

### ‘Enhancing Joint Efforts and Partnerships towards Achievement of the SDGs in the Mekong River Basin’

**Conference master of ceremony and coordinator:** Dr. Anoulak Kittikhoun, Chief Strategy & Partnership Officer, Mekong River Commission Secretariat (MRCS), with support from Mr. Santi Baran, MRCS and Ms. Denise Staubli, MRCS/SDC

**Conference facilitator:** Prof. David Grey, Oxford & Tsinghua Universities and former Senior Water Advisor, World Bank

#### DAY 1 - APRIL 2

7.30 Registration

#### WELCOME SESSION

8.15 **Welcome remarks (5’)** by H.E. Mr. Khim Bun Song, Governor, Siem Reap  
**Message about the International Conference (5’)** by Dr. Pham Tuan Phan, Chief Executive Officer, MRC  
**Opening statement (10’)** by H.E. Mr. Lim Kean Hor, MRC Council Member for Cambodia and Minister of Water Resources and Meteorology

8.45 **Conference objectives and structure (5’)** by Conference coordinator and facilitator

8.50 **Significant achievements, developments, opportunities and challenges for the MRC and Mekong in the last four years (15’)** by Prof. David Grey, Oxford & Tsinghua Universities and former Senior Water Advisor, World Bank

9.10 **Coffee break** \***Brief tour of Conference Exhibition by Minister, Governor, JC Chair and CEO\***

#### OPENING SESSION: MEKONG DEVELOPMENTS, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Chair: H.E. Mr. Te Navuth, Chair of the MRC Joint Committee

MRCS rapporteur: Ms. Duong Hai Nhu, MRCS

9.40 **Reflection from a panel of senior government officials of the Mekong River Basin countries (30’)**

- *H.E. Mr. Te Navuth, Secretary General of the Cambodia National Mekong Committee and Chair of the MRC Joint Committee, Cambodia*
- *Dr. Inthavy Akkharath, Director General, Department of Water Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Lao PDR*
- *Mr. Worasart Apaipong, Director General, Department of Water Resources, and Secretary General, Thai National Mekong Committee, Thailand*
- *Dr. Le Duc Trung, Director General of the Viet Nam National Mekong Committee, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Viet Nam*
- *Mr. Li Hong, Permanent Representative of China to ESCAP and focal point for MRC, China*
- *Dr. Pham Tuan Phan, Chief Executive Officer, MRC*

10.20 **Keynote 1: A matter of survival – Vision for water cooperation from the Chairman of the Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace (15’)** by H.E. Dr. Danilo Türk, Chair of Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace and former President of Slovenia and former Assistant Secretary General, United Nations Department of Political Affairs

10.40 **Keynote 2: Achieving the SDGs in a transboundary river basin through joint efforts and partnerships – International experiences, and opportunities for the Mekong basin (15’)** by Mr. Takuya Kamata, Practice Manager, Global Water Practice, World Bank

11.00 **Keynote 3: Lancang-Mekong Cooperation and Mekong River Commission – Opportunities, synergies and collaboration for the sustainable development and management of the whole Lancang-Mekong Basin (15’)** by Dr. Zhong Yong, Secretary-General of the Lancang-Mekong Water Resources Cooperation Center

11.20 **Keynote 4: MRC’s achievements and efforts in addressing Mekong opportunities and challenges towards achieving the SDGs (15’)** by Dr. Anoulak Kittikhoun, Chief Strategy and Partnership Officer, MRCS

11.40 Q&A and discussion (20’)

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12.00 Introduction to Session 1 by Conference facilitator

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12.10 Lunch

### SESSION 1: FROM ASSESSMENTS TO ACTIONS

#### Session 1a: Optimizing regional benefits and minimizing adverse impacts

Chair: Dr. Naruepon Sukumasavin, Director of Administration, MRCS

Session 1a facilitators: Ms. Thi Thanh Yen Ton Nu, Navigation Specialist, MRCS, and Dr. John Dore, Senior Water Expert, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

MRCS rapporteurs: Mr. Rattkone Sayasanem, MRCS, and Ms. Chamaporn Paiboonvorachat, MRCS

#### Session 1b: Addressing climate change, drought and flood

Chair: Mr. Bountieng Sanaxonh, Director of Technical Support, MRCS

Session 1b facilitators: Dr. Janejira Chuthong, Chief Hydrologist, MRCS, and, Ms. Maria Koenig, MRC-GIZ Advisor

MRCS rapporteurs: Dr. Sothea Khem, MRCS, and Dr. Anne Chaponniere, MRC-GIZ Advisor

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13.15 Introduction by Session 1a chair

Introduction by Session 1b chair

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13.20 **Latest Basin-wide impact assessments: the MRC Council Study and others**

**Mekong sediments (10')** by Ms. Sopheap Lim, Modeller, MRCS

**Environmental impacts of water resources development (10')** by Dr. So Nam, Chief Environment Management Officer, MRCS

**Social, economic and cumulative impact assessment of water resources development (10')** by Ms. Nguyen Thi Ngoc Minh, Socio-Economic Specialist, MRCS

#### Questions and Answers (15')

**Lancang-Mekong Development Plan Environmental Study – Findings and conclusions (10')** by Dr. Jeremy Carew-Reid, Director General, International Center for Environment Management (ICEM)

**Lancang-Mekong navigation plans – Perception and reality (10')** by Mr. Jacques Dezeure, Waterway Expert

**Nam Kong – Forgotten river of Myanmar and future international navigation improvement (10')** by Mr. Win Naing Tun, Director and Principal Consultant, Myanmar Environment Institute

#### Questions and Answers (15')

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**Latest climate, flood and drought assessments and actions**

**MRC assessments on floods, droughts and climate change (20')** by Mr. Oudomsack Philavong, MRCS Advisor, and Dr. Cong Nguyen Dinh, Climate Change Adaptation Specialist, MRCS

**MRC Actions on flood, drought and climate change adaptation: Joint projects, strategies and action plans (20')** by Dr. Thim Ly, Chief River Basin Planner, MRCS, and Mr. Ix Hour, Drought Technical Coordinator, MRCS

**Where does the effort go? A review of the contribution from international and regional players to flood and drought adaptation in the Mekong River Basin (10')** by Dr. Nguyen Huong Thuy Phan, Academic Coordinator and Head of SEA Region, Development Policies and Practices Executive Master Program, Graduate Institute Geneva

#### Questions and Answers (30')

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15.00 Coffee break

#### \*Poster presentations at the Conference Exhibition\*

Facilitators: Dr. Prayooth Yaowakhan, Ecosystem & Wetland Specialist, MRCS, and Dr. Dao Thi Ngoc Hoang, Water Quality Officer, MRCS

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16.00 **Reflection and implications of the MRC Council Study and others**

**Reflection on MRC Council Study Reports (15')** by Dr. Zhiliang Zhu, United States Geological Survey (USGS)

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**Good experiences and innovations from other partners/basins**

**The ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre – A regional collaboration for improved weather and climate services in Southeast Asia (10')** by Dr. Thea

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[Reflection on MRC Council Study: An assessment of the results and conclusions of selected reports \(15'\)](#) by Dr. Chayanis Krittasudthacheewa, Deputy Director & SUMERNET Programme Manager, Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) Asia Center, Bangkok, Thailand

[Uptaking the Council Study in the MRC work: High-level dissemination, State of Basin Report, Sustainable Hydropower Development Strategy \(20'\)](#) by Mr. Suthy Heng, Regional Technical Advisor, MRCS, and Mr. Palakorn Chanbanyong, Sustainable Hydropower Specialist, MRCS

#### **Facilitated panel-participant discussion (50')**

- *H.E. Mr. Watt Botkosol, Deputy Secretary General, Cambodia National Mekong Committee, Cambodia*
- *Dr. Inthavy Akkharath, Director General, Department of Water Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Lao PDR*
- *Dr. Wenling Wang, Yunnan University, China*
- *Mr. Gary Lee, Partnerships and Policy Advisor, Mekong Regional Water Governance Program, Oxfam*
- *Dr. Michael Roy, Senior Technical Advisor, Smart Infrastructure Program, Department of the Interior, United States*
- *Dr. Dao Trong Tu, Deputy Director, Centre for Sustainable Water Resources Development and Adaptation to Climate Change (CEWAREC), Viet Nam*

Turkington, Research Scientist, Centre for Climate Research, Meteorological Service Singapore

[Robust adaptation strategies to address a +4C world \(10'\)](#) by Mr. Niall O'Connor, Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) Asia Center, Bangkok, Thailand

[Flood forecast of Han River Flood Control Office \(10'\)](#) by Dr. Ji Youn Sung, Han River Flood Control Office, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, Republic of Korea

[Using flood-based livelihoods to restore the flood retention ecosystem function of the Mekong Delta, Vietnam \(10'\)](#) by Dr. Andrew Wyatt, Mekong Delta Program Manager, IUCN Vietnam

[Evaluation of water balance process in dry season for the rainfed areas in Thailand \(10'\)](#) by Mr. Laonamsai Jeerapong, Civil Engineer, Practitioner Level, Water Crisis Prevention Center, Department of Water Resources, Thailand

#### **Facilitated panel-participant discussion (50')**

- *Dr. Lam Hung Son, Head of Regional Flood Management and Mitigation Center, MRCS*
- *H.E. Mr. Ponh Sachak, Director General of the Technical Affairs, Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology, Cambodia*
- *Dr. Provash Mondal, Humanitarian and Resilience Manager, Oxfam Laos*
- *Dr. Muhibuddin Usamah, Project Manager, Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning System in Cambodia, United Nations Development Programme*

17.50 [Closure of Session 1a](#) by Session 1a chair

[Closure of Session 1b](#) by Session 1b chair

### **Special Session Day 1: Underlying data and information systems in the Mekong and other river basins**

Chair: Mr. Chanthanet Boualapha, Secretary General of the Lao National Mekong Committee

Special session facilitator: Dr. Henry Manguerra, Vice President, Atkins, a member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

MRCS rapporteur: Dr. Kritsana Kityuttachai, MRCS and Mr. Nuon Vanna, MRCS

16.00 [Introduction](#) by Special session chair

16.05 [Use of water monitoring information and data for Mekong Basin management and development \(10'\)](#) by Mr. Vongthasone Vilaythong, Information System and Database Specialist, MRCS, and Dr. Paradis Someth, Water & Climate Monitoring Specialist, MRCS

[Improving data for water resources management \(10'\)](#) by Mr. Suparek Janprasart, Coordinator of the LMI Sustainable Infrastructure Partnership Program, and Ms. Christy Owen, Country Director, PACT Thailand

[Integrated water resources management in K-water: Example of a drought risk management by multi-purpose dam \(10'\)](#) by Dr. Su-Hyung Jang, Principal Researcher, Water Resources Research Center, K-water Institute, Republic of Korea

[Water information systems – The art of the possible \(10'\)](#) by Prof. Robert Vertessy, former Director, Australia's Bureau of Meteorology

[Using satellite data for land and water management – Digital Earth Australia and Open Data Cubes \(10'\)](#) by Mr. Norman Mueller, Director of Product Development for Digital Earth Australia, Geosciences Australia

### Facilitated panel-participant discussion (50')

- Prof. Fuqiang Tian, Department of Water Resources and Hydropower Engineering, Tsinghua University, China
- Dr. Paradis Someth, Water & Climate Monitoring Specialist, MRCS
- Dr. Winai Wangpimool, Civil Engineer, Senior Professional Level, Bureau of International River Basin Management, Department of Water Resources, Thailand
- Dr. Nguyen Anh Duc, Senior Officer, Viet Nam National Mekong Committee
- Ms. Siv Vatana, Editor-Researcher, Open Development Cambodia (ODC)

17.50 Closure of Special Session by Special session chair

## CLOSURE OF DAY 1

18.00-19.00 Reception and cocktails hosted by the Chairman of the MRC Joint Committee for the participants of the International Conference

### DAY 2 - APRIL 3

08.30 Opening of Day 2 with the expectations for Day 2 by Conference facilitator

8.40 Statement (10') by Ms. Tiziana Bonapace, Director, Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, UN ESCAP

8.55 Statement (10') by Ms. Simonetta Siligato, Senior Advisor to the Regional Director, UNOPS Asia

#### Wrap-up of session 1

9.10 Report from Session 1a (10') by Session 1a facilitator  
Report from Session 1b (10') by Session 1b facilitator  
Report from Special Session Day 1 (10') by Special session facilitator  
Questions, additions, comments (15')

10.00 Coffee break **\*MoA Signing Ceremony with UN ESCAP\***

### SESSION 2: STRENGTHENING MANAGEMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION REGIMES

#### Session 2a: Monitoring and management of development projects in the Mekong and other basins

Chair: Mr. Worasart Apaipong, Director General, Department of Water Resources, Thailand

Session 2a facilitators: Dr. So Nam, Chief Environment Management Officer, MRCS and Ms. Duong Hai Nhu, Stakeholder Specialist, MRCS

MRCS rapporteurs: Ms. Nguyen Thi Ngoc Minh, MRCS and Dr. Prayooth Yaowakhan, MRCS

#### Session 2b: Strengthening Mekong cooperation and partnerships

Chair: Ms. Nguyen Hong Phuong, Deputy Director General of the Viet Nam National Mekong Committee

Session 2b facilitators: Dr. Anoulak Kittikhoun, Chief Strategy & Partnership Officer, MRCS, Prof. Richard Paisley, University of British Columbia and UN Expert on transboundary water management, and Prof. David Grey, Oxford & Tsinghua Universities and former Senior Water Advisor, World Bank

MRCS rapporteurs: Dr. Thim Ly, MRCS and Dr. Piriya Uraiwong, MRCS

10.30 Introduction by Session 2a chair

Introduction by Session 2b chair

#### 10.35 Procedures, guidelines and standards

The five MRC water utilisation procedures: A sound basis for water diplomacy and transboundary water management and cooperation (10') by Dr. An Pich Hatda, Director of Planning, MRCS

Sustainable development of multipurpose projects in the Mekong and Rhone Basins (10') by Mr. Jérôme Mentre, Project Manager, CNR representative in Viet Nam, CNR France

#### Legal foundation of cooperation

Strengthening the 1995 Mekong Agreement (10') by Dr. Pham Tuan Phan, CEO, MRC

Benefits and challenges for the Lower Mekong countries deriving from the 1997 UN Watercourses Convention (10') by Dr. Alejandro Iza, Director of the IUCN Environmental Law Centre, Bonn, Germany

Importance of trans-boundary impact assessment and joint monitoring in sustainable management of the Mekong River Basin (10') by Dr. Truong Hong Tien, Director of Environment Management, MRCS

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): Comparative analysis in the GMS countries and implications for SDGs (10')** by Mr. Thy Try, Executive Director, and Mr. Aliaksei Patonia, Research Intern, Open Development Cambodia

**Questions and Answers (30')**

Beyond international water law – Successfully negotiating mutual gains agreements for international watercourses (10') by Prof. Richard Paisley, University of British Columbia and UN Expert on transboundary water management

**Facilitated panel-participant discussion (50')**

- *Madame Do Hong Phan, Senior Institutional Expert, Viet Nam*
- *Mr. Kanya Khammoungkhoun, Deputy Director General, Department of International Organisation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lao PDR*
- *Dr. Marko Keskinen, Lecturer, Aalto University, Finland*
- *Mr. Voradeth Phonekeo, MRCS Advisor*

12.15 *Lunch*

13.15 **Cases**

Linkage of transboundary Mekong water governance and livelihood of community in 3S rivers in Cambodia (10') by Mr. Leang Bunleap, Executive Director, 3S Rivers Protection Network

Learning from the M-IWRM Communication Outreach between the Tonle Sap and Songkhla Lake basins (10') by H.E. Mr. Hell Tony, Secretary General, and Mr. Sin Viseth, Director of Exploitation Control and Conservation Department, Tonle Sap Authority, Cambodia

**Facilitated panel-participant discussion (50')**

- *Dr. Truong Hong Tien, Director of Environment Management, MRCS*
- *Ms. Maureen Harris, Southeast Asia Program Director, International Rivers*
- *Ms. Nguyen Thi Hong Van, National Coordinator of Vietnam Rivers Network (VRN)*
- *Mr. Senglong Youk, Deputy Executive Director, Fisheries Action Coalition Team (FACT, Cambodia)*

**Collaboration with other regional mechanisms and frameworks**

Some bi- and multi-lateral institutions relating to the Mekong cooperation and recommendations to synergize (10') by Mr. Nguyen Nhan Quang, Former Director, Centre for Promotion of Integrated Water Resources Management

Views from the GMS/ADB on current and future alignment and cooperation with other regional mechanisms and the MRC (10') by Dr. Jiangfeng Zhang, Director of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Asian Development Bank, Manila

**Facilitated panel-participant discussion (50')**

- *Dr. Pham Tuan Phan, CEO, MRC*
- *Dr. Aaron Salzberg, Bureau of Oceans, Environment and Science, Department of State, US*
- *Mr. Nguyen Nhan Quang, Former Director, Centre for Promotion of Integrated Water Resources Management*
- *Dr. Zhijian Wang, Associate Professor of School of Law, Hohai University and Adjunct Professor of Hopkins-Nanjing Center*

14.50 **Closure of Session 2a** by Session 2a chair

**Closure of Session 2b** by Session 2b chair

### **Special Session Day 2: Integrated water and energy planning – Pathways for sustainable hydropower and other renewables**

Chair: H.E. Mr. Te Navuth, Secretary General of the Cambodia National Mekong Committee

Special session facilitator: Mr. Simon Krohn, MRCS Advisor

MRCS rapporteurs: Mr. Palakorn Chanbanyong, MRCS and Dr. Phattareeya Suanrattanachai, MRCS

13.15 **Introduction** by Special session chair

13.20 **Changing dynamics of power trade in South Asia: Implications for hydropower development (10')** by Dr. Sagar Prasai, Country Representative, the Asia Foundation, India

**Repositioning hydro operations and electricity supply in a dynamic energy sector (10')** by Mr. James E Mason, International Business Development Manager, Entura-Hydro Tasmania

**Southern African power pool – Cross-border partnership in planning and operation (10')** by Mr. William Derbyshire, Director for Asia, Economic Consulting Associates (ECA)

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Enhancing regional water cooperation through clean energy transition (10') by Mr. Brian Eyler, Director Southeast Asia Program, Stimson Center and Mr. Jake Brunner, Head of Indo-Burma Group, IUCN

Sustainable hydropower development alternatives for the Mekong: Maintaining the flows that nourish life (5') by Mr. Gregory A. Thomas, Executive Director, Natural Heritage Institute

**Facilitated panel-participant discussion (40')**

- *Dr. An Pich Hatda, Director of Planning, MRCS*
- *Representative, Department of Energy Policy and Planning, Ministry of Energy and Mines, Lao PDR*
- *Mr. Pen Somony, Executive Director, Cambodian Volunteers for Society (CVS)*
- *Ms. Hyunjung Lee, Senior Energy Economist, Southeast Energy Division, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Hanoi, Viet Nam*

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14.50 Closure of Special Session by Special session chair

15.00 Coffee break **\*MoA Signing Ceremony with UNOPS\***

**Wrap-up of session 2**

15.30 Report from Parallel Session 2a (10') by Session 2a facilitator  
Report from Parallel Session 2b (10') by Session 2b facilitator  
Report from Special Session Day 2 (10') by Special session facilitator  
Questions, additions, comments (15')

**FINAL SESSION**

Chair: Dr. Pham Tuan Phan, Chief Executive Officer, Mekong River Commission

Conference facilitator

MRCS Rapporteurs: Ms. Vu Thu Hong, MRCS, and Mr. Somsanith Ninthavong, MRCS

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16.20 Key messages from the Conference to the Summit (45') by Conference facilitator

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17.10 Final thoughts 1 (10') by Ms. Gisela Hammerschmidt, Director for Asia, Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany

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Final thoughts 2 (10') by Dr. Pham Tuan Phan, Chief Executive Officer, Mekong River Commission

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Closing remarks (10') by H.E. Mr. Te Navuth, Chair of the MRC Joint Committee

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**CLOSURE OF DAY 2**

18.00 Side event (for MRC only)

**The Mekong River Commission 20/20: Looking back into the last 20 years, and vision for the next 20 years: A side event of former MRC leaders**