# Thailand Moves Towards Coordinated Regulation of Data Centers

*November 2026*

Investment planning for data centers in Thailand will increasingly require an assessment of resource demand, environmental performance and benefits to the domestic economy.

On 10 November 2026, the Thai Cabinet approved a policy framework aimed at establishing a coordinated approach to regulating data center operations and introducing minimum operating standards. The framework addresses regulatory oversight, project classification, environmental requirements, and transitional arrangements for existing and new data center operators.

**Importantly, the Cabinet's approval establishes the overall policy direction, while detailed technical requirements, implementing regulations, and administrative procedures remain to be clarified. Investors should therefore consider the announced framework alongside subsequent regulations and guidance issued by the relevant authorities.**

## 1 Project Capacity and Location Requirements

Under the announced framework, data centers are classified into seven categories based on their electricity demand. The coordinated oversight mechanism is expected to apply to facilities with electricity demand of 0.5 megawatts (MW) or more, with greater regulatory scrutiny for facilities with demand of 20 MW or more.

The reported classifications are as follows:

| CATEGORY | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TOTAL FACILITY LOAD | Below 0.5 MW | 0.5 MW to <5 MW | 5 MW to <10 MW | 10 MW to <20 MW | 20 MW to <50 MW | 50 MW to <200 MW | 200 MW or more |

According to reports of the Cabinet briefing, data centers with electricity demand below 20 MW may be located in commercial zones, while facilities with demand of 20 MW or more are expected to be located in industrial zones.

Accordingly, investors should consider site selection, electricity demand, and potential capacity expansion together when planning new projects. The precise classification criteria and applicable zoning requirements should be verified against the relevant implementing regulations.

## 2 Centralized Regulatory Oversight and Approval Process

The Ministry of Digital Economy and Society has been tasked with establishing a TH-DC Dashboard to consolidate information on project locations, project characteristics, construction and permitting status, electricity and water demand, public utilities, surrounding communities, environmentally sensitive areas, and strategic areas to ensure that government authorities have accurate and up-to-date information for project assessment.

Relevant government agencies will also be tasked with uploading information on project approvals, permits, and investment promotion into the system. In addition, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society will be responsible for drafting legislation requiring data center operators to register and report relevant information through the TH-DC Dashboard.

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## 3 Environmental Performance Remains Central

Environmental performance is expected to be a key consideration under the new regulatory framework. The announced approach includes environmental Code of Practice ("**CoP**") addressing the potential environmental impacts of data center operations.

Measures discussed during the Cabinet briefing include:

**70 dBA**
**NOISE LIMIT**
Noise limit at the facility boundary

**1–2°C**
**TEMPERATURE CONTROL**
Measures to limit surrounding temperature increases to approximately 1–2°C

**WATER**
**COOLING & WATER QUALITY**
Cooling-water circulation and water quality monitoring before discharge

Government officials also indicated that data centers would generally not be required to prepare a standalone Environmental Impact Assessment ("**EIA**"), while projects located within industrial estates would remain subject to the applicable EIA requirements of those estates.

**However, these statements should not be interpreted as a blanket exemption from environmental requirements. The applicable obligations must be assessed based on the characteristics and location of each project, together with the relevant laws and implementing regulations.**

## 4 Transitional Arrangements Pending Revision of the Minimum Requirements

During the transitional period pending the revision of the minimum requirements, approvals and permits for data center operations will be processed through a centralized approval mechanism, based on the status of each data center operator, as follows:

### A. Existing Data Center Operators with Construction Permits or Expansion Plans Below 20 MW

Data center operators that (i) obtained a construction permit (Form Aor.1 or under Section 39 Bis) on or before 14 August 2026, being the effective date of the relevant Regulation of the Office of the Prime Minister, or (ii) plan to expand their system capacity resulting in an aggregate increase in electricity demand of less than 20 megawatts (MW), will be subject to the following arrangements:

- Relevant government authorities may proceed with the approval and permitting processes in accordance with the existing minimum requirements under applicable laws and regulations.
- Such approvals or permits must be subject to a condition requiring operators to comply with the new minimum requirements for data center operations, specifically those relating to environmental and economic standards, within one year from the date specified by the Cabinet.

### B. Data Center Operators Granted BOI Investment Promotion on or Before 14 August 2026

Data center operators that obtained investment promotion approval from the Board of Investment (BOI) on or before 14 August 2026 will be subject to the following arrangements:

- Relevant government authorities may proceed with the approval and permitting processes in accordance with the existing minimum requirements under applicable laws and regulations.
- Such approvals or permits must include a condition requiring operators to comply with the new minimum requirements for data center operations, specifically those relating to environmental standards, within one year from the date specified by the Cabinet.

### C. New Data Center Operators

The following operators will be classified as new data center operators:

- Operators that obtained a construction permit (Form Aor.1 or under Section 39 Bis) after 14 August 2026;
- Operators that have not yet obtained a construction permit; or
- Existing operational data centers planning to expand their system capacity, resulting in an aggregate increase in electricity demand of 20 MW or more.

Relevant government authorities must strictly apply the new minimum requirements for data center operations to be prescribed by the Cabinet when considering approvals and permits for these operators.

### D. Early Approval for New Data Center Operators Meeting the New Minimum Requirements

New data center operators falling under item C. that are able to adjust their investment projects to comply with the new minimum requirements for data center operations to be prescribed by the Cabinet may proceed with the relevant approval and permitting processes without having to wait for the completion of amendments to the applicable laws and regulations to align with those requirements.

## 5 Key Considerations for Investors

The new framework indicates that future assessments of data center investments will place greater emphasis on environmental performance, infrastructure readiness, and contributions to the Thai economy.

In particular, economic considerations are expected to include Thai employment, workforce development, local income generation, and participation by Thai businesses in the data center supply chain.

Investors and operators should therefore consider the following matters when planning new projects or expanding existing operations:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Classification & Location** | Assess electricity demand, applicable project classification, zoning requirements, and the implications of future capacity expansion. |
| **Regulatory Status** | Review existing construction permits, BOI investment promotion approvals, and other relevant authorizations to determine the applicable transitional arrangements. |
| **Utility Requirements** | Assess electricity and water demand, utility availability, and related infrastructure requirements. |
| **Environmental Compliance** | Evaluate the potential technical and financial implications of the new environmental standards. |
| **Economic Contributions** | Consider incorporating measurable commitments relating to Thai employment, skills development, and local business participation into project proposals and investment budgets. |

## Outlook

The Cabinet's approval marks an important development in Thailand's approach to regulating data center investments. However, the detailed regulatory requirements, administrative procedures, and implementation timelines remain subject to further clarification.

Investors should continue to monitor the regulations, notifications, implementing measures, and official guidance issued by the relevant authorities, particularly those concerning the centralized approval mechanism, minimum operating requirements, and transitional compliance obligations.

> **We will continue to monitor these developments and provide further legal updates as the relevant implementing regulations and official guidance are issued.**

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