IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSBOUNDARY CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION IN THE MEKONG BASIN THROUGH BASIN AND NATIONAL ACTIONS

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Outline

- Mekong Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (MASAP)
- Mainstreaming CCA into Basin Development Strategy
- Mainstreaming CCA into regional sector strategies
- Monitoring system on CCA
- Preparation of transboundary adaptation projects
- Financing for CCA implementation
- Mainstreaming regional CCA into national actions/activities, including NDCs
MASAP Strategic Priorities

MASAP is a Statement of the LMB countries of strategic priorities and actions at basin level to *address CC risks and strengthen basin-wide resilience.*

**Strategic priorities:**

1. **Mainstreaming** CC into regional and national policies/programs/plans
2. Regional and international **cooperation and partnership** on adaptation
3. Preparation of **transboundary**, gender sensitive adaptation options
4. Access to adaptation **finance**
5. **Monitoring**, data collection and sharing
6. **Capacity development** for CC adaptation strategies/plans
7. **Outreach** of MRC products on CC and adaptation.
Key Adaptation Strategies for Basin Development

1. *Enabling additional dry season flows*
   - Use of storages above hydropower cascades
   - Clear operating rules and protocols for extreme conditions

2. *Enhancing flood mitigation and management*
   - Coordinating upstream storages to control flood releases
   - Coordinating spatial planning on the floodplain so that floodplain storage is in synergy with biodiversity benefits
   - Agreements on connected floodways, flood protection measures and development constraints

3. *Protecting watersheds upstream of hydropower operations and settlements*
   - Mitigate the effect of increased runoff including additional sediment into reservoirs, damaging flash floods and species migration to higher altitudes

4. *Implementing transboundary biodiversity corridors*
   - Landscape scale protection of remaining environmental assets allowing species migration
   - Connecting existing protected area network through regulatory and planning measures
Mainstreaming Climate Change into the BDS (1)

- **Reflecting current knowledge** of basin condition, trends and outlook with regard to potential impacts of climate change
  - Drawing on basin-wide studies undertaken by MRC
- **Incorporating within the Basin Vision and goals** by considering what is possible under a changing climate
  - Decisions taken on infrastructure with 50+ year lifespans will need to consider climate change in design and operations
- **A proactive regional planning approach** requires consideration of climate change impacts and the role of basin infrastructure and non-infrastructure measures to help mitigate the impacts
  - Alternative development pathways considering the size and location of projects as they relate to multiple objectives
  - Updated scenarios and projections
- Emphasising the need for **enhanced coordination of operational management** especially between upper and lower Mekong Basin
  - Enhanced data and information sharing between all riparian countries, improved forecasting and early warning systems, the development and communication of clear operating protocols, and a deeper institutionalisation of regional cooperating platforms will support this effort
Mainstreaming Climate Change into the BDS (2)

- **Enhanced data and information management systems** in line with the recently agreed Mekong Basin Indicator Framework, including the climate change dimension and the establishment of the MRC climate change monitoring and reporting system.

- **Facilitate implementing agencies to work together** to:
  - reduce the remaining uncertainties and raise awareness
  - provide guidance on assessing vulnerability
  - enhance flood forecasting systems, tools and communication protocols
  - support infrastructure design and operation that is resilient to future climate impacts

- Facilitating the development of *joint projects* and *national projects of basin-wide significance* that support regional climate change adaptation
Road map for MRC to become a regional accredited entity to AF and GCF

- Transboundary adaptation project
- Accreditation process: MRC become regional accredited entity to AF and GCF
- MRCS gap assessment and development of a work plan: done
- Closing gap (2021-2022)
- Prepare readiness support proposal (GCF)
- Prepare and submit accreditation application (2021)
- Follow up with the funds (2021 - 2022): respond to comment/ request
Mainstreaming to Adaptation Communications (1)

National circumstances, institutional arrangements and legal frameworks

- Regional institutional arrangements and legal frameworks: **1995 Mekong Agreement**, the BDS and the MASAP guiding regional cooperation in addressing CCA on water-related issues in the Mekong River Basin

- Describe the **national circumstances** in relation to **water resources** development and management throughout the **Mekong River Basin** and the risks and opportunities from that development and management in relation to CC
Mainstreaming to Adaptation Communications (2)

**Impacts, risks and vulnerabilities, as appropriate**

- Use the MRC’s BWA of CC impact to inform an assessment of potential impacts, risks and vulnerabilities in key water related sectors including water resources, fisheries, forestry and land-use change, ecosystem services and agriculture.

- Participate in and facilitate to improve gender disaggregated data collection and vulnerability mapping throughout the Mekong River Basin to better inform national policies and measures aimed at reducing gender inequality and CC vulnerability.

- Institutionalise the implementation of the regional CC monitoring and reporting system: collection, processing and sharing of existing datasets that inform an assessment of CC conditions, trends and impacts.
Mainstreaming to Adaptation Communications (3)

National adaptation priorities, strategies, policies, plans, goals and actions

- Consider **regional needs and opportunities** in determining priorities, strategies, policies, plans, goals and actions.
  
  - **Flood and drought risk mitigation and management** including through the coordinated operations of water resources infrastructure and improved forecasting, monitoring and disaster response
  
  - Planning, design and implementation of **multi-purpose reservoirs** that provide basin-wide benefits including for irrigation, power generation, flood control and environmental flows
  
  - **Transboundary biodiversity corridors and protected areas** including improved landscape management in and around priority environmental assets of regional importance
Mainstreaming to Adaptation Communications (4)

Implementation and support needs

• Identify potential country-to-country capacity building opportunities with other MCs – i.e. what each country can learn from other countries in the region and also what each country has to offer the other countries in terms of its relative strengths

• Link database and decision support tools related to climate change between national and regional levels

• Identify the budgetary resource needs to implement the conditional mitigation and adaptation components of NIPs and help facilitate the MRC’s efforts to achieve accreditation under the global climate change funds to streamline access to international climate finance
Suggestions for Adaptation Communications

• Consider providing greater specificity as to its legal, institutional, technology and capacity needs and gaps, and to link these clearly to its adaptation priorities and intended actions.

• Opportunities for regional cooperation (joint projects, regional capacity building, data and information sharing, joint systems, tools and processes, and the national application of regional frameworks and guidelines) - focus on:
  
  a. Enhancing **flood and drought** forecasting, early warning, monitoring and management
  
  b. Identifying, assessing, negotiating and implementing significant **joint projects** aimed at addressing floods and droughts
  
  c. Identifying, agreeing, building capacity and implementing joint projects and measures to address **biodiversity loss, deforestation and land degradation** in transboundary areas (both wetlands and watersheds) in order to increase resilience
  
  d. Institutionalising **data and information sharing** related to CC including through regional and nationally-linked databases and decision-support systems
SUMMARY

- Projected future CC and the resulting impacts are extreme.
- Mainstreaming CC into Basin Development Strategy 2021-2030
- Mainstreaming CC into national policies/programs/plans, including NDCs, Adaptation Communication
- Transboundary adaptation projects and access to climate funds – very important
- Road map for MRC become accredited entity to AF and GCF
- MASAP implementation needs stakeholder engagement and efficient coordination
THANK YOU

One Mekong. One Spirit.