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Agenda B.1

Progress Report on the Study on Sustainable Management and Development of the Mekong River including Impacts by Mainstream Hydropower Projects



*Preparatory Meeting of the MRC Joint Committee
For the Forty-first Meeting of the MRC Joint Committee
Mekong River Commission
05 May 2015
Siem Reap, Cambodia*

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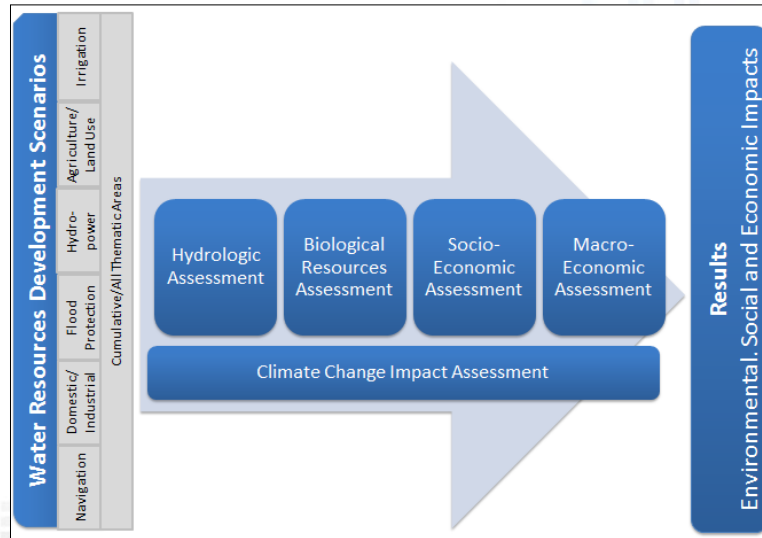
Objectives

- Further develop/establish a reliable scientific evidence of positive and negative environmental, social, and economic impacts of water resources development
- Integrate results into the MRC knowledge base to enhance the BDP process
- Promote capacity and ensure technology transfer to Member Countries



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Assessment Framework



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Progress to Date



- Important progress milestones have been achieved since the 3rd RTWG in November 2014 – the start of the Implementation Phase

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Specific Implementation Accomplishments (1)



- Consolidated and Individual Team Work Plans and Staffing Plans Completed
- International/Regional Consultants Successfully Recruited
- Modeling Approach Approved by TACT

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Specific Implementation Accomplishments (2)



- Development Scenarios Approved During the 4th RTWG Meeting (10 March 2015)
- Completed Field Visit (Part 1 – Delta and Tonle Sap) in March 2015 by the Biological Resource Expert Team
- Scoping of macro-economic assessment initiated through a consultant

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Specific Implementation Accomplishments (3)

- Participated in meetings with various stakeholders and partners
- Launching and continuous update of the Council Study Web Site



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Council Study Web Site



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The Study on Sustainable Management and Development of the Mekong River including Impacts of Mainstream Hydropower Projects

The Council Study objectives are threefold:

i) Further develop/establish reliable scientific evidence base on the environment, social and economic consequences (positive and negative) of development in the

Latest Consultations

- 4th Regional Forum on the Basin Development Strategy
- Don Sahong Hydropower Project
- Xayaburi Hydropower Project Prior Consultation Process
- Panel of Experts on the Basin Development Plan Phase 2
- 4th BDP Regional Forum on the Basin Development Strategy - Powerpoint Presentations

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Latest News

- Media Advisory: Twenty-first Meeting of the MRC Council
- Every year, water and environment

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Challenges Now and Ahead



- Uncertainty in Scope
- Compressed Implementation Schedule
- Funding Gap
- Management and Coordination Challenge

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Uncertainty in scope



- Types and number of development and climate change scenarios to assess
- Calibration and validation of the models (in particular WUP-FIN models)
- Number of physical, environmental, social, and economic indicators to assess
- Specific data availability and extent of data gap filling
- And many others

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Compressed implementation schedule



- One year instead of two years (to compensate delays in completing planning phase)
- Not compatible with the objective to adopt an open, transparent, collaborative, and participatory process among MRC Programmes and between the Secretariat and MCs
- Not compatible with Programme work loads
- May compromise product quality if time is not sufficient for adequate QA/review

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Funding Issue



- Funding to cover the estimated total budget needed has not been all secured

Budget Item	Amount (USD Millions)
Total Estimated Budget (Original from Inception Report)	6.1
Revised Estimated Budget	7.3
Revised In-Kind (Staff Time) Contribution	1.1
Revised External Funding Required (from DP)	6.2
Secured Funding to Date (from Finland, Australia, Luxembourg, Germany, ISH)	2.5
Funding Gap	3.7
Potential Funding from Identified Sources (Switzerland, US, EU, Belgium, and Finland)	2.0
Funding with funding source unidentified	1.7

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Management and Coordination Challenge



- Inherently complex due to the following:
 - multisectoral technical scope
 - large team (all Programmes, large number of consultants, 4 MCs, and stakeholders)
 - compressed implementation schedule
 - funding issues
- Made even more complex due to lingering questions on approach

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4th RTWG Meeting Recommendation



- MRC to propose to JC to extend the schedule of the Council Study

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Benefits of Extending Overall Schedule

- Reduces workload pressure on Programmes
- Relieves the need to secure the total budget for the Council Study now (spread over a longer period)
- Provides more time for QA/Review and for participatory and collaborative process

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Proposed Revised Schedule: Six-Month Extension

Num	Tasks	2014			2015									2016													
		Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep		
0	Study Management and Coordination																										
1	Detailed Work Plans and Staffing Plans																										
2	Consolidated Work Plan and Staffing Plan																										
3	Startup Meeting/ 3rd RTV/G Meeting (Nov 12-14, 2014)		*																								
4	Recruit Team Personnel																										
5	Select Baseline																										
6	Formulate Development Scenarios																										
7	Assess Direct Socio-Economic Impacts																										
8	Assess Hydrologic Impacts (Including Sediment/Water Quality)																										
9	Assess Bioresource Impacts																										
10	Assess Indirect Socio-Economic Impacts																										
11	Scoping of Macro-Economics Study																										
12	Assess Macro-Economic Impacts																										
13	Assess Climate Change Impacts																										
14	Assess East Seas Coastal Area Impacts																										
15	Prepare Technical Reports																										
16	Prepare Cumulative Thematic Reports																										
17	RTV/G Meetings		*																								
18	National Consultations			*			*							*					*								
19	Regional Stakeholder Meetings								*		*					*											
20	Closeout Activities																									*	

Note: Duration of extension is based on technical inputs of the CS Teams

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Lingering Question on implementation arrangement



- Current (As per TOR and Inception Report): Management under OCEO with all Programmes involved and with “equal” ownership and accountability

VS

- Question/Suggestion (from one MC) : Management under the Planning Division with possibility of restructuring teams

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Lingering Question on technical scope of the scenario assessments



- Current (As per TOR and Inception Report): Both Thematic and Cumulative Assessments

VS

- Question/Suggestion (From one MC): Only Cumulative Assessments

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Cumulative vs. Thematic Assessments



<u>Cumulative Assessments</u> Assess combined impacts of development stressors	<u>Thematic Assessments</u> Understand impacts of thematic-specific development stressors
2007 Early Development Scenario 2020 Definite Future Scenario 2040 Planned Scenario (With and Without Climate Change)	Sensitivity of impacts of thematic-specific deviations in the 2040 Planned scenario Examples: Impact of different levels of irrigation Impact of navigation/hydropower dam combined infrastructure investments Impact of alternative joint management and operation of the full cascade of mainstream dams Many others...

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The Joint Committee may wish to take note of the progress made by the Council Study and provide the following:

- (1) Decision on the proposed extension of the Council Study schedule as per recommendation of the RTWG***
- (2) Guidance and if possible closure on the implementation arrangement***
- (3) Guidance and if possible closure on the technical scope of the scenario assessments***

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