

**SUMMARY
OF
MINUTES OF THE TWENTY- SIXTH MEETING OF
THE MRC COUNCIL
(SESSION 1)**

**MEKONG RIVER COMMISSION
26 November 2019 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

GENERAL

1. The MRC Council held its Twenty-Sixth Meeting (hereinafter referred to as “The Meeting”) on 26 November 2019 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The proposed Programme and Agendas covered the following items:

- Approval of the Drought Management Strategy 2020-2025 by the MRC Council
- Achievement of the M-IWRM Joint Projects and its closure

2. Session 1 of the Meeting was followed by a Session 2 of the MRC Council with the Twenty-Fourth Development Partner Consultative Group Meeting on the same date, 26 November 2019, at which other strategic matters were discussed.

3. A separate Draft Minutes will be prepared for Session 2, the Joint Meeting with the Twenty-Fourth MRC Development Partner Consultative Group Meeting. On 25 November 2019, Members of the MRC JC held a Preparatory Meeting to review the draft agenda and discuss issues of mutual concern prior to the Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the MRC Council on 26 November 2019. On the morning of 26 November 2019, the Council held a Private Session to discuss matters of mutual interest prior to the Plenary Session.

4. The Meeting was opened and chaired by **H.E. Mr. Lim Kean Hor**, Minister of Water Resources and Meteorology, Chairman of Cambodia National Mekong Committee, Member of the MRC Council for Cambodia, Chairperson of the MRC Council for 2019.

5. The Meeting was attended by 77 participants, including Delegates from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam and professional and support staff from the MRC Secretariat (the Secretariat) (**Appendix No. 1.2: List of Participants**).

6. The MRC Secretariat with the assistance of the Cambodia National Mekong Committee (CNMC) provided logistics and other related support to the Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the MRC Council.

OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE MRC COUNCIL FOR 2019

7. The Chairperson expressed warm welcome and sincere thanks and appreciation to all Council Members for their effective support and assistance provided to him over the past year and joined the other Council fellows in applauding the MRC for the key milestones made in implementing the strategic priorities set out in the Siem Reap Declaration of the Third MRC Summit. The Chairperson went on to highlight drought issue which is one of the most important work of the MRC, recently becoming an emerging issue and talk among the MRC community, re-iterating the importance of the exercise the MRCS has been working on among the MRC itself and with China to conduct a Joint Study on the possible causes and impacts as well as mitigation measures to deal with its negative impacts on the region. As a key to tackling the issue in the long run, the Chairperson encouraged all the Delegates to provide their best insights, advice and approval for the Drought Management Strategy 2020-2025. The Chairperson informed the Meeting of another important work of the MRC put forward for our information and guidance today, which is the achievement of the M-IWRM Joint Projects and its closure. Before opening, the Chairperson

thanked the MRC Secretariat and CNMC Secretariat for all their cooperative efforts in arranging this Meeting and wished the Meeting a great success.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

8. The Chairperson sought consideration for adoption from the floor on the Agenda for the Meeting. The Agenda was adopted as proposed (Appendix No.1.1: Agenda).

A. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

A.1 Approval of the Drought Management Strategy, 2020-2025 by the MRC Council

9. The Secretariat reported on the status of the discussions of the Drought Management Strategy (DMS), especially its endorsement the day before by the Joint Committee and sought approval of the MRC Council on the mentioned DMS 2020-2025.

10. The MRC Council approved the DMS 2020-2025 and requested the MRC Secretariat to move forward and prepare the action plan for implementation effectively and in a timely manner to deal with the impacts caused by the Drought condition at present and in the future.

B. Matters for Information

B.1 Achievement of the M-IWRM Joint Projects and its closure

11. The Secretariat provided the Meeting with an overview of the project including its key events timelines, achievements and key outputs, its expenditures as of September 2019 and ways forward including the following: 1) Additional financial support is sought to support this critical activity by the MRC and NMCs to implement the outputs of the M-IWRMP, 2) M-IWRM Project closing workshop to be conducted on 29 November 2019 in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, and 3) Project implementation completion report to be completed in Dec 2019. Details were reported in the briefing note B.1.

12. The Meeting took note with appreciation of achievement of the M-IWRM Joint Projects and its closure, requesting the MRC Secretariat to maintain the tangible results of the Projects and move forward with its fund-raising and up-taking in the next phase.