

MRC Strategic Plan 2026–2030



Towards Sustainable Water Resources
Management in the Mekong Basin

Developed by the Mekong River Commission



Water
Security



Communities
Livelihoods



Clean Energy
Transition



Healthy
Ecosystems &
Fisheries



Sustainable
Agriculture



Climate Resilience
& Adaptation



Regional
Cooperation

GROWING TOGETHER AND STRONGER
FOR PEOPLE, PARTNERSHIP, AND PROSPERITY
IN THE MEKONG RIVER BASIN



The IWRM-based

**Basin Development Strategy for the
Mekong River Basin 2021-2030 &
MRC Strategic Plan 2026-2030**



One Mekong One Spirit

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Meeting the Needs
Keeping the Balance

PREFACE

It is my pleasure to present to you, on behalf of the Mekong River Commission, the MRC Strategic Plan 2026-2030.

By approving this Strategic Plan in November 2025, the MRC Council underlined its commitment to bring about responsible development and ensure that social, economic and environmental improvements lead to better living standards for all the Mekong Basin countries and peoples.

This Strategic Plan, prepared on a five-year cycle, focuses on the entire Mekong River Basin from the perspectives of the MRC Member Countries: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam. It recognises that the basin's sustainable development and current water security challenges can only be addressed effectively at the basin scale through cooperation between MRC Member Countries and other riparian countries and those established cooperative bodies, including the civil society organizations who represent the voices of the Mekong communities.

The Strategic Plan aims at guiding all relevant actors – not just the MRC – involved in the development and management of the Mekong's water and related resources to achieve improvements for the Mekong River Basin as laid down in the 1995 Mekong Agreement. The Strategic Plan covers all water and related sectors, integrates the relevant Sustainable Development Goals, and internalises a gender and vulnerability approach that emphasises diversity, equity, and inclusion.

As a unified corporate plan that is fully responsive to the Basin Development Strategy 2021-2030, the MRC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 sets out coherent activities for the MRC to effectively implement the Basin Development Strategy and strengthen the organization over the next five years and beyond 2030.

The MRC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 takes stock of the experience, lessons learned, and progress achieved through the implementation of earlier versions, and includes input from a broad range of regional, national and local stakeholders.

I believe that the Strategic Plan will serve as a unified instrument that will guide us towards more responsible development and protection of the Mekong and its related resources for an economically prosperous, socially just, environmentally sound and climate change resilient Mekong River Basin.



H.E. Mr Paradorn Prissanantakul
Minister Attached to the Prime Minister's Office
Chairperson of the Thai National Mekong Committee
Member of the MRC Council for Thailand
Chairperson of the MRC Council for 2025

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACMECS	Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy
AD	Administration Division
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BDS	Basin Development Strategy
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIP	Community Innovation Projects
CRBMFs	Core River Basin Management Functions
CRMN	Core River Monitoring Network
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DAGAP	Data Acquisition and Generation Action Plan
DEM	Digital Elevation Model
DPs	Development Partners
DSF	Decision Support Framework
DSS	Decision Support System
DSHPP	Don Sahong Hydropower Project
DTM	Digital Terrain Model
ED	Environmental Management Division
EHM	Ecological Health Monitoring
EWS	Early Warning System
FMIS	Financial Management Information System
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEV	Gender Equity and Vulnerability
GEVAP	Gender Equity and Vulnerability Action Plan
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) German Agency for International Cooperation)
GIS	Geographic Information System
GMS	Greater Mekong Subregion
HRMS	Human Resources Management System
IABP	Initial Adaptive Basin Plan
IAM	Irrigation Asset management
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
JAP	Joint Action Plan
JC	Joint Committee
JEM	Joint Environmental Monitoring
JPF	Joint Projects Facility
JWG	Joint Working Group
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (German state-owned development bank)

LMB	Lower Mekong Basin
LMC/MLC	Lancang-Mekong Cooperation / Mekong-Lancang Cooperation
LPHPP	Luang Prabang Hydropower Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCs	Member Countries
MFEW	Mekong Fund Ecosystem Window
MOUs	Memorandums of Understanding
MRB-IF	Mekong River Basin Indicator Framework
MRC	Mekong River Commission
MRCS	Mekong River Commission Secretariat
MRC SP	Mekong River Commission Strategic Plan
MSP	Multi Stakeholder Platform
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MWP	Multi-Year Work Plan
NIP	National Indicative Plan
NMC	National Mekong Committee
NMCS	National Mekong Committee Secretariat
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
OCEO	Office of the Chief Executive Officer
OD	Organisational Development
PD	Planning Division
PDG	Preliminary Design Guidance
PDIES	Procedures for Data and Information Exchange and Sharing
PMFM	Procedures for the Maintenance of Flows on the Mainstream
PNPCA	Procedures for Notification, Prior Consultation and Agreement
PWQ	Procedures for Water Quality
PWUM	Procedures for Water Use Monitoring
RAP	Regional Action Plan (for Sustainable Transport of Dangerous Goods)
RBO	River Basin Organisation
RFDMC	Regional Flood and Drought Management Centre
ROK	Republic of Korea
RPM	River Plastic Monitoring
RPTCC	Regional Power Trade Coordination Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SHDS	Sustainable Hydropower Development Strategy
SIMVA	Social Impact Monitoring and Vulnerability Assessment
SOBR	State of the Basin Report
SP	Strategic Plan
TbEIA	Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment
TD	Technical Division
TGs	Technical Guidelines
TGWQ	Technical Guidelines for Water Quality
UMB	Upper Mekong Basin
UN	United Nations
USD	United States Dollar
XYHPP	Xayaburi Hydropower Project

An aerial photograph of a wide river with many small, colorful boats. The boats are mostly covered with corrugated metal roofs in various colors like blue, green, orange, and silver. The water is a muddy brown color. The boats are clustered in the lower right portion of the image, leaving the upper left portion mostly empty water.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Mekong River Commission (MRC) stands at a critical juncture, where strengthening its institutional foundations for post-2030 and asserting regional leadership are imperative to ensuring long-term sustainability and resilience. The organisation is therefore entering a transformative phase aimed at enhancing its role as the leading regional platform for transboundary water cooperation and basin development. Amidst growing environmental and socio-economic challenges, the MRC is strengthening its institutional foundations with a renewed focus on intensifying regional ownership, achieving financial sustainability, and ensuring strategic impact.

This transformation builds on the achievements from the delivery of the previous MRC Strategic Plan (SP) with an emphasis in the MRC SP 2026-2030 on contributing to the Basin Development Strategy (BDS) 2021-2030 Strategic Priorities by:



Strengthening institutional foundations and governance



Enhancing data, monitoring and predictive capabilities for decision support



Advancing coordinated river basin management operations



Delivering tangible benefits through significant transboundary projects with community impact



Leveraging partnerships and expanding knowledge exchange

The emphasis on these five focus areas responds to lessons learned from previous SP implementation as reflected in the BDS as well as more recent reviews, and the ongoing and emerging challenges for transboundary water resource management throughout the basin. As the organisation moves towards self-financing the risks to MRC operations and capacity from a potential funding shortfall become more acute. More regulated basin water resources require increased focus on coordination of operations in both mainstream and tributaries to mitigate impacts and achieve mutual benefits.

Recent experience also indicates a need for more collaborative and proactive problem solving, engaging a wider range of stakeholders and partners in identifying solutions to shared challenges, while leveraging better use of existing assets such as investments in data and monitoring. The benefits of using trials or pilot application and national capacity building to address what is often insufficient uptake of regional guidelines and tools has been demonstrated, but the need for more integrated cross-sectoral activities with agile planning and implementation mechanisms including joint formulation, development and implementation of significant transboundary projects remains.

The MRC will therefore drive greater impact across regional, national, and local levels through more efficient operations, drawing on its strong data and knowledge base and working with partners to leverage joint efforts. At the same time, new mechanisms, shaped by lessons from past cycles, will accelerate joint and transboundary projects, enable stronger community engagement, and move the organisation beyond issuing regional strategies, plans and guidelines to enhance collaborative implementation with Member Countries and partners.

Across the five focal areas, the MRC will implement a **strategic shift to impact focused monitoring** to improve mutual accountability at regional and national levels for achieving positive impacts for basin communities. This includes utilising the MRC Procedures in support of more active flow coordination, instituting a results-based implementation framework for agreed measures in the Joint Action Plans, and implementing spatially relevant risk forecasting and more targeted monitoring activities linking current conditions to planning and management decisions that all parties can work together to address.





1 Strengthening Institutional Foundations and Governance

Securing Financial Sustainability and Strengthening the Foundation for Post-2030

As the MRC moves towards self-financing arrangements, the financial and institutional foundations of the organisation require strengthening to ensure ongoing effectiveness and impact across the whole basin. Financial sustainability with robust governance and greater institutional capacity is needed to support partnerships, leverage new funding sources, work with other parties including MRC Dialogue Partners and the private sector on integrated management arrangements of both the mainstream and tributaries, and facilitate more active joint efforts between countries to address the highest priority concerns in a coordinated way.

The MRC will implement a financial sustainability strategy anchored in Member Country ownership, diversified funding, institutional efficiency and results-driven accountability. It will do this through reaffirming **high-level political commitment** to self-financing of core routine functions by Member Country leaders during the MRC Summit, assessing organisational capacity and needs for greater operational efficiencies, outlining a **roadmap for post-2030 financial arrangements**, and operationalising a unified **Mekong Fund** with the support of a **Joint Projects Facility** to help accelerate the identification, development and financing of significant joint and transboundary projects and the leveraging of external financing and innovation. These key deliverables will be backed-up by strengthened financial, governance, auditing and results-based reporting systems.





Reinforcing Implementation of the MRC Procedures

The MRC will move toward a more **active coordination** of the whole river network that considers the hydrological interactions between key and selected tributaries and the mainstream by better utilising the MRC Procedures to support harmonised reservoir coordination and active management. This includes enhanced **near real-time data systems and operational collaboration** linked to the upgraded Decision Support Framework, upgrading Joint Action Plan implementation **with results-based tracking of mitigation measures**, formalising pre-PNPCA processes and actions **to help identify and address transboundary risks early** and undertaking **strategic joint pilot projects** on flood forecasting, response to water quality emergencies and reservoir coordination.

2

Enhancing Data, Monitoring and Predictive Capabilities for Decision-Support

Modernising River Monitoring and Integrating Disciplines in the CRMN

The MRC will continue to modernise its river monitoring activities by integrating the Core River Monitoring Network (CRMN) with a **near real-time data** visualisation system to support early warning and rapid operational responses. The **unified data visualisation and analytics platform, based on the current water status dashboard**, will support more integrated cross-disciplinary analysis and be underpinned by improvements in **advanced monitoring technologies** that address key risks including from water infrastructure, climate change, and land-use in the basin. The enhanced data and information system will improve decision-support for hydropower coordination, fisheries management, transboundary water pollution, and navigation.

Enhancing Flood and Drought Forecasting and Regional Preparedness

The MRC will continue to strengthen data integration for flood and drought forecasting using the upgraded MRC DSF, taking into account reservoir coordination and near real-time hydrometeorological data. **Selected tributary flood forecasting** will also be implemented.

3

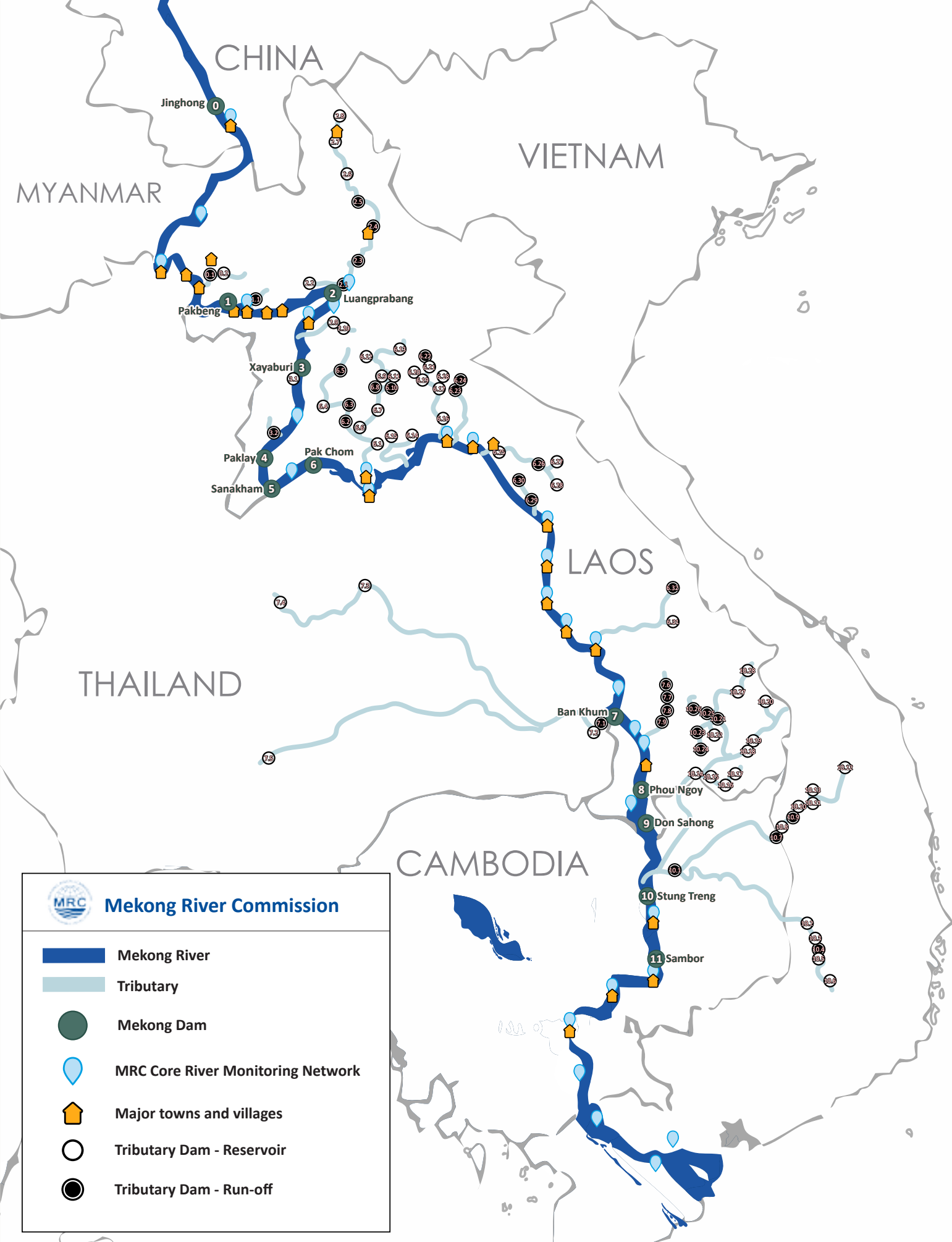
Advancing Coordinated River Basin Management Operations


Advancing Water flow and Hydropower Coordination for Multiple Benefits








The MRC will work with Member Countries to enhance the coordination of water releases and flow regulation across hydropower cascades to improve flood and drought resilience, energy-environment-water optimisation and transboundary impact management. Guidelines will be developed for operational **flow coordination and real-time dialogue** including with information support through a **Hydropower Flow Coordination System**. **Pilot projects** will be implemented to evaluate opportunities for integrating water security objectives in reservoir coordination aimed at optimising energy-water use while reducing transboundary risks.

Operationalizing Basin-wide Sediment Management

The MRC will integrate sediment management into basin planning and coordination including **harmonising monitoring methodologies** as part of the CRMN, implementing **sediment-flushing pilots** with reservoir operators and identifying and implementing **transboundary projects to mitigate further sediment loss**. Technical guidelines will support coordinated actions while upstream and downstream countries will be engaged in dialogue and implementation of joint solutions. The development of a **basin sediment budget** with **sediment flow targets** will help track progress and support adaptive management.




 **Mekong River Commission**

-  Mekong River
-  Tributary
-  Mekong Dam
-  MRC Core River Monitoring Network
-  Major towns and villages
-  Tributary Dam - Reservoir
-  Tributary Dam - Run-off

Map information
 Unit: meter
 System: UTM, Zone 48
 Spheroid: Everest
 Datum: WGS84

Prepared by Technical Support Division, 2026
 Website: <http://www.mrcmekong.org>

0 100 200 400
 Kilometers





LIST OF MEKONG RIVER SYSTEM AND HYDROPOWER PROJECTS OF THE LOWER MEKONG BASIN

CHINA

0 Jinghong

CAMBODIA

- 10** **10** **Stung Treng**
Storage: 518 M m³
Energy: 1,400 MW **planned**
- 11** **11** **Sambor**
Storage: 984 M m³
Energy: 2,600 MW **planned**
- 10.1** **10.1 Lower Se San 2**
Storage: 33 M m³
Energy: 400 MW

THAILAND

- 3.1** **3.1 Nam Hong 1**
Storage: N/A M m³
Energy: 15 MW
- 3.2** **3.2 Nam Phoun**
Storage: 339 M m³
Energy: 45 MW
- 7.1** **7.1 Pak Mun**
Storage: 125 M m³
Energy: 136 MW
- 7.2** **7.2 Sirindhorn**
Storage: 1,135 M m³
Energy: 36 MW
- 7.3** **7.3 Ubol Ratana**
Storage: 1,695 M m³
Energy: 25 MW
- 7.4** **7.4 Chulabhorn**
Storage: 144.5 M m³
Energy: 40 MW
- 7.5** **7.5 Lam Ta Khong P.S.**
Storage: 299.6 M m³
Energy: 500 MW

VIET NAM

- 10.2** **10.2 Sre Pok 4**
Storage: 8 M m³
Energy: 80 MW
- 10.3** **10.3 Sre Pok 3**
Storage: 63 M m³
Energy: 220 MW
- 10.4** **10.4 Dray Hlinh 2**
Storage: 1.5 M m³
Energy: 16 MW
- 10.5** **10.5 Buon Kuop**
Storage: 25.63 M m³
Energy: 280 MW
- 10.6** **10.6 Buon Tua Srah**
Storage: 523 M m³
Energy: 86 MW
- 10.7** **10.7 Se San 4A**
Storage: 7.5 M m³
Energy: 63 MW
- 10.8** **10.8 Se San 4**
Storage: 264 M m³
Energy: 360 MW
- 10.9** **10.9 Se San 3A**
Storage: 4 M m³
Energy: 108 MW
- 10.10** **10.10 Se San 3**
Storage: 3.8 M m³
Energy: 260 MW
- 10.11** **10.11 Yali**
Storage: 779 M m³
Energy: 720 MW
- 10.12** **10.12 Upper Kontum**
Storage: 122.7 M m³
Energy: 250 MW
- 10.13** **10.13 Plei Krong**
Storage: 948 M m³
Energy: 100 MW

0.1 0.1 Nam Tha Hatmuak Storage: 3.5 M m ³ Energy: 37.5 MW	6.8 6.8 Nam Karb Storage: 675.5 M m ³ Energy: 12 MW	6.27 6.27 Nam Gnouang Storage: 2,262 M m ³ Energy: 60 MW	10.24 10.24 Xepian-Xenamnoy Storage: 1,021 M m ³ Energy: 410 MW
0.2 0.2 Nam Tha 1 Storage: 1,755 M m ³ Energy: 168 MW	6.9 6.9 Nam Phay Storage: 240 M m ³ Energy: 86 MW	6.28 6.28 Nam Theun 2 Storage: 3,908 M m ³ Energy: 1,080 MW	10.25 10.25 Houay Lamphan Downstream Storage: 74 M m ³ Energy: 15 MW
1.1 1.1 Nam Beng Storage: 5.4 M m ³ Energy: 36 MW	6.10 6.10 Nam Phayai Storage: 25 M m ³ Energy: 19.2 MW	6.29 6.29 Nam Hinboun (Downstream) Storage: 35.5 M m ³ Energy: 15 MW	10.26 10.26 Houay Lamphan Yai Storage: 141 M m ³ Energy: 88 MW
2.1 2.1 Nam Ou 1 Storage: 118 M m ³ Energy: 180 MW	6.11 6.11 Nam Ngum 3 Storage: 1,411 M m ³ Energy: 480 MW	6.30 6.30 Nam Hinboun Storage: 25.6 M m ³ Energy: 30 MW	10.27 10.27 Nam Emoun Storage: 1.14 M m ³ Energy: 133 MW
2.2 2.2 Nam Nga 2 Storage: 9.34 M m ³ Energy: 14.5 MW	6.12 6.12 Nam Ngum 5 Storage: 303 M m ³ Energy: 120 MW	6.31 6.31 Xelanong 1 Storage: 881 M m ³ Energy: 70 MW	10.28 10.28 Huay La-Nge Storage: 1484 M m ³ Energy: 60 MW
2.3 2.3 Nam Ou 2 Storage: 162 M m ³ Energy: 120 MW	6.13 6.13 Nam Ngum 4 Storage: 80 M m ³ Energy: 240 MW	6.32 6.32 Tad Sakoi Storage: 2.44 M m ³ Energy: 31.2 MW	1 1 Pakbeng Storage: 780 M m ³ Energy: 912 MW under construction
2.4 2.4 Nam Ou 3 Storage: 218 M m ³ Energy: 210 MW	6.14 6.14 Nam Mang 1 Storage: 19 M m ³ Energy: 64 MW	7.6 7.6 Huay Por Storage: N/A M m ³ Energy: 15 MW	2 2 Luangprabang Storage: 120 M m ³ Energy: 1,410 MW under construction
2.5 2.5 Nam Ou 4 Storage: 142 M m ³ Energy: 132 MW	6.15 6.15 Nam Leuk Storage: 198 M m ³ Energy: 60 MW	7.7 7.7 Xe Xet 1 Storage: 0.27 M m ³ Energy: 45 MW	3 3 Xayaburi Storage: 115 M m ³ Energy: 1,285 MW operational
2.6 2.6 Nam Ou 5 Storage: 350 M m ³ Energy: 240 MW	6.16 6.16 Nam Ngiep 1 (Regulating Dam) Storage: 10.3 M m ³ Energy: 18 MW	7.8 7.8 Xe Xet 2 Storage: 0.8 M m ³ Energy: 76 MW	4 4 Paklay Storage: 317 M m ³ Energy: 770 MW under construction
2.7 2.7 Nam Ou 6 Storage: 433 M m ³ Energy: 180 MW	6.16 6.16 Nam Ngiep 1 Storage: 2,238 M m ³ Energy: 272 MW	7.9 7.9 Xe Xet 3 Storage: 0.23 M m ³ Energy: 23 MW	5 5 Sanakham Storage: 132 M m ³ Energy: 660 MW planned
2.8 2.8 Nam Ou 7 Storage: 1,866 M m ³ Energy: 210 MW	6.17 6.17 Nam Chiane 1 Storage: N/A M m ³ Energy: 15 MW	10.14 10.14 Xekong A Downstream Storage: 125 M m ³ Energy: 86 MW	6 6 Pak Chom Storage: 808 M m ³ Energy: 1,079 MW planned
2.9 2.9 Nam Khan 3 Storage: 224 M m ³ Energy: 60 MW	6.18 6.18 Nam Chian Storage: 21 M m ³ Energy: 104 MW	10.15 10.15 Nam Kong 1 Storage: 651 M m ³ Energy: 160 MW	7 7 Ban Kum Storage: 2,110 M m ³ Energy: 1,872 MW planned
2.10 2.10 Nam Khan 2 Storage: 686 M m ³ Energy: 130 MW	6.19 6.19 Nam Ngiep 2 Storage: 152 M m ³ Energy: 180 MW	10.16 10.16 Nam Kong 2 Storage: 71 M m ³ Energy: 66 MW	8 8 Phou Ngoy Storage: 530 M m ³ Energy: 651 MW planned
6.1 6.1 Nam Mang 3 Storage: 58 M m ³ Energy: 40 MW	6.20 6.20 Nam Aow Storage: N/A M m ³ Energy: 15 MW	10.17 10.17 Nam Kong 3 Storage: 574 M m ³ Energy: 54 MW	9 9 Don Sahong Storage: 25 M m ³ Energy: 260 MW operational
6.2 6.2 Nam Lik 1 Storage: 61.2 M m ³ Energy: 64.7 MW	6.21 6.21 Nam Ngiep 2ABC Storage: 1,192+N/A+1,565 M m ³ Energy: 10.5+9.4+14.6 MW	10.18 10.18 Xekaman - Xanxay Storage: 132.6 M m ³ Energy: 32 MW	
6.3 6.3 Nam Song Storage: 13.5 M m ³ Energy: 6 MW	6.22 6.22 Nam Ngiep 3A Storage: 14 M m ³ Energy: 44 MW	10.19 10.19 Xekaman 1 Storage: 4,805 M m ³ Energy: 322 MW	
6.4 6.4 Nam Lik 1/2 Storage: 1,445 M m ³ Energy: 100 MW	6.23 6.23 Nam San 3B Storage: 0.74 M m ³ Energy: 45 MW	10.20 10.20 Xekaman 3 Storage: 141 M m ³ Energy: 250 MW	
6.5 6.5 Nam Sana Storage: N/A M m ³ Energy: 14 MW	6.24 6.24 Nam San 3A Storage: 0.77 M m ³ Energy: 69 MW	10.21 10.21 Xenamnoy 1 Storage: 0.21 M m ³ Energy: 14.8 MW	
6.6 6.6 Nam Ngum 1 Storage: 7,108 M m ³ Energy: 235 MW	6.25 6.25 Nam Theun 1 Storage: 3,009 M m ³ Energy: 650 MW	10.22 10.22 Houay Ho Storage: 615 M m ³ Energy: 152 MW	
6.7 6.7 Nam Ngum 2 Storage: 4,886 M m ³ Energy: 615 MW	6.26 6.26 Theun-Hinboun Storage: 40.6 M m ³ Energy: 460 MW	10.23 10.23 Xekatom 1-Xenamnoy2 Storage: N/A M m ³ Energy: 13.4 MW	



MEKONG RIVER SYSTEM AND HYDROPOWER PROJECTS OF THE LOWER MEKONG RIVER BASIN

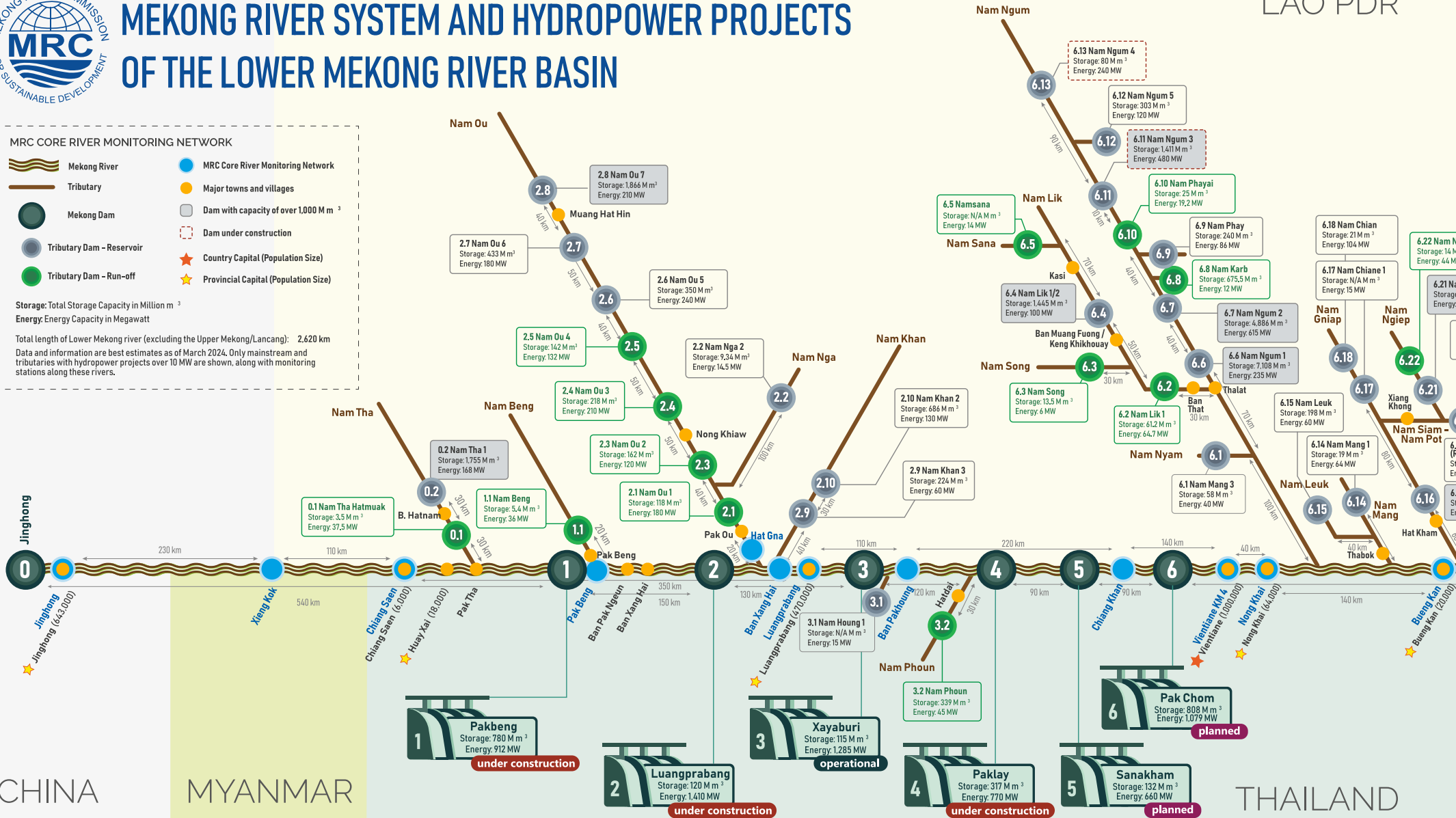
LAO PDR

MRC CORE RIVER MONITORING NETWORK

- Mekong River
- MRC Core River Monitoring Network
- Tributary
- Major towns and villages
- Mekong Dam
- Dam with capacity of over 1,000 M m³
- Tributary Dam - Reservoir
- Dam under construction
- Country Capital (Population Size)
- Provincial Capital (Population Size)
- Tributary Dam - Run-off

Storage: Total Storage Capacity in Million m³
 Energy: Energy Capacity in Megawatt

Total length of Lower Mekong river (excluding the Upper Mekong/Lancang): 2,620 km
 Data and information are best estimates as of March 2024. Only mainstream and tributaries with hydropower projects over 10 MW are shown, along with monitoring stations along these rivers.

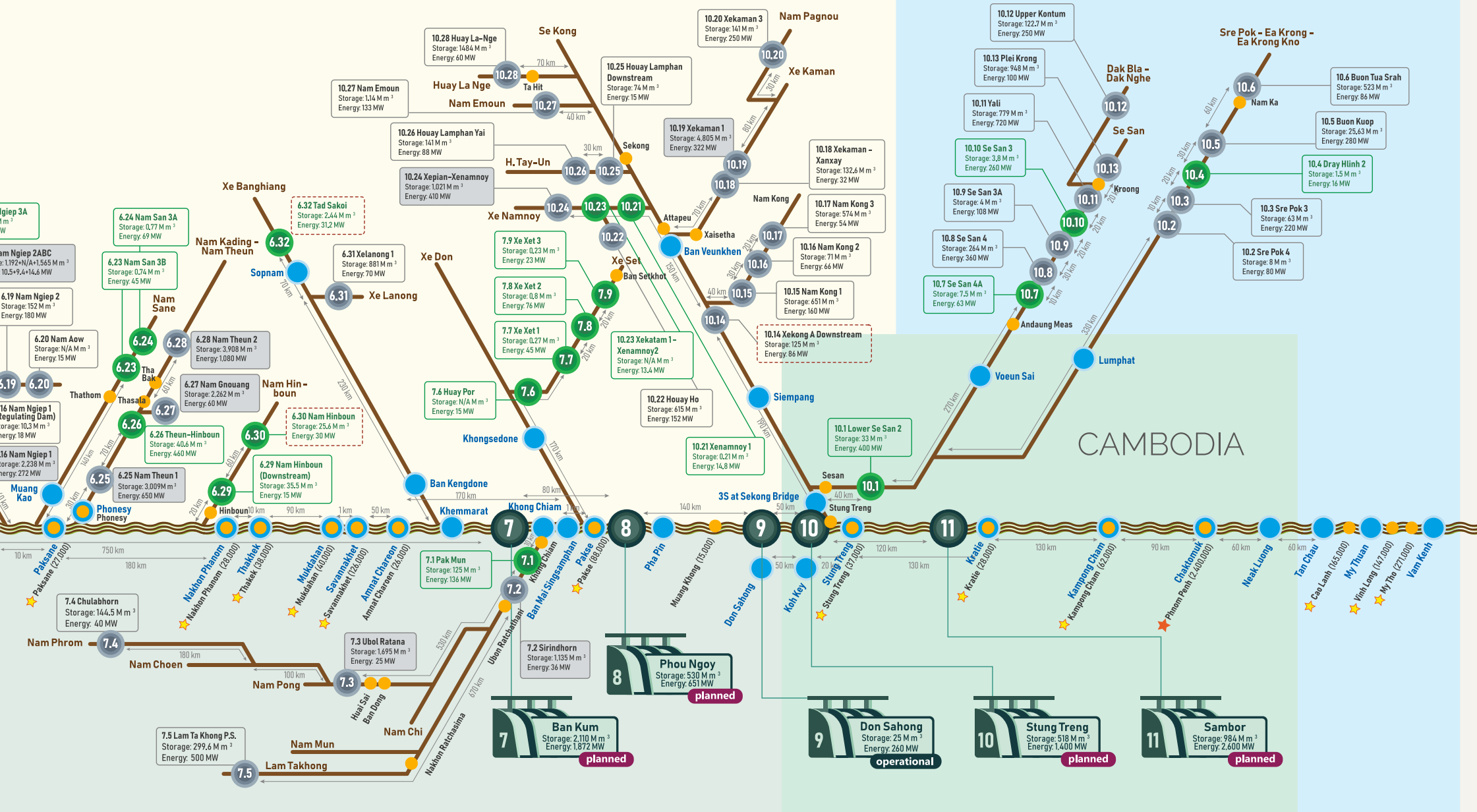


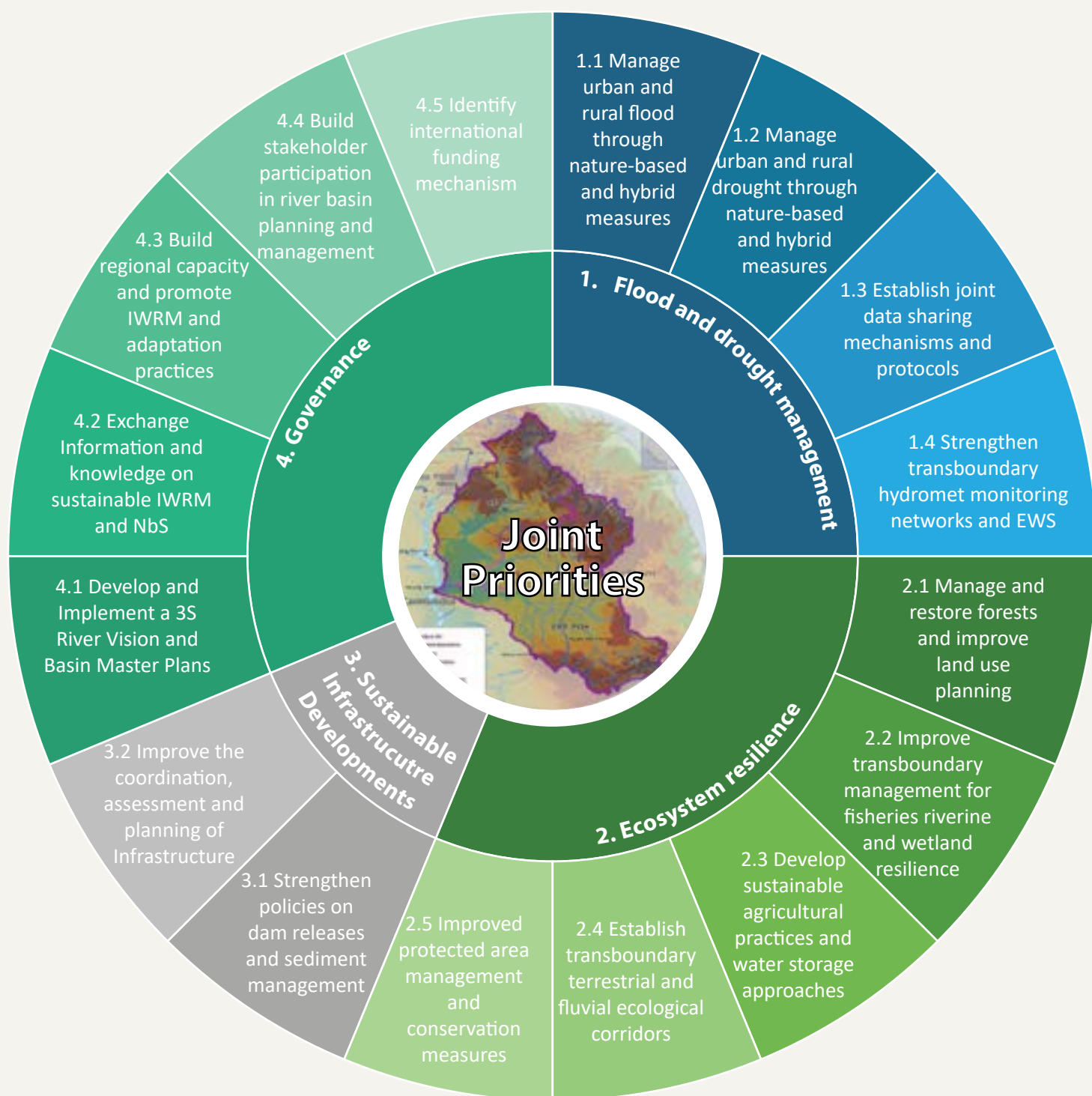
CHINA

MYANMAR

THAILAND

VIET NAM





4 Delivering Tangible Benefits through Significant Transboundary Projects with Community Impact

Accelerating Joint and Transboundary Projects

The MRC will expand its role as a platform for cooperative action by **scaling-up its portfolio of joint and transboundary projects** to address shared challenges such as flood and drought management, fisheries decline, the energy transition and increasing transboundary water quality concerns. Joint and transboundary projects will build on those already underway in the 9C-9T and 3S sub-basins and those identified in the **Adaptive Basin Plan** and be incubated and co-developed through **the Joint Projects Facility** which will accelerate the collaborative identification and development of investment-ready proposals to **attract climate and development finance** for shared transboundary challenges including through the Mekong Fund.

Ensuring Community Impact

The MRC will strengthen community engagement through co-developed community-based projects including under the inclusive **Community Innovation Projects** mechanism which aims at identifying water-related challenges at the grassroots level and supporting the co-development of solutions (including nature-based solutions) with local communities, providing technical and financial backing for joint implementation. The approach will emphasize alignment with the BDS 2021-2030 and national development priorities to ensure local relevance and basin-wide coherence. The initiative will facilitate collaboration with **civil society and others** and include **innovation labs, training workshops, and peer exchange programs**, empowering women, youth, and vulnerable groups to lead and replicate successful solutions across the basin. The MRC will implement its **Mekong Youth Strategy 2030** to mobilise a new generation of empowered Mekong youth in support of sustainable water resources management across the region.

5 Leveraging Partnerships and Expanding Knowledge Exchange

Enhancing Strategic Partnerships that Leverage Competitive Advantage

The MRC will continue working with partners within the region and globally to raise the profile of the Mekong River Basin and the MRC, exchange new and innovative river management knowledge, tools and expertise, and leverage the skills and capacities of partner organisations in areas of competitive advantage. This includes coordinating with ASEAN to support sustainable hydropower consistent with relevant initiatives such as the **ASEAN Power Grid Framework**, implementing further **Joint Studies with China and Myanmar**, expanding **Sister River Partnerships** with other River Basin Organisations and collaborating on **streamlined priorities** under existing and updated partnership agreements.

Implementing the MRC SP

Implementing activities to address the five focal areas of the MRC SP will be progressed through impact-based planning and engagement including through gender equity and vulnerability inclusion, rolling 2-year work planning and activity implementation, support to national capacity building, active stakeholder engagement, and strengthened risk management, financing, and monitoring, evaluation and learning mechanisms.



2nd ASEAN-MRC WATER SECURITY DIALOGUE

Sustainable Investment
for a Connected, Resilient,
& Water-secure Southeast Asia





Gender Equity and Vulnerability Inclusion: The Strategic Plan 2026–2030 responds to the need for more inclusive development by integrating targeted actions to improve gender equity, reduce social vulnerability, and address disparities in access to resources and services. This includes operationalizing Gender Equity and Vulnerability Action Plan (GEVAP), strengthening data systems, including sex disaggregation as a minimum requirement for people data report, and prioritizing support to disadvantaged groups and geographies as impacted by water resources development and climate change (flood, drought, and other hazards) through community-based projects/activities.

Multi-Year Work Plan: This MRC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 is a macro-level planning framework, providing strategic direction and expected results over five years. To operationalise this medium-term vision the MRC has adopted rolling 2-year work plans, updated annually, which ensure continuity of implementation – especially for activities spanning multiple years – and allow responsive adjustments based on funding availability and performance. The multi-year work plans help to maximize the engagement of line/implementing agencies and their expert groups to ensure national uptake of regional products. The delivery of work packages will be distributed among MRC organisational units, with collaboration by others. The implementation of the work packages will be managed and overseen in accordance with the updated MRC operating manuals and with an activity ‘impact pathway’ outlined during activity conceptualisation to support national uptake.

Capacity Building: Several targeted capacity building activities have been identified in the Results Chain to build national capacity for regional planning and management processes and to facilitate uptake and application of activity deliverables. Guidelines will be prepared for integrating regional planning and management processes in national planning and governance systems, and for creating staff time in the annual workplans and staffing plans of national line/implementing agencies for participation in joint basin expert groups and contributing to the regional planning, management and operational coordination work.





Stakeholder Engagement: The BDS approach for enhanced stakeholder engagement is mainstreamed in the MRC multi-year work plans through dedicated tasks, similar to the enabling tasks aimed at capacity building for decentralisation of CRBMFs and for uptake of MRC deliverables in national governance, decision-making and planning. Key external stakeholders and their interests have been identified and the purpose of engagement described. In addition, several targeted engagement initiatives will be implemented through SP activities including for enhanced data visualisation and public access, mechanisms for community-driven solutions such as the CIP, and ongoing improvements to consultation processes including for the Procedures for Notification, Prior Consultation and Agreement (PNPCA) and through Regional Stakeholder Forums. Emphasis will

be placed on strengthening **private sector** engagement, **including through** data and information sharing, mobilising finance for joint and transboundary projects through the JPF and facilitating participation and support to community initiatives through the CIP.

Risk Management: The MRC SP sets out arrangements for managing basin-wide risks, as identified in the BDS, and organisational risks specific to the MRC. The resulting risk management matrix shows how the risk management tactics and measures are integrated in the MRC SP results chain. The organizational risks identified also help frame the risks associated with MRC SP deliverables and the specific measures planned to address them. The MRC will assess the completeness/relevance of the risk management matrix three times a year during the Mid-Year Report, preparation of



MWP and Annual Report, and report the results to the MRC governance bodies.

Finance: The total indicative cost of MRC SP implementation is estimated at around **USD 80.95 million**, to be funded by the Member Countries and Development Partners. Around **26.59 million** is estimated for routine Core River Basin Management Functions and **26.07 million** for non-routine Core River Basin Management Functions. The indicative cost is made up of operations (including staff and administrative services) and strategic and technical activities under both routine and non-routine CRBMFs. As the transition to self-financing continues it is anticipated Member Countries will contribute around **50.2 per cent** of the budget and Development Partners around **49.8 per cent**. In case of significant unexpected funding

shortfalls, Outputs and activities will be re-prioritized in the multi-year work planning process based on criteria agreed by all Member Countries.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning:

The MRC's organizational monitoring and evaluation system monitors implementation of the Strategic Plan in terms of inputs, activities, key deliverables, financial status, and Output indicators for each BDS Output that the MRC contributes to. Mid-year and Annual reports communicate the results of this monitoring to stakeholders. Independent mid-term and final evaluations are scheduled for the implementation of the Strategic Plan in its entirety with learnings used to inform ongoing adaptive management and future Strategic Plans.



MRC STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030





PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This Mekong River Commission Strategic Plan (MRC SP) for 2026-2030 is a unified corporate plan that is fully integrated with the Basin Development Strategy (BDS) 2021-2030 through the implementation of the strategic basin planning cycle (Figure 1). A key characteristic of the cycle is the linkage between the five-yearly State of the Basin Reports (SOBR) and the ten-yearly BDS, with the former recording and evaluating the development and management impacts (positive and negative) within the Mekong River Basin, and the latter aimed at the improvement of the conditions in the basin in the 5 dimensions of the Mekong River Basin Indicator Framework (MRB-IF): environment, social, economic, climate change, and cooperation.

This MRC SP sets out how the MRC will continue to contribute to the implementation of the BDS and strengthen the organization over the next five years in preparation for its post 2030 role. The MRC SP outlines how:

1

The MRC will coordinate the implementation of the BDS and contribute to the delivery of most of its Outputs, some in cooperation with other regional cooperation mechanisms. Other parties will also contribute to BDS Outcomes and Outputs through activities and projects in their water-related priority areas (see Section 6.2 of BDS 2021-2030);

2

The MRC will continue to strengthen its organisational development to support national implementation of Core River Basin Management Functions (CRBMFs) and the ongoing transition towards more proactive regional planning and management processes that are embedded in the national planning, decision-making and governance systems, and funded by the basin countries, and prepare its role for post-2030.

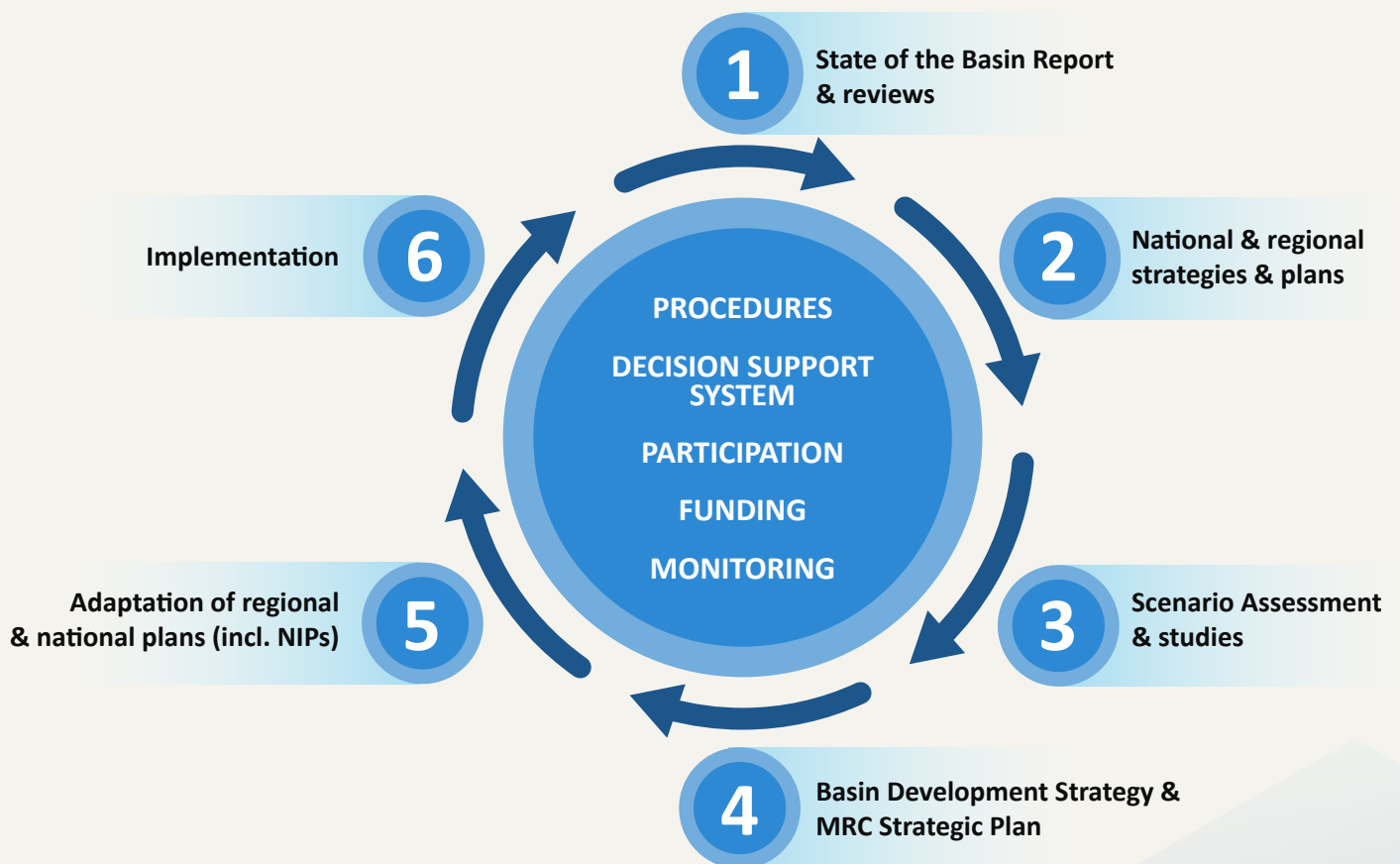


Figure 1: Mekong Basin Strategic Planning Cycle



The role of the MRC continues to change. In parallel with the development trajectory of the Mekong River Basin, the role of the MRC is changing from cooperation primarily on knowledge acquisition and sharing focused on the mainstream towards more action-oriented coordination and management of the Mekong as an entire river network (both tributaries and the mainstream and between upper and lower Mekong River Basin). This SP supports this ongoing shift in focus by guiding the implementation of:

1

Joint and Transboundary Projects which build on the national plans to create synergies at the basin level within and between planned and new sectoral developments, including significant joint and national projects, to increase regional benefits, reduce regional costs, and provide a higher level of water security during dry and wet seasons;

2

Coordinated river flow management and operations to prevent and manage water-related emergencies and other impacts through coordinated operations of infrastructure (such as hydropower cascades in the Mainstream) in an increasingly developed basin susceptible to more extreme weather events that cause transboundary impacts;

3

Modernisation of data integration, analytics, and visualisation for public access moving from siloed data collection and reporting to more integrated causal analysis leading to advanced decision support systems able to inform coordinated management of the whole Mekong River network;

4

More integrated Mekong-Lancang management through the involvement of all countries in expert groups and in joint working groups to inform the work streams in the above areas, and by increasing joint studies, data sharing and cooperation between MRC and MLC Water, with the support of other partners and stakeholders.



Regional cooperation is intensifying. Proactive regional planning and coordination of basin management operations is shifting transboundary cooperation to a level that emphasizes the capturing of regional gains and mitigating regional costs through a continuum from unilateral action to coordination and collaboration and ultimately joint action, as illustrated in Figure 2. The Heads of State of the basin countries provided direction to the intensification of regional cooperation on regional water resources development and management at the Fourth MRC Summit and the Fourth Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Leaders Meeting, both in 2023.

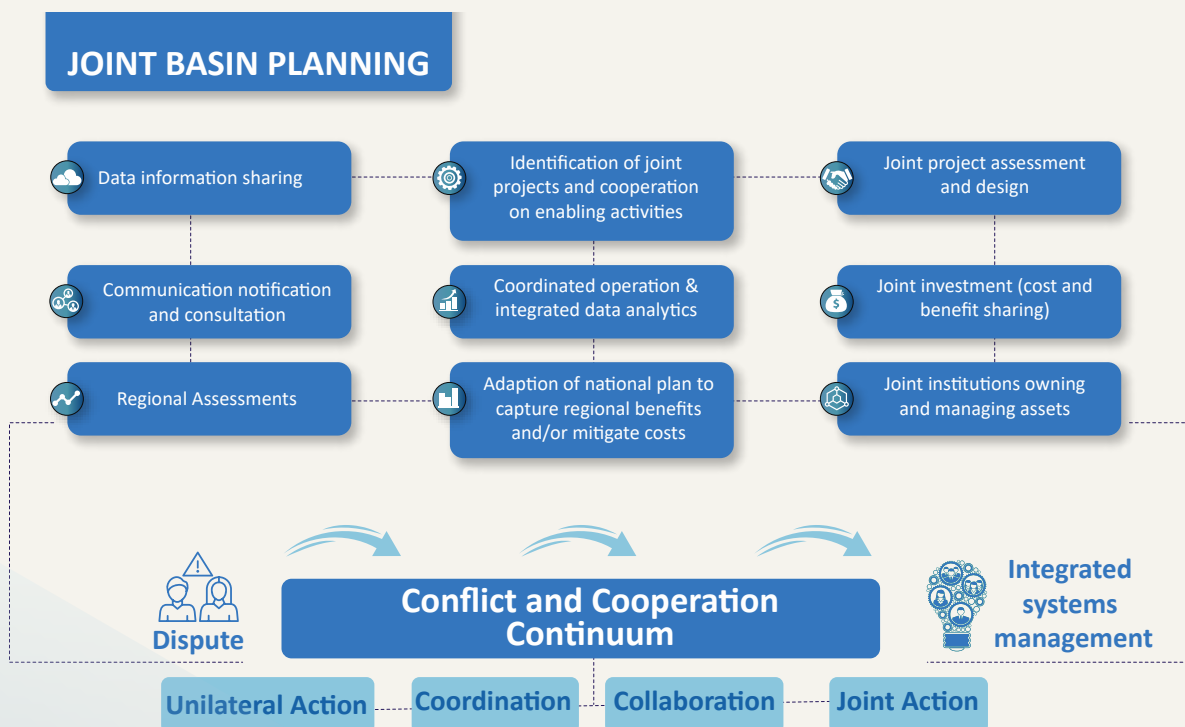


Figure 2: Conflict and Cooperation Continuum from Unilateral Action to Joint Action and Integrated Systems Management.

The arrangements for the implementation of the MRC SP In the last Chapter build on those of the previous MRC SP 2021-2025, with enhancements designed to benefit from the changing institutional landscape and the need to engage the national sector agencies more in the implementation of MRC SP activities (to improve uptake of regional Outputs and achieve the BDS Outcomes). A key mechanism for the implementation of this MRC SP is the enhancement of the existing MRC expert groups by involving technical leaders from all 6 basin countries, as needed, and undertaking additional Joint Activities.

Approach to MRC SP preparation. This MRC SP is formulated as an integrated component of the BDS 2021-2030, considering the recommendations from the Mid-Term Review of the MRC SP 2021-2025, State of the Basin Report 2023, as well as the high-level leadership directions for MRC to be financially self-sustainable by 2030. The formulation of the BDS and MRC SP was undertaken through a participatory process that engaged with all relevant stakeholders and has benefitted from views and inputs from MRC Member Countries (NMCS and line/implementing agencies), Development Partners, Dialogue Partners, other regional cooperation mechanisms, the private sector, and broader stakeholders including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). The final version of the MRC SP was negotiated by senior government officials from the Member Countries prior to consideration and approval by the Ministers in the MRC Council on behalf of their respective Governments.



FOUNDATIONS OF THE MRC STRATEGIC PLAN

The foundations of the MRC SP 2026-2030 are the *1995 Mekong Agreement*, outcomes of the MRC Summits, the BDS 2021-2030, the 2023 State of the Basin Report, and the MRC SP Mid-Term Review.





The 1995 Mekong Agreement

Cooperation in the coordinated planning of the Mekong countries has a long history, dating back to the establishment of the Mekong Committee under the auspices of the United Nations in 1957. The *1995 Mekong Agreement* with its commitment to coordinated planning and joint management of the Mekong River Basin for its sustainable development raised this cooperation to a new level.

The *1995 Mekong Agreement* establishes the goals, objectives and underlying principles by which the four Member Countries have committed to cooperate (see Section 1.1 of **BDS 2021-2030**). The Agreement establishes the MRC as the inter-governmental river basin organisation with the mandate to implement the Agreement and the projects, programmes and activities taken thereunder in cooperation and coordination with each member and the international community, and to address and solve related issues and problems.

Under the Agreement, the MRC has three principal organs: the MRC Council (ministerial level), Joint Committee (heads of department level), and the Secretariat (impartial staff and experts led by the CEO). To manage Mekong affairs internally and to facilitate Mekong cooperation, each Member Country has established a National Mekong Committee (NMC), comprising representatives of the relevant major line/implementing agencies, including foreign affairs; finance; agriculture and environment; agriculture, forestry and fisheries; industry and commerce; and energy, and supported by a secretariat (NMCS). The NMCS is attached to the ministry/office for water/natural resources and environment.

The Agreement charges the MRC with promoting and coordinating sustainable development, utilisation, management and conservation of the Mekong's water and related resources. It also mandates the MRC to formulate a basin development plan to identify, categorise and prioritise the projects and programmes to seek assistance for and to implement at the basin level.

MRC SUMMITS





Since 2010, the MRC has held a Summit every 4 years where Prime Ministers of its Member Countries meet. The Summits, in which the MRC Dialogue Partners also participate at ministerial level, provide political support and direction to regional cooperation within the MRC framework as described in the *1995 Mekong Agreement*. A summary of the Summits and the key directions is provided below.

MRC SUMMITS AND KEY DIRECTIONS FROM THE SUMMIT STATEMENTS



1ST SUMMIT: MEETING THE NEEDS, KEEPING THE BALANCE

The First MRC Summit “ Meeting the Needs, Keeping the Balance ” held in April 2010 in Hua Hin (Thailand) acknowledged that accelerating the development of water and related resources would make a significant contribution to the socio-economic development of the region. The key messages in the Summit Declaration address the trade-offs between economic development, environment protection and social development, and launch the MRC toward financial self-sustainability.

Key Directions

- Balancing development and protection
- Establishment of forecasting and warning systems
- Protection of food security and livelihoods
- Improvement of MRC Procedures implementation
- Cooperation with Dialogue and Development Partners
- MRC riparianisation and decentralisation
- Stakeholder engagement and participation (IWRM)



2ND SUMMIT: WATER, ENERGY AND FOOD SECURITY IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

At the Second MRC Summit held in April 2014 in Ho Chi Minh City (Viet Nam) the Heads of Governments reaffirmed their commitment to implement the *1995 Mekong Agreement* and consolidate the spirit of Mekong cooperation. The priority areas for action in the Summit Declaration were directed at expansion of cooperation in the region and provision of water and environmental security under climate change.

Key Directions

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Managing flood and drought risks
- Transboundary, IWRM and nexus thinking
- Implementation of MRC Procedures
- Protect livelihoods and river ecology
- Implementation of Council Study
- Expanding cooperation with China and Myanmar, development partners and other initiatives



3RD SUMMIT: JOINT EFFORTS AND PARTNERSHIPS TOWARDS ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN THE MEKONG

At the Third MRC Summit, held in Siem Reap in April 2018 (Cambodia) under the slogan One Mekong One Spirit, the Heads of Governments reaffirmed their commitment to Mekong cooperation and provided key directions for basin development and management that shaped the BDS 2021-2030 in terms of sustainable development opportunities and orienting the results chain towards achieving the SDGs for the Mekong River Basin. They also reiterated their support to the organizational development of the MRC and for pursuing concrete cooperation with MLC Water, ASEAN and GMS towards a shared future.

Key Directions

- Whole of basin management approach
- Regional development opportunities and challenges
- Addressing trade-offs, benefit sharing and risks
- Strengthening of basin-wide monitoring network
- Implementation of MRC Procedures
- Uptake of MRC products
- Cooperation with MLC, ASEAN and others
- Organizational development of the MRC



4TH SUMMIT: INNOVATION AND COOPERATION FOR A WATER SECURE AND SUSTAINABLE MEKONG

At the Fourth MRC Summit, held in Vientiane (Lao PDR) in April 2023, the Heads of Government of MRC Member Countries emphasised the importance of a strategic shift to more proactive regional planning. They called for further innovation in cooperation and enhanced basin-wide partnerships, stakeholder engagement and support to communities in transition to ensure a water, food and energy secure and economically, socially and environmentally sustainable Mekong River Basin.

Key Directions

- More proactive regional planning
- Helping communities adapt to change
- More effective stakeholder consultations
- Use of technology to improve operational decisions
- Enhanced entire basin cooperation and partnerships
- Exploring innovative financing models
- A sustainable transition to self-financing of the MRC



The Basin Development Strategy 2021-2030

The BDS 2021-2030 as Part I of this document forms an integral part of this SP. The BDS sets out how water and related resources of the Mekong River Basin will be sustainably developed, utilised, managed and conserved over the period 2021-2030 from the shared perspectives of the Lower Mekong River Basin countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam) and in-line with their commitment to the *1995 Mekong Agreement*. This SP describes how the MRC will contribute to the implementation of the BDS over the second half of the BDS period.

The 2023 Mekong State of the Basin Report

The 2023 Mekong State of the Basin Report (SOBR) highlights the rapid economic growth that has occurred across the basin over recent decades and the vital contribution of water-related sectors to the basin economy, a contribution valued at around USD 63 billion per year (MRC, 2024). These economic conditions have enabled enormous improvements in the living conditions and wellbeing of basin communities especially in terms of household water, food and energy security.

However, gains in some social indicators appear to be slowing, putting achievement of some of the Sustainable Development Goals within basin communities by 2030 at risk. The social and economic gains have also come at a significant cost to the environment as the resource base for future economic growth is increasingly degraded with changing river conditions exacerbated by a run of recent dry years.

Changes in the flow regime especially the reduced reverse flow to Tonle Sap and related reductions in fish yields, reduced sediment transport, and salinity intrusion in the Delta are of significant concern to basin countries. There are also some concerning trends in water quality parameters requiring further investigation and more information with improved monitoring and assessment methods needed to better evaluate gender disparities and vulnerability, basin-wide erosion and deposition, net economic value in water-related sectors, and the condition of some environmental assets including forest cover and biodiversity.





Basin Development

PRIORITY 1: MAINTAIN THE ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION OF THE MEKONG

Water flow & quality	Sediment transport
Guidance for water flow and quality	Basin-wide sediment management plan
Guidance for water infrastructures	Ecosystem services
	Limits of change for river and wetland
	Basin-wide planning and management framework for watersheds

PRIORITY 4: STRENGTHEN RESILIENCE AGAINST CLIMATE RISKS, EXTREME FLOODS AND DROUGHTS

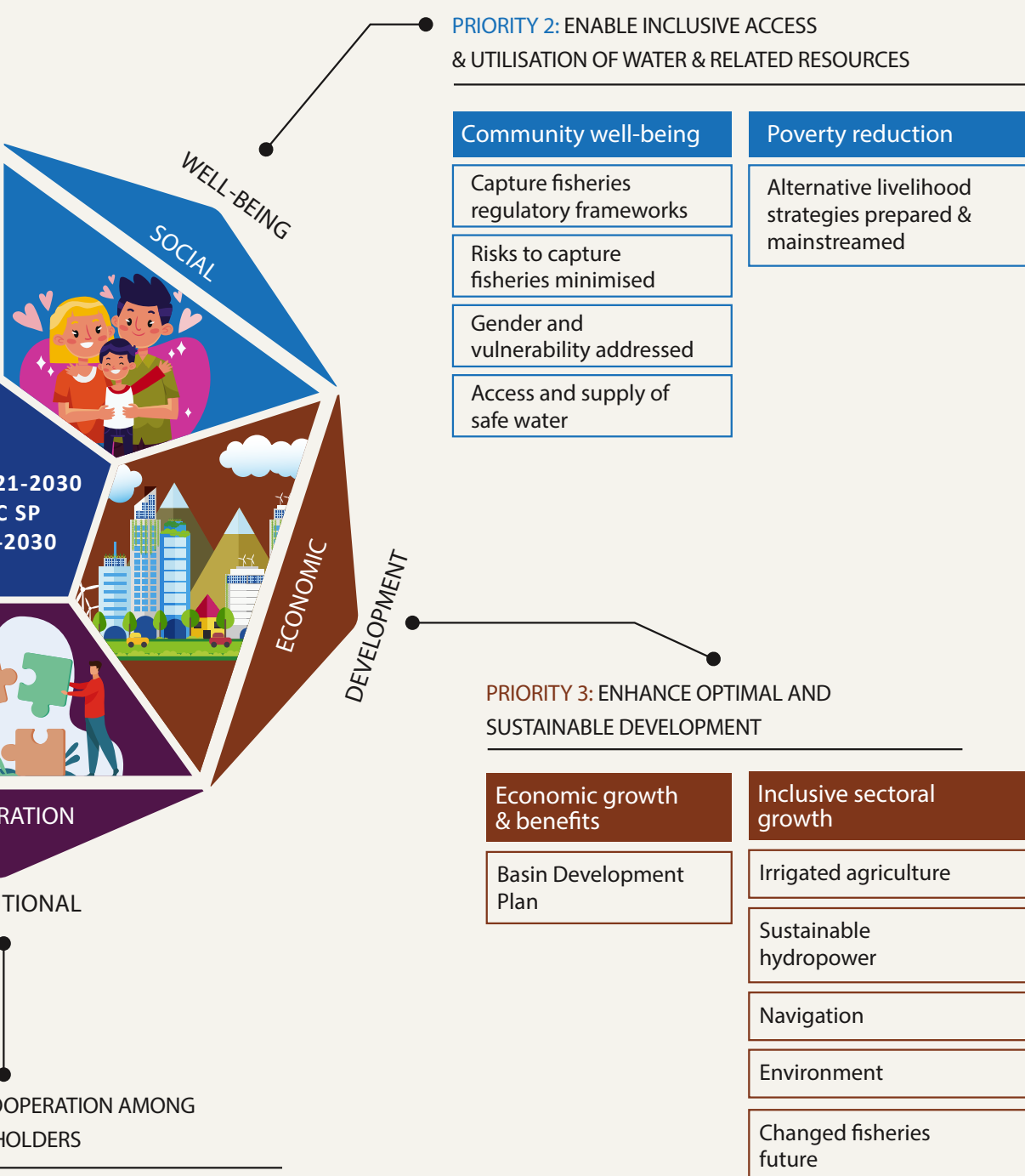
Informed & prepared against flood & drought	Disaster management & adaptation
Core monitoring network	Coordinated Water infrastructure operations
Integrated data and information systems	Climate change adaptation, flood & drought management mainstreamed at national levels
Decision Support Systems	
Flood and drought forecasting and early warning	
Joint State of Basin Report	




PRIORITY 5: STRENGTHEN COOPERATION AMONG ALL COUNTRIES AND STAKEHOLDERS

MRC effective implementation of 1995 agreement
Implementation of the MRC Procedures
Organisational development of the Mekong River Commission

Strategy 2021-2030







The MRC SP 2026-2030 responds to the challenges identified in the 2023 SOBR by elaborating activities for implementation in response to all SOBR recommendations in each dimension of the MRB-IF. These activities encompass:

- Developing and implementing new monitoring and assessment methods
- Enhancing data sharing with Dialogue Partners (China and Myanmar), including through additional joint studies and especially to support operational coordination and responding to floods and droughts
- Implementing the MRC procedures, their enhanced technical guidelines, and an updated flow framework (incl. additional flow thresholds to protect wetlands)
- New action plans (incl. the basin sediment management plan and an adaptive fisheries management plan)
- Enhancing capacity building (incl. on management of environmental assets and implementation of regional guidelines and strategies at the national level)
- Mobilising sustainable financing (incl. through the further development and implementation of the Mekong Fund, development and trialling of benefit sharing models, and planning for post-2030 financial arrangements)

Strategic Shift to Impact-Focused

Monitoring (Report-Based)

Active Monitoring (Impact-Based)



PMFM Notification



Flow Coordination



Joint Action Plan



Results-based Implementation Framework



Point-based Flood Forecasting



Spatial-based flood risk forecasting & reservoir coordination for emergencies response



Sediment



Coordinated Sediment Flow



Fisheries



Tracking eDNA & Tagging to monitor fish passage effectiveness



Water Quality



Water Quality monitoring for transboundary mgmt & economic growth in aquaculture and agriculture



Voluntary Cooperation



Mutual Accountability

From voluntary cooperation to mutual accountability, we turn cooperation into measurable results—better coordination of flows, open information people can trust, faster warnings, and safer communities. Cooperation not by our words, but by what we deliver together.



Strategic Plan Mid-Term Review and Regional Roadmap for Decentralisation

The roadmap for reform and decentralisation (MRC 2014 Roadmap¹) set out how the MRC as an organisation would develop over the period to 2030 to become a leaner and efficient ‘expert’ organization funded by the Member Countries. This was to be achieved with increasing implementation of the Core River Basin Management Functions (CRBMFs) by national line or implementing agencies in each Member Country in order to achieve regional objectives consistent with the *1995 Mekong Agreement*.

Under the Roadmap, the MRC is on a transition pathway to self-financing by 2030. Member Countries have increased financial contributions to the MRC in line with the agreement at the First MRC Summit in 2010 to cover the costs of core functions by 2030. By then, Member Countries will collectively contribute USD 9.76 million per year. Following a period of rapid reduction, the MRC has consolidated its capabilities through a stable staffing complement and supplementary consultancy contracts to become a leaner and more efficient organisation. A more gradual transition is now being implemented as part of the process such that all routine core functions of the organization will be funded by MCs.

This SP builds on this progress to guide implementation of the remaining decentralisation agenda over the critical final period to 2030, especially through the determination of post-2030 financing arrangements in light of the progress made in establishing the Mekong Fund, working towards accreditation under global climate funds and improved clarity on routine versus non-routine core functions.

A strengthened MRC is necessary to enable increased cooperation with all basin countries for the purposes of integrated management of the whole Mekong River system by 2030, ensuring compatibility of systems, the adequate sharing of data, information and knowledge, joint monitoring, assessments and reports and an integrated whole-of-basin monitoring network, as described in the BDS.

1 MRC 2014 Regional Roadmap for Decentralisation of Core River Basin Management Functions



PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING THE OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS OF THE BDS 2021-2030

Contribution to-date of the MRC to the Outcomes and Outputs of the BDS

Over the first half of the BDS 2021-2030 period the MRC has progressed activities towards achieving all BDS Outcomes and Outputs. The independent Mid-Term Review (MTR) found in 2024 that “the MRC has made considerable progress in implementing the Strategic Plan,” with nearly 80% of deliverables completed or on track for completion by 2025, on the way to making “significant contributions to achieving the outputs of the BDS”. Highlights by BDS Strategic Priority include:



Strategic Priority 1: Maintain the Ecological Function of the Mekong River Basin

- **Updates to the PMFM and PWUM** and their integration into the upgraded MRC Decision-Support Framework but with further work needed to address pending issues in technical guidelines and improve implementation of PWUM. Indicative hydrological thresholds to maintain wetland ecosystem function have been identified during the Proactive Regional Planning initiative but need further testing, refinement and incorporation into the flow framework.
- **Updates to the PWQ implemented** along with an expanded regional focus on riverine plastic pollution, with efforts now needed to build capacity for monitoring and responses at the national level.
- **Updated Preliminary Design Guidance (PDG) for Sustainable Hydropower** as a critical element of the PNPCA process for mainstream hydropower, with further efforts needed to integrate the PDG into national planning systems and apply it on significant tributaries.
- **Finalisation of Transboundary EIA Guidelines** with its voluntary application by Lao PDR to the sensitive Sekong A hydropower project on a major Mekong tributary with capacity building and policy dialogue now needed for more systematic adoption in national systems.
- **Roadmaps, results and outputs were agreed** to conclude the Sanakham Dam Prior Consultation process and commence the Phou Ngoy consultation, while the PNPCA Guidelines were updated. The Joint Action Plan implementation saw improvements in the mitigation measures to reduce impacts of the Luang Prabang, Pak Beng, and Pak Lay hydropower projects.



Strategic Priority 2: Enable Inclusive Access and Utilisation of the Basin's Water and Related Resources

- **Development of substantive guidance on fish passage** for irrigation infrastructure and other in-stream barriers with a need now for capacity building and policy dialogue to support increased uptake and application across the basin.
- **Project design and implementation of the transboundary fisheries management project** which is now being implemented with the involvement of all Member Countries and funding support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF).
- **Enhanced gender disaggregated data collection** for the 2023 SOBR and updated Mekong Basin Atlas, supported by an upgraded socio-economic database and significant progress on mainstreaming approaches to gender equity and vulnerability across MRC activities including in PNPCA and TbEIA processes.





Strategic Priority 3: Enhance Optimal and Sustainable Development of Water and Related Sectors

- **Phase 1 of Proactive Regional Planning** undertaken with an upgraded Decision Support Framework and development of an Initial Adaptive Basin Plan (IABP). Further work on facilitating agreement on joint investment projects including cross-border dam projects the countries are already planning, and progressing the joint enabling activities identified in the IABP especially on supporting the regional energy transition and managing sediment, is still to come.
- **The Sustainable Hydropower Development Strategy** was approved and supported by considerable advances in the sharing of data on operations, and further needs continued supports on capacity building and facilitation of uptake at the national level.
- Development of training materials and facilitated initiatives to implement the **Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transport of Dangerous Goods (RAP)** and coordinating implementation of non-physical actions under the MRC Navigation Master Plan. Further support to facilitating investments and ongoing harmonisation of rules will need to continue.





Strategic Priority 4: Strengthen Resilience Against Climate Risks, Extreme Floods and Droughts

- **More integrated river and environment monitoring**, through the MRC as a knowledge hub with work to implement and integrate the Core River Monitoring Network (CRMN) across all 5 disciplines, including drought monitoring stations.
- **Agreements to share near real-time dam operational data**, maintain inclusive and open stakeholder engagement and new targeted cooperation mechanisms developed such as the Hydropower Developers Roundtable.
- **More accurate forecasting and improved communications** contributing to better flood and drought warnings with use of an improved medium-to-long term forecast model. A regular Situation Update, development of Flood and Drought TV, one MRC Website portal, and revamped bulletin all increase MRC's ability to deliver data and information better and faster to Member Countries and basin communities. The Regional Flood and Drought Management Centre in Phnom Penh has been upgraded, including supporting infrastructure with modern Situation Rooms at the RFDMC and in Vientiane, and development of the One Mekong App.
- **An expanded knowledge base** with major new knowledge products and supporting systems delivered – the State of Basin Report 2023 (with better socio-economic and gender disaggregated data), the updated Mekong Atlas (also as an online system), 3S Basin Atlas, MRC Document Management System (assembling 70 years of MRC documents in one place), and upgraded Decision Support Framework (including new modelling packages using Source, Mike, and a comprehensive water status dashboard).



Strategic Priority 5: Strengthen Cooperation Among All Basin Countries and Stakeholders



- **Enhanced joint efforts and collaboration.**

Cooperation with China and the Mekong Lancang Cooperation have grown exponentially during the past 3-5 years, successfully building relationships, and establishing joint mechanisms such as the Joint Study (Phase I and II), a joint meeting of the JC and JWG, Joint Lancang Mekong Survey, and Joint MRC-LMC Expert Group on Data, Modelling and Forecasting. These measures are leading to common upstream-downstream understanding on how the Mekong River has changed, the key issues needing entire-basin coordination and management and enhanced data sharing.

- **Implementation of the NIPs (in particular Joint Projects):** although projects proposed and identified by Member Countries as national projects have some challenges in

ensuring funding to implement them, some joint projects identified in the NIPs have progressed with support from Development Partners and the MRC budget such as the 9C-9T, 3S and Mekong Delta projects. Lessons learnt from the implementation challenges will be further considered into the next phase of NIP (2026-2030) formulation and continued implementation.

- **More visible cooperation with ASEAN.**

The 2nd ASEAN-MRC Water Security Dialogue, convened at the ministerial level, highlighting both the importance of the Mekong to the rest of Southeast Asia – food, energy, connectivity - and growing interest of non-Mekong ASEAN countries in Mekong development and peace. Indonesia has signed on as a partner. Singapore and others may soon follow.



- **Strong and expanding international partnerships** have been maintained by the MRC including with its traditional Development Partners such as Australia, Belgium, France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States, but new partnerships have also been entered into with Canada, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom, and Morocco.
- **Innovative new financing has also been secured** including USD 12 million from the GEF to conserve and transform transboundary fisheries and USD 15 million from Germany for the Mekong Fund Ecosystem Window trial, with the governance and financial model agreed after two years of discussion.
- **Strengthened organisational standards.** The MRC continued to strengthen its standards, regulations and internal controls, including passing three additional Pillar assessments and receiving certification by the European Commission, and receiving approvals for the updated MRC Operational Manuals. A fully functional and online Financial Management Information System (FMIS) is now in place.
- **The MRC Education and Visitor Centre** was opened in December 2024 at the MRCS HQ in Vientiane and acts as a public repository of Mekong knowledge and cooperation.



Focus Areas of the MRC SP 2026-2030

The MRC is committed to the effective implementation of the 1995 Mekong Agreement, and its role as the primary regional water cooperation and diplomacy platform and knowledge hub to enhance the implementation of basin-wide strategies, procedures, guidelines, and data and information sharing that drives peaceful and mutually beneficial cooperation to achieve our shared vision for an *economically prosperous, socially just, environmentally sound and climate resilient Mekong River Basin*. Building on the achievements from the MRC SP 2021-2025, the MRC SP 2026-2030 emphasises:



1. Strengthening Institutional Foundations and Governance



The MRC will strengthen the core institutional elements necessary for its effectiveness, sustainability, and ability to govern. This includes an emphasis on financial sustainability, institutional capacity and authority and reinforcing implementation of the MRC Procedures.



Securing Financial Sustainability and Strengthening the Foundation for Post 2030

The MRC is advancing toward a self-financing model based on predictable and equitable Member Country contributions. Strengthening financial independence aims to solidify regional ownership and ensure greater accountability, reinforcing the Commission's role as a resilient, trusted, and self-sustaining regional institution.

Strategic Approach

To establish a resilient and self-sustained Mekong River Commission beyond 2030, the MRC will implement a **financial sustainability strategy** anchored in **Member Country ownership, diversified funding, institutional efficiency, and results-driven accountability**. This strategy will be structured around 4 interlinked actions:





Reaffirming High-Level Commitment to Self-Financing

The MRC will obtain **formal endorsement from Member Country leaders** during the **MRC Summit**, securing political commitment to the long-term self-financing vision. This includes reaffirming ongoing contributions under a predictable and equitable formula and embedding financial sustainability into national water diplomacy agendas.



Organisational Assessment for Efficient Operations

The MRC Secretariat will conduct an institutional and financial review to evaluate staffing, resource allocation, and operational efficiency as needed for post-2030 arrangements. The objective is to remain a learner and **efficient organization**, reducing costs without compromising performance, and reorienting resources toward high-impact and joint delivery areas, while ensuring sufficient institutional capacity and resources to deliver the SP's expanded scope and outputs.



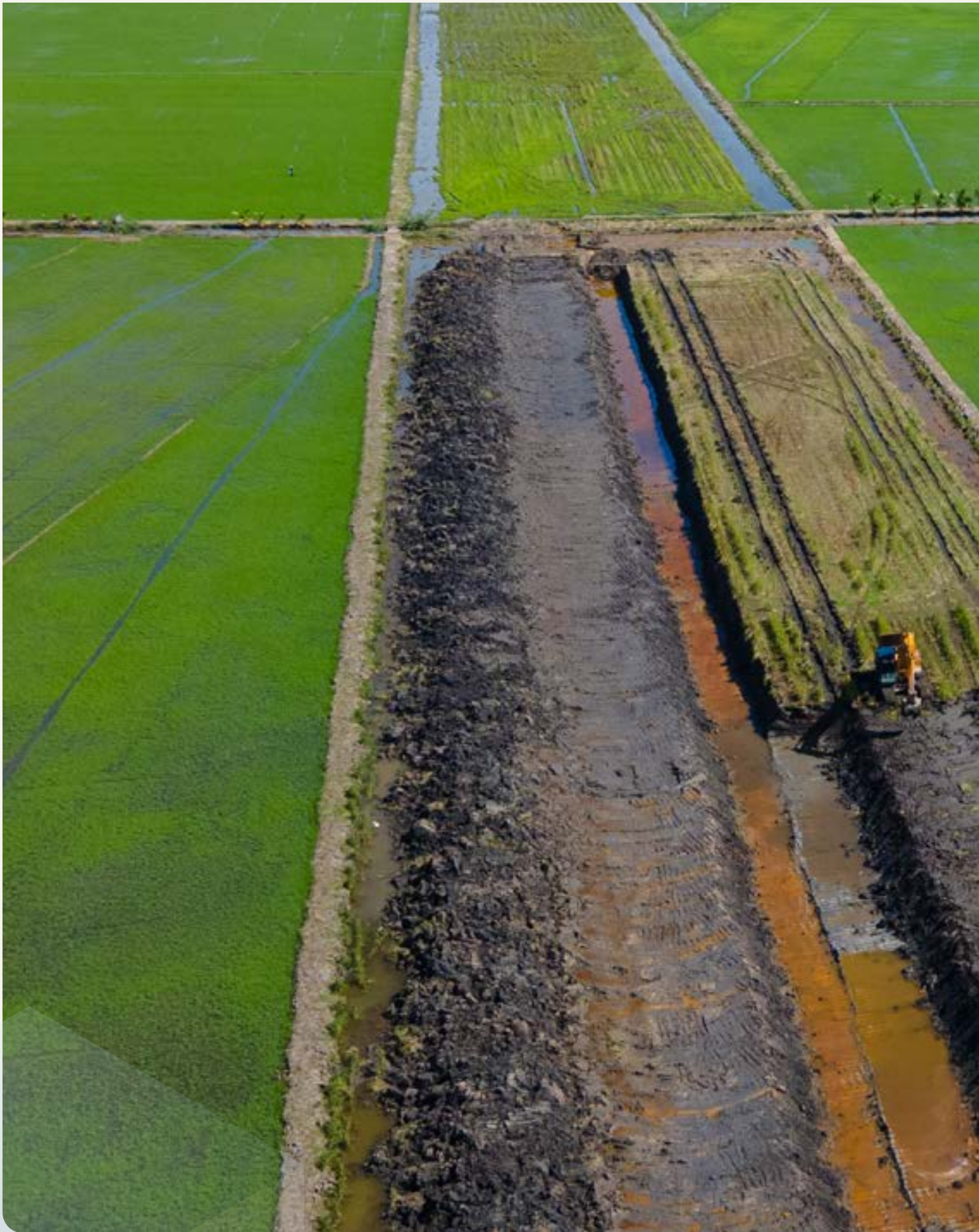
Operationalizing the Mekong Fund


The MRC will scale up the **Mekong Fund** as a unified multi-modal financing mechanism for funding joint and transboundary initiatives. By instituting a unified Mekong Fund, with clear governance arrangements covering funding flows, eligibility and selection criteria, decision-making procedures, and oversight mechanisms, linking transboundary cooperation to measurable results, the MRC will drive both ownership and accountability at regional and national levels while attracting financing and cooperation from development partners and others. The Mekong Fund will focus on core non-routine activities with larger one-off investment needs, including joint and transboundary projects with national implementation components.



Leveraging External Financing and Innovation

The MRC will position itself as a regional partner for global financing windows (e.g., **Green Climate Fund (GCF)** and **Global Environment Facility (GEF)**) and seek to pilot **innovative financing models** such as blended finance, CSR partnerships, payments for ecosystem services and green bonds. Collaboration with the private sector, particularly in energy, agriculture, water services and watershed carbon projects, will be pursued to diversify and sustain funding towards the BDS Strategic Priorities.





To ensure trust and accountability, the MRC will continue to strengthen its **financial governance, auditing, and reporting systems**, linking all resource mobilization efforts to the delivery of **concrete results** under its Strategic Plan. Through this multi-faceted approach, the MRC aims to be a **financially autonomous, trusted regional institution**, capable of delivering sustained cooperation and resilience for the entire Mekong Basin region.

Key Deliverables:

- MRC Summits (2027; 2030) (Output 5.1.2)
- Joint Projects Facility with joint and transboundary investment projects delivered (2028) (Output 4.2.2)
- Final Mekong Fund operating arrangements (2030) (Output 5.1.2)
- Mekong Fund Trial to support wetland and watershed management (2030) (Output 1.3.1)
- Roadmap for post-2030 financing, with targets, funding modalities and aligned staffing levels (2028) (Output 5.1.2)
- Accreditation of MRC to global climate funds (2028) (Output 4.2.2)

Reinforcing Implementation of the MRC Procedures

The MRC Procedures, the PNPCA, PDIES, PWUM, PMFM and PWQ, are the pillars of effective Mekong governance. The MRC will strengthen implementation, compliance, and institutional capacity to uphold these rules as the foundation for building trust, equity, and intensifying cooperation including through a more proactive approach.

Strategic Approach

The MRC will move beyond monitoring and notification to **proactive management of the whole river network** by making better and more immediate use of data and information collected to support decision-making. Near real-time updates to data and information will be pursued through communication and data analytics platforms that provide information to decision-makers as and when needed to ensure increased effectiveness and value-add on the MRC's significant data resources. Implementation of the MRC Procedures will be strengthened through the following key actions:



1

Expanding the use of PMFM and PWUM from monitoring instruments to supporting Active Coordination, enabling real-time operational collaboration on water releases and basin-wide flow regulation. This includes establishing visualisation and joint operational plans for cascade hydropower dams.



2

Enhancing Procedural Integration with near Real-time Data Systems, particularly linking the PDIES and PWQ with upgraded CRMN telemetry, and linking the PMFM and PWUM to the upgraded Decision Support Framework (DSF) for predictive modelling capabilities to support dynamic decision-making, visualisation and early warning functions.



3

Formalizing the Pre-PNPCA phase to engage early with hydropower developers, offering technical support to align with the Preliminary Design Guidance (PDG) and supporting Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessments (TbEIAs), as voluntary application before formal submission. This proactive step will **help identify and address transboundary risks early** so that adverse impacts can be as far as possible avoided.



4


Upgrading the Joint Action Plan (JAP) mechanism to encompass a Results-Based Implementation Framework, transforming the JAP from a static document into a live, trackable implementation tool guiding post-consultation cooperation and monitoring. We will include **site visits to monitor construction**, mitigation actions, and the implementation of recommendations from the PNPCCA Joint Statement.



5

Undertaking Strategic Pilots, demonstrating MRC Procedure application through real-world cases, such as joint flood forecasting and reservoir operations, or joint water quality monitoring for transboundary pollution response protocols, to generate lessons and scale successful models.





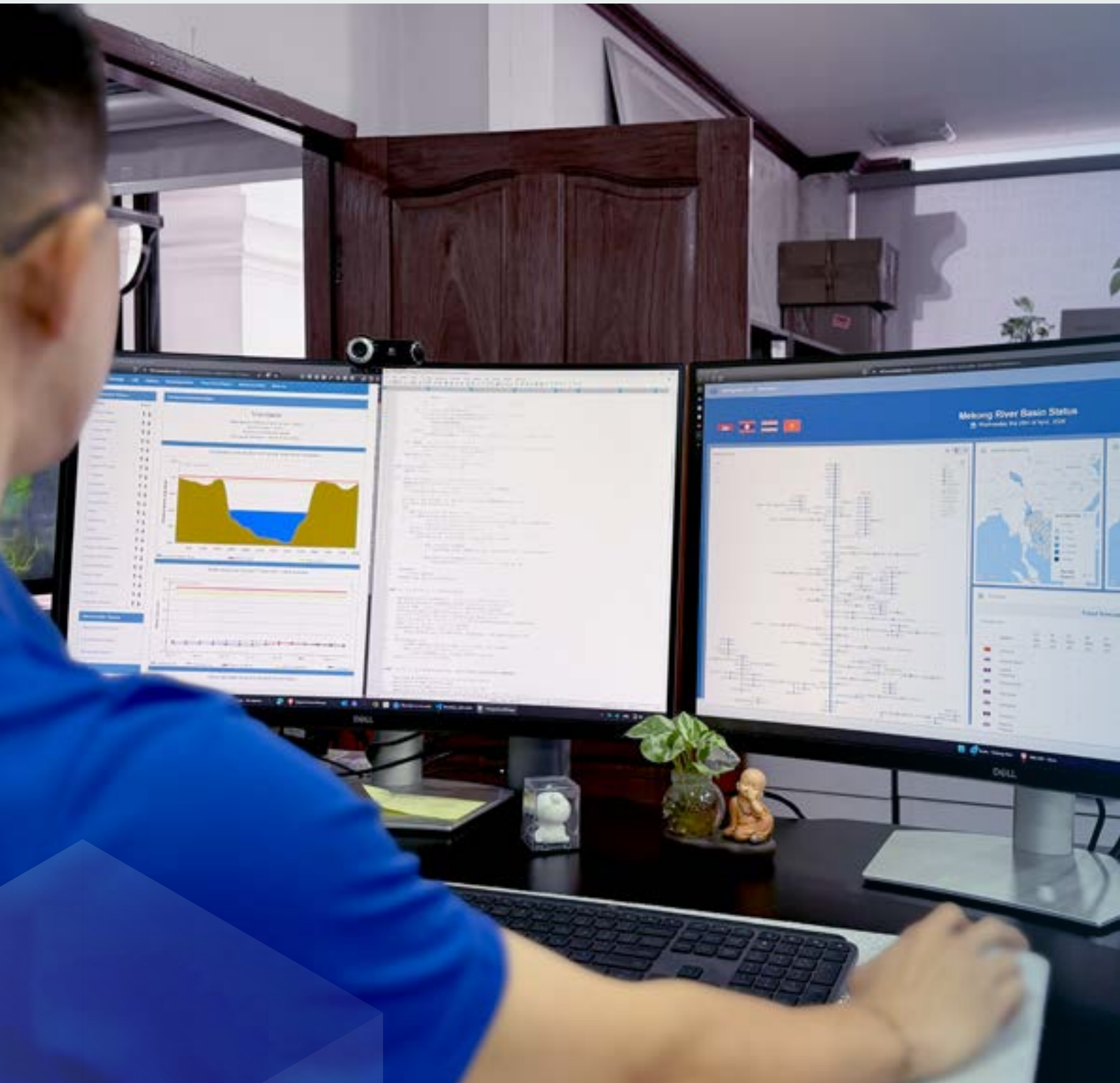
By reinforcing Procedures implementation through these integrated, action-oriented measures, the MRC will seek to transform the Procedures from a static to a proactive governance framework through an **operational system** that supports **adaptive basin management, trust-building, and more sustainable basin development**.

Key Deliverables:

- Overview of the hydrology of the entire Mekong-Lancang River Basin (2027) (Output 1.1.1)
- Finalised hydrological thresholds for PMFM guidelines and flow framework (2028) (Output 1.1.1)
- Updated Technical Guideline for PWUM (2028) (Output 1.1.1)
- Notifications and management actions in accordance with MRC Procedures (annual) (Output 1.1.1)
- Updated TGWQ, thresholds, and scoring methodologies (2028) (Output 1.1.1)
- Mainstreaming of TbEIA guidelines into national EIA systems and regulations as needed and project-specific assessment reports (annual) (Output 1.1.2)
- Implementation of the PNPCA and updated Guidelines for sustainable water infrastructure development (annual) (Output 5.1.1)
- Key priorities for selected tributaries of basin-wide significance agreed and implemented (2029) (Output 5.1.1)



2. Enhancing Data, Monitoring, and Predictive Capabilities for Decision-Support



The MRC will seek to leverage its extensive knowledge base and further improve technical tools for informed decision-making and proactive basin management capitalising on its extensive data assets and analytical capabilities.

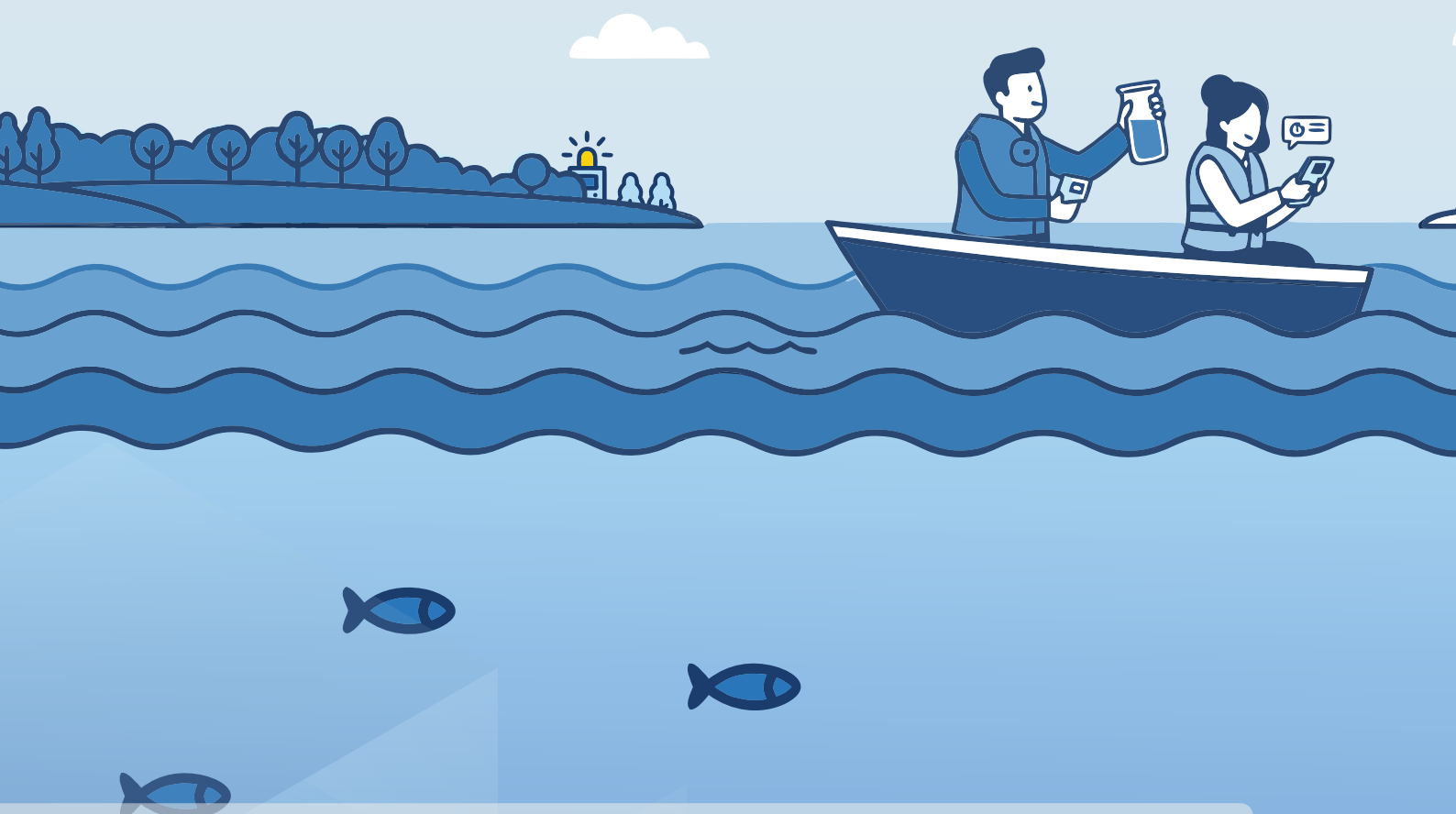


Modernising River Monitoring and Integrating Disciplines in the Core River Monitoring Network

The MRC will modernize and integrate its Core River Monitoring Network (CRMN) to provide comprehensive near real-time data analytics for decision-making. Using advanced tools and enhancing water quality, flows, sediment, fisheries and ecological monitoring are essential for effective early warning systems and timely operational responses.

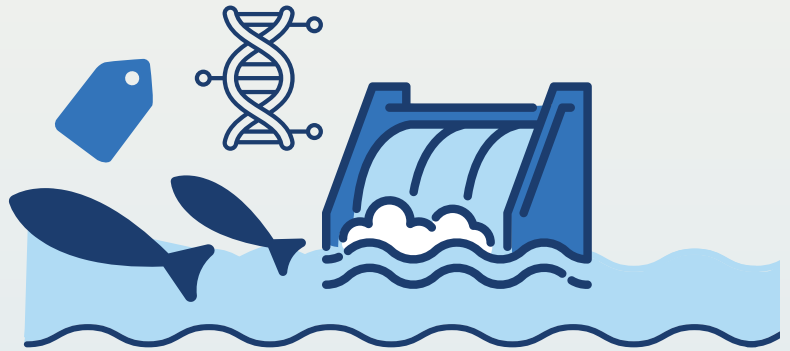
Strategic Approach

To modernize decision-making and strengthen resilience in the Mekong Basin, the MRC will **integrate its Core River Monitoring Network** with a near **real-time data visualisation system** that supports early warning and rapid operational responses. This includes integrating all thematic data, water quality, flow, sediment, ecology, into a **unified data visualisation analytics platform**. The enhanced CRMN will also include near real-time alerts delivered to communities and decision-makers. Training and capacity-building for Member Countries will ensure sustainability and shared ownership. The more integrated CRMN will significantly enhance the MRC Data Portal by providing monitoring insights to inform basin planning and implementation of MRC Procedures. The CRMN will serve as a **centralized data hub for river monitoring**.





Real Time Data Visualisation System that Supports Early Warning and Policy Formulation



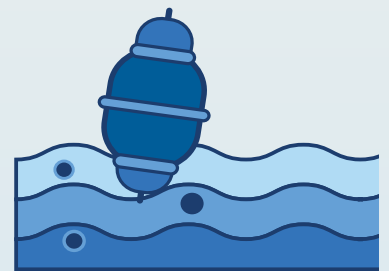
Using Modern Technology (eDNA and Tagging) to track real-time movement of fishery migration, spawning hotspots, and hydropower fish passage/ladder effectiveness



Linked to Reservoir Coordination with Flood and Drought Forecasting and Early Warning Systems



MRC Data Portal is enhanced to become a one-stop service (Data Analytics) rather than having multiple webpages



Expand Sediment Monitoring Services to tackle basin-wide sediment management

Key Deliverables

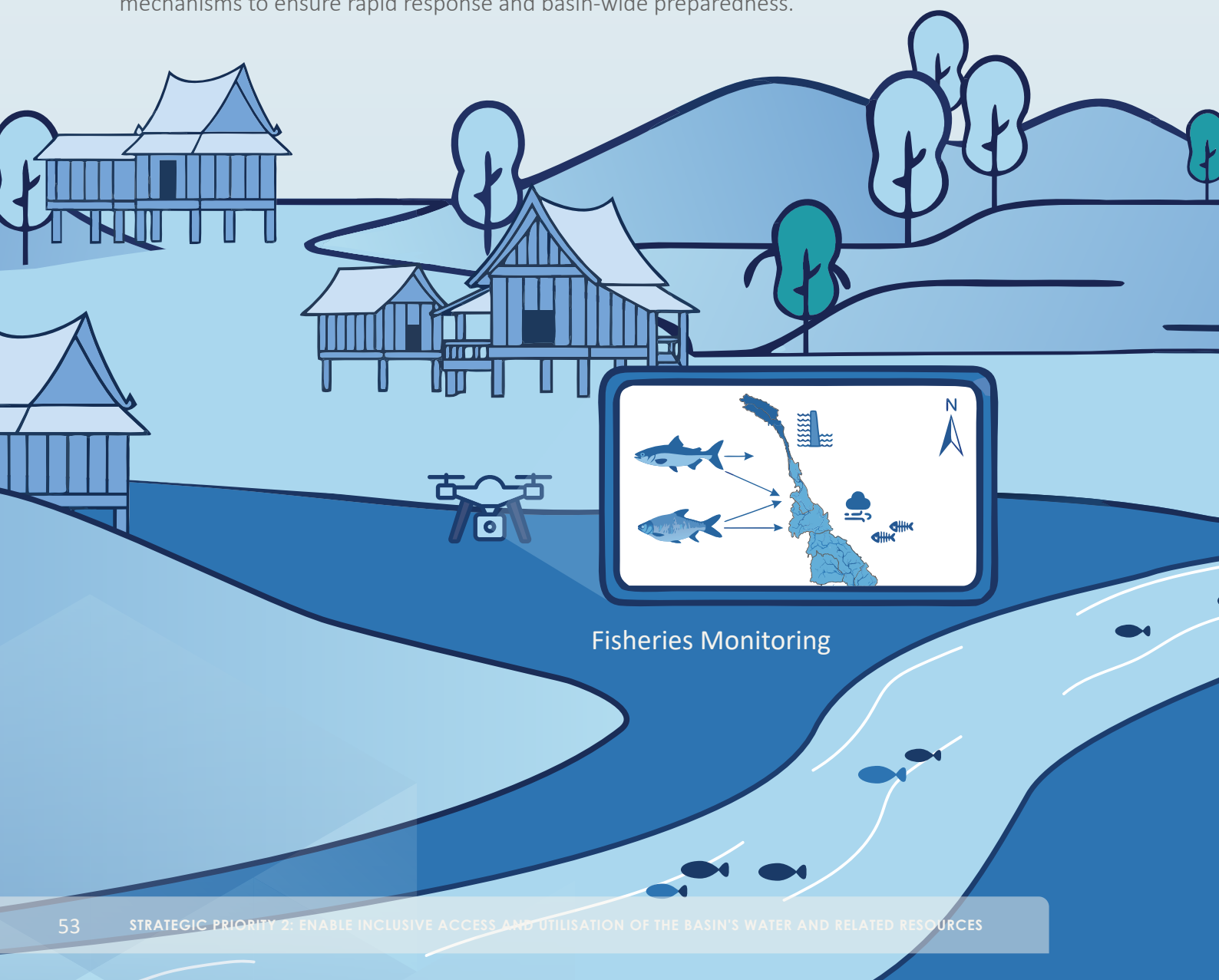
- The transboundary fisheries management project (2030) (Output 2.1.2)
- Advanced technology to assist fish monitoring and transboundary fisheries management (2027) (Output 2.1.3)
- An accessible, digital MRC Navigation River Information Service for a diverse range of users, including small-scale traders and local riverine users (2028) (Output 3.2.3)
- Core River Monitoring Network, assessment and reporting (annual) (Output 4.1.1)
- Upgraded spatial data and remote sensing product repository (2027) (Output 4.1.2)
- Visualisation and data analytics platform to support integrated analysis and inform decision-makers (2028) (Output 4.1.2)
- An operational and continuously improved MRC-DSF supporting basin-wide planning and forecasting, including capacity building (Annual) (Output 4.1.3)
- State of the Basin Report with automated online data visualisation of SOBR dashboards (2029) (Output 4.1.5)

Enhancing Flood and Drought Forecasting and Regional Preparedness

Investing in a modern, interconnected mainstream and tributary flood forecasting system is critical for whole-of-basin management. The MRC will enhance its river profile datasets to develop flood risk maps and hydrological models to improve real-time forecasts and enable early warnings in key tributaries that safeguard lives, livelihoods and infrastructure.

Strategic Approach

The MRC will strengthen data integration across the river network, linking upstream reservoirs, near real-time hydrometeorological data, and advanced modelling tools. This includes expanding the use of spatial technologies and **LIDAR for topographic mapping**, upgrading forecasting systems with MRC DSF and AI-supported simulations, and coordinating with national agencies for synchronized early warning dissemination. **Transboundary flood forecasting** pilots will be launched in **shared flood-prone zones**, supported by joint protocols/arrangements, **simulation exercises**, improved **flood risk mapping of vulnerable groups** and institutional coordination mechanisms to ensure rapid response and basin-wide preparedness.



Key Deliverables

- An integrated system for river monitoring, river flood, flash flood guidance, and drought forecasting tools, including both backend (modelling and analysis tool) and frontend (2028) (Output 4.1.4)
- An impact-based forecasting system with advisory dissemination for river flood, flash flood, and drought on short-term to long-term time scales (2029) (Output 4.1.4)
- A riverine forecasting system for selected key tributaries (2028) (Output 4.1.4)
- Transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought management solutions (2028) (Output 4.2.2)



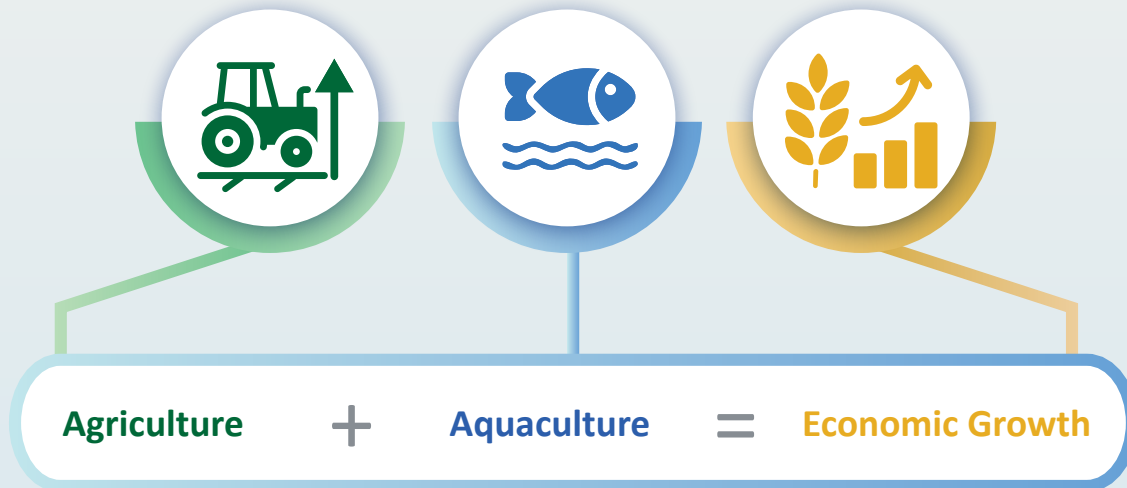
Digital Twin & LiDAR
for Topographic
Mapping
(DEM & DTM)

Transboundary
Flood Forecasting
(Flood Risk Map)

Joint Protocols
Simulation Exercise
(MRC Decision
Support Framework)

Boosting Economic Growth through Better Water Quality

Improved Water Quality = Higher Yields = Stronger Economy



Improved Water Quality Management Leads To:



Investing in Water Quality = Investing in National Prosperity

Tackling Transboundary Water Pollution

1

Conduct Field Surveys

Map land use, water inputs, and potential pollutant sources



2

Engage with Communities

Consult Locals about pollution sources and river flow



3

Test Water Quality

Collect water samples for laboratory analysis



4

Observe Flow Patterns

Examine the convergence point of the rivers



5

Assess Rainfall Data

Analyze rainfall and runoff characteristics



6

Model Pollutant Transport

Simulate the movement of contaminants via runoff



7

Validate Model Predictions

Compare model results of field data



8

Create a Pollution Map

Integrate all data into a GIS-based risk map



3. Advancing Coordinated River Basin Management Operations



While the MRC has made significant strides in basin planning and monitoring, there is an urgent need to enhance real-time flow coordination, flood and drought risk management, and environmental flow regulation through regional cooperation. The MRC will work with Member Countries and infrastructure operators on coordinated flow management to support transboundary resilience, protect ecosystems, and ensure equitable and sustainable water use.

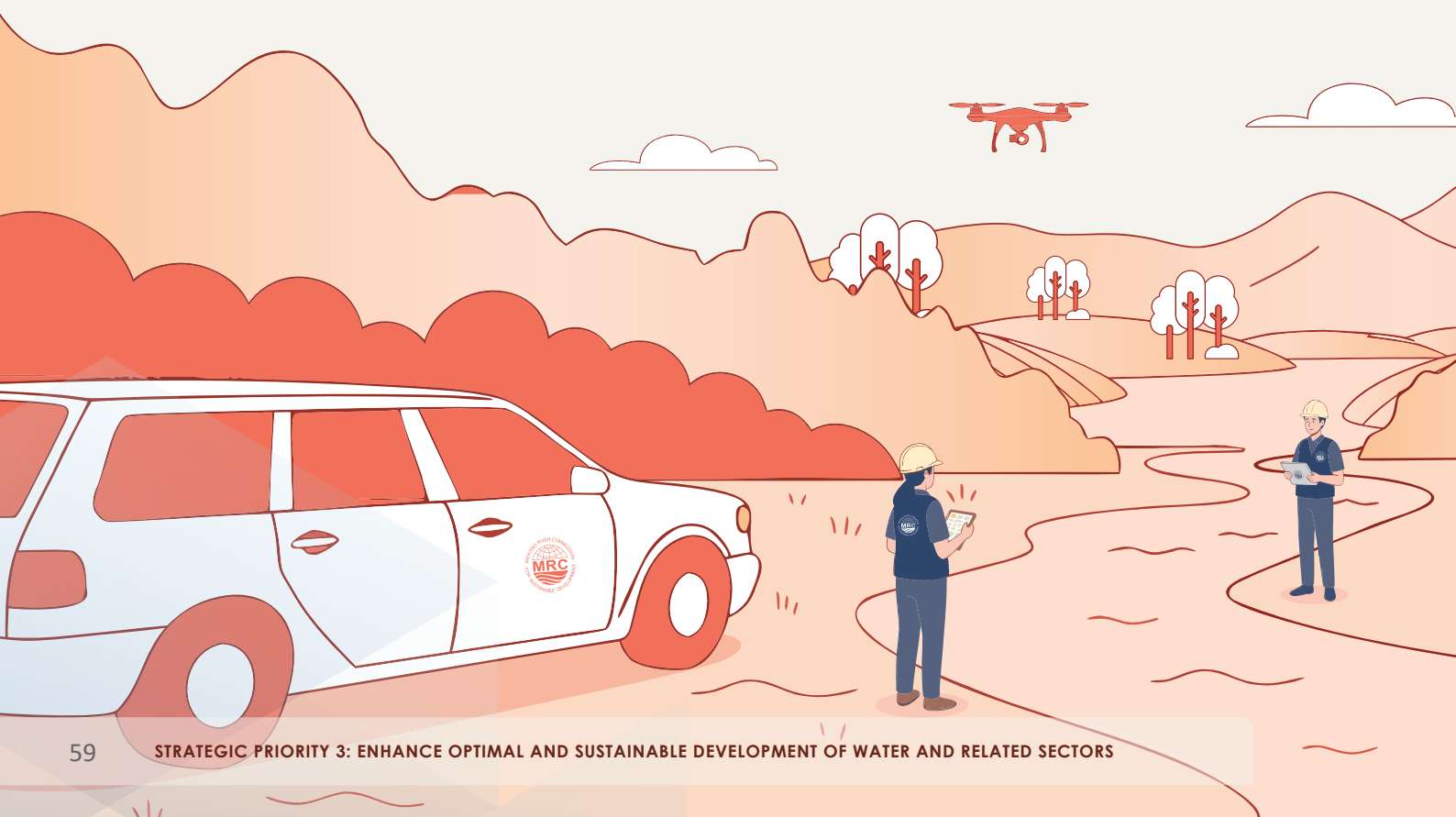


Advancing Water Flow and Hydropower Coordination for Multiple Benefits

Recognizing the rapid increase in the number of hydropower developments, the MRC will work with Member countries to enhance coordination of water releases and flow regulation across cascade hydropower projects. This will improve flood and drought resilience, energy-water optimization, and transboundary impact management.

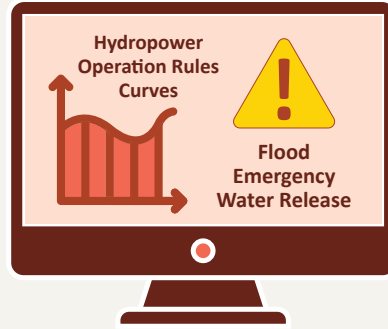
Strategic Approach

To address the growing challenges posed by cascade hydropower development, the MRC will advance flow and hydropower coordination through a basin-wide, data-driven approach. This includes establishing and supporting implementation of **guidelines for operational coordination** and real-time dialogue and developing **joint protocols for emergency situations**, and enhancing data sharing and near real-time monitoring across Member Countries. **A Hydropower Flow Coordination System** will include an Operational Mekong River Flow Dashboard and Database, improved flood forecasting and emergency coordination system, documented environmental flow targets and pilot releases, trained personnel and engaged communities across borders and will be supported by bilateral protocols and aligned with national energy-water planning. The ultimate goal is to **optimize water-environment-energy use while reducing transboundary risks** and strengthening basin resilience. The MRC will work towards the **integration of flood and drought forecasts and water security risk scenarios into reservoir coordination** and work with partners to implement joint and transboundary projects that demonstrate coordinated releases for flood mitigation and drought support. The enhanced implementation of the MRC Procedures will support these efforts.





Hydropower Flow Coordination System



Rule Curves & Emergency Rules



Active Flow Coordination (PMFM)

Key Deliverables

- Water quality, sediment, and salinity integrated into MRC-DSF (2030) (Output 4.1.3)
- Increased data and information sharing from dam operators (2027) (Output 4.2.1)
- Guidelines for hydropower flow and reservoir coordination, supported by a hydropower flow coordination system (2029) (Output 4.2.1)
- An active coordination mechanism for water releases in water-related disaster management (2030) (Output 4.2.1)

Operationalizing Basin-wide Sediment Management

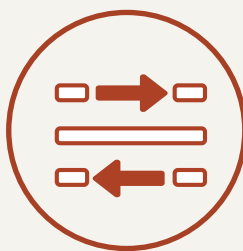
To sustain river health and delta resilience, the MRC will develop and implement a basin-wide Sediment Management Plan. The plan will enable coordinated and joint sediment monitoring, sediment flushing, data harmonization, assessment and cooperation with hydropower operators to mitigate sediment trapping and preserve ecological functions.



Coordinated Monitoring



Sediment Flushing



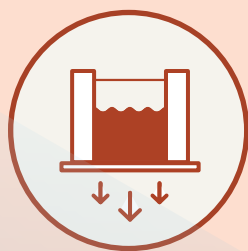
Data Harmonisation



Assessment & Cooperation

Strategic Approach

The MRC will integrate sediment management into basin planning and coordination. This includes promoting near real-time data sharing, harmonizing monitoring methodologies, and implementing **transboundary projects to mitigate further sediment loss**. Technical guidelines will be developed to support **coordinated actions**, while upstream and downstream countries will be engaged in dialogue and implementation of **joint solutions**. **Sediment flow targets** and accounting of a **basin sediment budget** will be linked to hydropower coordination protocols to help maintain **sediment transport** and mitigate adverse impacts to the ecological and geomorphological integrity of the river system.



Sediment Flow



Real-time Data Sharing



Technical Guidelines

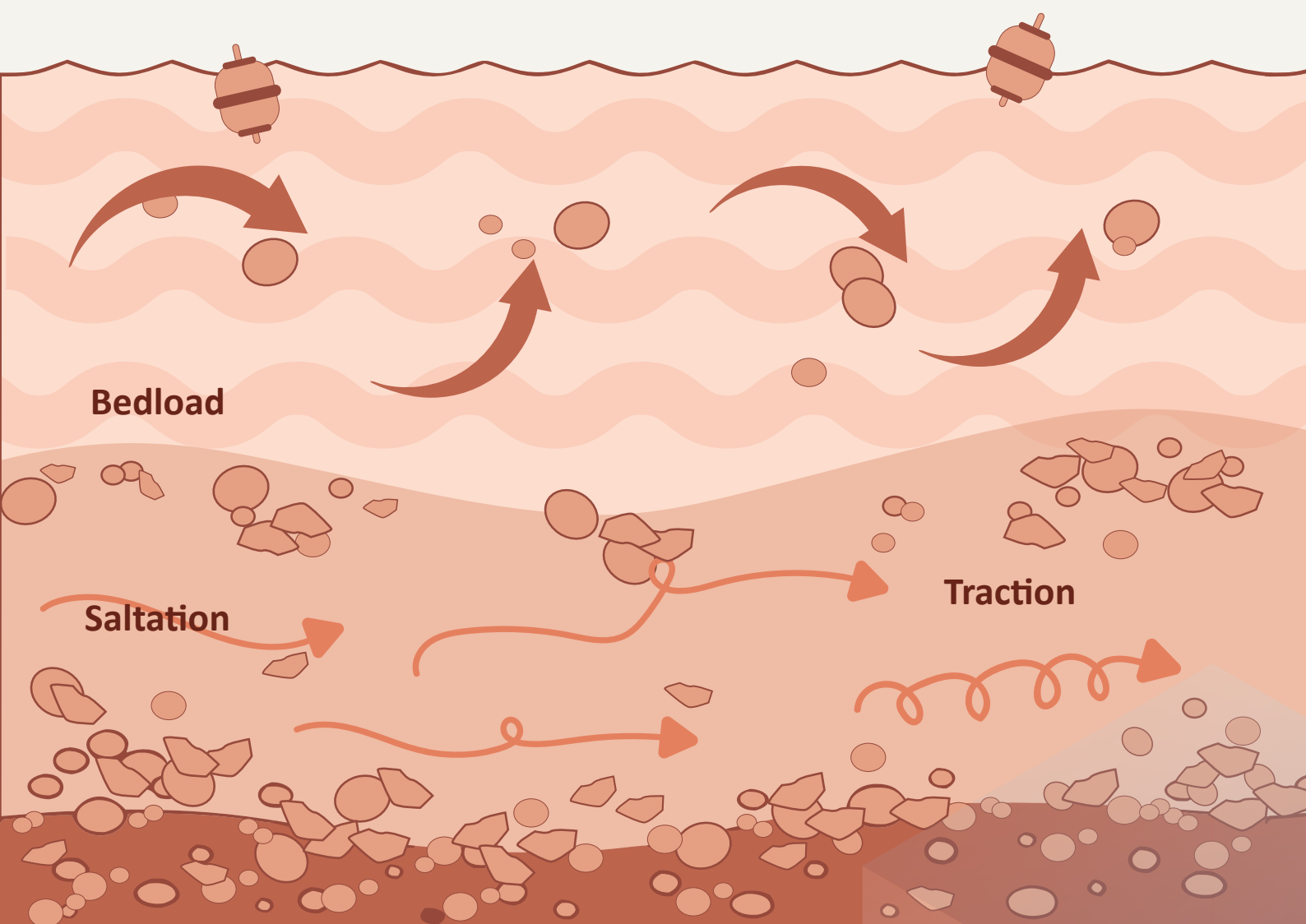


Dialogue & Solutions

Key Deliverables

- Basin-wide sediment budget assessment (2026) (Output 1.2.1)
- Basin-wide sediment management plan (2027) (Output 1.2.1)
- Water quality, sediment, and salinity integrated into DSF (2030) (Output 4.1.3)
- Implementation of coordinated sediment flushing (2030) (Output 1.2.1)

Sediment Monitoring Device



4. Delivering Tangible Benefits through Significant Transboundary Projects with Community Impact



The MRC is working with Member Countries to deliver tangible on-the-ground actions and engagement to ensure that regional cooperation translates into measurable benefits for stakeholders, especially local communities.



Accelerating Joint and Transboundary Projects

MRC will expand its role as a platform for cooperative action by accelerating joint and transboundary initiatives. It will scale-up its portfolio of joint and transboundary projects to address shared challenges such as flood and drought management, fisheries decline, the energy transition and increasing transboundary water quality concerns. These initiatives will promote collaboration, optimize resourcing, and deliver concrete benefits across Member Countries at the national and local levels.



Strategic Approach:

To accelerate joint and transboundary projects, the MRC will adopt a strategic approach that accelerates project identification and elaboration, strengthens regional cooperation, mobilizes finance from a range of sources, and delivers tangible benefits to Member Countries. Building on the IABP, key actions are to prioritize joint or **transboundary projects** and enabling activities in areas of basin-wide significance (e.g., shared flood zones, fish migration corridors, sediment management zones). The MRC will establish a **Joint Projects Facility** as a project portfolio delivery engine to incubate and co-develop initiatives aimed at attracting climate and development finance for shared challenges including through the Mekong Fund. A core function of the JPF is to convert unfunded National Indicative Plan (NIP) project lists into investment-ready, co-financed portfolios.



1. Identify and Prioritise Joint or Transboundary Challenges



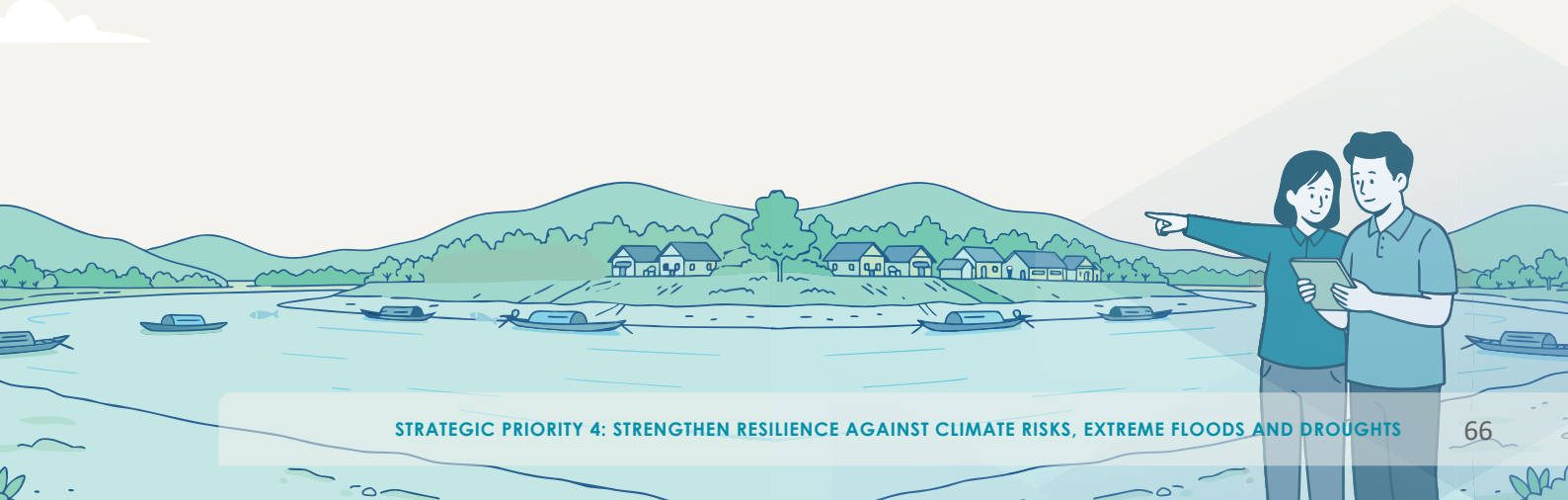
2. Establish Joint Projects Facility under the Mekong Fund

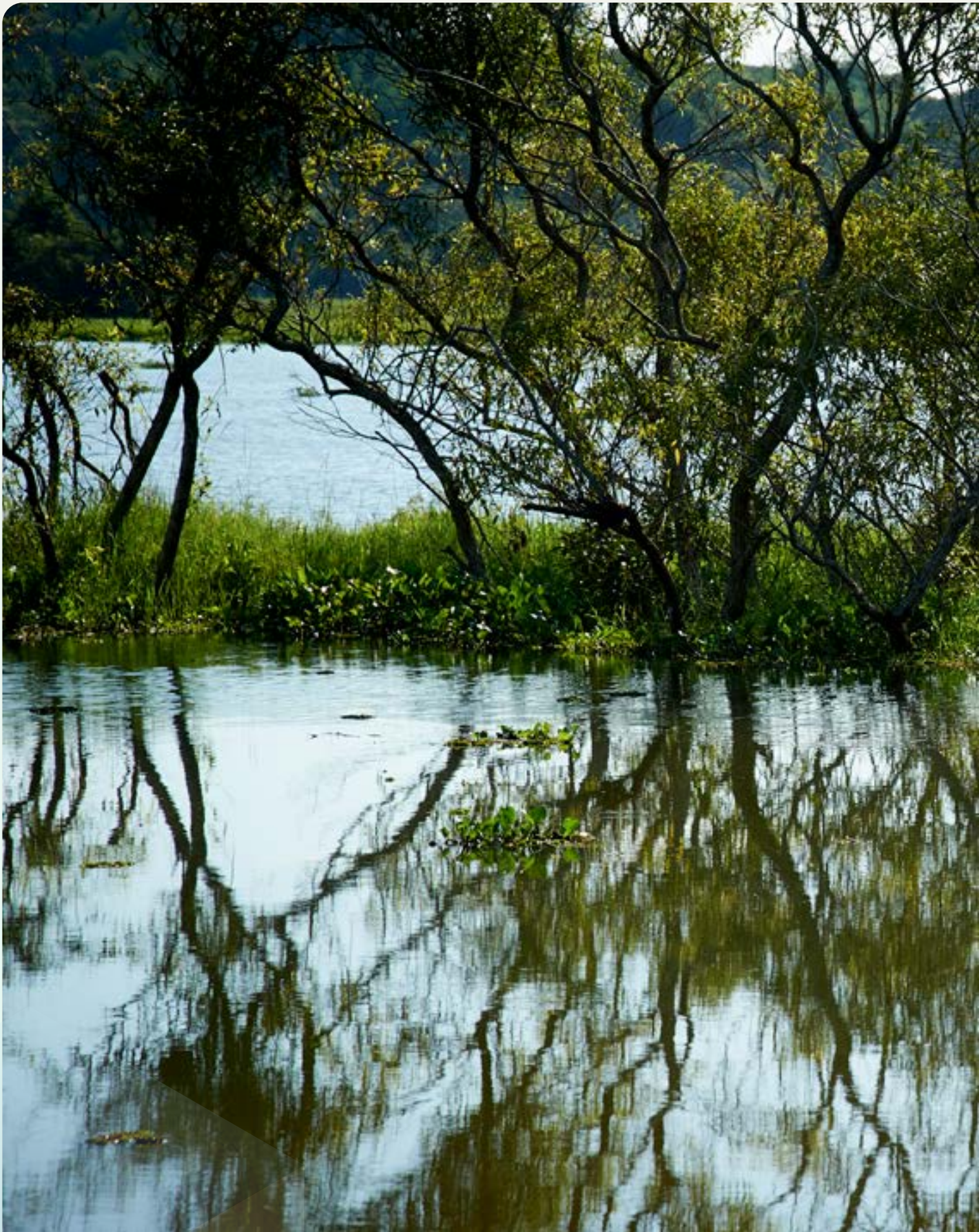



3. Create a Mekong Transboundary Investment Framework



4. Empowering Local and Community Stakeholders to Co-design Solutions







The JPF provides the missing preparation layer, screening for transboundary value, harmonizing methods and data (PDIES/MRB-IF), financing feasibility and safeguards and then packages country components into multi-country projects with synchronized milestones and joint monitoring. Successful approaches from existing cooperation (e.g., 9C–9T, 3S) and pilots (e.g., P-LINK community solutions) will be templated for replication at sub-basin scale. This approach reflects a shift from the current National Indicative Plan approach, moving towards a more strategic, coordinated and systematic approach including for projects that have significant national implementation components. The MRC will also institutionalize joint mechanisms, expand partnership networks, and implement flagship joint projects in key areas aligned with regional needs to ensure long-term sustainability and scalability. For example, in relation to emergency transboundary water pollution issues that require a coordinated response bringing together a range of MRC products and tools, including conducting field surveys, community engagement, modelling pollutant transport, validating predictive models and implementing creative solutions.

Key Deliverables

- Reports on Joint water quality monitoring including status of heavy metals in the Mekong Basin (2028) (Output 1.1.1)
- Mekong Fund Trial to support wetland and watershed management (2030) (Output 1.3.1)
- Scaled-up wetland and watershed management pilot projects (2030) (Output 1.3.2)
- Adaptive fisheries management mechanisms established for Transboundary Fisheries Conservation in the Mekong Basin (2028) (Output 2.1.3)
- Final Adaptive Basin Plan including agreed pathways for joint projects and enabling activities (2027) (Output 3.1.1)
- Joint Projects Facility with joint and transboundary investment projects delivered (2028) (Output 4.2.2)
- Agreements between countries on cooperation arrangements and benefit sharing for joint investment projects and enabling activities (2029) (Output 5.2.2)

Ensuring Community Impact

Communities across the Mekong River Basin face growing challenges from climate change, environmental degradation, and increasing demand for shared water resources. While the MRC has made progress in regional policy and basin planning, there remains a need to translate these efforts into tangible outcomes at the local level. Strengthening community engagement and demonstrating the practical benefits of regional cooperation are critical to building trust and resilience. Joint pilot projects offer a strategic approach for innovative solutions, promote knowledge exchange, and scale successful models across borders. These initiatives serve as a bridge between policy and practice, reinforcing the MRC's relevance and visibility at the grassroots level.

Building on the significant work by civil society organizations and community groups over many years, including through citizen science initiatives, the MRC will work with Member Countries to strengthen community-level engagement and complement existing efforts including through joint community-based projects. These include locally-adapted products, tools and services, such as for flood-resilient aquaculture, adaptive farming technologies, localized warning systems, and nature-based solutions, to build resilience to water-related disasters and hydropower-related risks. Awareness campaigns supported by new outreach tools for information sharing, early warning and coping strategies will help improve community resilience to climate and water infrastructure-related changes. By aligning regional strategies with local needs, especially through greater emphasis on community-driven initiatives that support broader sustainability objectives, the MRC will ensure that joint cooperation delivers tangible benefits to the people of the Mekong.



Strategic Approach

To ensure community-driven solutions are central to Mekong cooperation, the MRC will develop and operationalise **Community Innovation Projects (CIP)**. This initiative will identify water-related challenges at the grassroots level, support the co-development of solutions with local communities, and provide technical and financial backing for joint implementation. The approach will emphasize alignment with the BDS 2021-2030 and national development priorities to ensure local relevance and basin-wide coherence. Through the CIP, the MRC will actively collaborate with **civil society organizations (CSOs), academic and research institutions, private sector partners, and national line agencies** building on existing initiatives to design and deliver community-based innovations in areas such as climate-resilient agriculture, flood adaptation, aquaculture, and water quality monitoring. Selected projects will receive support for implementation and follow a results-based workplan with clear milestones, regular monitoring, and knowledge-sharing outputs.



A key element of this strategy is to promote **citizen science and community-led data generation** by equipping communities with practical tools (e.g., water quality kits, mobile apps, rainfall logbooks) and integrating their observations into MRC's regional monitoring systems, enabling information and knowledge sharing across borders that supports shared understanding. To foster long-term engagement and impact, the MRC will organize **innovation labs, training workshops, and peer exchange programs**, empowering women, youth, and indigenous and vulnerable groups to lead and replicate successful solutions across the basin and to share with other communities facing similar issues.

The CIP will serve as a regional **showcase** to document, promote, and scale high-impact innovations, with embedded monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track outcomes and inform policy and investment. Through this strategic approach, the MRC will transform community engagement from participation to **active partnership and co-ownership of sustainable Mekong development** within and between communities.

The MRC will also implement its **Mekong Youth Strategy 2030** to mobilise a new generation of empowered Mekong youth in support of sustainable water resources management across the region. The strategy seeks to support the development of Youth as river guardians, innovators and riverpreneurs, water diplomats, global voices and cultural ambassadors. Flagship initiatives include the Mekong Youth Volunteers program, the Mekong River lab innovation showcase, the Mekong Youth Diplomacy Academy, Mekong Music and Arts competition, the Mekong Entrepreneur Fund, and the Mekong Wataverse for Youth as an educational platform for learning about the Mekong River system.

Key Deliverables

- Joint community-based Mekong products to strengthen community resilience and climate change adaptation (2027) (Output 2.1.4)
- Community awareness campaigns and capacity building to improve resilience, preparedness, and response capabilities in vulnerable regions (annual) (Output 4.1.4)
- Community Innovation Projects including capacity building to improve resilience, preparedness, and response capabilities in vulnerable regions (annual) (Output 5.2.5)
- Outreach and engagement of youth and communities on iReport for community-based early warning system (2028) (Output 5.2.5)

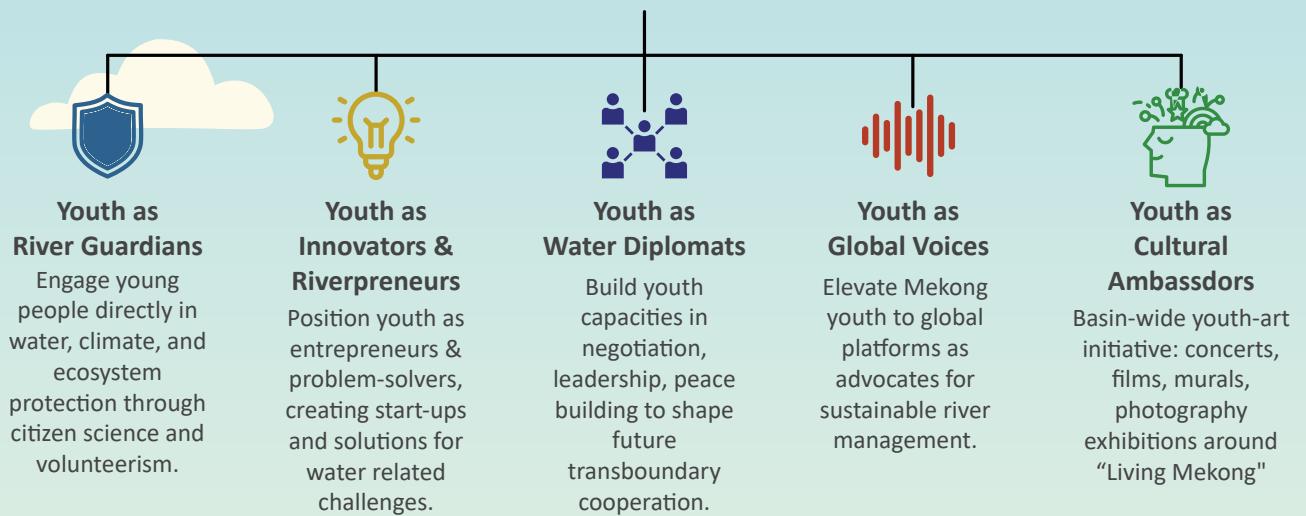


MEKONG YOUTH STRATEGY 2030

A new generation of empowered Mekong youth driving innovation, diplomacy, and sustainable solutions for the river basin, transforming the Mekong into a hub of creativity, resilience, and shared prosperity.



Strategic Goals



Mekong Youth Volunteers

A 6–12 month volunteer programme where youth join riverine communities to support climate adaptation, eco-tourism, and clean water access.



Mekong River Lab (Innovation Lab)

A youth lab that showcases water technologies and local innovations, co-financed by private sector technology partners.



Mekong Youth Diplomacy Academy

A simulation-based programme where youth role-play and negotiate transboundary water issues. The best teams present their final agreements to the MRC Joint Committee or Council.



Flagship Initiatives

Mekong Music & Arts for Youth

An annual creative platform where youth express their connection to the Mekong through arts, including song competitions, concerts, films, murals, and photography exhibitions.



Mekong Youth Entrepreneur Fund

A new financing window within the Mekong Fund offering seed capital for youth-led start-ups on water, environment, and sustainable livelihoods, supported through public–private partnerships.



Mekong Wataverse for Youth

A virtual reality experience of the Mekong Basin that enables youth to explore the region's geography, simulate water flow management, and host virtual debates on river governance.



5. Leveraging Partnerships and Expanding Knowledge Exchange



The MRC is working with partners within the region and globally to raise the profile of the MRC, import new and innovative river management knowledge, tools and expertise, and leverage the skills and capacities of partner organisations in areas of competitive advantage.



Enhancing Strategic Partnerships that Leverage Competitive Advantage

Global cooperation and concerted efforts are essential in a fast-paced competitive and changing international environment. The MRC will deepen cooperation with international river basins through its Sister River Mechanism, fostering fellowships, knowledge exchange and innovation. Through the Sister River Mechanism, the MRC will expand its partnerships with other international river basins to exchange knowledge and best practices, accelerate innovation, and amplify the Mekong voice in the ASEAN and global dialogues.

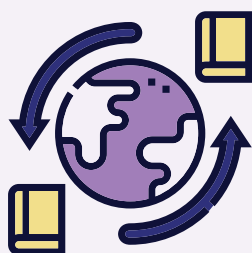
Strategic Approach:

The MRC will adopt a strategic approach that works with partners on areas of competitive advantage such as with ASEAN in the energy-water space and to transform the Sister River Mechanism into a **dynamic, multi-tiered platform** for global cooperation. This includes forming new partnerships with leading river basin organizations (RBOs) across continents, such as the **Nile, Paraná, and Yangtze River**, building on existing partnerships such as in the Murray-Darling Basin and focusing on shared challenges like climate adaptation, flood and sediment management, and stakeholder engagement. Bilateral and multilateral exchanges will be facilitated through **joint study tours, twinning projects, technical workshops, and secondment and fellowship programs** for young professionals and technical staff.

With MRC Dialogue Partners, MRC will strengthen regional collaboration by continuing the **Joint Study** and **Joint Survey** with LMC Water Center and boost implementation of the **Joint LMC-MRC Expert Group on Data, Modelling, and Forecasting**.



Form Partnerships with Leading River Basin Organizations across continents



Facilitate Exchanges through Study Tours, Twinning Projects, Workshops



Co-Develop Joint Knowledge Products and Pilot Innovative Solutions



Participate in Global and Regional Platforms to raise Mekong Profile



To drive innovation and shared learning, the MRC will co-develop **joint knowledge products**, **pilot solutions**, and **digital tools** with its sister basins, research institutions, and think tanks. Furthermore, the MRC will actively participate in global and regional platforms, such as **UN Water**, **GEF IW: LEARN**, and **ASEAN dialogues**, to raise the Mekong’s profile and contribute to shaping international water governance. Through this approach, the MRC aims to strengthen institutional capacity, expand its global network, and position the Mekong as a model for **transboundary cooperation in an evolving global context**.

Key Deliverables:

- Partnership agreements with Development Partners, ASEAN, GMS, MLC Water Center, ACMECS, Mekong-US, Mekong-Australia, Mekong-Japan, and Mekong-ROK implemented (annual) (Output 5.2.3)
- Sister River Partnerships expanded with river basin organisations and joint work programme agreed (2027) (Output 5.2.3)
- Implementation of agreed Joint Studies, Data/module sharing (annual) (Output 5.2.4)
- Enhanced cooperation on water-environment-energy linkages with other regional frameworks (2029) (Output 3.2.2)
- Basin-wide Alternative Energy Planning Review (2030) (Output 3.2.2)





MRC RESULTS CHAIN





GENERAL

MRC's contribution to the BDS 2021-2030. For the next five years, the MRC will continue to coordinate the implementation of the BDS 2021-2030 by all relevant actors, while contributing to the implementation of many of the Outputs themselves. In this regard, MRC will:

- 1. Promote and provide advice on identification, preparation, and implementation of the BDS sustainable development opportunities** by national agencies and the private sector, in particular joint investment projects and national projects of basin-wide significance as identified through Proactive Regional Planning and agreed in the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan (see Section 6.1 of BDS 2021-2030);
- 2. Coordinate implementation of the five BDS strategic priorities** among relevant national implementing agencies, regional cooperation mechanisms, and others. This includes advising how their broader water-related priority areas can contribute to BDS Outcomes and encouraging approaches consistent with the impact pathways (see Section 6.2 of BDS 2021-2030);
- 3. Contribute in whole or part to 25 BDS Outputs** by MRCS, NMCs and national line/implementing agencies. Some of the Outputs will be delivered under existing and new cooperation agreements with regional cooperation mechanisms such as MLC Water, ASEAN, and GMS (Section 6.2 of BDS 2021-2030); and
- 4. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the BDS and MRC SP.** MRC's monitoring systems cover implementation of the BDS (through impact monitoring and reporting in the SOBR) and the entire BDS results chain, through organizational monitoring especially the contribution of the MRC and others in achieving BDS Outcomes and Outputs.

MRC's Core Functions. MRC will work in the above 4 areas by undertaking its core functions which provide guidance for what the MRC can do (in terms of activities, deliverables) in implementing the BDS (Figure 3). As defined in the Roadmap, the MRC's core functions include: (i) corporate services functions, (ii) core river basin management functions (CRBMFs), and (iii) consulting and advisory services functions. Corporate services functions include administration and management, facilitating dialogue and coordination, and reporting and dissemination. The CRBMFs are:



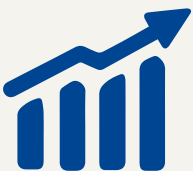
CRBMF 1: Data acquisition, exchange and monitoring



CRBMF 2: Analysis, modelling and assessment



CRBMF 3: Planning support



CRBMF 4: Forecasting, warning and emergency response



CRBMF 5: Implementing MRC Procedures

Routine and non-routine core functions. The above corporate and CRBMFs are subdivided into activities that are either routine or non-routine activities in this MRC SP. Core routine activities are continuous or recurring activities that should be performed as a river basin organization. Non-routine core activities are new initiatives or one-off investments that are identified as part of the update of the BDS and MRC SP to address new challenges and opportunities, as well as to enhance the effectiveness of implementing the routine activities. These new strategic activities are essential to achieving the objectives of the MRC SP and Outcomes and Outputs of the BDS.





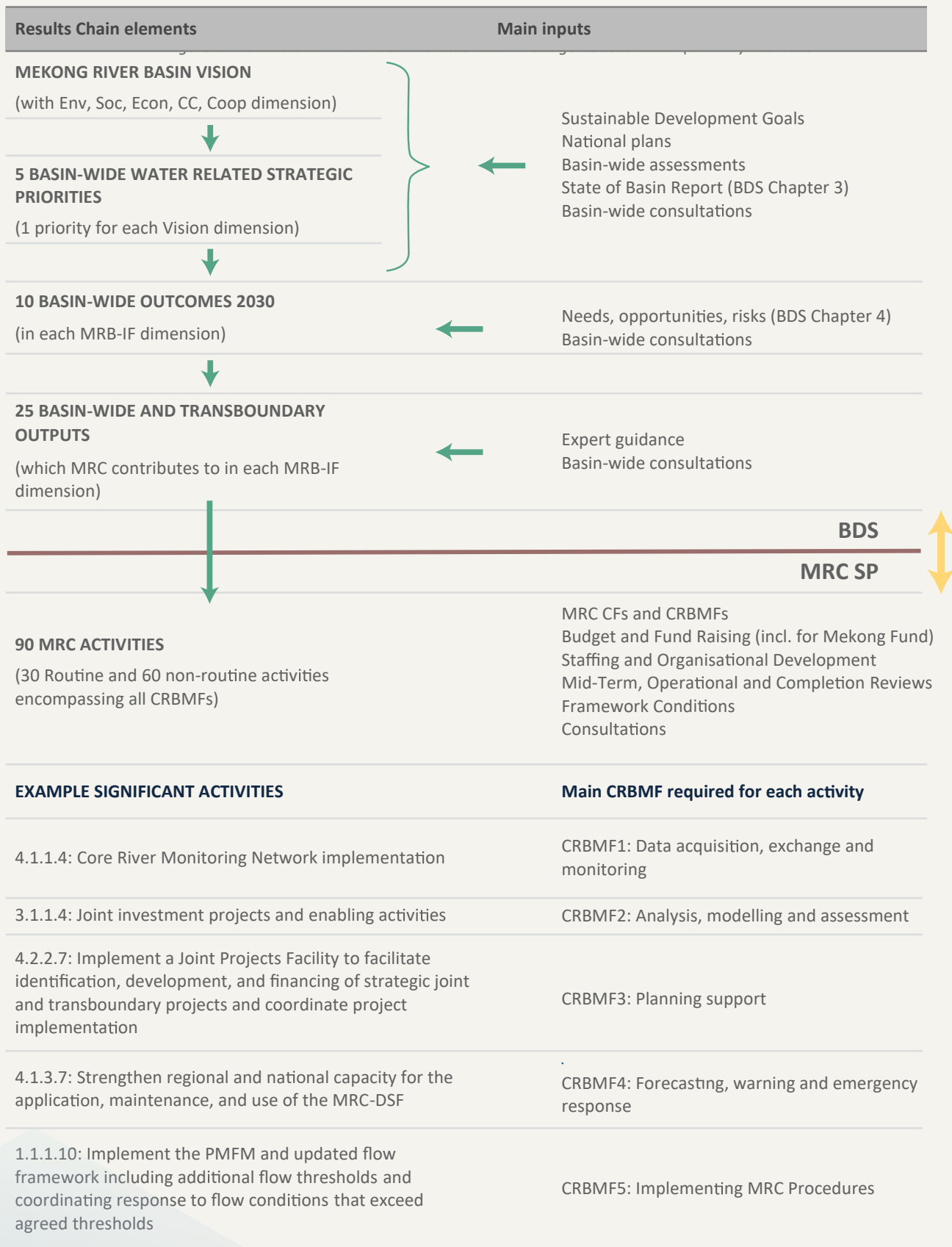
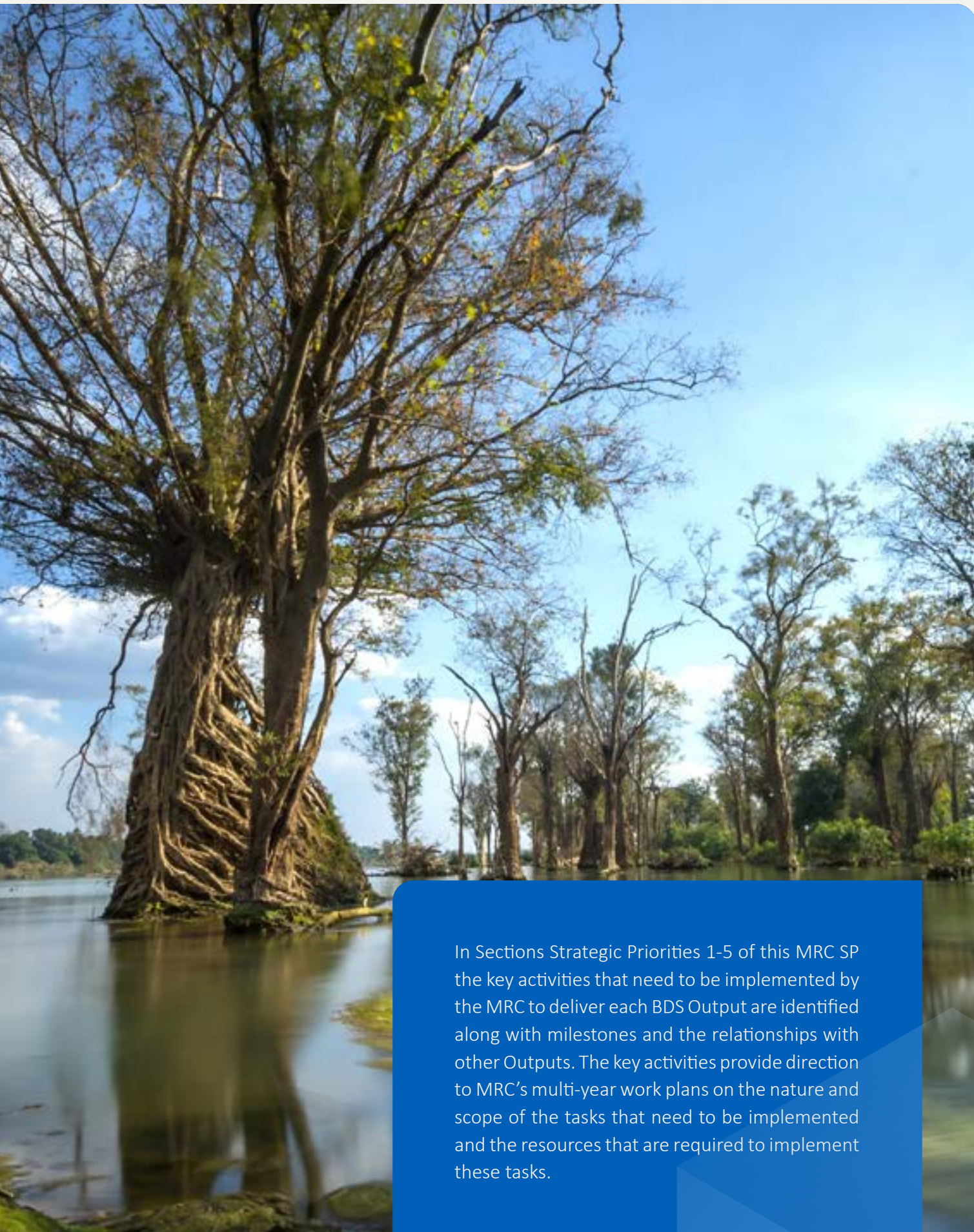


Figure 3: Results Chain Towards MRC Core Basin Management Function (CRBMF) Activities





In Sections Strategic Priorities 1-5 of this MRC SP the key activities that need to be implemented by the MRC to deliver each BDS Output are identified along with milestones and the relationships with other Outputs. The key activities provide direction to MRC's multi-year work plans on the nature and scope of the tasks that need to be implemented and the resources that are required to implement these tasks.

Enabling tasks. There are a few essential ‘enabling tasks’ that are common to the delivery of most Outputs and are not shown in the tables with key activities in Section Strategic Priority 1: Maintain the ecological function of the Mekong River Basin to Strategic Priority 5. These common enabling activities are aimed at knowledge sharing for decentralisation of CRBMFs and at the uptake of MRC deliverables in national governance, decision-making and planning systems:

- Preparation of a tailor-made **consultation and capacity building plan** for the delivery of each Output, from the initial identification of the work plan with activities and tasks, to the uptake and use of the resulting Output by the ‘client’ (e.g. national implementing agency);
- Incorporation of the **impact pathway** that has been defined for each BDS Output (see Section 5.5 of BDS 2021-2030) in the work plan of activities and tasks. An example of a typical impact pathway is presented in Figure Strategic Priority 1: Maintain the ecological function of the Mekong River Basin. In particular, the first step of the impact pathway – the sign off by national implementing agencies on an informative concept note - is often forgotten, which makes the relevance and uptake of the Output uncertain from the beginning.

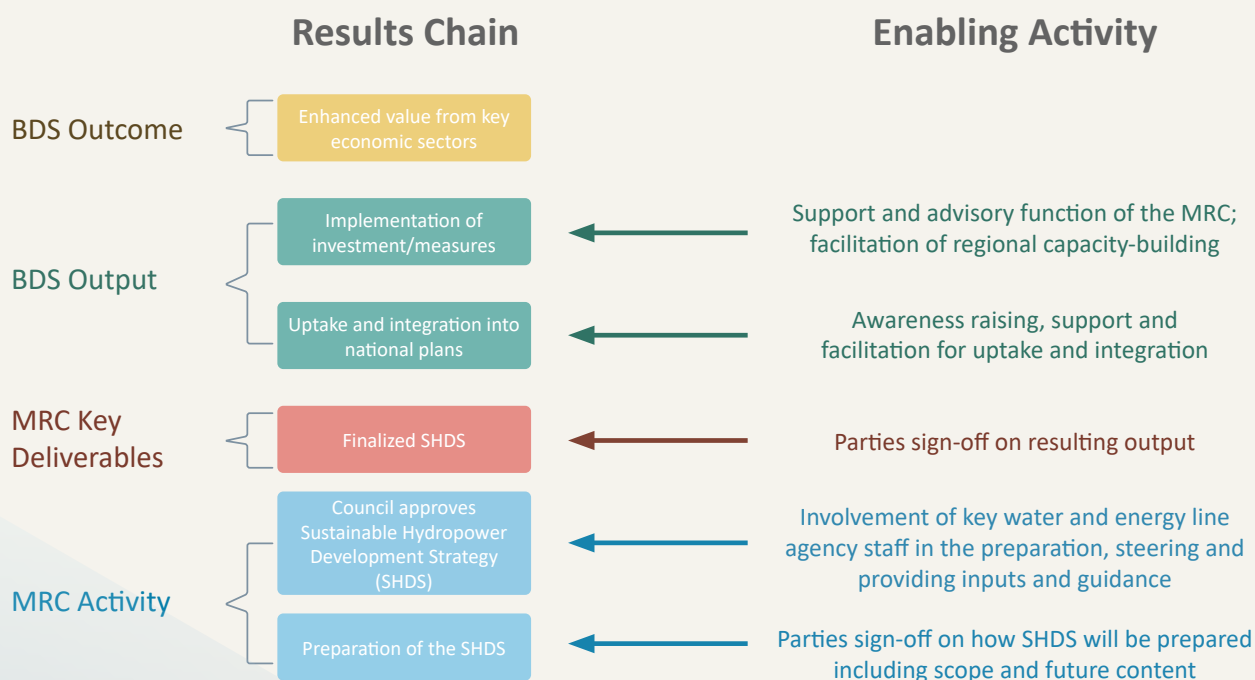


Figure 4: Impact Pathway Example with the Existing Sustainable Hydropower Development Strategy (SHDS) in Mind



The above enabling tasks were not always fully considered or implemented for past activities, which has hampered national uptake of MRC products or even led to the non-acceptance of MRC products by one or more countries. The implementation of these important MRC products figures prominently among the activities for 2026-2030 albeit with the understanding that their development approach may need to be revisited along the lines of the above impact pathway, starting with a policy discussion of what each country would like to see as a deliverable, Output, and Outcome.



Phasing of Outputs and activities. It is noted that the Outcomes and Outputs defined in the BDS and used in the results chains in Sections Strategic Priority 1 to 5 are to be achieved by 2030. As reflected in the MTR of the SP 2021-2025, achieving these Outcomes and Outputs in this timeframe is ambitious, especially as they do not depend entirely on the work of the MRC. Hence, additional emphasis is placed in this SP on capacity building and support for national implementation and ongoing enhancement of partnerships with other actors who can contribute to the delivery of the outputs.

The activities that are identified in the results chain are for implementation during the MRC SP period of 2026-2030 (5 years), and some of them are designed to lay the groundwork for actions beyond 2030. Most of the routine CRBMF activities continue from the previous SP period. Some of the non-routine CRBMF activities from the previous SP are also continuing into 2026 and beyond as their implementation is phased over two SP periods. A key focus of the 2026–2030 SP is on practical, on-the-ground implementation to deliver meaningful impact at the community level. Under each Strategic Priority, new or modified MRC Activities have been identified based primarily on:



- Activities not yet complete from the MRC SP 2021-2025 as reflected in the MTR Report, the 2024 Annual Report, and the Mid-Year Report 2025.
- Ongoing routine core functions identified in the MRC SP 2021-2025 that need to continue for the MRC to undertake its primary RBO functions.
- Medium-Term Recommendations for the MRC SP 2026-2030 identified in the 2023 SOBR.
- Recommendations from the MTR of the MRC SP 2021-2025
- Identified Joint Projects and Enabling activities from the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan and ongoing joint and transboundary projects agreed by Member Countries.
- Recommendations from the MLC – MRC Joint Study for further collaboration to support countries adapt to the changing flow regime.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: MAINTAIN THE ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION OF THE MEKONG RIVER BASIN

Under this strategic priority, which is to maintain the ecological function of the Mekong in good condition, the BDS identifies and describes 3 Outcomes and 5 Outputs (see Sections 5.4 of BDS 2021-2030 and 5.5 of BDS 2021-2030). The tables below summarize the key deliverables (and timelines) that will be produced and the activities that the MRC will implement to contribute to these Outcomes and Outputs. For the preparation of multi-year work plans, the activities under each Output will be further broken down into tasks, including the enabling tasks related to the impact pathway and the necessary stakeholder engagement and capacity building to ensure uptake.







BDS OUTCOME 1.1: ADEQUATE WATER FLOW AND QUALITY FOR A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT AND PRODUCTIVE COMMUNITIES

To help achieve Outcome 1.1, the MRC will continue to focus on supporting basin countries in improving the management of river flows and water quality in the mainstream and mitigating the potential adverse environmental impacts of water resources development.

The identified activities are central to the MRC's mandate as specified in the *1995 Mekong Agreement* (including Article 3 on Protection of the Environment and Ecological Balance and Article 7 on the Prevention and Cessation of Harmful Effects) and build on existing regional products and services developed over many years. They involve the MRC undertaking its assessment (CRBMF2), planning (CRBMF3), and procedures (CRBMF5) core functions.

Implementation of PMFM, PWUM and PWQ technical guidelines will be enhanced including to coordinate rapid responses to issues as they arise. As recommended in the SOBR, the MRC will investigate the causes and possible solutions to concerning trends in some key water quality parameters; update the regional study into heavy metals and pollutants last undertaken with data from 2011, and if necessary, re-evaluate the calculation of water quality indices used to report on implementation of the PWQ considering current international standards, if these are shown not to be adequately identifying changing water quality conditions in underlying parameters of importance to Member Countries.

The MRC will also seek to strengthen water quality monitoring in response to new challenges including: (a) joint water quality monitoring to enhance transboundary cooperation; (b) improving the capacity of Member Countries for monitoring riverine plastics, (c) developing coordination mechanisms between MRC, national focal points and national disaster management authorities in each MC to support implementation of the Emergency Water Quality Response and Management (chapter 4 of the TGWQ) together with the Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transport of Dangerous Goods; and (d) reintroducing the annual water quality and aquatic health report cards.

Support will be provided to Member Countries in the embedding of existing regional policies, guidelines, and strategies at the national level as needed, including the Preliminary Design Guidelines (PDG) for Mainstream hydropower, the Sustainable Hydropower Development Strategy (SHDS), and the Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment guidelines (TbEIA).



The Joint Action Plan (JAP) implementation under the PNPCA will be enhanced with specific timelines, responsibilities and trackable actions. On the PDG, support is expected to include measures responding to MTR recommendations including clarifying the division of responsibilities at national level; carrying out awareness raising and experience sharing and other capacity building; promoting inclusion of PDG review provisions in the terms of reference for engineering firms; developing project specific technical requirements to ensure alignment with the PDG; potential PDG-related national technical guidelines; and applying the PDG to lowland tributary dams.

On the TbEIA, support involves raising awareness of the TbEIA in national agencies, aligning TbEIA with national EIA procedures, building capacity for implementation, providing clear guidance on candidate projects, and considering application of TbEIA during the conceptual planning stages of relevant development projects.

A new activity for this SP involves scoping the potential for geological and seismic data collection and analysis and its integration with MRC systems to support early warning

of seismic hazards in relation to dam safety. Coordination with relevant national agencies and international monitoring bodies will be an important component.

Analysis and reporting on basin conditions, including river flows and water quality is a core function of the MRC and this is undertaken through a consolidated monitoring activity under Strategic Priority 4, including the hydro-meteorological monitoring and reporting, the routine water quality monitoring and reporting.



Strategic Priority 1: Maintain the Ecological Function of the Mekong River Basin

BDS Outcome 1.1: Adequate water flow and quality for a healthy environment and productive communities

BDS Output 1.1.1: Guidance for water flow and quality management implemented

MRC SP Deliverables

- Overview of the hydrology of the entire Mekong-Lancang River Basin (2027)
- Finalised hydrological thresholds for PMFM guidelines and flow framework (2028)
- Updated Technical Guideline for PWUM (2028)
- Notifications and management actions in accordance with MRC Procedures (annual)
- Reports on Joint water quality monitoring including status of heavy metals in the Mekong Basin (2028)
- Updated TGWQ, thresholds, and scoring methodologies (2028)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
1.1.1.7 Evaluate and identify hydrological thresholds to support the PMFM guidelines and flow framework, update PMFM dashboard	TD	NR- CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 5
1.1.1.8 Update an overview of the hydrology of the Lancang-Mekong River Basin	TD	NR-CRBMF 2/ CRBMF5
1.1.1.9 Update and Implement the PWUM technical guidelines and water balance approach, including reporting and visualisation	TD	R- CRBMF 1 / CRBMF 5
1.1.1.10 Implement the PMFM and updated flow framework, including measures to identify and coordinate responses to flow conditions that exceed agreed thresholds	TD PD	R- CRBMF 1 / CRBMF 5
1.1.1.11 Update and implement the PWQ guidelines, including trial implementation of Riverine Plastic Monitoring (RPM), annual water quality reports, scorecards, and a revised scoring method, including additional thresholds consistent with international standards of water quality used for aquaculture and agriculture	ED	R- CRBMF 1 / CRBMF 5
1.1.1.12 Undertake joint water quality monitoring to enhance transboundary cooperation and mitigate impacts focused on: (i) the causes and possible solutions to some concerning trends reported in the 2023 SOBR and (ii) updating status and contamination conditions of heavy metals and other pollutants (e.g. pesticides and microplastic) in the water column, sediments, and biota	ED	NR- CRBMF 1 / CRBMF 2
1.1.1.13 Implement capacity-building for monitoring of riverine plastic, emergency spills, heavy metals, and other key parameters, to support implementation of the PWQ and the Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transport of Dangerous Goods	ED PD	NR- CRBMF 1

Strategic Priority 1: Maintain the Ecological Function of the Mekong River Basin

BDS Output 1.1.2: Guidance and measures for impact mitigation of water infrastructure implemented

MRC SP Deliverables

- Application and integration of PDG in national regulatory, technical frameworks, and project design (annual)
- Enhanced JAPs implementation with specific timelines, responsibilities, and trackable actions (annual)
- Mainstreaming of TbEIA guidelines into national EIA systems and regulations as needed and project-specific assessment reports (annual)
- Geological and seismic data collection and analysis for dam safety (2028)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
1.1.2.5 Support the application and integration of the PDG into national regulatory frameworks, including considerations for its application to selected tributaries	PD	NR- CRBMF 3
1.1.2.6 Coordinate the implementation and enhanced tracking of actions in Joint Action Plans (JAPs)	PD	NR- CRBMF 3 / CRBMF 5
1.1.2.7 Support future wider application and continuous improvement of the TbEIA based on lessons learned and through mainstreaming into national EIA systems, targeted capacity building measures, and project-specific technical guidance, as needed	ED	NR- CRBMF 3
1.1.2.8 Collect and review geological and seismic data related to dam safety and conduct knowledge sharing and capacity building to enhance dam safety practices	PD	NR-CRBMF 1 / CRBMF 2

The activities under Outcome 1.1 can be implemented through the usual MRC delivery model, which uses mostly individual consultants, as needed, to support the work of the expert groups. In relation to capacity building support to Member Countries on the national implementation of regional guidelines, the MRC may consider establishing a roster of experts on retainer to provide project-specific technical guidance or workshop training and seminars as needed, ideally in an integrated fashion that also builds capacity of a network of regional and national experts.

Water quality challenges are basin-wide and there would be value in a better appreciation of the dynamics affecting changing water quality conditions across the whole basin including from the Upper Mekong Basin to the Lower Mekong Basin and in relation to the parameters of concern identified in the SOBR and the heavy metals and other pollutants that may be present in the water column, sediment and biota.



The work will be overseen by the Expert Group for Environmental Management and the Expert Group for Basin Planning, as well as the Joint Platform on implementing the MRC Procedures, with reporting to the Joint Committee. For any work part of a joint study, a joint technical working group will be established with participation from the upper Mekong Basin countries.

Some of the activities will need to be incorporated and implemented at the national level as they depend substantially on national actions for the Outcome and Outputs to be achieved. For instance, the implementation of regional products such as the TbEIA and PDG at the national level will be incorporated into the national regulatory systems and budgeted for, as needed.



BDS OUTCOME 1.2: SEDIMENT TRANSPORT MANAGED TO MITIGATE BANK EROSION AND MAINTAIN WETLAND AND FLOODPLAIN PRODUCTIVITY

To help achieve Outcome 1.2, the MRC will continue to focus on identifying the information available on sediment and erosion conditions throughout the basin and working with basin countries and partners on a basin-wide plan to mitigate the impacts of water resource development on sediment transport. The activities identified involve the MRC undertaking its assessment (CRBMF2) and planning (CRBMF3) core functions and are critical to helping basin countries minimise and mitigate harmful effects to the environment as required by Articles 3 and 7 of the *1995 Mekong Agreement*.

A key objective of this SP period is the preparation of a basin-wide sediment management plan to address the loss of sediment transport and respond to changes in the basin-wide sediment budget. This should include: (a) working with MCs to close the data gap on sand extraction; and (b) working towards application of PDG guidance on sediment management to key tributary rivers where scope still remains as well as progressing the enabling activities identified in the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan with a focus on: i) adapting dams for sediment

passage, where feasible; (ii) coordinating operations to support sediment flushing; and (iii) working together towards sustainable sand extraction, especially through the identification and resort to less sensitive sources outside the active river channel.

The preparation of the 2018 and 2023 SOBRs was hampered by a lack of accessible data on sand extraction operations and erosion and sedimentation throughout the basin. MRC will work with countries to identify appropriate national datasets on these critical issues as a basis for regular updating and reporting of erosion conditions and sand mining in SOBR and to support the development of a basin-wide sediment management budget to help inform sediment transport targets.

Analysis and reporting on basin conditions, including sediment transport, is a core function of the MRC. This is undertaken through a consolidated and integrated monitoring activity under Strategic Priority 4, including the routine discharge and sediment monitoring and reporting.



Strategic Priority 1: Maintain the Ecological Function of the Mekong River Basin

BDS Outcome 1.2: Sediment transport managed to mitigate bank erosion and maintain wetland and floodplain productivity

BDS Output 1.2.1: Basin-wide sediment management plan developed and implemented

MRC SP Deliverables

- Basin-wide sediment budget assessment (2026)
- Basin-wide sediment management plan (2027)
- Implementation of coordinated sediment flushing (2030)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
1.2.1.4 Conduct a basin-wide sediment budget assessment	TD (PD)	NR-CRBMF 1 / CRBMF 2
1.2.1.5 Prepare and implement a basin-wide sediment management plan based on (i) sediment budget; (ii) coordinated operations to support sediment flushing, and (iii) working towards sustainable sand/sediment extraction	PD	NR-CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 3
1.2.1.6 Develop and implement coordinated sediment flushing operations for hydropower projects	PD	NR-CRBMF 3

The activities under Outcome 1.2 will be implemented through Phase 2 of Proactive Regional Planning, including implementing the enabling activities identified in the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan (IABP) and with support of the Joint Projects Facility for joint and transboundary projects. It requires the continuation of a Core Team within the MRCS to oversee the work, including input from National Advisors, and extensive cooperation between line agencies in basin countries and with dam operators in relevant countries, especially to support a pilot on coordinated sediment flushing.

The work will be overseen by the Expert Group on Data and Modelling and the Expert Group on Basin Planning in cooperation with the Expert Group on Environmental Management, with reporting to the Joint Committee.

The preparation of the sediment management plan will include the assessment of the future spatial extent of bank erosion along the mainstream and in the Mekong Delta, as well as the evaluation of the options to reduce bank erosion. Extensive engagement with infrastructure developers and operators, the sediment extraction industry, and national regulators will be critical to the success of these activities.

Some of the activities will need to be incorporated and taken-up at the national level as they depend substantially on national actions for the Outcome and Outputs to be achieved. For instance, the establishment/modification of systems and processes at the national level to collect, process, and share data in the appropriate format and in a timely way, with the cooperation of industry.

BDS OUTCOME 1.3: ECOSYSTEM SERVICES FROM WETLANDS AND WATERSHEDS ENSURED

To help achieve Outcome 1.3, the MRC will focus on developing mechanisms to better inform basin country decision-making about the impacts of development on key wetlands throughout the basin and on building capacity to improve watershed management. The activities identified involve the MRC undertaking its assessment (CRBMF2) and planning (CRBMF3) core functions, which are critical to helping basin countries minimise and mitigate harmful effects to the environment as required by Articles 3 and 7 of the *1995 Mekong Agreement*.

As part of PRP Phase 2, the MRC will also evaluate and refine the additional hydrological limits of change for key wetland assets and river flows to support sustainable development pathways that protect further loss of wetlands and their ecosystem functions and consider incorporating additional thresholds into the updated PMFM guidelines. The implementation of the updated flow framework and thresholds (identified under MRC SP 2021–2025) with agreed response protocols to help countries minimize any significant adverse environmental impacts of an increase in dry season flows and a reduction in flood season flows and consider the implications for reduced flood season flows on the accumulated volume and timing of Tonle Sap reverse flows links to Outcome 1.1.1.

The MRC will work with Member Countries to implement a holistic plan and concrete measures to address environmental challenges at environmental assets of regional importance mainly through the

implementation of the Mekong Fund Ecosystem Window Trial. Activities include coordination support to the implementation of environmental asset or river basin management plans including the update or development of management plans of REAs or key watershed, and integrated strategic management plans for assets of multiple use areas, where needed. Efforts will also focus on identifying, trialling and evaluating innovative sustainable financing models for wetland and watershed management such as Payments for Ecosystem Services and international carbon financing opportunities, to ensure capacity for sustainable financing beyond the Mekong Fund trial period.

Wetland and watershed management activities will also be pursued as one of the enabling activities identified in the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan with its emphasis on support to scaling-up pilot projects focused on forest protections, reforestation and sustainable agroforestry initiatives.

Analysis and reporting on basin conditions, including wetlands and watersheds, is a core function of the MRC, and this is undertaken through the implementation of the Data Acquisition and Generation Action Plan (DAGAP) and the State of Basin Report under Strategic Priority 4. In support of Outcome 1.3, the monitoring, analysis, and reporting under Priority 4 will be improved through the reinvigoration of the MRC's DSF and greater use of earth observation and remote sensing products to evaluate and report on basin-wide changes.

Strategic Priority 1: Maintain the Ecological Function of the Mekong River Basin

BDS Outcome 1.3: Ecosystem services from wetlands and watersheds ensured

BDS Output 1.3.1: Limits of acceptable change for key river and connected wetland habitats identified and implemented

MRC SP Deliverables

- Identification of minimum flow requirements for the mainstream to support the maintenance of ecosystem functions of Regional Environmental Assets (2029)
- Mekong Fund Trial to support wetland and watershed management (2030)
- Regional Environmental Asset management plans developed or updated, as needed, with alternative financing identified (2029)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
1.3.1.3 Evaluate and identify hydrological thresholds of the mainstream for maintaining ecosystem services (incl. critical fish habitats) of Regional Environmental Assets	ED	NR-CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 5
1.3.1.4 Establish the Ecosystem Window of the Mekong Fund Trial (MFEW) to support and facilitate local community engagement in wetland and watershed biodiversity conservation	ED	NR-CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 3
1.3.1.5 Exploration of alternative financing mechanisms such as payment for ecosystem services and carbon financing to support sustainable management of the Regional Environmental Assets and key Watersheds	ED	NR-CRBMF 3

BDS Output 1.3.2: A basin-wide planning and management framework for watersheds developed and implemented

MRC SP Deliverables

- Scaled-up wetland and watershed management pilot projects (2030)
- Capacity of line agencies at all levels on watershed and wetland good management practices improved (2030)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
1.3.2.3 Support and coordinate the scaling-up of wetland and watershed management pilot projects of basin-wide significance to support regional water security objectives consistent with national strategies	ED	NR-CRBMF 3
1.3.2.4 Capacity building of national, provincial and local authorities on watershed and wetland good management practice including grant proposal writing to support the implementation of the MFEW	ED	NR-CRBMF 3

The activities under Outcome 1.3 can best be implemented by through a combination of (a) the usual MRC delivery model which uses in-house experts working with international, regional and national consultants, as needed, to support the work of the expert groups; (b) activities integrated with PRP as part of the work of a consulting firm guided and supported by MRCS and national teams; and (c) capacity building support at the national level on embedding policies, guidelines and tools and preparing project proposals for funding.

Some of the significant projects identified for environmental management and watersheds are most effectively implemented in partnership with development partners and others through transboundary and joint projects funded by global environment and climate change funds and Mekong Fund, and there may be further opportunity to progress these including in relation to the enabling activity from the IABP on protecting and rehabilitating forested watershed areas.



The work will be overseen by the Expert Group for Environmental Management, which will collaborate with the Joint Platform on MRC Procedures for related issues that link to the regional flow framework and report to the Joint Committee and coordinated with other Expert Groups as needed.

Some of the activities will need to be incorporated and implemented at the national level as they depend substantially on national actions for the Outcome and Outputs to be achieved. For instance, the establishment/modification of systems and processes at the national level to collect, process, and share data in the appropriate format and in a timely way, with the cooperation of industry.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: ENABLE INCLUSIVE ACCESS AND UTILISATION OF THE BASIN'S WATER AND RELATED RESOURCES

Under this strategic priority, the BDS identifies and describes 2 Outcomes and 5 Outputs (Sections 5.4 of BDS 2021-2030 and 5.5 of BDS 2021-2030). The tables below summarize the key deliverables (and timelines) and activities that the MRC will implement to contribute to these Outcomes and Outputs. For the preparation of work plans, the activities under each Output will be further broken down into tasks, including the enabling tasks related to the impact pathway and the necessary stakeholder engagement and capacity building to ensure uptake.





BDS OUTCOME 2.1: STRENGTHENED WATER, FOOD, AND ENERGY SECURITY FOR BASIN COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

To help achieve Outcome 2.1, the MRC will continue to focus on supporting Member Countries in managing risks to food security from pressure on fish stocks. This includes pressure from potentially unsustainable fishing efforts and practices, as well as adverse impacts from water resources and other development. In addition, the MRC will continue to support improved understanding of the gender and vulnerability aspects of basin water, food, and energy security. The activities identified involve the MRC undertaking its data collection (CRBMF1) and assessment (CRBMF2) core functions.

The MRC will develop and implement adaptive fisheries management measures of basin-wide significance including support to priority projects at key transboundary

locations. The delivery of the Transboundary Fisheries Management Project supported by the Global Environment Facility is a priority.

Supporting the development of innovative new fish monitoring techniques, as occurred under the Joint Environmental Monitoring pilot and initial stages of the CRMN establishment, will also be continued with regular review and refinement of fisheries monitoring methods and technologies to enable integration of advanced techniques such as fish tagging, eDNA and other methods. The MRC will also seek to improve integrated data analysis and decision-support for fisheries management by linking monitoring data and systems to decision-support systems.



The MRC will intensify efforts at disseminating guidelines and experiences on fish passages for both hydropower and irrigation projects at the national level including consideration of: (a) further raise awareness of the guidance on fish passages; and (b) extend fish passage guidance to key tributary dams; (c) further disseminate guidance on irrigation fishways. This work will be informed by the outcomes of the JEM pilot and continuing monitoring and reporting on the impact of dams and other in-stream barriers on fish populations and fisheries yields.

Much progress has been made in the previous SP period to improve the collection of gender-disaggregated data, to identify relevant indicators of gender disparities, and to evaluate gender and other vulnerabilities to changes in water resources. The MRC will continue to promote consideration of gender and vulnerability issues into development projects including by (a) continuing the collection and analysis of

agreed relevant national and sub-national data disaggregated by gender and other dimensions of vulnerability at the national level; and (b) facilitating the development of concrete measures in national action plans to improve equity and access for gender and vulnerable groups related to water-resources management.

Analysis and reporting on basin conditions, including social wellbeing, is a core function of the MRC, and this is undertaken through the implementation of the MRC Data Acquisition and Generation Action Plan (DAGAP) and State of the Basin Report under Strategic Priority 4. In support of Outcome 2.1, this monitoring, analysis, and reporting under Strategic Priority 4 has been improved through the reinvigoration of the MRC's data and information systems, especially the upgrading of the socio-economic database and further work to support modifications to national surveys and other data collection exercises.





Strategic Priority 2: Enable Inclusive Access and Utilisation of the Basin's Water and Related Resources

BDS Outcome 2.1: Strengthened water, food, and energy security for basin community well-being

BDS Output 2.1.2: Capture fisheries regulatory frameworks improved to support food security

MRC SP Deliverables

- The transboundary fisheries management project (2030)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
2.1.2.4 Support implementation of the transboundary fisheries management project under the GEF and coordinate integration of its outputs into regional and national policies, strategies, and institutional frameworks	ED	NR-CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 3
2.1.2.5 Implement capacity building to enhance institutional, governance and regulatory arrangements within national and provincial fisheries management frameworks including through participatory outreach, community training, and alignment with national food security policies	ED	NR-CRBMF 3

BDS Output 2.1.3: Risks to capture fisheries productivity and diversity minimised to support food security

MRC SP Deliverables

- Advanced technology to assist fish monitoring and transboundary fisheries management (2027)
- Adaptive fisheries management mechanisms established for Transboundary Fisheries Conservation in the Mekong Basin (2028)
- Updated Fish-friendly irrigation guidelines based on lesson learned and technical assessment (2030)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
2.1.3.3 Develop and coordinate implementation of an adaptive fisheries management plan at key transboundary locations	ED	NR-CRBMF 2/ CRBMF3
2.1.3.4 Explore new technologies and methodologies to enhance transboundary fisheries monitoring	ED	NR-CRBMF 1
2.1.3.5 Support the implementation of technical guidelines on fish-friendly infrastructure for irrigation systems, including improving monitoring, capacity building, policy dialogues, and assistance to project-specific technical assessments	ED	NR-CRBMF 3
2.1.3.6 Develop an evidence-based transboundary fisheries management system linking monitoring systems and data to integrated analysis and decision-support	ED	NR-CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 3

Strategic Priority 2: Enable Inclusive Access and Utilisation of the Basin's Water and Related Resources

2.1.3.7 Updated Fish-friendly irrigation guidelines based on lessons learned and technical assessment, including exploration of cost-effective fish passage solution/facilities in the Lower Mekong Basin ED NR-CRBMF 3

BDS Output 2.1.4: Gender and vulnerability aspects of basin water, food and energy security addressed
MRC SP Deliverables

- Improved Gender and vulnerability mapping and assessment at basin-wide level, based on updated SIMVA reports (2027)
- Gender equity and vulnerability action plan implemented, reviewed and updated (2028)
- Joint community-based Mekong products to strengthen community resilience and climate change adaptation (2027)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
2.1.4.4 Conduct the SIMVA field surveys and prepare SIMVA reports	PD, ED	R-CRBMF 1
2.1.4.5 Coordinate implementation, monitoring and review of the regional gender equity and vulnerability action plan	PD	NR-CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 3
2.1.4.6 Develop Mekong products to enhance community resilience to climate change and changes in hydrological conditions	PD	NR-CRBMF 2

The activities under Outcome 2.1 can best be implemented through the usual MRC delivery model, which involves in-house experts working with international, regional and national consultants, as needed, to support the work of the expert groups. Engagement with partners is critical, especially on the transboundary fisheries project, and through organisational development of the MRC, consideration will be given to enhancing the

social science capacities at MRCS, including the possible recruitment of a Gender and Vulnerability consultant, for targeted and mainstreaming support and as part of improved multi-disciplinary assessment capabilities. The work will be overseen by the Expert Group for Environmental Management and the Expert Group on Basin Planning, and reporting to the Joint Committee.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: ENHANCE OPTIMAL AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF WATER AND RELATED SECTORS

Under this strategic priority, the BDS identifies and describes 2 Outcomes and 6 Outputs (see Sections 5.4 of BDS 2021-2030 and 5.5 of BDS 2021-2030). The tables below summarize the key deliverables (and timelines) and activities that the MRC will implement to contribute to these Outcomes and Outputs. For the preparation of work plans, the activities under each Output can be further broken down into tasks, including the enabling tasks related to the impact pathway and the necessary stakeholder engagement and capacity building to ensure uptake.



BDS OUTCOME 3.1: INCREASED ECONOMIC GROWTH OF ALL BASIN COUNTRIES FROM MORE PROACTIVE REGIONAL PLANNING

To help achieve Outcome 3.1, the MRC will focus on continuing the Proactive Regional Planning initiative and in particular coordinating the transboundary social, economic, and environmental impact assessment of any proposed joint investment projects that are short-term priorities of the Member Countries and progressing the enabling activities identified in the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan with a view to finalising the Adaptive Basin Plan. Identified joint investment projects can be considered for implementation through the Joint Projects Facility under Output 4.2.2 and the finalisation of the Mekong Fund arrangements under Output 5.1.2.

The activities identified under Outcome 3.1 involve the MRC undertaking its assessment (CRBMF2) and planning (CRBMF3) core functions and are critical to helping basin countries achieve the sustainable development, utilisation, management and conservation of the water and related resources of the Mekong River Basin under Article 1 (optimize the multiple-use and mutual benefits of water and related

resources) and Article 2 (formulation of a basin development plan of basin-wide projects) in the *1995 Mekong Agreement*.

The completion of the initial basin planning process will provide the information that the countries need to discuss the trade-offs and benefits of adapting national plans with new joint infrastructure and significant national projects to increase regional benefits and reduce regional costs under Output 5.2.2 while providing a comprehensive response to: (i) climate change through reducing flood and drought risks and (ii) the need for coordination of basin management operations. The additional information should enable increased flexibility for basin countries to adapt their national plans, subject to sovereign decision-making processes, in a way that provides win-win outcomes. The implementation of any feasibility studies and detailed designs will need to be consistent with the requirements of relevant financing institutions that agree to support implementation, as identified in Output 5.2.2.



Strategic Priority 3: Enhance Optimal and Sustainable Development of Water and Related Sectors

BDS Outcome 3.1: Increased economic growth of all basin countries from more proactive regional planning

BDS Output 3.1.1: The Basin Development Plan and associated national plans for water resources development are informed by the findings of a more proactive regional planning approach

MRC SP Deliverables

- Final Adaptive Basin Plan including agreed pathways for joint projects and enabling activities (2027)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
3.1.1.4 Develop joint projects and enabling activities identified the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan	PD	NR-CRBMF 3
3.1.1.5 Finalise the Adaptive Basin Plan based on agreed pathways to progress the joint projects and enabling activities and supported by additional environmental, social, and economic assessments as needed	PD	NR-CRBMF 3

The activities under Outcome 3.1 can best be implemented by continuing the existing PRP initiative of working with a company or consortium on the basin planning process. The services of the company or consortium will continue to be coordinated and managed by the MRCS and directed and overseen by the expert group for basin planning and relevant line/ implementing agencies with reporting to the MRC Joint Committee. A Core Team within the MRCS will continue to coordinate across MRC divisions with enhanced measures put in place to ensure adequate involvement of Member Country teams.

As joint projects and enabling activities move from planning to feasibility assessment and implementation, they will need increasing inputs at the national level. At this stage, MRC's role under Output 3.1.1 will mostly involve coordination and facilitation between basin countries and engagement with potential project financing institutions and other potential funding sources as part of implementing the Joint Projects Facility.

BDS OUTCOME 3.2: ENHANCED INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY IN IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE, HYDROPOWER, NAVIGATION, ENVIRONMENT, AND FISHERIES SECTORS

To help achieve Outcome 3.2, the MRC will focus on coordinating the work of the basin countries in helping to facilitate the identification and implementation of investments and associated measures in irrigated agriculture, sustainable hydropower, and navigation. The MRC undertakes its coordinator role to help achieve the sustainable development, utilisation, management, and conservation of the water and related resources of the Mekong River Basin under Article 1 of the *1995 Mekong Agreement*. The activities identified involve the MRC's planning (CRBMF3) core function.

The MRC will continue to support adaptation to climate change and the management of floods and droughts at the regional and national levels. A focus will be on the irrigation sector and the promotion of increased investment in alternative renewable energy sources in parallel with ongoing hydropower development. Enabling activities related to pumped hydropower storage and floating solar will facilitate the optimised use of hydropower within the ASEAN Power Grid through alignment of energy and water management policies. Further technical studies and policy analysis will support Member Countries to identify and progress joint investments in alternative renewable energy to help optimise Mekong Basin hydropower generation and the broader energy transition throughout the region.

In support to the irrigation sector and sustainable management of basin water resources the MRC will continue its initial work on groundwater resources to get

a better understanding of the status of groundwater use, management, and data gaps in the basin, including its connectivity with the surface or river water, recharge rates and sustainable yields, with improved understanding of the risks to the total water resources of the basin. In addition, the MRC will also continue to promote and support the Member Countries on uptake of the MRC Guidance on Irrigation Asset Management and Intermittent Irrigation, and the Technical Guideline on Sustainable Groundwater Use and Management for Agriculture.

The MRC will intensify efforts to facilitate the uptake of the Navigation Master Plan and the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Transport of Dangerous Goods, following a review and revision to ensure alignment with the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan and changing national priorities. In doing this, the MRC will organize intensive contacts and discussions with national agencies/authorities on the prioritization, identification, and implementation of actions under the Navigation Master Plan and Regional Action Plan; and support identification of funding opportunities for joint projects including under the Joint Projects Facility.

The MRC will continue to act as an honest broker to the competent authorities in each basin country to facilitate the transboundary harmonisation process on navigation and the coherent scheduling and implementation of investments that support the sector's sustainable development.



Strategic Priority 3: Enhance Optimal and Sustainable Development by Increasing Regional Benefits and Decreasing Regional Costs

BDS Outcome 3.2: Enhanced inclusive growth and sustainability in irrigated agriculture, hydropower, navigation, environment, and fisheries sectors

BDS Output 3.2.1: Irrigated agriculture investment and associated measures implemented

MRC SP Deliverables

- Groundwater monitoring system and database established and updated to support an assessment of groundwater status (2030)
- Uptake of Guidance on Irrigation Asset Management (IAM), and Intermittent Irrigation, and Technical Guideline on Sustainable Groundwater Use and Management for Agriculture (Annual)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
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3.2.1.3 Collect additional groundwater data and establish groundwater monitoring system and database to support a new regional groundwater strategy and policy recommendations for optimizing the groundwater irrigation development	PD	NR-CRBMF 3
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3.2.1.4 Promote the uptake of Guidance on Irrigation Asset Management and Intermittent Irrigation	PD	NR-CRBMF 3
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3.2.1.5 Promote the uptake of Technical Guidelines on Sustainable Groundwater Use and Management for Agriculture including carrying out pilot project related to groundwater	PD	NR-CRBMF 3
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BDS Output 3.2.2: Sustainable hydropower development strategy and related regional energy plans implemented in synergy

MRC SP Deliverables

- Enhanced cooperation on water-environment-energy linkages with other regional frameworks (2029)
- Basin-wide Alternative Energy Planning Review (2030)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
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3.2.2.2 Facilitate regional collaboration on water-environment-energy linkages to advance and support sustainable hydropower and alternative energy	PD	NR-CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 3
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3.2.2.3 Support Member Countries to identify, assess, and promote joint investments in alternative renewable energy	PD (OCEO)	NR-CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 3
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3.2.2.4 Conduct basin-wide alternative energy planning review	PD	NR-CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 3
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Strategic Priority 3: Enhance Optimal and Sustainable Development by Increasing Regional Benefits and Decreasing Regional Costs

BDS Output 3.2.3: Basin navigation plans implemented in synergy

MRC SP Deliverables

- Implementation of the Navigation Master Plan and the Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transport of Dangerous Goods (annual)
- Implementation of harmonised navigation rules and regulations (2026/2029)
- An accessible, digital MRC Navigation River Information Service for a diverse range of users, including small-scale traders and local riverine users (2028)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
3.2.3.3 Support the implementation of the Navigation Master Plan and the Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transport of Dangerous Goods in alignment with national priorities, and regional and national development plans	PD	NR-CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 3
3.2.3.4 Facilitate the harmonisation of navigation rules and regulations between basin countries, undertake technical and policy discussions, and support national implementation consistent with agreed regional priorities	PD	NR-CRBMF 3
3.2.3.5 Establish an accessible, a digital, basin-wide Mekong River Navigation Information Service to improve the safety, coordination, and sustainability of cross-border river transport	PD (TD)	NR-CRBMF 3



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: STRENGTHEN RESILIENCE AGAINST CLIMATE RISKS, EXTREME FLOODS, AND DROUGHTS

Under this strategic priority, the BDS identifies and describes 2 Outcomes and 7 Outputs (see Sections 5.4 of BDS 2021-2030 and 5.5 of BDS 2021-2030). The tables below summarize the key deliverables (and timelines) and activities that the MRC will implement to contribute to these Outcomes and Outputs. For the preparation of work plans, the activities under each Output can be further broken down into tasks, including the enabling tasks related to the impact pathway and the necessary stakeholder engagement and capacity building to ensure uptake.



BDS OUTCOME 4.1: BETTER INFORMED AND PREPARED BASIN COMMUNITIES AGAINST CHANGING RIVER CONDITIONS, AND MORE FREQUENT AND SEVERE FLOODS AND DROUGHTS

To help achieve Outcome 4.1, the MRC will continue to improve and implement the regional systems to inform people about basin conditions and support the MRC assessment and planning functions under the other strategic priorities. These systems include the monitoring networks, data and information management, modelling and decision support systems, forecasting and early warning, and data generation, sharing, analysis, and reporting across all dimensions of the MRB-IF and this BDS.

The activities to be implemented provide a foundation for the sustainable development, utilisation, management, and conservation of the water and related resources of the Mekong River Basin under Article 1 of the *1995 Mekong Agreement*. They mainly involve the MRC undertaking its data collection, monitoring (CRBMF1), and forecasting (CRBMF4) core functions.

The MRC will enhance the implementation of the Core River Monitoring Network, including incorporating new monitoring methods and guidance from the Joint Environmental Monitoring (JEM) Pilot Programme, building capacity among Member Countries, and integrating new data analytics and visualisation tools to support integrated cross-disciplinary analysis and decision-support. This investment in data to support basin planning and operational management will be complemented by further use of remote sensing products as integrated with the MRC's information and data management systems and the upgrade DSF and as necessary to support the State of the Basin Report. A Joint River Profile Survey will also be implemented including

with updated DEM and bathymetry mapping and greater use of ground and near-earth sensors with a view to improving flood inundation mapping and analysis, erosion and deposition and other dynamic process of interest to Member Countries.

Analysis and reporting on basin conditions (including in response to climatic variability) is a core function of the MRC, and this is undertaken for all strategic priorities through the implementation of activities under this Outcome. This includes hydro-meteorological, discharge and sediment, water quality, fisheries, ecological health monitoring, and the JEM, along with implementing the DAGAP to ensure a comprehensive and up-to-date State of Basin Report can be delivered in 2028. The MRC will again seek collaboration with China and Myanmar to prepare the whole-of-basin State of the Basin Report, as an underpinning resource for developing the next Basin Development Strategy 2031-2040 under Output 5.1.2.

Following significant investment in upgraded systems and tools in the last SP period, the next few years will require a focus on embedding new systems and practices into standard operating arrangements, testing and refining as needed, and building capacity for their use and application at the regional and national levels including with new tools for data analysis and decision-support. An important priority is the implementation of the recently upgraded Decision-Support Framework including with currently missing modules for water quality, sediment, salinity and hydropower coordination.

The MRC will continue to enhance data sharing, monitoring, and forecasting capabilities for floods and droughts at multiple scales (from the regional to the community level) and strengthen the links and ongoing cooperation with national monitoring, forecasting, and early warning systems.

The MRC will undertake a significant review and revision of the MRB-IF, with a focus on streamlining and rationalising the number

of indicators and improving consideration of gender disparities and vulnerability of basin communities, building on the gender and vulnerability review and removing redundant indicators where feasible data sources and appropriate methods have not been identified over two rounds of the SOBR since the MRB-IF was agreed. Filling gaps for the SOBR will emphasise use of existing national datasets, where feasible.

Strategic Priority 4: Strengthen Resilience Against Climate Risks, Extreme Floods, and Droughts

BDS Outcome 4.1: Better informed and prepared basin communities against changing river conditions, and more frequent and severe floods and droughts

BDS Output 4.1.1: A core river monitoring network for the mainstream and remaining national river monitoring networks consolidated

MRC SP Deliverables

- Core River Monitoring Network, assessment and reporting (annual)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
4.1.1.4 Implement the Core River Monitoring Network, including integrated analysis and reporting activities, updated databases and the update of rating curves for hydro-meteorological, discharge and sediment disciplines	TD	R-CRBMF 1
4.1.1.5 Implement the Core River Monitoring Network, including integrated analysis and reporting activities and updated databases for water quality, fisheries, and ecological health disciplines	ED	R-CRBMF 1

BDS Output 4.1.2: Integrated data and information systems for more effective basin-wide data management and sharing

MRC SP Deliverables

- Updated Bathymetry and Digital Elevation Model (DEM) dataset of the Mekong Basin (annual)
- Upgraded spatial data and remote sensing product repository (2027)
- Implementation of strengthened PDIES to enhance timely, standardized information sharing, including additional data from tributaries and coordination of basin operations (annual)
- Visualisation and data analytics platform to support integrated analysis and inform decision-makers (2028)

Strategic Priority 4: Strengthen Resilience Against Climate Risks, Extreme Floods, and Droughts

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
4.1.2.4 Continue to update bathymetry data, digital elevation model, and other ground data to improve accuracy of transboundary environmental impact assessment, flood and drought forecasting, and in support of MRC procedures	TD	NR-CRBMF 1 / CRBMF 2
4.1.2.5 Continue to upgrade and update the remote sensing and geospatial data products and repository to store, visualize and disseminate MRC products including maps and undertake capacity building to generate, handle and maintain the product and repository	TD	NR-CRBMF 1 / CRBMF 2
4.1.2.6 Strengthen implementation of the PDIES consistent with updated Technical Guidelines and related guidelines for other Procedures, and by operating and maintaining single-point entry and integrated regional databases and information systems and facilitating the transfer of data to and from basin countries and the private sector	TD	R-CRBMF 5
4.1.2.7 Update network analytics and visualisation platform for CRMN (Water Status Dashboard), integrating hydrology, WQ, EHM, fisheries, and sediment	TD (OCEO, ED, PD)	NR-CRBMF 1

BDS Output 4.1.3: Compatible Decision Support Systems in line with reinvigorated data, modelling, forecasting, and communication capabilities

MRC SP Deliverables

- An operational and continuously improved MRC-DSF supporting basin-wide planning and forecasting, including capacity building (annual)
- Water quality, sediment, and salinity integrated into MRC-DSF (2030)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
4.1.3.5 Maintain, operate and enhance the MRC-DSF, including the Water Status Dashboard, update data, and implement the scenario analysis tool to support basin-wide planning, transboundary decision-making, timely communication of flood and drought, and development risks to stakeholders and the public	TD	R-CRBMF 2
4.1.3.6 Further develop and incorporate the water quality (mainly salinity and sediment) module into the MRC-DSF to support basin-wide planning, transboundary sediment management, and coordinated responses to flood, drought, and water-related emergencies in vulnerable areas	TD (ED)	NR-CRBMF 2
4.1.3.7 Strengthen regional and national capacity for the application, maintenance, and use of the MRC-DSF	TD	R-CRBMF 2

Strategic Priority 4: Strengthen Resilience Against Climate Risks, Extreme Floods, and Droughts

BDS Output 4.1.4: Integrated basin-wide flood and drought forecasting and early warning

MRC SP Deliverables

- An integrated system for river monitoring, river flood, flash flood guidance, and drought forecasting tools, including both backend (modelling and analysis tool) and frontend (2028)
- An impact-based forecasting system with advisory dissemination for river flood, flash flood, and drought on short-term to long-term time scales (2029)
- A riverine forecasting system for selected key tributaries (2028)
- Joint transboundary activities/projects for flood and drought adaptation (2028)
- Community awareness campaigns and capacity building to improve resilience, preparedness, and response capabilities in vulnerable regions (annual)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
4.1.4.4 Enhance the integration standard procedures between river monitoring and forecasting systems; and enhance the back-end (tools and database) and front-end (website) integration system for forecasting tools and effective database management, including linking predictive models to early warnings	TD OCEO	R-CRBMF 4
4.1.4.5 Develop profiles (incl. base level data and mapping) of vulnerable groups susceptible to floods, flash floods, and drought, and risk maps for potential impacts of floods (river and flash flood) and drought on these groups over multiple spatial and temporal scales	TD PD	NR-CRBMF 4
4.1.4.6 Develop and implement impact-based forecasting system with advisory dissemination for river flood, flash flood, and drought on short-term to long-term scales	TD PD	NR-CRBMF 4
4.1.4.7 Develop an integrated flood forecasting system in key tributaries of the Mekong mainstream and integrate into the existing bulletins	TD	R-CRBMF 4
4.1.4.8 Enhance forecast dissemination and awareness about hydro-meteorological risks, strengthen stakeholder capacity for flood and drought management, and educate communities through NMCs, about natural disasters to improve resilience and emergency response capabilities including with detailed flood risk maps	TD (OCEO)	R-CRBMF 4
4.1.4.9 Develop and implement the joint transboundary flood and drought adaptation activities/projects	TD (PD)	R-CRBMF 4

Strategic Priority 4: Strengthen Resilience Against Climate Risks, Extreme Floods, and Droughts

BDS Output 4.1.5: Joint State of Basin Report

MRC SP Deliverables

- Updated MRB-IF and DAGAP aligned with PDIES to reduce cost with data sharing agreements in place (2027)
- Integrated multi-disciplinary assessment methodology to support analysis of causal relationships and vulnerabilities of basin communities (2027)
- State of the Basin Report with automated online data visualisation of SOBR dashboards (2029)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
4.1.5.2 Review and revise as needed the MRB-IF indicators and assessment methods including improving gender and vulnerability analysis and reporting	ED (OCEO, PD, TD)	R-CRBMF 1 / CRBMF 2
4.1.5.3 Develop and trial an integrated multi-disciplinary assessment methodology to identify causal linkages and impacts on environmental conditions and vulnerable basin communities	ED (TD, PD)	NR-CRBMF 2
4.1.5.4 Implement the streamlined MRB-IF and Data Acquisition and Generation Action Plan including regional studies to enable preparation of the 2028 State of Basin Report	ED (PD, TD)	R-CRBMF 1 / CRBMF 2
4.1.5.5 Prepare the 2028 State of Basin Report with all six basin countries to inform the development of the BDS 2031-2040	ED	R-CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 3
4.1.5.6 Improve data visualisation dashboard for the State of the Basin Report using business intelligence tools (e.g., Power BI, Tableau) to generate live dashboards from MRC IF databases to visualize conditions and trends	OCEO (PD, ED, TD)	NR-CRBMF 2 / CRBMF 3



The activities under Outcome 4.1 can best be implemented by MRC staff through their routine operational roles and with the support of basin expert groups and individual consultants or consultant teams, as needed. Additional technical investment will likely be necessary to support bedding-in of capacity for new systems and ensuring maximum value is obtained from the investment to-date as well as supporting the integration of systems at regional and national levels. This investment may be in new datasets and tools, as well as IT systems, data sharing, and communications mechanisms. Some of the activities under this Outcome will need to be incorporated and implemented at the national level for the Outcome and Outputs to be achieved.

To save costs and improve efficiency, the SOBR will use existing national data to fill gaps where available, adopt modular reporting, and automate visualisations, enabling timely, data-driven insights with minimal new data collection. Further improvements in data acquisition and reporting include:

- **Optimizing Data Acquisition Costs for DAGAP:** To reduce costs and enhance efficiency, the preparation of SOBR will prioritize the use of existing National Data Systems by formalizing data-sharing protocols to use existing datasets (e.g., hydrology, water quality, land use) rather than commissioning new surveys.
- **Streamlining SOBR Report Writing & Development:** To improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the State of the Basin Report (SOBR) process, a Modular Reporting Approach will be adopted. The SOBR will be structured into thematic online modules (e.g., water quality, fisheries, socio-economics) and updated on a rolling basis, reducing studies, data collections, writing and editing costs.
- **Automate Data Visualisation & Dashboards:** In addition, the use of business intelligence tools such as Power BI and Tableau will be used to generate live dashboards from MRC IF databases to visualize the State of the Mekong, further supporting decision-making.





BDS OUTCOME 4.2: BETTER DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND ADAPTATION TO WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE RISKS

To help achieve Outcome 4.2, the MRC will continue to focus on supporting cooperation between basin countries on coordinated water infrastructure operations, floodwater management, and climate change adaptation. The activities to be implemented are central to the sustainable development, utilisation, management, and conservation of the water and related resources of the Mekong River Basin under Article 1 of the *1995 Mekong Agreement*, and involve the MRC undertaking monitoring (CRBMF1), assessment (CRBMF2), and planning (CRBMF3) core functions.

The Outcome is supported by the contribution of Outputs from other dimensions, in particular the facilitation of significant joint investment projects, national projects of basin-wide significance, and enabling activities identified in the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan under Outputs 3.1.1 and 5.1.2, having the capacity to influence water availability and flow conditions.

A key focus will be on advancing the coordinated operation of hydropower and other water infrastructure to support disaster management, sediment flushing trials and environmental benefits and other outputs of the Joint Studies with China and Myanmar. The MRC will work with basin countries and project operators to develop guidelines and facilitate active coordination of water releases on hydropower cascades. This work

will be supported by the development of hydropower coordination system that makes necessary data and information available to decision-makers.

The MRC will coordinate the implementation of agreed flood and drought solutions (including nature-based solutions and coordinated infrastructure operations) identified in the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan to enable resilience to potential future climatic conditions and cooperate on progressing large-scale regional projects that contribute to climate change resilience with the support of a regional Mekong Fund and other funding sources. This includes continuing efforts to adapt to climate change and manage floods and droughts through transboundary projects at sub-basin scale, such as the joint projects for 9C-9T, the Mekong Delta, and the 3S basin - Sekong, Sesan, and Srepok. A Joint Projects Facility will be established to introduce a systematic process of project identification, development, assessment and financing including for projects with significant national implementation components, as reflected in the National Indicative Plans.

Work on accreditation of the MRC to the global climate funds will continue along with ongoing identification, review, and progression of joint transboundary projects of mutual interest to more than one country.

Strategic Priority 4: Strengthen Resilience Against Climate Risks, Extreme Floods and Droughts

BDS Outcome 4.2: Better disaster management and adaptation to water resources development and climate risks

BDS Output 4.2.1: Coordinated water infrastructure operations for multiple benefits including gender and vulnerability sensitive disaster mitigation and management

MRC SP Deliverables

- Increased data and information sharing from dam operators (2027)
- Guidelines for hydropower flow and reservoir coordination, supported by a hydropower flow coordination system (2029)
- An active coordination mechanism for water releases in water-related disaster management (2030)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
4.2.1.5 Develop guidelines on hydropower flow and reservoir coordination for water-related disaster management (floods and droughts), sediment flushing trials, and environmental benefits, while considering engagement from upper riparian countries	PD (ED, TD)	NR-CRBMF 2
4.2.1.6 Support the implementation of coordinated hydropower flow and reservoir coordination, including through pilot project implementation	PD TD	NR-CRBMF 2

BDS Output 4.2.2: Climate change adaptation, flood and drought management mainstreamed at national levels

MRC SP Deliverables

- Accreditation of MRC to global climate funds (2028)
- Transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought management solutions (2028)
- Joint Projects Facility with joint and transboundary investment projects delivered (2028)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
4.2.2.6 Finalise accreditation requirements for MRC access to international climate finance to project proposals that ensure cost-effective administration	PD	NR-CRBMF 3
4.2.2.7 Implement a Joint Projects Facility to facilitate identification, development, and financing of strategic joint and transboundary projects and coordinate project implementation	OCEO PD (TD, ED)	NR-CRBMF 3
4.2.2.8 Support the development of ecosystem-based or nature-based, and green-grey solutions for flood and drought mitigation in the LMB	PD	NR-CRBMF 4



The activities under Outcome 4.2 can best be implemented through the agreed enabling activities identified in the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan, particularly in relation to the coordination of multiple-use reservoirs and coordinated basin operations to support flood and drought management. This will need to be complemented by the usual

MRC operational arrangements supported by individual consultants, where needed including to undertake targeted studies and projects on specific issues. Some of the activities under this Outcome will need to be incorporated and implemented at the national level for the Outcome and Outputs to be achieved.

The background image shows a conference setting. In the foreground, the backs of several people's heads and shoulders are visible as they sit in chairs. One person on the right is holding up a smartphone to take a photo. In the background, a large screen displays the MRC logo, which includes a globe and the letters 'MRC'. To the right, a yellow banner has some text, including 'Coop' at the top and 'We n' and 'partners' below. The overall scene is dimly lit, with the screen and banner providing the main light source.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5: STRENGTHEN COOPERATION AMONG ALL BASIN COUNTRIES AND STAKEHOLDERS

Under this strategic priority, the BDS identifies and describes 2 Outcomes and 7 Outputs (see Sections 5.4 of BDS 2021-2030 and 5.5 of BDS 2021-2030). The tables below summarize the key deliverables (and timelines) and activities that the MRC will implement to contribute to these Outcomes and Outputs. For the preparation of work plans, the activities under each Output can be further broken down into tasks, including the enabling tasks related to the impact pathway and the necessary stakeholder engagement and capacity building to ensure uptake.





BDS OUTCOME 5.1: STRENGTHENED MEKONG RIVER COMMISSION FOR MORE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEKONG AGREEMENT

To help achieve Outcome 5.1, the MRC will continue to focus on strengthening the implementation of the *1995 Mekong Agreement* Procedures (aka MRC Procedures), including in relation to Article 7 and Article 8, and on the development of organisational capacity encompassing all its regional and national parts. The activities identified involve the MRC enhancing the operation of the MRC Procedures (CRBMF5) and Corporate Services (CF1) core functions.

In this SP period, the MRC will prioritise the resolution of outstanding issues and the integrated application of the five Procedures, including consolidating the learnings from PNPCA and the working arrangements on PMFM into a final agreement along with enhanced data visualisation and decision-support tools.

On the PNPCA this involves: (a) improving feedback on implementation of commitments made by project developers/host countries as part of the PNPCA process; (b) stimulating greater uptake of lessons learnt by project proponents through targeted information sharing meetings; (c) clarifying the definition of 'tributary' in the PNPCA and its Guidelines; (d) promoting early resolution of contested PNPCA submissions; (e) providing clarity on the role of PNPCA in cases of incremental development; and (f) clarifying internal processes by which MRCS undertakes investigations in response to gaps in PNPCA

submissions. An enhanced Joint Action Plan tracking and follow-up process will be implemented.

On the PMFM this involves: (a) continuing work to agree and implement an updated flow framework and flow thresholds with agreed response protocols; (b) incorporating considerations of reduced occurrence of beneficial floods and increased variability of river flows in the PMFM analysis; and (c) operationalising PMFM with support from the DSF as soon as feasible, under Output 1.1.1.

Updated technical guidelines on the pragmatic implementation of PWUM with enhanced use of remote sensing products are also needed, along with the institutionalising of coordination mechanisms between MRC, national focal points, and national disaster management authorities in each Member Country.

Organisational development (OD) is a critical activity in the lead-up to 2030, so it is important to position the organisation for effective implementation of its functions under self-financing arrangements beyond 2030. The OD will need to ensure that the organisation has the right staffing complement, structure, and financial systems, including accessible funding sources, working priorities, and partnerships, to remain the central coordinating platform for cooperation on water resources in the basin.

The OD activities will be guided by a review of financial and staffing arrangements, including consideration of organisational structure, HR forecasting and development, gender and diversity inclusion, HRMS digitalisation, capacity building and maintaining institutional memory. The OD activities will also need to consider emerging organisational issues such as the separation of responsibilities in MRCS for activities related to implementation of its Procedures and Technical Guidelines and the preparatory work in support of developing joint infrastructure and the administration of governance arrangements for the Mekong Fund and any role MRC has in the identification, formulation and progression of potential projects to be funded, ensuring the highest governance standards continue to be met.

The MRC will also identify ways to improve its HR recruitment processes and policy to attract highly qualified staff and promote diversity. This includes accelerating the number of women in leadership positions by strengthening good practices and reconsidering internal procedures for entry salaries and benefits.

Further organisation development will require discussion and consultation with Member Countries and Development Partners to prioritise post-2030 budget allocations under agreed funding arrangements and

clarify potential vehicles for external funding of non-routine core activities beyond 2030, including clarity on the role of the Mekong Fund. The preparation of the next BDS 2031-2040 will incorporate agreements reached in finalizing the Adaptive Basin Plan, including joint supplementary investment projects and enabling activities, and with guidance on a set of non-routine core activities necessary for implementation over the ten-year period. Subject to resourcing, these can then be taken up by MRC in the next SP, including in partnership with others, as appropriate. Priorities from regional strategies that require implementation beyond 2030 will also be considered in the new BDS 2031-2040 rather than updating or renewing the regional strategies themselves.

The MRC's M&E system will be updated, where necessary including to: (a) consider amending the assessment process and being clearer on the level of progress and achievement; (b) strengthening the national capacity in M&E and coordination between the MRCS and the NMCSs; (c) exploring development of an online portal that links to the MRCS M&E system; (d) involving MRCS M&E staff periodically within Divisions on particular project work to deepen their understanding and capacity to undertake analysis.



Strategic Priority 5: Strengthen Cooperation Among all Countries and Stakeholders

BDS Outcome 5.1: Strengthened Mekong River Commission for more effective implementation of the Mekong Agreement

BDS Output 5.1.1: Implementation of the MRC Procedures enhanced

MRC SP Deliverables

- Enhanced implementation of the MRC Procedures and their associated (technical) guidelines in an integrated way (annual)
- Implementation of the PNPCA and updated Guidelines for sustainable water infrastructure development (annual)
- Key priorities for selected tributaries of basin-wide significant agreed and implemented (2029)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
5.1.1.6 Strengthen the MRC Joint Platform to enable integrated analysis and coordination of MRC Procedures taking into account the Technical Guidelines of relevant MRC Procedures and enhanced visualisation tools	PD	R- CRBMF 3 / CRBMF 5
5.1.1.7 Implement the PNPCA to support sustainable water infrastructure development	PD (ED, TD, OCEO)	NR-CRBMF 5
5.1.1.8 Develop and implement a policy note to deal with flow and sediment and other environmental issues in selected tributaries of basin-wide significance	PD	NR-CRBMF 5

Strategic Priority 5: Strengthen Cooperation Among all Countries and Stakeholders

BDS Output 5.1.2: Organisational development of the Mekong River Commission

MRC SP Deliverables

- MRC Summits (2027, 2030)
- IT investments to support data analytics and visualisation tools (2027)
- National Indicative Plans 2026-2030 formulated (2026)
- Product dissemination and communication frameworks for national uptake (2027)
- Final Mekong Fund operating arrangements (2030)
- Mid-Term Review of the MRC Strategic Plan (2028)
- Roadmap for post-2030 financing arrangements with targets, funding modalities and aligned staffing levels (2028)
- BDS 2031-2040 and MRC Strategic Plan 2031-2035 (2030)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
5.1.2.13 Review and finalize the roadmap for self-financing of MRC post-2030 including financial arrangements, governance and operating mechanisms (including for the Mekong Fund) through consultations with Member Countries and Development Partners, to ensure long-term financial sustainability of the organisation	AD OCEO	NR-CF1
5.1.2.14 Operate the financial management information system and internal controls in line with standard operating procedures for budget, risk, fraud, audit procurement and IT security, and undertake risk assessments, updating controls and checks as needed	AD	R-CF1
5.1.2.15 Organise and coordinate MRC governance meetings, including MRC Summits*, Council, Joint Committee, Joint Committee Task Force, and Budget Committee, including participation of MRC partners, and identify and implement efficiency measures	OCEO AD	R-CF1
5.1.2.16 Prepare, monitor and manage the MRCS MWPs to implement the MRC SP; provide guidance on impact pathways, and coordinate across divisions	OCEO	R-CF1
5.1.2.17. Support the preparation and implementation of the National Indicative Plans to implement the BDS 2021-2030	PD	NR-CF1
5.1.2.18 Prepare the BDS 2031-2040 and the MRC SP 2031-2035	PD OCEO	R-CF1
5.1.2.19 Update and implement MRC's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems consistent with the new MRC Strategic Plan 2026-2030, and conduct the Mid-Term Review of SP 2026-2030 and the Completion Review of the SP 2021-2025	OCEO	R-CF1

Strategic Priority 5: Strengthen Cooperation Among all Countries and Stakeholders

5.1.2.20 Prepare and implement national CIP dissemination and communication frameworks co-developed with Member Countries to improve uptake of MRC products, tools, and strategies	OCEO	NR-CF1
5.1.2.21 Improve IT infrastructure including use of hybrid cloud solutions, strengthening cybersecurity, and enhanced IT support, to enable improved visualisation and data analytics platforms	AD	NR-CF1
5.1.2.22 Implement the MRC SP, MWPs through efficient and productive Procurements and HR activities, systems, and processes, and cross-Division/Office coordination	AD	R-CF1
5.1.2.23 Strengthen HR systems to promote equitable practices; enhance leadership and empowerment opportunities for women across the MRC; build capacity through internal gender policy audit and leadership training activities; promote gender equality in HR data systematization, and inclusive procurement	AD	NR-CF1

The activities under Outcome 5.1 can best be implemented through the normal MRC mechanisms involving leadership by MRCS senior staff, and support from individual consultants, where needed. The work under Output 5.1.1 will need to be coordinated by the MRC Joint Platform and reporting to the MRC Joint Committee.

For the implementation of the organisational and institutional activities under Output 5.1.2 it will be important to use experts and consultants that have been involved in

a leading role in similar activities for similar organizations elsewhere within or outside the region. Many of the activities will need to be complemented with capacity building of the relevant national line/implementing agencies by regional MRC bodies (i.e. these activities are not only about strengthening the MRC Secretariat). Considerable engagement with Member Countries and MRC Development Partners will be needed to ensure the institutional mechanisms and funding arrangements are in place to support a seamless transition up to and beyond 2030.



OUTCOME 5.2: INCREASED JOINT EFFORTS AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR MORE INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF THE ENTIRE RIVER BASIN

To help achieve Outcome 5.2, the MRC will continue to focus on working with all its partners and other stakeholders through several avenues designed to move the management of the entire river system to a more integrated, coherent state. The activities identified primarily involve the MRC undertaking its planning (CRBMF3) and corporate services (CF1) core functions by fulfilling leaders' requests to *coordinate the work on water and related resources development and management of relevant actors* in the Mekong.

The MRC will seek to elevate cooperation with MRC Dialogue Partners and Mekong-Lancang Cooperation on Water by facilitating and coordinating operational data sharing, joint studies/surveys, joint expert groups and information sharing systems, coordinated operation of water-related infrastructures, and the development of a joint basin-wide flood and drought management strategy for the Mekong-Lancang River Basin with both infrastructure and non-infrastructure measures and emphasising transboundary cooperation needs.

The MRC will work towards strengthening cooperation with China on routine sharing of reservoir operational data from dam operators on the Lancang mainstream to support the above directions. Further effort will also be made to prioritise partnership activities with all relevant actors, including

through improved approaches to measuring and evaluating the benefits of cooperation, so that effort can be targeted where it is most effective and achieve tangible benefits for riparian countries.

Partnership activities will also be streamlined and prioritised with other partners and with further development of the Sister River partnership with other River Basin Organisations around the world as a means of promoting the cooperative arrangements for water resources management in the Mekong River Basin and sharing knowledge and lessons learned on common challenges.

To support the implementation of the adaptive basin plan, the MRC will (a) facilitate the development and trialling of benefit sharing models to support joint investments between countries, including to share the benefits derived from wetlands and their ecosystem services; and (b) engage with potential funding agencies and the private sector early in the assessment of all proposed joint investment projects and adaptation measures, and in discussions between countries, to build support for potential investment decisions. The MRC will also implement and seek to raise further funds for the Mekong Fund for all agreed purposes and windows. The Mekong Fund is envisioned to be a unified structure, including the Mekong Fund Ecosystem Window (MFEW).

Strategic Priority 5: Strengthen Cooperation Among All Countries and Stakeholders

BDS Outcome 5.2: Increased joint efforts and partnerships for more integrated management of the entire river basin

BDS Output 5.2.2: Significant joint investment projects and national projects of basin-wide significance and associated measures agreed based on consideration of trade-offs, benefit sharing, and risks

MRC SP Deliverables

- Agreements between countries on cooperation arrangements and benefit sharing for joint investment projects and enabling activities (2029)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
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5.2.2.1 Support the preparation of funding proposals and implementation of agreed joint investment projects and national projects of basin-wide significance with community impact, including facilitation of negotiations and outreach to potential investors	OCEO PD, ED	NR-CRBMF 3
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5.2.2.2 Establish an agreed benefit sharing model to share the costs and benefits of joint investment projects including the existing planned transboundary hydropower projects and provide guidance on its implementation at regional and national levels	PD (OCEO, ED)	NR-CRBMF 3
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BDS Output 5.2.3: Mekong water-related cooperation mechanisms and relevant partnerships implemented in collaboration with countries

MRC SP Deliverables

- Partnership agreements with Development Partners, ASEAN, GMS, MLC Water, ACMECS, Mekong-US, Mekong-Australia, Mekong-Japan, and Mekong-ROK implemented (annual)
- Partnership agreements and cooperation plans with all relevant partners developed and implemented (annual)
- Sister River Partnerships expanded with river basin organisations and joint work programme agreed (2027)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
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5.2.3.4 Implement and enhance partnerships between MRC and Dialogue Partners, Development Partners, other Mekong water-related programmes of regional cooperation mechanisms (incl. MLC, ASEAN, GMS, ACMECS, Mekong-US, Mekong Australia, Mekong-Japan, Mekong-ROK) and sister river RBOs	OCEO	R-CRBMF1
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5.2.3.5 Engage and participate in regional and global water-related activities/events, including World Water Week, UN events, World Water Forums, Asia-Pacific Water Weeks etc to raise the profile of the Mekong	OCEO	NR-CF1
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Strategic Priority 5: Strengthen Cooperation Among All Countries and Stakeholders

BDS Output 5.2.4: Joint Basin Expert Groups

MRC SP Deliverables

- Implementation of agreed Joint Studies, data/model sharing (annual)
- Implementation of the strengthened Joint Expert Group on Data, Modelling, and Forecasting (annual)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
5.2.4.1 Implement Joint Studies and technical collaboration to support data/model sharing	TD	R-CRBMF1
5.2.4.2 Implement Joint Survey of the Lancang and Mekong River Basin	TD	R-CRBMF1
5.2.4.3 Strengthen the Joint LMC-MRC Expert Group on Data, Modelling, and Forecasting's functions	TD	R-CRBMF1
5.2.4.4 Evaluate the effectiveness of the current Expert Groups for further improvement	OCEO	NR-CRBMF1

BDS Output 5.2.5: Harmonised basin-wide stakeholder platform

MRC SP Deliverables

- Stakeholder engagement activities undertaken to gather inputs to BDS implementation and feedback response mechanism established (annual)
- Mekong Roundtable, Media Exchange and Regional Stakeholder Forums, University Competition and other events conducted (annual)
- Outreach and engagement of youth and communities on iReport for community-based early warning system (2028)
- Community Innovation Projects including capacity building to improve resilience, preparedness, and response capabilities in vulnerable regions (annual)

MRC SP Activities	Lead	Core Function
5.2.5.4 Coordinate proactive and enhanced stakeholder engagement on BDS implementation in coordination with countries and partners, including through the implementation of MRC Procedures and Regional Stakeholder Forums	OCEO	R-CF1

Strategic Priority 5: Strengthen Cooperation Among All Countries and Stakeholders

5.2.5.5 Develop and support MCs to implement outreach through youth and community engagement and provide structured responses to feedback given, including through the MRC Education and Visitor Center and One Mekong App, for disseminating information to and gathering feedback from stakeholders, the media, basin communities, and the broader public on matters relevant to MRC functions, policies, products, and services, and evaluate its effectiveness

OCEO R-CF1

5.2.5.6 Develop and coordinate implementation of Community Innovation Projects to help address regional challenges such as community-based fish breeding centres

OCEO R-CF1
(ED, PD)



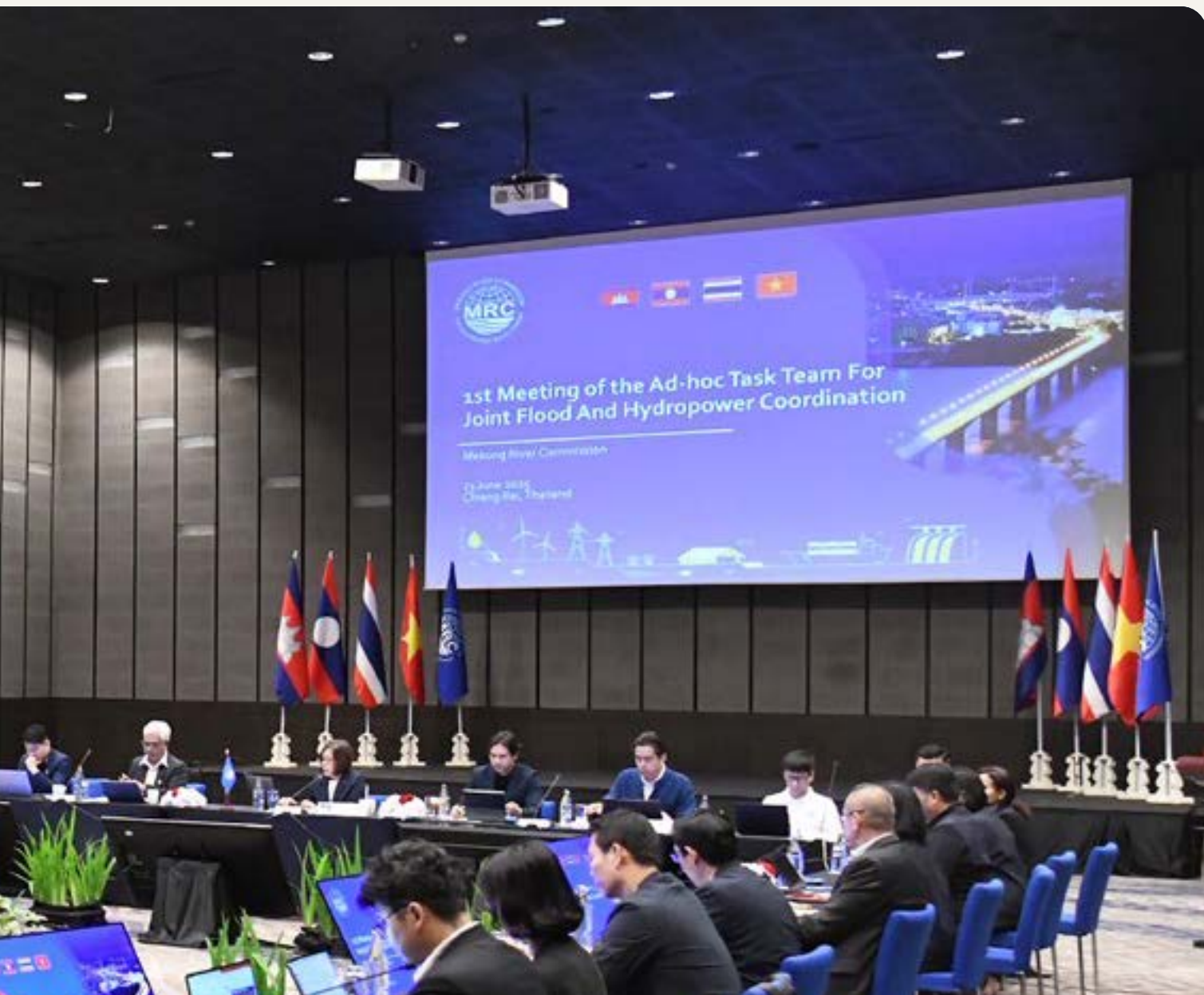
The activities under Outcome 5.2 can best be implemented by the normal MRC mechanisms, involving leadership by MRCS senior staff and support from individual consultants, where needed. The work engaging with MRC partners and stakeholders is led and coordinated by the OCEO and requires the involvement of all MRC divisions. The work is overseen by the Expert Group on Partnerships and reports to the MRC Joint Committee.

In addition to the operation of Expert Groups under Output 5.2.3, ad-hoc sub-groups and joint technical working groups may be established for specific issues, reporting to the existing Expert Groups. Options will be considered and implemented to facilitate greater involvement of Joint Committee Members in visits and engagement activities across the Basin to enable greater awareness and understanding of basin-wide concerns.



**IDENTIFIED PRIORITY JOINT
INVESTMENT PROJECTS AND
ENABLING ACTIVITIES TO PROGRESS
OVER THE REMAINDER OF THE BDS
2021-2030 PERIOD AND BEYOND**





The Initial Adaptive Basin Plan developed through the Proactive Regional Planning initiative identifies a mix of joint supplementary projects with transboundary relevance, joint enabling activities, and national projects of basin-wide significance. Although some interventions are initially designated to occur in particular countries, in all cases, projects can be formulated as joint

projects involving two or more Member Countries with appropriate consideration of benefit-sharing mechanisms. The joint enabling activities may lead to specific investment decisions through further investigation. Progressing these projects and activities will be undertaken through several activities in the MRC SP 2026-2030 work plan, aligning with the Outcomes and Outputs of the BDS 2021-2030 (Table 1).

Table 1: Joint Investment Projects and Enabling Activities Identified in the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan

Projects and Activities		Relevant MRC SP 2026-2030 Activities
Joint Supplementary Investment Projects		
1.	Implementation of multi-purpose grey storage involving all countries (last resort projects)	Activities 3.1.1.4; 4.2.2.7; 4.2.2.8; 5.1.1.7; 1.1.2.5; 1.1.2.7; 5.2.2.1; and 5.2.2.2
Joint Enabling Activities with potential for specific investment projects		
1.	Coordination of multi-purpose operation of existing and planned hydropower dams (no regrets, involving all Member Countries)	Activities 4.2.1.5; 4.2.1.6; 4.2.2.7
2.	Development of alternative renewables leading to joint investment projects, including in floating solar and pumped hydropower storage in addition to land-based solar and wind (no regrets, involving all Member Countries)	Activities 3.2.2.2; 3.2.2.3; 3.2.2.4; 4.2.2.7; 4.2.2.8
3.	Spatial planning for flood risk management in Cambodia and Viet Nam (no regrets, involving cooperation between Cambodia and Viet Nam)	Activities 4.2.2.7; 4.2.2.8
4.	Sediment management (no regrets, involving all Member Countries)	Activities 1.2.1.4; 1.2.1.5; 1.2.1.6; 4.2.2.7; 4.2.2.8
5.	Towards sustainable sand extraction (no regrets, involving Cambodia and Viet Nam)	Activities 1.2.1.6; 1.2.1.4; 4.2.1.5; 4.2.2.7; 4.2.2.8
National Projects of basin-wide significance and potential for joint involvement through agreed benefit-sharing mechanisms		
1.	Wetland protections in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Thailand (no regrets, involving Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Thailand)	Activities 1.3.1.4; 1.3.2.3; 1.3.2.4; 4.2.2.8
2.	Watershed protection and reforestation in Lao PDR (no regrets, involving other Member Countries, only as needed through agreed benefit sharing)	Activities 1.3.1.4; 1.3.2.3; 1.3.2.4; 4.2.2.8

Main Roles and Responsibilities

MRC Roles and Responsibilities:

- Facilitate agreement coordination between countries (MRCS) and within countries (NMCs)
- Provide policy and technical support, including transboundary assessments and benefit sharing
- Engage with partners and support finance mobilisation
- Ensure consistency with regional guidelines and strategies
- Facilitate application of PNPCA as needed

Member Countries Roles and Responsibilities:

- Integrate projects and activities to national plans and implementation processes
- Ensure consistency with national policies, guidelines and strategies
- Undertake national assessments and support finance mobilisation
- Apply regional strategies and guidelines in national systems, including TbEIA as needed
- Apply PNPCA as needed
- Engage local stakeholders, especially those potentially affected by projects and activities



CONTRIBUTING TO THE SDGs AND ADDRESSING GENDER AND VULNERABILITY

All Member Countries are committed to working towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, and this commitment in relation to the Mekong River Basin is integrated into Chapter 5 of the Basin Development Strategy 2021-2030 through the BDS Results Chain. Although recognizing significant implementation and funding gaps, this MRC SP 2026-2030 supports a final push to the achievement of the SDGs as far as possible with activities under each Outcome and Output of the BDS and contributing to the following SDGs:



Figure 5: SDGs to Which the MRC SP 2026-2030 Contributes through the BDS Results Chain

The Mekong River Basin faces growing environmental, social, and climate-related pressures that disproportionately affect vulnerable groups, especially vulnerable households lacking access to resources and services, and communities in remote or

hazard-prone areas. While the MRC Strategic Plan 2026–2030 outlines transformative priorities for resilience, sustainability, and cooperation, it must also seek to ensure these benefits are **equitably distributed**.

Building on the substantial achievements and progress made in the SP 2021-2025 implementation, the MRC SP 2026-2030 will continue to ensure that gender and vulnerability aspects are integrated into the planning and implementation of the MRC’s core functions and activities, including the monitoring framework. It embeds equity, gender sensitivity, and vulnerability into MRC work, from joint investment projects to data collection, forecasting, and monitoring systems. These actions reinforce the Plan’s goals and are intended to strengthen basin-wide cooperation, trust, and tangible benefits for the most at-risk communities.

The MRC SP 2026-2030 will emphasize the need for more inclusive development and collective action to improve gender equity, reduce social vulnerability, and address gender disparities and other vulnerabilities of basin communities affected by water resources development and changing river conditions in access to resources and services. This SP highlights the importance of ensuring equitable access to resources and service by operationalizing Gender Equity and Vulnerability Action Plans (GEVAP), strengthening data systems, and prioritizing additional support to the vulnerable communities and LMB populations impacted



by water resources development and climate change (flood, drought, and other hazards) through community-based projects/activities. Community-based approaches, such as the **Mekong community-based product development, Community Innovation Projects (CIP), and Mekong Roundtables**, will be key mechanisms to deliver these outcomes.

The SP 2026–2030 introduces a more **systematic approach to implementing GEVAP** at both regional and national levels,

building on progress made under the current SP:

Strengthening organizational gender equity: The MRC will continue to strengthen HR systems to promote equitable practices; enhance leadership and empowerment opportunities for women across the MRC; build capacity through internal policy gender audit and leadership training activities; promote gender equality in HR data systematization, inclusive procurement (Activity 5.1.2.10 and 5.1.2.23).

Transitioning from GAP to GEVAP:

Moving beyond the Gender Action Plan (GAP), the focus will shift towards a more comprehensive GEVAP integrating gender equity and vulnerability into water, energy, and food security. This aligns with BDS Output 2.1.4, which aims for the next five years to address gender equity and vulnerability aspects of basin-wide water, food, and energy security. The MRC Gender Handbook will be systematically applied to strengthen mainstreaming from the earliest stages of activity design, concept notes, methodologies, budgeting, and implementation, ensuring GEV is embedded throughout.

Systematic monitoring and reporting: An M&E system will be maintained to track and report on all gender and vulnerability-related deliverables. This includes collecting gender-disaggregated data, sharing knowledge and good practices, and building the capacity of both MRC staff and national line agencies to integrate GEV into their work. Through these measures, the MRC SP 2026–2030 will reinforce gender equity and vulnerability inclusion as cross-cutting priorities, ensuring that cooperation in the Mekong Basin delivers equitable, resilient, and sustainable benefits for all.

The continued development and implementation of Gender Equity and Vulnerability Action Plans under:

Activity 2.1.4.5 seeks to achieve the mainstreaming of gender equity actions throughout all MRC operations, plans and

strategies. This includes gender equity and vulnerability mainstreaming across MRC work, including the MRC's own Human Resources management under Output 5.1.2 to facilitate the promotion of gender balance, diversity and leadership as well as the implementation of gender and vulnerability aspects of regional processes and guidelines including through the PNPCA process and implementation of the PDG and TbEIA at the national levels under Activities 1.1.2.5, and 1.1.2.7, and PNPCA under Activity 5.1.2.17. Activities 3.2.1.3 and 3.2.1.4 will also keep the GEV lens in the groundwater and irrigation sector.

The MRC will track key metrics on gender **equality and inclusion within the organization**. The MRC compiles data on indicators such as the proportion of disaggregated gender recruited in a given period, the percentage of women in management positions, gender pay gap statistics, the gender-disaggregated data in access to education, land ownership, income generation, etc. By quantifying these metrics, the scorecard provides a clear picture of the organization's performance in the gender equity goals management study (Activity 5.1.2.19).

Consultation processes on the development and implementation of joint investment projects and enabling activities will also need to factor-in gender representation, including in the development of: the sediment management plan under Activity 1.2.1.5; Establish the Ecosystem Window of the Mekong Fund Trial (MFEW) to support

and facilitate local community engagement in wetland and watershed biodiversity conservation under activity 1.3.1.4, implementation of the transboundary fisheries management project under GEF Activity 2.1.2.4, 2.1.2.5, 2.1.3.3; flood and drought forecasting and dissemination under Activity 4.1.4.8 and 4.1.4.9, and the access to the international climate finance and joint project facility under Activity 4.1.2.4, 4.2.2.7 and 4.2.2.8, among others.

Considerable effort has been expended in the SP 2021-2025 to improve the collection of gender disaggregated data and other data on measures of vulnerability. This process will continue under Activity 2.1.4.4 including through improved analysis and mapping of gender and vulnerability to be reflected in the Basin Atlas 2028, SIMVA 2028, updated Socio-Economic Database 2028-2029, and support to Member Countries to develop and implement gender and vulnerability action plans with concrete measures to improve gender disparities in water resources and related sectors under Activity 2.1.4.4, 2.1.4.5, and 2.1.4.6 for development of Mekong products to enhance community resilience.

Applying the gender and vulnerable group lens across all areas of MRC's work and promoting its implementation at both regional and national levels, will remain an integral part of the MRC's Multi-Year Work Plan, M&E, and long-term strategies. This includes integration into the next Basin Development Strategy and Strategic Plan, particularly under Activities 5.1.2.16-5.1.2.19.

The development of these national action plans in each Member Country will be supported by (a) updating the MRB-IF to improve gender and vulnerability related indicators under Activity 4.1.5.2; and (b) developing integrated multi-disciplinary analysis of MRC environmental data and its links to gender and vulnerability issues under Activity 4.1.5.3, to support improved understanding of conditions and trends in the next SOBR under Activity 4.1.5.4, 4.1.5.5, and 4.1.5.6

Support to MCs in implementing outreach through youth and community engagement under Activities 5.2.5.5 and 5.2.5.6 will continue to emphasize gender-sensitive approaches and communication channels that can reach vulnerable groups.

The MRC will continue to systematically monitor gender-disaggregated data on participation in its activities at both national and regional levels, including gender equity and vulnerable groups in the related activities, and reports for planning. This monitoring will capture information on target groups, gender disaggregated data, and specific GEV aspects throughout the preparation, design, consultation, and implementation of MRC activities. These efforts help ensure equitable representation and active engagement of all genders across the MRC's work. The MRC remains committed to promoting gender equality and fostering a more inclusive approach in its activities, consultations, and decision-making processes.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MRC SP

This Chapter describes the MRC's institutional arrangements for implementing the MRC SP, the roles of the MRC's key stakeholders in the implementation of the Plan, the multi-year work planning for implementation of the activity chains in MRC Results Chain, and the financial and human resource requirements and arrangements for the Plan. It also describes how key risks to Plan will be managed and how the Plan implementation will be monitored and evaluated.



Institutional Arrangements for MRC SP Implementation

The implementation of the MRC Strategic Plan (SP) 2026–2030 is anchored in a **results-based mutual accountability** process involving both the regional level (MRCS) and the national level (NMCs and line agencies). The successful delivery of the BDS Outcomes and MRC SP Outputs therefore requires clear institutional arrangements at both regional and national levels that reflect the MRC’s ongoing transition toward a more decentralized, leaner, efficient, and expert-driven organization. This institutional shift will be supported through implementing organisational development activities (Output 5.1.2) to:



1. Support increasing national implementation of core river basin management functions and the transition towards regional planning and management processes that are integrated in national planning and governance systems by 2030;

2. Strengthen the MRC to enable increased cooperation with MLC Water for the purposes of integrated management of the whole Mekong River system, ensuring the adequate sharing of data and information, joint studies and assessments, an integrated whole-of-basin monitoring network, and common state of basin reporting and basin development strategy.

Detailed **organisational planning** will support implementation of the current Strategic Plan and guide the MRC's shift from its current structure to its desired future state beyond 2030 as identified in the post-2030 financing roadmap (under Output 5.1.2). The process will include workforce planning to ensure efficient resource allocation and help prevent capacity bottlenecks as functions and activity focus evolves. All transition arrangements will be supported by change management and staff capacity building, knowledge retention and institutional memory building mechanisms and handover, mentoring and succession planning, as needed.

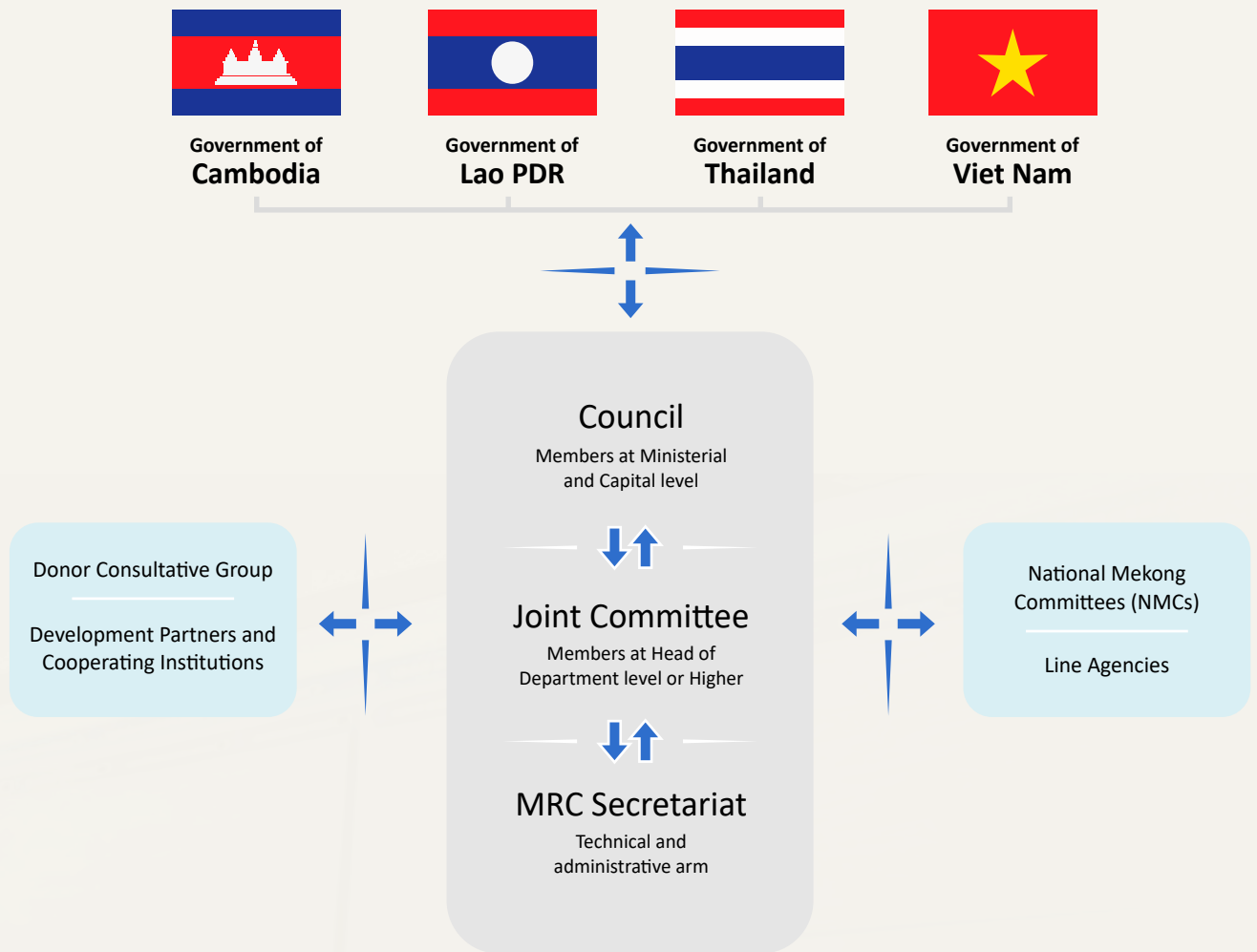


A key mechanism in this transition process is the enhancement of the existing MRC expert groups to joint basin expert groups with technical leaders from key national line/ implementing agencies of all 6 basin countries (see Section 6.2 of BDS 2021-2030). This joint approach is being pursued both through involvement, where relevant of UMB countries in the expert groups or through joint technical working groups for specific projects such as the Joint Study between MRC and MLC Water.

These groups help steer, oversee and increasingly implement (through their agencies) regional planning and management functions with coordination and facilitation of MRCS at the regional level and NMCSs at the national level. The joint basin expert groups will gradually take over many activities that are currently dependent on consultants and the financial support of development partners, although for some time yet a hybrid approach is likely necessary.

Institutional development. To achieve this higher degree of national implementation by 2030, institutional mechanisms, technical processes, and tools and capacity need to be developed in the national line/ implementing agencies and the NMCSs. The required institutional strengthening, decentralisation and cooperation processes are fully incorporated into the activity chains for Strategic Priority 5 (Section Strategic Priority 5). In this process, the MRC structure, governance and operations will change to address identified constraints and adapt to the changing institutional landscape. The following summarises the (changing) roles and responsibilities for MRC SP implementation of the bodies that make up the MRC governance structure (Figure 6).





Our Dialogue Partners

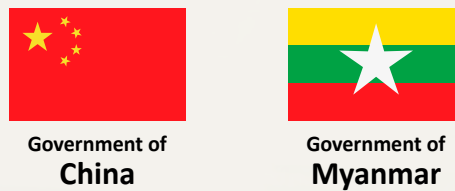


Figure 6: MRC Governance Structure

Summit of Heads of Government

The MRC Summit of Heads of Government, first organised in 2010, and conducted every four years, is the highest political forum of the MRC whereby outcomes of cooperation are assessed, and directions set for the

following years. The fifth Summit to be held in Thailand in 2027 at an early stage in the implementation of this MRC SP- is an important milestone for the MRC to refine the direction of its implementation.

Council of Ministers

As the highest decision-making body in the MRC, the Council approves the MRC SP and makes decisions on all policy-related matters concerning its implementation, including organisational policies, basin-wide strategies and plans, strategic cooperation partnerships, and resolution of differences. The Council provides strategic guidance on priority setting, including by approving the multi-year work plans (including annual budgets) based on endorsement from the Joint Committee and the recommendation of the Budget Committee.

In what is a critical transition phase for MRC in a changing institutional landscape, the Council also oversees high-level risks relating to the implementation of the BDS, including national uptake of regional Outputs, and the organisational development of the MRC, including the transition to national implementation of core river basin management functions and increasing cooperation with MLC Water for the purposes of integrated management of the whole Mekong River system. It helps in this regard that the MRC Council members are the same ministers for four LMB countries providing policy direction in Ministerial Meetings of MLC Water.

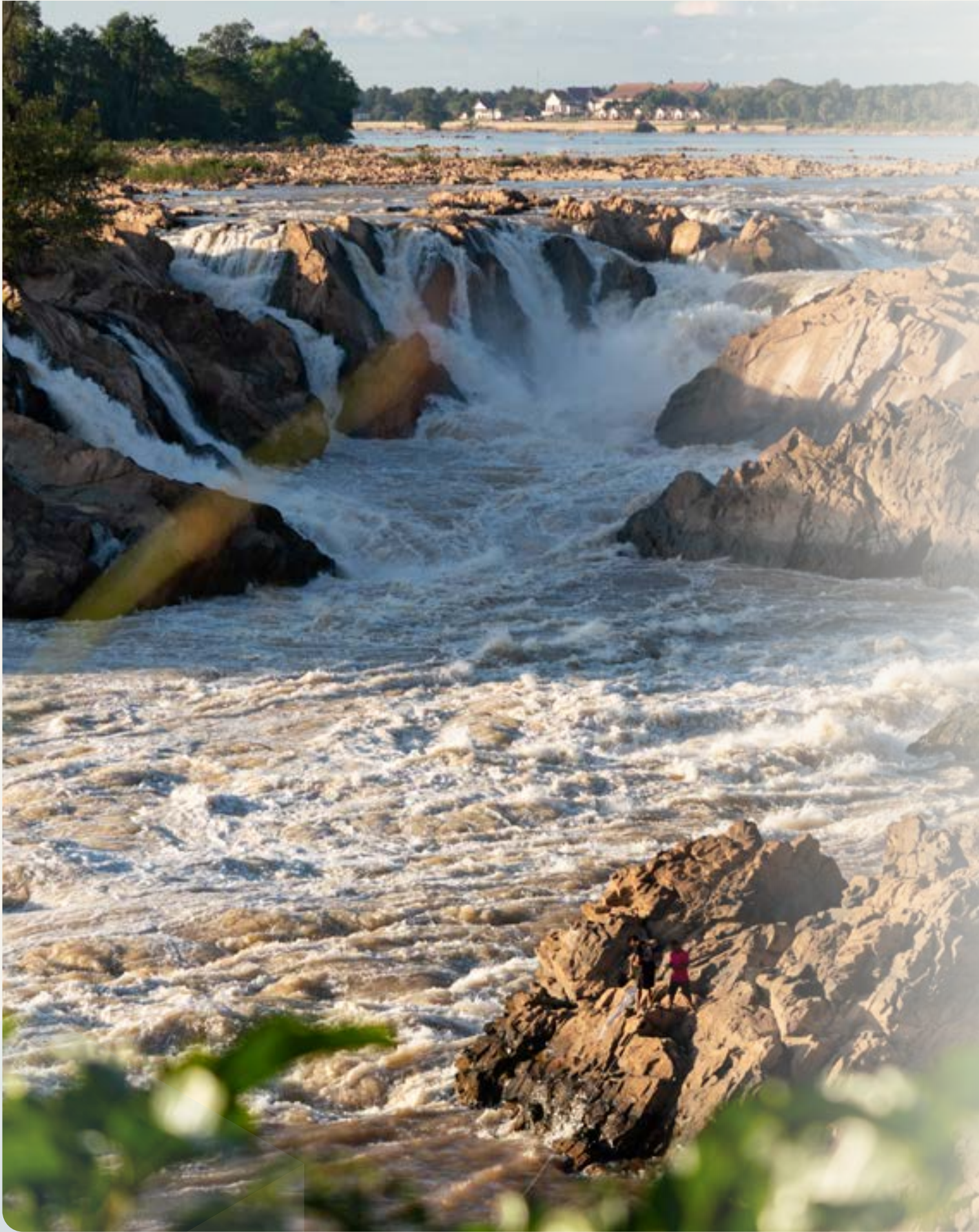
Joint Committee


In coordinating the implementation of the Council's decisions, the Joint Committee steers the implementation of this MRC SP. This role includes technical priority setting and guidance on delivery of activities as well as reviewing and endorsing policy-related resolutions for submission to the Council for approval. The Joint Committee provides guidance on the preparation of the multi-year work plans, including the definition of activities and allocation of annual budgets.

The Joint Committee establishes and is assisted in its work by task forces,

working groups, expert groups or similar arrangements that provide technical input and advice on certain institutional, technical and policy related issues. As senior officials in their respective countries, Joint Committee members also have extensive networks which need to be mobilised to advance the MRC's aims with respect to engagement with external stakeholders. The CEO works closely with Committee members in this regard. Most of the JC members are also members of the Joint Working Group (JWG), which is the coordination and decision-making body of MLC Water.







National Mekong Committees of Line/ Implementing Agencies

In each Member Country, line or implementing agencies in water and related sectors, as well as those agencies relevant to Mekong cooperation (such as planning and investment and foreign affairs), are members of a National Mekong Committee (NMC), supported by a Secretariat (NMCS) which performs cross-sectoral, cross-agency coordination, communication and reporting. The NMCSs are attached to the ministry responsible for water resources management and/or environmental management.

Each NMC provides policy advice and technical information to enable regional decision-making in the interest of the respective country with due consideration of opportunities arising from BDS/MRC SP implementation. Each committee advises the Council Member and Government on national interest for

regional consensus building and help ensure that regional decisions are implemented by concerned sectors, including the uptake of existing and new regional Outputs. Each NMC secretariat fulfils its coordination function for Mekong cooperation and is an advocate of transboundary cooperation and IWRM in each country.

With the ongoing transition towards national implementation of core river basin management functions, including regional planning and basin management, the NMC's need to facilitate and oversee basin activities to ensure they are integrated in the annual work plans and budgets of relevant national line/implementing agencies. This will enable the joint basin expert groups and their working groups (with representatives of the line/implementing agencies) to implement basin activities with their agencies. The NMCSs/MRCS will coordinate the preparation and implementation of the work plans of the expert groups to ensure proper basin-wide synergy and to monitor and assess performance. This transition process will improve communication and decision-making between MRCS, JC, NMCSs and line/implementing agencies, and further contribute to integration of regional and national planning.



MRC Secretariat (MRCS)

The MRCS is the operational arm of the MRC and performs technical, facilitating and administrative functions under the management of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). It facilitates regional meetings of the Member Countries and provides technical advice on joint planning, coordination and cooperation. It also works closely with the four countries' coordinating bodies, the NMCs, partners and stakeholders.

The MRCS undertakes many of the MRC SP activities in cooperation with national counterparts and others. Each of the Secretariat's divisions and office will lead implementation of specific activities with the contribution of other divisions identified in delivery plans. All divisions will be accountable not only for their lead deliverables but also for their agreed contribution to activities led by other divisions. These arrangements will be further developed in multi-year work plans.

Evolving MRCS delivery model. In the current delivery model of the MRCS, international and national consultants are carrying out many of the activities/tasks with coordination, facilitation and supervision from MRCS staff. In addition, the staff of MRCS facilitates and supports monitoring and evaluation of basin conditions, regional discussion, negotiation and communication with support from the NMCSs. The ongoing transition towards national implementation of regional planning and basin management processes will gradually change this delivery model. The joint basin expert groups (with their national agencies and supported by national consultants where needed) will in the longer term carry out more of the activities/tasks in the MRC SP.

It will take more than 10 years to fully transition towards this delivery model, as the basin and countries become developed and the region more integrated, whereby regional planning and basin management is an integral part of national planning and governance processes, coordinated by the MRCS/NMCSs. The MRC, as a coordinating RBO, would be supported by a smaller, expert MRCS (to monitor, assess, forecast and report on basin conditions, coordinate policy, diplomacy, and technical analysis, and to undertake contract management) with much of the integrated river basin management work undertaken by Member Countries. This is the model that has evolved for many international RBO's as they reach a more 'mature' phase.

Improving the MRCS structure. During the MRC SP period (2026-2030), the organisational structure and staffing of the MRCS will be improved to become more aligned with the MRC's core functions and to meet the needs for supporting the implementation of the new BDS/MRC SP in the best possible way. The total number of staff will be subject to the roadmap to be developed in 2028. However, further strengthening of the MRCS work planning, financial, administrative and management and monitoring systems is expected to support improved efficiencies. The future size and structure of the MRCS to meet future needs will be examined through the review of post-2030 staffing and financial arrangements under Output 5.1.2.

Expanded scope of financial oversight. As the MRC decentralises functions and provides more funds to National Mekong Committees (NMCs) and line agencies, the scope of financial oversight and tools will need to expand to cover these national-level activities. Accountability and risk management need to be consistent across all levels of implementation to ensure confidence in MRC systems and processes, protect the integrity of MRC funds and maintain trust with development partners.



Development Partners (DPs)

While Member Countries increase significantly their financial contribution to USD 40.27 million for the MRC SP 2026-2030, well in line with their commitment in the Reform Roadmap, a significant percentage of funding for the MRC will still be needed from MRC's Development Partners. While the MRC SP is driven by Member Countries, it is important to continue and deepen MRC-DP cooperation, through the following measures that will enhance the engagement and support that DPs provide to the MRC in its strategic, technical, planning and monitoring work:

- Commitment by DPs to contribution to the basket funding (to enable greater efficiency and agility in allocating resources to priority needs as agreed in the MRC SP), and if needed through earmarking for specific areas;
- Where appropriate, provision of targeted technical/financial assistance from DPs to

MRCs and/or Member Countries (to tackle challenges identified);

- Participation in the Budget Committee (for administrative and financial matters); and
- Regular consultations between DPs and MRC attached to the annual Informal Partners Meeting (especially technical matters) and annual Partners Consultative Group Meeting (especially strategic matters).

The development of post-2030 financial arrangements in consultation with Development Partners will further consider the appropriate mechanisms for financial support to regional water resources management and development beyond 2030 including in consideration of the need for support to periodic non-routine core functions of the MRC and the role and progressive development of the Mekong Fund.



Dialogue Partners

China and Myanmar are MRC's Dialogue Partners. Close cooperation with upstream countries is essential to optimally benefit from the increased flow regulation by the storage dams constructed on the Upper Mekong and minimise the risks associated with these projects. The strategic cooperation between the MRC and China has recently reached a new level. The MRC Secretariat and the Ministry of Water Resources of China, in October 2020, signed an agreement that has seen China providing year-round hydrological data from its two stations on the Upper Mekong. This will improve river monitoring and flood and drought forecasting in the Mekong countries. Over the 18 years prior to this new agreement, China had shared its water level and rainfall data only during June – October in the flood season.

Areas for further deepening cooperation with China include expanding policy dialogue, increasing data and information sharing, enhancing technical exchanges, supporting basin planning and management (including coordinated flood and drought management), and securing stronger involvement in the five-yearly update of the State of Basin Report (SOBR).

Myanmar's primary interests lie in knowledge sharing on basin development and management, as well as broader regional cooperation. The MRC will further strengthen engagement with Myanmar by deepening dialogue, expanding technical exchanges, and ensuring its participation in the five-yearly update of the SOBR.



External Stakeholder Engagement

The BDS provides the rationale for broader and deeper engagement with partners and other stakeholders in sustainable water resources development and management throughout the basin. Indeed, there is a common interest from stakeholder groups throughout the basin to engage in proactive regional planning and coordinated basin management operations.

MRC stakeholder engagement is managed by the OCEO. The BDS approach for enhanced stakeholder engagement (Section 6.3 of BDS 2021-2030) is mainstreamed in the MRC multi-year work plans through dedicated tasks, similar to the enabling tasks aimed at capacity building for decentralisation of CRBMFs and for uptake of MRC deliverables in national governance, decision-making and planning (see MRC Results Chain, General). Key external stakeholders and their interests have been identified and the purpose of engagement for this MRCSP period described (Table 2).



Table 2: Interests and Roles of External Stakeholders in Supporting MRC SP Implementation

Stakeholder	Interest of stakeholder	Purpose of engagement by the MRC
MLC Water	Water resources and green development	Implementation of current MoU
	IWRM and climate change adaptation	Dialogue to explore opportunities to optimize the basin-wide approach in water and related resources development and management
	Water sector production capacity	Involvement in basin expert groups for Joint Studies, basin planning, coordinated basin management operations, and water-related monitoring and DSS facilities
	Rural areas, water conservancy and livelihood improvement	Collaboration on common projects and activities, including coordinated stakeholder engagement, strengthening flood and drought management capacity, enhancing data sharing and developing a mainstream early warning system, and reviewing cooperation mechanisms and modalities for Mekong transboundary river management
	Sustainable hydropower development and energy security	
	Transboundary river cooperation and information sharing	
	Coordination with other areas	
ASEAN	Regional cooperation and integration	Implementation of current MoU
	IWRM Country strategy guideline and indicator framework implementation	Making contributions to BDS Outcomes and Outputs, particularly in relation to environment, social improvements, water security and energy-water interactions under the ASEAN Power Grid initiative
	Water quality and sanitation	Collaboration on common projects, including on water-related disasters, water quality and energy transition
	Water-related disasters	Key MRC strategies, guidelines and perspectives are discussed and supported at relevant ASEAN forums and agendas
	Climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience	Ensuring debates about critical, water and related basin-wide opportunities and issues are framed appropriately and influence relevant decision-making processes, including through the standing ASEAN-MRC Water Security Forum

Stakeholder	Interest of stakeholder	Purpose of engagement by the MRC
GMS	<p>Natural resources and ecosystem services</p> <p>Regional power market integration</p> <p>Climate resilience and disaster risk management</p> <p>Agriculture</p>	<p>Making contributions to BDS Outcomes and Outputs, particularly in relation to energy and environment; and partnering for support to energy transition related activities</p> <p>Participation in GMS Regional Power Trade Coordination Committee (RPTCC) to keep abreast of future developments</p> <p>Strengthen integration of MRC strategies and guidelines into GMS water and related investment appraisal and planning tools and the support of ADB for further integration into national frameworks</p>
Other partners and multilateral agencies (UN, World Bank, ADB)	<p>Raising living standards and securing socio-economic benefits and regional political stability</p> <p>Sustainable water resources development and management</p> <p>International cooperation</p>	<p>Greater awareness and strategic and water diplomacy support among senior officials for alignment/harmonization of approaches in line with MRC assessments, strategies and recommended development pathways</p> <p>Technical and financial support including potential financing of joint investment projects and national projects of basin-wide significance</p> <p>Making contributions to BDS Outcomes and Outputs</p> <p>Promotion of sharing experiences with other international river basins</p>
Private sector entities	<p>Participation in national development activities</p> <p>Confidence in national and regional governance processes for beneficial investments</p>	<p>Preparation and implementation of BDS sustainable development opportunities in line with national and regional frameworks (procedures, strategies and guidelines) including potential financing of joint investment projects and national projects of basin-wide significance</p> <p>Uptake and use of relevant MRC Procedures, strategies, guidelines and tools</p>
Civil society organizations, communities	<p>Securing socio- economic benefits and avoiding negative impacts from water-related developments</p>	<p>Promotion of common understanding of the evidence base relating to the basin</p> <p>Participation in the basin planning and management process to raise their interests, concerns and policy recommendations</p> <p>Represent the interests of the vulnerable groups, women and children, and the environment</p>

Stakeholder	Interest of stakeholder	Purpose of engagement by the MRC
Research institutes and academia	Bringing in new perspectives to policies and development strategies to ensure equitable distribution of wealth and opportunity	Promotion of common understanding of the evidence base relating to the basin Collaboration in preparing and promoting MRC assessments and tools development
Media	Raising awareness	Promotion of greater understanding of the role and benefits of MRC Clarification of issues from scientific perspectives

The BDS proposed to ‘institutionalise’ external stakeholder engagement in a Multiple Stakeholder Platform (MSP) with a mandate to undertake regular stakeholder reviews of the implementation of the BDS (see Section 6.3 of BDS 2021-2030). Following review of existing arrangements in the Mid-Term Review of the SP 2021-2025, the MRC has decided an additional platform is not warranted at this stage as the existing mechanisms (Figure 7) effectively

encompass the needs reflected in the BDS. The MTR noted the reasons for this being the effectiveness and specific nature of current stakeholder arrangements for MRC Procedures such as PNPCA as well as consultations for thematic activities, the recent introduction of the CEO-civil society dialogue, the continuation of the annual regional stakeholder forum, and cost implications of an additional layer of engagement.



Further emphasis in the current SP is instead placed on improving current mechanisms with proactive engagement and structured response mechanisms to follow-up on

feedback and constructive inputs, especially in relation to non-state actors through PNPCA consultations, CSO dialogue and the Annual Regional Stakeholder Forum.

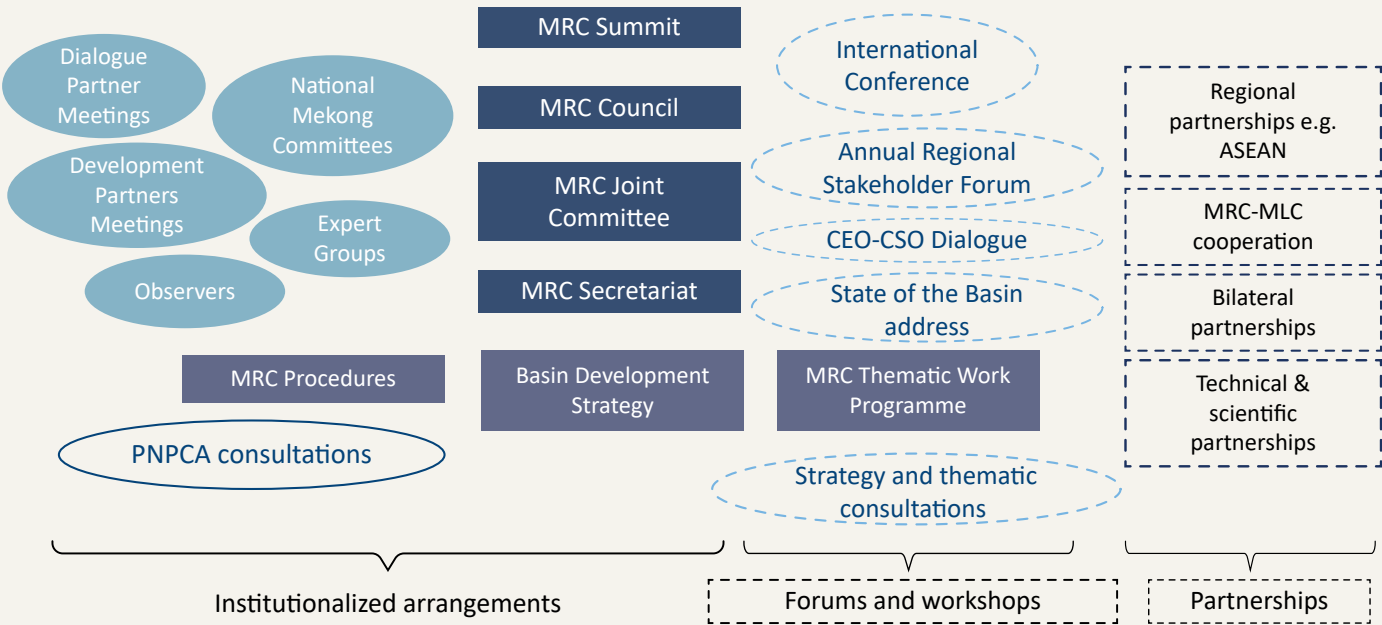


Figure 7: Range of Engagement Mechanisms Encompassing Multiple Stakeholder Platform



Multi-Year Work Planning

This MRC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 is a macro-level planning framework, providing strategic direction and expected results over five years. To operationalise this medium-term vision the MRC has adopted rolling 2-year work plans, updated annually, which ensure continuity of implementation – especially for activities spanning multiple years – and allow responsive adjustments based on funding availability and performance. The **multi-year work plans serve three key purposes:**

1. Operational Continuity: Activities initiated in one year can seamlessly continue into the next with clearly defined outputs, responsibilities, and timelines;

2. National Integration: National line agencies and NMCs are better equipped to align their plans with MRC regional priorities, ensuring greater ownership and improved delivery at the national level;

3. Resource Planning and Execution: Procurement, budgeting, and staffing needs can be forecasted and coordinated through early planning processes, thus reducing execution delays.

The preparation of the work plans is guided by the schedule of activities and provisional budgets in this MRC SP. Each of these activities will be further elaborated in detailed tasks, required resources, linkages to and dependencies with other tasks, and then consolidated in an overall work plan with procurement plans (supported by advanced procurement mapping), management responsibilities, and matching revenue and budget streams. Every year account will be taken of progress made over previous years and the ongoing availability of funds.



MRCs will lead the preparation of the work plans, in accordance with the procedures provided in the MRC Finance Manual. The process starts with the issuing of a Guidance Note by the CEO setting out the broad parameters within which each work plan is to be prepared (see Figure 8). To prepare the Guidance Note, the CEO, with the support of OCEO, will consult with senior management staff (comprising Division Directors), Joint Committee and Development Partners. The Guidance Note will include:

- Key achievements and difficulties of the previous years, current status of MRC SP implementation, and lessons for future implementation;
- A Statement of the overall budget for the two years, based on the indicative budgets set out in this MRC SP and modified by funding realities for the specific years;
- Implementation priorities (MRC SP activities) for the years including significant crosscutting issues to be addressed, with associated timelines;
- Template for activity and task descriptions, interdependencies between activities/tasks, progress milestones, resourcing, procurement, and budgeting;
- Assignment of responsibility for the implementation of MRC SP activities to MRC organisational units, and the management, reporting and MRC's organisational M&E system;
- A consultation framework, stipulating whom to be consulted as part of the preparation;
- Tentative timetable, including working sessions, national and regional consultations, the circulating of the final draft and formal meetings of Budget Committee, Joint Committee and Council;
- Key actions necessary to ensure effective achievement of impacts, as reflected in an impact pathway for each activity including to facilitate improvements in gender equality and vulnerability



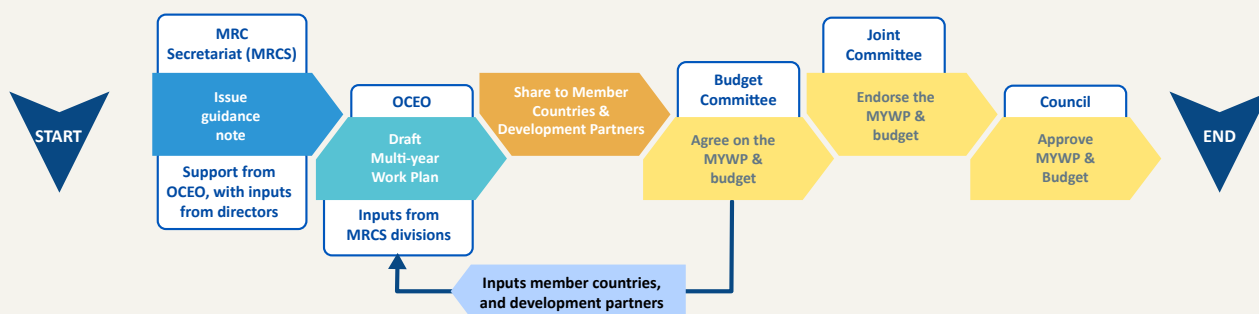


Figure 8: The MRC Work Plan Formulation Process

The OCEO will prepare the rolling two-year work plans, and update them as necessary each year, with inputs from the MRCS Divisions, Member Countries and Development Partners. The work plan preparation process includes the balancing of budget and revenue projections through prioritization of activities.

Approval of work plan. The completed draft work plan will be submitted to the Budget Committee for review. Once agreed by the Budget Committee, the work plan will be submitted to the Joint Committee for endorsement and to the Council for approval.

The implementation of the work plan will be managed in accordance with the updated MRC operational manuals. The delivery of activities and tasks will be distributed among MRC organisational units, with collaboration by others.

Annual Review and Adjustment. Each year, work plans will be reviewed and revised based on: progress achieved in the previous period; lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation results; budget disbursement performance; availability of funding commitments; evolving regional or national priorities. This iterative process ensures that the Strategic Plan remains a living document, responsive to changing conditions while staying aligned with long-term objectives. MRC’s organisational M&E system tracks activity/task delivery, and financial status. The system flags key areas of concern where interventions are needed to bring an activity back on course to regular senior management meetings (see BDS Section 6.5 of BDS 2021-2030). This feedback loop facilitates timely corrective measures to be taken, including prioritisation of resources in annual reviews of work plans and budgets to redress delays in critical activities.

National Procurement Readiness. As MRC implementation becomes increasingly decentralized, national line agencies and NMCs will play a larger role in executing MRC-financed activities. This requires a deliberate focus on **national procurement readiness**, ensuring national partners can conduct transparent, efficient, and compliant procurement. Key components are expected to include training, readiness

assessments, standard tools and templates, e-procurement and committees and legal alignment. By 2023, the MRC had trained national staff in project design and results-based reporting across all Member Countries. Similar capacity programs for procurement are being institutionalized under the **Procurement Communication Plan 2025–2026**.



Financial Arrangements and Budget

The cost of implementation of the MRC SP results chain in Section Strategic Priority 1-5, has been estimated based on the 90 identified activities and associated enabling tasks related to impact pathways, stakeholder engagement and capacity building. All activities and tasks belong to the core functions of the MRC.

The total budget for the implementation of the MRC SP is estimated at about USD **80.95 million**. The total budget for the implementation of MRC's core functions during 2026-2030 is about USD 52.67 million, excluding fixed cost for staff and administration. Core routine activities are estimated at USD 26.59 million and core non-routine activities cost at USD 26.07 million (Table 3).

The designation of core routine and core non-routine may become useful when making work plans and allocating available budgets. Ideally, all should be funded as both are of equal importance. However, if budget is limited, core routine works should be funded first (as a matter of sequencing and not prioritization), in order to maintain the minimum functions of a RBO like MRC. This is not optimal, however, and timely efforts should be made to fund and start the core non-routine works as they are critical in delivering better Outcomes from core routine activities and strategic BDS and MRC SP objectives.

The high expenditures for non-routine CRBMF activities are a direct result of the need to strengthen MRC's enhanced role in proactive regional planning and coordination of operational management in the Mekong River Basin, without which the MRC cannot effectively respond to the changing basin conditions and the needs of the countries and peoples. The budget is unevenly distributed over the main Outputs and core functions, as can be expected. Some Outputs related to non-routine CRBMF activities are costly and provide essential inputs to several other Outputs across the five Strategic Priorities.



Budget and contributions. Table 9.2 summarizes the MRC SP budget required by category of budget and the anticipated contributions from both Member Countries and Development Partners. The table shows that:

- The annually increasing funding from Member Countries is sufficient to cover the fixed costs of the MRC, including staff costs and some administration and support to NMCSs. The goal of the MRC is to have all routine MRC core functions fully funded by the Member Countries by 2030. To ensure the long-term sustainability of the Commission, the MRC

will not exclude development assistance contributions to the MRC cooperation beyond 2030 for non-routine CRBMFs, but will not be dependent on external assistance for its core routine operations (which will by then have been sufficiently strengthened);

- Total anticipated contributions from Development Partners (DPs) are 49.8 percent and the contributions of the Member Countries are 50.2 percent, without which the MRC SP cannot be implemented.

Table 3: Expected Expenditures and Contributions during Plan Period (2026-2030)

Budget and contributions	Million USD	Share (%)
Budget		
Fixed costs (staff and administration)	28,285,648	35%
Routine CF and CRBMF activities	26,595,645	33%
Non-routine CF and CRBMF activities	26,074,802	32%
Total Budget	80,956,095	
Contributions		
Member Countries ²	40,692,254	50.2%
Development Partners (Basket Fund and Earmarked Fund)	40,263,841	49.8%
Total Contribution	80,956,095	

² Based on the Member Countries' contribution agreement to the MRC Basket Fund, Cambodia and Lao PDR will gradually increase their contributions, with all Member Countries contributing an equal share of USD 2,439,662 each by 2030.

The MRC basket funding is a joint financial mechanism whereby Member Countries and DPs contribute funds to a common pooled account that is used to fund MRC activities through MRCS. The annual funds will be pooled from the designated DPs' accounts (receiving accounts) into the basket fund account and allocated to the activities of the responsible MRC units based on core functions including administration, governance, liaison and CRBMFs for implementation.

Within this arrangement, **earmarking** funds is possible, but DPs wishing to contribute to the implementation of this MRC SP will be required to contribute a proportion of their funds (provisionally 15%) as "unallocated" to the basket fund in order to balance with all other contributors who contribute all of their funds to the basket fund.

Financing parts of the MRC-SP 2026-2030 will also be considered through further development of the **Mekong Fund** over the next five years. In the transition to post-2030 funding arrangements, consideration will be given to a Mekong Fund with mixed funding modality to support **the financing of non-routine core functions** in addition to significant joint and transboundary projects to address the impacts of water resources development and climate change within Member Countries. The mixed funding modality of the Mekong Fund will seek to accommodate diverse forms of support and financing mechanisms and may include pool-based and needs-based earmarked funds. The Mekong Fund will have a simplified and unified governance structure in order to maximise efficiency and reduce transaction costs. Finalising agreement to the arrangements for the ongoing operation of the Mekong Fund and putting the necessary structures in place prior to 2030 is a priority activity under this SP (Activity 5.1.2.13).

The annual budget allocation for corporate services and the routine CRBMFs is fairly evenly distributed during 2026-2030. The budget allocation for the non-routine CRBMFs is somewhat skewed to the latter years of this MRC SP period as it is expected that it will take 1-2 years to plan, start-up and procure the services for the larger activities required for more proactive regional planning and the consolidation and modernization of the basin's monitoring networks. This allows time to raise fund and secure financial commitments from DPs in 2026 and 2027.

The indicative budget per Output and activity will be finalised during the work planning process when making multi-year work plans, which will be carefully reviewed by the Budget Committee, and endorsed/ approved by the Joint Committee and Council.

NOTE: In case of significant unexpected funding shortfalls, especially during the first one or two years of the new MRC SP, the Outputs and activities will be prioritized in the multi-year work planning process based on criteria agreed by all Member Countries. The criteria could be based on factors such as sequencing core routine activities over core non-routine activities, relevance for achieving the most important BDS Outcomes, the ongoing progress and completion status of Outputs and activities, and the urgency and importance of the Outputs for regional and national planning.



Risk Management

The following section sets out the main risks and risk management strategies for the period of the MRC SP. Several risks and risk management strategies identified in the MRC SP 2021-2025 remain valid. The risks identified reflect both basin-wide risks and organisational risks facing the MRC. The basin-wide risks are identified in the BDS (Section 4.5 of BDS 2021-2030). Nine MRC organisational risks³ are identified below.

1. The MRC's expertise & impartiality are not valued in the region (Medium likelihood, High impact, and thus a High risk)

Without its position of trust and impartiality with Member Countries, MRC could not deliver its MRC SP. Because of this unique position, MRC can provide information and recommendations to Member Countries without the suspicion of bias or a hidden agenda. However, this trust and impartiality cannot be taken for granted; MRC must work to maintain it.

The mitigation measures include improved communication of the MRC's mandate & work, improved engagement with wider stakeholder groups, and strengthened quality (evidence based and balanced) of MRC products. MRCS will also more often publicly address unbalanced, biased and incorrect statements and journalism on water-related issues in social and other media, including by providing timely factual and even-handed information on the actual situation in the basin.

2. Coordination and inputs to the preparation and implementation of national development plans are insufficient to improve regional outcomes (High likelihood, High Impact, and thus a Critical risk)

If national development plans are not sufficiently informed about basin-wide effects and linkages, there is a high risk that collectively they will remain sub-optimal for all Member Countries (see Chapters 3 and 4). In the past, some of the MRC's strategies, guidelines and tools have not been taken up and/or used.

This situation will be mitigated by building 'uptake' into the multi-year work plans as described in MRC Results Chain, General and through greater involvement of national line/ implementing agency staff in the preparation and implementation of activities as described in Multi-year Work Planning. In addition, the MRC's organisational M&E system now informs and tracks impact pathways, which are supported by enabling activities.

³ These are the organisational risks identified in the Strategic Plan. In addition, the MRC registers and monitors other implementation risks, which are reported in the Mid-Year Report, MWP update/planning, and the Annual Report.

3. There is difficulty in reaching consensus among Member Countries on critical issues (High likelihood, High impact, and thus a Critical risk)

Differences of view between some or all Member Countries are always likely to exist. In some cases, these differences can be deeply held. Resolving differences by mutually satisfactory solutions remains an ongoing challenge for MRC. Failure to manage this risk will jeopardize Member Country commitment to the MRC.

This risk will be mitigated by a combination of proactive regional planning that goes beyond what countries are currently planning (as described in Section 4.2 of BDS 2021-2030), the further strengthening of both in-house (MRCS) and Council/Joint Committee (including more pro-active role of the Chairs) water-diplomacy capacity to enable MRC to act as an honest facilitator, and leveraging partnerships with MLC, ASEAN and other (multilateral) organisations.

4. There is difficulty in effectively implementing the MRC's cooperation mechanisms (High likelihood, Medium impact, and thus a High risk)

There is a risk that MRC cooperation mechanisms, including its five Procedures, as well as the BDS and basin-wide sector strategies, are not implemented effectively. This may arise through insufficient understanding of the purpose and role of a mechanism but also in cases where mechanisms fail to adapt to changes in expectations and needs.

This risk will be mitigated by incorporating the updating of the (interdependent) set of five Procedures in the results chain to ensure they are fit-for-purpose under the new basin realities and continue to deliver full value to Member Countries (see Section Strategic Priority 5). Building 'uptake' into the multi-year work plans as described in MRC Results Chain, General, will also help implement MRC's cooperation mechanisms, as will strengthening and empowering joint basin expert groups and their national line/ implementing agencies.



5. There are limited resources and capacity at national level to implement MRC's decentralised activities (Medium likelihood, High impact, and thus a High risk)

Under the decentralisation roadmap, Member Countries themselves are increasingly responsible for core MRC activities, not only for monitoring and data collection but increasingly also for basin planning and management activities, with coordination by MRCS, as described in Institutional arrangements for MRC SP implementation. Capacity in Member Countries differs, however, and any significant gaps in the basin-wide knowledge base and deficiencies in institutional mechanisms for engaging in basin planning in some countries, will adversely affect the value for all Member Countries.

A key focal area of this MRC SP is to support capacity building for increasing national implementation of core river basin management functions to enable the continuing and gradual transition of MRC towards a leaner and efficient 'expert' organization, as described in Institutional arrangements for MRC SP implementation. For this purpose, a major organizational development and capacity plan will be implemented (Section Strategic Priority 5), joint basin expert groups with representatives of national implementing agencies strengthened, and institutional mechanisms developed for mobilizing national implementing agencies to increasingly implement basin planning and management functions (Section Strategic Priority 5). Further consideration of the distinction between routine and non-routine core functions and the role of the Mekong Fund will also inform funding mechanisms beyond 2030.



6. Bureaucratic implementation of the MRC SP (Medium likelihood, High impact, and thus a High risk)

Experiences suggest that important MRC SP activities may not be adequately elaborated into informative concept notes and/or Terms of References, and therefore not adequately resourced and implemented. This lack of focus on Outcomes has hampered 'uptake' of Outputs and led to fragmented approaches to the development of MRC cooperation mechanisms (knowledge base, procedures). The implementation experiences of the current MRCS structure in the recent past also reveal challenges and issues to overcome, in order to create more optimal core functional base structure able to deliver integrated outcomes.

To help mitigate this risk, the MRC SP results chain provides guidance for the resourcing and implementation modalities of activities. The development and the implementation of the organizational development plan to 2030 will also contribute to the development of a less bureaucratic 'expert' organization (Section Strategic Priority 5). In particular, operation of the updated MRCS structure, and the set-up of a practical integrated system for multi-year work planning and budget and activity performance monitoring will create organization-wide performance and staffing benefits (as the effectiveness of MRCS management largely depends on the quality of the management systems in place). Additional requirements on actions to be implemented in each activity to ensure impact will be included as part of the multi-year work planning process.





7. There is significant unexpected funding shortfall (Medium likelihood, High impact, and thus a High risk)

The MRC SP is based on the financial commitments made to MRC. There are significant commitments made to the MRC in the last SP period which will continue into the 2026-2030 SP period and including the mobilisation of additional resources through the GEF and for the Mekong Fund. Nevertheless, failure by MRC Member Countries and/or Development Partners to deliver on these commitments would have a significant adverse impact for achievement of the Plan. This risk is increasing as the organisation moves towards self-financing and requires a clear and coherent strategy for the sustainable funding of the organisation up to and beyond 2030.

The mitigation measures to reduce this impact, should the risk be realized, include the prioritization of activities for Outputs and activities with the highest relevance in the multi-year work planning process (see section Multi-year Work Planning) to achieve the most important BDS Outcomes and the implementation of a fund mobilization strategy by the CEO. Mobilisation of the Mekong Fund in a unified structure and progressing opportunities for accreditation through global climate and environment funds also seek to help manage this risk.



8. Financial management does not ensure transparency and accountability (Low likelihood, High Impact, thus a Medium risk)

MRC needs to achieve and maintain a high level of credibility in both procurement and financial management areas to secure sufficient MRC SP funding based upon a Basket fund model. This risk is assessed as having a low likelihood as MRC has been mitigating this risk for the past few years and has made considerable progress as illustrate by passing three additional Pillar assessments and achieving certification by the European Commission. A fully functional and online Financial Management Information System is now in place.

To mitigate this risk, an independent Audit Committee and Internal Auditor, as well as the full implementation of the updated Finance and other manuals, needs to continue. As a result, actions will be taken to address any monitored and reported wrongdoings.

Operationalisation of risk management matrix.

The risk management strategies are an integral part of the implementation of this MRC SP and are addressed in the activity/task chains in MRC Results Chain, as indicated in the risk management matrix in Annex A. The risk matrix summarizes the identified basin-wide risks and the MRC organisational risks together with the risk category and the identified mitigating measures. The MRC judges that the proposed mitigation measures will be adequate to control the risks, although they may not eliminate the risks entirely. The organizational risks identified also help frame the risks associated with MRC SP deliverables and the specific measures that are planned to address them. The MRC will review the completeness/relevance of the risk management matrix three times a year during the Mid-Year Report, preparation of MWP and Annual Report, and report the results to the MRC governance bodies.



Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

MRC's results-based monitoring and evaluation framework is summarized in Table 9.3 below. It combines the basin monitoring system (see section 6.5 of BDS 2021-2030) and the organizational M&E system. The latter also tracks the contribution of national agencies and other regional cooperation mechanisms to the achievement of BDS Outputs and Outcomes.

MRC's basin monitoring system comprises of a dashboard traffic light and trend display of the BDS Outcomes and their contributions to relevant SDG targets. The Outcomes and SDG contributions will be assessed in the State of Basin Report (SOBR), which is updated every 5 years. The SOBR records and evaluates the development impacts, positive and negative, within the Mekong River Basin as a measure of their effectiveness of the implementation of the

BDS. The SOBR quantifies the strategic and assessment indicators of the Mekong River Basin Indicator Framework (MRB-IF) and as described in Section 6.5 of BDS 2021-2030. The next update, which also evaluates the contributions to SDG targets, is in 2028.

MRC's organizational M&E system monitors and evaluates the implementation of this Strategic Plan in terms of inputs, activities, key deliverables, expenditures and Output indicators. The system monitors implementation progress against milestones and flags issues and concerns to the regular senior management meetings. Mid-year and annual reports are the main communication channels for monitoring, which is conducted internally by the lead divisions under the coordination of the MRCS OCEO's M&E team. A team of independent external experts will be engaged for the assessment of the Output indicators and deliverables and the overall MRC SP implementation, including cost effectiveness at mid-term of the 5-year MRC SP cycles. The evaluation feeds into the next Strategic Plan that will be prepared in 2030 to contribute to the new BDS for 2031-2040.



Table 4: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for BDS and MRC SP

Issues of interest	Methodology	Parameters	Function
Contribution to implementation of SDGs	Five-yearly updating of the <i>State of Basin Report (next 2023)</i>	The SDG targets that are relevant to Mekong River Basin management	SDG monitoring
BDS Outcomes & Outputs (Basin status and trends)	<i>Dashboard</i> which tracks progress towards Outcomes (see Section 6.5) and Outputs based on the 5-yearly updated <i>State of Basin Report</i>	Strategic and assessment indicators of the Mekong River Basin Indicator Framework (MRB-IF)	Mekong River Basin monitoring
MRC contributions to BDS Outputs and Outcomes (Results, interim Outcomes)	Assessment of the quality of the Output produced Level of benefits and change through MRC interventions Value for money/C&B analysis <i>MRC Annual Report, Mid Term Review Report</i>	Output indicators in MRC SP Annex B MRC deliverables	Organizational Monitoring & Evaluation (internal & external)
MRC tasks implementation (for activities and deliverables)	<i>Dashboard</i> that tracks progress against deliverables and flags issues to management <i>MRC Annual Report, MRC Mid-Year Report</i>	MRC tasks Rolling multi-year work plan with deliverables, budgets, etc.	Organizational Monitoring
MRC Budgets and expenditures	Integrated with task implementation above <i>Mid-Year Report, Annual Report, External Audit Report</i>	Rolling multi-year workplan with budgets, cash flow planning Accrual accounting	Organizational Monitoring

Issues of interest	Methodology	Parameters	Function
Gender aspects	<p>Verification of gender aspects reflected in relevant Outputs and activities implementation</p> <p><i>MRC Annual Report, Mid Term Review Report</i></p>	<p>Collected gender-disaggregated data</p> <p>Gender Output indicators for MRC</p>	<p>Organizational Monitoring & Evaluation (internal & external)</p>
Contribution by others to BDS Outcomes and Outputs	<p>Expert Group on Strategy and Partnership meeting</p> <p>MRC Annual Report, Mid Term Review Report, MRC SP Completion Report</p>	<p>Activities, projects and programmes listed</p>	<p>Organizational Monitoring & Evaluation (internal & external)</p>



Output Indicators for MRC. The BDS Outcomes seek to describe the resulting end state that basin countries would like to see by 2030. Their achievement will be evaluated using the strategic and assessment Indicators of the MRB-IF. The Outputs, which would be implemented by all relevant actors including MRC, are the immediate results necessary for producing one of the Outcomes through an identified impact pathway. This takes a more subjective survey-based approach to periodically assess the extent that Outputs have been taken-up and utilized and are influential in attaining BDS Outcomes. For MRC, the Output indicators and their scheduled emergence are defined in **Annex B**. The indicators generally comprise two aspects:

1) A measure to signify that the Output has been delivered to the end user, for example the agreement or approval of a regional strategy or guideline by MRC governance

bodies, through which relevant national line or implementing agency is consulted, which is relatively easy to assess.

2) A more subjective assessment of the quality of the Output that is contributed by MRC and the extent it has been taken up in the national governance and planning system, which is inherently more difficult to assess as they relate behavioural, policy and institutional change that typically occurs over a longer time frame.

The above monitoring and evaluation framework supports the preparation of various progress and performance reports that MRC needs to manage the implementation of the BDS, demonstrate the benefits of regional cooperation on Mekong water resources, report on achieving the SDG, and for other purposes. The reporting system is summarized and illustrated below.



Mid-Year Report: (total number to be issued: 5) Once the Council approves the first rolling multi-year work plan, activity implementation will begin. Progress in implementing tasks (to implement the activities and deliver the planned deliverables (see Section Strategic Priority 1 until Section "Identified Priority Joint Investment Projects and Enabling of the BDS 2021-2030 period and beyond" and expenditures will be reported every mid-year. The status of tasks will be assessed (on track or delayed), and issues and challenges will be reported to the Budget Committee, and actions recommended to adapt the Multi-Year Work Plan.

Annual Report: (total number to be issued: 5) Midway and at the end of each two-year work plan cycle, an Annual Report will be issued to report progress in terms of delivery of key deliverables and achievement of Output indicators, based on completion of tasks. The Annual Report will also include a section on financial status. The annual reports may include a section on the contribution of

other regional cooperation mechanisms and partners to BDS Outputs. The final Annual Report (2030) will double as the MRC SP 2026-2030 Completion Report.

Mid-Term Review Report 2028 (total amount to be issued: 1): Half-way through the Strategic Plan implementation cycle (2.5 years), a Mid-Term Review will be undertaken by a team of independent experts to assess the achievement of the Plan so far, the synergy and challenges among the implementation units, the overall MRCS with Member Countries, and partners, as well as the resources spent and benefits received. Recommendations will be made to re-orient the SP to avoid possible risks for the remaining years and to achieve its most relevant deliverables, activities and indicators. Recommendations on indicator improvement can also be made at this review session. The review will also assess the contribution of other regional cooperation mechanisms to BDS Outputs and Outcomes.

Strategic Plan Completion Report 2030 (total amount to be issued: 1): The final AR 2030 will be expanded and double as the Completion Report for the MRC SP cycle, assessing the overall achievements under this MRC SP. To complete the report, the MRCS will work with Member Countries, partners, and stakeholders to document successes and difficulties through Outcome reflection workshops and interviews. The cost-effectiveness of the implementation will also be determined. The overall implementation process, the most significant changes, and story-based practices that bring results (both positive and negative) can also be documented to serve as the MRC knowledge base.



ANNEX A





Annex A: Risk Matrix and Mitigation Measures for Annual Review and Updating by the MRC Joint Committee

Risk	Category	Strategic Priority	Mitigation Measures
Mekong Basin wide risks, as identified in Section 4.5 of the BDS			
<p>1. Sufficient trust and confidence may yet not materialize among all parties to implement basin-wide proactive planning and transboundary cooperation on basin operations</p>	M	All	<p>There is no easy remedy for insufficient trust: it comes with regional (economic) integration to which this BDS/MRC SP contributes.</p> <p>Development of political commitment of the basin countries and technical and diplomatic skills of the leadership within the MRC and MLC Water to drive a practical process towards achieving this BDS/MRC SP aims. Impartial political/technical leaders could be considered to help facilitate consensus when needed.</p> <p>Output 5.1.2 on MRC strengthening, Output 5.2.3 on strengthening dialogue and partnerships</p>
<p>2. Loss of lives and infrastructure in urban and industrial areas of the Mekong Delta due to the lack of coordinated investment in flood protection</p>	H	3, 4	<p>Development of an Adaptive Basin Output 3.1.1 and subsequent trade-off and benefit sharing discussions, leading to the update of the flood and drought management strategy under Output 4.2.2 with an emphasis on floodplain spatial planning</p>
<p>3. Insufficient increase in inter-seasonal water storage to keep up with increasing water uses in a future climate with dryer dry seasons, increasing water shortages and salinity intrusion</p>	M	3	<p>Adaptive Basin Plan developed with activities to be implemented on progressing identified supplementary investment projects and enabling activities and integrated flood and drought management strategy including coordinated basin operations and protocols for multi-purpose reservoirs</p>

Risk	Category	Strategic Priority	Mitigation Measures
<p>4. Loss of livelihoods and food security in poor resource-dependent communities, exacerbated by gender inequalities, before economic development gradually lifts them out of poverty and accommodates change in livelihoods</p>	H	2, 3	<p>Guidance for avoidance, minimization and mitigation of adverse impacts of infrastructure projects- Output 1.1.2.</p> <p>Planning for postponing or relocation of projects with large negative impacts as often such projects are also economically unattractive- Output 3.1.1</p> <p>Policies and programmes for alternative livelihood programmes- Output 2.2.1.</p> <p>Mekong Fund mechanism for adaptation to changes – activity 5.2.3.5.</p>
<p>5. Stranded hydropower projects because electricity supply runs ahead of demand, or lower than anticipated dry season flows, or expansion of new technology, leading to unreliable, loss-making hydropower projects and higher electricity costs for consumers</p>	L	3	<p>Harmonization between water and energy sector planning and the development of hydropower in storage-backed cascades along with support to the broader energy transition and its links to water sectors including through establishment and operation of knowledge hubs and partnerships with energy focused organisations- Outputs 3.1.1, 3.2.2</p>
<p>6. Critical loss of remaining wetland and floodplain habitat reducing ecosystem services, such as flood absorption and fish habitat, and impacting vulnerable communities</p>	H	1, 3	<p>Setting and implementation of limits of acceptable change including through updates to the regional flow framework- Output 1.3.1.</p> <p>Regional planning and a whole-of-landscape approach- Output 3.1.1.</p>

Risk	Category	Strategic Priority	Mitigation Measures
<p>7. Higher future cost of water security projects due to ongoing and planned infrastructure developments in areas and locations that may be needed in future for (joint) projects to build climate resilience and manage flood and drought risks</p>	H	3, 4	Basin planning has produced an initial adaptive basin plan. Further implementation to follow, followed by floodplain spatial planning as part of an integrated flood and drought management strategy- Outputs 3.1.1, 4.2.2.
<p>8. Higher cost of riverbank and coastal protection and other costly measures to address the impact of sediment starvation</p>	H	1, 3	Preparation and agreement on the implementation of a basin-wide sediment management strategy including to support sediment flushing trials and actions towards more sustainable sand extraction- Outputs 1.2.1, 3.1.1.
<p>9. Larger impacts of water-related accidents and operations due to accidental spills of toxic substances, dam breaks, and uncoordinated hydropower operations</p>	H	4, 5	<p>Coordination of basin management operations through cooperation, communication and data sharing protocols- Output 4.2.2</p> <p>Preparation and agreement on communication protocols for emergency response- Output 4.2.1.</p>
<p>Organizational risks, specific to MRC, as identified in MRC SP Section 9.6</p>			
<p>1. MRC's expertise & impartiality are not valued in the region. Without its position of trust and impartiality with Member Countries, MRC cannot deliver its Strategic Plan</p>	H	5	<p>Improved communication of the MRC's mandate & work, improved engagement with wider stakeholder groups, and strengthened quality of MRC products</p> <p>MRCs will more often publicly address unbalanced, biased and incorrect statements and journalism in social and other media with factual and even-handed information</p>

Risk	Category	Strategic Priority	Mitigation Measures
<p>2. Coordination and inputs to the preparation and implementation of national development plans are insufficient to improve regional outcomes. If national development plans are not sufficiently informed by basin planning, they will remain sub-optimal for all Member Countries</p>	H	5	<p>Building ‘uptake’ into the multi-year work plans and tracking of Impact pathways by MRC’s M&E system. Most Outputs in Sections Strategic Priority 1: Maintain the ecological function of the Mekong River Basin-Strategic Priority 5.</p> <p>Greater involvement of national line/ implementing agency staff through joint basin expert groups in the preparation and implementation of work plans</p>
<p>3. There is difficulty in reaching consensus among Member Countries on critical issues. Resolving differences by mutually satisfactory solutions remains an ongoing challenge for MRC. Failure to manage this risk will jeopardize Member Country commitment to the MRC</p>	H	3, 5	<p>Proactive regional planning that goes beyond what countries are currently planning including identifying and trialling benefit sharing models</p> <p>The development of in-house (MRCS) and Council/JC’s water diplomacy capacity to enable MRC to act as an honest facilitator</p> <p>Levering partnerships with MLC, ASEAN and other (multilateral) organisations</p>
<p>4. There is difficulty in effectively implementing the MRC’s cooperation mechanisms. There is a risk that MRC cooperation mechanisms, Procedures, strategies and guidelines are not implemented effectively because the mechanisms and quality of MRC products does not meet the needs or are not understood</p>	H	5	<p>Updating of the five Procedures for the new basin realities and needs</p> <p>Building ‘uptake’ into the multi-year work plans and tracking of Impact pathways by MRC’s M&E system.</p> <p>Strengthening and empowering joint basin expert groups and their national line/ implementing agencies</p>

Risk	Category	Strategic Priority	Mitigation Measures
<p>5. There are limited resources and capacity at national level to implement MRC's decentralised activities. Any significant gaps in the basin-wide knowledge base and deficiencies in institutional mechanisms for engaging in basin planning in some countries will adversely affect the value for all Member Countries</p>	H	5	<p>Implementation of an organizational development plan and capacity building activities for all relevant activities as reflected in the Results Chain to strengthen the MRC and enable continuing, gradual decentralisation</p> <p>Strengthening of Joint basin expert groups with representatives of national line/implementing agencies</p> <p>Development of institutional mechanisms for national implementing agencies to integrate basin planning and management in their staffing and workplans</p> <p>Leveraging partnership and support from partners</p>
<p>6. Bureaucratic implementation of the MRC SP. Important MRC SP activities may not be adequately elaborated into informative concept notes and/or Terms of References, and therefore not adequately resourced and implemented. This lack of focus on Outcomes has hampered 'uptake' of Outputs</p>	H	5	<p>The results chain in this MRC SP provides guidance for the resourcing and implementation modalities of activities.</p> <p>Strategic and technical coordination and oversight by the OCEO will be strengthened, which would be helped by an updated MRCS structure more aligned with MRC core functions</p> <p>A practical integrated system for multi-year work planning and budget and activity performance monitoring will be set-up. See Multi-year Work Planning</p>



Risk	Category	Strategic Priority	Mitigation Measures
<p>7. There is significant unexpected funding shortfall. While the likelihood may be low, failure by MRC Member Countries and/or Development Partners to deliver on prior commitments would have a significant adverse impact for achievement of the Plan.</p>	H	5	<p>Prioritization of activities for Outputs with high relevance in the in the multi-year work planning process according to agreed criteria. Sections 9.3 and 9.4</p> <p>Implementation of a funding mobilization strategy by the CEO and development of a post-2030 self-financing roadmap including development of innovative funding mechanisms</p>
<p>8. Financial management and independent control do not ensure transparency and accountability. MRC needs to achieve and maintain a high level of credibility in both procurement and financial management areas to secure sufficient MRC SP funding based upon a Basket fund model</p>	M	5	<p>An independent Audit function will continue, as will implementation of all updated manuals including Finance Manual.</p>



ANNEX B





Annex B: BDS Output Indicators for MRC

Strategic Priority 1: Maintain the Ecological Function of the Mekong River Basin

Outcomes	Outputs (2021-2030)	Output Indicators (2026-2030)
1.1 Adequate water flow and quality for a healthy environment and productive communities	1.1.1 Guidance for water flow and quality management implemented	<p>Indicator: Evidence of management actions being taken in response to notifications of relevant water flow and quality conditions</p> <p>Target: Management actions taken as needed</p> <p>Baseline: No management actions taken</p> <p>Assumptions: National governments are jointly committed and have the capacity to act in response to relevant flow conditions</p>
	1.1.2 Guidance and measures for impact mitigation of water infrastructure implemented	<p>Indicator: Evidence that the PDG and TbEIA have been incorporated into national regulatory systems, as needed, and have informed the development of significant new infrastructure projects, including hydropower projects and any groups of projects categorized under the TbEIA</p> <p>Target: All significant water infrastructure projects of PDG and TbEIA implemented consistently with their scopes, principles, and processes</p> <p>Baseline: The PDG and TbEIA have been trialled in some specific projects, with lessons learned for continuing improvement and wider application being documented</p> <p>Assumptions: If determined to be needed, there is sufficient political will and technical support to systematically incorporate PDG and TbEIA recommendations into national regulatory systems</p>
1.2 Sediment transport managed to mitigate bank erosion and maintain wetland and floodplain productivity	1.2.1 Basin-wide sediment management plan developed and implemented	<p>Indicator: Approval status of the basin-wide sediment management plan</p> <p>Target: Basin-wide sediment management plan approved by Member Countries for implementation</p> <p>Baseline: No basin-wide sediment management plan</p> <p>Assumptions: National governments, private developers, and industry cooperate in providing relevant data, information, implementation of the plan, and site access</p>

Strategic Priority 1: Maintain the Ecological Function of the Mekong River Basin

Outcomes	Outputs (2021-2030)	Output Indicators (2026-2030)
1.3 Ecosystem services from wetlands and watersheds ensured	1.3.1 Limits of acceptable change for key river and connected wetland habitats identified and implemented	<p>Indicator: Evidence that the identified limits of acceptable change are used in regional and national development planning processes to maintain ecosystem services of Regional Environmental Assets, including under the PMFM</p> <p>Target: Identified limits of acceptable change are incorporated into regional and national planning processes, including the PMFM</p> <p>Baseline: Hydrological limits of acceptable change in mainstream flows have been discussed under the PMFM, but not yet agreed upon or implemented in planning processes</p> <p>Assumptions: Agreement can be reached with national agencies on appropriate and implementable limits for key regional environmental assets, and they have enough technical and resource capacity to implement</p>
	1.3.2 A basin-wide planning and management framework for watersheds developed and implemented	<p>Indicator: Ecological and hydrological conditions of the mainstream are measurably maintained and periodically reported, due to improved and coordinated management actions in key watersheds</p> <p>Target: At least one pilot project scaled-up at a key national watershed and one transboundary or joint project being implemented in each Member Country, with sustainable implementation pathways identified for adoption following the completion of the pilots, including the establishment of a sustainable alternative financing mechanism</p> <p>Baseline: Basin-wide Planning and Management Framework developed and finalized in 2025, but has yet to be implemented</p> <p>Assumptions: Despite the absence of legal obligation, national line agencies/site managers take ownership of the framework and are equipped with sufficient technical and resource capacity to implement, including through the MFEW</p>

Strategic Priority 2: Enable Inclusive Access and Utilisation of the Basin's Water and Related Resources

Outcomes	Outputs	Output Indicators (2026-2030)
2.1 Strengthened water, food, and energy security for basin community well-being	2.1.2 Capture fisheries regulatory frameworks improved to support food security	<p>Indicator: Evidence of national governments improving their capture fisheries plans, policies, laws, and institutional arrangements, and/or enhancing implementation</p> <p>Target: At least one national framework for each country drafted for the harmonization of plans, policies and institutional arrangements across sectors to support transboundary fisheries solutions</p> <p>Baseline: Current country plans, policies, laws, and institutional arrangements</p> <p>Assumptions: There is recognition at national, sub-national, and local levels that existing capture fisheries arrangements need to be improved, and there is enough technical and resource capacity to make improvements</p>
	2.1.3 Risks to capture fisheries productivity and diversity minimised to support food security	<p>Indicator: Evidence of effective fish passage design and operation in water infrastructure</p> <p>Target: All hydropower projects on the mainstream and significant irrigation schemes have effective fish passage in place</p> <p>Baseline: Designs and recommendations as documented in technical reviews under the PNPCA and in follow-up through JAP; and baseline Joint Environmental Monitoring reports</p> <p>Assumptions: There are cost-effective options available to improve fish passage, and national governments and developers have sufficient incentive and resources to change their designs, where relevant</p>
	2.1.4 Gender and vulnerability aspects of basin water, food, and energy security addressed	<p>Indicator: Degree to which gender equity and vulnerability aspects have been integrated into implementing MRC's work and activities at regional and national levels, including improving equity for vulnerable communities in LMB</p> <p>Target: Gender equity and vulnerability action plan implemented, and Mekong products addressing gender equity and vulnerability rolled out, expanded, or replicated in each Member Country</p> <p>Baseline: The Socio-Economic and Gender and Vulnerability Data Collection and Transmission within DAGAP is in place, some assessments of socio-economic and gender and vulnerability data under MRB-IF conducted, gender action plan partially implemented and initial Mekong Products identified and promoted to support vulnerable communities in the LMB</p> <p>Assumptions: National governments have sufficient resources to support the collection of disaggregated data on gender and vulnerability, and the capacity to implement responses to improve gender disparities at national level</p>

Strategic Priority 3: Enhance Optimal and Sustainable Development of Water and Related Sectors

Outcomes	Outputs	Output Indicators (2026-2030)
3.1 Increased economic growth of all basin countries from more proactive regional planning	3.1.1 The Basin Development Plan and associated national plans for water resources development are informed by the findings of a more proactive regional planning approach	<p>Indicator: Degree to which the Adaptive Basin Development Plan is implemented</p> <p>Target: Adaptive Basin Development and pathways for joint projects and enabling activities agreed with implementation underway</p> <p>Baseline: Initial Adaptive Basin Plan prepared with joint projects and enabling activities proposed but not yet implemented</p> <p>Assumptions: Countries approve the Final Adaptive Basin Plan and agree to collaborate on the implementation of joint projects and enabling activities</p>
3.2 Enhanced inclusive growth and sustainability in irrigated agriculture, hydropower, navigation, environment and fisheries sectors	<p>3.2.1 Irrigated agriculture investment and associated measures implemented</p> <p>3.2.2 Sustainable hydropower development strategy and related regional energy plans implemented in synergy</p> <p>3.2.3 Basin navigation plans implemented in synergy</p>	<p>Indicator: Evidence of regional guidelines, strategies, and plans implemented or integrated into national strategies and plans</p> <p>Target: At least one activity or project in each guidance or guidelines related to irrigation, the navigation masterplan, the regional action plan, and the SHDS implemented</p> <p>Baseline: Planned activities or projects in each guidance or guidelines, navigation master plan, and regional action plan, and SHDS identified but not yet implemented</p> <p>Assumptions: National line/implementing agencies are proactive in working with MRC to improve the implementation of MRB water-related sector strategies to help identify and support investment measures</p>



Strategic Priority 4: Strengthen Resilience Against Climate Risks, Extreme Floods and Droughts

Outcomes	Outputs	Output Indicators (2026-2030)
4.1 Better informed and prepared basin communities against changing river conditions, and more frequent and severe floods and droughts	4.1.1 A core river monitoring network for the mainstream and remaining national river monitoring networks consolidated	<p>Indicator: Extent and quality of implementation of the Core River Monitoring Network</p> <p>Target: Core River Monitoring Network is fully operational with ongoing data provision and integrated analysis and reporting provided</p> <p>Baseline: CRMN exists, but coverage gaps remain across the basin; annual assessment reports are discipline-specific and not fully integrated; Databases exist, but are not consistently updated or harmonized across disciplines</p> <p>Assumptions: MCs maintain commitment to operate and share data from national networks, and adequate technical and financial resources are available for station maintenance, calibration, and field surveys, and integrated analysis and reporting</p>
	4.1.2 Integrated data and information systems for more effective basin-wide data management and sharing	<p>Indicator: Extent of data coverage and timeliness under PDIES, including tributary and basin operations data, and availability and functionality of visualisation and analytics platform</p> <p>Target: PDIES operational and expanded to include tributary data and basin operations data with Integrated analytics and visualisation platform (Water Status Dashboard) fully functional and publicly accessible</p> <p>Baseline: PDIES operational but data coverage limited, updated irregularly and fragmented; Visualisation platforms exist but are discipline-specific with Water Status Dashboard in early stages</p> <p>Assumptions: MCs remain committed to timely data sharing under PDIES, including tributary and operational data, and capacity-building efforts are sustained and institutionalized within national agencies</p>



Strategic Priority 4: Strengthen Resilience Against Climate Risks, Extreme Floods and Droughts

Outcomes	Outputs	Output Indicators (2026-2030)
	4.1.3 Compatible Decision Support Systems in line on reinvigorated data, modelling, forecasting, and communication capabilities	<p>Indicator: The MRC-DSF is fully operational and applied for supporting MRC procedures, forecasting, and basin-wide planning</p> <p>Target: MRC-DSF is applied in transboundary planning or emergency response processes, and the system is used in basin-wide scenario assessments</p> <p>Baseline: MRC-DSF exists but lacks full operational capacity; modules for water quality and sediment are under development; limited national-level use and no coordinated application in transboundary emergency response</p> <p>Assumptions: Member Countries remain committed to collaborative modelling and data sharing; technical and financial resources are secured for continued capacity development and DSF enhancement</p>
	4.1.4 Integrated basin-wide flood and drought forecasting and early warning	<p>Indicator: Existence of an integrated riverine forecasting and early warning system being operational</p> <p>Target: Integrated riverine forecasting and early warning system tested and operational in at least 4 selected tributaries</p> <p>Baseline: Current system covers mainly river flood forecasting at the basin scale; flash flood and drought forecasting are fragmented and limited with tributary forecasting not developed</p> <p>Assumptions: National agencies and NMCs are committed to disseminating forecasts and advisories to communities; Communities are willing and able to participate in awareness and preparedness campaigns</p>
	4.1.5 Joint State of Basin Report	<p>Indicator: The extent to which China and Myanmar collaborate in preparing the SOBR 2023 and data gaps in all basin countries have been addressed in accordance with the MRB-IF</p> <p>Target: Data, information and analysis from China and Myanmar are included in the SOBR 2028 and there are no substantial data gaps to implement the MRB-IF</p> <p>Baseline: Limited official data and information from China and Myanmar were made available for preparing the SOBR 2023 and remaining data gaps in all basin countries for some key indicators</p> <p>Assumptions: China and Myanmar are willing to contribute to the joint SOBR 2023 and there is sufficient recognition of the need to improve data collection, assembly and sharing with the MRCS across all basin countries</p>

Strategic Priority 4: Strengthen Resilience Against Climate Risks, Extreme Floods and Droughts

Outcomes	Outputs	Output Indicators (2026-2030)
4.2 Better disaster management and adaptation to water resources development and climate risks	4.2.1 Coordinated water infrastructure operations for multiple benefits including gender and vulnerability sensitive disaster mitigation and management	<p>Indicator: The degree to which dam operations are being coordinated between Member Countries</p> <p>Target: At least 1 trial coordination event conducted and river operations tool in place to support decisions</p> <p>Baseline: Data sharing arrangements are in place, but as yet no improvements in coordinated operations</p> <p>Assumptions: Member Countries agree to coordinate the operation of dams for water security benefits and are willing to address this issue at the national and transboundary levels</p>
	4.2.2 Climate change adaptation, flood and drought management mainstreamed at national levels	<p>Indicator: The degree to which regional climate change adaptation needs and water security challenges are addressed</p> <p>Target: Number and extent of transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought management projects for climate change adaptation developed and implemented</p> <p>Baseline: Some transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought management projects for climate change adaptation are partially mainstreamed into some Member Country strategies but not systematically aligned at the basin level. Limited implementation of transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought adaptation measures across transboundary areas</p> <p>Assumptions: Member Countries remain committed to joint projects addressing climate change adaptation and transboundary cooperation. The accreditation process for MRC to global climate funds is successful and timely. Adequate financial resources and technical support are mobilized from climate funds and development partners.</p>





Strategic Priority 5: Strengthen Cooperation Among all Basin Countries and Stakeholders

Outcomes	Outputs	Output Indicators (2026-2030)
5.1 Strengthened Mekong River Commission for more effective implementation of the Mekong Agreement	5.1.1 Implementation of the MRC Procedures enhanced	<p>Indicator: The degree to which enhanced Technical Guidelines of MRC Procedures are agreed and implemented</p> <p>Target: All enhanced MRC Procedures and Technical Guidelines are agreed by Member Countries and implemented</p> <p>Baseline: Improvements made to all technical guidelines, but implementation gaps remain</p> <p>Assumptions: Agreement can be reached between the Member Countries on enhanced Technical Guidelines, and they have the political will and capacity to implement them</p>
	5.1.2 Organisational development of the Mekong River Commission	<p>Indicator: The degree to which the MRC has sustainable institutional and funding arrangements agreed and in place for post 2030</p> <p>Target: Agreed institutional and funding mechanisms in place for the period beyond 2030 with commitments from Member Countries and Development Partners</p> <p>Baseline: New funding modalities ready to be trialed, strong ongoing support from Development Partners and from Member Countries meeting their funding commitments</p> <p>Assumptions: A model for adequate funding of non-routine and routine core functions post 2030 can be agreed upon by all relevant parties</p>
5.2 Increased joint efforts and partnerships for more integrated management of the entire river basin	5.2.2 Significant joint investment projects and national projects of basin-wide significance and associated measures agreed based on consideration of trade-offs, benefit sharing and risks	<p>Indicator: The extent to which joint investment projects and enabling activities are prepared</p> <p>Target: Preparation of agreed joint investment projects consistent with MRC procedures and guidelines, and all enabling activities implemented</p> <p>Baseline: The Adaptive Basin Plan proposed two joint investment projects and multiple enabling activities, and there are two existing transboundary hydropower projects planned for implementation</p> <p>Assumptions: Member Countries engage in high-level discussions on trade-offs and benefit sharing, and are willing to agree on government-to-government cooperative approaches to transboundary investment projects</p>
	5.2.3 Mekong water-related cooperation mechanisms and relevant partnerships implemented in collaboration with countries	<p>Indicator: The degree to which new and existing MOUs are implemented</p> <p>Target: All MOUs are implemented or amended</p> <p>Baseline: Some MOUs are not fully implemented</p> <p>Assumptions: Partners in the MoUs make sufficient time and resources available to implement agreed actions</p>

Strategic Priority 5: Strengthen Cooperation Among all Basin Countries and Stakeholders

Outcomes	Outputs	Output Indicators (2026-2030)
	5.2.4 Joint Basin Expert Groups	<p>Indicator: The status of the establishment and operations of the proposed joint basin expert groups</p> <p>Target: Joint technical working groups established for all joint studies and other cooperation activities with UMB countries</p> <p>Baseline: Joint Basin Expert Groups are being implemented through participation of UMB countries in MRC groups and through joint technical working groups for specific projects</p> <p>Assumptions: An ad-hoc and flexible approach to joint expert groups is sufficient to support whole-of basin cooperation toward shared objectives</p>
	5.2.5 Harmonised basin-wide stakeholder platform	<p>Indicator: The degree to which key concerns of basin communities are being heard and addressed through basin-wide stakeholder engagement mechanisms, operating with consistent recording, reporting, and impact tracking procedures</p> <p>Target: All key MRC SP deliverables take into account stakeholders' concerns and inputs as reflected in stakeholder feedback</p> <p>Baseline: Systematic and institutionalized mechanisms are in place with enhanced communication and engagement procedures in place</p> <p>Assumptions: Existing stakeholder engagement mechanisms are sufficient to address stakeholder concerns</p>



ANNEX C





Annex C: Deliverables

Outputs	Deliverables (2026-2030)	Year	Lead/Support
1.1.1	Overview of the hydrology of the entire Mekong-Lancang River Basin (2027)	2027	TD
1.1.1	Finalised hydrological thresholds for PMFM guidelines and flow framework (2028)	2028	TD
1.1.1	Updated Technical Guideline for PWUM (2028)	2028	TD
1.1.1	Notifications and management actions in accordance with MRC Procedures (annual)	Annual	TD, PD
1.1.1	Reports on Joint water quality monitoring including status of heavy metals in the Mekong Basin (2028)	2028	ED
1.1.1	Updated TGWQ, thresholds, and scoring methodologies (2028)	2028	ED
1.1.2	Application and integration of PDG in national regulatory, technical frameworks, and project design (annual)	Annual	PD
1.1.2	Enhanced JAPs implementation with specific timelines, responsibilities, and trackable actions (annual)	Annual	PD
1.1.2	Mainstreaming of TbEIA guidelines into national EIA systems and regulations as needed and project-specific assessments reports (annual)	Annual	ED
1.1.2	Geological and seismic data collection and analysis for dam safety (2028)	2028	PD
1.2.1	Basin-wide sediment budget assessment (2026)	2026	TD (PD)
1.2.1	Basin-wide sediment management plan (2027)	2027	PD
1.2.1	Implementation of coordinated sediment flushing (2030)	2030	PD
1.3.1	Identification of minimum flow requirements for the mainstream to support the maintenance of ecosystem functions of Regional Environmental Assets (2029)	2029	ED
1.3.1	Mekong Fund Trial to support wetland and watershed management (2030)	2030	ED
1.3.1	Regional Environment Asset management plans developed or updated, as needed, with alternative financing identified (2029)	2029	ED
1.3.2	Scaled-up wetland and watershed pilot projects (2030)	2030	ED
1.3.2	Capacity of line agencies at all levels on watershed and wetland good management practices improved (2030)	2030	ED
2.1.2	The transboundary fisheries management project (2030)	2030	ED
2.1.3	Advanced technology to assist fish monitoring and transboundary fisheries management (2027)	2027	ED
2.1.3	Adaptive fisheries management mechanisms established for Transboundary Fisheries Conservation in the Mekong Basin (2028)	2028	ED
2.1.3	Updated Fish-friendly infrastructure for irrigation guidelines based on lesson learned and technical assessment (2030)	2030	ED
2.1.4	Improved Gender and vulnerability mapping and assessment at basin wide level, based on updated SIMVA reports (2027)	2027	PD, ED
2.1.4	Gender equity and vulnerability action plan implemented, reviewed and updated (2028)	2028	PD
2.1.4	Joint community-based Mekong products to strengthen community resilience and climate change adaptation (2027)	2027	PD

Outputs	Deliverables (2026-2030)	Year	Lead/Support
3.1.1	Final Adaptive Basin Plan including agreed pathways for joint projects and enabling activities (2027)	2027	PD
3.2.1	Groundwater monitoring system and database established and updated to support an assessment of groundwater status (2030)	2030	PD
3.2.1	Uptake of Guidance on Irrigation Asset Management (IAM), and Intermittent Irrigation, and Technical Guideline on Sustainable Groundwater Use and Management for Agriculture (Annual)	Annual	PD
3.2.2	Enhanced cooperation on water-environment-energy linkages with other regional frameworks (2029)	2029	PD
3.2.2	Basin-wide Alternative Energy Planning Review (2030)	2030	PD
3.2.3	Implementation of the Navigation Master Plan and the Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transport of Dangerous Goods (annual)	Annual	PD
3.2.3	Implementation of harmonised navigation rules and regulations (2026/2029)	2026, 2029	PD
3.2.3	An accessible, digital MRC Navigation River Information Service for a diverse range of users, including small-scale traders and local riverine users (2028)	2028	PD, TD
4.1.1	Core River Monitoring Network, assessment and reporting (annual)	Annual	TD, ED
4.1.2	Updated Bathymetry and Digital Elevation Model (DEM) dataset of the Mekong Basin (annual)	Annual	TD
4.1.2	Upgraded spatial data and remote sensing product repository (2027)	2027	TD
4.1.2	Implementation of strengthened PDIES to enhance timely, standardized information sharing, including additional data from tributaries and coordination of basin operations (annual)	Annual	TD
4.1.2	Visualisation and data analytics platform to support integrated analysis and inform decision-makers (2028)	2028	TD (OCEO, ED, PD)
4.1.3	An operational and continuously improved MRC-DSF supporting basin-wide planning and forecasting, including capacity building (annual)	Annual	TD
4.1.3	Water quality, sediment, and salinity integrated into MRC-DSF (2030)	2030	TD (ED)
4.1.4	An integrated system for river monitoring, river flood, flash flood guidance, and drought forecasting tools, including both backend (modelling and analysis tool) and frontend (2028)	2028	TD, OCEO
4.1.4	An impact-based forecasting system with advisory dissemination for river flood, flash flood, and drought on short-term to long-term time scales (2029)	2029	TD, PD
4.1.4	A riverine forecasting system for selected key tributaries (2028)	2028	TD
4.1.4	Joint transboundary activities/projects for flood and drought adaptation (2028)	2028	TD, PD
4.1.4	Community awareness campaigns and capacity building to improve resilience, preparedness, and response capabilities in vulnerable regions (annual)	Annual	TD (OCEO)
4.1.5	Updated MRB-IF and DAGAP aligned with PDIES to reduce cost with data sharing agreements in place (2027)	2027	ED (OCEO, PD, TD)

Outputs	Deliverables (2026-2030)	Year	Lead/Support
4.1.5	Integrated multi-disciplinary assessment methodology to support analysis of causal relationships and vulnerabilities of basin communities (2027)	2027	ED (TD, PD)
4.1.5	State of the Basin Report with automated online data visualisation of SOBR dashboards (2029)	2029	OCEO (PD, ED, TD)
4.2.1	Increased data and information sharing from dam operators (2027)	2027	PD
4.2.1	Guidelines for hydropower flow and reservoir coordination, supported by a hydropower flow coordination system (2029)	2029	PD (ED, TD)
4.2.1	An active coordination mechanism for water releases in water-related disaster management (2030)	2030	PD, TD
4.2.2	Accreditation of MRC to global climate funds (2028)	2028	PD
4.2.2	Transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought management solutions (2028)	2028	PD
4.2.2	Joint Projects Facility with joint and transboundary investment projects delivered (2028)	2028	OCEO, PD
5.1.1	Enhanced implementation of the MRC Procedures and their associated (technical) guidelines in an integrated way (annual)	Annual	PD
5.1.1	Implementation of the PNPCA and updated Guidelines for sustainable water infrastructure development (annual)	Annual	PD (ED, TD, OCEO)
5.1.1	Key priorities for selected tributaries of basin-wide significant agreed and implemented (2029)	2029	PD
5.1.2	MRC Summits (2027, 2030)	2027, 2030	OCEO, AD
5.1.2	IT investments to support data analytics and visualisation tools (2027)	2027	AD
5.1.2	National Indicative Plans 2026-2030 formulated (2026)	2026	PD
5.1.2	Product dissemination and communication frameworks for national uptake (2027)	2027	OCEO
5.1.2	Final Mekong Fund operating arrangements (2030)	2030	OCEO, AD
5.1.2	Mid-Term Review of the MRC Strategic Plan (2028)	2038	OCEO
5.1.2	Roadmap for post-2030 financing arrangements with targets, funding modalities and aligned staffing levels (2028)	2028	OCEO, AD
5.1.2	BDS 2031-2040 and MRC Strategic Plan 2031-2035 (2030)	2030	OCEO, PD
5.2.2	Agreements between countries on cooperation arrangements and benefit sharing for joint investment projects and enabling activities (2029)	2029	PD, OCEO, ED
5.2.3	Partnership agreements with Development Partners, ASEAN, GMS, MLC Water, ACMECS, Mekong-US, Mekong-Australia, Mekong-Japan, and Mekong-ROK implemented (annual)	Annual	OCEO
5.2.3	Partnership agreements and cooperation plans with all relevant partners developed and implemented (annual)	Annual	OCEO
5.2.3	Sister River Partnerships expanded with river basin organisations and joint work programme agreed (2027)	2027	OCEO
5.2.4	Implementation of agreed Joint Studies, data/model sharing (annual)	Annual	TD
5.2.4	Implementation of the strengthened Joint Expert Group on Data, Modelling, and Forecasting (annual)	Annual	TD

Outputs	Deliverables (2026-2030)	Year	Lead/Support
5.2.5	Stakeholder engagement activities undertaken to gather inputs to BDS implementation and feedback response mechanism established (annual)	Annual	OCEO
5.2.5	Mekong Roundtable, Media Exchange and Regional Stakeholder Forums, University Competition and other events conducted (annual)	Annual	OCEO
5.2.5	Outreach and engagement of youth and communities on iReport for community-based early warning system (2028)	2028	OCEO
5.2.5	Community Innovation Projects, including capacity building to improve resilience, preparedness, and response capabilities in vulnerable regions (annual)	Annual	OCEO



ANNEX D





Annex D: SP Activity Description

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
Dimension: Environment				
Output 1.1.1: Guidance for water flow and quality management implemented				
1.1.1.7 Evaluate and identify hydrological thresholds to support the PMFM guidelines and flow framework, update PMFM dashboard	TD	2,5	NR	This activity aims to finalize the PMFM TGs incorporate with the lesson learned from the testing of new flow framework and results from hydrological limits under PRP to support the ecosystem functions and fisheries management.
1.1.1.8 Update an overview of the hydrology of the Lancang-Mekong River Basin	TD	2,5	NR	This activity aims to update the overview of the hydrology of the Mekong River Basin published in 2009 by using the updated reliable data and information, covering Lancang-Mekong River Basin, such as from the Joint Study.
1.1.1.9 Update and Implement the PWUM technical guidelines and water balance approach, including reporting and visualisation	TD	1,5	R	The PWUM Technical Guidelines will be developed/updated through the testing and lesson learned from the water balance simulation, water status dashboard, reporting tool under the upgraded DSF.
1.1.1.10 Implement the PMFM and updated flow framework, including measures to identify and coordinate responses to flow conditions that exceed agreed thresholds	TD, PD	1,5	R	This activity aims to implement the PMFM following the agreed thresholds via the webpage and integrate to the upgraded DSF platform including the water status dashboard.
1.1.1.11 Update and implement the PWQ guidelines, including trial implementation of Riverine Plastic Monitoring (RPM), annual water quality reports, scorecards, and a revised scoring method, including additional thresholds consistent with international standards of water quality used for aquaculture and agriculture	ED	1,5	R	This activity aims to revise and update TGWQ to ensure up-to-date international standard limit for water quality and specific actions for Guidelines of Emergency Water Quality Response and Management (Chapter 4), and conducts trial implementation of Riverine Plastic Monitoring.
1.1.1.12 Undertake joint water quality monitoring to enhance transboundary cooperation and mitigate impacts focused on: (i) the causes and possible solutions to some concerning trends reported in the 2023 SOBR and (ii) updating status and contamination conditions of heavy metals and other pollutants (e.g. pesticides and microplastic) in the water column, sediments, and biota	ED	1,2	NR	This activity includes conducting joint water quality assessment between Cambodia and Viet Nam according to the potential transboundary water quality related to the nutrient parameters; and regional study on updating the status and contamination conditions of heavy metals and other pollutants (e.g. pesticides and microplastic) in the water column, sediments, and biota. Note: Microplastic can be in capacity building for RPM.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
1.1.1.13 Implement capacity-building for monitoring of riverine plastic, emergency spills, heavy metals, and other key parameters, to support implementation of the PWQ and the Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transport of Dangerous Goods	ED, PD	1	NR	Conduct an emergency response drill for an oil spill in the Mekong River (with PD) and build capacity for implementing the Regional Riverine Plastic Monitoring (RPM), including equipment for sampling and microplastic analysis, and dissemination of lessons learned and apply results to Chapter 4 of the RAP-DG.

Output 1.1.2: Guidance and measures for impact mitigation of water infrastructure implemented

1.1.2.5 Support the application and integration of the PDG into national regulatory frameworks, including considerations for its application to selected tributaries	PD	3	NR	Conduct trainings on areas of interest agreed upon by Member Countries. Propose designing a PDG community webpage (within the MRC website) to serve as a knowledge pool for all disciplines in PDG2022, incorporating machine learning/AI for Q&A sections. Organize site visits to XYHPP and DSHPP (LPHPP) to understand the extent and specifics of consultations between Mekong Dams and PDG.
1.1.2.6 Coordinate the implementation and enhanced tracking of actions in Joint Action Plans (JAPs)	PD	3,5	NR	This is to set up some meeting/dialogues with related Developers through LNMCS; to organise regional meeting on the implementation of the JAPs; and to organise a number of site visit to the hydropower project to see their operation or monitoring.
1.1.2.7 Support future wider application and continuous improvement of the TbEIA based on lessons learned and through mainstreaming into national EIA systems, targeted capacity building measures, and project-specific technical guidance, as needed	ED	3	NR	This activity will be implemented to address lessons learned from the pilot at the Sekong Downstream (Site A) Hydropower Project with the ED plans to support the Member Countries in mainstreaming TbEIA into national framework, hoping for its wider application while support increase awareness and capacity building of national EIA authorities. As well, efforts will be made to improve specific provisions of the TbEIA to ensure their effective, efficient, and systematic implementation during the the SP cycle.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
1.1.2.8 Collect and review geological and seismic data related to dam safety and conduct knowledge sharing and capacity building to enhance dam safety practices	PD	1,2	NR	Consult with Member Countries and line agencies responsible for seismic monitoring, and regional/global agencies to link and share data on the MRC website. Coordinate with dam operators on dam safety reviews for seismic issues, including sharing past experiences and investigation results from actual earthquake events, to build public confidence.

Output 1.2.1: Basin-wide sediment management plan developed and implemented

1.2.1.4 Conduct a basin-wide sediment budget assessment	TD, (PD)	1,2	NR	This activity aims to have better understanding on sediment in LMB and provide inputs to the basin-wide sediment management plan. This will include the technical and consultation works for methodology, tools, data used for the assessment. it is anticipated with modelling work for sediment budget, available sediment monitoring data, and secondary data collection to identify the current status, trend, and significant sediment-related issues.
1.2.1.5 Prepare and implement a basin-wide sediment management plan based on (i) sediment budget; (ii) coordinated operations to support sediment flushing, and (iii) working towards sustainable sand/sediment extraction	PD	2,3	NR	This activity will includes several tasks including hiring a group of consultants (or firms) which have different expertise related to sediment to formulate the draft Sediment Management Plan based on the agreed Concept Note; conduct national and regional consultations in with Member Counties and at joint meeting of the Expert Group. TD and ED will provide technical inputs.
1.2.1.6 Develop and implement coordinated sediment flushing operations for hydropower projects	PD	3	NR	This activity will include several tasks including drafting and discussing concept note on the sediment flushing, and drafting and discussion on the note/mechanism for sediment flushing for hydropower projects, consultation and implementation of a pilot project. TD and ED may provide technical inputs.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
Output 1.3.1: Limits of acceptable change for key river and connected wetland habitats identified and implemented				
1.3.1.3 Evaluate and identify hydrological thresholds of the mainstream for maintaining ecosystem services (incl. critical fish habitats) of Regional Environmental Assets	ED	2,5	NR	This activity includes two Phases. Phase I will identify the flow threshold to fisheries, the activities will first compile all available data and analysis the trend of fisheries in the LMB since 1995 and correlated with the flow data. Then the next important question is to identify what fish yield/productivity is acceptable so then identifying relative flow thresholds. As for Phase II, in 2029, ED will aim to identify minimum mainstream flow to maintain ecosystem services (including maintain critical fish habitats) of key regional environmental assets. This work will involve the development of methodology and assessment to identify (i) key wetlands (ii) their ecological values and (iii) hydrological limits to support optimal ecological values.
1.3.1.4 Establish the Ecosystem Window of the Mekong Fund Trial (MFEW) to support and facilitate local community engagement in wetland and watershed biodiversity conservation	ED	2,3	NR	To initiate a trial implementation of the Mekong Fund, an Ecosystem Window of the Mekong Fund Trial (MFEW) will be established and trial for a period of five years following the signing of grant agreement between the MRCS and KfW (donors). Once established the fund from the MFEW will be disbursed to implement projects for sustainable wetland and watershed management and their biodiversity conservations. With project implmentation to include both national and transboundary types at prioritized regional environmental assets and key watersheds.
1.3.1.5 Exploration of alternative financing mechanisms such as payment for ecosystem services and carbon financing to support sustainable management of the Regional Environmental Assets and key Watersheds	ED	3	NR	To support the sustainable management of wetlands and watersheds, the MRCS ED with the support of the Member Countries will intitiate a regional assessment of potential alternative financing mechanisms that would sustainably provide funding to support and facility the implementaiton of biodiversity conservation project, without the needs to rely on the BF and EF funding sources.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
Output 1.3.2: A basin-wide planning and management framework for watersheds developed and implemented				
1.3.2.3 Support and coordinate the scaling-up of wetland and watershed management pilot projects of basin-wide significance to support regional water security objectives consistent with national strategies	ED	3	NR	Identified as one of the urgent actions by the Basin-wide Planning and Management Framework and its Project-based Action Plan, this activity will utilize funding from the MFEW to scale up any pilot projects that have been documented to contribute to improved biodiversity conservation and local community livelihoods. The activity will include a greater coordination between the MRCS and Member Countries in identifying and implementing the urgent needed projects for alignment with national and regional objectives
1.3.2.4 Capacity building of national, provincial and local authorities on watershed and wetland good management practice including grant proposal writing to support the implementation of the MFEW	ED	3	NR	This activity includes the development of capacity building plan for national, provincial and local authorities on watershed and wetland good management practice and MFEW's proposal writing (2026). Annual capacity building will be conducted on three components: (i) wetland good management practice, (ii) watershed good management practice, and (iii) MFEW's proposal writing .



Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
Dimension: Social				
Output 2.1.2: Capture fisheries regulatory frameworks improved to support food security				
2.1.2.4 Support implementation of the transboundary fisheries management project under the GEF and coordinate integration of its outputs into regional and national policies, strategies, and institutional frameworks	ED	2,3	NR	This activity aims to increase the connectivity, productivity, and resilience of transboundary capture fisheries, aquatic biodiversity, and the ecosystem services they provide by strengthening community-based fisheries management, fisheries value chain development, and income diversification, and through the Mekong River Commission (MRC) integrate fisheries conservation into sectoral policies, especially hydropower and irrigation.
2.1.2.5 Implement capacity building to enhance institutional, governance and regulatory arrangements within national and provincial fisheries management frameworks including through participatory outreach, community training, and alignment with national food security policies	ED	3	NR	This activity includes capacity building to local fisheries community will be conducted throughout 4 components of the GEF Project at various levels to cover all project related activities.
Output 2.1.3: Risks to capture fisheries productivity and diversity minimised to support food security				
2.1.3.3 Develop and coordinate implementation of an adaptive fisheries management plan at key transboundary locations	ED	2,3	NR	This activity includes a baseline assessment and the development of an adaptive management plan to address the complex social, economic, and ecological dynamics of fisheries in the LMB. It will also establish a feedback loop to regularly update policies based on monitoring and evaluation, linked to Activity 2.1.3.4 on developing an evidence-based transboundary fisheries management system that connects monitoring systems and data to integrated analysis and decision-support.
2.1.3.4 Explore new technologies and methodologies to enhance transboundary fisheries monitoring	ED	1	NR	This activity will review alternative technology/methodology advancements which focus on the adoption and integration of innovative tools; and assess and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of MRC fisheries monitoring aiming to optimize sampling, species identification methods, and feasible innovative approaches.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
2.1.3.5 Support the implementation of technical guidelines on fish-friendly infrastructure for irrigation systems, including improving monitoring, capacity building, policy dialogues, and assistance to project-specific technical assessments	ED	3	NR	This activity focuses on 1) Regional Fisheries monitoring report for Fish passage in Irrigation system; 2) Exploring cost effective fish passage solution/facilities in the LMB (ED lead under GEF funding); 3) Cross Sector Policy dialogues between fisheries and irrigation agencies for up taking technical guidelines on fish-friendly infrastructure for irrigation systems (PD lead under BF and ED lead under GEF funding); 4) Assistance to project-specific technical assessments (ED lead to support specific fish passage design and construction in GEF landscapes)
2.1.3.6 Develop an evidence-based transboundary fisheries management system linking monitoring systems and data to integrated analysis and decision-support	ED	2,3	NR	This activity includes integrated analysis including Identify factors linking to fisheries assessment, fisheries trend to support MCs for management decision.
2.1.3.7 Updated Fish-friendly irrigation guidelines based on lessons learned and technical assessment including exploration of cost-effective fish passage solution/facilities in the Lower Mekong Basin	ED	3	NR	PD will share the results on the Effectiveness Assessment of Fishway for the irrigation system with ED and work together with ED on updating the technical guidelines on Fish-friendly Infrastructure.

Output 2.1.4: Gender and vulnerability aspects of basin water, food and energy security addressed

2.1.4.4 Conduct the SIMVA field surveys and prepare SIMVA reports.	PD, ED	1	R	This activity will include the following tasks: regional report on improving equity for vulnerable groups in LMB finalised, endorsed and published on the MRC website; updated SIMVA Guideline (2025) finalised, endorsed and published on the MRC website; SIMVA field surveys in LMB countries conducted in each MC for data collection, processing and analysis completed; and national and regional SIMVA reports drafted, consulted, finalised and endorsed for publication on the MRC website.
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Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
2.1.4.5 Coordinate implementation, monitoring and review of regional gender equity and vulnerability action plan	PD	2,3	NR	This activity aims to support the implementation of a Regional Gender Equity and Vulnerability Action Plan (GEVAP 2026-2030) and also mainstreaming at national level in each MC, which is aligned with the national development priorities and clear measures to improve equity for vulnerable groups in water resources and related sectors in LMB. The key activities include regional and national workshop (capacity building) on gender equity and vulnerability aspects for the MRCS, MCs and concerned national line agencies. In collaboration with OCEO, regular monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the GEVAP's implementation and progress/achievements.
2.1.4.6 Develop Mekong products to enhance community resilience to climate change and changes in hydrological conditions	PD	2	NR	Support member countries in developing Mekong products that strengthen community resilience to climate change and changing hydrological conditions, including joint community research, value-chain development, and application of science, technology, and innovation. An inclusive Community Innovation Platform will unite communities, CSOs, research institutions, the private sector, and development partners to pilot and upscale innovative products. The work will apply gender equity and vulnerability lens, ensuring inclusiveness in design, production, and market access. This will support member countries in further research and development and innovation in converting this raw material into consumer products, which will increase the community's livelihood.



Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
Dimension: Economic				
Output 3.1.1: The Basin Development Plan and associated national plans for water resources development are informed by the findings of a more proactive regional planning approach				
3.1.1.4 Develop joint projects and enabling activities identified the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan	PD	3	NR	This activity is depending on the outcome of the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan in which a number of joint projects and enabling activities are identified. If agreed by MCs, a number of joint projects and enabling activities could be selected to further conduct more assessment focusing on socio-economic, and environmental aspects. The inputs from this detailed assessment will be used to further finalising the Adaptive Basin Plan, as in the below activity 3.2.1.2.
3.1.1.5 Finalise the Adaptive Basin Plan based on agreed pathways to progress the joint projects and enabling activities and supported by additional environmental, social, and economic assessment as needed	PD	3	NR	This activity is to further proceed the Initial Adaptive Basin Plan into the final Adaptive Basin Plan.
Output 3.2.1: Irrigated agriculture investment and associated measures implemented				
3.2.1.3 Collect additional groundwater data and establish groundwater monitoring system and database to support a new regional groundwater strategy and policy recommendations for optimizing the groundwater irrigation development	PD	3	NR	Groundwater Potential Maps for two selected transboundary aquifers will be developed to assess the availability of groundwater resources in these areas. In addition, a groundwater database will be initiated during this SP period to support future studies, utilization, and management of groundwater in the region. This activity will also include discussion workshops and pilot projects on groundwater data collection, monitoring system design and installation, data analysis, mapping, and the design and development of the database system.



Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
3.2.1.4 Promote the uptake of Guidance on Irrigation Asset Management and Intermittent Irrigation	PD	3	NR	This activity includes: 1. Irrigation Asset Management: MRC will provide support the MCs in uptaking the irrigation asset management guidance on the capacity building and coordination between the relevant line agencies in the MCs and the Japanese Institutions, who are implementing the pilot projects on the irrigation asset management in the LMB region. 2. Intermittent Irrigation: The pilot projects will be implemented in each member country. This activity will divide into three stages. The Pilot Project Stage 1 will be conducted in two countries for two years. The Pilot Project Stage 2 will be conducted in other two countries by applying the same technique and technology as stage 1. The stage 3 is to summary all of the results from the pilot project and prepare the regional report on the pilot testing of the intermittent irrigation in the LMB. The lesson learned and recommendations from the pilot testings will be used to improve the intermittent guidance in the Year Five.
3.2.1.5 Promote the uptake of Technical Guidelines on Sustainable Groundwater Use and Management for Agriculture including carrying out pilot project related to groundwater	PD	3	NR	The main focuses of this activity are to: 1. Disseminate the Technical Guidelines on Sustainable Groundwater Use and Management for Agriculture; and 2. Strengthen the capacity of relevant line agencies in groundwater data collection, analysis, management, and application through training workshops and pilot projects implemented under Activity 3.2.1.2.



Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
Output 3.2.2: Sustainable hydropower development strategy and related regional energy plans implemented in synergy				
3.2.2.2 Facilitate regional collaboration on water-environment-energy linkages to advance and support sustainable hydropower and alternative energy	PD	2,3	NR	Facilitate regional collaboration on water-energy linkages to advance and support sustainable hydropower including within the ASEAN Power Grid Framework through policy guidance, technical support, and benefit-cost assessments in a way that is environmentally responsible, socially equitable and inclusive, and economically beneficial. This initiative should be led by OCEO 5.2.3.1, with hydropower specialists and NMC Focal Points ready to provide support, including travel costs for MRCS/ NMCs to join events on the ASEAN Power Grid Framework and identify potential energy/water regional projects. It also aims to seek collaborations and opportunities for Energy/Water integration initiatives, necessitating greater discussion and involvement with energy sectors.
3.2.2.3 Support Member Countries to identify, assess, and promote joint investments in alternative renewable energy	PD , (OCEO)	2,3	NR	Undertake further technical studies and policy analysis to support Member Countries identify, assess, and progress joint investments in alternative renewable energy, such as pumped hydro and floating solar projects that help optimise Mekong Basin hydropower generation and the broader energy transition. Organize site visits and meetings on MCs' National Energy Development Plans, Regional Cooperation, and Alternative Energy in the LMB. Provide a knowledge base on ASEAN Energy Transition, ASEAN Power Grids, and Energy Control Centers to optimize alternative energy in national power systems, as part of enhancing water-energy coordination for dam operations in the LMB.
3.2.2.4 Conduct basin-wide alternative energy planning review	PD	2,3	NR	This activity will review the national energy development plan of each MC, and look at the development situation and trend related to the alternative energy in addition to the hydropower development.



Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
Output 3.2.3: Basin navigation plans implemented in synergy				
3.2.3.3 Support the implementation of the Navigation Master Plan and the Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transport of Dangerous Goods in alignment with national priorities, and regional and national development plans	PD	2,3	NR	This activity include a number of tasks including: conducting capacity building to support national implementation of the Regional Action Plan for the Sustainable Transport of Dangerous Goods; developing technical guidances in alignment with national priorities, regional and national development plans; and reviewing and prioritizing navigation projects for 2031-2040.
3.2.3.4 Facilitate the harmonisation of navigation rules and regulations between basin countries, undertake technical and policy discussions, and support national implementation consistent with agreed regional priorities	PD	3	NR	This activity include a number of tasks such as: supporting the harmonisation and implementation of the MOU on navigation safety and pollution prevention between Lao PDR- Thailand; facilitating the implementation of the Cambodian-Vietnamese Agreement on Waterway Transportation; and coordinating with Member Countries to explore any gaps, challenges and opportunities to harmonise navigation rules and regulations between basin countries.
3.2.3.5 Establish an accessible, a digital, basin-wide Mekong River Navigation Information Service to improve the safety, coordination, and sustainability of cross-border river transport	PD (TD)	3	NR	This activity includes a number of tasks such as: implementing River Information Services (RIS) on the Mekong River: Navigational data standardisation process on a regional level; developimh a manual for the Mekong Navigation River Information Services; and conducting national dissemination and stakeholder engagement of the Mekong RIS.



Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
Dimension: Climate Change				
Output 4.1.1: A core river monitoring network for the mainstream and remaining national river monitoring networks consolidated				
4.1.1.4 Implement the Core River Monitoring Network, including integrated analysis and reporting activities, updated databases and the update of rating curves for hydro-meteorological, discharge and sediment disciplines	TD	1	R	This activity covers the routine tasks related hydro-meteorological stations and discharge and sediment measurement such as O&M of the stations, spare parts, consultations, capacity building, regular update of rating curves, work agreements for DSMP, annual mekong hydrology, flood and drought report, joint discharge measurement at Xieng Kok.
4.1.1.5 Implement the Core River Monitoring Network, including integrated analysis and reporting activities and updated databases for water quality, fisheries, and ecological health disciplines	ED	1	R	This activity implements routine environmental monitoring on water quality, fisheries, and ecological health.
Output 4.1.2: Integrated data and information systems for more effective basin-wide data management and sharing				
4.1.2.4 Continue to update bathymetry data, digital elevation model, and other ground data to improve accuracy of transboundary environmental impact assessment, flood and drought forecasting, and in support of MRC procedures	TD	1,2	NR	This activity aims to update the the database including the bythemetry data, DEM for the Mekong Basin using the existing methodology and equipment including the new equipment sensor to expand the coverage area in order to achive a higher resolution products. The product of this activity would be used as an input of any MRC analysis.
4.1.2.5 Continue to upgrade and update the remote sensing and geospatial data products and repository to store, visualize and disseminate MRC products including maps and undertake capacity building to generate, handle and maintain the product and repository.	TD	1,2	NR	This activity aims to maintain and enhance the repository of geospatial databases, along with remote sensing data and products developed by MRC. It will involve the use of GIS and remote sensing software, engagement with technical consultants, and targeted capacity-building initiatives. Additionally, it requires expertise in database management to ensure efficient organization, accessibility, and long-term sustainability of the data systems.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
4.1.2.6 Strengthened implementation of the PDIES consistent with updated Technical Guidelines and related guidelines for other Procedures, and by operating and maintaining single-point entry and integrated regional databases and information systems and facilitating the transfer of data to and from basin countries and the private sector	TD	5	R	This activity involves implementing the Procedures for Data and Information Exchange and Sharing (PDIES) in alignment with the latest Technical Guidelines and other related procedural guidelines. It includes operating and maintaining integrated regional databases and information systems, as well as developing the MRC Single Gate. The work also covers facilitating the efficient transfer of data between basin countries and the private sector, ensuring accuracy, accessibility, and compliance with agreed standards.
4.1.2.7 Update network analytics and visualisation platform for CRMN (Water Status Dashboard), integrating hydrology, WQ, EHM, fisheries, and sediment.	TD (OCEO, ED, PD)	1	NR	This activity focuses on updating the river network analytics and visualisation platform for the Core River Monitoring Network (CRMN), known as the Water Status Dashboard. The update will integrate multiple thematic areas, including hydrology, water quality, ecological health monitoring (EHM), fisheries, and sediment. It will also enhance functionality to provide public access to MRC data and information, improving transparency, usability, and stakeholder engagement.

Output 4.1.3: Compatible Decision Support Systems in line with reinvigorated data, modelling, forecasting, and communication capabilities

4.1.3.5 Maintain, operate and enhance the MRC-DSF, including the Water Status Dashboard, update data, and implement the scenario analysis tool to support basin-wide planning, transboundary decision-making, and timely and communication of flood and drought, and development risks to stakeholders and the public.	TD	2	R	This activity focuses on ensuring the continued operation and enhancement of the MRC Decision Support Framework (DSF) as a core platform for integrated basin-wide planning. It includes the maintenance and regular updating of key components such as the Water Status Dashboard and scenario analysis tools to reflect the latest data, modelling capabilities, and user needs. These tools will support Member Countries in conducting joint assessments, developing coordinated strategies, and communicating risks related to floods, droughts, and development projects in a timely and transparent manner to decision-makers and the public.
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Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
4.1.3.6 Further develop and incorporate water quality (mainly salinity and sediment) module into the MRC-DSF to support basin-wide planning, transboundary sediment management, and coordinated responses to flood, drought, and water-related emergencies in vulnerable areas.	TD (ED)	2	NR	This activity aims to enhance the functionality of the MRC-DSF by integrating new modelling components focused on water quality (especially salinity intrusion) and sediment transport. These modules will enable a more comprehensive understanding of how upstream developments, flow alterations, and climate extremes impact downstream water quality, sediment dynamics, and ecosystem health. The enhanced DSF will provide Member Countries with a shared analytical basis for managing sediment flows, addressing salinization threats in deltas and coastal areas, and coordinating basin-wide responses to water-related emergencies such as droughts and floods.
4.1.3.7 Strengthen regional and national capacity for the application, maintenance, and use of the MRC-DSF.	TD	2	R	This activity aims to strengthen the technical and institutional capacity of national line agencies and national modelling teams across Member Countries to effectively apply, maintain, and utilize the MRC-DSF in support of basin-wide planning and transboundary cooperation. Capacity building efforts will include structured training courses, on-the-job training, and case study-based learning, specifically designed for associate modellers from each Member Country. These capacity development initiatives will equip national teams with the practical skills and knowledge required to operate and interpret MRC-DSF tools, conduct scenario-based analyses, and contribute meaningfully to regional decision-making processes. The activity will also promote regional knowledge exchange and harmonized modelling practices to ensure consistency and long-term sustainability of the MRC-DSF platform.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
Output 4.1.4: Integrated basin-wide flood and drought forecasting and early warning				
4.1.4.4 Enhance the integration standard procedures between river monitoring and forecasting systems; and enhance the back-end (tools and database) and front-end (website) integration system for forecasting tools and effective database management, including linking predictive models to early warnings.	TD, OCEO	4	R	This focuses on strengthening the forecasting infrastructure of the MRC by enhancing both backend modeling systems and front-end dissemination tools. The aim is to establish a unified, efficient, and user-centric forecasting platform covering riverine flood, drought, and flash flood hazards. This also includes improved communication and visualisation mechanisms for decision-making. As part of enhancement of drought monitoring and forecasting for IBF, crop modeling, particularly with regard to crop water consumption is expected to be incorporated in the enhanced system/tools.
4.1.4.5 Develop profiles (incl. base level data and mapping) of vulnerable groups susceptible to floods, flash floods, and drought, and risk maps for potential impacts of floods (river and flash flood) and drought on these groups over multiple spatial and temporal scales	TD, PD	4	NR	This activity focuses on assessing and mapping the vulnerability, hazard, and exposure landscape across the LMB. It aims to generate a comprehensive understanding of socio-economic, environmental, and physical exposure to key climate-related hazards such as floods and droughts. Moreover, this activity also aims to conduct a comprehensive risk assessment for both flood and drought hazards across the LMB, integrating vulnerability, hazard, and exposure data.
4.1.4.6 Develop and implement impact-based forecasting system with advisory dissemination for river flood, flash flood, and drought on short-term to long-term scales	TD, PD	4	NR	The activity focusing on enhancing the current forecasting product into so-called impact-based forecasting, which lead to actionable by local authority, line agencies, and stakeholders. This will produce an advisory bulletin, which mainly focus on key sector such as agricultural sector, etc. This activities comprise of development of the flood and drought risk maps (vulnerability, exposures and hazard, etc), IBF system with pilot project, and improvement of the forecasting products and dissemination.
4.1.4.7 Develop an integrated flood forecasting system in key tributaries of the Mekong mainstream and integrate into the existing bulletins	TD	4	R	This activity aims to develop and operationalize a customized tributary forecasting system tailored to the hydrological characteristics of the LMB; conduct a rigorous calibration and validation process for the forecasting models to improve their performance and reliability; formulate the dissemination for tributary forecasting in form of e.g., webpage, bulletin, etc.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
4.1.4.8 Enhance forecast dissemination and awareness about hydro-meteorological risks, strengthen stakeholder capacity for flood and drought management, and educate communities through NMCs, about natural disasters to improve resilience and emergency response capabilities including with detailed flood risk maps	TD (OCEO)	4	R	This activity focuses on enhancing digital interfaces to enable real-time access to flood and drought data and forecast products; ensures last-mile connectivity by delivering forecast information to communities through physical outreach and localized tools; enhances the capacity of local influencers and leaders to communicate critical flood and drought information, fostering greater awareness, trust, and behavioral response at the community level; supports on-the-job training for ADFs
4.1.4.9 Develop and implement the joint transboundary flood and drought adaptation activities/projects	TD, (PD)	4	R	This activity focuses on the development and implementation of the joint transboundary flood and drought adaptation activities between Lao PDR and Thailand, and between Cambodia and Viet Nam

Output 4.1.5: Joint State of Basin Report

4.1.5.2 Review and revise as needed the MRB-IF indicators and assessment methods including improving gender and vulnerability analysis and reporting	ED (OCEO, PD, TD)	1,2	R	This activity will undertake review of MRB-IF indicators and assessment methods in order to identify gaps in data collection and transmission from MCs, monitoring indicators, assessment methodology, and overall evaluation of the MRB-IF indicators.
4.1.5.3 Develop and trial an integrated multi-disciplinary assessment methodology to identify causal linkages and impacts on environmental conditions and vulnerable basin communities	ED (TD, PD)	2	NR	With technical and financial support from GIZ, a desk review of impact based integrated assessment methodologies will be conducted in 2026. The method will utilize existing CRMN data of 5 discipline with causal linkage to existing socio-economic data. Selected methodology will be consulted and finalized including the testing in 2026 and refining to apply in 2027 for the dataset reporting to the SOBR2028.
4.1.5.4 Implement the streamlined MRB-IF and Data Acquisition and Generation Action Plan including regional studies to enable preparation of the 2028 State of Basin Report	ED (PD, TD)	1,2	R	This activity includes conducting periodic regional studies under DAGAP in preparation for the SOBR 2028, with a focus on refining agreed methodologies and strengthening ground data validation. The studies will cover: (i) the extent of salinity intrusion in the Mekong Delta (SIM); (ii) the condition of riverine, estuarine, and coastal habitats of the Mekong (RECH); (iii) the economic value of wetland ecosystem services (EVW); (iv) threatened water-dependent species and ecologically significant areas; and (v) fisheries yield assessment.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
4.1.5.5 Prepare the 2028 State of Basin Report with all six basin countries to inform the development of the BDS 2031-2040	ED	2,3	R	This activity includes preparing the outline and work plan, coordinating inputs, compiling data and information, drafting the SOBR 2028, and conducting both regional and national consultations, leading to the finalisation of the report.
4.1.5.6 Improve data visualisation dashboard for the State of the Basin Report using business intelligence tools (e.g., Power BI, Tableau) to generate live dashboards from MRC IF databases to visualize conditions and trends	OCEO (PD, ED, TD)	2,3	NR	The State of Basin Report (SOBR) will be improved by developing interactive, live dashboards using business intelligence tools such as Power BI, Tableau, and SVP tools. Currently, the SOBR is a highly technical document spanning hundreds of pages. While it serves as an authoritative reference, feedback from the public has highlighted the need for a simpler and more user-friendly version. In response, the MRC will design an online dashboard that will present the core findings of the SOBR in a clear, visualised format. This will allow the general public to quickly understand the state of river health and basin conditions without navigating the full technical report. The simplified dashboard will complement the full SOBR by making key information more accessible, transparent, and engaging for a broader audience, while still providing depth for those who wish to explore further.

Output 4.2.1: Coordinated water infrastructure operations for multiple benefits including gender and vulnerability sensitive disaster mitigation and management

4.2.1.5 Develop guidelines on hydropower flow and reservoir coordination for water-related disaster management (floods and droughts), sediment flushing trials, and environmental benefits, while considering engagement from upper riparian countries	PD (ED, TD)	2	NR	This activity is to serve a purpose for Regional Coordination and Monitoring Center. Start by promoting dam data sharing for all types (operational, planning, emergency) as inputs to the coordination platform (DHI Water Status Dashboard, etc.), primarily for flood prevention and management, early warning systems, sediment management, balanced water use, and climate change projection mitigation.
4.2.1.6 Support the implementation of coordinated hydropower flow and reservoir coordination, including through pilot project implementation	PD, TD	2	NR	This activity is to develop and trial at least one coordination event and tool in place to support decisions for water-related disaster management, it could be Thai-Lao, Viet Nam- Cambodia in flooding season.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
Output 4.2.2: Climate change adaptation, flood and drought management mainstreamed at national levels				
4.2.2.6 Finalise accreditation requirements for MRC access to international climate finance to project proposals that ensure cost-effective administration	PD	3	NR	This activity is to continue working with GCF and AF Secretariat to finalize the accreditation process for the MRC to become the accredited entity of the GCF and Adaptation Fund.
4.2.2.7 Implement a Joint Projects Facility to facilitate identification, development, and financing of strategic joint and transboundary projects and coordinate project implementation	OCEO, PD (TD, ED)	3	NR	A Joint Projects Facility will be established as a structured mechanism to identify, prepare, and finance strategic joint and transboundary projects. It will support Member Countries through feasibility studies, concept notes, and close coordination with development partners and financiers, providing both financial and strategic assistance. Beyond technical support, the Facility will also serve as a trust-building platform, fostering dialogue on trade-offs, risks, and opportunities for cooperative investments. Its work will include refining project concepts, preparing funding proposals, and mobilising resources from mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Mekong Fund, and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Depending on Member Country priorities, projects may cover infrastructure, capacity building, or knowledge exchange, with the ultimate goal of ensuring that joint initiatives are implemented and deliver tangible, basin-wide benefits.
4.2.2.8 Support development of ecosystem-based or nature-based, and green-grey solutions for flood and drought mitigation in the LMB	PD	4	NR	This activity is to further support the development/formulation and aslo implementation of the joint projects including 9C-9T, 3S, Mekong Delta and possibly other joint projects identified under the NIP joint projects with consdiration of using ecosystem-based or nature-based, and gree-grey solutions as climate change mitigation.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
Dimension: Cooperation				
Output 5.1.1: Implementation of the MRC Procedures enhanced				
5.1.1.6 Strengthen the MRC Joint Platform to enable integrated analysis and coordination of MRC Procedures taking into account the Technical Guidelines of relevant MRC Procedures and enhanced visualisation tools	PD	3,5	R	This activity is to continue to support and implement organisation and discussion of the MRC Joint Platform to ensure the MRC Procedures be implemented in a linked and coordinated manner. This is supported by other Divisions, ED and TD.
5.1.1.7 Implement the PNPCA to support sustainable water infrastructure development	PD (ED, TD, OCEO)	5	NR	This activity is to support the implementation of the updated PNPCA Guidelines through the national dissemination of this updated Guidelines; as well as to use the updated PNPCA Guidelines to support the implementation of the PC process for two additional hydropower dams, which are under the plan.
5.1.1.8 Develop and implement a policy note to deal with flow and sediment and other environmental issues in selected tributaries of basin-wide significance	PD	5	NR	This activity is to support the formulation and implementation of a Policy Note to deal with flow and sediment and other environmental issues of some selected tributaries of basin-wide significant agreed by Member Countries.
Output 5.1.2: Organisational development of the Mekong River Commission				
5.1.2.13 Review and finalize the roadmap for self-financing of MRC post-2030 including financial arrangements, governance and operating mechanisms (including for the Mekong Fund) through consultations with Member Countries and Development Partners, to ensure long-term financial sustainability of the organisation	AD, OCEO,	1	NR	This activity prepares the MRC for self-financing beyond 2030 by reviewing its financial arrangements, governance, and operating mechanisms, with a focus on ensuring long-term institutional sustainability. It will involve consultations with Member Countries and Development Partners to strengthen financing models, including the Mekong Fund and coverage of fixed costs, and to define practical steps guided by the decentralisation roadmap. The review will also assess organisational capacity, staffing, and resources to identify the mechanisms needed for effective institutional development. By the mid-point of the SP 2026–2030, a clear roadmap will be established to reinforce the MRC’s institutional strength and position it as a competitive and resilient regional river basin organisation and knowledge hub. Clear Roles & Responsibilities, Budget, Activities/Tasks shall be specifically identified and allocated to each OCEO and AD, relevant to their functions.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
5.1.2.14 Operate the financial management information system and internal controls in line with standard operating procedures for budget, risk, fraud, audit procurement and IT security, and undertake risk assessments, updating controls and checks as needed	AD	1	R	This activity ensures the effective and continuous operation of the Financial Management Information System (FMIS) and the strengthening of internal controls in accordance with standard operating procedures related to budgeting, risk management, fraud prevention, audit, procurement, and IT security, including regular risk assessments and updates to control measures to enhance compliance, transparency, and system integrity across MRCS financial operations.
5.1.2.15 Organise and coordinate MRC governance meetings, including MRC Summits*, Council, Joint Committee, Joint Committee Task Force, and Budget Committee, including participation of MRC partners, and identify and implement efficiency measures	OCEO, AD	1	R	<p>This activity will ensure the effective organization and facilitation of MRC governance meetings at both political and technical levels, including the MRC Summits, Council, Joint Committee, Joint Committee Task Force, and Budget Committee, while engaging Development Partners and other stakeholders as appropriate. In line with the MRC Strategic Plan 2026–2030, these meetings are central to sustaining regional dialogue, building consensus, and enabling joint decision-making on transboundary water governance and basin development. They serve as the primary platform for Member Countries to discuss shared challenges, identify joint solutions, and agree on cooperative actions that deliver equitable benefits and advance sustainable development of the Mekong River Basin.</p> <p>The activity will also focus on strengthening efficiency, transparency, and inclusiveness in governance processes, including digital facilitation tools, streamlined documentation, and results-based reporting mechanisms. By reinforcing the governance architecture of the MRC, this activity will enhance institutional accountability, ensure stronger regional ownership, and provide the political and technical foundation needed to implement the Strategic Plan 2026–2030 and to prepare the Commission for its evolving role beyond 2030.</p> <p>Clear Roles & Responsibilities, Budget, Activities/Tasks shall be specifically identified and allocated to each OCEO and AD, relevant to their functions.</p>

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
5.1.2.16 Prepare , monitor and manage the MRCS MWP to implement the MRC SP; provide guidance on impact pathways, and coordinate across divisions.	OCEO	1	R	Prepare and manage MRC Multi-year Work Plan (MWP) that translates the MRC Strategic Plan into operational plan. The activity will guide divisions in preparing activities and tasks that align cross-cutting priorities, and coordinate scheduling and budgets in a lightment iwth the impact pathways of the MRC SP. Regular monitoring and updates will ensure the MWPs remain practical and focus for achieving basin objectives and adapting to changing conditions.
5.1.2.17 Support the preparation and implementation of the National Indicative Plans to implement the BDS 2021-2030	PD	1	NR	This activity supports the preparation and implementation of National Indicative Plans (NIPs) as a key mechanism for translating the Basin Development Strategy (BDS) 2021–2030 into country-level action. Its objective is to ensure that national priorities are aligned with basin-wide goals while strengthening ownership and accountability of Member Countries in delivering the Strategy. Activities will include providing technical guidance and advisory support to national agencies, facilitating consultation processes, and aligning NIPs with MRC procedures, strategic priorities, and monitoring frameworks.
5.1.2.18 Prepare the BDS 2031-2040 and the MRC SP 2031-2035	PD, OCEO	1	R	This activity is to formulate the new BDS led by PD, and new SP led by OCEO. Both PD and OCEO will work closely with each other and other Divisions to discuss the drafts and finalise them. Undertake a comprehensive, consultative process to prepare the Basin Development Strategy (BDS) 2031-2040 and the MRC Strategic Plan (SP) 2031-2035, including a review of lessons from the current BDS 2021-2030 and SP 2026-2030, wide engagement with Member Countries, stakeholders and partners to update basin priorities and institutional arrangements, and the drafting and finalisation of both documents for endorsement, ensuring alignment with regional and global development frameworks.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
5.1.2.19 Update and implement MRC’s Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems consistent with the new MRC Strategic Plan 2026-2030, and conduct the Mid-Term Review of SP 2026-2030 and the Completion Review of the SP 2021-2025	OCEO	1	R	The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system will be updated and aligned with the Strategic Plan 2026–2030. The M&E system under the FMIS will be upgraded to improve functionality and usability. Capacity-building activities will be conducted for both MRCS staff and national focal points to strengthen institutional capacity. In addition, Mid-Term Review and Completion Reviews will be carried out with the active involvement of Member Countries and partners, ensuring accountability, transparency, and continuous learning throughout the implementation cycle.
5.1.2.20 Prepare and implement national CIP dissemination and communication frameworks co-developed with Member Countries to improve uptake of MRC products, tools, and strategies	OCEO	1	NR	This activity will support the preparation and implementation of a national CIP dissemination and communication framework, co-developed with Member Countries, to enhance the accessibility, uptake, and national ownership of MRC products, guidelines, tools, and strategies. It will strengthen communication and dissemination efforts at the national level, ensuring that MRC’s work is effectively shared, applied, and integrated into national practices and policies, as well as implementing at the national levels.
5.1.2.21 Improve IT infrastructure including use of hybrid cloud solutions, strengthening cybersecurity, and enhanced IT support, to enable improved visualisation and data analytics platforms	AD	1	NR	This activity focus on (1) Seeking to store backup data on the AWS cloud with the immutability feature turned on, which will protect the data in case of a ransomware or intentional deletion; (2) Conducting annual compulsory cybersecurity awareness trainings/refresh trainings to MRCS & NMCS’s staff; (3) Providing Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS) for MRC website, MRC Summit website, One Mekong Mobile app, DSF, etc. and improving the MRCS IT infrastructure through the adoption of hybrid cloud solutions, enhancement of cybersecurity measures, including strengthening IT support service; (4) Supporting necessary licenses and HRMS dashboard. These efforts aim to ensure greater system reliability, data security, and operational efficiency, while also enabling more advanced data analytics and visualisation platforms to support evidence-based decision-making across the organisation.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
5.1.2.22 Implement the MRC SP, MWPs through efficient and productive Procuremernts and HR activities, systems, and processes, and cross-Division/Office coordination.	AD	1	R	<p>This activity focuses on (1) Supporting the implementation of On-Job-Training programme for the MRC Junior Riparian Professional enhancement; (2) Supporting attraction, recruitment, and retention of MRCS Staff and Consultants; (3) Building capacity for staff at the MRC Secretariat and the National Mekong Committees Secretariat for effectively and</p> <p>productively carrying out the MRC’s missions; (4) Supporting HR management and development through an effective and productive automation of HR-related systems and processes, (5) Strengthening MRC Internal Control and Compliance with the MRC HR Manuals, associated Guidelines, Rules and Regulations for staff at MRCS & NMCS</p>
5.1.2.23 Strengthen HR systems to promote equitable practices; enhance leadership and empowerment opportunities for women across the MRC; build capacity through internal gender policy audit and leadership training activities; promote gender equality in HR data systematization, and inclusive procurement	AD	1	NR	<p>This Activity aims to promote Women Powering & Leadership with Gender-Sensitive, Inclusive, Responsive & Transformative, shall focus on (1) Gender audit/analysis; (2) Systematize HR data collection in terms of Gender across the MRC; (3) Leadership & Empowerment Development Training to staff of MRCS & NMCS, it is in collaboration with Australian Gender Expert and/or Mentoring programs for aspiring and empowering Women leaders within the MRC.</p>



Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
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Output 5.2.2: Significant joint investment projects and national projects of basin-wide significance and associated measures agreed based on consideration of trade-offs, benefit sharing, and risks

5.2.2.1 Support the preparation of funding proposals and implementation of agreed joint investment projects and national projects of basin-wide significance with community impact, including facilitation of negotiations and outreach to potential investors	OCEO, PD, ED	3	NR	This activity will enhance the MRC’s role as a regional platform for investment facilitation and resource mobilization by supporting the preparation of high-quality funding proposals and the implementation of agreed joint and national projects of basin-wide significance. In line with the Strategic Plan 2026–2030, the activity will ensure that projects are designed to deliver tangible community-level impacts, such as improved resilience to floods and droughts, sustainable fisheries management, climate change adaptation, and water quality improvements, while advancing regional cooperation and transboundary benefits. It will involve providing technical and advisory support to Member Countries in the formulation of project proposals, aligning investments with national priorities and regional strategies, and facilitating outreach and negotiations with bilateral and multilateral development banks, private sector partners, and other financing institutions. By linking proposals to the Mekong Fund, the Joint Project Facility, and global financing windows such as the GCF and GEF, this activity will strengthen financial sustainability, diversify funding sources, and ensure that resource mobilization efforts translate into inclusive, sustainable, and results-oriented investments that benefit communities across the Mekong Basin.
5.2.2.2 Establish an agreed benefit sharing model to share the costs and benefits of joint investment projects including the existing planned transboundary hydropower projects and provide guidance on its implementation at regional and national levels	PD, (OCEO, ED)	3	NR	This activity will be based on the previous work and discussion and further propose a model considering as benefit sharing which share both costs and benefits of joint investment projects in form of an arrangement which could be agreed amongst relevant MCs for joint investment, joint management and operation, and benefit.

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
Output 5.2.3 Mekong water-related cooperation mechanisms and relevant partnerships implemented in collaboration with countries				
<p>5.2.3.4 Implement and enhance partnerships between MRC and Dialogue Partners, Development Partners, other Mekong water-related programmes of regional cooperation mechanisms (incl. MLC, ASEAN, GMS, ACMECS, Mekong-US, , Mekong Australia, Mekong-Japan, Mekong-ROK) and sister river RBOs</p>	OCEO	1	R	<p>This activity will strengthen and expand the MRC’s partnerships with Dialogue Partners, Development Partners, and regional cooperation frameworks, as well as with sister river basin organizations worldwide, to enhance collective knowledge, innovation, and joint action. In line with the MRC Strategic Plan 2026–2030, the activity will focus on deepening technical cooperation, facilitating knowledge exchange, and leveraging comparative experiences to improve water governance and integrated river basin management. Partnerships will be operationalized through joint studies, technical workshops, staff exchanges, field visits, and co-development of knowledge products, with particular emphasis on innovation in climate adaptation, hydropower coordination, sediment and water quality management, and community resilience. Collaboration with regional mechanisms such as ASEAN, GMS, MLC, and ACMECS will also ensure stronger policy coherence and basin-wide integration, while sister river partnerships will open opportunities for global exchange on benefit-sharing, transboundary cooperation, and sustainable water resource management. Through these enhanced partnerships, the MRC will not only increase its visibility at regional and global levels but also enhance the capacity of the Member Countries and foster shared solutions, mobilize resources, and promote the Mekong as a model of inclusive, cooperative, and sustainable water governance.</p>



Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
5.2.3.5 Engage and participate in regional and global water-related activities/events, including World Water Week, UN events, World Water Forums, Asia-Pacific Water Weeks etc to raise the profile of the Mekong	OCEO	1	NR	<p>This activity will ensure the MRC’s active participation in major global and regional water fora, such as World Water Week, UN events, the World Water Forum, and Asia-Pacific Water Week, to raise the profile of the Mekong and position the MRC as a leading platform for transboundary river basin cooperation. In line with the MRC Strategic Plan 2026–2030, such engagement will allow the MRC to showcase progress on basin management, share lessons on integrated water resources management, and contribute Mekong perspectives to global policy debates on climate resilience, sustainable development, and energy–water–food nexus challenges.</p> <p>It will also strengthen partnerships, attract international support, and promote innovation and financing opportunities that reinforce the implementation of the Strategic Plan and long-term sustainability of the Mekong River Basin.</p>

Output 5.2.4: Joint Basin Expert Groups

5.2.4.1 Implement Joint Studies and technical collaboration to support data/model sharing	TD	1	R	<p>The activity mainly focus on the implement joint flood and drought adaptation activities in transboundary areas, analyze rainfall thresholds for high-risk locations, focusing on vulnerability reduction and resilience building. This can be a joint projects for flood and drought under transboundary context between Cambodia & Viet Nam and Lao PDR & Thailand. It comprises of selection of transboundary project site, identification of the adaption measure/options, and pilot implementation, capacity building and EWS.</p>
5.2.4.2 Implement Joint Survey of the Lancang and Mekong River Basin	TD	1	R	<p>Conduct coordinated joint surveys across the Lancang and Mekong River Basin to improve shared knowledge on river conditions and support regional cooperation</p>

Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
5.2.4.3. Strengthen the Joint LMC-MRC Expert Group on Data, Modelling, and Forecasting's functions	TD	1	R	This activity involves implementing agreed Joint Studies and enhancing the capacity and functions of the Joint Expert Group on Data, Modelling, and Forecasting. It aims to strengthen technical collaboration among the six riparian countries of the Langchan Mekong Basin, promote effective data sharing, and ensure the coordinated execution of joint studies to support basin-wide knowledge and decision-making.
5.2.4.4 Evaluate the effectiveness of the current Expert Groups for further improvement	OCEO	1	NR	Review the Expert Groups to confirm their relevance, performance, and added value for BDS/SP delivery. Gather feedback from Member Countries and partners, identify strengths and gaps, and propose practical adjustments to improve effectiveness, inclusiveness, and alignment with priorities. Agree light follow-up actions and a simple mechanism to track progress over time.

Output 5.2.5: Harmonised basin-wide stakeholder platform

5.2.5.4 Coordinate proactive and enhanced stakeholder engagement on BDS implementation in coordination with countries and partners, including through the implementation of MRC Procedures and Regional Stakeholder Forums	OCEO	1	R	<p>Coordinate structured stakeholder engagement on the implementation of the Basin Development Strategy in close collaboration with Member Countries and partners. The activity will define clear objectives, roles, and guidelines for participation to ensure inclusiveness, transparency, and effectiveness. By building on national and regional processes, it will also strengthen Member Country leadership in convening and guiding stakeholder inputs, while enhancing consistency and accountability in how engagement is conducted and reported.</p> <p>Enhance engagement initiatives through established mechanisms such as PNPCA and Regional Stakeholder Forums, while expanding the use of technology and media platforms to reach diverse audiences. Structured processes will ensure that feedback is documented, reviewed, and responded to systematically. By embedding accountability and responsiveness, the activity will build greater trust between the MRC and its stakeholders.</p>
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Activities	Divisions	CRBMFs	CRBMF Category	Activity Description
5.2.5.5 Develop and support MCs to implement outreach through youth and community engagement and provide structured responses to feedback given, including through the MRC Education and Visitor Center and One Mekong App, for disseminating information to and gathering feedback from stakeholders, the media, basin communities, and the broader public on matters relevant to MRC functions, policies, products, and services, and evaluate its effectiveness	OCEO	1	R	This activity aims to strengthen outreach by supporting Member Countries (MCs) in engaging youth, communities, and broader stakeholders in meaningful dialogue on Mekong cooperation. Its objective is to ensure that basin information, MRC policies, products, and services are widely accessible, well-communicated, and responsive to the needs of stakeholders. Activities will include developing and implementing outreach programs with NMCSs that empower youth and communities, using platforms such as the MRC Education and Visitor Centre and the One Mekong App to disseminate knowledge, gather structured feedback, and provide timely responses. The activity will also involve engaging the media and civil society to amplify outreach efforts, facilitating inclusive participation at the grassroots level, and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of engagement approaches to continuously improve practices. Through this, the MRC will foster transparency, inclusiveness, and ownership, while ensuring that community and youth perspectives are systematically integrated into regional decision-making.
5.2.5.6 Develop and coordinate the implementation of Community Innovation Projects to help address regional challenges such as community-based fish breeding centres	OCEO (ED, PD)	1	R	This activity aims to develop and coordinate the implementation of Community Innovation Projects, such as community-based fish breeding centres, to strengthen local resilience, enhance livelihoods, and address shared regional challenges. Working through the Community Innovation Projects, the MRC will engage communities, civil society, research institutions, and national agencies to co-design and implement innovative solutions that are locally relevant and regionally coherent. Support will include technical assistance, capacity building, seed funding, and innovation labs to empower women, youth, and vulnerable groups, while community-generated data will be integrated into MRC systems for monitoring and replication. Successful projects will be documented, showcased, and scaled up through regional platforms and financing mechanisms, ensuring that cooperation delivers tangible and sustainable benefits across the Mekong Basin



ANNEX E





Annex E: Gender Equity and Vulnerability Action Plan (GEVAP) 2026-2030



The Strategic Plan 2026–2030 responds to the need for more inclusive development by integrating targeted actions to improve gender equity, reduce social vulnerability, and address disparities in access to resources and services. This includes operationalizing Gender Equity and Vulnerability Action Plan (GEVAP), strengthening data systems, including sex disaggregation as a minimum requirement for people data report, and prioritizing support to disadvantaged groups and geographies as impacted by water resources development and climate change (flood, drought, and other hazards) through community-based projects/activities.



The **Gender Equity and Vulnerability Action Plan (GEVAP) 2026–2030** consolidates activities under the MRC Strategic Plan (SP) 2026–2030 that directly contribute to advancing gender equity and **vulnerability (GEV) mainstreaming**. Each activity will highlight specific GEV-related objectives, approaches, and methodologies to consider GEV and be aligned with the anticipated ultimate goals of the SP. GEVAP has been developed in close **consultation with Member Countries** and Development Partners, and it will be implemented through the **MRC Multi-Year Work Plan (MWP)**. To guide this process, the **MRC Gender Handbook (2022)**, a technical guideline for mainstreaming GEV across the MRC’s core functions and activities, will guide the integration of GEV into the basin planning, technical guidelines updates/development, river monitoring and forecasting, etc., at both regional and national levels.

The **deliverables and milestones** for GEVAP have been integrated into the **MRC SP monitoring framework**. This ensures systematic **monitoring and reporting** of all GEV-related activities, providing continuous feedback to strengthen mainstreaming efforts across planning, design, consultation, and implementation stages. The guiding principles for integration include:

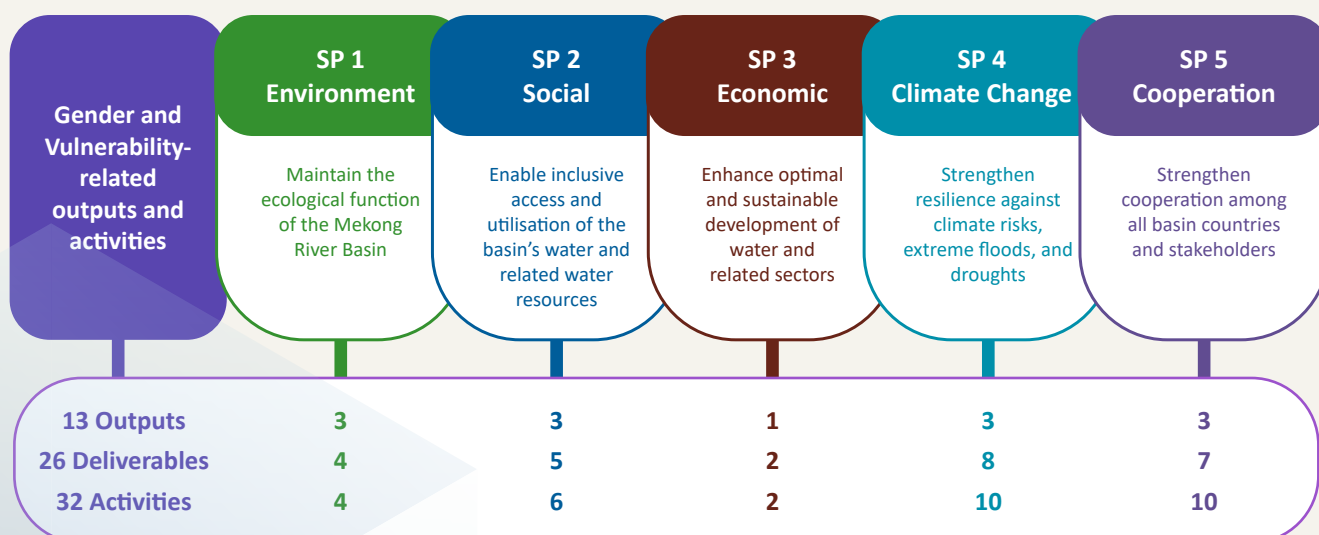
- Ensuring **gender equity and vulnerability** inclusion in results-based monitoring.
- Collecting and reporting disaggregated data and GEV-specific findings to inform evidence-based planning and decision-making.

- Documenting **best practices** of the MRC activities that contribute to gender equity, reduce social vulnerability, and ensure equitable access to resources and shared benefits.

The **MRC is committed** to mainstreaming GEV into all relevant activities beyond those explicitly outlined in this action plan. As a **cross-cutting priority**, GEVAP will be implemented across all divisions of the MRCS in close cooperation with Member Countries in line with the SP. The Socio-Economic Specialist (Planning Division) will serve as the lead coordinator to oversee and provide necessary guidance to the Divisions/Office in implementing GEVAP, and monitoring provided by the **Monitoring and Evaluation team under the Office of the CEO**.

It is worth noting that a **specific budget is not allocated** exclusively for GEV mainstreaming, except for dedicated GEV-related activities. Instead, GEV is an integrated cross-cutting approach, ensuring that every activity applies a GEV lens throughout the planning and implementation cycle. Thus, the **overall activity budget** is considered an **investment in GEV**, reflecting the MRC and Member Countries’ commitment to equity, inclusiveness, and resilience.

The following BDS outputs and SP activities under each strategic dimension demonstrate a consistent focus on integrating the GEV lens, reinforcing the MRC’s role in advancing gender equity, reducing vulnerability, and building a more inclusive Mekong Basin.





Key Goals



**Advance
Gender Equity**



**Reduce Social
Vulnerability**



**Support at-risk
Communities**



**Inclusive
Participation**



**Gender
Disaggregated Data**



**Support to
Vulnerable Groups**



**Equitable
Leadership**

Strategic Approach

Policy & Regional Guidelines

Operationalise GEVAP

Assist Vulnerable Populations

Community - Based Projects

Capacity Building & Training

Strengthen Data Collection and Analysis

Monitoring & Reporting



Strengthening Basin-Wide Cooperation, Equity, and Resilience for Vulnerable and At-Risk Groups.



BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
<p>1.1.2. Guidance and measures for the impact mitigation of water infrastructure implemented</p>	<p>Indicator: Evidence that the PDG and TbEIA have been incorporated into national regulatory systems, as needed, and have informed the development of significant new infrastructure projects, including hydropower projects and any groups of projects categorized under the TbEIA</p> <p>Target: All significant water infrastructure projects of PDG and TbEIA implemented consistently with their scopes, principles, and processes</p> <p>Baseline: The PDG and TbEIA have been trialled in some specific projects, with lessons learned for continuing improvement and wider application being documented</p> <p>Assumptions: If determined to be needed, there is sufficient political will and technical support to systematically incorporate PDG and TbEIA recommendations into national regulatory systems</p>	<p>Application and integration of PDG in national regulatory, technical frameworks, and project design (annual)</p>	<p>1.1.2.5. Support the application and integration of the PDG into national regulatory frameworks, including considerations for its application to selected tributaries</p>	<p>PD</p>	<p>Annual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Support at-risk communities Support to vulnerable groups Gender disaggregated data 	<p>This activity will consider a gender equity lens by ensuring that women and vulnerable communities are meaningfully engaged in consultations and capacity-building related to PDG integration, particularly for tributary applications. Safeguards will incorporate gender- and vulnerability-sensitive measures to address potential impacts on livelihoods and access to resources. Training will include gender and social inclusion, while feedback mechanisms with gender-disaggregated data will help monitor outcomes and ensure that planning delivers equitable benefits across all groups.</p>
		<p>Mainstreaming of TbEIA guidelines into national EIA systems and regulations as needed and project-specific assessments reports (annual)</p>	<p>1.1.2.7. Support future wider application and continuous improvement of the TbEIA based on lessons learned and through mainstreaming into national EIA systems, targeted capacity building measures, and project-specific technical guidance, as needed.</p>	<p>ED</p>	<p>Annual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Reduce social vulnerability Gender disaggregated data 	<p>This activity will embed inclusive participation by ensuring gender equity and vulnerable groups are meaningfully engaged in the wider application and improvement of the TbEIA. Capacity-building and project-specific guidance will integrate gender and social inclusion, using gender-disaggregated data to identify and address differentiated impacts. By mainstreaming these approaches into national EIA systems, the activity will help reduce social vulnerability and increase more equitable and responsive outcomes.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
1.2.1. Basin-wide sediment management plan developed and implemented	<p>Indicator: Approval status of the basin-wide sediment management plan</p> <p>Target: Basin-wide sediment management plan approved by Member Countries for implementation</p> <p>Baseline: No basin-wide sediment management plan</p> <p>Assumptions: National governments, private developers, and industry cooperate in providing relevant data, information, implementation of the plan, and site access</p>	Basin-wide sediment management plan (2027)	<p>1.2.1.5. Prepare and implement a basin-wide sediment management plan based on (i) sediment budget; (ii) coordinated operations to support sediment flushing, and (iii) working towards sustainable sand/sediment extraction</p>	PD	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive participation • Equitable leadership • Gender disaggregated data 	<p>This activity will develop and implement a basin-wide sediment management plan that promotes inclusive participation and equitable leadership by engaging women and vulnerable groups in decision-making processes related to sediment budgeting, flushing operations, and sustainable sediment extraction. Gender-disaggregated data will be applied to assess impacts and guide actions, ensuring that management measures deliver fair and equitable benefits across communities.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
<p>1.3.1. Limits of acceptable change for key river and connected wetland habitats identified and implemented</p>	<p>Indicator: Evidence that the identified limits of acceptable change are used in regional and national development planning processes to maintain ecosystem services of Regional Environmental Assets, including under the PMFM</p> <p>Target: Identified limits of acceptable change are incorporated into regional and national planning processes, including the PMFM</p> <p>Baseline: Hydrological limits of acceptable change mainstream flows have been discussed under the PMFM, but not yet agreed upon or implemented in planning processes</p> <p>Assumptions: Agreement can be reached with national agencies on appropriate and implementable limits for key regional environmental assets, and they have enough technical and resource capacity to implement</p>	<p>Mekong Fund Trial to support wetland and watershed management (2030)</p>	<p>1.3.1.4. Establish the Ecosystem Window of the Mekong Fund Trial (MFEW) to support and facilitate local community engagement in wetland and watershed biodiversity conservation</p>	<p>ED</p>	<p>2030</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive participation • Reduce social vulnerability • Support at-risk communities • Support to vulnerable groups • Gender disaggregated data 	<p>This activity will establish the Ecosystem Window of the Mekong Fund Trial (MFEW) to promote the inclusive participation of local communities in the conservation of wetland and watershed biodiversity. It will prioritize support for at-risk communities and vulnerable groups, ensuring their knowledge and needs are integrated into conservation actions. By applying gender-disaggregated data and fostering equitable opportunities, the activity will help reduce social vulnerability while promoting fair and sustainable benefits from biodiversity conservation across the basin.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
2.1.2. Capture fisheries regulatory frameworks improved to support food security	<p>Indicator: Evidence of national government's improving their capture fisheries plans, policies, laws, and institutional arrangements, and/or enhancing implementation</p> <p>Target: At least one national framework for each country drafted for the harmonization of plans, policies and institutional arrangements across-sectors to support transboundary fisheries solutions</p> <p>Baseline: Current country plans, policies, laws, and institutional arrangements</p> <p>Assumptions: There is recognition at national, sub-national, and local levels that existing capture fisheries arrangements need to be improved, and there is enough technical and resource capacity to make improvements</p>	The transboundary fisheries management project (2030)	<p>2.1.2.4. Support the implementation of the transboundary fisheries management project under the GEF and coordinate integration of its outputs into regional and national policies, strategies, and institutional frameworks</p>	ED	2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Support to vulnerable groups Reduce social vulnerability Gender disaggregated data 	This activity will support the implementation of the transboundary fisheries management project under the GEF by promoting inclusive participation of women, men, and vulnerable groups in fisheries governance and decision-making. It will use gender-disaggregated data to assess differentiated impacts, provide targeted capacity-building, and promote equitable leadership and participation. A special focus will be given to supporting vulnerable groups whose livelihoods depend on fisheries, aiming to reduce social vulnerability through improved resource management, alternative livelihood options, and strengthened safeguards. By integrating project outputs into regional and national policies, strategies, and institutional frameworks, the activity will foster more equitable & sustainable fisheries management across the basin
			<p>2.1.2.5. Implement capacity building to enhance institutional, governance and regulatory arrangements within national and provincial fisheries management frameworks including through participatory outreach, community training, and alignment with national food security policies</p>	ED	2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Reduce social vulnerability Support to vulnerable groups Gender disaggregated data 	This activity will deliver capacity-building to strengthen institutional, governance, and regulatory arrangements within national and provincial fisheries management frameworks, ensuring inclusive participation through participatory outreach and community training. It will support communities and vulnerable groups, aligning with national food security policies to safeguard livelihoods and reduce social vulnerability. The use of gender-disaggregated data will guide training and monitoring, ensuring that benefits are shared equitably and that women and the community participate actively in fisheries management and decision-making.

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
<p>2.1.3. Risks to capture fisheries productivity and diversity minimised to support food security</p>	<p>Indicator: Evidence of effective fish passage design and operation in water infrastructure Target: All hydropower projects on the mainstream and significant irrigation schemes have effective fish passage in place Baseline: Designs and recommendations as documented in technical reviews under the PNPCA and in follow-up through JAP; and baseline Joint Environmental Monitoring reports Assumptions: There are cost-effective options available to improve fish passage, and national governments and developers have sufficient incentive and resources to change their designs, where relevant</p>	<p>Adaptive fisheries management mechanisms established for Transboundary Fisheries Conservation in the Mekong Basin (2028)</p>	<p>2.1.3.3 Develop and coordinate implementation of an adaptive fisheries management plan at key transboundary locations</p>	<p>ED</p>	<p>2028</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive participation • Reduce social vulnerability • Gender disaggregated data • Community engagement 	<p>This activity will develop and coordinate the implementation of an adaptive fisheries management plan at key transboundary locations, ensuring inclusive participation of women, men, and the community in decision-making. The plan will incorporate measures to mitigate social vulnerability by promoting sustainable practices and protecting fisheries-dependent livelihoods. Use of gender-disaggregated data will guide planning and monitoring to ensure equitable benefits and strengthen resilience across transboundary communities.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
<p>2.1.4. Gender and vulnerability aspects of basin water, food and energy security addressed</p>	<p>Indicator: Degree to which gender equity and vulnerability aspects have been integrated into implementing MRC's work and activities at regional and national levels, including improving equity for vulnerable communities in LMB</p> <p>Target: Gender equity and vulnerability action plan implemented, and Mekong products addressing gender equity and vulnerability rolled out, expanded, or replicated in each Member Country</p> <p>Baseline: The Socio-Economic and Gender and Vulnerability Data Collection and Transmission within DAGAP is in place, some assessments of socio-economic and gender and vulnerability data under MRB-IF conducted, gender action plan partially implemented and initial Mekong Products identified and promoted to support vulnerable communities in the LMB</p> <p>Assumptions: National governments have sufficient resources to support the collection of disaggregated data on gender and vulnerability, and the capacity to implement responses to improve gender disparities at national level</p>	<p>Improved Gender and vulnerability mapping and assessment at basin-wide level, based on updated SIMVA reports (2027)</p>	<p>2.1.4.4 Conduct the SIMVA field surveys and prepare SIMVA reports</p>	<p>PD, ED</p>	<p>2027</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance gender equity • Inclusive participation • Gender disaggregated data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through SIMVA field surveys and SIMVA reports, the riparian communities will have opportunities to engage and provide data and information to the gender and vulnerability assessment and mapping. • SIMVA will fill the data gaps, including gender disaggregated data at the community level, which will contribute to the SOBR 2028 and other assessments at the regional and national levels. • Based on the MRC's assessments and reports, the recommended measures for planning and decision-making at the regional and national levels to advance gender equity in LMB.

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
2.1.4. Gender and vulnerability aspects of basin water, food and energy security addressed	<p>Indicator: Degree to which gender equity and vulnerability aspects have been integrated into implementing MRC's work and activities at regional and national levels, including improving equity for vulnerable communities in LMB</p> <p>Target: Gender equity and vulnerability action plan implemented, and Mekong products addressing gender equity and vulnerability rolled out, expanded, or replicated in each Member Country</p> <p>Baseline: The Socio-Economic and Gender and Vulnerability Data Collection and Transmission within DAGAP is in place, some assessments of socio-economic and gender and vulnerability data under MRB-IF conducted, gender action plan partially implemented and initial Mekong Products identified and promoted to support vulnerable communities in the LMB</p> <p>Assumptions: National governments have sufficient resources to support the collection of disaggregated data on gender and vulnerability, and the capacity to implement responses to improve gender disparities at national level</p>	<p>Gender equity and vulnerability action plan implemented, reviewed and updated (2028)</p>	<p>2.1.4.4 Coordinate implementation, monitoring and review of the regional gender equity and vulnerability action plan</p>	<p>PD</p>	<p>2028</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable leadership • Inclusive participation • Advance gender equity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the MRC's institutional governance/policies and capacities at regional and national levels to mainstream/integrate GEV aspects into the implementation and contributions to achieve the BDS and MRC SP, as well as relevant SDGs targets. • Capacity building, knowledge-sharing, and best practice exchanges at regional and national levels will further support and measure the MRC's good practices and leadership in advancing gender equity, equitable leadership, and inclusive participation at the organizational and programmatic levels.
		<p>Joint community-based Mekong products to strengthen community resilience and climate change adaptation (2027)</p>	<p>2.1.4.6. Develop Mekong products to enhance community resilience to climate change and changes in hydrological conditions</p>	<p>PD</p>	<p>2027</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive participation • Reduce social vulnerability • Support at-risk communities • Support to vulnerable groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through community-based solutions and a participatory approach, the riparian communities in LMB, particularly the vulnerable groups and at-risk communities, will enhance their adaptation capacities and resilience to the changes in the environment and climate. • The joint community research and development of Mekong Products as value-added local products will support the communities' livelihoods and well-being to reduce their social and economic vulnerability.

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
3.2.1. Irrigated agriculture investment and associated measures implemented	<p>Indicator: Evidence of regional guidelines, strategies, and plans implemented or integrated into national strategies and plans</p> <p>Target: At least one activity or project in each guidance or guidelines related to irrigation, the navigation masterplan, the regional action plan, and the SHDS implemented</p> <p>Baseline: Planned activities or projects in each guidance or guidelines, navigation master plan, and regional action plan, and SHDS identified but not yet implemented</p> <p>Assumptions: National line/ implementing agencies are proactive in working with MRC to improve the implementation of MRB water-related sector strategies to help identify and support investment measures</p>	Groundwater monitoring system and database established and updated to support an assessment of groundwater status (2030)	<p>3.2.1.3. Collect additional groundwater data and establish groundwater monitoring system and database to support a new regional groundwater strategy and policy recommendations for optimizing the groundwater irrigation development</p>	PD	2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Support vulnerable groups Gender disaggregated data 	<p>This activity will collect additional groundwater data and establish a regional groundwater strategy and policy recommendations for sustainable irrigation development. It will ensure inclusive participation by engaging women, men, and local stakeholders, while providing targeted support to at-risk communities and vulnerable groups that rely heavily on groundwater resources. The use of gender-disaggregated data will help capture diverse needs and impacts, ensuring equitable access, resilience, and benefits across all user groups</p>
		Uptake of Guidance on Irrigation Asset Management (IAM), and Intermittent Irrigation, and Technical Guideline on Sustainable Groundwater Use and Management for Agriculture (Annual)	<p>3.2.1.4 Promote the uptake of Guidance on Irrigation Asset Management and Intermittent Irrigation</p>	PD	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Gender disaggregated data Support vulnerable groups 	<p>This activity will promote the uptake of Guidance on Irrigation Asset Management and Intermittent Irrigation through inclusive participation of farmers, water user groups, and local stakeholders, ensuring women and vulnerable groups are actively engaged. The use of gender-disaggregated data will inform monitoring and capacity-building, helping to tailor approaches and ensure equitable benefits from improved irrigation practices.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
4.1.4: Integrated basin-wide flood and drought forecasting and early warning	<p>Indicator: Existence of an integrated riverine forecasting and early warning system being operational</p> <p>Target: Integrated riverine forecasting and early warning system tested and operational in at least 4 selected tributaries</p> <p>Baseline: Current system covers mainly river flood forecasting at the basin scale; flash flood and drought forecasting are fragmented and limited with tributary forecasting not developed</p> <p>Assumptions: National agencies and NMCs are committed to disseminating forecasts and advisories to communities; Communities are willing and able to participate in awareness and preparedness campaigns</p>	Community awareness campaigns and capacity building to improve resilience, preparedness, and response capabilities in vulnerable regions (annual)	<p>4.1.4.8 Enhance forecast dissemination and awareness about hydro-meteorological risks, strengthen stakeholder capacity for flood and drought management, and educate communities through NMCs about natural disasters to improve resilience and emergency response capabilities, including detailed flood risk maps</p> <p>4.1.4.9 Develop and implement the joint transboundary flood and drought adaptation activities/projects</p>	TD (OCEO)	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Reduce social vulnerability Support at-risk communities Support to women, men, and local stakeholders in disaster preparedness and equitable access to early warnings and preparedness resources. It will provide targeted support to at-risk communities and vulnerable groups by delivering accessible early warnings, capacity-building, and detailed flood risk maps. The use of gender-disaggregated data will help tailor responses to diverse needs, ultimately reducing social vulnerability and strengthening resilience and emergency response capabilities across the basin. 	<p>This activity will enhance the dissemination of forecasts and awareness of hydro-meteorological risks, strengthen stakeholder capacity for flood and drought management, and educate communities through NMCs, ensuring the inclusive participation of women, men, and local stakeholders in disaster preparedness and equitable access to early warnings and preparedness resources. It will provide targeted support to at-risk communities and vulnerable groups by delivering accessible early warnings, capacity-building, and detailed flood risk maps. The use of gender-disaggregated data will help tailor responses to diverse needs, ultimately reducing social vulnerability and strengthening resilience and emergency response capabilities across the basin.</p>
		Joint transboundary activities/projects for flood and drought adaptation (2028)		TD (PD)	2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Support at-risk communities Reduce social vulnerability Gender disaggregated data Support the vulnerable group 	<p>This activity will develop and implement joint transboundary flood and drought adaptation projects with inclusive participation of women, men, and local stakeholders in planning and decision-making. Priority adaptation measures will be identified with attention to the needs of women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups, ensuring their participation in planning, decision-making, and implementation. It will provide targeted support to at-risk communities and vulnerable groups, strengthening their adaptive capacity through tailored measures and the sharing of knowledge. By applying gender-disaggregated data to assess risks and monitor impacts, the impacts of floods and droughts across borders, support sustainable water management, and enhance the capacity of communities and institutions to respond effectively to transboundary risks.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
4.1.5. Joint State of Basin Report	<p>Indicator: The extent to which China and Myanmar collaborate in preparing the SOBR 2023 and data gaps in all basin countries have been addressed in accordance with the MRB-IF</p> <p>Target: Data, information and analysis from China and Myanmar are included in the SOBR 2028 and there are no substantial data gaps to implement the MRB-IF</p> <p>Baseline: Limited official data and information from China and Myanmar were made available for preparing the SOBR 2023 and remaining data gaps in all basin countries for some key indicators</p> <p>Assumptions: China and Myanmar are willing to contribute to the joint SOBR 2023 and there is sufficient recognition of the need to improve data collection, assembly and sharing with the MRCS across all basin countries</p>	<p>Updated MRB-IF and DAGAP aligned with PDIES to reduce cost with data sharing agreements in place (2027)</p>	<p>4.1.5.2. Review and revise as needed the MRB-IF indicators and assessment methods, including improving gender and vulnerability analysis and reporting</p>	ED (OCEO, PD, TD)	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Gender disaggregated data Reduce social vulnerability Support the vulnerable group 	<p>This activity will review and revise the MRB-IF indicators and assessment methods, encouraging inclusive participation in basin-wide monitoring and reporting. It will include a gender and vulnerability analysis, applying gender-disaggregated data, to ensure that assessments capture differentiated impacts and support more equitable, evidence-based decision-making across the basin.</p>
		<p>Integrated multi-disciplinary assessment methodology to support analysis of causal relationships and vulnerabilities of basin communities (2027)</p>	<p>4.1.5.3. Develop and trial an integrated multi-disciplinary assessment methodology to identify causal linkages and impacts on environmental conditions and vulnerable basin communities</p>	ED (TD, PD)	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Support at-risk communities Support the vulnerable group 	<p>This activity will develop and trial an integrated, multidisciplinary assessment methodology to identify causal linkages between environmental conditions and community impacts, ensuring the inclusive participation of women, men, and local stakeholders in the process. The approach will support at-risk communities by capturing their specific vulnerabilities and needs, while generating evidence-based insights to design measures that help reduce social vulnerability and promote more equitable and resilient outcomes across the basin.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
4.1.5. Joint State of Basin Report	<p>Indicator: The extent to which China and Myanmar collaborate in preparing the SOBR 2023 and data gaps in all basin countries have been addressed in accordance with the MRB-IF</p> <p>Target: Data, information and analysis from China and Myanmar are included in the SOBR 2028 and there are no substantial data gaps to implement the MRB-IF</p> <p>Baseline: Limited official data and information from China and Myanmar were made available for preparing the SOBR 2023 and remaining data gaps in all basin countries for some key indicators</p> <p>Assumptions: China and Myanmar are willing to contribute to the joint SOBR 2023 and there is sufficient recognition of the need to improve data collection, assembly and sharing with the MRCS across all basin countries</p>	State of the Basin Report with automated online data visualisation of SOBR dashboards (2029)	<p>4.1.5.4. Implement the streamlined MRB-IF and Data Acquisition and Generation Action Plan, including regional studies to enable preparation of the 2028 State of Basin Report</p>	ED (PD, TD)	2029	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender disaggregated data • Inclusive participation • Reduce social vulnerability • Support at-risk communities 	This activity will implement the streamlined MRB-IF and Data Acquisition and Generation Action Plan (DAGAP), including regional studies, to prepare the 2028 State of Basin Report. It will ensure inclusive participation by engaging women, men, and vulnerable groups in data collection and consultations, while applying gender-disaggregated data to capture differentiated impacts. By focusing on the needs of at-risk communities, the activity will generate evidence to inform the design of measures that reduce social vulnerability and support equitable, sustainable basin management.
			<p>4.1.5.5. Prepare the 2028 State of Basin Report with all six basin countries to inform the development of the BDS 2031-2040</p>	ED	2029	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable leadership • Inclusive participation • Gender disaggregated data 	This activity will prepare the 2028 State of Basin Report in collaboration with all six basin countries to inform the development of the BDS 2031-2040. It will promote the inclusive participation of women, men, and local stakeholders in consultation processes, while applying gender-disaggregated data to capture the differentiated impacts and contributions of these groups. The report will provide evidence-based insights to reduce social vulnerability and support more equitable, sustainable strategies for basin-wide development.

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
<p>4.1.5. Joint State of Basin Report</p>	<p>Indicator: The extent to which China and Myanmar collaborate in preparing the SOBR 2023 and data gaps in all basin countries have been addressed in accordance with the MRB-IF</p> <p>Target: Data, information and analysis from China and Myanmar are included in the SOBR 2028 and there are no substantial data gaps to implement the MRB-IF</p> <p>Baseline: Limited official data and information from China and Myanmar were made available for preparing the SOBR 2023 and remaining data gaps in all basin countries for some key indicators</p> <p>Assumptions: China and Myanmar are willing to contribute to the joint SOBR 2023 and there is sufficient recognition of the need to improve data collection, assembly and sharing with the MRCS across all basin countries</p>	<p>State of the Basin Report with automated online data visualisation of SOBR dashboards (2029)</p>	<p>4.1.5.6. Improve data visualisation dashboard for the State of the Basin Report using business intelligence tools (e.g., Power BI, Tableau) to generate live dashboards from MRC IF databases to visualize conditions and trends</p>	<p>OCEO (ED, PD, TD)</p>	<p>2029</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive participation • Gender disaggregated data 	<p>This activity will enhance the data visualisation dashboard for the State of the Basin Report by utilizing advanced business intelligence tools (e.g., Power BI, Tableau, SVP tool, etc.) to create live, interactive dashboards from MRC IF databases. It will promote inclusive participation by making basin data more accessible and user-friendly for women, men, policymakers, the community, and vulnerable groups. The dashboards will integrate gender-disaggregated data to highlight differentiated impacts and provide insights that help support at-risk communities and reduce social vulnerability, ensuring evidence-based and equitable decision-making across the basin.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
<p>4.2.2. Climate change adaptation, flood and drought management mainstreamed at national levels</p>	<p>Indicator: The degree to which regional climate change adaptation needs and water security challenges are addressed</p> <p>Target: Number and extent of transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought management projects for climate change adaptation developed and implemented</p> <p>Baseline: Some transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought management projects for climate change adaptation are partially mainstreamed into some Member Country strategies but not systematically aligned at the basin level. Limited implementation of transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought adaptation measures across transboundary areas</p> <p>Assumptions: Member Countries remain committed to joint projects addressing climate change adaptation and transboundary cooperation. The accreditation process for MRC to global climate funds is successful and timely. Adequate financial resources and technical support are mobilized from climate funds and development partners.</p>	<p>Accreditation of MRC to global climate funds (2028)</p>	<p>4.2.2.6 Finalise accreditation requirements for MRC access to international climate finance to ensure cost-effective administration</p>	<p>PD</p>	<p>2028</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive participation • Gender disaggregated data • Reduce social vulnerability • Support at-risk communities 	<p>This activity will finalise accreditation requirements for MRC access to international climate finance, enabling the preparation of project proposals with cost-effective administration. It will promote inclusive participation by integrating the perspectives of women, men, and vulnerable groups into project design, while applying gender-disaggregated data to identify differentiated climate impacts. By prioritising actions that support at-risk communities and reduce social vulnerability, the accreditation process will ensure that climate finance mobilised through the MRC delivers equitable, sustainable, and high-impact benefits across the basin.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions
<p>4.2.2. Climate change adaptation, flood and drought management mainstreamed at national levels</p>	<p>Indicator: The degree to which regional climate change adaptation needs and water security challenges are addressed</p> <p>Target: Number and extent of transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought management projects for climate change adaptation developed and implemented</p> <p>Baseline: Some transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought management projects for climate change adaptation are partially mainstreamed into some Member Country strategies but not systematically aligned at the basin level. Limited implementation of transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought adaptation measures across transboundary areas</p> <p>Assumptions: Member Countries remain committed to joint projects addressing climate change adaptation and transboundary cooperation. The accreditation process for IMRC to global climate funds is successful and timely. Adequate financial resources and technical support are mobilized from climate funds and development partners.</p>	<p>Joint Projects Facility with joint and transboundary investment projects delivered (2028)</p>	<p>4.2.2.7 Implement a Joint Projects Facility to facilitate identification, development, and financing of strategic joint and transboundary projects and coordinate project implementation</p>	<p>OCEO, PD (TD, ED)</p>	<p>2028</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable leadership • Inclusive participation • Gender disaggregated data 	<p>This activity will implement a Joint Projects Facility to identify, develop, and finance strategic joint and transboundary projects while coordinating their implementation. It will ensure inclusive participation by engaging women, men, and vulnerable groups in project design and decision-making, and applying gender-disaggregated data to capture differentiated needs and impacts. By prioritizing initiatives that support at-risk communities and strengthen resilience, the facility will help reduce social vulnerability and ensure that joint projects deliver equitable and sustainable benefits across the basin.</p>
		<p>Transboundary ecosystem-based flood and drought management solutions (2028)</p>	<p>4.2.2.8 Support the development of ecosystem-based or nature-based, and green-grey solutions for flood and drought mitigation in the LMB</p>	<p>PD</p>	<p>2028</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive participation • Gender disaggregated data • Reduce social vulnerability • Support at-risk communities 	<p>This activity will support the development of ecosystem-based, nature-based, and green-grey solutions for flood and drought mitigation in the LMB, ensuring inclusive participation of women, men, and vulnerable groups in planning and implementation. It will support at-risk communities most exposed to water-related disasters, applying gender-disaggregated data to assess differentiated risks and benefits. By promoting equitable access to protective measures, the activity will help reduce social vulnerability and strengthen basin-wide resilience through sustainable and locally relevant solutions.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
5.1.1 Implementation of the MRC Procedures enhanced	<p>Indicator: The degree to which enhanced Technical Guidelines of MRC Procedures are agreed and implemented</p> <p>Target: All enhanced MRC Procedures and Technical Guidelines are agreed by Member Countries and implemented</p> <p>Baseline: Improvements made to all technical guidelines, but implementation gaps remain</p> <p>Assumptions: Agreement can be reached between the Member Countries on enhanced Technical Guidelines, and they have the political will and capacity to implement them</p>	Implementation of the PNPCA and updated Guidelines for sustainable water infrastructure development (annual)	5.1.1.7 Implement the PNPCA to support sustainable water infrastructure development	PD (ED, TD, OCEO)	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Gender disaggregated data 	<p>This activity will implement the PNPCA to ensure water infrastructure development is both sustainable and socially responsive. By guaranteeing inclusive participation of women, men, and vulnerable groups, applying gender-disaggregated data, and prioritizing support to at-risk communities, it will directly address transboundary impacts on livelihoods and ecosystems. These measures will deliver concrete outcomes; reducing social vulnerability, strengthening community resilience, and ensuring water infrastructure brings equitable and sustainable benefits across the basin.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
<p>5.1.2. Organisational development of the Mekong River Commission</p>	<p>Indicator: The degree to which the MRC has sustainable institutional and funding arrangements agreed and in place for post 2030</p> <p>Target: Agreed institutional and funding mechanisms in place for the period beyond 2030 with commitments from Member Countries and Development Partners</p> <p>Baseline: New funding modalities ready to be trialled, strong ongoing support from Development Partners and from Member Countries meeting their funding commitments</p> <p>Assumptions: A model for adequate funding of non-routine and routine core functions post 2030 can be agreed upon by all relevant parties</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>5.1.2.16. Prepare, monitor and manage the MRCS MWPs to implement the MRC SP; provide guidance on impact pathways, and coordinate across divisions</p>	<p>OCEO</p>	<p>2026, 2027-2028, 2029-2030</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equitable leadership Inclusive participation Gender disaggregated data 	<p>This activity will monitor and manage the MWP, procurement, and HR systems to implement the MRC SP, ensuring inclusive participation, equitable leadership, and the use of gender-disaggregated data to strengthen transparency and responsiveness to the diverse needs of Member Countries and stakeholders.</p>
		<p>National Indicative Plans 2026-2030 formulated (2026)</p>	<p>5.1.2.17. Support the preparation and implementation of the National Indicative Plans to implement the BDS 2021-2030</p>	<p>PD</p>	<p>2026</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Gender disaggregated data Reduce social vulnerability Support at-risk communities 	<p>This activity will support the preparation and implementation of the National Indicative Plans to advance the BDS 2021–2030, encouraging inclusive participation of women, men, and local stakeholder groups in national planning processes. NIPs will prioritize support to at-risk communities by addressing their specific needs and integrating locally relevant solutions, while applying gender-disaggregated data to identify differentiated impacts and benefits. Through these measures, the activity will help reduce social vulnerability and ensure that basin development is more equitable, sustainable, and responsive to diverse needs.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
5.1.2. Organisational development of the Mekong River Commission	<p>Indicator: The degree to which the MRC has sustainable institutional and funding arrangements agreed and in place for post 2030</p> <p>Target: Agreed institutional and funding mechanisms in place for the period beyond 2030 with commitments from Member Countries and Development Partners</p> <p>Baseline: New funding modalities ready to be trialled, strong ongoing support from Development Partners and from Member Countries meeting their funding commitments</p> <p>Assumptions: A model for adequate funding of non-routine and routine core functions post 2030 can be agreed upon by all relevant parties</p>	BDS 2031-2040 and MRC Strategic Plan 2031-2035 (2030)	5.1.2.18. Prepare the BDS 2031-2040 and the MRC SP 2031-2035	OCEO, PD	2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Support vulnerable groups Advance gender equity Reduce social vulnerability Equitable leadership 	This activity will prepare the BDS 2031–2040 and MRC SP 2031–2035 through a consultative process that ensures inclusive participation and equitable leadership, engaging women, men, and diverse stakeholders in shaping basin-wide priorities. By promoting gender equity and prioritizing support to vulnerable and at-risk groups, the strategies will help reduce social vulnerability and ensure future basin development is inclusive, equitable, and sustainable
		Mid-Term Review of the MRC Strategic Plan (2028)	5.1.2.19. Update and implement MRC's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems consistent with the new MRC Strategic Plan 2026-2030, and conduct the Mid-Term Review of SP 2026-2030 and the Completion Review of the SP 2021-2025	OCEO	2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender disaggregated data Reports on GEV-related activities, achievements 	This activity will update the MRC's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems in line with the Strategic Plan 2026–2030 and conduct the Mid-Term Review of SP 2026–2030 and Completion Review of SP 2021–2025. It will ensure inclusive participation of Member Countries, line agencies, DPs, partners, and stakeholders, while systematically applying gender-disaggregated data to strengthen analysis, reporting, and learning. GEV-related measures will be tracked and reported regularly, with lessons learned documented to advance gender equity, reduce social vulnerability, and support more accountable, equitable, and sustainable basin outcomes.

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
5.1.2. Organisational development of the Mekong River Commission	<p>Indicator: The degree to which the MRC has sustainable institutional and funding arrangements agreed and in place for post 2030</p> <p>Target: Agreed institutional and funding mechanisms in place for the period beyond 2030 with commitments from Member Countries and Development Partners</p> <p>Baseline: New funding modalities ready to be trialled, strong ongoing support from Development Partners and from Member Countries meeting their funding commitments</p> <p>Assumptions: A model for adequate funding of non-routine and routine core functions post 2030 can be agreed upon by all relevant parties</p>	<p>Product dissemination and communication frameworks for national uptake (2027)</p>	<p>5.1.2.20 Prepare and implement national CIP dissemination and communication frameworks co-developed with Member Countries to improve uptake of MRC products, tools, and strategies</p>	OCEO	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Support for the vulnerable group Support at-risk communities Gender Disaggregated data Equitable leadership 	<p>This activity will prepare and implement national Community Innovation Projects dissemination and communication frameworks, co-developed with Member Countries, to enhance the uptake of MRC products, tools, and strategies. The dissemination and communication material will include features that promote inclusive participation, engage women, youth, and community stakeholders in design and outreach, while also supporting vulnerable and at-risk groups to strengthen access and benefits. The material will also include gender-disaggregated data to guide communication approaches and measure impact, thereby advancing gender equity and reducing social vulnerability by ensuring that information is accessible, relevant, and equitably shared across communities.</p>
		NA	<p>5.1.2.22 Implement the MRC SP, MWPs through efficient and productive Procurements and HR activities, systems, and processes, and cross-Division/Office coordination</p>	AD	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equitable leadership Advance gender equity Gender disaggregated data Inclusive participation 	<p>This activity will implement the MRC SP and MWPs through efficient HR and procurement systems, strengthened processes, and effective cross-divisional and office coordination. It will ensure inclusive participation and promote equitable leadership opportunities within the MRCs, while applying gender-disaggregated data in HR systems to track progress and address gaps. By embedding measures that advance gender equity and equitable leadership, these institutional processes will help the organizational delivery be transparent, inclusive, and responsive to the diverse needs of Member Countries and stakeholders.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions <i>(How each activity will apply a gender equity lens and address the needs of vulnerable groups & community to ensure inclusiveness and equitable benefits during planning and implementation)</i>
<p>5.1.1.2. Organisational development of the Mekong River Commission</p>	<p>Indicator: The degree to which the MRC has sustainable institutional and funding arrangements agreed and in place for post 2030</p> <p>Target: Agreed institutional and funding mechanisms in place for the period beyond 2030 with commitments from Member Countries and Development Partners</p> <p>Baseline: New funding modalities ready to be trialled, strong ongoing support from Development Partners and from Member Countries meeting their funding commitments</p> <p>Assumptions: A model for adequate funding of non-routine and routine core functions post 2030 can be agreed upon by all relevant parties</p>	NA	<p>5.1.2.2.3 Strengthen HR systems to promote equitable practices; enhance leadership and empowerment opportunities for women across the MRC; build capacity through internal gender policy audit and leadership training activities; promote gender equality in HR data systematization, and inclusive procurement</p>	AD	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable leadership • Advance gender equity • Gender disaggregated data • Inclusive participation 	<p>This activity will strengthen HR systems to promote equitable practices and create an enabling environment that enables inclusive participation and equitable leadership throughout the MRC. It will enhance leadership and empowerment opportunities for women through targeted training and capacity-building, supported by an internal policy gender audit. The activity will utilize gender-disaggregated data to enhance HR data systematization and inform evidence-based decision-making, while also incorporating gender-responsive and inclusive practices. Together, these measures will advance gender equity and contribute to reducing institutional and social vulnerability across the organization.</p>

BDS Output	BDS Output Indicator	SP Deliverables	SP Activities	Divisions	Timeline (2026-2030)	GEV Goal	GEVAP in Actions
5.2.5. Harmonised basin-wide stakeholder platform	<p>Indicator: The degree to which key concerns of basin communities are being heard and addressed through basin-wide stakeholder engagement mechanisms, operating consistent recording, reporting and impact tracking procedures</p> <p>Target: All key MRC SP deliverables take into account stakeholders' concerns and inputs as reflected in stakeholder feedback</p> <p>Baseline: Systematic and institutionalized mechanisms are in place with enhanced communication and engagement procedures in place</p> <p>Assumptions: Existing stakeholder engagement mechanisms are sufficient to address stakeholder concerns</p>	<p>Outreach and engagement of youth and communities on iReport for community-based early warning system (2028)</p>	<p>5.2.5.5 Develop and support MCs to implement outreach through youth and community engagement and provide structured responses to feedback given, including through the MRC Education and Visitor Center and One Mekong App, for disseminating information to and gathering feedback from stakeholders, the media, basin communities, and the broader public on matters relevant to MRC functions, policies, products, and services, and evaluate its effectiveness</p>	OCEO	2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Support for the vulnerable group Support at-risk communities Gender disaggregated data 	<p>This activity will develop and support Member Countries to implement outreach through youth and community engagement, ensuring inclusive participation and meaningful involvement of diverse stakeholders. Using platforms such as the MRC Education and Visitor Center and the One Mekong App, it will disseminate information and gather feedback from communities, media, and the broader public. Structured mechanisms will ensure timely responses to community and stakeholder input, with gender-disaggregated data applied to track participation and impacts. By prioritizing support to vulnerable and at-risk groups, the activity will help reduce social vulnerability, strengthen trust, and enhance the effectiveness and equity of MRC's policies, products, and services.</p>
	<p>Community Innovation Projects, including capacity building to improve resilience, preparedness, and response capabilities in vulnerable regions (annual)</p>	<p>5.2.5.6 Develop and coordinate the implementation of Community Innovation Projects to help address regional challenges, such as community-based fish breeding centres</p>	<p>5.2.5.6 Develop and coordinate the implementation of Community Innovation Projects to help address regional challenges, such as community-based fish breeding centres</p>	OCEO (ED, PD)	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive participation Support for the vulnerable group 	<p>This activity will develop and coordinate the implementation of Community Innovation Projects, such as community-based fish breeding centers, etc., ensuring the inclusive participation of women, youth, and local stakeholders in the design and implementation. It will provide targeted support to at-risk communities and vulnerable groups, fostering innovation that strengthens livelihoods, food security, and resilience. By applying gender-disaggregated data to capture differentiated impacts and benefits, the activity will help reduce social vulnerability and promote equitable, sustainable solutions across the basin.</p>





Innovation and Cooperation
for a Water Secure and Sustainable Mekong



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