

Briefing Notes Package
4rd RTWG Meeting
10 March 2015, OSV, Vientiane
Document Prepared: 3 March 2015

This briefing notes package provides the participants a summary of what to expect from the meeting including decisions that are requested to be made. The briefing package includes also a synopsis of the topics and when appropriate stand-alone documents (as attachments) for review.

The objectives of the 4th RTWG meeting are the following:

1. Provide and discuss overall progress of the Council Study
2. Discuss and agree on the development scenarios and baselines for the Council Study
3. Provide a progress update on thematic and discipline areas of the Study and solicit RTWG comments and guidance
4. Discuss overall schedule, next steps, challenges, and proposed corrective actions

The briefing note is organized according to the following agenda topics in line with the meeting objectives listed above:

- Overall Progress Update
- Proposed Development Scenarios, Climate Change Scenarios, and Baselines for the Council Study
- Progress Update – Implementation of the TACT-Approved Modeling Approach
- Progress Update – Biological Resource Assessment Including Field Visits
- Progress Update – Socio-Economic and Macro-Economic Assessment
- Review of Follow-up Actions, Challenges and Next Steps

Agenda Topic - Overall Progress Update

What to Expect

A brief background and important progress milestones of the Council Study will be presented to put the 4th RTWG meeting in context. Most of the **participants are expected to be familiar and knowledgeable** of the Council Study objectives and overall approach as per documented in the Council Study Concept Note, Terms of Reference, and Inception Report (version 27 October 2014). These documents and related information are available in the Council Study Web Site (<http://www.mrcmekong.org/highlights/>).

Synopsis

The implementation phase of the Council Study officially began when the Member Countries agreed during the 3rd RTWG Meeting on 14 November 2014 to use the Inception Report (version 27 October 2014) to be the basis of the Council Study Implementation. In anticipation of this agreement, the implementation phase was kicked-off during the Startup Workshop on 12-13 November 2014.

Since then, the following key progress implementation milestones were accomplished (in accordance with the overall schedule shown in the Gantt Chart below).

- Completion and presentation of initial version of consolidated and individual thematic and discipline team work plans and staffing plans (12 November 2014). Work plans and staffing plans are continuously being reviewed/revise as more information becomes available (Task 1)
- Established MRCS member roster of Council Study Team with comments of MCs during the Start-up Workshop/3rd RTWG Meeting addressed (Task 0)
- Completion of TORs for international/regional/national consultants. Successfully contracted key and immediately needed international/regional consultants (biological resource and macro-economic teams) and requested MCs for qualified candidates for the national consultants (Task 4)
- Established the CS Coordinating Group and conducted regular monthly meetings and reporting (Task 0)
- Established CS Web Site (Task 0)
- Shared literature review documents (primary relevant documents) with MCs and CS Team (including consultants) through various mechanisms (e.g., CD, FTP, and CS Web Site) (Task 0)
- Developed modelling approach for the Council Study which was subsequently approved by the TACT (3 February 2015) (Task 8)
- Developed concept note for the proposed formulation of development scenarios, climate change scenarios, and baselines, 3 March 2015 (i.e., concept note attached with this briefing package) (Tasks 5 and 6)
- Prepared (and implementing) plan for site visits of the biological resource assessment, 24 February 2015 (i.e., field visit plan attached with this briefing package) (Task 9)
- Conducted initial scoping meeting with macro-economic consultant 23-24 February, 2015 (Task 11)
- Participated in information exchange (through presentations and/or discussions) on behalf of the Council Study Team in various meetings attended by stakeholders and partners such as the following (various tasks):
 - BDP Forum (19-21, November 2014, Siem Reap)
 - National Consultation with Lao PDR (3 December 2014)
 - Mekong Delta Study Technical Working Group Meeting (8-10 December 2014)
 - JC Preparatory Meeting and Council Meeting with the Development Partners (14-16 January, 2015)
 - IKMP TACT Meeting (3 February 2015, Hanoi)
 - Development Partners Meeting (11 February 2015, Vientiane)

Num	Tasks	2014			2015												2016		
		Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
0	Study Management and Coordination (including conduct of MRCS Coordinating Group Monthly Meetings)																		
1	Detailed Work Plans and Staffing Plans																		
2	Consolidated Work Plan and Staffing Plan																		
3	Startup Meeting/ 3rd RTWG 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																		
9	Assess Bioresource Impacts																		
9a	... Field Visits/Assessment						*												
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 Thematic Reports																		
17	Perform Closeout Activities																		
18	1st Regional Stakeholder Meeting									*									
19	2nd Regional Stakeholder Meeting														*				
20	Final Regional Stakeholder Meeting																		*
21	4th RTWG Meeting						*												
22	5th RTWG Meeting												*						
23	Final RTWG Meeting																		*
24	National Consultations			*					*					*				*	

Agenda Topic - Proposed Development Scenarios, Climate Change Scenarios, and Baselines for the Council Study

What to Expect

The proposed development and climate change scenarios and baselines for the Council Study as described in detail in the attached Concept Note will be presented and discussed. **The RTWG delegates are requested to carefully review the Concept Note, participate during the presentation and discussions, and make a consensus decision during the RTWG meeting on some if not all of the proposed scenarios and baselines for the Council Study.** Arriving at a decision constitute the completion of an important milestone that allows the Council Study to continue to the next steps.

Synopsis

The proposed development and climate change scenarios and baselines for the Council Study as described in detail in the attached Concept Note (see Attachment 1) has gone through a rigorous process of deliberations and review by the Council Study Team (i.e., All Directors, and Programme Coordinators and key staff) and represent its collective effort and consensus recommendation. The proposed development and climate change scenarios and baselines are summarized in the table below.

Development scenarios	Number of development scenarios	Number of CC scenarios	Hydrologic baseline (natural flow regime)	Water resources development within scenario (impacts of which will be assessed)	Exogenous development situation (due to developments outside the water sector)
Early Development Scenario	1	-	1985 - 2007	All up to 2007	2007
Definite Future Scenario	1	-	1985 - 2007	All up to 2020	2020
Planned Development Scenario, with/without CC	1	2 to 3	1985 - 2007	All up to 2040	2040
Exploratory scenarios, with/without CC	up to 5	2 to 3	1985 - 2007	All up to 2060	2060
Alternative Plan Scenarios, with/without CC	2 to 3	2 to 3	1985 - 2007	All up to 2040	2040

Agenda Topic - Progress Update: Implementation of the TACT-Approved Modelling Approach

What to Expect

The Council Study Hydrologic Assessment Team will present progress updates primarily on the following activities:

- Integration of WUP-FIN models with MRC DSF models as per the TACT-approved modeling approach
- Proposed use of eWater Source for the Council Study as per recommendation of the TACT

The RTWG delegates are expected to participate during the presentation and discussion of the progress updates and provide guidance to the Hydrologic Assessment Team. The RTWG delegates may review the following powerpoint presentations (presented during the 10th IKMP TACT meeting on 3-4 February 2015 in Hanoi) as background materials:

- Modeling Approach to Support the Council Study (see Attachment 2)
- eWater Source (in particular pages 31-32) – see Attachment 3 for an updated presentation of the version presented during the TACT meeting

Synopsis

The MRC DSF toolbox will be used as the primary basis for the modeling work for the Council Study, in particular the use of the approved DSF models such as SWAT, IQQM, and iSIS. However, the DSF models currently have current limitations with respect to modeling nutrients and water quality (apart from salinity) and to some extent modeling. For example:

- The current DSF models have not been applied to simulate sediment and water quality fate and transport including nutrients due to the limited on time and quality of sediment and water quality data is still suspect and need further investigation.
- Despite complex flow conditions in floodplains and reservoirs including the Tonle Sap -Great Lake, they can only be simulated in iSIS using one-dimensional hydrodynamic flow model.
- 1D-ISIS models for the Mekong Mainstream (from Chiang Saen – Kratie (above the “Phnom Penh confluence node”)) is still under the process of testing by National Modeller Team and waiting for approval for official use by the Technical Assistance and Coordination Team.

Therefore, a modelling approach that integrates WUP-FIN models with the DSF models was developed to provide the full integrated modeling functionality for the Council Study. The WUP-FIN models include the following:

- VMOD (IWRM/HAE) is a distributed hydrological model with comprehensive water management, farming system, erosion, hydropower and climate change sub-components. A simple flooding procedure is also included for crop impact modeling.

- A combined 1D/2D/3D hydrodynamic model is available for flooding, erosion, water quality, primary productivity and fisheries productivity. The model is based on a nested finite difference scheme.

The modelling approach was presented to and approved by the TACT during the 10th IKMP Meeting on 3-4 February 2015 in Hanoi.

In addition, the eWater Source which was presented during the TACT meeting was acknowledged by the TACT as a progressive successor to IQQM. TACT also recommended eWater Source as a potential tool for the Council Study.

Agenda Topic - Progress Update: Biological Resource Assessment Including Field Visits

What to Expect

The Council Study Biological Resources Assessment (BioRA) Team will present progress updates primarily on the upcoming field visit by the biological resources expert team. **The RTWG delegates are expected to participate during the presentation and discussion of the progress update and provide further guidance to the Biological Resources Assessment Team.**

Synopsis

The BioRA Expert Team will be conducting field visits throughout the LMB to provide the experts the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the study area in a multidisciplinary environment where experts can share and discuss their understanding of the characteristics of the sites based on field observations and their potential to be selected as focus sites for the biological resources assessment. The BioRA experts will be accompanied by participants from the Member Countries.

Preparation meetings before and after the field visits will be conducted to accomplish the following:

- Provide Council Study background to the expert team
- Afford lead specialists the opportunity to introduce their disciplines and outline the main considerations with respect to the Council Study;
- Introduce the DRIFT DSS – see DRIFT Quick Guide;
- Develop a draft list of discipline indicators and linked indicators;
- Finalise selection of focus sites/areas;
- Schedule BioRA activities.

Outputs from the March BioRA preparation meetings and site visits will include the following:

- Progress Report: Indicator and Site Selection and Field Visits. This will contain, *inter alia*:
- Final selection of focus sites/areas for the Mekong and Tonle Sap rivers, the Tonle Sap Great Lake and the Delta
- Initial site descriptions from individual specialists
- The preliminary lists of BioRA indicators and linked indicators
- Schedule of follow-up activities
- Minutes of the Preparation Meetings Part 1 and 2
- Copies of presentations made at Preparation Meetings Part 1 and 2.

The field visits will be conducted in two stages. Stage 1 is visiting sites in the Delta and Tonle Sap (Cambodia and Viet Nam) from 18-29 March 2015. Stage 2 will involve field visits in Mekong River (Laos PDR and Thailand) which has not been scheduled yet.

The table below shows the itinerary of field visits in Cambodia and Viet Nam.

Biological Resources Assessment Site Visit Plan 18-29 March 2015

March	Activity	Overnight location
Day 1: Wednesday 18	Arrival at OSV	Vientiane
Day 2: Thursday 19	Preparation meeting (Part 1) at OSV	Vientiane
Day 3: Friday 20	Preparation meeting (Part 1) at OSV	Vientiane
Day 4: Saturday 21	Travel to Ho Chi Minh (By VN 921 leaves Vientiane at 11.35 a.m. via Phnom Penh arrives in Ho Chi Minh at 14.45)	Ho Chi Minh City
Day 5: Sunday 22	Travel to the Delta and visit sites in the Delta	Tan Chau
Day 6: Monday 23	Visit sites in the Delta	Tan Chau
Day 7: Tuesday 24	Take boat from Tan Chau to Phnom Penh. (Fly to Siem Reap in the afternoon on the same day)	Siem Reap
Day 8: Wednesday 25	Visit Kampong Khlang in Tonle Sap	Siem Reap
Day 9: Thursday 26	Take boat to visit Tonle Sap (visit Prek Toal, Biosphere Reserve)	Siem Reap
Day 10: Friday 27	Preparation meeting (Part 2) at hotel	Siem Reap
Day 11: Saturday 28	Preparation meeting (Part 2) at hotel	Team members may take the evening or night flight back home.

The table below shows the members of the expert group who are participating in the preparatory meetings and field visits. They will be accompanied by up to four representatives from each MC from the NMC Secretariat and/or line agencies

Role	Name	Country of Residence	Email
Technical Leader	Dr Cate Brown	South Africa	cate@southernwaters.co.za
DRIFT DSS Manager	Dr Alison Joubert	South Africa	alison@southernwaters.co.za
Geomorphology and WQ Lead Specialist	Dr Lois Koehnken	Australia	LKoehnken@inet.net.au
Tonle Sap Processes	Dr Dirk Lamberts	Belgium	dirklamberts@yahoo.com
Vegetation Lead Specialist	Dr Andrew MacDonald	USA	amcdonald@utpa.edu
Delta Microalgae Lead Specialist	Duong Thi Hoang Oanh	Vietnam	hoangoanh@ctu.edu.vn
Delta Macrophytes Lead Specialist	Dr Nguyen Thi Ngoc Anh	Vietnam	ntnanh@ctu.edu.vn
Macroinvertebrate Lead Specialist	Dr Ian Campbell	Australia	I.C.Campbell@bigpond.com
Fish Lead Specialist	Prof. Ian Cowx	England	I.G.Cowx@hull.ac.uk
Fish Delta Specialist	Dr Kenzo Utsugi	Japan	kenzoutsugi@gmail.com
Herpetology Lead Specialist	Dr Hoang Minh Duc	Vietnam	ducthao71@yahoo.com
Bird and Mammal Lead Specialist	Anthony Stones	England	anthony.stones@btinternet.com
Fish Specialist	Chavalit Vidthayanon	Thailand/Laos	chavalit@mrcmekong.org

Agenda Topic - Progress Update: Socio-Economic and Macro-Economic Assessment

What to Expect

Progress updates on the Council Study socio-economic and macro-economic assessment will be presented. The assessments will occur after the formulation of agreed scenarios and baselines (which require knowledge gaps to be closed and data/information to be prepared), the presentation will focus on the following key planned activities:

- Coordination of the macro-economic assessment with the direct and indirect socio-economic assessments
- Scoping of the macro-economic assessment team
- Progress update on SIM/VA
- Progress update on the MRC Indicator Framework

The RTWG delegates are expected to participate during the presentation and discussion of the progress updates and provide guidance to the Socio-Economic and Macro-Assessment Teams.

Synopsis

The social and economic assessments for the Council Study are divided into three components namely:

- Direct socio-economic assessment conducted by each of the Thematic Teams
- Indirect socio-economic assessment (impacts related to changes in flow, sediment, and water quality) conducted by the socio-economic discipline team
- Macro-economic assessment conducted by the macro-economic assessment team based on the input of both the direct and indirect socio-economic assessment teams

The plan involves coordinating the activities of the different teams to ensure consistency in the methodology, indicators used, analysis and compatibility of the results. Sector experts (especially those with economic background) will participate in one team in conducting the social and economic assessments.

The scope including the framework and methodology for the macro-economic assessment is being developed through a scoping activity by a macro-economic consultant in accordance with the Inception Report. A regional workshop is planned to discuss the proposed macro-economic framework and methodology and the scope of work for the macro-economic implementation team.

MRC has conducted Social Impact Monitoring and Vulnerability Assessment (SIMVA) 2013-14 which is based on the results from the previous Vulnerability Assessment (VA) in 2005, Social Impact Monitoring (SIM) in 2006, SIMVA pilot study in 2009, and SIMVA baseline study in 2011. The objective of SIMVA survey is to provide regular information on the status and trends of social conditions of the people in the Basin, linked to changes in the Basin's aquatic ecosystems and water related resources. SIMVA is part of the overall environmental monitoring system in the Lower Mekong Basin (LMB), which includes water

quality and ecological health monitoring. SIMVA 2013 -2014 progress for example includes the following products:

- Final regional household survey dataset (5,632 samples) (combined 4 countries)
- Combining 4 countries dataset into regional qualitative study (Focus group discussion=28 villages, Village profile=352 villages)

The MRC Indicator Framework (MRC IF) sets out a hierarchy of strategic and assessment indicators that are underpinned by a wide range of monitoring indicators, covering the five dimensions of sustainability (see Box). The MRC IF includes 71 assessment indicators. Together these indicators provide the information required to quantify the distribution of the benefits, costs, impacts and risks of each scenario at the appropriate level of detail. Quantification of the positive and negative (transboundary) impacts is an essential underpinning of the subsequent regional discussions and negotiations of acceptable levels of water security, risks, transboundary impacts, and benefit and cost sharing. The indicators of the MRC IF provide a solid basis for assessment under the Council Study.

Agenda Topic - Review of Follow-up Actions, Challenges, and Next Steps

What to Expect

Comments from the 3rd RTWG meeting that need follow-up actions/responses will be reviewed. Challenges, issues, and next steps (including potential corrective actions) will be discussed. **The RTWG delegates are expected to participate during the discussion and provide guidance.**

Synopsis

Difficult challenges and issues remain and need to be overcome for the Council Study to be completed by March 2016 with all technical tasks completed by December 2015 (as per original schedule). These challenges and issues and potential corrective actions will be discussed.

The challenges are related to the triple constraints of project management: scope/quality, time, and budget. There is still significant uncertainty in the scope (e.g., related to baseline and development scenarios) and achieving agreements on the baseline and development scenarios will greatly reduce these scope uncertainties. The Council Study Team is required to be agile and flexible to make the necessary work adjustments to account for new and more detailed information as they become available and that in the process of making these adjustments, the quality of services and deliverables are not compromised. The compressed implementation schedule (i.e., one year instead of two years) is not compatible with the existing work load commitments of the Programmes and may collide with the objective of keeping the process open, transparent, and participatory with Member Countries. The total budget required by the Council Study remains not immediately available and Development Partners are reluctant to make funding commitments to the Council Study until they are convinced that there is a clear and definitive plan including seeing significant progress.

During the 3rd RTWG meeting, several comments that need further actions/responses were raised by the MCs. The table below summarizes these comments (taken from 3rd RTWG Meeting Notes) and status updates/responses to date.

Response/Status Update
Comments of the 3rd RTWG Meeting on the Council Study (on 14 November 2014) that
Required Further Actions/Response
Response Version: 3 March 2015

Number	Comments	Response/Status Update
II.2	<p>Question was raised by TNMC delegate on how the CS and MDS can be synergized as TNMC always and remains considered that the two studies are intended to be independent?</p> <p>Cambodia shared similar view that the two studies should be kept independent.</p>	<p>The CEO referred to the statement made at the 2nd MRC Summit in Ho Chi Minh in April 2014 where the leaders made commitment to moving forward with the two studies and the MRCS is to ensure coordination between the studies. However, there is no commitment to working together and sharing information for a joint study.</p> <p>Therefore, the two studies will remain independent. Any opportunities to use share data, information, tools and/or models (for the benefit</p>

	<p>Lao PDR noted that it will be difficult to synergize the two studies given the short time.</p> <p>Thailand reiterated her reservation on final conclusion on the synergies between the CS and the MDS and expressed remaining concerns about some parts of the Work Plans that need to be worked on.</p> <p>The CEO stated that identifying synergies between the two studies has been supported by the Joint Committee (JC). Note: TNMC has a reservation and does not agree with this text/statement. Where is the evidence to support this statement?</p>	<p>of the CS) will need to be reviewed and approved by the RTWG before they are implemented.</p>
<p>II.7</p>	<p>Lao PDR sought clarification on how existing methods for water quality monitoring and ecological monitoring can be used to collect the data within short time frames.</p>	<p>The Council Study will primarily use existing data (hydrologic, water quality, biological, socio-economic, etc.) collected by existing methods. There is no plan to collect additional data specifically for the Council Study.</p>
<p>II.8</p>	<p>Thailand wished to remind the meeting that the RTWG shall consider the lessons learned on the implementation of DRIFT from the previous work of EP under the IBFM activities and the purpose of the study is to quantify the transboundary impacts. It is imperative to select the methods for the implementations of the Study in the context that internal capacity is limited. Another challenge noted by Thailand is how to bridge the knowledge gaps, and noted that there is a need to look at other component in the time series data and not only hydro-biological information.</p>	<p>The Council Study Biological Resources Assessment Team prepared a Working Paper entitled “Comparing the Current DRIFT Version for the Council Study from the IBFM Predictive Tool Based on an Early Version of DRIFT” on January 2015 in an effort to partly address this comment from the RTWG and consider lessons learned from IBFM. The Working Paper (which can be downloaded from the Council Study Web Site http://www.mrcmekong.org/highlights/council-study-team-site/) describes how the current version of DRIFT addresses the comments raised by MRC/Halcrow (2009) during their review of the IBFM Predictive Tool. The review was conducted as part of the Basin-wide Modelling Support and Capacity Building for the MRC (Contract: # 056 – 2008 - Work Package 006; MRC/Halcrow 2009).</p> <p>Enhancements anticipated include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confidence in the underlying driving forces of change in the ecosystem will be higher due to the use of better models (IKMP DSF-WUP/FIN modelling approach for the Council Study) and improved data

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biological indicators will be linked to a wide range of other indicators in addition to hydrology - Biota in the Delta will be considered (IBFM only considered physical impacts) <p>In addition, site selection during the preparatory meetings for the field visit will be guided by the need to understand transboundary impacts. The expert group of the Biological Resource Assessment Team was also requested to refer to the IBFM reports in preparing their discipline indicators.</p> <p>With respect to the capacity of implementing the methodology, IKMPs internal capacity on the MRC DSF toolbox will be supplemented by external capacity for WUP-FIN model and DRIFT. Likewise, existing internal capacity for performing social and economic assessments (BDP, MRC socio-economic expert group) will be supplement by consultants as planned.</p>
II.9	<p>MCs need to see the formulated development scenarios and how they are linked with the BDS.</p> <p>MCs expressed need to select an early baseline to capture the fact that some countries are still under-develop relative to others.</p>	<p>Comments were addressed in the Concept Note – Formulation of Development Scenarios and Baselines for the Council Study</p>
II.10	<p>TNMC strongly recommended that national consultation activities for other MRCS Programmes shall include the CS in their agendas.</p>	<p>MRC Programmes are planning to include providing updates of their activities related to the Council Study during Programme National Consultations especially in disseminating and discussing results of the assessments.</p>
II.10	<p>MCs requested information on how progress, including deliverables, will be monitored in the CS and clarity on the role of the NMCs in this monitoring (i.e., check IBFM experience). There is a lack of monitoring mechanism to monitor inputs and outcomes.</p> <p>Viet Nam noted the importance of a strong monitoring mechanism for progress and suggested for the CS to have a criteria for M&E. It was also suggested that the roles and</p>	<p>Process to be determined and further input and discussion needed.</p> <p>The MRCS Council Study Coordinating Group was established and had been meeting on a monthly basis not to coordinate activities but also for periodic progress reporting and monitoring.</p>

	responsibilities of the National Committees for monitoring be revised.	
II.10	<p>Thailand reiterated their comment made during the Start-up Workshop that additional details are required in the work plans of the various CS teams especially with respect to the use of the international and regional consultants, and integration of the CS activities into existing MRC programmes/projects activities and schedules, e.g.:</p> <p>BDP's role in formulation of development scenarios and modeling activities.</p> <p>BDP's deliberations with respect to the socio-economic and macroeconomic assessments (cost-benefit sharing, in particular sharing of cost of dealing with transboundary environmental impacts associated with developments).</p> <p>EP's role in the Biological Resources Assessment.</p> <p>IKMP's capacity to handle the modeling, in terms of time available and technical skills as well as the capacity building activities for the NMCs modeling teams.</p>	<p>Work plans of the thematic and discipline teams will continuously be refined as more information becomes available and decisions made (e.g., number of scenarios).</p> <p>The Cumulative Assessment Team (led by BDP) as planned is leading the formulation of development scenarios</p> <p>Organizational adjustments will be proposed during the 4th RTWG meeting in which BDP is proposed to lead the socio-economic discipline team and the macro-economic discipline team to take advantage of their expertise and experience in similar studies. EP will continue to support the socio-economic discipline team and TCU (in coordination with BDP) will continue to directly manage the macro-economic consultant who is scoping the macro-economic assessment.</p> <p>EP's staff (fish biologist and water quality specialist) are now members off the Bioresource Assessment Team</p> <p>The TACT-approved modeling approach involves the use of additional external modeling expert resources and capacity from the WUP-FIN Team for the Council Study. IKMP committed that full support on modeling work for Council Study will be the first priority for 2015 Programme implementation.</p>
II.10	Thailand suggested for each Programme to develop a concise list (i.e. framework) of Programme activities that will help the MCs understand the activities better.	Programmes have added activities related to the Council Study in their annual work plans. As to the development of a concise list of Programme activities, this will be determined as per additional discussion and input from the Programmes.
II.10	Thailand suggested that literature reviews in the CS should include information on the source of the literature cited: MRCS, Member Countries, and external organizations.	Completed. The Literature Review Report (31 March 2014) sorts the references by source (External Publications vs. MRC publications). The Council Study Web Site (password-protected Team Site) includes a link to the Literature Review Report and separate lists of references for external publications and MRC publications.
II.11	On national consultations, Thailand was not insisting on having quarterly national consultations. This, however, will depend on how far and how effective the team can move with disseminating the information to the MCs.	The overall schedule reflects tentative dates when national consultations are scheduled. These national consultations are primarily intended for the MCs (i.e., line agencies) and as per request of the MCs. However, specific national consultations targeted to discuss specific important topics (i.e., related to formulation of scenarios tentatively in

		<p>May 2015) will be initiated by MRCS.</p> <p>In addition to RTWG meetings, national consultations, and regional stakeholder meetings, the following mechanisms are expected to improve the effectiveness of disseminating information to MCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council Study Web Site - Coordinating Group Monthly Meeting (to systematically and proactively identify issues to share with the MCs) - Weekly Senior Staff Meeting (with Council Study weekly progress on top of the agenda to again systematically and proactively identify issues to share with the MCs) <p>In addition, briefing materials for the RTWG meetings will be prepared and submitted to MCs in advance of the meeting.</p>
II.11	<p>Viet Nam asked how MRCS can support the setting up of national working group for the CS and what is the framework for sectoral/thematic coordination? It was noted that coordination between sectors/thematic areas is important especially when one theme impacts another.</p>	<p>To be determined and further input and discussion needed</p>
II.13	<p>Thailand suggested to organize a special TACT meeting in December to discuss models for use in the CS. TACT therefore shall recommend the way forward for the CS.</p>	<p>Completed. The proposed modeling approach for the Council Study was approved by TACT during the 10th IKMP Meeting on 3-4 February 2015</p>
Post Meeting	<p>LNMC does not agree with the current staffing plan for the Biological Resources Assessment Team which includes only the FP Programme. We propose that this team be managed, coordinated and implemented with participation from different Programmes</p>	<p>The Biological Resource Assessment Discipline Team now includes two staff from EP (fish biologist and water quality specialist). The fish biologist will serve as a member of the expert group of the Biological Resources Assessment Team.</p>
Post Meeting	<p>The number of proposed activities and experts for the biological resources assessment is too many. Some activities are not necessary and not realistic within the timeframe for the council study (15 Month only). LNMC suggests to replace biodiversity survey</p>	<p>The staffing plan of the Bioresources Assessment Team has been revised to address this comment and reduce the number of consultants needed. The work plan is being continuously reviewed and revised as more detailed information becomes available.</p>

	with ecological health if possible.	The Council Study Team will consider the suggestion to replace biodiversity survey with ecological health but additional input and discussion is needed.
Post Meeting	Why "mining" is included in the thematic "agriculture and land use"? Normally it should be a specific theme because mining creates a lot of negative impacts and this is a highly sensitive issue.	Mining is not a separate thematic area but is recognized as an important activity that will be considered for assessment. Sand mining is also included as an important activity in the Domestic and Industrial Water Use Thematic Area.
Post Meeting	How the countries can be involved in the process because this is important for us and need to know how to prepare ourselves to contribute and participate efficiently.	<p>Same answer to a similar question in II.11</p> <p>The overall schedule reflects tentative dates when national consultations are scheduled. These national consultations are primarily intended for the MCs (i.e., line agencies) and as per request of the MCs. However, specific national consultations targeted to discuss specific important topics (i.e., related to formulation of scenarios tentatively in May 2015) will be initiated by MRCS.</p> <p>In addition to RTWG meetings, national consultations, and regional stakeholder meetings, the following mechanisms are expected to improve the effectiveness of disseminating information to MCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council Study Web Site - Coordinating Group Monthly Meeting (to systematically and proactively identify issues to share with the MCs) - Weekly Senior Staff Meeting (with Council Study weekly progress on top of the agenda to again systematically and proactively identify issues to share with the MCs) <p>In addition, briefing materials for the RTWG meetings will be prepared and submitted to MCs in advance of the meeting.</p>
Post Meeting	When we look at attachment 1 on compilation of Work Plans and Staffing Plans, It seems like thematic and discipline teams should not be paid by using Programme or Council budget since all of staff who has name on the list in attachment are staff who work for MRCS already. Therefore, their payment should be in-kind as their salary, for Example: In Work Plan of Hydrologic assessment, the Budget	Existing Programme personnel are Programmes as in-kind contribution for the Council study. Programme and Council Study budgets shown in the Budget Table are intended to cover consultants. The Budget Table has also been revised to make the corrections as well as part of the effort to revise/refine the work plan and the staffing plan.

	Table shows the Programme has to pay additional money (about USD 806,000) to technical support staff who already work under MRC IKMP Programme	
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