The MRC Regional Stakeholder Forum
14th – 15th December 2017
Vientiane, Lao PDR

Review and Update – Preliminary Design Guidance (DG2018)
Outlines of Presentation

1. Background

2. Contents of Current PDG

3. Scope, approach and timeline of the PDG Review and Update
   - The MRC BDS and SP 2016-2020
   - ISH0306 Mitigation Guidelines
   - Consideration of additional sections in PDG 2018
   - Scope of Review
   - Overall Progress in 2017
   - Work plan and timeline for 2018
1. Background

❖ **Context in 2008 with Mekong Hydropower**

- 11 large hydropower schemes proposed on mainstream in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Thailand
- Projects will inevitably be accompanied by major impacts and other development risks in four MRC Member Countries

❖ **Principles and Approach for PDG 2009**

- PDG is *preliminary* and *advisory* in nature
- *Avoidance* over mitigation,
- Water as an *economic good*,
- *Adaptive* management,
- *Good* practice and *safe* operations
1. Background

**Why PDG is termed “Preliminary”?**

- Urgent need to move ahead with proposed mainstream dams
- Provide developers with *Preliminary Guidance* so that they can *adapt their design to comply with the guidance* for sustainable HP development in the context of MA 1995
- Stresses on *performance targets, design and operating principles* for mitigation measures, compliance monitoring and adaptive management
2. Contents of Current PDG

**PDG coverage: 5 aspects/disciplines:**

1. Navigation
2. Fish Passage on Mainstream Dams
3. Sediment Transport and River Morphology
4. Water Quality and Aquatic Ecology
5. Safety of Dams

**PDG does not cover:**

- Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment (TbEIA)
- Socio-economic impacts
3.1. MRC-BDS and SP for 2016-2020

- **Outcome 3**: Guidance for development and management of water and related projects and resources shared and applied by national planning and implementing agencies

  - **Output 3.1**: PDG for mainstream dams reviewed, updated and implementation supported

  - **Objective**: “Updated DG for Proposed Mainstream (and Tributary) Dams on LMB (DG2018) provides: contemporary, research based performance standards, design and operating principles; which also covers compliance monitoring and adaptive management”
3.2. ISH0306 Mitigation Guidelines – across cycle

- **Project Phase**
  - Master Plan
  - Feasibility Study
  - Project Design

- **Investigation**
  - SEA, CIA, EIA
  - Avoid Impacts
  - Understand the characteristics of the impact
  - Research mitigation options
  - Design and Operation measures, mitigation rules and procedures, compensation

- **Mitigation Focus**
  - Avoidance
  - Mitigation (incl. minimization)
  - Compensation
3.3. Lessons Learnt from PNPCA Implementation

- **Guidance** on *minimum primary data requirements*;
- Elaborate on *Adaptive Management*;
- Emphasis on the *avoidance* of impacts (through strategic planning);
- **Guidance** as to *quality of the EIA* to avoid delays in provision of adequate information for assessment;
- *Operating rules* for projects are often not provided in PNPCA documents;
- *Inclusion of the need for Trans-boundary CIA requirements* – with reference to current MRC preparation of guidance for TbEIA.
3.4. Consideration of Additional Sections in DG2018

1. **Hydrology and Water Flow:** Dealt separately in PNPCA (*ramping rates, hydropeaking, operational mode, baseline hydrological data - flow variation, minimum flows etc.)*;

2. **Socio-economics and Livelihoods:** Considered in PNPCA but no guidance, focus on transboundary, and take account of national standards;

3. **Transboundary EIA:** Currently under preparation by MRCS through WB funds, will allow separation of local and Tb impacts to be fully set out.
3.5. Scope of Review and Update PDG

**Common understanding** reached among MCs on how to proceed:

- ✓ **All sections** of PDG2009 will be reviewed and selectively updated;
- ✓ "**Performance Standards**" rather than "**Prescriptive Designs**" – same philosophy to be retained;
- ✓ **New sections** will be added to fill identified areas with gaps (*hydrology*, *TbEIA; Socio-economics*);
- ✓ **Clear links** to **Risk & Mitigation Guidelines** (ISH0306);
- ✓ **Stakeholder opinions/suggestions** will be taken into account;
- ✓ **Consultation** and **active participation** of MCs will be vital in DG2018 update.
3.6. Overall Progress by December 2017

✓ Concept Note (CN) prepared, discussed and finalized through national and regional consultations:
  - **Cambodia**: 18th September
  - **Thailand**: 20th September
  - **Lao PDR**: 25th September
  - **Viet Nam**: 13th October
  - **Regional**: 6th November, HCM City

✓ Overall confirmation of **high priority** by MCs in 2018

✓ JC **took note** of Concept Note to guide the preparation of TOR and implementation in 2018 (24th MRC Council Meeting)
3.7. Work Plan and Timeline

- Agree objective, scope; inform stakeholders  
  Nov. – Dec. 2017
- Gather inputs (developers, experts) & update  
  Jan. – Mar. 2018
- First draft of DG2018  
  by April 2018
- National Consultation  
  by May 2018
- Regional Consultation  
  by July 2018
- MRC JC’s consideration and approval of DG2018  
  by August 2018
Thank you