

M-POWER

Mekong Program on Water
Environment and Resilience



M-POWER Working Group Meeting

7-8 March 2011

Chiang Mai, Thailand

Financial support from  Sida

M-POWER PARTNERS' WORKING GROUP MEETING

Improving Water Governance in the Mekong Region

Le Meridien Hotel
Chiang Mai, Thailand

7-8 March 2011

Introduction

The M-POWER 2011 Working Group (WG) meeting will be held in Chiang Mai, Thailand from 7-8 March and will comprise both plenary sessions and working group parallel sessions.

Meeting objectives:

- to provide opportunities for collective learning, sharing and exploring governance issues throughout the Mekong region;
- to encourage and motivate participants to interact and share their experiences and research learning; and
- to design, develop and refine specific products and develop associated action plans, such as assessment tools, policy briefs, books and special issues.

The meeting is an opportunity to share our practical experiences and research findings with interested colleagues across the Mekong Region. This meeting will be focused on particular projects of the network and will involve a high degree of reflection on some of the significant engagements and discoveries of M-POWER researchers and their implications for water governance in the Mekong Region in the context of rapidly changing development.

M-POWER stands for the Mekong Program on Water, Environment and Resilience. The network brings together people committed to improving local, national and regional governance in Cambodia, China, Laos, Burma/Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

Our strategic objectives include: (1) convening, facilitating and supporting inclusive forums; (2) supporting and establishing mechanisms to better represent politically marginalized groups; (3) analyzing, proposing and promoting institutional changes; (4) synthesizing understanding about how to democratize water governance; and (5) supporting regional networks of researchers committed to critical analyses and actions to support democratizing water governance.

M-POWER convenes an annual meeting for network members and invited guests. These meetings are conducted in different locations within the Mekong Region in order to provide opportunities for membership engagement and for exploring issues throughout the region. The annual meetings encourage and motivate participants to interact and share their experiences and research learning. Meetings are utilized to design, develop and refine specific products, such as assessment tools, policy briefs, books and special issues. Past meetings were held in 2010, Phnom Penh; 2009, Kunming, China; 2008, Hanoi, Vietnam; 2007, Chiang Mai, Thailand; 2006, Chiang Mai.

Program, Day 1: Monday 7 March				
8.30-9.00	Welcome , Program overview <i>Pech Sokhem</i> , Chair, M-POWER Steering Committee			
9.00-10.30	Debate: Decision-making in the Mekong Region: What role for scientists? Advisory or Advocacy? Central or Sideshow? Moderated by <i>Dipak Gyawali</i> Panelists: Chayanis Krittasudthacheewa, Lilao Bouapao, Suon Seng, Kim Geheb, Voradeth Phonekeo Respondents: Juha Sarkkula, Nguy Thi Khanh, Surichai Wun’Gaeo, Yang Saing Koma			
10.30-11.00	Morning tea			
Session 1: Completed Projects: Sharing & Discussing Findings				
11.00-12.30	WG 1: Enhancing multi-scale Mekong water governance <i>Organiser: Louis Lebel</i>		WG 2: Improving water allocation in the Mekong Region <i>Organiser: John Dore</i>	
12.30-1.30	Lunch			
Session 2: Current Projects: Making Progress				
1.30-2.00	High-speed introduction to current projects			
2.00-3.30	WG 3: Hydropower governance and sustainability assessments <i>(Organisers: Pech Sokhem and Wu Yusong)</i>	WG 4: Exploring Mekong Region Rutures <i>(Organisers: Alex Smajgl and Lilao Bouapao)</i>	WG 5: Comparing water governance regimes: Experiences in the Twin2Go project and insights from the Mekong Region <i>(Organisers: Louis Lebel and Bach Tan Sinh)</i>	WG 6: Fellows Corner: Research Fellowship - Socially engaged research <i>(Organisers: Rajesh Daniel and Suparek Janprasart)</i>
3.30-3.45	Tea Break			
3.45-5.15	WG 7: Water governance and optimization of reservoir management <i>(Organisers: Rutmanee Ongsakul and Suon Seng)</i>	WG 8: Mekong Region modeling <i>(Organisers: Jeff Richey, Jorma Koponen and Erland Jensen)</i>	WG 9: Roundtables and multi-stakeholder platforms <i>(Organisers: Lu Xing and Kate Lazarus)</i>	WG 10: Sustainable Water Resource Use for Agriculture in the Asia Pacific <i>(Organisers: Thierry Facon and Louise Whiting)</i>
5.15-5.45	Reflections (David Hasbury + +)			
7.00	M-POWER Reception at Sangdee Gallery 5 Sirimankhalajarn soi 5 A.Muang, T. Suthep, Chiang Mai 50200 Thailand Vans depart from the Le Meridien at 6.30pm)			

Program, Day 2: Tuesday 8 March				
8.30-8.45	Reflections and Overview of Day 2 program (Chantana Wun'Gaeo)			
Session 3: Skills & Impact Pathways				
8.45-10.15	WG 11: Making your research travel: Web 2.0, strategic communication and the media (Organisers: <i>Michael Victor and Lisa Robins</i>)	WG 12: Contrasting Research Methods (Organisers: <i>Alex Smagl and Edsel Sajor</i>)	WG 13: Publishing for Impact (Organisers: <i>Xu Jianchu and Ed Grumbine</i>)	WG 14: Research engagement in the PNPCA process (Organisers: <i>Pech Sokhem</i>)
10.15-10.45	Morning tea			
Session 4: Your Bright Ideas				
10.45-11.45	Open Space: Exploring synergies and compelling ideas for future new initiatives in democratizing water governance in the Mekong (Yang Saing Koma and Suparek Janprasart) Participants will be asked to propose topics for this session and will have 60 seconds to make their case to get people to join their session. Participants can move between groups.			
11.45-12.30	Bus stops: Leads of the open space topic sessions will remain while other participants move from group to group to learn about the results of the discussions.			
12.30-1.00	Stop the Press: Sharing of reflections (Johanna Son, David Hasbury ++)			
1.00	Close & Lunch			

WG 1: Enhancing multi-scale water governance in the Mekong Region

Organisers: Louis Lebel and Ram C. Bastakoti

Chairperson: Edsel Sajor

Rapporteur: Rajesh Daniel

Background

The CPWF Project PN50 “Enhancing multi-scale water governance” was for many years a flagship activity of the M-POWER network. Its stated goal was to help improve livelihood security, human and ecosystem health in the Mekong Region through democratizing water governance. The democratization agenda was viewed broadly encompassing issues of public participation and deliberation, separation of powers, accountability of public institutions, social and gender justice, protection of rights, representation, decentralization, and the dissemination of information.

The program was pursued through critical research and direct engagement with stakeholders involved in managing fisheries, floods, irrigation, hydropower, watersheds, urban water works and integrated water management at various scales. In each policy domain we identified common, shared, problems with current patterns of governance and made suggestions on how they could be addressed.

Purpose

The purpose of this working group is two-fold. First, to quickly recap the main findings of the CPWF PN50 project that technically ended in June 2010. Second, to identify, based on these findings a few high priority areas for follow-up by M-POWER as policy actions or research.

Structure

The session will be organized in three parts of roughly equal length as follows:

In the first part Louis Lebel will give a presentation summarizing key findings of the PN50 project. This will not describe the activities carried out under the PN50 project (this can be found in the project report) but rather focus on a small set of significant findings explaining why they are important to policy, practice or scholarship. After the presentation the floor will be opened for short questions of clarification and comment.

In the second part of the session participants will be invited – starting with research fellows and research leaders, but then moving on to all individuals regardless of past formal roles – to offer their perspectives on the most significant findings and explain their reasoning.

In the third and final part of the session participants will be asked to discuss in groups of 5-8 people (around a table) what the 3-5 highest priorities for follow-up research based on the findings identified in first two parts of the session. These priority areas are to be clearly printed out on A4 sheet per group and posted on a central board at the end of the session. The chair will then offer a very brief 3 minute summary to wrap up the session based on these postings.

WG 2: Improving Mekong Water Allocation

Organiser: John Dore
Chairperson: Santita Ganjanapan
Rapporteur: David Blake

Background

The CPWF Project PN67 “Improving Mekong Water Allocation” was a key, collaborative activity of the M-POWER between 2008-2010. The goal of contributing to water allocation policy and practice which results in a more optimal and equitable use of water by society has been pursued by research across the Mekong Region and active engagement with policymakers. The project team have examined the use of a wide range of decision-support tools (and processes), in many decision-making arenas (and places). In doing so, they have sought to understand decision contexts and drivers.

The tools examined were: Scenarios and Modeling, Environmental Flows, Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); and market-based instruments, such as Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES). The processes examined were: Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs) and consensus-building. Decisions were explored in Cambodia, China, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam.

Purpose

The purpose of this working group is to explore the main findings of the CPWF PN67 project.

Structure

The session will have several components.

First, John Dore will briefly summarise the origins and logic of the PN67 project, and some of the significant findings. After the presentation the floor will be opened for short questions of clarification and comment.

Second, the session participants will be invited – starting with the researchers who were in the PN67 team – to offer their perspectives on the most significant findings and explain their reasoning. The Chair will start.

Third, we will break into small groups of 5-8 people and annotate, embellish, discuss and possibly re-draw the “the water allocation complex – an explanatory framework”. This is important for all who wish to join in the production of the final synthesis Journal article for PN67. It may also be of significant interest to others interested in the political economy of water governance.

Fourth, we will update the formal publishing status, and pathways being pursued. Any hiccups will be brainstormed.

WG 3: Hydropower governance and sustainability assessments

Organisers: Pech Sokhem and Wu Yusong

Chairperson: Michael Simon

Rapporteur: Wu Yusong

Background

There is extensive and increasing water-related development in the Mekong Region with hydropower which is high on the agenda of the governments of the region. This is being driven by perceptions of water and energy needs, as well as commercial and political drivers. Large dams can have profound impacts on people's livelihood and ecosystems. The M-POWER hydropower governance work focuses on drivers behind hydropower expansion; the politics of planning specific projects, in terms of assessment, knowledge production, and investment decisions; and the identification of tools for improving hydropower.

M-POWER and partners have been leading several projects in the Mekong Region which aim to improve and integrate energy and water resources development policy and advance sustainable hydropower and assessment. In particular, the project's aim to influencing governments' energy planning processes in which hydropower is an option, amongst others; publicly examine the Mekong mainstream dams and diversions by facilitating deliberative processes that influence energy and hydropower policy-making and implementation; and, promote corporate social and environmental responsibility by exploring application of transnational codes of conduct in Mekong hydropower investment – namely the International Hydropower Association's Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol (HSAP).

Purpose

The purpose of this working group is two-fold. Firstly, to share main findings of work to date. Second, to identify, a few high priority areas for follow-up by M-POWER as policy actions or research.

Structure

The session will be organized in three parts as follows:

In the first part Pech Sokhem will give a presentation summarizing key issues related to hydropower governance in the Mekong Region. After the presentation there will be questions for clarification and comment.

In the second part participants will be invited to share some of their work in this domain. This will include results of three trialling reports of HSAP Section 1 in Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia as well as activities on-going and planned in China and Laos. Michael Simon, HSAF representative, will give and update on the HSAP next phase.

In the third and final part of the session participants will be asked to discuss, in groups of 5-8 people, the 3-5 highest priorities for follow-up research or policy work based on discussions in the first two parts of the session. These priority areas are to be clearly noted on the sheets of paper on each table and posted on a central board at the end of the session. The chair will summarise the postings to wrap up.

WG 4: Exploring Mekong Region Futures

Organisers: Alex Smajgl and Lilao Bouapao

Chairperson: Alex Smajgl

Rapporteur: Angela Bush

Background

This Session presents the project Exploring Mekong Region Futures. This project aims to improve the sustainability of the Mekong Region by investigating the complex relationships between the production, distribution, and use of energy, food and water of the region.

Project investigations focus on the dynamic interactions that occur with the management of food, energy and water at local and regional scales. The research explores regional and local factors that affect national decisions, livelihood outcomes and preferred strategies. The results will help identify the benefits, costs and risks of natural resource development options, subject to a regime of climate change.

Changes in Mekong countries region are shaped by regional factors such as cross-border investment flows, climate change, rapid land use change and urbanization and increasing regionalism. However, the opposite is also true: National decisions can alter regional factors to cause unintended feedbacks to their national situation. Understanding this connectivity of the Mekong region requires both local and regional studies.

Purpose

To provide an update on this project and to invite constructive feedback.

Structure

The session will be organized in four presentations, followed by discussions:

In the first part Alex Smajgl (CSIRO) will provide a project overview, which will explain the goal, methodologies, and the context of large scale investments and the assessment of two-scale cross-border dynamics.

Lilao Bouapao (MRC) will present preliminary results on livelihoods and migration from the expert panel approach.

Chayanis (SEI) will present results from a scenario building workshop in Northeast Thailand.

Xu Jianchu (ICRAF) will present preliminary results for the Yunnan study.

WG 5: Comparing water governance regimes: Experiences in the Twin2Go project and insights from the Mekong Region

Organisers: Louis Lebel and Bach Tan Sinh

Chairperson & Rapporteur: Louis Lebel

Background

The Twin2Go project reviews, consolidates, and synthesizes research on adaptive and integrated water resources management in basins around the world. The aim is to draw insights relevant to policy and research on issues around adaptive water governance in the context of climate change, and to make them transferable to other basins.

A key component of the project was to develop a dataset describing 96 different aspects of water governance in 29 river basins in Europe, Asia, Latin-America and Africa that previously been a part of EU Basin Twinning Projects. The dataset was based on a standard questionnaire and a set of expert workshops held around the world with preparatory and follow-up activities to improve, validate and help interpret expert judgments and values from global datasets. Another part of the project is attempting to compile case histories of best-practice experiences from around the world.

Purpose

The purpose of this working group is twofold. First, to share ideas about comparative methods and the initial findings from the Twin2Go multi-region study. Second, to identify a small group of questions and individuals interested in participating in a follow-up validation exercise with analysis of generalizability, transferability and fit issues based on experience in the Mekong region.

Structure

The session will be organized in two parts of roughly equal length as follows:

In the first part Bach Tan Sinh will give an introductory presentation summarizing the overall goals and activities of the Twin2Go project. He will also include some specific examples of the analysis his team did for the Red River Basin as one of the contributing case studies. After the presentation the floor will be opened for questions of clarification, comments and more detailed discussions. Louis Lebel will join Bach Tan Sinh in providing responses and reflections on the Twin2Go methods and analyses.

In the second part of the session participants will be invited to explore two questions:

(1) How can the findings arising from comparisons of multiple governance systems be synthesized, translated and transferred to new basins or country locations?

(2) How could a promising approach suggested in (1) be validated and tested in the Mekong Region?

The chair will end the session with a brief summary based on the outcome of discussions.

WG 6: Research Fellowship - Socially engaged research

Organisers: Rajesh Daniel and Suparek Janprasart

Chairperson: Rajesh Daniel

Rapporteur: Suparek Janprasart

Background

M-POWER's research fellowship program has been a core activity of the M-POWER network. The fellowship program provides an exciting and challenging opportunity for a wide variety of actors to join a multi-country and multi-disciplinary team of researchers. Under the program, the research fellows have gained a deeper understanding of water governance issues facing the region, conducted original research, and become involved in public events and deliberations.

Purpose

The purpose of this working group is to bring together past fellows and provide a space to discuss the following:

- The key lessons learned from their fellowships
- Sharing of fellows' findings of what they have done with their research
- In what ways has their research been used or had some impact in the public arena
- How can the fellowship be improved: as an example, mentorship especially for less skilled or inexperienced fellows to complete and write up their research
- Collect ideas for new fellowships from M-POWER (the 1st call to be circulated at the meeting).

Structure

The session will be organized in two parts.

In the first part, individual fellows will be given about 4-6 minutes to 1) Briefly recap on their research area(s) and 1-3 key findings 2) Provide thoughts and reflections on their research experience focusing in particular on the 5 main session points outlined above. The fellows will also be encouraged to write up their responses and post it on the session board.

In the second part, the group will share and reflect on their and other's research and findings, key challenges and areas needing improvement, and their suggestions for future fellowship programs.

The second part will encourage fellows' perspectives on efforts at becoming socially engaged researchers and their involvement during and post-research in public events and deliberations.

We will wrap up the session with the rapporteur briefly summarizing the key points and using the fellows' written postings.

WG 7: Water governance and optimization of reservoir management

Organisers: Rutmanee Ongsakul and Suon Seng

Chairperson: Suon Seng

Rapporteur: Rutmanee Ongsakul

Background

Mekong Project 4 on Water Governance is one of six projects under the CGIAR Challenge Program on Water and Food (CPWF) in the Mekong River Basin and focuses on governance structures and mechanisms needed to enable, support and maintain efficient and fair management strategies for reservoirs in the fields of livelihoods, water valuation and dam cascades. It considers the ways in which reservoirs are presently being developed, managed or planned to be managed, and what needs to change if benefits are to be increased, burdens and risks reduced, and allocation to multiple uses fairly distributed and decided upon.

Purpose

This WG will map out key institutions directly involved in the issue fields of selected outputs of MK4. The purpose is to share and examine initial information gathered by researchers about the profile, nature, and workings of relevant public institutions in reservoir governance in 3 countries, and identify issues and areas to pursue in data collection & analysis in connection with institutional mapping.

Structure

The session will be organized into three parts.

Firstly, the chair will briefly introduce the MK4 Project, its expected outputs and progress of research activities (15 min). The core agenda and process of institutional mapping will be explained.

The participants will then be asked to divide into 2-3 groups (depending on the size of the group) to develop institutional maps of the selected issue fields of the Project. They will be asked to (a) identify key public sector actors (government units, individual public officials, bilateral or multi-lateral agencies) associated directly and varying degrees with the issue fields; (b) discuss and assess the importance of each actor to the issue field, and particular scale/level of its effective influence on practical outcomes; (c) assess the nature of relationships between these actors (45 min); and (d) assess the inclusiveness of these public institutions (that is, their representation of every important stakeholder group, their participatory conduct, and their accessibility to the public) and identify who are the ones unacknowledged and left out. A visual representation of institutional mapping will be presented on large paper with cards and markers.

Lastly, each group will be asked to present their institutional maps to the floor for reactions and comments (10-15 min each). The chair will then sum up the session

WG 8: Mekong Region modeling

Organisers: Jeffrey Richey, Jorma Koponen, and Erland Jensen

Chairpersons: Amphavanh Sisouvanh

Rapporteur: Kesa Ly

Background

The issues facing the development of the Mekong are extremely complex, involving the intersection of the “natural” environment (landscape structure, hydrologic cycle, fisheries) in the context of social and economic development. Water resources “modeling” is a process by which these complexities can be captured and examined. Models can range from relatively simple assemblage of stories and GIS images, to operational models to sophisticated dynamic simulation models, driven by data inputs from multiple sources, from ground to satellite. As such, modeling is well suited to play a rigorous role in the discussions. The validity of this assumption depends on at least two factors: How rigorous, transparent, intercomparable, and otherwise believable are the models? How can the “technical” results be brought to bear on the decision process?

Where is the Mekong community on development of models that can inform the Mekong dialogue? Past and ongoing work have been models addressing aspects of the landscape and hydrology of the basin, but there has been little inter-comparison and information exchange of the sort to advance the application. The “Visual Mekong Basin” (VMB) has been started as a means to promote synthesis of model results, and advance a broader advance of the results.

Purpose

The purpose of this working group is to first summarize and compare the current status of hydrology, hydropower and environmental modeling by the WUP-FIN, DSF, and UW groups, and how to incorporate and utilise these results in the IWRM work, MRC Toolbox and the VMB, to maximum effect. The group will then establish the most robust process to move forward – what needs to be done, who will engage, and how that will happen.

Structure

The session will open with a brief introduction and review of the history of modeling in the Mekong, based on several recent manuscripts (10 minutes). Then the current status of the existing modeling efforts will be summarized (20 minutes each). The focus will be on the reasons for each model, how each model was developed (including calibration/validation), and how the results will be incorporated in the IWRM work, MRC Toolbox and the VMB. The final part of the session will be a structured group discussion, focused on the details of what needs to be done next.

WG 9: Roundtable and multi-stakeholder platforms

Organisers: Lu Xing and Kate Lazarus

Chairperson: Lu Xing

Rapporteur: Suparek Janprasart

Purpose

As a mechanism for informing policy changes and represent diverse stakeholder groups, M-POWER has been actively organizing and engaging in various dialogues at local, national, regional and global levels. This session aims to share lessons and experiences of these dialogues, to assess their effectiveness, and to identify critical issues that should be included in future dialogues. Experience will be draw from the 2006 Exploring Mekong Region Futures dialogue, HSAP roundtables, Cambodia Irrigation Working Group, Lancang-Mekong Dialogue among others.

Structure

Sharing lessons and experiences

The session starts with three short presentations about 5 minutes each. One presentation will share lessons and experiences by focusing on local level dialogues. A second presentation will focus on national dialogues and a third on regional level efforts. Participants will share their experiences after the presentation.

Identify contributions

The participants will be requested to undertake a rapid assessment on the contributions of the dialogues to policy process. Each participant will write their assessment where dialogues have contributed to shaping policy processes. The assessments will be collected and analyzed.

Issues in the future

Participants will identify several recommendations for future dialogues on water governance at the regional, national and local levels.

WG 10: Sustainable Water Resource Use for Agriculture in Asia Pacific

Organisers: Thierry Facon and Louise Whiting

Chairperson: Louise Whiting

Rapporteur: Paradis Someth

Purpose

In May 2009 the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific launched a three-year 'Study on Analysis of Sustainable Water Resource Use' project that is funded by the Government of Japan (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries – MAFF). The immediate objective of the project is to promote sustainable water resource use for agriculture in the Asia Pacific region through capacity development and policy recommendations; analyses of water allocation policies, strategies and practices in the selected river basins; and make available a comprehensive set of technical and policy assistance instruments. The main outputs of the project are following:

1. Centres of excellence established in a number of river basins;
2. A knowledge network on water allocation for agriculture;
3. Case studies - containing issues, experience, changes and options related to water allocation and water use – will be conducted with supporting analysis and dialogue in representative countries/basins;
4. Review of existing status, challenges and issues related to water allocation and water resources use;
5. A publication on synthesis of recommendations.

The project's first **Regional Email Conference** will run from March - May 2011 and will bring together project participants, partner organizations and industry experts to discuss current themes in agricultural water management.

FAO is keen to collaborate with as many regional partners as possible to bolster the technical content of the project and broaden the scope of topics covered. FAO hopes to utilize the specialised expertise within M-POWER to improve project outcomes for the Mekong region.

Structure

The Chairperson will introduce the project by presenting a brief overview and describing upcoming events and opportunities for collaboration with key partners.

This will be followed by two technical brainstorming sessions covering the following key project components:

1. *Agricultural water management versus high level planning: Realities, Synergies, Conflicts. The future.*
2. *Water allocation in the Mekong: What, Who, How.*

The working group will conclude with a third workshop session designed to generate ideas for the regional email conference, discuss technical participation by M-POWER and invite comments on the current conference program.

WG 11: Making your research travel: Web 2.0, strategic communication and the media

Organisers: Michael Victor
Chairperson: Michael Victor
Rapporteur: Chitlatda Keomuongchanh

Background

Under pressure to get your research findings out to a wider audience? Being asked what type of impacts your research has? Having trouble presenting your research findings to development professionals, the media or policy makers and demonstrating how it can be useful to them?

If so, come join us in this session to share lessons and experiences in how we can more effectively communicate our research findings. It is no longer acceptable to produce a research report and expect the findings to be adapted and used by different end users. Our research has to be linked to the changes that we seek and be able to inform different groups decision-making processes. Moreover, it is recognized that effective internal communication in a research program is a pre-requisite to achieving and ensuring effective external communication.

Purpose

This session will explore how we can begin to make our research travel farther and have greater impacts. Some guiding questions will include:

- How can we use the social media, reporting and the web more effectively to get our messages out?
- How can we adapt/transform research into other products (comics, videos, non-print formats) for farmers and other targets?
- How do we effectively communicate with policy makers? What kinds of products would attract them? What other mechanisms need to be combined so such information can be effectively used.
- How can we engage the media better?

Structure

This session will be divided into three parts, each of about 30 minutes:

- **Part 1: Web2.0 and the researchers** – how to use social media tools and process. This part will focus primarily on the reinvigorated M-POWER website and how partners can take advantage of it as well as brainstorm on ideas for improving internal communications. We will also introduce different social media sites and tips for how researchers can make effective use of the web.
- **Part 2: Strategic communication and research:** This part will introduce participants into the strategic communication approach and demonstrate how researchers can link communication into their impact pathways. Tools and approaches for documenting, and producing alternative research materials will be discussed
- **Part 3:** This part will provide participants with insights in how to engage, work with and present information to the media. How can we engage and work with the media? What are the best type of materials to provide the media? What are tips and strategies for working with journalists?

WG 12: Contrasting Research Methods

Organisers: Alex Smajgl and Edsel Sajor

Chairperson: Alex Smajgl

Rapporteur: David Blake

Background

Researchers in the Mekong basin and across the wider Mekong region employ a huge variety of research methods. While each method has a specific purpose researchers find themselves often confronted with a choice of which methodology to use. One's own training and available capacity can be limiting factors in designing the most effective research. More recent science debates highlight the importance of employing multiple methods, which can allow for covering multiple scales and complex research questions. Sharing experiences in using individual or mixed methods and how these perform is very valuable.

Purpose

To present methods implemented in the Mekong context and to provide an experience sharing and learning debate.

Structure

The session will be organized in three parts of roughly equal length as follows:

In the first part two examples for research methods will be provided. Kim Geheb will present the methodological approach of the Mekong investment of the Challenge Program for Food and Water. Alex Smajgl will present methodological details of the Exploring Mekong Region Futures work.

In the second part the plenary discussion will aim for identifying different research contexts, which includes the type of research questions and the scale these questions are addressing.

For the third part break out groups will be clustered according to comparable contexts. The first task will be to agree on performance indicators. The second discussion will identify how different methods performed in the same research context.

WG 13: Publishing for Impact

Organisers: Xu Jianchu and Ed Grumbine

Chairperson: Ed Grumbine

Rapporteur: Suon Seng

Purpose

In a world where many people struggle to get published, how can you maximize the impact of your message on both the general public and decision makers? This participatory workshop will help you to focus your message and target your writing toward a broad range of audiences. The goal is to help you find the best format to get your message out to the most appropriate audience so that your voice is heard.

Beginning with research results, key messages, and early drafts, we will outline a step-by-step path to publication providing tips for each step along the way. We will discuss the peer review process and the pros and cons of formal publication. We will review how to find the best journals for particular work and discuss the role of a journals' impact factor. For maximum impact on policy, however, scientific journals may not provide the best venue for publication; we will offer advice on different formats including newspaper opinion editorials, online outlets, and popular magazines. We will show how to turn a formal paper into forms appropriate to all of the above alternative formats. Examples of each format will be provided.

Participants will come away from this workshop with enhanced skills to: 1) focus their writing to make it useful for contributing to topical debates and 2); understand the different options for publication so that delivering a message can be optimized.

Structure

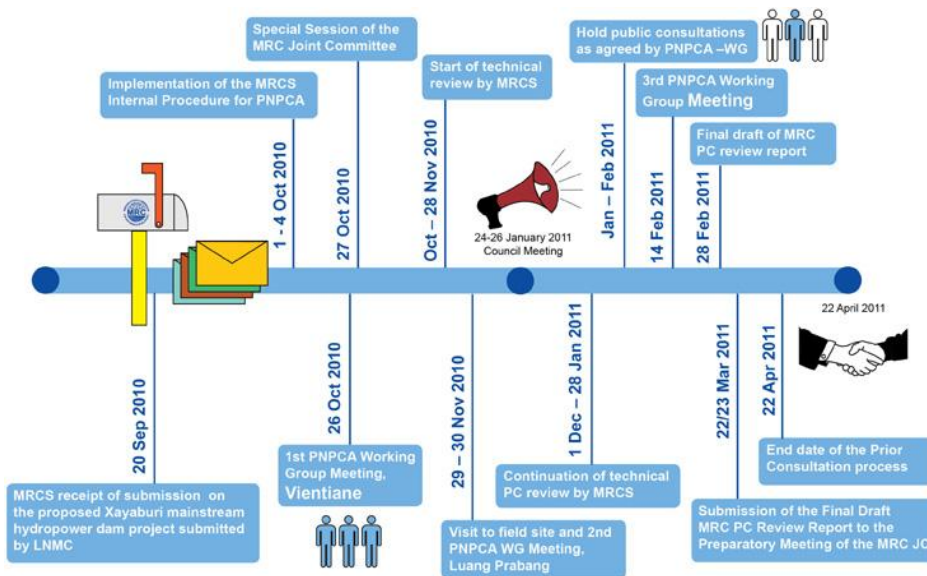
We will use small group discussions to identify key issues, topics and questions. There will be ample time for questions and answers.

WG 14: The PNPCA and proposed Lower Mekong mainstream dams

Organiser: Pech Sokhem
Chairperson: Juha Sarkkula
Rapporteur: Lilao Bouapao

Background

In late 2003, the MRC Council approved the Procedures for Notification, Prior Consultation and Agreement (PNPCA). The MRC Joint Committee adopted the Guidelines on Implementation of the PNPCA in August 2005. In late-September 2010, the MRC received the official submission for a proposed mainstream hydropower development project at Sayaboury from the Government of Lao PDR. This triggered the PNPCA process. The 'road map' for the PNPCA, not publicly available until late December 2010, is as follows:



Purpose

The purpose of this working group is to assess the progress of the PNPCA, and to better understand the larger decision-making context for proposed Lower Mekong mainstream dams.

Structure

The session will be organized in three parts as follows:

In the first part, the organisers will briefly summarise the status of the PNPCA, followed by questions for clarification and comment.

In the second part participants will be invited to offer their reflections on the PNPCA – theory, practice and lessons to date. Effort will be made to locate the PNPCA within the wider decision making processes within and between countries.

Recognising the different roles played by M-POWER colleagues, in the final part, participants will brainstorm ways to contribute to improving transboundary decision-making processes, with a focus on Lower Mekong mainstream dams.

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