Regional Stakeholder Forum

on Mekong Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan

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Linkages between MRC Basin Development Strategy (BDS), MASAP and MRC's planning process

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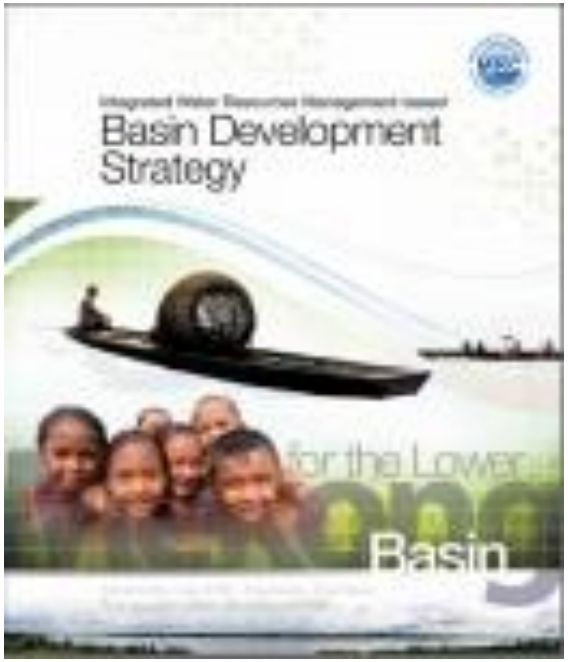
Background



The Basin Development Strategy (2011) had a strategic priority:

>> *"Climate Change Adaptation Strategy prepared and its implementation initiated"*

MRC Climate change adaptation initiative was then launched in 2013 with MASAP as a key final product

Background

- In 2014-2015, the BDS 2011 went through an updating process
- Preparation for the MASAP, especially possible adaptation options, was still ongoing and could not directly contribute to the BDS update
- However perspectives and ideas emerging from the MASAP preparation were used in the finalization of the updated BDS

Basin Development Strategy 2016-2020

- The new BDS assesses climate change status and trends and agreed on strategic actions related to CC

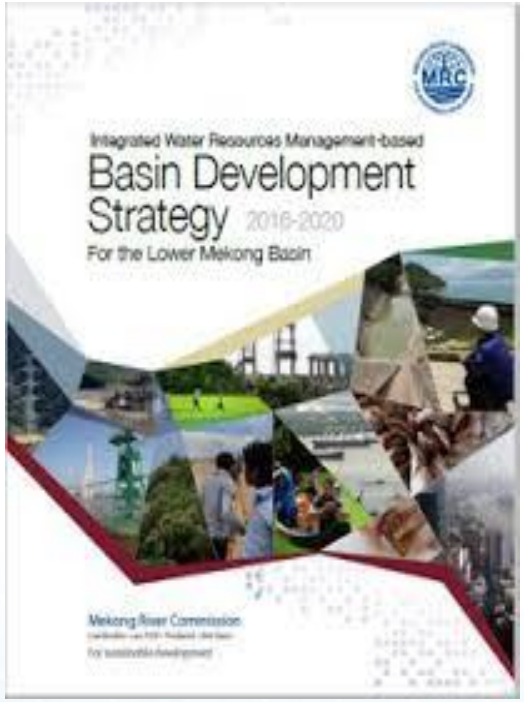
2.3.4 CLIMATE CHANGE

The Mekong basin is expected to be significantly affected by climate change. Results of long-term climate model projections under various emission scenarios indicate that temperatures will increase and sea level rise, while changes in rainfall and run-off may increase or decrease, depending on location within the basin.

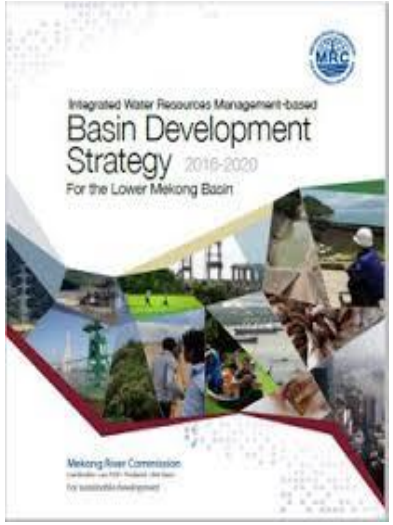
The predicted changes in rainfall and temperature could cause greater variability in the hydrological regime of the Mekong. In the short-term, the climate variability change adds more uncertainty to the changes caused by the development activities. An increase in the risk of both floods and droughts is expected. Low-lying areas downstream of Kratie and in the Mekong delta would be particularly at risk.

In the Mekong delta, the most important factor related to flooding is expected to be sea level rise. Estimates indicate that approximately 30% of the delta would be inundated with a one metre sea level rise. .The recently prepared Mekong Delta Plan of Viet Nam provides a long-term vision and strategy for the development and management of the delta in the face of climate change.

Based on further assessments of the range of potential impacts that climate change may have on the Mekong basin, the MRC is leading the formulation of a regional adaptation strategy.



Basin Development Strategy 2016-2020



3.4.4 UNCERTAINTIES ASSOCIATED WITH CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE IMPACTS ARISING FROM DEVELOPMENTS OUTSIDE THE WATER SECTOR

Uncertainties exist in all planning exercises. They may arise from insufficient knowledge of how a system responds to change, of what stimulates change, or from unforeseen external shocks such as natural catastrophes and conflicts. A good plan anticipates where these risks lie, takes action to minimise their impacts, and increase resilience to external shocks. In the Mekong context, this requires a greater knowledge of how economic, social and environmental impacts relate to shocks, and the subsequent development of robust "no regret" plans with adequate provision for adaptation to changing circumstances and with measures to deal with emergency situations.

The MRC has already built a substantial body of knowledge and has plans in place to address identified gaps. A climate change adaptation strategy is currently being formulated, which will increase understanding of the possible impacts of climate change and how these may be managed. MRC is also exploring the positive and negative impacts of alternative long-term scenarios that will draw upon the long-term trends in developments outside the water sector. Insights gained will be used to promote adaptation of national plans.

BDS strategic actions relevant to climate change

Studies

- Study of **options to increase storage** within LMB for flood and drought management purposes
- Study on **transboundary impacts of climate change** on water and related resources of LMB in medium to long term and potential adaptation options
- Study of the use of surface and **groundwater** and the potential for increasing the use
- Assessment of **alternative medium term development scenarios**

BDS strategic actions relevant to CC

Guidelines and strategies

- Prepare and promote basin-wide **strategy for sustainable hydropower development**
- Prepare and promote regional **strategy for flood management, especially for the Cambodia - Viet Nam** flood plains
- Implement and update Mekong cl**imate change adaptation strategy and action plan**
- Promote, further identify, and implement cost and benefit sharing opportunities and deal structures emphasising national projects of basin-wide significance and **joint projects**
- Prepare and implement **guidelines for addressing climate change risks and opportunities** in water and related sector projects, including guidelines to adapt to water shortage and drought impacts

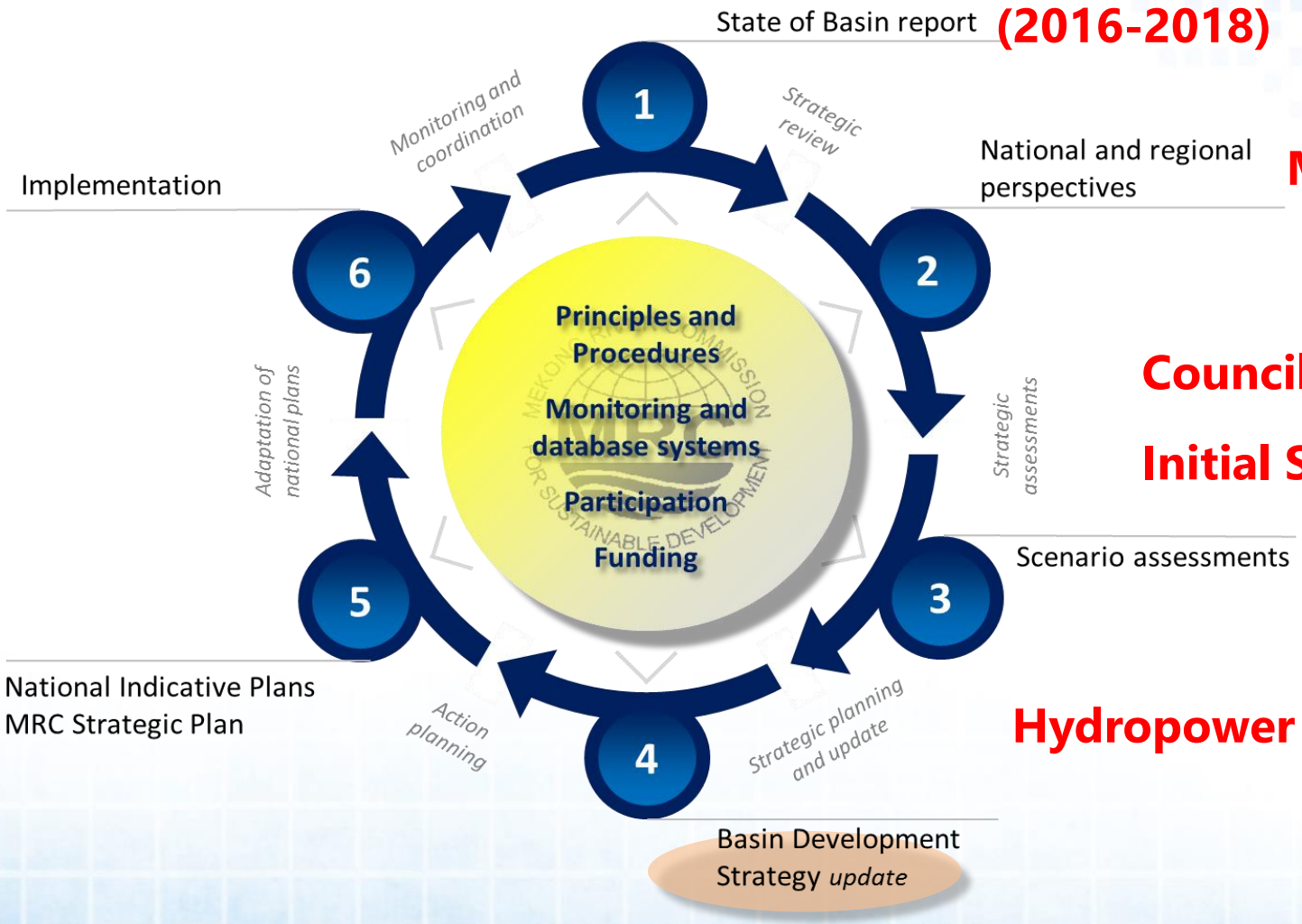
Relationship between BDS and MASAP

- BDS and MASAP are aligned (no inconsistency)
- BDS describes past development, assesses current state of water resources situation and exogenous development (outside the water sector) and future plans
- BDS takes note of projected future water resources development situation (20-50 years) with climate change
- MASAP is identifying possibilities & limitations of existing water management situation & identifies consequences of expected development & defines actions to be prepared for such development
- Development actions as planned to be beneficial for the short term (5-15 years) may appear counterproductive in the long term (20-50 years), due to climate change and other developments

Implementation of BDS related to climate change

- The **MRC Strategic Plan** uptakes strategic actions from the BDS including:
  - The Study on Sustainable Development and Management of the Mekong River (**Council Study**) is assessing past, present and future development plans with and without climate change
  - **Climate change assessments** and **MASAP**
  - The **Initial Studies** (flood risks) phase 2
  - MRC indicator-based **State of Basin Report**: 1 of 5 dimensions is devoted to monitoring and reporting on climate change
- The **National Indicative Plans** has two relevant **joint projects**:
  - Integrated flood management in the border area of Cambodia and Viet Nam in the **Mekong Delta** for water security and sustainable development
  - Transboundary cooperation for **flood and drought management in Thai-Cambodian border area** – a part of 9C-9T Sub-area

Assessments, MASAP, and MRC planning



(2016-2018)

MASAP (2017)

Council Study (2017)

Initial Studies (2017)

Hydropower Strategy (2019)

(2019-2020 for the new BDP)

Thank you