



Mekong²River Commission

For Sustainable Development

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. CONSULTANCY SUMMARY:

Title	Consultancy for the Preparation of the 2025 Water Quality Report of the Lower Mekong Basin
Consultancy/Staff Type	Special Service Agreement (SSA), type (B) One-time assignment
Division	Environmental Management Division (ED)
Duration	28 working days from 1 September 2026 to 15 December 2026
Duty Station	Home-based
Reporting to	The consultant will work under the overall supervision of the Director of ED and under the direct supervision of the Chief Environmental Management Officer, in close consultation with the MRCS ED Water Quality Officer
Expected Deliverables of this additional deliverables)	Key ToR for detailed Completion report of 2025 Water Quality; Presentations of the 2025 Water Quality report.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

The Mekong River Commission (MRC) Member Countries adopted the Procedures for Water Quality (PWQ) in 2011 to support the protection and sustainable management of water quality in the Mekong River Basin. To facilitate implementation of the PWQ, the Technical Guidelines for the Implementation of the Procedures for Water Quality (TGWQ) were subsequently developed through technical cooperation among Member Countries.

Under Part A of the TGWQ, the implementation of routine water quality monitoring activities has progressed through established monitoring programmes as one of the Mekong River Commission (MRC) Core River Basin Monitoring Network (CRMN). The Water Quality Monitoring Network (WQMN) has provided valuable long-term data and information to support basin-wide assessment of environmental conditions and spatiotemporal changes in water quality and served as a key mechanism for assessing the achievement of the PWQ objective of maintaining “acceptable/good” water quality in the Mekong River, as well as for reporting water quality conditions in the Lower Mekong River Basin (LMB) through the State of the Basin reports

In 2025, the redesigned CRMN-WQMN, which was approved in the Joint Committee preparatory Meeting of the 29th Council Meeting on 23 November 2022, started implementing. The redesigned CRMN-WQMN has ensured its implementation process through the MRC annual or multi-year work plan.

In this regard, annually reporting the water quality remains important to maintain the integrity and value of WQMN, as well as to inform decision makers on the status of the Mekong River and its tributaries. Therefore, the engagement of a consultant for preparing the 2025 water quality report of LMB will ensure that such information is distributed in a timely manner.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY:

The objectives of this consultancy are to:

- Compile and validate water quality monitoring data collected under the Core River Basin Monitoring Network – Water Quality Monitoring Network (CRMN-WQMN) for 2025.
- Analyse the status and spatial-temporal trends of key water quality parameters in the Lower Mekong Basin, including the Mekong mainstream and selected tributaries.
- Assess water quality conditions against the objectives and indicators defined under the Procedures for Water Quality (PWQ) and the Technical Guidelines for the Implementation of the Procedures for Water Quality (TGWQ).
- Identify significant water quality issues, emerging concerns, and notable changes in water quality conditions observed during 2025.
- Prepare the 2025 Water Quality Report and its relevant presentations, including data analysis, interpretation of results, maps, figures, and technical narratives, and information on water quality conditions to support decision-making, basin planning, and sustainable water resources management in the Lower Mekong Basin.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

The Consultant shall undertake the following tasks:

Task 1: Data Compilation and Validation

- Compile the 2025 water quality monitoring data generated through the Core River Basin Monitoring Network – Water Quality Monitoring Network (CRMN-WQMN).
- Review the completeness, consistency, and quality of the monitoring data.
- Identify any data gaps, anomalies, or inconsistencies.
- Coordinate with MRCS technical staff to verify and validate datasets prior to analysis.

Task 2: Water Quality Assessment and Analysis

- Analyse key physical, chemical, and biological water quality parameters monitored under the CRMN-WQMN.
- Assess spatial and temporal variations in water quality conditions across monitoring stations in the Lower Mekong Basin.
- Compare 2025 monitoring results with historical data and identify significant trends and changes in water quality conditions.
- Evaluate water quality conditions against the objectives, indicators, and assessment criteria established under the TGWQ.

Task 3: Identification of Key Water Quality Issues

- Identify significant water quality issues, hotspots, and emerging concerns observed during 2025.
- Assess potential drivers of observed water quality changes, where relevant and supported by available information.
- Summarize key findings and implications for water quality management in the Lower Mekong Basin.

Task 4: Preparation of the 2025 Water Quality Report

- Develop the structure and content of the 2025 Water Quality Report.
- Prepare maps, tables, graphs, and other visual materials to support the presentation of findings.
- Draft technical narratives, analyses, and conclusions based on the monitoring results.
- Incorporate comments and inputs received from MRCS and Member Countries into the report.
- Prepare presentation materials summarizing the key findings of the 2025 Water Quality Report.
- Revise and finalize the report according to feedback from MCs in the regional workshop.

5. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The consultancy is expected to produce the following outputs:

- Inception report and detailed work plan;
- Capacity building programme and training materials.
- Communication workflows and operational flowcharts for different emergency scenarios;
- Standard communication templates and reporting formats;
- Delivery of regional and national training sessions and simulation exercises; and
- Final consultancy report consolidating all outputs and recommendations.

6. DELIVERABLES AND CONCRETE TIMELINES:

A tentative schedule of key deliverables is provided below. The exact schedule will depend on the timing of the contracting with the successful consultant, but it is anticipated that the assignment will commence on 1 June 2026 and continue through 31 December 2026.

No.	Deliverables and expected quality	Number of days	Deadline
1.	Inception note outlining the methodology, workplan, and reporting schedule.	3	5 September 2026
2.	Draft 2025 Water Quality Report.	20	10 October 2026
3.	Presentation materials on the key findings of the report	3	15 October 2026

No.	Deliverables and expected quality	Number of days	Deadline
4.	Final 2025 Water Quality Report incorporating comments from MRCS and Member Countries.	2	30 November 2026
	Total number of days	28	

7. REQUIRED TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Consultant will be responsible for:

- Review relevant MRC documents, including the Procedures for PWQ and TGWQ, previous Water Quality Reports, and other relevant technical references.
- Compile, organize, and validate the 2025 water quality monitoring data generated through the CRMN-WQMN.
- Conduct statistical and technical analyses of water quality data, including assessments of spatial distribution, temporal variation, and long-term trends of key water quality parameters.
- Assess water quality conditions against the PWQ objectives, indicators, and assessment criteria, and evaluate the overall status of water quality in the Lower Mekong Basin.
- Identify significant water quality issues, emerging concerns, and notable changes in water quality conditions observed during 2025, and provide technical interpretations of the findings.
- Prepare maps, charts, graphs, tables, and other visual products to support the analysis and presentation of water quality information.
- Draft the 2025 Water Quality Report, including methodology, data analysis, assessment results, key findings, conclusions, and recommendations, in accordance with MRC reporting standards and formats.
- Liaise with MRCS technical staff to obtain additional information, clarify technical issues, and ensure the accuracy and consistency of the report.
- Prepare presentation materials and technical summaries highlighting the key findings of the 2025 Water Quality Report.
- Revise and finalize the 2025 Water Quality Report based on comments provided by MRCS and Member Countries.
- Submit all datasets, analysis files, figures, presentation materials, and finalized report.

8. PAYMENT MODALITY:

Payment will be made in instalments as follows:

- 40% upon signing the contract;
- 40% upon submission of deliverables No. 1-3; and
- 20% upon submission and acceptance of the final report (Deliverables No. 4).

Note: Consultancy rate is defined by the MRCS consultancy rate policy and the level of consultancy. MRC is a tax-exempted agency for the work done for the MRC. Consultant, in case mission is required, will be covered with a return ticket to and from the assigned duty stations with a daily related subsistence allowance of 75% of the UN for the mission days.

9. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR):

Intellectual property rights -IPR: Information, data, database, knowledge resources in the forms of briefings, reports, proceedings, articles, essays, etc. issued by and for the MRCS will be the MRCS property.

Any utility, announcement and disclosure that are without MRCS highest levels of authority' permission is considered illegal and will be charged by relevant local and international legal procedures.

10. WORKING ARRANGEMENT:

Reporting Line:	The Consultant will work under the overall supervision of the Director of ED.
Communication Line:	The Consultant shall maintain close coordination with the MRCS Environmental Management Division, particularly the Chief Environmental Management Officer and Water Quality Officer, throughout the assignment.
Work Station:	Home-based with possible travel to MRC Secretariat and MRC Member Countries (MCs)

11. QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

The Consultant should possess the following qualifications and experience:

- Advanced university degree (Master's degree or higher) in environmental management, water quality management, environmental engineering, environmental sciences, environmental chemistry, or related fields;
- At least 7 years of experience in the field of water quality monitoring and management, water quality assessment, water quality analysis, or related fields;
- Strong knowledge of water quality monitoring programmes, water quality indicators, and environmental assessment methodologies.
- Proficiency in data analysis and visualization tools, including Microsoft Excel and relevant statistical (e.g., SPSS) or GIS software.
- Strong analytical and report-writing skills;

- Experience in writing scientific reports and scientific papers;
- Familiarity with the Lower Mekong Basin context and MRC frameworks would be an advantage;
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and deliver high-quality outputs within agreed timelines.
- Excellent command of written and spoken English.

12. SIGNATURE BLOCK:

MRCS:

Consultant:

Full Name: Theerawat Samphawamana

Incumbent's Full Name:

Title: Director of Environmental Management

Signature: _____

Incumbent's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____