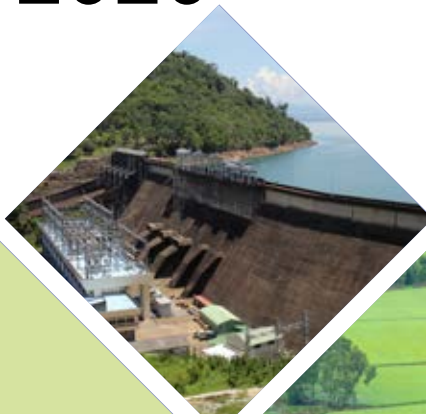




Strategic Plan

2016-2020



Mekong River Commission

Cambodia . Lao PDR . Thailand . Viet Nam
For sustainable development





Meeting the needs, keeping the balance.



Acknowledgements

The Mekong River Commission Strategic Plan 2016-2020 is the result of extensive consultations with a wide range of regional and national stakeholders. The Commission would like to acknowledge the guidance, support and valuable contributions received from the four Member Countries' governments, their national Mekong committees and line agencies, the MRC Dialogue and Development Partners, and members of the broader civil society and private sector. Within the MRC Secretariat, the Plan was prepared by the Strategic Plan (SP) team composed of riparian staff, under the guidance of the Chief Executive Officer and Directors and working with experts of MRC Programmes, Member Countries, and Development Partners.



Message from the Chairperson of the MRC Council

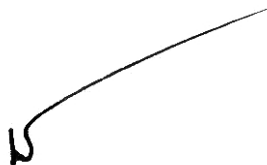
On behalf of the MRC Council, it gives me great pleasure to present the MRC Strategic Plan for 2016-2020. The Plan resonates with our Heads of Governments' renewed strong commitments for Mekong cooperation at the Second MRC Summit in Ho Chi Minh City, April 2014.

Unlike the past, this MRC Strategic Plan, together with the four National Indicative Plans of MRC Member Countries, represents a collective MRC response to address the strategic priorities and actions set forth in the updated IWRM-based Mekong Basin Development Strategy (BDS), and the institutional recommendations in the Roadmap for Decentralisation. The Plan is a product of extensive consultations that began two years ago with the updating of the BDS and has involved multiple stakeholders within our Member Countries from government agencies, research institutes, river basin organisations, private sector, non-governmental organisations as well as Dialogue and Development Partners.

The Council is especially delighted to emphasise that the Strategic Plan tackles both medium and long term needs and challenges for the Mekong basin, needs and challenges that no one riparian country can tackle effectively alone. A national approach does not address fully current basin-wide needs relating to water, food, energy and flood security, but may also have potentially high transboundary costs as uncoordinated development in irrigation expansion, hydropower, flood control and navigation proceeds. Addressing these needs and challenges means promoting and implementing identified development opportunities at the national levels, informed by a sound understanding of the opportunities, as well as trade-offs, from basin-wide and nexus perspectives.

Taking a beyond borders view, and given the MRC mandate and mission, the Strategic Plan elaborates the work that is needed for the next five years in terms of results and outcomes sought, deliverables conducted and activities to be carried out. With the highest level of mandate given by

our Heads of Governments, the Council will ensure that this Strategic Plan is endowed with resources and commitment from our governments. We call on our traditional development partners, who have contributed significantly to 20 years of MRC achievements, to continue providing adequate financial support in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. We call on new development partners to work with us in ensuring balanced and sustainable development of not only one of the earth's great rivers but also one that is located in a most dynamic economic and geo-strategic region.



H.E. Mr. Lim Kean Hor

Minister of Water Resources and Meteorology, Cambodia
Chairperson of the MRC Council for 2015-2016

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Abbreviations and acronyms

BDP	Basin Development Plan (of the MRC)
BDS	(IWRM-based) Basin Development Strategy
CF	Core Function(s)
CRBMF	Core River Basin Management Function(s)
DP	Development Partner
KRA	Key Result Area
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
LMB	Lower Mekong Basin
MC	Member Countries
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MRC	Mekong River Commission
MRCs	Mekong River Commission Secretariat
NIP	National Indicative Plan
NMC	National Mekong Committee
NMCS	National Mekong Committee Secretariat
PDIES	Procedures for Data and Information Exchange and Sharing
PNPCA	Procedures for Notification, Prior Consultation and Agreement
PMFM	Procedures for Maintenance of Flow on the Mainstream
PWQ	Procedures for Water Quality
PWUM	Procedures for Water Use Monitoring
RBO	River Basin Organisation



THAI BINH OI
HAI PHONG
IMO 956627

Executive Summary

This Strategic Plan sets out how for the period 2016-2020 the MRC will deliver the role established by the 1995 Mekong Agreement: to promote and coordinate sustainable development and management of the Mekong's water and related natural resources.

A solid foundation grounded in basin-wide perspectives

The Plan has been developed based on:

- the updated IWRM-based Mekong Basin Development Strategy (BDS), which itself was the product driven by Member Countries with extensive consultations with their line/ implementing agencies and broader stakeholder groups, and which identifies basin-wide development and management needs, challenges, opportunities and priorities;
- MRC's organisational reform agenda, first signalled by the MRC Summit of Heads of Governments in 2010 and subsequently detailed in the 2014 Roadmap document; and
- recommendations from the midterm review of the 2011-2015 MRC Strategic Plan and the 2015 appraisal mission commissioned by MRC's Development Partners.

Four focused key result areas

For the next five years, the MRC will focus its work on four key result areas to achieve its agreed, strategic outcomes. These are concrete, priority areas where MRC will exert its influence to realize its mission and mandate as the regional river basin organisation in the Mekong.

Strategic Plan Objectives 2016-2020

Key Result Area 1:

Enhancement of national plans, projects and resources based on basin-wide perspectives

Outcome 1: Increased common understanding and application of evidence-based knowledge by policy makers and project planners

Outcome 2: Environment management and sustainable water resources development optimised for basin-wide benefits by national sector planning agencies

Outcome 3: Guidance for the development and management of water and related projects and resources shared and applied by national planning and implementing agencies

Key Result Area 2:

Strengthening regional cooperation

Outcome 4: Effective and coherent implementation of MRC Procedures by the Member Countries

Outcome 5: Effective dialogue and cooperation between Member Countries and strategic engagement of regional partners and stakeholders on transboundary water management

Key Result Area 3:

Better monitoring and communication of the Basin conditions

Outcome 6: Basin-wide monitoring, forecasting, impact assessment and dissemination of results strengthened for better decision-making by Member Countries

Key Result Area 4:

Leaner River Basin Organisation

Outcome 7: MRC transitioned to a more efficient and effective organisation in line with the Decentralisation Roadmap and related reform plans

Streamlined planning and improved way of delivering results

New approaches to strategic planning, including the updating of the BDS and preparation of the Strategic Plan and National Indicative Plans, have already eliminated the previous fragmented method of programmatic planning and increased efficiency, saving costs and potential duplication of work.

Delivering our key results over the Strategic Plan period, however, also requires substantive changes in the way MRC operates. It involves doing better with less, given the reductions in both financial and staffing resources set out in this Plan. Over the next five years, MRC will implement the changes needed so that it can better support and promote:

- increased uptake, application and integration of basin-wide evidence into national planning processes (to increase national and basin benefits, while reducing regional costs and moving towards water security);
- more effective stakeholder engagement to strengthen regional dialogue and cooperation;
- greater Member Country ownership of MRC and its processes to strengthen implementation; and
- more streamlined and efficient MRC operations to improve knowledge management, make better use of limited resources and ensure MRC continues to offer good value for money.

The Strategic Plan will be operationalised through five Annual Work Plans, supported by basket funding arrangements. This fresh approach will bring new focus to the MRC's activities by promoting greater integration and alignment of efforts, more agility in allocating resources and responding to implementation experience and increased efficiency and transparency in the use of resources.

Well established high level governance and leaner technical operations

MRC's key governance bodies, the MRC Council and Joint Committee, will lead the implementation of this Plan, by providing and guiding the strategic direction of MRC's work over the period, ensuring effective processes are in place for timely decision-making and issue resolution and managing risks to the delivery of the Plan at the highest levels.

The MRC Secretariat is responsible for administrative and technical aspects of Plan implementation. Under Key Result Area 4, the MRC Secretariat will also deliver the significant organizational reform agenda established by the 2014 Roadmap document. This includes advancing the long-term plan to transition the MRC from a programme-based structure that is largely Development Partner funded to a Member Country financed organisation, focused on core functions and process set out in the Roadmap for staged decentralisation of MRC functional activities to national agencies within Member Countries based on the principle of subsidiarity.

Member Countries themselves, in the form of line and implementing agencies in water and related sectors as well as those relevant to Mekong cooperation, also play a critical role in the implementation of the Plan. Working through their National Mekong Committees (NMCs), and supported by their respective NMC Secretariats, they establish the necessary national implementation arrangements in four National Indicative Plans (NIPs). The NIPs promote implementation of development opportunities identified in the BDS and contribute to common MRC outcomes and outputs identified in this Strategic Plan. The NIPs therefore are a key instrument to bring basin perspectives

and functions into national plans and systems, and vice versa. In short, the MRC SP and the NIPs are the collective MRC response to implementing the BDS.

Finally, the four-yearly Summit of Heads of Government, the highest political forum of the MRC, is scheduled for April 2018 – the mid-point in the implementation of this Strategic Plan. This will provide an important milestone for the MRC to assess the direction of its reform and the achievements of cooperation.

An operational risks management tool in place

Recognising the significant challenges faced by the MRC over the next five years, both organisationally and contextually, the current Plan advocates a more systematic approach to both risk management and monitoring and reporting than has been the case in the past. Risk management systems have been formalised, with key external, technical and operational risks identified for review and tracking on a regular basis. Under normal operating circumstances, Senior Management at the MRC Secretariat will carry out these assessments every six months, but during the transition to and early stages of this new Plan, monthly briefings will be provided to the MRC Council and Joint Committee members on the status of the key operational risks that have significant potential knock-on effects to the reform programme and wider MRC operations.

A common M&E system to measure and ensure success

Progress indicators have been established at all levels of implementation for the Strategic Plan, including strategic outcomes. A key feature of this strategic planning period will be the mutual accountability frameworks established between MRC national and regional bodies through the Strategic Plan and NIPs, to ensure coherent planning, shared monitoring and collective responsibility. Progress will be reported to the Joint Committee, Council and development partners six monthly and annually. External reviews are envisaged at the half-way point and end of this Strategic Plan period.





CHAPTER I

Introduction

1.1 Purpose and scope of the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan 2016-2020 set outs how the MRC will implement the updated IWRM-based Mekong Basin Development Strategy (BDS) at the regional level and the institutional reform measures directed by the MRC Council in the Roadmap for Decentralisation. It guides the actions of the MRC Secretariat (MRCS) in supporting MRC Member Countries to promote and coordinate sustainable development of the Mekong River Basin over the next five years. It also addresses the collaborative arrangements between the MRC, the line/implementing agencies in its Member Countries, Dialogue Partners (China and Myanmar), Development Partners and the wider stakeholder groups.

This Strategic Plan forms part of a streamlined planning process adopted by MRC, and differs in this regard from those in past years. This Plan presents a unified corporate plan for the organisation, replacing the need for a multitude of MRC Programme Documents, Inception Reports, Project Implementation Plans and the like. In its new form, the Strategic Plan will be operationalised through five Annual Work Plans (AWP) for MRC as a whole.

This fresh approach will bring new focus to the MRC's activities by promoting greater integration of effort, increased alignment with the BDS and, through implementation of the Roadmap's organisational reform and decentralisation programmes, increased efficiencies and transparency.

The Strategic Plan is presented in five chapters. Chapter 2 establishes the foundations to the Plan – the 1995 Mekong Agreement, the BDS and the MRC's Roadmap. It recaps the MRC's mandate and mission to realise a Vision of the Mekong Basin that is economically prosperous, socially just and environmentally sound. Chapter 3 sets out the outcomes that the MRC aims to achieve in response to the priorities identified in the BDS and the deliverables it will deliver during 2016 – 2020. Member countries through their national Mekong committee secretariats and line/implementing agencies will also contribute to the realisation of these common outcomes via their National Indicative Plans 2016-2020.

Chapter 4 outlines how the MRC will implement the Strategic plan. The chapter covers organisation issues and implementation arrangements, risk management, together with estimated budgets for implementing the plan. Results-based monitoring, evaluating and reporting are set out in Chapter 5.

1.2 Approach to Strategic Plan formulation

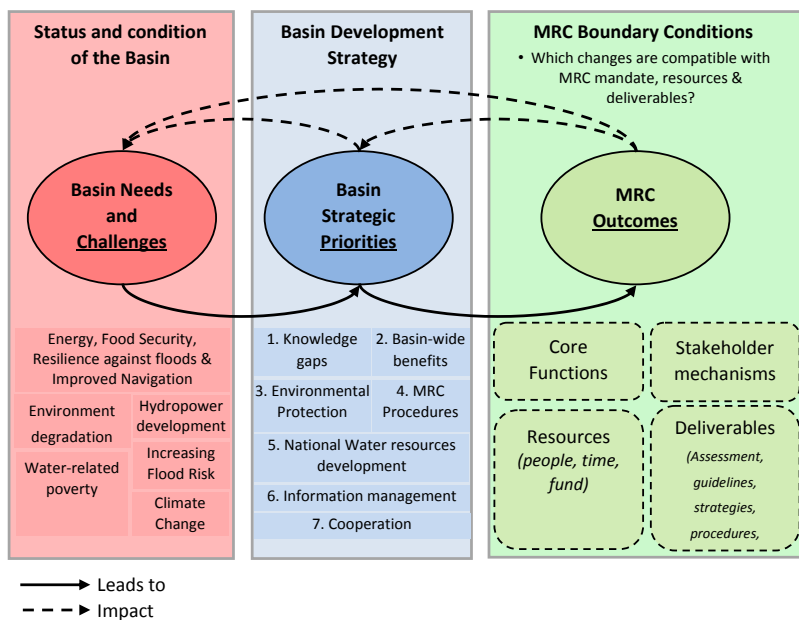
The Strategic Plan reflects the strategic directions provided by the Member Countries and broader stakeholders in the updated BDS. It also incorporates the institutional direction established by the MRC Roadmap and recommendations from the midterm review of the Strategic Plan 2011-2015 and individual programme reviews .

In updating the BDS, the Member Countries and MRC Secretariat reconsidered basin-wide needs, challenges and risks, and identified the opportunities and strategic priorities to be addressed in the medium term. The assessment was informed by the most recent State of Basin Report, the Assessment of the existing Basin-wide Development Scenarios, examination of development trends and long-term outlook for the basin based on key economic, social and environment indicators and a review of national and regional plans and strategies.

Key questions guiding Strategic Plan formulation

- What changes are needed to address the basin needs/challenges most effectively?
- How will the MCs have ownership & best support these changes?
- Are other organizations already addressing these challenges?

Figure 1: Strategic Plan formulation approach



MRC outcomes are the changes that the Organisation, given its boundary conditions, will bring to address the basin needs and challenges. The seven outcomes are elaborated in Chapter 2.





CHAPTER II

Foundations to the MRC Strategic Plan

2.1 The 1995 Mekong Agreement

The 1995 Mekong Agreement¹ establishes the goals, objectives and underlying principles by which the four Member Countries intend to cooperate. These may be summarised as:

- To cooperate in all fields of sustainable development, utilisation, management and conservation of the water and related resources of the Mekong River Basin, in a manner to **optimise multiple uses and mutual benefits** in the water and related resources of the Mekong River Basin including, but not limited to **irrigation, hydro-power, navigation, flood control, fisheries**, timber floating, recreation and tourism;
- To promote the development of the **full potential of sustainable benefits** and to prevent wasteful use with an emphasis and preference on joint and/or basin-wide development projects and basin programs through the formulation of a basin development plan;
- To **protect the environment**, natural resources, aquatic life and conditions, and ecological balance of the Mekong River Basin from pollution or other harmful effects; and
- To utilize the waters of the Mekong River system in a **reasonable and equitable manner**.

The Agreement also establishes the Mekong River Commission (MRC) as the inter-governmental organisation with the mandate to implement the Agreement and the projects, programmes and activities taken thereunder in cooperation and coordination with each member and the international community, and to address and solve related issues and problems.

Under the Agreement, the MRC has three principal organs: the MRC Council, Joint Committee, and the Secretariat. To manage Mekong affairs internally and to facilitate Mekong cooperation, each Member Country has established a National Mekong Committee (NMC), comprising representatives of the relevant major line/implementing agencies in each country and supported by a secretariat (NMCS).

¹ Agreement on the Cooperation for the Sustainable Development of the Mekong River Basin entered into by the Governments of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam (the Member Countries) on 5th April 1995

The Agreement charges the MRC with promoting and coordinating sustainable development and management of the Mekong's water and related natural resources. It also mandates the MRC to formulate a basin development plan to identify, categorise and prioritise the projects and programs to seek assistance for and to implement at the basin level. The current planning tool adopted by the MRC is the IWRM based Basin Development Strategy (BDS), which is updated every five years.

2.2 The IWRM-based Basin Development Strategy: Basin Challenges and Priorities

In the updated IWRM-based Basin Development Strategy (BDS) , Member Countries and MRC Secretariat have identified a set of basin-wide development and management needs, trade-offs, challenges and opportunities:

BASIN NEEDS

Food and livelihood security: Agriculture and fisheries contribute to local food and income security. Sustainable hydropower development contributes to employment and national poverty reduction.

Resilience against floods and drought: For floods, reduction of flood plain (natural) storage due to developments, combined with climate change, will increase the severity of both mainstream floods and tributary flash floods. As cities and population grow, more protection is needed to secure infrastructure, assets and lives. For drought, resilience is also needed, especially relating to impacts of climate change.

Energy security: Regional energy demands will continue to grow and the need for national energy security will remain important for Member Countries. Demand for hydropower is expected to remain high as a cost effective source of renewable energy.

Improved navigation: Maintaining freedom of navigation and enhancing river-borne transport networks are needed to support remote communities, shipment of bulk goods, and further regional interconnectivity.

BASIN CHALLENGES

Environmental degradation from developments in water and non-water sectors: MRC scenario and other assessments show that on-going degradation of water quality, fisheries,

biodiversity, wetlands and environmental assets is likely to continue with developments not only in the water sectors (intensive agriculture and aquaculture, hydropower and irrigation dams, flood control work, sand mining and navigation dredging, etc.) but beyond (e.g. industrialisation, urbanisation, deforestation, etc.).

Hydropower developments in the Upper and Lower Basin: Development of hydropower cascade in the Upper Mekong in China has largely completed, bringing both benefits and risks to the Lower Mekong. While hydropower development in Thailand and Viet Nam has also mostly finished, it is central to the economic and poverty reduction strategy of Lao PDR and is also planned in Cambodia. Further anticipated development of hydropower has the potential to bring about large and transformative benefits, especially for the poorer countries in the region, but may also lead to significant costs and risks especially to capture fisheries and sediment if not properly managed.

Climate change: Temperatures are set to increase and sea levels rise, while rainfall and runoff patterns are expected to change. These could result in greater hydrological variability and, in the short-term, increase the uncertainty associated with developments. An increase in the risk of both flooding and drought is expected, with low-lying areas downstream particularly at risk.

Water-related poverty: Whilst long-term changes in the rural socio-economy may reduce the numbers of vulnerable resource users in the future, poverty reduction in the Mekong region remains a major challenge in the medium term and an indispensable requirement of sustainable development. Developments within the water-related sectors should contribute to this while avoiding or minimising harm to those whose livelihoods depend upon natural resources.

Gender Mainstreaming is critically important for sustainable development in the Mekong basin. Men and women contribute and are impacted differently by water resources development and management. Better understanding of these differential effects is needed to enable gender-inclusive development strategies that contribute significantly to economic growth and poverty reduction, as well as to equity objectives.

BASIN-WIDE OPPORTUNITIES

Based on current assessments, and in the light of identified needs and challenges, the development opportunities identified in the BDS are:

- Tributary hydropower development
- Expansion of irrigated agriculture
- Mainstream hydropower development
- Other opportunities: fisheries, navigation, flood and drought management, watershed management, tourism and environment

In response to this analysis, the updated BDS establishes seven, medium term Strategic Priorities for basin development and management (see box) and a range of strategic actions to be implemented over the next five years to address these Priorities (see Annex A)

Implementation is undertaken at both regional and national levels through the MRC Strategic Plan and the four National Indicative Plans respectively, collectively to achieve outcomes and outputs that address BDS priorities and actions.

At the national level, Member Countries are able to capitalise on the development opportunities set out in the BDS, and are encouraged to give prominence to implementing projects that are of basin-wide significance. In addition, Member Countries are taking on increased responsibility for MRC activities in accordance with the principles established in MRC's Roadmap for decentralisation (see Section 2.3 below).

The BDS thus establishes the strategic directions and agenda for the MRC, ensuring strong linkage between strategy at the basin level, the MRC's Strategic Plan and countries' NIPs.

2.3 Regional Roadmap for decentralisation

The First MRC Summit held in Hua Hin, April 2010 set the stage for the MRC's reform. The directions set by the Prime Ministers of the four Member Countries at this Summit and reaffirmed at the Second Summit in HCMC, April 2014 include: full member country financing of the MRC by 2030; decentralisation of the organisation's core functions to Member Countries, based on the principle of subsidiarity; and an associated shift in the MRC Secretariat to a leaner organisation focussed on the MRC's core functions. These directions establish an extensive reform agenda for the MRC.

A Roadmap of decentralisation and reforms (MRC Roadmap) was prepared and its 14 Overarching Recommendations (see Box overleaf) approved by the MRC Council in June 2014. The Roadmap sets out how the MRC as an organisation will develop over the next 15 years, moving from its current largely Development Partner funded, programme structure to a smaller, Member Country financed organisation, focussed on core functions (CF), within which core river basin management functions (CRBMF) are defined.

The Roadmap, inter alia, establishes

- the nature of MRC's core functions, in that they should serve the MRC's long-term purpose of transboundary river basin planning and management and be performed on a routine, recurrent basis. (As a corollary, functions that are not transboundary or do not contribute to the implementation of the 1995 Mekong Agreement will be discontinued);
- the CRBMF activities to be undertaken at the regional level (see Annex B). These will be limited to those requiring neutral, expert, transboundary facilitation principally by the

Secretariat in the short to medium term, but increasingly by regional working arrangements with Member Country technical staff). Choice of activities will be subject to five yearly review; and

- the CRBMF activities that should be undertaken by national agencies within the Member Countries, together with a timeline for the transfer of these responsibilities from the regional to national level – also subject to five yearly review.

The Roadmap also sets out a financial plan for the MRC as a whole, reflecting the transfer of regionally managed, CRBMF activities to national implementation arrangements. The financial plan also provides the basis for progressive increases in direct Member Country contributions to the Secretariat in line with the long-term (2030) objective of an organisation that is fully financed and owned by the Member Countries. Future levels of Member Country contributions are currently under negotiation.

Finally, the Roadmap provides directions on the re-organisation of the MRC Secretariat to align better with the agreed core functions and promote greater efficiencies and integration across Secretariat activities. The intent is that the current Programme structure will be replaced by a single corporate structure with operating units aligned to core functions.

This Strategic Plan sets out how the MRC will address these transformational challenges and assess the progress and achievements during 2016 - 2020 as the organisation transitions to a more efficient and effective organisation.



Summary of the Roadmap's 14 Overarching Recommendations

1. **A phased transition** to achieve the Hua Hin commitment with the Regional and National Roadmaps prepared to guide this transition
2. **MRC's core functions** include: (i) corporate services functions, (ii) core river basin management functions (CRBMFs), and (iii) consulting and advisory services functions.
3. Member Countries commit to implement and finance the 27 core river basin management (CRBMF) activities* for decentralisation and agree the proposed **timelines and levels of decentralisation** of the first batch of activities presented in the Regional Roadmap
4. Member Countries agree the **MRC Secretariat** continue to provide regional facilitation and coordination and to support implementation of the 1995 Mekong Agreement and commit to finance the Secretariat's core functionality. The MRC Secretariat will undertake this role through the 18 centralised CRBMF activities*, governance and dialogue support and corporate services functions.
5. Member Countries note that the regular **periodic reviews** [at one year prior to the end of each strategic planning period] ... may identify CRBMF activities that are no longer necessary to continue, and may also identify additional CRBMF activities that are required to implement the mandate of the MRC
6. To establish a **"kick start" fund**** ... for the period of 2014-2016 [to] initiate the CRBMF financing mechanism and finance implementation of the [first phase of] decentralisation at both national and regional levels during this period
7. Consistent with a decentralised modality, streamlining of the MRC Secretariat [could lead to] a **reduction in the staff numbers** at the MRC Secretariat to 90-100 total staff by 2020, and to 40-50 by 2030
8. To restructure the MRC Secretariat to strengthen support for decentralised implementation, streamline [its operation] and increase coordination and efficiency
9. To establish **Expert Groups** aligned to the CRBMFs by 2016. Expert Groups would replace the current steering committees, technical working groups and advisory bodies of the MRC's programmes and provide strengthened and streamlined structure for national-regional linkages.
10. The **estimated budget for a streamlined MRC Secretariat** is at a level of one third of current regional budget (or approximately US\$ 6.5 million per year in today's dollar) by 2030
11. To establish a **core river basin management financing mechanism** that (i) replaces programme budgeting by 2016, (ii) receives gradually increasing Member Country contributions from 2016 in combination with Member Country contributions to the corporate services functions (An estimated 25% of total MRC's costs would be funded by Member Countries by 2020, 50% by 2025, and 100% by 2030), and (iii) is overseen by a Budget Committee***, which would consist of one representative from each Member Country (or JC), the MRC Secretariat's Chief of FAS, an external auditor as well as two Development Partner representatives.

12. The Joint Committee to provide **high-level oversight** of the transition with an annual report provided to the Council on progress on decentralisation and emerging issues. In this function, the Joint Committee could be assisted by a Joint Committee Task Force or by a small, expert independent reform group.
13. The MRC Secretariat through the Joint Committee to develop **a detailed reform plan** to implement these recommendations, ... for implementation starting in 2016
14. Member Countries recognise the role of the **National Mekong Committees** and their Secretariats in the coordination and management of implementation of the decentralisation plan at the national level

* Changes are subject to periodic reviews scheduled at one year prior to the end of each strategic planning period (e.g. 2014 in preparation for 2016-2020 period, or 2019 for 2021-2025, etc). The 2014-2015 review provides better clarity to what activities should remain centralised and which should not (mostly related to monitoring). Work is ongoing on finalising changes resulting from this review.

** In the end, the MRC did not establish a "kick start" fund for decentralisation but instead initiated the establishment of a Basket Fund for all MRC's core functions to replace the programme-based funding mechanism in accordance with Recommendation 11 above.

*** The Budget Committee has been established in 2015 with members from MRC Member Countries (1 each), MRCS CEO assisted by Finance manager, and 2 representatives of the MRC Development Partners. It has been decided not to have an external auditor as a member of the Committee.

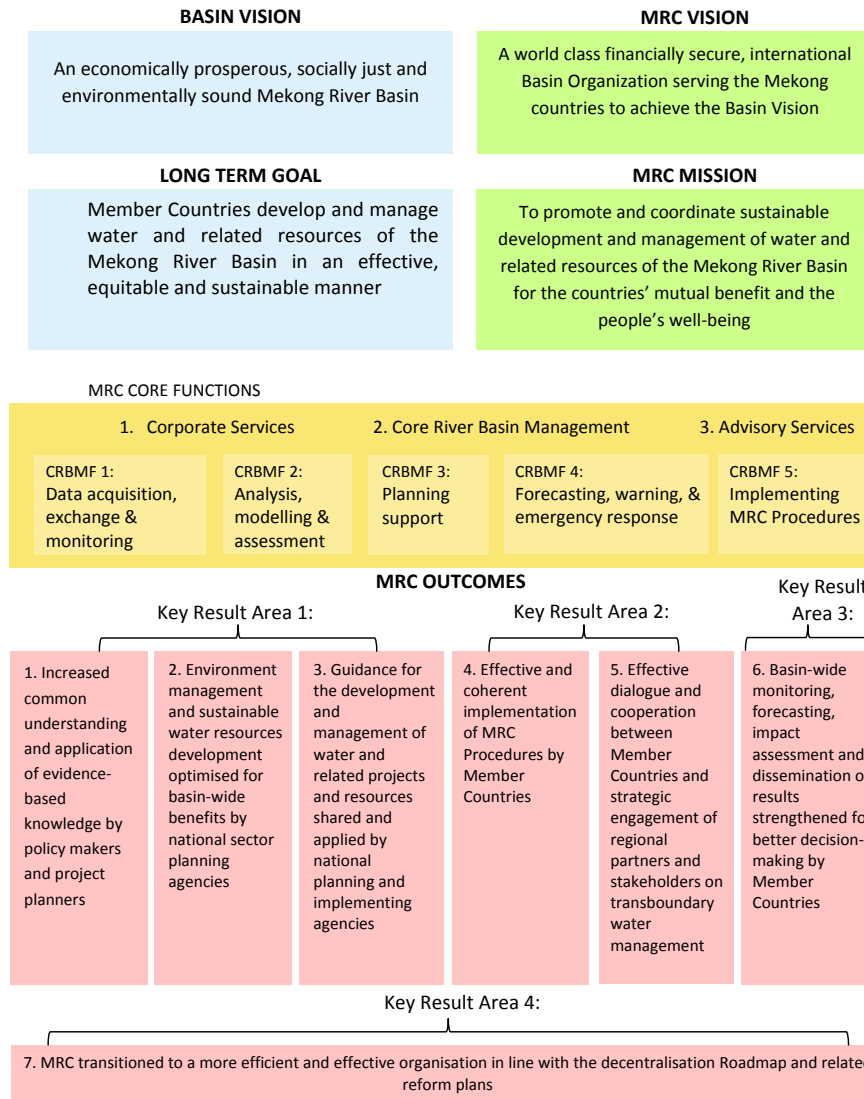




CHAPTER III

Strategic Plan objectives

3.1 Framework: Vision, Goal, Mission, Functions, Result Areas



3.2 Key Result Areas

For the next five years, the MRC will focus its work in delivering outcomes under four key result areas. These represent concrete and highly focused priority areas that MRC seeks to influence to advance its mission and role as a regional river basin organisation in the Mekong.

Under each key result area, the strategic outcomes and the approach to deliver these outcomes are presented, along with associated key deliverables (outputs), resources required and monitoring indicators. The outcomes grouped under each result area are of a similar nature but contribute to a specific result within the area.

Key Result Areas and their outcomes

I. Enhancement of national plans, projects and resources from basin-wide perspectives

1. Increased common understanding and application of evidence-based knowledge by policy makers and project planners
2. Environment management and sustainable water resources development optimised for basin-wide benefits by national sector planning agencies
3. Guidance for the development and management of water and related projects and resources shared and applied by national planning and implementing agencies

II. Strengthening of regional cooperation

4. Effective and coherent implementation of MRC Procedures by Member Countries
5. Effective dialogue and cooperation between Member Countries and strategic engagement of regional partners and stakeholders on transboundary water management

III. Better monitoring and communication of the Basin conditions

6. Basin-wide monitoring, forecasting, impact assessment and dissemination of results strengthened for better decision-making by Member Countries

IV. Leaner River Basin Organisation

7. MRC transitioned to a more efficient and effective organisation in line with the decentralisation Roadmap and related reform plans

3.3 Key Result Area 1: Enhancement of national plans, projects and resources from basin-wide perspectives

This Key Result Area relates to the role that MRC plays in informing the development of plans and projects by Member Countries that affect, directly or indirectly in a positive or adverse manner, the management of the basin. Under this, three strategic outcomes for the period of this plan are targeted:

Strategic outcomes

- Outcome 1:** Increased common understanding and application of evidence-based knowledge by policy makers and project planners
- Outcome 2:** Environment management and sustainable water resources development optimised² for basin-wide benefits by national sector planning agencies
- Outcome 3:** Guidance for the development and management of water and related projects and resources shared and applied by national planning and implementing agencies

Approach

The MRC has a central role in promoting optimal and sustainable development from a basin-wide perspective, in line with the aims of the 1995 Mekong Agreement and the updated BDS³. The MRC achieves influence through the quality of its knowledge products and its engagement with key project planners and implementers during the preparation, trialling and implementation of guidelines and strategies. Maintaining this influence and support requires capacity both to support the mitigation of risks in the short-term from existing and planned development projects in the basin and to conduct on-going analysis to help shape and adapt national development policies and plans to address longer term needs and challenges.

How the MRC will make this happen

Implementing this approach requires a four-pronged strategy, as described below.

i. Targeted assessment of need

Based on the analysis in the updated BDS, critical knowledge gaps have been identified that contribute to the risks associated with development decisions and constrain development planning.

²The word “optimised” comes from Article 1 of the 1995 Mekong Agreement, in which Member Countries agreed to “cooperate in all fields of sustainable development” of the Mekong in a “manner to optimise the multiple-use and mutual benefits of all riparians and to minimise the harmful effects”.

³The word optimal is used to paraphrase Article 1 and part of Article 2 of the 1995 Agreement: ‘the development of the full potential of sustainable benefits to all riparian States and the prevention of wasteful use of Mekong River Basin waters’. Optimal and sustainable development is also in line with the 1997 UN Watercourses Convention, which calls for “optimal and sustainable utilization” of water resources.

Member Countries' current policies, plans and projects and likely future developments have also been examined. The assessment highlights the fact that current national plans are, in a number of respects, sub-optimal from a basin-wide perspective. Using this assessment, the Secretariat will work with countries to **examine specific national plans and projects** that have significant impact on the basin and that offer opportunities for MRC to support improvement and strengthening.

ii. Strengthen the evidence base

To address the information needs identified, the MRC will initiate a number of **new studies** in areas informed by its needs assessment: biodiversity trends, fish ecology, vulnerability of rural livelihoods, and the options for increasing water storage in the basin. However, it is recognised that much relevant research is available from other organisations and previous MRC studies. As such, the Secretariat will also improve its **knowledge management** processes to ensure it maximises the value of knowledge developed in MRC and elsewhere. In some cases, rather than doing primary research, reviewing, validating and synthesising available evidence to provide an overall, consensus view may be needed. Where feasible and appropriate, the MRC will explore the scope to **convene expert working groups** with others in the region to assist in this process.

The MRC will further develop exploratory and alternative **scenario assessments**, as the primary means of support to Member Countries at the early stage of development planning. Using the evidence base established, including the cumulative assessment of the national water resources development plans under the former Basin Development Plan Programme during 2008-2010 and the Council Study, these assessments will inform judgements about trade-offs and risks associated with different management options and identification of more optimal pathways for sustainable development. The analysis of different options will be used to inform the development of basin-wide strategies (below) and facilitate discussions and dialogue at the technical and political level (see Key Result Area 2).

iii. Deliver usable knowledge products

To be useful, new or improved knowledge must be embodied in practical tools that can assist decision-makers in Member Countries ongoing and planned investments in the basin. To inform the development of longer term national policies and plans, the MRC will produce **basin-wide sector and cross-cutting strategies**. These strategies will show how planning at national level can be improved through increased cooperation amongst Member Countries. They will help highlight why environmental assets need protection for basin-wide benefit (storage, fisheries, biodiversity) and where developments could be optimised for basin needs and water security to the benefit of multiple sectors (flood protection, hydropower, irrigation, navigation, etc.). In the process, **joint projects and options for cost and benefit sharing** will be identified and promoted.

In the shorter term, **Best Practice Guidelines and implementation guidance** developed by MRC, Member Countries, and other organisations will be further developed and shared to minimise

potential transboundary impacts and risks of existing and impending national projects and programmes. As a regional body and forum, MRC has an important role to facilitate sharing of information and experience for joint learning to support the development and operation of water and related projects on the mainstream and tributaries.

iv. Promote and disseminate

Use and application of MRC knowledge products require effective promotion and dissemination. The first step occurs during the development phase, when MRC consults widely with target end-users to ensure their needs and expectations inform the development of the products. This occurs through established mechanisms of **national and regional consultations and regional technical working groups**. The MRC aims to strengthen the approach further, by engaging the **regional stakeholder forum** more in substantive development of knowledge products and by engaging the broader stakeholders (especially private sector, civil society) through the **stakeholder platform** (under Key Result Area 2). In certain cases, where necessary the MRC Secretariat will provide support to target users at a national level in the form of **training or awareness-raising** to increase the likelihood of uptake.

The MRC Secretariat will work closely with National Mekong Committee (NMC) Secretariats to ensure our knowledge products engage effectively with national policy processes. Support will be provided to the NMC Secretariats to identify key national stakeholders and develop **joint outreach strategies**, for implementation with both national and regional level support, leveraging our position as 'neutral' knowledge or technical facilitators. In addition, National Indicative Plans will include activities for dissemination and uptake promotion to ensure these aspects are adequately covered.

The MRC will also maintain communication channels with target users in Member Countries so that we can **seek regular feedback** on the quality of our knowledge products and the extent of uptake. This is elaborated in the M&E framework.

What the MRC will deliver

The key deliverables (outputs) required under the outcomes in this Result Area are as follows. **Annex A provides more detail and full listing outputs.**

Types	Deliverables
New assessments/ synthesis of existing research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transboundary impacts and mitigation for capture fish ecology • Transboundary impacts and mitigation for rural livelihoods • Storage options for flood, drought and environment management • Biodiversity: baseline environmental conditions and trends • Water requirements and availability for specific land uses* • Basin-wide assessment of development and climate scenarios to address longer term needs and challenges • Transboundary impacts of development projects, including irrigation projects and sustainable groundwater management*
Basin-wide strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable hydropower • Flood and drought* management and mitigation • Fisheries management and development • Master plan for regional waterborne transport • Management for priority environmental assets • Mekong Adaptation (climate change) • Updated Basin development strategy, including a Basin Development Plan
Guidelines / guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream dam design • Sharing and learning of guidelines on development and operation of water and related tributary projects • Integrated Flood Risk Management • Waterborne transport management • Sustainable Transportation of Dangerous Goods • Watershed management practices • Transboundary Environment Impact Assessment* • Hydropower Environment Impact Mitigation and Risk Management • Sustainable use and management of wetlands* • Adapt to water shortage and drought impacts* • Fish friendly irrigation schemes*

Note: * Deliverables that are already funded

What resources the MRC will need

Within MRC Secretariat, the team responsible for Assessment and Knowledge Management will be actively involved in undertaking the studies and assessments identified. They will liaise closely with the team responsible for Basin Planning and Management, who will guide the approach and lead on the development of the resulting strategies. Finally, the Communications team will play a key role in developing the dissemination and promotion strategy for all key deliverables.

Beyond the Secretariat, the National Mekong Committees (NMCs) will also play a crucial role, as both a direct channel to target users and target users themselves. National Focal Points within the NMC Secretariats and planning departments of national agencies will coordinate the necessary national stakeholders to ensure effective engagement at that level. To ensure that MRC collectively has efficient outreach to target users, MRC Secretariat and the NMC Secretariats will operate under a system of shared and mutual accountability. Close dialogue and monitoring will be maintained to ensure both meet their expected responsibilities.

The activities required to support the deliverables identified under this Key Result Area are budgeted to cost US\$35 million over the course of the Strategic Plan (54% of total budget).

How the MRC will know if it is successful

The MRC will track its influence and success in this key result area by monitoring the following indicators:

- The number of national and regional agencies and organisations using MRC knowledge generated for research, planning and policy making
- Evidence of national and regional decisions making based on or referring to MRC knowledge products
- Number of transboundary national and provincial projects applying MRC guidelines
- Evidence of national and basin benefits in using MRC guidelines and standards
- Number of transboundary national and provincial policies and plans integrating MRC basin-wide analysis and strategies
- Evidence that National Plans benefit from basin-wide strategies and action plans

Gender Indicators

- Evidence of NMCs and Line Agencies applying MRC Gender Strategy & Policy, tools/ knowledge products
- Evidence of Regional and National policies, strategies and plans incorporating gender aspects

3.4 Key Result Area 2: Strengthening of regional cooperation

While the knowledge and understanding generated under Key Result Area 1 are necessary, they are not sufficient to advance basin-wide optimal and sustainable development. This Key Result Area focuses on the engagement and cooperation needed between a wide range of stakeholders to realise fully the potential benefits for the basin. Within this Result Area, two strategic outcomes for the period of this plan have been identified:

Strategic outcomes

Outcome 4: Effective and coherent implementation of MRC Procedures by Member Countries

Outcome 5: Effective dialogue and cooperation between Member Countries and strategic engagement of regional partners and stakeholders on transboundary water management

Approach

The updated BDS for 2016-2020 is directed at “Cooperation on water development and management to further move national sector planning towards basin-wide optimal and sustainable development in the Mekong basin”. Optimal and sustainable development and management of the resource is fundamentally a collective action challenge. Achieving the necessary cooperation depends on sufficient levels of trust, confidence and a sense of fairness existing between stakeholders. The MRC will engender stronger relationships by facilitating dialogue among its member countries and with its partners on the options to address pressing and longer-term needs and challenges, increase regional benefits, reduce regional costs, and provide water security, underpinned by established, transparent Procedures that address Member Countries’ needs.

How the MRC will make this happen

Implementing this approach requires a five-pronged strategy, as described below.

i. Implementing MRC Procedures

The five MRC Procedures and their Technical Guidelines elaborate key principles established in the 1995 Mekong Agreement and guide Member Countries’ interactions for basin management and development. Compared to most developing basins, they provide a solid foundation for on-going cooperation. However, effective implementation faces challenges depending on the particular Procedure, including: misconceptions regarding role among some stakeholders, perceptions of low value/high burden among some Member Countries, uncertainty about the Procedure’s scope and lack of implementation capacity in some Member Countries.

To address these challenges, the MRC will **review and update the Procedures** as necessary, facilitating dialogue between Member Countries to reach a consensus where necessary. We will also **promote common understanding** among Member Countries about the role and scope of different Procedures, supported by **targeted training at a national level** where necessary. A key vehicle to achieve this will be the effective operation of the recently established **Joint Platform** that will act as a forum for discussion about the Procedures and will encourage a more coherent, less piecemeal, approach to their application. **Stronger linkages with basin development planning** will also assist in the implementation of the Procedures, making them tools to support basin development and not potential blockages.

ii. Strengthening cooperation with China and Myanmar

Among the upper riparians, cooperation between the MRC Members and Dialogue Partners (China and Myanmar) is central to developing and managing the Mekong. While MRC Procedures do not apply to non-Member States, the principles of information sharing, dialogue and monitoring form the basis for MRC's relations with Dialogue Partners, especially China. Building on existing foundations of regular communication, information sharing and technical exchanges, the MRC will aim to conclude an additional **agreement** with China to capture potential downstream opportunities of dry season flow increase and address associated risks. This could lead to the exchange of seasonal data and 3-year dam operation plans, a process for advance warning of major operational changes and new water planning initiatives, and **engagement of China in the 5-yearly updating of the State of Basin report** (to include the Lancang basin). For Myanmar, dialogue and information sharing will continue; and intensify if Myanmar puts in place plans to develop its part of the basin.

iii. Leveraging partnerships with ASEAN and GMS

Within the context of ASEAN integration, the MRC will work actively and more strategically with the GMS and ASEAN, as the two most prominent regional cooperation frameworks. More effective engagement with ASEAN's political and policy arenas offers the scope to promote MRC's agenda, help frame debates about development affecting the Basin, and further enhance regional integration. As an initial step, MRC will **review and update the MOU** with ASEAN (which expires this year). More substantively, however, we will develop a tailored **ASEAN engagement strategy** that will include identifying key ASEAN fora, events and working groups where MRC representation would be beneficial, and vice versa.

Through its Regional Investment Framework (RIF), GMS with support from ADB offers both a channel for the MRC to shape relevant investments in line with the BDS, and a source of potential funding for basin-wide and joint opportunities identified and developed under the MRC framework, including in the new National Indicative Plans. Similarly, MRC will develop a tailored **GMS engagement strategy** that reflects these ambitions. This may include: pursuing greater alignment and traction between the BDS and the RIF; closer technical collaboration in areas of joint interest (environment, energy, transport, etc); and MRC participation in the development of ADB support for national development plans in Mekong countries.

iv. Establishing a Regional Stakeholder Platform

Recognising the range of interests involved in the Basin and the importance of a shared and informed understanding of different stakeholders' perspectives, MRC will strengthen relationships of member governments with a broader range of actors: the private sector, civil society and research organisations. To do this, MRC will establish a **Regional Stakeholder Platform**, with associated working groups for different interests. The purpose of the platform will be three-fold. First, promote common understanding of the evidence base relating to the basin. While stakeholders may disagree about approaches, recognition of the MRC as a repository and impartial interpreter of the scientific evidence is an important step towards resolving differences. Second, promote greater understanding of the role and benefits of MRC Procedures and other knowledge products. And finally, provide a forum for substantive involvement by broader stakeholders in the assessment of scenarios and projects and development of basin-wide strategies and guidelines and provide recommendations to political decision makers.

v. Strengthening strategic engagement and water diplomacy

Equipped with sound technical knowledge, the MRC will aim to reinforce the value of cooperation among riparians by facilitating cost and benefit sharing in 'win-win' basin-wide and joint projects between Member Countries. This will draw on analysis generated under Key Result Area 1 but will still require discussion and negotiation between the countries and within sectors to find the 'middle ground' to which all can agree or compromise. Our longer term strategy is to develop **deliberative processes and mechanisms** to facilitate the development of informed, consensual solutions.

The MRC has proven skills in facilitating discussion and debate at the technical level but faces challenges to engage political decision makers in the process. Addressing this challenge requires action on a number of fronts. Over the period of this plan, the Secretariat will look to expand in-house capacity by **recruiting expertise in the skills needed** to work more strategically and politically. In the shorter term, we will bolster existing capacity through **targeted in-house capacity development in water diplomacy**⁴. We will also look to **partner with trusted multilateral development partner(s), other regional bodies and RBOs**. Partnering offers a cost-effective approach to build capacity, by exposing MRC to different strategies and approaches. It also provides a potential entry point for MRC's findings and recommendations on preferred basin-wide development pathways, cost and benefit sharing arrangements and joint projects to be brought to bear in existing dialogue and negotiation processes facilitated by partners.

What the MRC will deliver

The key deliverables (outputs) required under the outcomes in this Key Result Area are as follows. Annex A provides more detail.

⁴ "Water" and "hydro" diplomacy are used interchangeably in this document, as is conventionally practiced globally. See, for example: <https://www.adelphi.de/en/in-focus/water-diplomacy>.

Types	Deliverables
Cooperation on MRC Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures and associated technical guidelines reviewed and updated • MRC Joint Platform and working groups for MRC Procedures implementation • Common understanding of the Procedures implementation by Member Countries promoted
Engagement and cooperation with partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with China and Myanmar further developed and implemented • Engagement with ASEAN and ADB-supported GMS and other organizations / initiatives updated and implemented • Regional Stakeholder Platform established and operational

What resources the MRC will need

While the quality and neutrality of MRC analysis provides a foundation for achievement of the outcomes in this Key Result Area, realisation of these ambitions will require strategic, high-level engagement with a range of stakeholders.

The CEO of the MRC Secretariat will play a key role, undertaking both quiet and public diplomacy to promote opportunities among senior officials and ensure the wider public are well-informed through the media. Public diplomacy requires putting out regular, evidence-based information and correcting misperceptions and misrepresentations. The CEO will be assisted in this role by the Secretariat's communication team and basin planning/management team, who will turn technical information into targeted messages for high level policy makers and the public.

The MRC Joint Committee and Council members will also play an active role in their respective countries through their own networks. The MRC Secretariat, through the CEO, will support them in this regard with regular briefing, including providing short policy briefs, on the strategic issues facing MRC.

There is also a potential role for senior officials of trusted multilateral development partners such as the UN, ASEAN, World Bank and ADB in supporting and promoting MRC recommended development pathways. The CEO and basin planning/management team will look to build these relationships, through attendance at high-level events and follow up on speeches/statements made.

The activities required to support the immediate priorities identified under this Key Result Area are budgeted to cost US\$7.6 million over the course of the Strategic Plan (12% of total budget).

How the MRC will know if it is successful

The MRC will track its influence and success in this key result area using the following indicators:

- Evidence of adverse transboundary impacts that were mitigated, minimized or avoided in basin planning and management by using MRC Procedures
- Evidence of actions taken under PWQ and PMFM when water flows, levels and quality are at critical levels
- The number of data and information under the PDIES that are shared and used for basin development planning and management and research purpose
- The number of projects monitored under PWUM in both national and regional level
- Number of water utilization projects notified, consulted and improved under consultation and notification process of PNPCA
- Number of deals and agreements to secure specific cost and benefit sharing arrangements especially joint projects among riparian countries
- Evidence of stronger engagement with China and Myanmar
- Evidence of ASEAN and GMS Mekong related strategies, forums and meetings reflect MRC basin-wide perspectives
- Evidence that the opinions/perspectives of academic/research institutions, civil society and private sector are taken into consideration by MRCS and Member Countries
- Extent of continuing dialogue of Member Countries to resolve critical basin issues and challenges

Gender Indicators

- Extent to which gender issues are addressed in MRC Joint Platform and Regional Stakeholder Forum.
- Gender balance of participations of MRC's events

3.5 Key Result Area 3: Better monitoring and communication of the Basin conditions

The Lower Mekong Basin is expected to experience significant environmental and socio-economic changes due to developments within and beyond the water sectors in the Lower as well as Upper Basin. The Mekong is further expected to be significantly affected by climate change, with an associated increase in the risk of both flooding and drought. This Result Area relates to the key role that MRC plays in tracking these changes and responding to both the short and longer term implications. Under this Key Result Area, the MRC targets one outcome over the course of this Strategic Plan:

Strategic outcome

Outcome 6: Basin-wide monitoring, forecasting, impact assessment and dissemination of results strengthened for better decision-making by Member Countries

Approach

The importance of coordinated monitoring and forecasting systems for the management of flood and pollution risk in both the mainstream and tributaries has been demonstrated clearly over the last decade. Daily warnings provide government agencies and communities in the Basin with advanced notice of rising water levels.

MRC's role to date has been to support the collection and analysis of critical data and communicate the results effectively to inform timely decision-making in Member Countries. As both a trustee of the data and a neutral analyst and interpreter of the implications at a regional level, MRC fulfils a vital institutional function that no individual Member Country can perform. The MRC will continue to provide these services to Members but in the future, under MRC's decentralization roadmap, responsibility for the operation and maintenance of these monitoring systems will increasingly reside with individual Member Countries. This presents both opportunities and challenges for Member Countries that MRC will have to manage.

How the MRC will make this happen

The MRC will maintain its current suite of **monitoring and forecasting systems** as well as its modelling tools and capability. Decentralisation of monitoring responsibilities provides an opportunity to build ownership and capacity among the relevant Member Countries' agencies. However, it also carries risks for data quality. Relevant staff in MRC Secretariat will coordinate and monitor data quality closely to ensure any weaknesses are addressed early. In addition, where there are real capacity constraints, MRC will use its dialogue with Development Partners to examine opportunities for bilateral technical and/or financial assistance to the agencies in need.

MRC will continue to provide forecasting and early warning services to Member Countries for flood and drought management. We will support the maintenance and improvement and, where necessary, expansion of monitoring systems on water quality, sediment transport, fisheries, biodiversity, water use and ground water across the Lower Mekong Basin. We will also set up a communication network to link with the disaster management focal points in each country to support transboundary pollution incident alert, mitigation and response. The data and information routinely and periodically assembled will be maintained in regional databases and publicly shared through the MRC's web-based Data Portal, and communicated with stakeholders.

While routine analytical and dissemination services provided are keys, this Key Result Area also

includes the flagship knowledge and impact monitoring product, the **State of Basin Report**. This provides a status report on the economic, social, environmental, climate and cooperation conditions in the Basin (upper and lower parts) and is an important input for the update of the Basin Development Strategy and national planning processes. State of basin analysis and reporting will be based on the **MRC Indicator Framework**, a unified hierarchy of strategic indicators (for policy makers and the public), assessment indicators and monitoring parameters. The understanding generated by the Framework will help guide basin management objectives in the future – for example, in terms of water flows, water quality, environmental assets, vulnerable populations, economic benefits from water resources development and so on.

What the MRC will deliver

We have targeted the following deliverables under this Key Result Area. Annex A provides more detail.

Types	Deliverables
Monitoring, forecasting, and information systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and forecasting systems developed and maintained • State of Basin Report based on MRC Indicator Framework prepared • Regional information systems and databases quality assured, standardized and maintained • Communication of and access to MRC data and information developed and maintained
Modelling tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRC modelling and related analysis tools updated and approved for use

What resources will the MRC need

Realising these ambitions requires coordinated efforts across a number of MRC teams. The forecasting and emergency team and the team responsible for data management and modelling will be key focal points in the Secretariat in coordinating with Member Country agencies delivering these outcomes.

In addition, bilateral technical assistance from Development Partners may be important in selected cases to effect a smooth transition under the decentralisation programme. These will be elaborated in the updated National Indicative Plans.

The activities required to support the necessary work under this Key Result Area are budgeted to cost US\$10.5 million over the course of the Strategic Plan (16% of total budget).

How the MRC will know if it is successful

MRC will monitor performance and progress in this area based on the following indicators:

- Quality (timeliness and accuracy) of MRC forecasting information in critical or emergency situations.
- The extent to which Line Agencies use MRC reports and information systems for better decision making

Gender Indicators

- The extent to which information regarding gender-based vulnerability and exposure to challenges and risks is reflected in the basin-wide monitoring, forecasting and dissemination of results

3.6 Key Result Area 4: Leaner River Basin Organisation

Consecutive MRC Summits of Heads of Government have committed to an on-going reform programme designed to build Member Country ownership and better align the distribution of roles and responsibilities with Member Country capacities and needs. As part of this, existing systems and structures are being re-engineered to ensure the MRC Secretariat provides an operating platform that is fit for purpose over the coming decade. The key outcome targeted under this Result Area for the coming 5 years is:

Strategic outcome

Outcome 7: MRC transitioned to a more efficient and effective organisation in line with the Decentralisation Roadmap and related reform plans

Approach

The reform ambitions established in MRC Summits are clear: Full member country financing of the MRC by 2030; and rationalisation of the MRC's core functions and decentralisation of relevant activities to Member Countries, based on the principle of subsidiarity. Alongside these changes, the MRC Secretariat will shift to a leaner organisation built around and focussed on the MRC's core functions. The MRC will advance this agenda significantly over the course of this Strategic Plan, with activities for decentralisation identified and targeted reductions in MRC's annual budget to less than US\$10 million by 2020 and in staffing by approximately half. Implementation of the extensive reform agenda requires a structured, well-managed process to ensure that the MRC simultaneously delivers the intended improvements in services to Member Countries targeted in Key Result Areas 1-3. It will also require rigorous monitoring and reporting, alongside transparent and timely discussion and resolution of challenges as they emerge.

How the MRC will make this happen

The **MRC Roadmap** is a key tool for the reform process, setting out the agreed decentralisation programme and a financial plan for the MRC as a whole. In order to enable these changes, the MRC Secretariat will **restructure** starting 2016 to better align with the MRC's core functions. This will also enable greater efficiency gains through the pooling and integration of skills that were previously siloed and duplicated across the MRC Secretariat in more than 10 separate programmes. The MRC Secretariat will also introduce **new financial management systems** to enable a shift from programmatic funding to basket funding by Development Partners, to facilitate greater efficiency and agility in allocating resources to priority needs.

Consistent with a decentralised operating model, **staffing will be streamlined** in the MRC Secretariat, through a combination of staff reductions based on a definition of the Secretariat's needs going forward and more flexible yet strategic use of outsourcing. A period of significant transition poses significant organizational risks. In order to retain highly qualified and motivated staff, a revised workforce plan will be developed and communicated clearly and routinely with existing staff regarding the direction and status of the planned reforms.

In order to facilitate and oversee the reform process, the MRC Secretariat may appoint an experienced **Change Manager**, who will champion the change and ensure a smooth transition. In the new structure, we will also strengthen the management of the Secretariat by having a dedicated senior management position to oversee the management and operation of the Secretariat and delivery of agreed plans, freeing up the CEO to focus on strategic, diplomatic and policy issues, including stakeholder engagement. This is in line with the practice of many organisations, where the CEO is supported by a senior professional manager in running the organisation.

Timely decisions and implementation of the planned reforms is essential to success. To maintain commitment to the process, the MRC **will monitor the progress of the reforms closely**, including budgets for and execution of decentralised activities under the National Indicative Plans. As agreed by Member Countries, the updated NIPs for 2016-2020 will be designed to contain both decentralised and national activities that contribute to overall MRC outcomes and outputs in the Strategic Plan. In terms of reporting on the reform progress, we will produce quarterly updates for Member Countries and Development Partners and make these available on our website. The Secretariat will report consolidated progress annually to the MRC Council.

What will the MRC deliver

The MRC has targeted the following deliverables to support the outcomes in this Key Result Area. Annex A provides more detail.

Types	Deliverables
Organisation reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised MRC organisational structure operational • New MRC staffing plan in place and implemented • New financial management system functioning • Results-based monitoring, evaluation and reporting system for SP and NIPs operating
The next plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan for 2021-2025 delivered

What resources will the MRC need

Corporate Services team will be mobilised to deliver the reform programme, under the CEO's leadership, and guided by the Change Manager. This will involve engaging with and enlisting the support of technical teams. In this regard, internal communications supported by the Communications team will also be important. Finally, the Monitoring and Evaluation experts in the Secretariat will also be required to establish robust systems to track and report progress.

The activities required to support the immediate priorities identified under this Key Result Area are budgeted to cost US\$1.85 million over the course of the Strategic Plan (2.8% of total budget).

How the MRC will know if it is successful

The MRC will monitor and report progress based on the following indicators:

- Extent to which MRCS organization structure supports integrated water resources planning & implementation (IWRM Framework)
- Percentage of MRC SP outputs completed as planned
- CFs batches 1 & 2 successfully fully decentralized
- Percentage of Member Countries funding contributions
- Extent of staff morale and satisfaction with the MRC management system and organizational direction
- Percentage (10%) of reduction in operating costs achieved over period of the plan

Gender Indicators

- MRC's Gender Strategy and Policy are referred to in the development and implementation of MRC activities
- Gender-disaggregated data is collected and used for the MRC's M&E system.

3.7 How the MRC addresses specific basin needs and challenges through the planned SP outputs and activities

The following is a summary of how the MRC addresses the basin-wide needs and challenges identified in the BDS and chapter 2 through its planned deliverables.

Addressing BASIN NEEDS

Food and livelihood security

Two priority studies will provide information on dependent livelihoods and the measures needed to adapt to changes brought about by development:

- Study of capture fish ecology completed and promoted with a view to mitigating impacts from development and protecting environment
- Study of rural livelihoods and measures to cope with transboundary changes by which sector development plans can adopt a pro-poor agenda completed and promoted

In addition, work related to irrigated agriculture, drought management, watershed management and fisheries (including aquaculture development) which contribute to food and livelihood security is as follows:

- *Guidance for design and operation of irrigation systems with transboundary implications*
- *Guidelines for fish-friendly irrigation schemes*
- *Basin-wide fisheries management and development strategy (BFMS)*
- *Guidelines to adapt to water shortage and drought impacts*
- *Regional strategy for drought management and mitigation*
- *Guidelines for improvement of watershed management practices*

Resilience against floods and droughts

In the short term, efforts are focused on the following services and outputs:

- *Monitoring and forecasting systems developed and maintained*
- *Integrated Flood Risk Management guidelines promoted and implementation supported*
- *Guidelines to adapt to water shortage and drought impacts prepared and implemented*

In the longer run, as cities and population grow, and climate change advances, more protection is needed to secure infrastructure, assets and lives. Thus, we prioritise two outputs in this regard:

- *Study of options to increase storage within LMB for flood, drought and environment management purposes completed and promoted*
- *Regional strategies for flood management and mitigation developed and approved*
- *Regional strategy for drought management and mitigation developed and approved*

Energy security

The MRC's contribution in this area focuses on hydropower as a cost-effective source of renewable energy, even though hydropower will represent a small (but sizeable) percentage of future regional energy demand. Assessment will be conducted to look at opportunities and risks of optimising basin-wide hydropower development, and a strategy developed taking into account the synergies and trade-offs with other sectors in terms of regional trade and integration.

- *Basin-wide development and climate scenarios and related assessments updated and findings agreed and disseminated*
- *Basin-wide strategy for sustainable hydropower developed and approved*
- *Engagement with ASEAN and GMS and other organizations updated and implemented*
- *Joint enabling, infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects and mechanisms between two or more member countries initiated, further developed and carried out*

Improved navigation

Improving navigation requires both activities relating to facilitation of harmonized waterborne transport standards and regulations as well as long term planning to enhance regional trade and connectivity throughout the basin. Both works are included in the Strategic Plan:

- *A set of guidelines and frameworks on waterborne transport management prepared and promoted*
- *Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transportation of Dangerous Goods implemented*
- *Master plan for regional waterborne transport implemented*

Addressing BASIN CHALLENGES

Environmental degradation from developments in water and non-water sectors

Addressing this challenge requires further understanding of the impacts brought about by changes in key areas:

- *Study of capture fish ecology completed and promoted with a view to mitigating impacts from development*
- *Study of biodiversity to establish baseline environmental conditions and trends completed*
- *Study of options to increase natural storage within LMB for flood, drought and environment management purposes completed and promoted*

And promoting relevant guidelines to support national environmental management:

- *Sharing and learning of "best practice" guidelines and tools to support the development and operation of water and related projects on tributaries of transboundary significance*
- *The implementation of the guidelines for improvement of watershed management practices supported*
- *Methodologies for sustainable use and management of wetlands developed and implementation supported*

As well as developing strategies to manage and protect basin-wide environmental assets:

- *Basin-wide strategy and action plan for fisheries management and development*
- *Strategy for basin-wide environmental management for prioritised environmental assets developed and approved*

Finally, state of environment will be monitored and reported through:

- *Monitoring ... systems for MRC Procedures and Indicator Framework developed and maintained*
 - o *Maintain, improve the harmonized MRC monitoring system including hydro-meteorology, water quality, sediment transport, fisheries, biodiversity, water use and ground water across the Mekong Basin*
 - o *Support national water quality routine monitoring in Cambodia and Laos*
 - o *Support national ecosystem routine monitoring in all countries*
 - o *Support national fisheries routine monitoring in all countries*
 - o *Support national SIMVA routine monitoring and case studies in all countries*
- *State of Basin and Status of Climate Change Reports based on MRC Indicator Framework prepared*

Hydropower impacts in the Upper and Lower Basin

Addressing this challenge requires closing key knowledge gaps to better inform hydropower project planning and decision making:

- *Basin-wide development and climate scenarios and related assessments updated and findings agreed and disseminated*
 - *Study of capture fish ecology completed and promoted with a view to mitigating impacts from development*
 - *Study of rural livelihoods and measures to cope with transboundary changes by which sector development plans can adopt a pro-poor agenda completed and promoted*
-

<p>And in the short term, supporting sustainable hydropower project implementation through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Design guidance for mainstream dams reviewed, updated and implementation supported</i> • <i>Sharing and learning of “best practice” guidelines and tools to support the development and operation of water and related projects on tributaries of transboundary significance</i> • <i>Hydropower Environmental Impact Mitigation and Risk Management</i> <p>And improving the effectiveness of MRC Procedures implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Procedures and associated technical guidelines reviewed and updated</i> • <i>MRC Joint Platform and working groups for MRC Procedures implementation supported</i> 	<p>And in the medium term, developing strategies to optimise sustainable basin development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Basin-wide strategy for sustainable hydropower developed and approved</i> • <i>Basin development strategy, including a new indicative Basin Development Plan, updated and approved for 2021-2025</i> <p>And through increased cooperation between Member countries and with China:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Engagement with China and Myanmar further developed and implemented</i> • <i>Joint enabling, infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects and mechanisms between two or more member countries initiated, further developed and carried out</i>
<p>In the process, to engage the private sector companies and consulting firms as well as broader stakeholders in the development and implementation of assessment, guidelines and strategies through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Regional Stakeholder Platform, especially the mechanism of specific working group for private sector</i> 	
<p>Finally, as with other water and related developments, the positive and adverse impacts of hydropower development will be monitored and reported through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>State of Basin Report based on MRC Indicator Framework</i> • <i>Joint monitoring of projects on the mainstream</i> 	

Climate change adaptation

<p>Building on the work done during the past few years, this challenge will be tackled through completing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Basin-wide development and climate scenarios and related assessments updated and findings agreed and disseminated</i> • <i>Study on water requirement and availability for specific land uses completed for drought management and impacts adaptation and mitigation purposes</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>And finalising and implementing:</i> • <i>Mekong climate change adaptation strategy and action plan</i> • <i>Guidelines for climate change impact assessments and adaptation planning</i>
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(in addition, climate change aspects are integrated into relevant assessments, other sector guidelines and strategies)

Water-related poverty reduction

Medium and longer term poverty reduction in the basin will depend on developments in the water and non-water sectors. In the shorter-term, , the MRC will support member countries in ensuring that developments in water-related sectors minimise harm to the poor and vulnerable through key work below. The direct impact on poverty alleviation would reside with the actions of member governments themselves.

- *Study of capture fish ecology completed and promoted with a view to mitigating impacts from development*
- *Study of rural livelihoods and measures to cope with transboundary changes by which sector development plans can adopt a pro-poor agenda completed and promoted*
- *Study on water requirement and availability for specific land uses completed for drought management and impacts adaptation and mitigation purposes*
- *Study of on transboundary impacts of irrigation projects and sustainable groundwater management for production completed and promoted*
- *Basin-wide development and climate scenarios and related assessments updated and findings agreed and disseminated*

And through guidelines:

- *Design guidance for mainstream dams reviewed, updated and implementation supported*
- *Integrated Flood Risk Management guidelines promoted and implementation supported*
- *Sustainable Management of Watersheds in the Lower Mekong Basin Project supported*
- *Guidelines for water resources management to adapt to water shortage and drought impacts in drought prone areas prepared, approved and promoted at the national level*

In the long term, economic growth through optimal and sustainable basin development would contribute to poverty reduction, and the MRC provide support through basin-wide strategies:

- *Basin-wide strategy for sustainable hydropower*
- *Master plan for regional waterborne transport*
- *Basin-wide strategy for fisheries management and development*
- *Basin development strategy updated and approved for 2021-2020*

Engagement of civil society and broader stakeholder through:

- *Regional Stakeholder Platform established and implemented for enhanced dialogue and collaboration with different interest groups*

Monitoring and Reporting on status of poverty related indicators:

- *State of Basin and Status of Climate Change Reports based on MRC Indicator Framework prepared*





CHAPTER IV

Strategic Plan implementation

4.1 The overarching approach

This Chapter describes the MRC's approach to implementing of the Strategic Plan, the roles of MRC's key actors and stakeholders in realising the Plan's objectives, and sets out the financial and human resource requirements and arrangements for the Plan. It also describes key risks to Plan implementation and preliminary risk management measures.

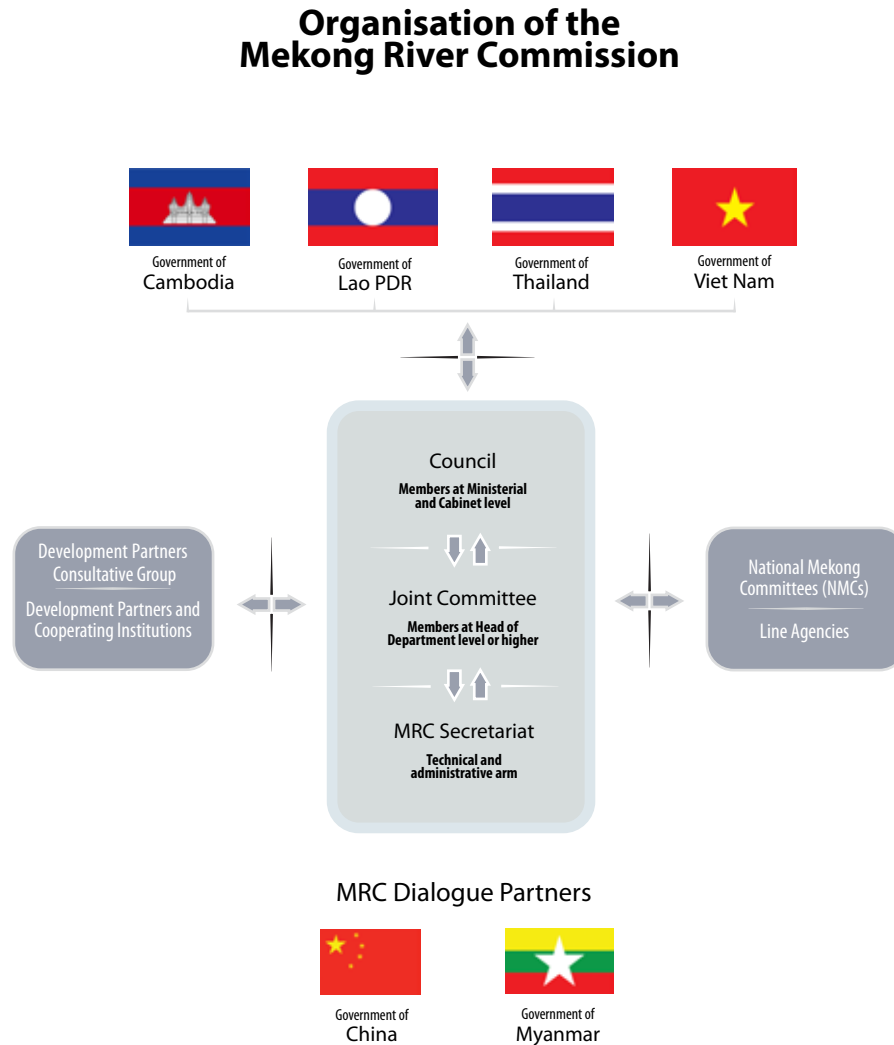
This 5-year Strategic Plan serves as a macro-level planning tool for the MRC at the regional level. It will be operationalised through five successive Annual Work Plans. The Annual Work Plan (AWP) specifies the activities that the MRC will implement in that year (see Annex B).

As such, while the Outcomes and Outputs in this Strategic Plan are firm targets for the MRC to achieve during 2016-2020, the (5-year) Activities identified are a preliminary guide and indicative, pending availability of funds, further consultations within Member Countries, emerging issues and priorities and progress made in preceding years. The final definition of Activities will be determined at the operational level through the Annual Work Planning process.

The CRBMF (functional) activities which are described in the decentralisation Roadmap are being updated in 2015 (see Annex B), and will be updated every 5 years. They provide a general framework through which specific activities will be identified for implementation during the 5-year period. All activities for the first round of decentralisation include a regional component for collation, quality assurance and dissemination of monitoring reports. For the next wave of activities, the Strategic Plan includes regional technical support to embed the activities at national level as well as for transitional support for funding the data collection activities.

4.2 Institutional Arrangements

Figure 2 MRC Governance Structure



Summit of Heads of Government

The four-yearly **Summit of Heads of Government**, first organised in 2010, is the highest political forum of the MRC whereby outcomes of cooperation are assessed as well as direction for the following four years for the Commission and Mekong cooperation is set. The Third Summit scheduled for April 2018 – the mid-point in the implementation of this Strategic Plan, is an important milestone for the MRC to assess the direction of its reform and the achievements of cooperation.

Council of ministers

As the highest decision-making body in the MRC and in approving this Strategic Plan, the **Council** makes policies and decisions on all policy-related matters concerning implementation, including organisational policies, basin-wide strategies and plans, strategic cooperation partnerships, and resolution of differences. The Council provides strategic guidance on priority setting, and in that connection considers and approves the Annual Work Plans (including annual budgets) based on recommendations from the Joint Committee.

In what is a critical transition phase for MRC, the Council will also oversee high-level risks relating to the organisational and stakeholder dialogue/management objectives in the Strategic Plan. Where organisational challenges cannot be resolved by the Joint Committee in the timeframe required, the Council will act as the escalation body to address outstanding issues rapidly. Given their personal seniority and influence, Council members can also help realise the Plan's ambitions with respect to stakeholder engagement. The CEO and JC will work closely with Council members in this regard.

Joint Committee

In implementing the Council's decisions, the **Joint Committee** steers the implementation of this Strategic Plan and oversees overall implementation. This role includes technical priority setting and guidance, considering and endorsing policy-related resolutions for submission to the Council for approval. In this role, the Joint Committee discusses and considers policy, technical and organisational management issues arising during the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Joint Committee provides guidance, reviews and advises on the preparation of the Annual Work Plan, covering both definition of annual activities and allocation of annual budgets.

As presently practised, the Joint Committee would establish and be assisted by Task Forces, Working Groups or similar arrangements in providing technical expert inputs and advice on certain policy-related issues. As senior officials in their respective countries, Joint Committee members also have extensive networks which can be mobilised to advance the MRC's aims with respect to engagement with external stakeholders. The CEO will work closely with Committee members in this regard (Key Result Area 2).

Secretariat

As the administrative and technical arm of the MRC, **the MRC Secretariat** facilitates regional discussion, negotiation and communication, provides technical and advisory support on regional and basin-wide issues, and undertakes the Strategic Plan's activities in cooperation with national counterparts.

Under Key Result Area 4 (Leaner RBO), the MRC Secretariat will reorganise existing Programmes into core functions based divisions to make better use of reduced resources, increase coordination between knowledge areas and operational efficiencies, and minimise duplications.

Each Divisions will lead implementation of specific outputs with the contribution of other Divisions identified in delivery plans. All Divisions will be accountable not only for their lead deliverables but also for their agreed contribution to outputs led by other teams. This arrangement will be reflected through the improved work flows and also at the budget planning and allocation level.

National Mekong Committees and line/implementing agencies

In each Member Country, **line and implementing agencies** in water and related sectors as well as those relevant to Mekong cooperation (such as planning and investment and foreign affairs) are members of a **National Mekong Committee** (NMC), supported by a **Secretariat**, that performs cross-sectoral, cross-agency coordination, communication and reporting. The NMC Secretariats are located in the ministry responsible for water and/or environment and play a key role in promoting, supporting and overseeing implementation in their respective countries.

Relevant line and implementing agencies lead the technical implementation of agreed national level activities that contribute to MRC's outcomes. Both implementation and promotion activities will be included in the National Indicative Plans (NIPs). The MRC Secretariat and NMC Secretariats will develop joint outreach and implementation plans, which, along with the NIPs, will form the basis for mutual accountability and monitoring of Strategic Plan implementation at a national level.

MRC Secretariat will also maintain communication channels with target users in Member Countries so that it can seek regular feedback on the quality of our knowledge products and the extent of uptake. At regional level, representatives of the national agencies participate in the various regional technical Working/Expert Groups to support Strategic Plan implementation, and contribute relevant national data and information.

4.3 External stakeholder engagement

Key Result Area 2 sets out the rationale for broader partner and stakeholder engagement. The MRC's focus in these five years is to broaden and deepen relationships with targeted partners and stakeholders to examine development options, costs, benefits and trade-offs to inform the riparian governments, individually and collectively. In addition to maintaining existing technical and

strategic relationships and exchanges with relevant partners, the MRC identified specific objectives for this Strategic Plan period, as set out below:

Partner/Stakeholder	Objective
China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain data and information sharing and technical exchanges • Further agreement to capture potential downstream opportunities of dry season flow increase and address associated risks • Secure greater substantive involvement in the 5-yearly updating of the State of Basin report.
Myanmar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen dialogue and technical exchanges
ASEAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key MRC strategies and perspectives are discussed and supported at relevant ASEAN forums and agendas, • Ensure debates about critical, water and related basin-wide issues are framed appropriately and influence relevant decision-making processes.
GMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen integration of MRC strategies and guidelines into GMS water and related investment appraisal and planning tools; • Increased value of GMS basin investments identified or improved with MRC support
Multilateral agencies (UN, World Bank, ADB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater awareness and strategic and water diplomacy support among senior officials for alignment/ harmonisation of approaches in line with MRC assessments, strategies and recommended development pathways
Broader stakeholders (including academia, media, NGOs) and private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Regional Stakeholder Platform, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o promote common understanding of the evidence base relating to the basin; o promote greater understanding of the role and benefits of MRC Procedures and other knowledge products; o promote substantive involvement in preparation of strategies and guidelines; and o promote substantive involvement by non-traditional partners in assessment of opportunities and development of recommendations for political decision makers

4.4 Development Partners

MRC's Development Partners (DPs) are an important asset in a number of respects: as a key source of funding for mission-critical activities; as a source of support for priority-setting led by MRC's Member Countries and subsequent implementation; as a channel to relay both MRC recommendations to stakeholders and stakeholder feedback to the MRC; and through their contribution to MRC performance, by requiring accountability for the effective use of DP funds.

Over the course of this Strategic Plan, the MRC will look to deepen MRC-DP cooperation, through:

- Commitment by DPs to new financial management arrangements (basket funding, less earmarking) to enable greater efficiency and agility in allocating resources to priority needs;
- Participation in the Budget Committee;
- Regular consultations between DPs and MRC Secretariat attached to the annual Informal Donor Meeting and annual Donor Consultative Group Meeting;
- Where appropriate, provision of targeted bilateral technical/financial assistance from DPs to develop MRC Member Countries' capacity to implement their responsibilities under the Roadmap/ NIPs;
- More visibility in the Annual Work Planning process through DPs' role in the Budget Committee (see details in Section 4.6 below);
- Greater transparency regarding progress implementing the Strategic Plan (including the reform programme) through stronger monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes.

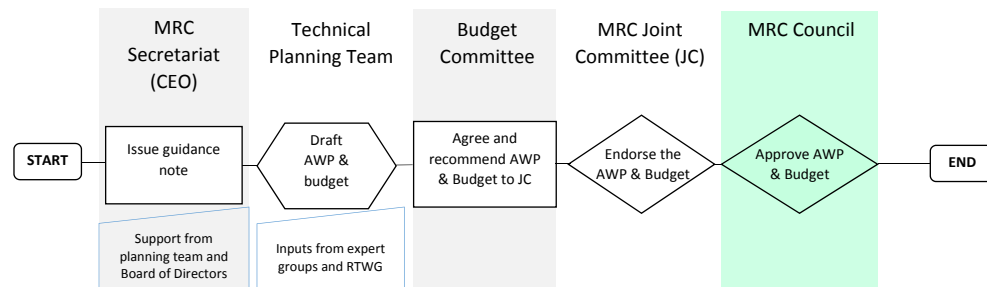
4.5 Annual work planning

The 5-year MRC-Strategic Plan serves as a macro-level planning tool for the MRC Secretariat. The operationalization of this Strategic Plan will be conducted through five successive Annual Work Plans (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020). This section describes the principles, approach and mechanisms to prepare and conduct the Annual Work Plan (AWP). The AWP specifies what the MRC plans to achieve in that particular year and the activities that the organization divisions will implement.

AWP Formulation process

The AWP formulation process will be based on the following general principles, approach and mechanisms.

Figure 3 : The AWP Formulation Process



(a) MRC Secretariat Senior Management

The CEO issues a Guidance Note setting out the broad parameters within which each AWP is to be prepared. To prepare the Guidance Note, the CEO will consult with his/her Senior Management Staff (comprising Division Directors), with the MRC Joint Committee members and with the Development Partners. The Guidance Note will help the MRCS technical planning team in presentation of the AWP.

To be issued no later than the end of Q3 each year, the Guidance Note shall include: is expected to include:

- A statement of overall budget availability for the year, based on the indicative budgets set out in the SP modified by funding realities for the specific year;
- Implementation priorities (SP outputs and activities) for the year including significant cross-cutting issues to be addressed; with associated timelines;
- Assignment of responsibility for implementation SP activities to MRC Secretariat organisation divisions;
- A consultation framework, stipulating organisations, line agencies and other stakeholders which are to be consulted as part of the AWP preparation (which may be different for each sector of activity); and
- Pro forma for presentation of activity and task plans, budgeting and resourcing.

(b) MRC Secretariat Technical Planning Team

The Team is composed of the technical leads and finance and HR managers of the different MRCS Divisions. The team will be collectively responsible for preparation of the draft AWP in conformity with the Guidance Note.

(c) Regional technical working groups/experts groups

The Secretariat Technical Planning Team (or its designated members) will consult with appropriate regional technical working or experts groups on basin planning or thematic/sectoral issues comprising of senior technical representatives from NMCs and relevant line and relevant line/ implementing agencies. This ensures that each AWP has engagement with key stakeholders in the countries and is technically sound. This will also allow for the integrity of activity planning of sector activities (e.g. agriculture, hydropower, fisheries or navigation, etc.) across the Divisions of MRC Secretariat.

The Technical Planning Team will then present their draft AWP to the CEO and Senior Management for consideration, together with a separate Quality Assurance Note confirming how the requirements of the Guidance Note have been met. The contents of the Quality Assurance Note will show in details on how the Divisions materialize the guidance from CEO in their AWP. Once satisfied, the CEO will present it to the MRC Budget Committee.

(d) Development Partners

In order to help the Development Partners to have sufficient knowledge and information on the content of the AWP before the meeting of the Budget Committee takes place, during the planning process, along with the consultation with the Member Countries, the MRCS Technical Planning Team will also engage and consult with the Development Partners. The comments from Member Countries and DPs will be taken into account in the revised AWP, which will be submitted to the Budget Committee for consideration and guidance.

(e) MRC Budget Committee

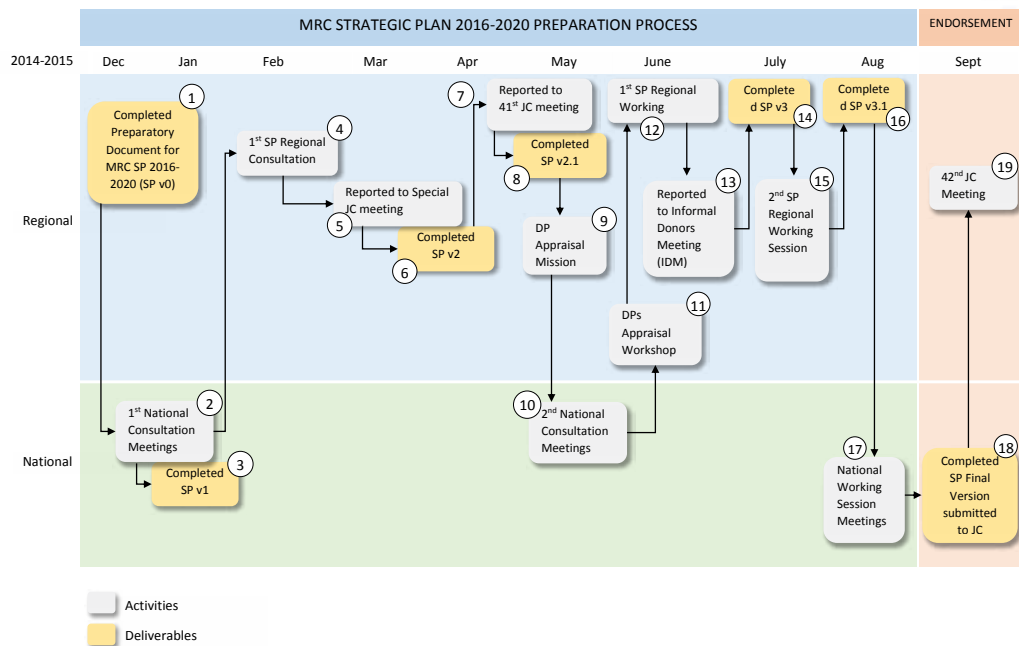
This Committee will broadly review and provide guidance to the MRCS on the AWP, considering issues of budget allocation, reconcile budget gaps (if needed), previous year progress, M & E, and contribution to the overall achievement of the MRC SP. The Budget Committee when convened to consider the AWP will meet to formulate their recommendation to the MRC Joint Committee for endorsement. A revision of the AWP may be made mid-year to make adjustments and respond to changes.

(f) MRC Joint Committee and MRC Council

The AWP and budget will be submitted to the MRC Joint Committee for endorsement and to the MRC Council for approval.

Once the AWP is approved, the MRCS CEO will authorise the Division Directors to implement the AWP, working with counterparts in the NMCs and line/implementing agencies.

The detailed process of formulating AWP and budget is summarised in the flow chart below:



Annual Work Plan

Content

Each AWP will contribute to achievement of the Key Result Areas, Outcomes and Outputs expressed in this Strategic Plan, guided by the schedule of the activities, timeline and provisional budgets in the Strategic Plan. Each year, account will be taken of progress made in previous years and funding availability.

Each AWP will augment the Strategic Plan results-chain by including milestone dates for Sub-activities and elaborating tasks needed to be undertaken during the year, and will also assign management responsibilities and detailed budgets for these. Performance monitoring will be based on this information.

The introduction of a single organisational AWP for the MRC will replace the previous individual Work Plans, Programme Implementation Plans and other similar documents of 12 different MRC Programmes, significantly reducing and simplifying the administrative workload for Secretariat staff. A single organisational AWP will also promote increased coordination of activities across the MRC as a whole and seek to ensure that cross-cutting issues are effectively addressed. An organisational AWP will also help in promoting a "One MRC" image.

Monitoring and evaluation

The AWP will incorporate results-based planning for monitoring and evaluation purposes by specifying which Outputs it aims to achieve and the relevant indicators for tracking implementation that year. The MRC will be accountable for implementation timeliness, cost-effectiveness and quality assurance for deliverables and reporting performance to the Member Countries and Development Partners and other stakeholders.

Typically, results-based M&E elements will consist of Output indicators and the means of verification. Methods of verification normally used by the MRC management are field observation, survey and assessment for quantitative indicators and focus-group discussion, interview and study for qualitative indicators. The M&E team in the MRC Secretariat will assist with selection and design of verification methods and also ensure that appropriate budget is provided for monitoring the indicators.

4.6 Financial arrangements and budgets

Basket Fund

The MRC basket funding is a joint financial mechanism whereby Member Countries and Development Partners (DPs) contribute funds to a common pooled account that is used to fund MRC regional activities through MRC Secretariat. The annual funds will be pooled from the designated DPs' accounts (receiving accounts) into the basket fund account and allocated to the units based on core functions including administration, governance, liaison and CRBMFs for implementation.

Move from Cash basis to accrual basis, from programme base to cost centre base and earmarked Fund

The change from cash to accrual accounting and the change from a programme-based to a cost centre based system are more appropriate to the basket funding modality as well as a better fit for results-based reporting requirements. Within this arrangement, earmarking funds will be possible but Development Partners will be required to contribute a proportion of their funds (provisionally 15%) as "unallocated" to the basket fund in order to balance with all other contributors who contribute all of their funds to the basket fund. Estimated budget by core function is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Estimated regional budget per Core Function

	Total	Share
CF1 - Corporate services core functions		
CF1.1 - Secretariat administration and management	7,879,000 \$	12%
CF1.2 - Promoting dialogue, coordination, facilitation	3,487,000 \$	5%
CF1.3 - Communication, reporting and dissemination	175,000 \$	0.3%
CF2 - Core river basin management functions	11,541,000 \$	
CRBMF1 - Data acquisition, exchange and monitoring	8,678,000 \$	13%
CRBMF2 - Analysis, modelling and assessment	13,727,000 \$	21%
CRBMF3 - Planning support	23,289,000 \$	36%
CRBMF4 - Forecasting, warning and emergency response	3,021,000 \$	5%
CRBMF5 - Implementing MRC Procedures	4,744,000 \$	7%
CF3 - Consulting and advisory services	53,459,000 \$	
Totals	65,000,000 \$	100%

Revaluation “Gain or Loss”

In principle, MRC shall manage its committed funding from different DPs with multiple currencies such as EURO, AU\$, and SEK etc. However, due to the fact that MRC’s reporting currency is USD, all committed income in other currencies will be converted and reported as equivalent USD using monthly exchange rates. Therefore, revaluation “gains or losses” will be incurred and recognized as “Gains” or “Losses” in the relevant income and expenditure returns. Closer financial management will preclude any surprise about “gains” or “losses” as has sometimes happened in the past.

Bilateral Support

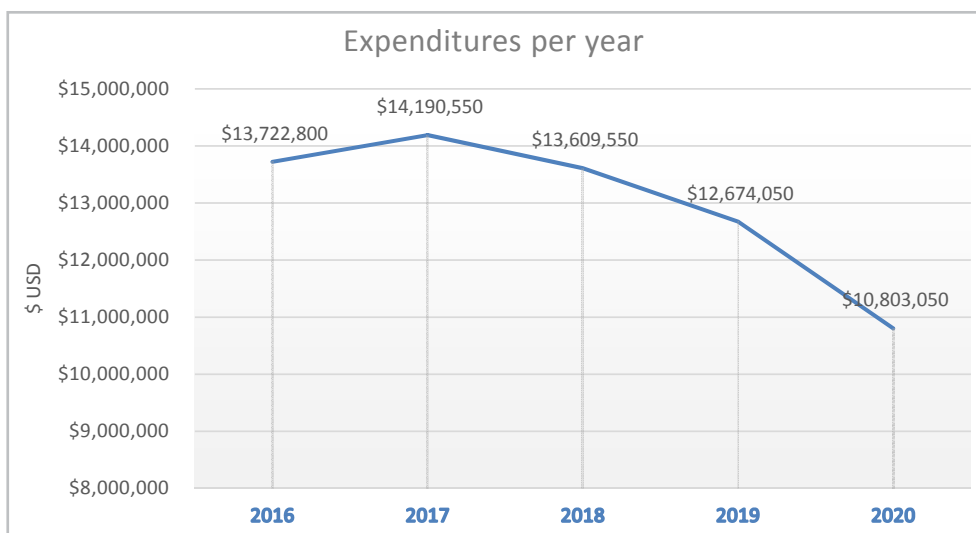
MRC regional activities, at the national level such as decentralised CRBMF and national capacity building, will require bilateral support. The MRC Secretariat together with NMCs and line agencies will annually identify activities and support needed linked to the MRC Annual Work Plan (AWP) and develop a supplementary plan to address the identified needs. The implementation of the national activities is undertaken by the respective agencies responsible for bilateral resources. Implementation of national activities will be reported on as part of the MRC AWP reporting process.

Funding approach and financial roadmap

The primary goal of MRC is to have all MRC core functions fully funded by the Member Countries by 2030. To ensure the long term sustainability of the Organisation, the MRC will not exclude development assistance contributions to the MRC cooperation beyond 2030 but will not be dependent on external assistance for its core operations. The target budget for the MRC Secretariat is approximately US\$10 million by 2020 (see Figure 4); US\$ 9 million by 2025; and US\$ 6.5 million

by 2030. Regional funding is reduced as decentralization of Core River Basin Management Function (CRBMF) activities progresses and Member Countries assume an increasing share of the costs.

Figure 4: SP Budget Allocation Per Year



MRC Associated Project Budget

The MRC Associated Project Budget comprises the investment support leveraged by the MRC Strategic Plan from DPs (including bilateral technical assistance) direct to the Member Countries for development opportunities in the Basin. As defined in the Basin Action Plan (2013), this budget will be estimated on the basis of projects included in National Indicative Plans (NIPs), that respond directly to the development opportunities set out in the BDS to promote greater cooperation and optimisation of sustainable development and management of the basin (such as joint investment projects and those national projects of basin-wide significance).

The current NIPs include US\$670 million of enabling and non-infrastructure projects, of which about a third are currently unfunded. The full cost of planned joint projects has yet to be established, but may be in the order of US\$ 2-4 billion.

4.7 Human resources

The organisational changes facing the MRC in the coming five years present collective and individual challenges to the MRC Secretariat's staff. Collectively, these challenges require a significant shift in management systems, with overall reductions in numbers of staff. Individually, the challenges revolve around a change in mind-set as to how the new organisation as a whole should work and how the individual can and should contribute productively towards this. None should underestimate the magnitude of both the collective and individual challenges faced.

The overall staffing requirements for the period of 2016-2020 will be reduced to reflect the more streamlined and focused operation of the organisation based on core functions. This also takes into account the cessation in 2016 of international staff and full-time international consultants in the MRC Secretariat and an increased use of riparian consultants. International expertise is required in some highly technical areas or to bring in international experience, and this will be contracted on a short-term basis.

The numbers of full-time, fixed-term staff at the MRC Secretariat over the whole period will progressively decline in line with the decentralisation Roadmap. Starting at around 150 in mid-2015, the MRC Secretariat plans for a 30-40% reduction over the Strategic Plan period (to 90-100). Within these figures, it is similarly expected that total staff providing administration, finance and HR support services within the Secretariat will fall from currently around 80 in 2015 to around 35-40 staff in 2020.

The reductions in staff numbers illustrated above will be accomplished in a manner that will enable the MRC Secretariat to continue to deliver on all its core functions, as well as support decentralisation of agreed activities to national agencies. Whilst natural attrition will occur as staff contracts come to an end, the MRC is adopting a proactive approach to downsizing, based on a reprofiling of staff to achieve efficiencies and greater focus on core functions. MRC Secretariat will use the key staff competencies that were identified in the Roadmap, and refined in 2015 within the staffing reform framework, to guide evolution of the staffing profile, identify weaknesses where they may exist and take action to strengthen its human resources through targeted recruitment and capacity building.

From January 2016, depending on resource availability and the decision about the new MRC Secretariat structure, the number of staff and the staffing profile will be adjusted accordingly to deliver routine MRC functions and pending and ongoing work of 2015, prepare for implementation of the new Strategic Plan 2016-2020 and building capacity for and maintain the momentum of decentralisation. Starting from January 2016, there will be internal transfers of staff to a transitional arrangement, with a concurrent recruitment for the new structure when the final decision on the new structure is made. A radical reduction of staff is projected to occur at the beginning of the

implementation of the new structure. The staffing policies and practices are being reviewed and improved in 2015 to best maintain corporate knowledge and build new expertise, where needed. As part of this, MRC Secretariat will consider drawing upon targeted external expertise to achieve increases in productivity, especially in areas where Secretariat staff capacity is still in need of support.

MRC will also explore options to draw on the expertise within Member Countries and cooperation partners through both short and longer term secondments, to supplement its own capacity, particularly in areas of cutting-edge knowledge or expertise where the need is not on a regular basis and where therefore MRC Secretariat does not need to maintain a permanent in-house expertise.

4.8 Risk management

The following section sets out the Risk Matrix for the period of the Strategic Plan. The MRC anticipates this will evolve and develop over the course of Plan implementation. The risks identified reflect both basin-wide and organisational challenges facing the MRC.

Table 2: Risks and Risk Descriptions

BASIN-WIDE RISKS (as identified in the Basin Development Strategy)

Risk 1. The MRC expertise & impartiality are not valued in the region.

Without its position of trust and impartiality with Member Countries, MRC could not deliver its Strategic Plan. Because of this unique position, MRC can provide information and recommendations to Member Countries without the suspicion of bias or a hidden agenda. However, this trust and impartiality cannot be taken for granted; MRC must work to maintain it, especially in the face of different views about the role of MRC and its effectiveness in assisting Member Countries addressing the Basin challenges.

Risk 2. Collaboration of non-water sector agencies is insufficient for the sustainable development and management of the Basin.

Many risks to the sustainable management in the basin emanate from outside the water sector, for example, from agricultural, energy and industrial development. Adequate collaboration with these agencies is essential to manage the risks for optimal basin development.

Risk 3. Coordination and inputs to the preparation and implementation of national development plans from basin-wide perspective are insufficient.

If national development plans are not sufficiently informed about basin-wide effects and linkages, there is a high risk that collectively they will be sub-optimal for all Member Countries. MRC must work actively with Member Countries to manage this risk.

Risk 4. There is difficulty in reaching consensus among Member Countries on critical issues.

Differences of view between some or all Member Countries are always likely to exist. In some cases, these differences can be deeply contested. Resolving these differences by mutually satisfactory solutions remains an on-going challenge for MRC. Failure to manage this risk would jeopardize Member Country commitment to the MRC.

Risk 5. There is difficulty in effectively implementing the MRC's cooperation mechanisms.

There is a risk that MRC cooperation mechanisms, including its five Procedures as well as the BDS and basin-wide strategies, are not implemented effectively. This may arise through insufficient understanding of the purpose and role of a particular mechanism but also in cases where mechanisms fail to adapt to changes in expectations and needs. This risk needs to be managed to ensure cooperation mechanisms are fit for purpose and continue to deliver full value to Member Countries.

ORGANISATIONAL RISKS (specific to MRC)**Risk 6. There are limited resources and capacity at national level to implement MRC's decentralised activities.**

Under the decentralisation roadmap, Member Countries themselves are increasingly responsible for core MRC activities, particularly related to monitoring and data collection. Capacity in Member Countries differs, however, and any significant gaps in the basin-wide knowledge base will adversely affect the value for all Member Countries. It is important that MRC manages this risk.

Risk 7. Insufficient leadership & management capacity for reform implementation would risk the delivery of the Strategic Plan in all key result areas.

Given the challenges of planned reforms, delivery of the Strategic Plan relies also on effective leadership and decision-making. This requires adequate capacity and autonomy at senior levels of the Secretariat and clear strategic direction and timely decision-making from the Joint Committee.

Risk 8. Qualified professional staff are not retained and not recruited during the reform process.

In order to achieve the Strategic Plan, MRC must have access to high quality professional staff and attract new skills that fit with its evolving role in the Basin. Uncertainty during the transition and reform process increases the risk that good, existing staff will leave (and cannot be replaced in time), while insufficient management autonomy for the CEO in recruitment processes increases the risk that MRC cannot access the best possible staff for available positions.

Risk 9. Ineffective transition to Basket Fund arrangements would prevent MRC from realising intended improvements in management flexibility.

The Basket Fund is an important part of the Secretariat’s plans for a more efficient MRC. If Development Partners do not sufficiently support this reform in practice, intended improvements in management flexibility will not be realized, while the transaction costs of managing earmarked funds will remain high.

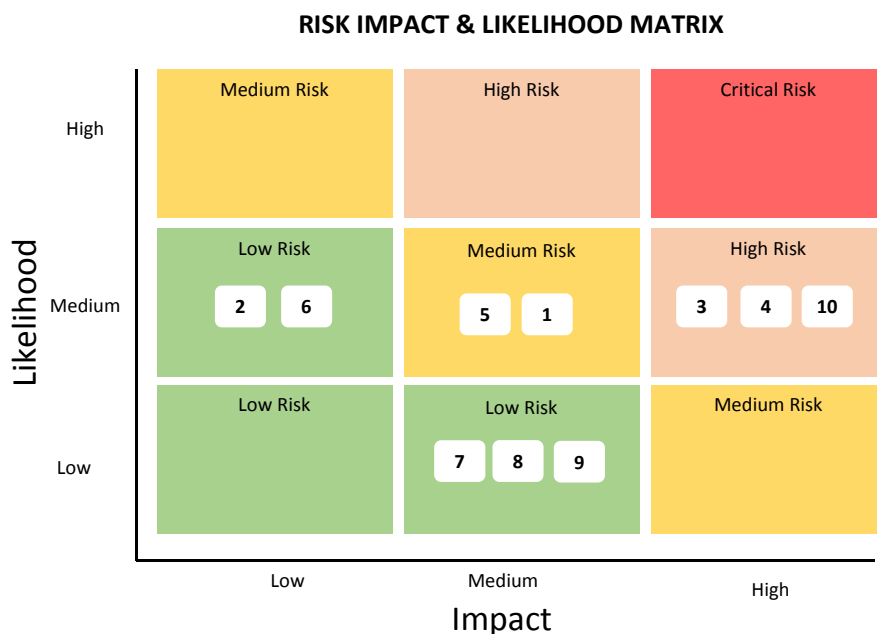
Risk 10. There is significant unexpected funding shortfall.

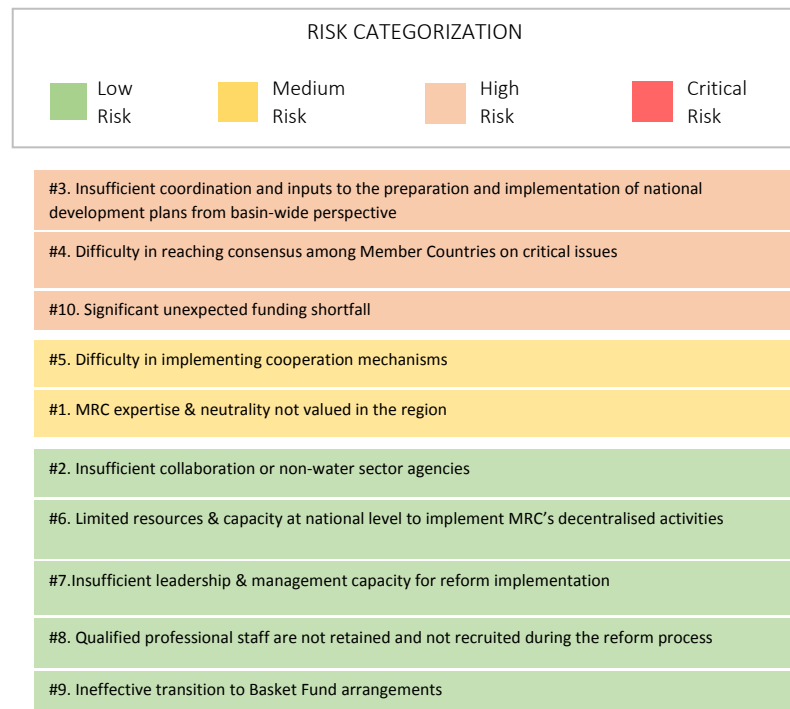
The Strategic Plan is based on the financial commitments made to MRC. While the likelihood may be low, failure by MRC’s Development Partners or Member Countries to deliver on these commitments would have a significant adverse impact for achievement of the Plan. The mitigation proposed measures will be in place to reduce this impact, should the risk be realized.

For each of the Strategic Outcomes, the MRC rates the risks according to the potential adverse impact (if they occur) and the likelihood of them occurring. Figure 5 presents the combined ratings of these Risks in terms of their potential effect on the implementation of the Strategic Plan as the whole.

The assessment did not identify any risks that are both High (adverse) impact and Highly likely to occur.

Figure 5: Risk Impact and Likelihood Tool





The Risk Matrix (overleaf) also summarises the main mitigation measures that are integrated in the strategy MRC designs to implement this Strategic Plan with specific actions to manage and mitigate those risks to be further detailed at the operational level of annual work planning. The MRC judges that the proposed mitigation measures will be adequate to control the risks, although not eliminate entirely. However, the MRC will review this assumption regularly.

On-going risk management:

The MRC has not designed risk management as an isolated add-on process but as an integral part of the Strategic Plan and its execution. Under normal operating circumstances, every six months, the MRC Secretariat will review the completeness/relevance of the Risk Matrix; the risk assessments contained in the Matrix; the continued adequacy of the mitigation measures; and update the Risk Impact and Likelihood Tool (to reflect the on-going assessment of likelihood and impact). The assessments will be reported to the Joint Committee members.

However, during the transition phase to the new Plan, a number of organisational risks are time critical, with significant potential knock-on effects to the reform programme and wider MRC operations. The Secretariat will therefore institute a monthly system of briefing MRC Council and Joint Committee members on the status of key risks in the short-term. This briefing process should enable faster escalation of concerns and more rapid response where critical risks actually materialise.





Table 3: Risk Matrix & Mitigation Measures (per Outcome)

Risk	RA 1		RA 2		RA 3	RA 4	Mitigation Measures
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5	Outcome 6	
#1. MRC expertise & impartiality are not valued in the region.							<p>Generally high impact/ low likelihood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved communication of MRC mandate & work Improved engagement with wider stakeholder groups Strengthened quality (evidence based and balanced) of MRC knowledge products
#2. Collaboration of non-water sector agencies is insufficient for the sustainable development & management of the Basin.							<p>Significant potential impact for policy influence objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMCs will play a critical coordinating and monitoring role through the mechanism of National Indicative Plans (preparation and implementation) Strengthen regional and technical working/expert groups
#3. Coordination and inputs to the preparation and implementation of national development plans from basin-wide perspective are insufficient.							<p>Significant potential impact for policy influence objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better understanding of structural / institutional constraints in Member Countries Basin-wide assessments and strategies will support in adapting national plans for basin-wide benefits and cost reduction
#4. There is difficulty in reaching consensus among Member Countries on critical issues.							<p>Significant potential risk for most controversial development topics in the basin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council/JC/CEO to play a critical hydro diplomacy role in bringing countries together Strengthen in-house (MRCS) hydro-diplomacy capacity skills to support the CEO Leveraging partnerships with multilateral organisations and partners

Risk	RA 1					RA 2		RA 3	RA 4	Mitigation Measures
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5	Outcome 6	Outcome 7			
#5. There is difficulty in effectively implementing the MRC's cooperation mechanisms.										Generally low likelihood though potentially high impact on Procedures and medium impact on monitoring systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote understanding and implementation of the Procedures Review and improve the implementation of the Procedures to ensure fit for purpose and benefits to countries Update and improve implementation of the BDS and other basin-wide strategies
#6. There are limited resources & capacity at national level to implement MRC's decentralised activities.										Generally low to medium likelihood / medium impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DP bilateral institutional strengthening programmes supporting IWRM (as identified/elaborated in NIPs) Targeted MRC Secretariat provision of capacity building in decentralisation priorities Close monitoring of SP and NIPs implementation by MRCS and NMCs
#7. Insufficient leadership & management capacity for reform implementation would risk the delivery of the Strategic Plan in all key result areas.										High impact and medium likelihood, with knock-on effects to other aspects of work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRCS CEO and senior managers will play a strong role in leading and managing the reform implementation Change Manager (temporary position) appointed to support CEO and senior management Council and JC set clear milestones for decisions on major issues and designate clear mechanisms and representatives to work on them MRCS institutes effective planning & reporting processes
#8. Qualified professional staff are not retained and not recruited during the reform process.										Significant risk, primarily to policy-influencing capability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent vision and certainty for reform expressed from the top Regular communication to staff of progress and impact of staffing reforms Identify and retain top performing staff Strengthen merit-based recruitment Clearer interpretation of professional staff's tenure & career development (Article 33)

Risk	RA 1		RA 2		RA 3	RA 4	Mitigation Measures
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5	Outcome 6	
#9. Ineffective transition to Basket Fund arrangements would prevent MRC from realising intended improvements in management flexibility.							<p>Generally medium to low impact/ medium to low likelihood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to promote Aid effectiveness principles at DP forum Apply a certain percentage of earmarked fund for Basket Fund
#10. There is significant unexpected funding shortfall.							<p>This is generally low likelihood but would have potentially a medium-high impact on all aspects of MRC's operations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Categorisation of outputs for immediate and anticipated implementation Fund mobilisation strategy and implementation by CEO and JC Annual Work Planning process to set funding priorities for the year



CHAPTER V

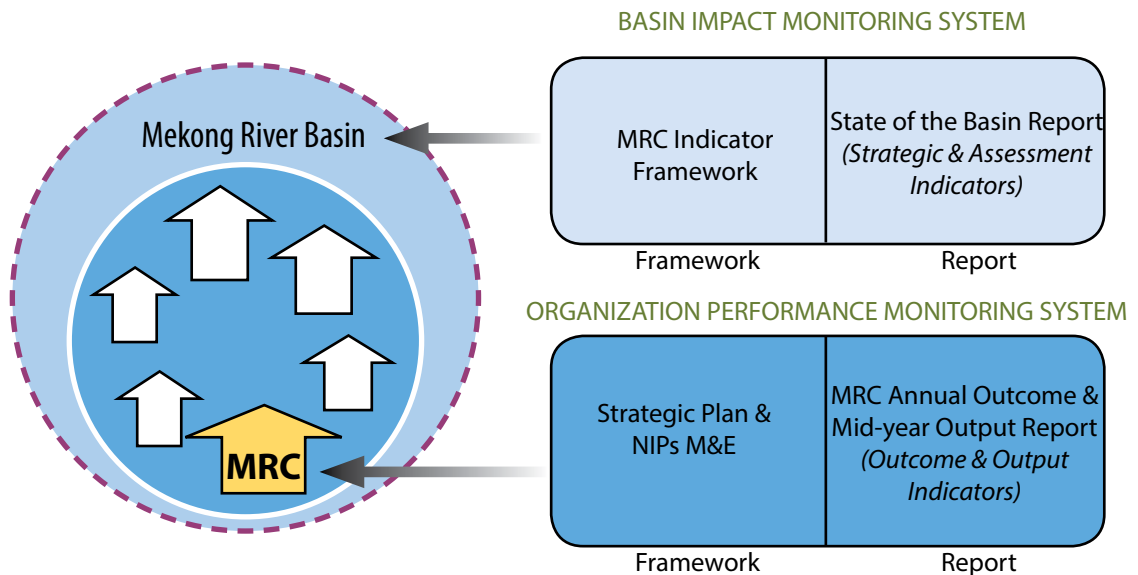
Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Implementation of the MRC Strategic Plan (2016-20) is subject to external and internal uncertainties, which may, to varying degrees, affect the likelihood of success or failure. MRC Secretariat will therefore set up a mechanism to identify change, track implementation and adjust strategy in response to these uncertainties. A regular reflection meeting to monitor and evaluate progress between the MRC and the Member Countries is proposed as the key component of this mechanism.

Systematic indicator collection and accurate implementation analysis with concise reporting are major parts of the monitoring and evaluation culture. This chapter outlines the above-mentioned mechanism, explains the monitoring and evaluation steps and the progress reporting procedures for it to happen.

5.1 Overview of monitoring & evaluation

Figure 6: Monitoring Systems



ework

In order to report on the Mekong River Basin condition and MRC performance, two monitoring systems operate: the Basin Impact Monitoring System and Organisation Performance Monitoring System. The Basin Impact Monitoring System uses the MRC Indicator Framework (strategic and assessment indicators) to monitor and evaluate status and trends in basin development and management. The Organization Performance Monitoring System uses the Outcomes and Outputs indicators in the Strategic Plan to monitor and evaluate MRC organization performance in implementing the Strategic Plan and NIPs

The human resources, time and budget needed to monitor the indicators in the Strategic Plan and NIPs, are identified to ensure data collection among the different implementing bodies is coordinated regionally. The MRC will define clearly each indicator, the data collection methods and budget for monitoring each indicator, so that each implementer can build coordinated M&E actions along the implementation process.

In the design of the current Strategic Plan, special attention has been given to developing measures of meaningful change over the short and long term. The Strategic Plan results chain was developed in consultation with experts in each sector to ensure that credible attribution linkages exist between MRC support and intended effects. Based on these results chains, practical monitoring and evaluation plans have been developed along with indicators for the intended Outcomes and Outputs. Progress will be reported mid-year and annually. Indicators will be supplemented with critical analysis to interpret results, particularly in the case of intangible Outputs.

The combination of the Results, Indicators, Method of Collection, Indicator Data Collection Schedule (which is nested inside the Annual Work Plan and includes the budget and means of verification) and the reporting routines together comprise the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

Under the Guidance Note for the preparation of the Annual Work Plan, quality assurance is ensured through the use of the integrated planning process (IWRM Framework), the MRC's results-based M&E reports, output timeline/ prioritization, value for money policies, and risks/issues management tools.

The table in Annex A (Results with Indicators sorted by Timeline) displays the Output Indicators and their scheduled emergence in the next 5 years. This table is the basis of AWP Output selection. The indicators reflect different levels of relevance, accuracy and precision. If more suitable indicators emerge once the implementation is underway, they may be re-considered during the Mid-Term Review.

5.2 Monitoring & evaluation framework

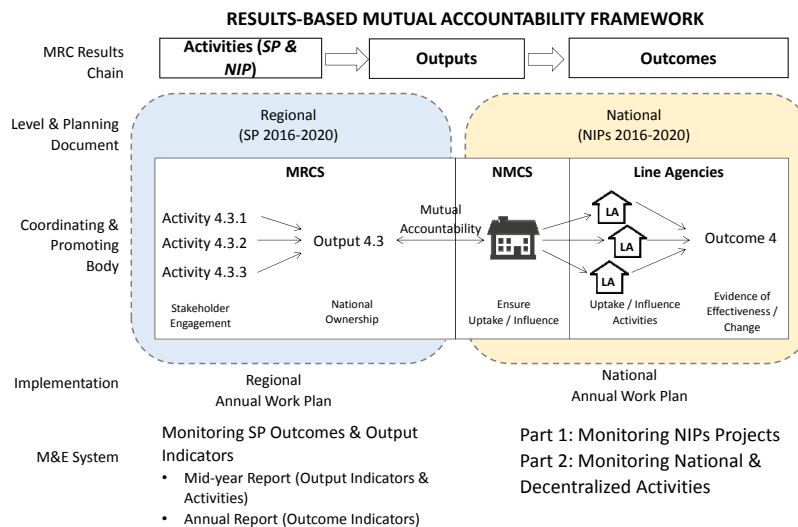
A functioning monitoring and evaluation framework used for monitoring the MRC Strategic Plan and NIPs must be able to track the implementation and provide outcome information for reporting to Senior Management, Member Countries and DPs. To accomplish this task, the results-based mutual accountability framework is described below.

Cooperation for results

Results-based mutual accountability is a process by which the regional (MRC Secretariat) and national (NMC Secretariats) coordinating bodies are jointly committed to deliver the MRC Outcomes in the next 5 years. The mutual relationship relies on trust and commitment around shared MRC Strategic Plan to encourage the change needed to meet the desired outcomes.

The results-based mutual accountability mechanism relies on aligned and coherent planning processes at a regional and national level. The NIPs are synchronized with the Regional plans to contribute to achieving the MRC Outcomes. Outputs are produced at the regional level (by regional and national activities) and are taken up and influence decisions at the national level, where outcomes are manifested. The process of monitoring and reviewing progress of the NIPs and Strategic Plan is supported by evidence that is collected and shared. Figure 7 below illustrates this framework / mechanism.

Figure 7: Results-based mutual accountability framework



Monitoring

Within the MRC Strategic Plan, monitoring is the periodic tracking and reflection mechanism to provide feedback for the unit managers on implementation. The focus of monitoring is on inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes. Indicator data collection is an integral part of monitoring. Mid-Year and annual reports are the main communication channels for monitoring. Monitoring is to be conducted internally by the Unit staff in collaboration with the Results-Based M&E (RBM&E) team in the Secretariat.

Evaluation

Evaluation is the snap-shot assessment of the MRC Strategic Plan implementation. It focuses on the likelihood of achieving Outcomes and Impact in light of the organisation set-up, budget, human resource and the changing operating environment. Evaluation also examines the materialised risks - both expected and unexpected, the cost effectiveness of the implementation and the validity of the strategy. Evaluation is part of the institutional knowledge management process that feeds experience into the next Strategic Planning cycle. A team of external experts is to be employed to evaluate the Strategic Plan implementation at mid cycle (2.5 years) and at the end of the 5 year cycle.

The Annual and Mid-year report provides the basis for the monitoring of the implementation progress and the evaluation of the Strategic Plan achievements. Table 4 summarises the distribution of relevant issues between the monitoring and evaluation functions.



Table 4: Monitoring & evaluation issues of interest

Issues of interest	Methodology	Parameters	Function
1 Tracking the rate of resources utilization for outcome & output.	Output & Outcome budget expenditures tracking (using the basket funding financial system)	Implementation inputs (budget and human resources)	Monitoring (Implementing division)
2 Gender Aspects	Verification of gender aspects reflected in all outcomes & outputs	Gender indicators in each Key Results Area	Monitoring (Implementing division)
3 Activity Implementation	Activity implemented: on time/ahead/delay of schedule/issues & challenges encounter	Scheduled and actual start and finish dates, risk matrix.	Monitoring (Implementing division)
4 Output deliverables	Outputs deliverable management: on track / off track / completed	Output Indicators baseline data and risk matrix.	Monitoring (Implementing division)
5 Outcome assessment	Outcomes Likelihood & Achievement Scale: Certain /Possible / Unlikely Fully Achieved / Partially Achieved/ Not Achieved/	Outcome Indicators and baseline data	Monitoring (Implementing division)
6 Cost effectiveness of SP implementation	Valuation of Outcomes compared to Resources inputs (Value for Money / Cost & Benefit Analysis)	Budget expenditure and evidence of change.	Evaluation (Expert Mission)
7 Overall SP Achievements	Level of change manifested by MRC interventions & validates SP outcomes achievements (High evidence / Low evidence)	Results-chain, evidence of change in the Annual & Mid-year Reports/ and risks management.	Evaluation (Expert Mission)
8 Impact evaluation	Outcomes lead to overall Impact on Mekong basin (High / Medium / Low) MRC Indicator Framework	Regional cooperation, social/economic/ environment and climate change	Evaluation (Expert Mission)

5.3 Reporting system

This sub-section outlines the reporting system for the monitoring and evaluation of the MRC Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

Monitoring

1. Baseline Data Collection: (to be issued in 2016) The MRC RBM&E team in collaboration with the implementing divisions formulates the Annual Indicator Data Collection Plan and conducts the initial indicator data collection with the NMCs. The information provides the baseline for evaluating Strategic Plan achievements. During the data collection process, the RBM&E team checks the collected data to make sure that they are relevant and precise.

2. Mid-Year Report: (total amount to be issued: 5) Once the AWP is approved by the Council, activity implementation will begin. Progress in delivering planned outputs will be reported every mid-year. The status of planned outputs will be assessed (on track or off track) and issues and challenges that need senior management support will be identified. The Mid-Year Report will also include forecasts for outputs and activities for the next six months for coordination purposes.

3. Annual Report: (total amount to be issued: 5) At the end of the AWP cycle, an Annual Report will be issued to report progress in terms of outcome achievements, with associated indicators. Actual and estimates of output delivery will also be included. The collected indicators will be checked in collaboration with the RBM&E team for quality assurance. The Annual Report is to include a section on financial status.

Evaluation

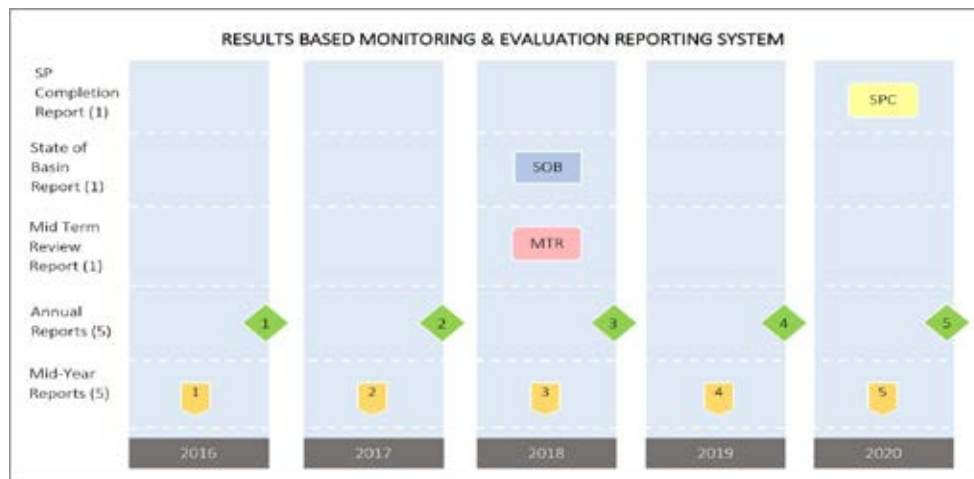
1. Mid-Term Review Report: (total amount to be issued: 1) Half-way through the Strategic Plan implementation cycle (2.5 years), a Mid-Term Review will be undertaken to sharpen the strategy and to review the organization set-up, the achievements and the synergy among the implementation partners. Recommendations will be made to re-orient the strategy in order to avoid possible risks for the remaining years. Recommendations on indicator improvement can also be made at this review session.

2. Strategic Plan Completion Evaluation Report: (total amount to be issued: 1) At the end of the implementation cycle, an evaluation mission will be deployed to assess the overall outcomes and impacts achieved under the Strategic Plan. The cost-effectiveness of the implementation will also be determined. In addition, the evaluation process will identify lessons that can be applied during the formulation of the next Strategic Plan. Examples of possible learning include accuracy of risk prediction (both accounted and unaccounted for), successful attributions to outcomes, the thoroughness of activity breakdown per Output (AWP), the quality of indicators verification, etc. The overall implementation process, the most significant changes and story-based practices that bring results (both positive and negative) can also be documented to serve as the MRC knowledge base.

3. State of the Basin Report: (total amount to be issued: 1) The State of the Basin report evaluates the overall development impacts within the Basin as a measure of the effectiveness of the Basin Development Strategy implementation. The State of the Basin monitoring is reported once every five years and is scheduled for completion in 2018 in this Strategic Plan cycle⁵. The report is compiled by the MRC Secretariat with support from the NMC Secretariats and submitted to the MRC Joint Committee for endorsement. The 5-yearly updated State of the Basin report tracks and analyses the trends in the values of the strategic indicators according to the MRC indicator Framework.

The reporting system is summarized in the Figure below.

Figure 8: Reporting system



⁵The preparatory State of Basin Report will be prepared in 2016 and a full SOB will be completed in 2018.





Annex A:

MRC Strategic
Plan Results Chain
linkages to BDS
Priorities



Outcome 1**1. Increased common understanding and application of evidence-based knowledge by policy makers and project planners**

Addressing BDS Strategic Priority #1: Reduce remaining knowledge gaps to minimise risks

Description:

While MRC has an extensive knowledge base about the basin, lack of knowledge in certain areas increases the risk and uncertainties of development decisions made and projects implemented in the basin. Building on the already extensive knowledge, environment (more specifically biodiversity), fisheries (especially fish migration, ecology and productivity), socio economic conditions (livelihood) of the poor and vulnerable rural population of the basin and storage options for multiple purposes (flood, drought, environment) have been identified as the most important topics on which more information is needed to close the remaining 'knowledge gap'. Closing the knowledge gap not only entails doing new studies, it also refers to incorporation into the MRC knowledge base of knowledge developed elsewhere and ensuring the newly acquired knowledge, as well as the knowledge already present within the organisation, is actively promoted and applied by the two key actors – policy makers and project planners. This requires active dissemination and promotion.

Indicators

- The number of national and regional agencies and organisations using MRC knowledge generated for research, planning and policy making
- Evidence of national and regional decisions making based on or referring to MRC knowledge products

Assumptions

- Policy makers and project planners have confidence and trust in MRC knowledge products

<p>Output 1.1</p>	<p>Study on water requirement and availability for specific land uses completed for flood and drought management and impacts adaptation and mitigation purposes *</p> <p>Description: A study to assess quantity of water requirement for each particular crop/land use in drought prone area in both rainy and dry season and availability of water resources including precipitation, surface and ground water for each cropping area in drought prone areas of the LMB. The study will provide precise information and knowledge on water requirement gap for each particular crop type and area in drought prone areas of the LMB. Crop modelling might be required for the study.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water requirement for each crop in drought prone areas of the LMB is assessed, (2) water availability in the area is modelled, and (3) water requiring gap for each crop of the drought prone areas is calculated for drought management work. <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data information on changes of water diversion by catchments is given by member Countries (however there may be limit of data accessibility) <p>Time line</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2017
<p>Output 1.2</p>	<p>Study of fish ecology and capture fisheries productivity and value completed and promoted with a view to mitigating impacts from development</p> <p>Description Current MRC knowledge on fisheries relates mostly to catch, abundance and diversity. Based on priorities identified from technical reviews of development projects this study supports a better understanding of fish yields of the most important habitats (flood zone and rain-fed habitats), provides improved insights into the ecology of the most important migratory fish species and allows for a more precise estimation of the value of the regional fish and fisheries resources. Data are used for identifying basin-wide trends in fisheries as well as for modelling of impacts.</p> <p>The study supports the better planning and implementation of development projects.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of fish yields in rain-fed and flood zones is documented. The bio-ecology of main trans-boundary fish species is documented Mekong fisheries value is estimated <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field work in Member Countries is possible <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Survey of fish yield/habitat by 2018 Value estimation by 2018 Fish bio-ecology descriptions by 2020

Output 1.3

Study of rural livelihoods and measures to cope with transboundary changes by which sector development plans can adopt a pro-poor agenda completed and promoted

Description

Food and livelihood security has been identified as a key development need in the Basin Development Strategy. Agriculture and aquaculture contribute to local food and income security. Sustainable hydropower development contributes to employment, as well as national revenues to achieve poverty reduction and economic growth. Whilst long-term changes inside and outside the water sector will reduce the numbers of vulnerable resource users in the future, there is a clear need to minimise adverse social impacts in the short to medium term until such changes have fully come into effect, which may take many years.

Socio economic assessment, including the assessment of food and nutrition security vulnerability, is one of the central requirements for Basin Planning and related scenario assessments and has repeatedly been identified as needing to be strengthened in the MRC context and requiring strong cross-sectoral coordination within the MRCS. This means maintaining and building on the current Social Impact Monitoring and Vulnerability Assessment (SIMVA) monitoring system.

Indicators

- Evidence of water sector management and development plans pay due attention to rural livelihoods vulnerability
- Measures to address changes to improve rural livelihoods vulnerability concerning water sector management are formulated and implemented.
- MRC report on social vulnerability published and disseminated among LAs.
- The number of people living in rural areas dependent on fisheries and other related resources as primary means of livelihoods is documented.
- Contribution of fish and other related resources to food and nutrition security of the rural and poor people in the region is analyzed and recorded.

Fish and rice are essential elements in food security for the Mekong region. There is growing awareness of the role these natural resources play in people's livelihoods and of the likely impacts that the changes we face will have on these resources. Multiple factors including management, population and demand growth, climate change, and dam and other infrastructure developments are likely to impact fish yields and fish consumption in the region. This study informs management policies and strategies as well as development planning.

The food and nutrition security study and the periodic SIMVA monitoring will provide information on the status and trends of the social conditions of the people in the basin. It will also provide data and information on social vulnerability, particularly food and livelihood vulnerability, linked to changes in water resources and water resources related sectors (fish, other aquatic animals and plants and aquaculture and agriculture). Use of the study results enables the Basin Development Planning process to help minimize negative impacts on, as well as enhance, economic and social well-being and living standards of the rural population of the basin.

Assumptions

- Assessment teams are able to obtain reliable information and available in a timely fashion

Timeline

- Study on rural livelihoods vulnerability completed by 2017
- Study results promoted by 2018

Output 1.4 Basin-wide development and climate change scenarios and related assessments including Council Study completed and findings agreed and disseminated

Description

This output will build on the assessment during the last SP 2011-2015 under BDP and the work began under the Council Study to produce the information that decision-makers in the Mekong basin need to consider, discuss and achieve a common understanding of the various options for moving towards more optimal and sustainable

Indicators

- Integrated assessment of development impacts of six thematic sectors under Council Study completed and findings endorsed by JC

development in the basin and make the required decisions on key development trade-offs. The work will also include an updated study to fill the knowledge and data gaps of the initial basin-wide assessment conducted under the MRC CCAI. That study contains basin-wide assessments of climate change impacts on water and water related resources and sectors in the Lower Mekong Basin. It includes, but not limited to, seven components namely flow/hydrology, flood, drought, hydropower, ecosystem, food security, and socio-economics.

The adapted development options will likely include a range of joint projects and national projects of basin-wide significance. The options will also consider a range of complementary measures that may be needed to offset or mitigate the impacts of proposed development. The produced information will enable the completion of regional and basin wide sector strategies that will help adapt the current sub-optimal national plans for water resources development. This output will also serve the other strategic outputs of the SP including preparation of the State of Basin Report, the Second Regional Report on Status of Climate Change and Adaptation in the Lower Mekong Basin (First Report is issued in 2015), as well as the development of basin wide sector strategies, the updating of the Mekong Adaptation Strategy and Basin Development Strategy.

- Exploratory and alternative basin-wide scenarios (with and without climate change) are formulated and the assessment results endorsed by JC
- Scenario assessment results used for the finalization of the regional and basin-wide sector strategies and for the preparation and negotiation of updated BDS for 2021-2025

Assumptions

- Countries provide the required data and information; political commitment for cooperation for considering changes in national plans.
- LMB countries continue to give high priority to climate change issues in their development agenda and budget
- National government agencies use MRC assessment results for adaptation planning

Timeline

- The assessed scenarios under Council Study will be delivered in 2016 and the alternative scenarios in 2017 followed by basin-wide discussion of the scenario assessment results in 2018-2019.
- In 2019-2020, the scenario assessment results will be used for the finalization of the regional sector strategies and the updating of the BDS for 2021-2025

Output 1.5

Study of basin-wide biodiversity to establish baseline environmental conditions and trends completed

Description

The Mekong River Basin harbours a number of unique ecosystems, exceptionally rich in biodiversity. They form habitats for a wide range of species including over 900 bird species, some 25 reptile species and the second highest fish (and other aquatic) biodiversity in the world. Loss of wetland area, combined with habitat degradation, due to physical alteration through dams and canals, water withdrawals, overharvesting, pollution, and introduction of exotic species, hunting and illegal wildlife trade has resulted in considerable loss of species. Populations of large mammals, primates and birds and many fresh water and marine species are seriously declining.

Comprehensive information on the biodiversity of the Mekong Basin is needed to better understand the reasons for this biodiversity decline and to guide development planning in such a way that further loss of species is prevented as much as possible. Some national economies depend on inland fisheries, thus the interface between biodiversity, healthy environment and economy is critical for a stable socio-economy in the region. Among other things indicators on the health of the fish stocks and fisheries will be important components of the indicator framework on environmental health conditions to be used for monitoring development initiatives and support adaptive management decision making processes. This output contributes to the implementation of Articles 3 (Protection of the Environment and Ecological Balance) of the 1995 Mekong Agreement.

Indicators

- Inventory and report of biodiversity including trends is published and disseminate among LAs.
- Indicator framework for biodiversity assessment is integrated into MRC Indicator Framework.

Assumptions

- All Member Countries agree to prioritise biodiversity monitoring
- Local authorities and communities actively engage in field surveys

Timeline

- Study of biodiversity by 2017
- Biodiversity indicator (including for fish and other species) framework available by 2017

<p>Output 1.6</p>	<p>Study of options to increase storage within LMB for flood, drought and environment/ecosystem management purposes completed and promoted</p> <p>Description MRCs will deliver an inventory of existing and potential water storage areas in the Mekong basin, including lakes, wetlands, storage dams, groundwater and others. The inventory will be in the form of a website, featuring the location and characteristics of a long-list of potential storage projects. Based on the evaluation of the projects on a range of criteria, a shortlist of storage projects will be prepared and promoted for pre-feasibility studies. The most promising projects will have large benefits in terms of water, food, energy, flood, climate change, and/or environment security.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory and database of all feasible storage areas created • Long-list of storage opportunities and projects is prepared • Shortlist of storage projects is prepared and taken up in regional sector strategies, national planning frameworks and NIPs <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member countries provide all relevant data <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The long-list of projects will be delivered in 2017 and the shortlist in 2020
<p>Output 1.7</p>	<p>Study on transboundary impacts of water and related projects completed and promoted *</p> <p>Description Among the water and related projects, irrigation is the biggest water consumptive sector, with dynamic farming practices and high demand for agriculture products in the market. Sub-optimal planning of irrigation project development may yield trans-boundary implications therefore a better plan for operation and management of irrigation scheme is necessary. Aside from this agriculture sector is facing uncertainties due to climate change. The study will include both impacts of irrigation project and the potential for groundwater development for production. The result of the study will be useful for MCs for better planning of irrigation project development and sustainable management of groundwater for production.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study report on trans-boundary impacts of irrigation project is completed • Study report on groundwater management is completed • Areas with potential on trans-boundary impacts of irrigation projects identified • Areas with potential development for agricultural groundwater use identified • Guidance for groundwater sustainable yield management for production is available <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant senior government official participated in study process • Trans-boundary impacts issues included in study report • Member Countries agreed on study sites <p>Time line</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2020 • *remark: current fund until 2018 and continue with earmark until 2020 if needed



Outcome 2

2. Environment management and sustainable water resources development optimized for basin-wide benefits by national sector planning agencies

Addressing BDS Strategic Priorities

- #2) *Optimise basin-wide sustainable development and cost and benefit sharing*
- #3) *Strengthen the protection mutually agreed environmental assets*

Description:

National planning yield national benefits but is sub-optimal and not sustainable basin-wide. The MRC has a central role in promoting optimal and sustainable development from a basin-wide perspective in line with the aims of the 1995 Mekong Agreement and as highlighted in the update of the Basin Development Strategy. Scenario assessments are the primary way in which the MRC supports Member Countries at the early stage of development planning. Updated development and climate change assessments will be completed in 2016-2017 and results used for discussion on synergies and trade-offs, including for hydropower, irrigation, fisheries, flood management, and the most optimal and sustainable development pathways for the basin.

Indicators

- Number of TB national and provincial policies and plans integrating MRC basin-wide analysis and strategies
- Evidence that National Plans benefit from basin-wide strategies and action plans

Assumptions

- Member Countries willingness to actively engage in the development of MRC Basin wide, Regional Sector strategies and action plans.
- Member Countries have confidence and trust in MRC Basin wide, Regional Sector strategies and action plans.

. The newly assessed opportunities and risks at the regional level will be reflected in basin-wide sector and cross-cutting strategies. These strategies demonstrate how planning at national level can be improved through increased cooperation amongst Member Countries to leverage additional gains over and above that which the Member Countries could achieve individually. Results will be the identification of basin-wide environmental assets that need to be protected (for storage, fisheries, biodiversity) and areas where sustainable development could be optimised for basin needs and water security benefiting multiple sectors (flood protection, hydropower, irrigation, navigation, etc). Cooperation and cost and benefit sharing through basin-wide and joint projects between riparian countries will increase.

Output 2.1

Basin-wide strategy for sustainable hydropower updated and approved

Description

Energy from hydropower projects plays an important role in each of the LMB country's energy supply mix and also contributes to the growing regional inter-dependency from cross-border energy trading. At the same time, the reservoir storage provided by these projects helps to regulate mainstream flows from the wet to the dry season, opening up opportunities for increased dry season abstractions and potentially for flood control. However, hydropower development has adverse transboundary impacts as well, e.g. on capture fish migration, rural livelihoods and sediment movement.

From a basin wide perspective, national plans are sub-optimal as they do not take into account opportunities to enhance benefits beyond national borders and minimise adverse transboundary impacts. According to MRC and other assessments, the location, number and size of mainstream and tributary hydropower have differing impacts

Indicators

- Basin-wide Hydropower Strategy is updated
- Basin-wide Hydropower Strategy is endorsed by the JC and approved by Council to be incorporated into national plans

Timeline

- By 2019

across the basin. Taking into account regional energy needs (GMS and ASEAN integration agenda), national economic development priorities, comparative national advantages in hydropower development, the development of storage for flood and drought management, and the preservation of key environmental assets for economic, social and environmental purposes, a basin-wide strategy is needed to address the difficult trade-offs and to design more optimal and sustainable hydropower development pathways. The basin-wide strategy will support improvement of national sector planning and contributes to the overall Basin Development Strategy.

Output 2.2

Regional strategies for flood management updated, prepared and approved

Description

More extreme events associated with climate change and the continued reduction of storage in the basin's floodplains will increase flood levels in future. This, combined with increasing population and economic development in the flood prone areas, strongly increases the potential flood damage. Experiences worldwide suggest that as societies become more affluent, the traditional approach of living with floods is more costly and unacceptable and flood management measures will have to be adjusted.

The regional flood management and mitigation strategy needs to be updated.

Two other specific regional strategies, one for the Cambodia-Vietnam Mekong Delta (especially floodplains) and one for Cambodia-Thailand border, will be developed. The strategy for flood protection and management of the floodplains will take a holistic approach and consider all

Indicators

- Regional flood management and mitigation strategy is updated
- Specific Regional Strategies are prepared (for XBF, NMK, CAM-THA and CAM-VN floodplain-delta)
- Regional strategies are endorsed by the JC and approved by Council to be incorporated into national plans

	<p>plausible structural and non-structural options throughout the basin taking into account the study on storage options and other basin-wide scenario assessments. Spatial planning, flood proofing and flood forecasting are important resilience measures, but also the increase of water storage capacity in the basin will be considered.</p>	<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong interest and cooperation from NMCs and LAs responsible for flood management in Member Countries <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy for floodplain by 2018 • Other strategies by 2019
<p>Output 2.3</p>	<p>Basin-wide fisheries management and development strategy (BFMS) approved and action plan developed and implemented</p> <p>Description</p> <p>Many fish species access regionally distributed critical life cycle habitats regardless of national borders and rely on homogenous management across borders. Joint principles for management of fisheries assets are therefore necessary and beneficial for an effective basin-wide management effort. This output aims to design and agree on a basin-wide strategy to manage the fisheries assets with the objective of finding common ground and practice for protecting key fishing habitats, important fish species at risk and important migrating fish species.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BFMS endorsed by JC and approved by Council • BFMS action plan is agreed by TAB (Technical Advisory Body on Fisheries Management in the LMB) • Relevant guidelines defined in the BFMS is endorsed by TAB <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Countries are able to mobilize national resources for BFMS implementation plan
<p>Output 2.4</p>	<p>Joint infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects and mechanisms between two or more member countries initiated, further developed and carried out</p> <p>Description</p> <p>Building on previous benefit sharing and related work, MRCS, through the basin development planning and other related processes, will prepare, promote and facilitate discussions on a range of joint projects and deal structures between two or more countries which provide incremental benefits and increase water-related security. Some deals</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of benefit sharing projects in water and related sectors • Number of deals identified and further developed • Number of deals implemented as joint projects

	<p>may flow from existing information and some from new understandings gained from ongoing studies and scenario assessments. Agreed deals will be taken up by relevant line agencies, RBOs, and others with possible technical and coordination support from the MRC. The development of such projects, and the sharing of their benefits, should lead inevitably to higher levels of transboundary cooperation.</p>	<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political commitment in the Member Countries for the development of joint projects • Sufficient trust and confidence among the countries for negotiating deals • MRCS can play the role of an 'impartial' facilitator. <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outputs in the form of joint activities, projects and deals will be delivered throughout 2016-2020
<p>Output 2.5</p>	<p>Mekong climate change adaptation strategy and action plan finalised, approved and implemented</p> <p>Description</p> <p>Endorsement expected in 2017, the First Mekong Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (MASAP) will be implemented by the MRC Secretariat as well as by the Member Countries. The MASAP involves a set of flexible strategic actions in response to current vulnerability and future climate risks in the LMB. It addresses the highest priorities of adaptation options and can be integrated into national and regional policy for sustainable development of the Mekong River Basin. More importantly, the MASAP will support the Member Countries to enhance their adaptive capacity especially in planning for addressing transboundary impacts of climate change and needs for transboundary adaptation. The MASAP needs to be updated every five years as needed to address the changing socio-economic condition as well as the new knowledge gained on climate change and adaptation. In 2017-2020, the approved MASAP shall guide the integration of climate change adaptation into the updated Basin Development Strategy (BDS) and consequently influence the MRC Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and its National Indicative Plans.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MASAP is endorsed by JC and approved by Council • National government agencies integrate actions of the MASAP into their national planning of climate change and adaptation • Basin wide and sector strategies incorporate relevant actions of MASAP <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LMB countries continue to give high priority to climate change issues into their development agenda and budget for addressing transboundary impacts of climate change and the needs for transboundary adaptation <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation supported throughout 2016-2020

<p>Output 2.6</p>	<p>Basin Development Strategy, including a new Indicative Basin Development Plan, updated and approved for 2021-2025</p> <p>Description The IWRM-based Basin Development Strategy needs to be updated in 2019 for 2021-2025 taking into account implementation experience, new assessment of alternative basin-wide scenarios (optimising national plans for water resources development from basin-wide perspective), results from the Council Study and other major studies, emerging sector and cross-cutting basin-wide strategies, and the State of Basin monitoring and reporting.</p> <p>In line with the 1995 Agreement and results of alternative scenarios assessment, the updated Strategy will re-define clearly the development opportunities (current chapter 4 of BDS) into a new Indicative Basin Development Plan (BDP) for national implementation and further specify joint actions and projects for more optimal and sustainable basin development. The updated Strategy will also refresh the medium term strategic priorities for the basin and re-examine the actions needed for the subsequent five year period to be implemented by the MRC.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated BDS, including a BDP, is prepared • Updated BDS is endorsed by JC and approved by the Council <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging results and recommendations from new assessment of alternative basin-wide scenarios and sector and cross-cutting strategies are in place, as well as State of Basin Report 2018 <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2020
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Output 2.7

Master plan for regional waterborne transport implemented

Description

To fully realize regional trade and transport potential and attract investments, an in-depth socio-economic and technical study for the improvement of the waterborne transport on the Mekong is required. Determining the optimal inter-modal nodes and links between the waterways, ports, roads and rail is vital to improve the cost-effectiveness of the regional transport system. A regional master plan is being formulated (first half of 2015) to determine where and quantify to what extent the different stretches of the whole Mekong River system will be improved.

There will be two main geographic areas described in the MP: (i) Lao PDR – Thailand, with links to PR China and Myanmar (Lao PDR and Thailand are also members of the Quadrangle Navigation Agreement of the four Upper Lancang-Mekong River Countries), and (ii) the Cambodia-Viet Nam Area (where an update of the Master Plan for Navigation in Cambodia will be made, and an integration of the national transport plans in Viet Nam in the MP).

The MP will include a comprehensive regional navigation scheme with links to multimodal transport modes. The portfolio of Projects will consist of National Projects with cross-border impacts (basin wide significance), and Regional Projects. The Projects will consist of both physical and non-physical interventions. Physical projects include installation of navigational aids, waterway improvements, and surveys etc. Non-physical projects include capacity building, establishing standards, establishing data management centres, and preparing legal frameworks.

Indicators

- Master Plan is endorsed by JC and approved by Council
- LAs include the Projects into their regular planning cycle for implemented
- Number of Associations for ports, fleets are established
- Cargo throughput through the ports increases at least 30% in 5 years' time

Assumptions

- Budget is available
- Member Countries are willing to fund the National Projects with Cross-border impact
- LA s and private sector have a better awareness and willingness to make Mekong Navigation ""Green""

Timeline

- By 2020 and beyond

<p>Output 2.8</p>	<p>Strategy for basin-wide environmental management for prioritised environmental assets developed and approved</p> <p>Description Article 3 of the 1995 Agreement, Protection of the Environment and Ecological Balance, emphasises the importance of protecting the environment and ecological assets, including those providing ecosystem services, of the basin. Nevertheless, environment is still considered one of the areas on which sufficient knowledge is not available at the basin-wide level. What is known is that the environment and natural values in the basin have been degrading considerably since development began. MRC scenario and other assessments show that environmental assets will be further eroded unless member countries through cooperation will select and implement a strategy to preserve those prioritised assets they mutually find valuable from a basin-wide economic, social and environment point of view. There is still time but this requires common understanding of the environmental assets present within the basin, followed by appropriate action.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of basin wide environmental assets prepared • Agreement on number and status of environmentally valuable areas basin-wide. • Strategy prepared • Strategy endorsed by JC and approved by Council • At least 1 transboundary protected area established. • Percentage of natural wetlands and hot spots having management plans. <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political will from member countries to select and protect key basin-wide environmental assets • Agreement on site selection can be reached with key stakeholders <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2020
<p>Output 2.9</p>	<p>Regional strategy for drought management and mitigation developed and approved*</p> <p>Description A regional strategy for basin-wide drought management and impacts mitigation based on actual historical and on-going impacts of drought on social, economic, and environment where with and without climate change influence the impacts still occur.</p> <p>This strategy will complement and in line with the regional strategies for flood and drought management.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regional strategy for drought management and mitigation is prepared, and endorsed by the JC and approved by Council to be incorporated into national plans. <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Countries consensus on adaptation options and mitigation strategies to adapt to and mitigate some specific drought impacts. <p>Time line</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2017

Outcome 3**3. Guidance for the development and management of water and related projects and resources shared and applied by national planning and implementing agencies**

Addressing BDS Strategic Priority #5: Improve national water resources development

Description:

In the medium and long term, impacts and risks caused by national development to the basin would be avoided and minimised through the adaptation of national plans based on basin-wide assessments and strategies (the strategic aim of outcome 2). In the shorter term, in addition to the MRC Procedures especially PNPCA, PMFM and PWQ, MRC need to support its Member Countries with Best Practice Guidelines and guidance on how existing and impending national projects and programmes should be carried out to minimise potential transboundary impacts and risks. The provision of these guidelines has been a longstanding task of MRC. Most of these guidelines are used at the national level to improve project design and implementation practices. As such they are also important for capacity building in the Member Countries. In the future, the further development and promotion of Best Practice Guidelines will be primarily a national task.

Indicators

- Number of TB national and provincial projects applying MRC guidelines
- Evidence of national and basin benefits in using MRC guidelines and standards

Assumptions

- National projects planners and managers have confidence and trust in the MRC's Guidelines

Output 3.1

Preliminary design guidance for mainstream dams reviewed, updated and implementation supported

Description

At least eleven large hydropower schemes have been planned on the mainstream reaches of the Lower Mekong Basin in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Thailand. Within MRC's areas of cooperation mentioned under article 1 of the 1995 Mekong Agreement, MRC needs to "formulate a consistent approach to evaluate the design, operation, impact and mitigation measures for any proposed mainstream dam in a basin-wide, sustainable development context". A Preliminary Design Guidance for Proposed Mainstream Dams in the Lower Mekong Basin has been issued in 2009 to provide developers of proposed dams with an overview of the issues that the MRC will be considering during the Procedures for Notification, Prior Consultation and Agreement (PNPCA) process under the 1995 Mekong Agreement.

PDG provides preliminary guidance in the form of performance targets, design and operating principles of mitigation measures as well as compliance monitoring and adaptive management. Taking into account the concerns of stakeholders including private developers, including on fisheries, sediments, dam safety, and navigation aspects, the current draft PDG will be up-dated including the lessons learned from the PNPCA on Xayaburi and Don Sahong Hydropower Dam Projects, and could include additional key topics on social safeguards, climate change adaptation, reservoir fisheries management and grievance procedures. This output contributes to the implementation of the 1995 Agreement, in particular improving the implementation of MRC procedures.

Indicators

- The updated PDG is prepared
- The updated PDG is endorsed by the JC
- Proposed mainstream HP projects address principles and recommendations in the PDG

Assumptions

- All Member Countries have common understanding and interests to update the PDG as needed and based on lessons learned

Timeline

- By 2020

Output 3.2

Integrated Flood Risk Management guidelines promoted and implementation supported

Description

FMMP 2004-2010 developed some 16 sets of best practice guidelines (BPGs) and associated training modules to promote integrated flood risk management (including flash flood) in the LMB, together with a number of training modules to assist in the resolution of trans-boundary flood Issues, Differences and Disputes. Training in the use of these flood risk management 'tools' was delivered to personnel from the Member Countries. This information and on-going training in its use constitutes a valuable resource for the more effective management of flood risk in the LMB.

In conjunction with Member Countries, the BPGs and trans-boundary training modules will be reviewed, modified as necessary and then assigned to a designated training institute in each Member Country, where the information will form part of the flood risk management curriculum delivered by these institutes. To assist in bedding down this process, FMMP will oversee and advise on the use of these materials for the first two years.

The IFRM process can be applied equally to national and trans-boundary areas of the LMB. In reviewing the BPGs, the need for modifications to make them more trans-boundary 'friendly' will be assessed.

The objective of this Output is to promote the use of and adoption by Member Countries of BPGs for IFRM and the use of procedures developed to assist in the resolution of trans-boundary Issues, Difference and Disputes.

Indicators

- Evidence of Member Countries use the IFRM guidelines in their flood risk management endeavours.
- The training materials and modules are used by the institutes of higher learning and form part of the flood risk management curriculum.
- The number of enrolments in courses that deliver training in the use of the BPGs and trans-boundary package.

Assumptions

- Sufficient resources and qualified staff are available to undertake the work.
- Institutes of higher learning are interested in undertaking this work

Timeline

- By 2020

Output 3.3

A set of guidelines and frameworks on waterborne transport management prepared and promoted

Description

With reference to the 1995 MRC Agreement Article 9 “Freedom of Navigation”, the MCs wish the Mekong river to be used for cross-border trade. However the most striking weakness in the Mekong Basin navigation regime is lack of common standards, procedures and rules for navigation. It will be impossible to encourage cross-border trade and transport if such a framework is not in place as investments are too risky. Clearly, such a situation is not the best platform for signing regional cooperation agreements on free trade. It is difficult to have different national systems on a river which is shared by two countries (e.g. the Mekong between the Lao PDR and Thailand along two stretches.) To maintain different systems does not only refrain cross-border traffic, but also endangers the lives of the waterway users.

A “level playing field” would have to be created before markets could be opened up. Distortions of competition resulting from differences in technical, safety and environmental standards would have to be addressed. The MRC, being an inter-governmental organisation, is in a position to assist the work of the LMB member countries in efforts to standardise and regulate ports and fleet. In order to make this happen, guidelines should be established, agreed upon and then used.

Indicators

- Number of Cross-border Transportation Permit issued by competent authorities of Cambodia and Vietnam
- Single stop formality for vessels engaged in transit transportation applied
- Adequate pilotage services to vessels requesting assistance are provided basin-wide
- Proposed standards for construction of ships and equipment on board, and the same standards for storing and carrying dangerous goods, crew certification, etc are legally adopted basin-wide
- Proposed technical guidelines are promoted and used basin-wide
- Lao PDR and Thailand use the same safety rules and regulations

Assumptions

- Member Countries’ decision makers understand the advantages and importance of waterborne transportation
- LA s understand that they should work together with the shipping companies
- Strong commitment to follow guidelines is required
- Public awareness on necessity of proper waste management is essential

Timeline

- By 2019

<p>Output 3.4</p>	<p>The sharing and learning of “best practice” guidelines and tools to support the development and operation of water and related projects on tributaries of transboundary significance</p> <p>Description MRC assessments indicate that existing and planned developments on tributaries of transboundary significance from hydropower developments to intensive irrigated agriculture and flood protection infrastructures, bring positive and potential adverse impacts at the transboundary level. For major projects on tributaries of transboundary significance, there is a need to apply national guidelines, but also share experience and expertise, update them if needed and with MRC expertise and tools as requested by member countries, in order to enhance transboundary benefits and avoid and mitigate adverse impacts.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance for water projects on tributaries of transboundary significance are shared and jointly learned and updated • Existing and proposed projects on tributaries of transboundary significance address principles and recommendations from MRC guidance and tools <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Countries have interest to share and develop such guidance <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous
<p>Output 3.5</p>	<p>Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transportation of Dangerous Goods implemented</p> <p>Description Increase in transport volumes of dangerous goods on the Mekong River require the Member Countries adhere to a consistent and coordinated development of their policies on transport infrastructure especially with regard to the inland waterway safety and environmental protection. The Mekong River has a fragile ecological balance; hence, a serious accident involving e.g. oil spills as well as operational spillages would thus have irreparable consequences on these fragile environments. Therefore MRC prepared the “Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transport of Dangerous Goods along the Mekong River” (RAP-DG) as a basis to reduce the risks of accidents, spillages and pollution and enhance emergency response and regional coordination.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAs include the Regional Action Plan into their regular planning cycle • Shipping accidents are reported and analysed according to established procedures • Measures to collect wastes in ports are implemented. • Measures to control pollution caused by boats are implemented • Transboundary emergency response schemes are in place <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law enforcement is well enforced • Private sector must set aside enough resources to make adjustments to ships and ports • Public awareness on necessity of proper waste management is accepted

	<p>The Implementation Phase is expected to run from 2015 to 2020, especially for National Projects with Cross Border Impact, which require national implementation, and Cross Border Projects which require regional implementation and coordination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public awareness on necessity of proper waste management is accepted • Public awareness on need for safety prevention, and impacts of oil pollution is accepted <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2020
<p>Output 3.6</p>	<p>Sustainable Management of Watersheds in the Lower Mekong Basin Project supported*</p> <p>Description</p> <p>By 2017 the agreed outputs under the MRC cooperation agreement with KfW on sustainable management of watersheds in the LMB will be delivered. This includes: a dedicated watershed management webpage, based on past and ongoing watershed management activities; a fully prepared pilot project for upland watershed management in Lao PDR aimed at demonstrating how recent policy and institutional reforms can close the growing policy-practice gap in watershed management; and the preparation of planning frameworks that will assist MONRE in guiding the various line agencies and their local departments in undertaking their socio-economic and development planning in a way that ensures the most acceptable balance between resource development and protection. After 2017, the use of the planning frameworks will be promoted and technically supported.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed management website is operational and actively used by stakeholders • Funding of pilot project is secured <p>Time line</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2017

<p>Output 3.7</p>	<p>The implementation of the guidelines for improvement of watershed management practices supported</p> <p>Description The interactive MRC webpage on watershed management will be maintained. The initially prepared planning frameworks with support from KfW (2016-2017) will be updated based on feedback from the national water resources management agencies. Staff of these agencies will be trained in the use of the updated planning frameworks. The updated planning frameworks will assist the national water resources management agencies in preparing a framework plan (or 'blueprint' or guidelines) for the development planning in tributary basins by the various line agencies (agriculture, energy, mining etc.) that will take into account environmental and social issues.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MRC interactive webpage on WM is kept up to date and evidence of visits/ uses each month; • The planning frameworks are disseminated and the identified users are trained <p>Time line</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018-2020
<p>Output 3.8</p>	<p>Guidelines to adapt to water shortage and drought impacts prepared and implemented*</p> <p>Description A guideline for drought management to provide recommendations to mitigate impacts caused by water shortage in dry season and prolonged dry spells in rainy season.</p> <p>The development of this guideline will take into account any synergies with the flood management guidelines.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guideline is developed and agreed by Member Countries to be incorporated into national plans. • Guideline implementation are supported • <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data information on changes of water diversion by catchments is precisely revealed by Member Countries (limit of data accessibility) • Policy makers might see the guideline as significant enough to incorporate into the national planning. <p>Time line</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2017

Output 3.9

Methodologies for sustainable use and management of wetlands developed and implementation supported*

Description

The Lower Mekong Basin (LMB) contains a great number and diversity of wetlands which support a wealth of biodiversity and provide a wide range of ecological service functions and natural resources that support food security, livelihoods and a range of other important social, economic and cultural values. Wetlands and their associated biodiversity are becoming increasingly threatened and the loss of wetlands in the LMB has been enormous. Increasing local population numbers, resulting in more intensive use of wetlands and ultimately drainage and conversion to agricultural lands or urban settlements, combined with increasing flood protection, further threaten these valuable ecosystems.

To prevent further loss or degradation of the Mekong wetlands, policy makers, wetland managers and local populations will be supported in managing their wetlands by providing tools and capacity development for wetland inventory and the assessment of wetland ecological functions and ecosystem services.

Indicators

- The increasing use of LMB wetlands database by external partners
- The increasing use of assessment methodologies by relevant LAs
- The number of LA experts trained in wetland management

Assumptions

- Political and policy support obtained

Time line

- By 2020

Output 3.10

Guidance for design and operation of irrigation systems with transboundary implications prepared and implementation supported*

Description

Irrigation has played a major role in increasing rice yields and consequently also in food security in large areas of the Basin. It has contributed to the impressive LMB record in increased rice production and export. Irrigation can be expected to reduce the risk of crop damage from water shortages in the wet season and expand cropping area in the dry season. Climate change will increase the intensity and duration of droughts as well as the frequency of extreme floods. Irrigation expansions are planned throughout the Basin, but some plans in southern Cambodia and in the mountainous regions of Lao PDR and Viet Nam appear to be in areas with relatively high mainstream and flash flood risk, which may expose crops and infrastructure to potential damage. The guidelines for irrigation sector need a clearer strategy for improved food security, poverty reduction, and its own efficiency and sustainability to remain justified as a priority public intervention. Engineering solutions at each location will produce different results and therefore the current set of skills and knowledge should be reviewed to determine if it can cope with additional complexities brought to the sector, which are more transboundary and interlinked with other sector developments.

Indicators

- The guidelines for the design and operation of irrigation system are agreed by Member Countries
- The guidelines for the design and operation of irrigation system tested in MCs
- Guidelines for design and operation of irrigation system are applied in national policy for irrigation planning, designing, evaluation and operation

Assumptions

- Cooperation from concerned line agencies

Timeline

- By 2018

<p>Output 3.11</p>	<p>Guidelines for fish-friendly irrigation schemes promoted and implementation supported*</p> <p>Description</p> <p>More than 14,000 dams and weirs have been built throughout LMB, and many more are planned or under construction. The weirs create artificial aggregations of pre-spawning fish which are extremely vulnerable to overexploitation and disease. Some have limited impacts on fisheries and others may be more severe depending on location, design, operation and management, etc. The development of guidelines will allow for designing and prioritizing measures depending on the impacts of the structures, feasibility of remedial measures, ecosystem requirements and value of fishery benefits as well the contribution of enhanced fisheries to poverty reduction.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines for fish friendly irrigation schemes adopted and agreed by Member Countries to be adapted in national policy for irrigation planning, designing, evaluation and operation. First round testing of draft guidelines in pilot areas in MCs completed and guidelines revised accordingly <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High ownership of relevant line agencies and local communities <p>Time line</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2020 *remark: current fund until 2018 and continue with earmark until 2020 if needed
<p>Output 3.12</p>	<p>Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment (TbEIA) guidelines established, approved and promoted*</p> <p>Description</p> <p>All LMB countries have national legislation for Environmental Impact Assessment in place. However, many of the developments taking place in the basin have transboundary impacts. A procedure for Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment (TbEIA) will improve existing cooperation as per the Procedures for Notification Prior Consultation and Agreement (PNPCA), help in conflict management and support sustainable development.</p> <p>A draft Framework for TbEIA is available, but needs to be approved in the form of a Framework Agreement. Guidance for implementing the framework and an institutional support mechanism will be developed. The guidance will support implementation of TbEIA by assisting Member Countries in determining the best approach to take in different circumstances. The institutional support mechanism will identify and implement necessary support measures.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TbEIA framework is endorsed by the JC <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceived need for implementation of TbEIA in Member Countries TbEIA recognized as meeting both national interests and regional cooperation <p>Time line</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2020

Outcome 4

4. Effective and coherent implementation of MRC Procedures by Member Countries

Addressing BDS Strategic Priority #4: Strengthen basin-wide procedures and national implementation capacity

Description:

The five MRC Procedures and their associated Technical Guidelines elaborate key principles established in the 1995 Mekong Agreement by which the Member Countries agree to cooperate in basin management and development. The fact that the MRC has five agreed procedures (water quality, flows maintenance, data sharing, water use monitoring, and project consultation) to complement basin planning provides a solid cooperation foundation compared to most developing basins. However, most Procedures and Guidelines have been in place for several years. With the basin changing and implementation experiences gathered, including the PNPCA for the mainstream dams, it is appropriate that the Procedures are now reviewed to establish whether their implementation is leading to the outcomes as originally envisaged and/or as may now be required as new situation and directions arise. In other words, the Procedures should be “fit for purpose” (in terms of clarity, link to basin planning and operationalisation). Furthermore, with increased decentralisation of MRC activities, consideration is needed of Member Country capacity to implement the Procedures and Guidelines (especially relating to monitoring), which were drafted at a time when regional support for their implementation was greater.

Indicator

- Evidence of adverse transboundary impacts that were mitigated, minimized or avoided in basin planning and management by using MRC Procedures
- Evidence of actions taken under PWQ and PMFM when water flows, levels and quality are at critical levels
- The number of data and information under the PDIES that are shared and used for basin development planning and management and research purpose
- The number of projects monitored under PWUM in both national and regional level
- Number of water utilization projects notified, consulted and improved agreed under consultation and notification process of PNPCA

Assumptions

- Member Countries approve all Technical Guidelines
- Member Countries willingness to apply the MRC Procedures

<p>Output 4.1</p>	<p>MRC Procedures and associated technical guidelines reviewed and updated</p> <p>Description</p> <p>To utilise the waters of the Mekong River system in a reasonable and equitable manner in their respective territories, pursuant to all relevant factors and circumstances under the implementation of the 1995 Mekong Agreement by the MRC Member Countries, the MRC Council adopted the five MRC Procedures. The Joint Committee has subsequently approved Technical Guidelines in support of the PDIES, the PWUM and the PNPCA (the PDIES has 2 Guidelines). The Technical Guidelines for the PMFM and the PWQ have been drafted, but are awaiting final agreement on some pending issues before they are submitted to the Joint Committee for final approval while other three approved technical guidelines are under implementation.</p> <p>The Procedures and Technical Guidelines may be reviewed and updated from time-to-time to ensure that they are practical, can be applied in an equitable manner, and that they remain consistent with the original principles, objectives and intentions of the 1995 Mekong Agreement.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Technical Guidelines for the PMFM are updated, finalised and agreed • The Technical Guidelines for the PWQ are finalised and agreed • Relevant MRC Procedures and Technical Guidelines including PNPCA are reviewed as part of Joint Platform <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness of Member Countries to review the MRC Procedures and make changes if needed to benefit Mekong cooperation • Agreement reaches on the pending issues • Positive perception of the benefits of the MRC Procedures <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016: Finalization of the Technical Guidelines of PMFM and PWQ
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<p>Output 4.2</p>	<p>MRC Joint Platform and working groups for MRC Procedures implementation supported</p> <p>Description The MRC Joint Platform will bring the on-going development of the Technical Guidelines as well as the required capacity-building processes under one roof, specifically with a view to address the pending and unresolved issues in the implementation of the MRC Procedures for better ways to promote the implementation of the Procedures in a consistent IWRM-based framework, which achieves the reasonable and equitable use of water (or Development Opportunity Space), while protecting the environment and ecological balance. This is also to link the implementation of the Procedures to efforts to develop and implement IWRM-based national legislation, hence supporting the acceptance of the Procedures in domestic law.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of pending/ challenging issues related to more than one procedure tabled and resolved by the Joint Platform • The number of pending issues specific to each procedure resolved by respective technical working groups of each Procedure <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid understanding of the purposes and intent of the MRC Procedures in accordance with 1995 Agreement • Willingness of Member Countries to resolve pending issues • Adequate resources are assigned to facilitation and implementation support <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016- 2020 organized routine meeting of the Joint Platform (twice a year as indicated in the TOR)
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<p>Output 4.3</p>	<p>Common understanding of the Procedures implementation by Member Countries promoted</p> <p>Description Effective implementation of the five MRC's Procedures is central to the implementation of the 1995 Mekong Agreement and to regional Mekong cooperation. In addition to reviewing Procedures and updating their technical guidelines, further work is needed to build common understanding of the intent of the Procedures and broad consensus on their implementation. To do this, capacity for the national level to implement of the Procedures is further strengthened through the Capacity Development Action Plan (CDAP) process. CDAP aims to build capacity and increase awareness of relevant stakeholders, especially the NMC Secretariats and Line Agencies on understanding and knowledge of the 1995 Mekong Agreement, the MRC Procedures and Technical Guidelines which contribute to effective implementation of the Procedures and Technical guidelines for the reasonable, equitable and sustainable development of the Basin.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1 Regional SLD is organised in one year. • AT least 1 national SLD is held in each Member Countries in one year. • Record of Member Countries that applies to CDAP • The number of orientation/training on 1995 Mekong Agreement that includes the content of the MRC Procedures and IWRM held per year. <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate resources are assigned to implementation support <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016-2020: Sharing and learning dialogue at once a year
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Outcome 5

5. Effective dialogue and cooperation between Member Countries and strategic engagement of regional partners and stakeholders on transboundary water management

Addressing BDS Strategic Priority #7: Increase cooperation with partners and stakeholders

Description:

The Mekong River Basin is shared by six riparian countries and cooperation between the MRC Members and the two upper riparians (especially China) is central to developing and managing the river. Cooperation between the Member Countries and China will be enhanced, building on the solid foundation of regular communication, information sharing and technical exchanges to address risks of upstream development and capture potential opportunities of dry season flow increase.

Within the context of ASEAN integration, the MRC will work closer and more strategically with two prominent regional cooperation frameworks and programmes driving the region together, namely the GMS and ASEAN. GMS Regional Investment Framework projects relevant to Mekong water resources development and management and in line with the Basin Development Strategy could be promoted under MRC, while basin-wide and joint projects developed under MRC framework contributing to regional integration could be promoted for funding and support under GMS. The political and policy arenas under ASEAN could be tapped to promote the MRC agenda and its contribution to regional integration.

Indicators

- Number of deals and agreements to secure specific cost and benefit sharing arrangements especially joint projects among riparian countries
- Evidence of stronger engagement with China and Myanmar
- Evidence of ASEAN and GMS Mekong related strategies, forums and meetings reflect MRC basin-wide perspectives
- Evidence that the opinions/perspectives of academic/research institutions, civil society and private sector are taken into consideration by MRCS and Member Countries
- Extent of continuing dialogue of MCs to resolve critical basin issues and challenges

Assumptions

- Partners/Stakeholders recognize the mutual benefits and interest in cooperation with MRC

Last but not least, institutionalized engagement with stakeholders will be developed, including a regular stakeholder platform and its specific components to engage groups such as private sector, civil society and research organizations. Strengthening the relationships between the MRC, its members' governments with key stakeholders such as the private sector and civil society will increase mutual understanding of the roles and functions of each organisation, the work and mandate of the MRC and the benefits of its procedures, assessments and guidelines.



Output 5.1

Partnerships with MRC's Dialogue Partners further developed and implemented, including an additional agreement with China on cooperation for Mekong basin development and management

Description

In 2002, the MRC's cooperation with China was further strengthened with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the provision of daily river flow and rainfall data from two monitoring stations in Yunnan Province during the wet season, which facilitates improved flood forecasting. More recently, MRC has cooperated with China in a number of areas, such as the exchange of relevant monitoring and water-quality data and sharing technical expertise and exchanges in flood prevention and management, hydropower development, and environmental management. Further collaboration in these and other areas are being explored, including the issue of Lancang dam operation which would build further confidence and trust to LMB countries in using new dry season flows and China's involvement in state of basin reporting.

Cooperation with the dialogue partners should be sustained and enhanced through regular yearly dialogue meetings (and high-level participation from China and Myanmar in MRC summits and Council meetings), technical exchanges of knowledge and expertise through visits and workshops, comparison of modelling and study results, and exchange of expertise building on the JRP programme.

Indicators

- The agreement between the MRC and China is maintained and updated
- Additional protocol/agreement with China on exchange of dam operation information concluded
- The number of joint technical workshops held in collaboration with China
- The number of Chinese experts working at the MRC
- The number of joint technical workshops held in collaboration with Myanmar
- The number of Myanmar experts working at the MRC

Assumptions

- Stable political and regional relations

Timeline

- Continuous

Output 5.2

Partnerships with ASEAN, GMS and other organizations updated and implemented

Description

MRC and ASEAN will review and extend the existing Memorandum of Understanding between the two organizations to cement concrete areas of cooperation based on the direction in the Basin Development Strategy. Both ASEAN and MRC can foster regional integration by promoting optimal and sustainable water resource development actions to reduce the development gap between countries. Strategic directions and cooperation agreements facilitated under ASEAN in the water and related sectors (energy, transport, environment, disaster management, etc.) could provide an added impetus for MRC cooperation. In this connection, ASEAN can also help promote and facilitate the development of broader multi-sectoral deals to secure specific benefit sharing arrangements (including benefits beyond the water sector). Regularly yearly dialogue meetings and participation in each other sectoral working/expert group meetings could facilitate further cooperation.

Based on recent dialogue and review, MRC and ADB will update their Partnership Agreement, with a view to greater sharing of knowledge and information through regular dialogue and technical meetings, and in promoting strategically important development opportunities. Alignment of development strategies developed under the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) cooperation programme supported by ADB and the Mekong IWRM-based Basin Development Strategy developed under the MRC cooperation framework will support each to succeed in their respective aims in synergetic ways.

Indicators

- MOU with ASEAN updated in accordance with BDS directions
- Yearly dialogue meetings with ASEAN held
- MRC representatives participate in ASEAN meetings
- ASEAN representatives participate in MRC governance/ technical meetings and stakeholder forums
- MRC-ADB Partnership Agreement updated in accordance with BDS directions
- Annual dialogue and regular technical meetings held between ADB and MRC
- MRC representatives participate in GMS Meetings
- ADB representatives participate in MRC governance/ technical meetings and stakeholder forums
- The number of funded RIF water-related projects that are in line with BDS

With the MRC transitioning to core river basin management functions, cooperation from GMS offers the opportunity for MRC to rationalise and phase out overlapping implementation of programmes in water-related sectors. For the GMS, the Basin Development Strategy provides a basin-wide perspective against which possible water related Regional Investment Framework (RIF) projects can be screened and 'cleared' from a basin perspective. This can facilitate funding of RIF projects as project developers are provided some certainty as to the regional water resources management processes against which RIF projects will be judged.

Finally, under existing MOUs, regular dialogue and exchange of visits have characterised the long cooperation between the MRC and the Mississippi River Commission and the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and these will be continue during 2016-2020. More recent initiatives with other partners will be reviewed and possibly enhanced as appropriate based on the needs of Member Countries.

Assumptions

- ASEAN work and meetings place Mekong issues regularly on the agenda and MRC Member Countries place the ASEAN integration drive as a key feature in the Mekong Basin Development Strategy and MRC Strategic Plan
- GMS supported by ADB value the basin-wide water related perspectives provided in the BDS and the opportunities to strengthen cooperation with MRC to build synergies and reduce duplications and overlaps

Timeline

- MOUs updated by 2016
- Implementation continuous

Output 5.3

Regional Stakeholder Platform established and implemented for enhanced dialogue and collaboration with broader stakeholders

Description

The MRCS will promote a more systematic and institutionalized and targeted approach to engaging with broader stakeholders, including private sector (developers and consulting companies), regional academic organisations, civil society and other regional organizations. Towards this end, a Regional Stakeholder Platform will be established to engage broader stakeholders that could feature two mechanisms. First, a yearly MRC-wide stakeholder forum on various strategic and technical work under the MRC agenda. Second, specific mechanisms under the Platform tailored to each group of stakeholders will be considered, such as the setting up of a stakeholder working group specifically for the private sector, for civil society or for research institutes.

Under existing MOUs, regular dialogue and exchange of visits have characterised the long cooperation between the MRC and the Mississippi River Commission and the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and these will be continue during 2016-2020. More recent initiatives with other partners will be reviewed and possibly enhanced as appropriate based on the needs of Member Countries.

Indicators

- Establishment of Regional Stakeholder Platform
- The level of satisfaction of stakeholders with MRC process and procedures
- The level of satisfaction of stakeholders with MRC products and services
- Yearly common stakeholder forum held; specific working groups (for private sector, for research organisations, for CSOs) set up and meetings held

Assumptions

- Stakeholders maintain interest to engage with MRC

Timeline

- Establishment of Regional Stakeholder Platform by 2017
- MRC-wide stakeholder forum held in 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020
- Specific working group meetings held at least once a year

Outcome 6

6. Basin-wide monitoring, forecasting, impact assessment and dissemination of results strengthened for better decision-making by Member Countries

Addressing BDS Strategic Priority #6: Enhance information management, communications and tools

Description:

Monitoring, tracking and reporting on the conditions and status of the basin are necessary tasks of the MRC in order to support better decision making in all aspects of Member Countries cooperation. The key work under this outcome will be the next State of Basin Report, which will monitor and track the economic, social, environment, climate and cooperation status in the Mekong (upper and lower parts) and will be indicator based and accessible via the web. The Report will evaluate development impacts, positive and negative, as a measure of the effectiveness of the BDS implementation as well as highlight emerging issues that need to be addressed by the next BDS update.

To support state of the basin monitoring, as well as basin-wide assessments and development and implementation of basin-wide strategies, the MRC needs to maintain its current suite of monitoring and forecasting systems as well as its modelling tools and capability. The data and information routinely and periodically assembled will need to be maintained in regional databases and publically shared and communicated with stakeholders.

Indicators

- Quality (timeliness and accuracy) of MRC forecasting information in critical or emergency situations.
- The extent to which Line / Implementing Agencies use MRC reports and information systems for better decision making

Assumptions

- Member Countries and the wider MRC stakeholder groups share information as needed for the maintenance and development of regional information systems and tools

Output 6.1

Monitoring and forecasting systems for MRC Procedures and Indicator Framework developed and maintained

Description

The MRC monitoring systems are central to the success of MRC's operation. They provide Member Countries with routine river and flash flood forecasting and drought monitoring and warnings. They are to be further developed during 2016-20 to better monitor MRC Procedures, improve flood and drought monitoring and forecasting and to embrace the multi sectoral MRC Indicator Framework, which will define the overall monitoring requirements for regional purposes, including State of Basin reporting. At the same time, responsibility for some MRC monitoring systems has or is being decentralised.

Continued improvement of existing systems is needed as well, including those for rainfall, water levels, discharge, fisheries, sediments and water quality. Furthermore, given the current sparse nature of MRC's hydromet network, there is a need to capture all relevant data (including potentially remotely sensed data) to support flood and drought monitoring and forecasting and for this to be made available in timely manner. New processes and monitoring systems also need to be established to capture the broader requirements of the MRC Indicator Framework.

Achievement of this output requires close collaboration with relevant line agencies to achieve the agreed data delivery schedules in line with PDIES. Where MRC monitoring systems are to be decentralised during this period, transitional support may be required to ensure the continuity of data availability and its good quality. MRC regional monitoring parameters for flood and drought monitoring and forecasting retrieved from other sources, such as remotely sensed data, will remain centralized.

The objective of this Output is to ensure that by no later than 2020 all necessary monitoring systems are in place, well maintained and data are being received by MRCS in accordance with agreed schedules and standards.

Indicators

- The MRC Monitoring and forecasting systems for required monitoring parameters established and maintained
- Data for required parameters are monitored by Member Countries and when needed delivered to MRCS according to agreed schedules and standards
- Decentralisation of monitoring is implemented according to the Roadmap
- The level of end-users satisfaction with quality of flash flood and river flood forecasting and drought warnings

Assumptions

- Member countries have sufficient capacity, tools and budget to carry out all MRC decentralised monitoring activities according the required standards

Timeline

- Continuous

Output 6.2

Regional information systems and databases quality assured, standardized, improved and maintained

Description

As indicated in the PDIES, the central data management system is a core role and function for MRCS to provide sound high standard of dataset with quality assured and reliable data and information to support all MRC and the member countries activities. Effective implementation of this work requires an international standard for data management and data quality assurance procedure to align with PDIES and its technical guideline. The International standards and procedures adopted by MRC for orderly, logical, and consistent Quality Assurance must be followed for all types of MRC datasets and data series, as set out in the MRCS-IS strategy.

In the navigation sector, River Information Services (RIS) for navigation are harmonised information services to support traffic and transport management in inland navigation including interfaces to other transport modes. In transport and definitely in inland shipping worldwide, the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is dramatically increasing. It can provide inland shipping with a competitive edge over road transport. The system supports traffic and transport management in inland navigation including interfaces to other transport modes. To avoid a situation where countries install different systems, the MRC could ensure that the basic functions of River Information Services could be in place and based on a standardised system. Once the development of regional navigation is well under way, the basic functions of the RIS can be expanded to allow for more advanced technological modules such as electronic charting and traffic management and vessel monitoring systems. Once all parties adhere to the communication standards across the basin, authorities and the industry will be able to exchange data.

Indicators

- The percentage of regional datasets received that are quality assured
- The percentage of assured data sets which have been uploaded to MRC-IS
- The level of quality, reliability and consistency of the MRC-IS datasets
- The amount of new data shared by Member Countries for basin-wide assessments that are deposited into MRC regional databases
- The percentage of real time data received that is used in forecasting
- The records of shipping accidents is available among the Member Countries
- River Information Services (RIS) architecture is used by shipping operators, port stevedores and river authorities
- All Member Countries use the same standard for collecting data on waterway traffic, dangerous goods, ship arrival times, etc.

Assumptions

- Sufficient and qualified staff to conduct work

Timeline

- Continuous

Output 6.3

MRC modelling and related impact assessment tools updated and approved for use by MRC and Member Countries

Description

The Decision Support Framework (DSF) and accompanying MRC toolbox (MRC toolbox) is a key tool for the MRC by which the transboundary impacts of basin-wide developments are assessed. The system lies at the heart of MRC's desire to promote and coordinate optimal and sustainable IWRM-based development within the Basin. The system, which was originally approved for MRC use in 2004, requires maintenance and periodic updating to reflect prevailing conditions within the basin, a process overseen by the MRC's Technical Advisory Committee. In addition, models and tools are also maintained for routine river and flash flood forecasting and drought monitoring and warnings in response to user needs for increased forecast accuracy, a longer lead-time and improved warning information.

The objective of this Output is to maintain and keep the DSF/MRC toolbox up to date and approved for use by the MRC for transboundary assessment and monitoring purposes.

Indicators

- The number of agencies using MRC toolbox
- Updated DSF/MRC toolbox version is endorsed and available for use

Assumptions

- MRC tools & analysis are accurate, timely and reliable

Timeline

- Updated DSF/MRC toolbox by 2017 with further upgrades as needed by 2020

<p>Output 6.4</p>	<p>State of Basin, Status of Climate Change, and technical reports based on MRC Indicator Framework prepared</p> <p>Description</p> <p>The State of Basin Report is a flagship product of the MRC. In addition the organisation has recently produced a Report on the Regional Status of Climate Change Adaptation in the LMB which needs also to be prepared every five years. The Climate Change report elaborates and expands the climate change section of the SOB.</p> <p>State of the Basin and climate change monitoring and reporting will be in accordance with the MRC indicator framework. The SOB will record and evaluate the development impacts, positive and negative, within the Basin as a measure of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Basin Development Strategy.</p> <p>State of the Basin monitoring, which will be reported once every five years, is to be completed by 2018 to feed into the strategic review and planning process for MRC's next cycle (BDS, MRC SP, NIPs). The report will be compiled by the MRCS with support from each NMCS and possibly Dialogue Partners and be submitted to the MRC Joint Committee for endorsement.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State of Basin Report is prepared including a web-based interactive version • The State of Basin Report is endorsed by MRC JC and disseminated • 2nd Regional Report on Status of Climate Change is prepared • 2nd Regional Report on Status of Climate Change is endorsed by MRC JC and disseminated • The number of bulletins, technical reports and publications prepared and published • The end user satisfaction of bulletins, technical reports and publications <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring data as defined by the MRC Indicator Framework is made available • Cooperation with China on State of Basin Report is developed and agreed <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous
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Output 6.5

Communication of and access to MRC data, information and knowledge developed and maintained

Description

The MRC is committed to sharing of information amongst Member Countries and with other potential information users of this information in accordance with MRC's Communication Policy and governed by the MRC Procedures for Data and Information Exchange and Sharing (PDIES) and the Guidelines on Custodianship and Management of the MRC Information System. The technical information dissemination service is intended to provide an effective and efficient interface between the MRC and these information users in a manner responsive to user needs.

The service will include learning services, sharing and communications networks, and the provision of disaster and emergency warnings related to flood, drought and river pollution. Effort will be given to stimulating wider community engagement with the MRC through promotion of user friendly access to MRC information products and attendance at MRC forums.

Indicators

- The number of visitors accessing the MRC-IS platforms
- The number of data uploaded and downloaded
- The level of satisfactions by the users with the system
- The number of organisations and individuals actively engaged with the Knowledge Hub
- The number of people benefiting from MRC Learning Services
- The user feedbacks (positive and negative) on technical information dissemination and learning services
- The number of national, regional and international fisheries organizations benefiting from MRC quarterly newsletter Catch and Culture
- Functional and operational communication network is maintained for transboundary emergency alert, response and mitigation.

Assumptions

- Timely availability of critical information and data

Timeline

- Upgraded platform by 2017
- Continuous maintenance

Outcome 7

7. MRC transitioned to a more efficient and effective organisation in line with the Decentralisation Roadmap and related reform plans

Description:

To support the realisation of the aforementioned outcomes and to meet the Roadmap objectives of financial self-sufficiency by 2030 as well as a “lean and mean” Secretariat focused on core functions to support Mekong cooperation, the timely completion of the ongoing reforms related to the structure and operation (human resources, administration and finance) of the Secretariat and effective linkages with Member Countries is a high priority. A Change Manager will champion the change and ensure a smooth transition. Highly qualified and motivated staff will be retained and/or recruited, including considering the new position of Deputy CEO to manage the Secretariat while the CEO focuses on strategic and policy issues. Finally, the MRC’s result based monitoring, evaluation and reporting system will be fully operationalised, in particular for reporting on implementation of the IWRM-based Basin Development Strategy, MRC Strategic Plan and the National Indicative Plans.

Indicators

- Extent to which MRCS organization structure supports integrated water resources planning & implementation (IWRM Framework)
- Percentage of MRC SP outputs completed as planned
- CFs batches 1 & 2 successfully fully decentralized
- Percentage of Member Countries funding contributions
- Extent of staff morale and satisfaction with the MRC management system and organizational direction
- Percentage (10%) of reduction in operating costs achieved over period of the plan

Assumptions

- A MRC reform implementation plan (including structural, operational, financial and staffing reform components) including risks management has been agreed by the Council in 2015, which stipulates the new internal structure of the MRC Secretariat, improved MRCS-NMCS-LAs arrangements, financial and staffing management and system changes.
- The MRC Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 which specifies the annual planning (work and budget) mechanisms has already been agreed upon by Member Countries in 2015
- Internal MRCS communication plan related to the reform has already been developed and approved by MRCS management and implementation started in 2015

<p>Output 7.1</p>	<p>MRCS structural reform implemented and linkages with Member Countries further improved</p> <p>Description</p> <p>The 2010 Hua Hin Declaration of the Heads of Government set the stage for the MRC reform. The organization is to become more reliant on in-country implementation, focused on the delivery of core functions, financially self-sustainable by 2030 and with a much leaner structure as a result</p> <p>The new structure of the MRCS and the new arrangements for links between MRCS and national agencies are expected to be approved by MRC governance bodies within 2015 for implementation in 2016. Following this approval, the existing Programmes will be rearranged and streamlined into new organizational units, and the operational arrangements adjusted to strengthen the national and regional linkages and to ensure strong engagement of national implementing agencies in the delivery of MRC's core functions. The management systems and operational procedures as well as the annual work planning and implementation processes will be reviewed and updated to align with the new structure while ensuring thematic / disciplinary coherence and consistency. The transitional management from the MRCS leadership team and from the MRC governance bodies is critical during 2016-2020.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New organization structure is in place with clear linkages to Member Countries • TORs of the new organisational units and JDs of all staff positions are in place • Work flows and processes are updated to reflect the structural and operational changes • The number (or percentage) of MRC organizational units that adopt and apply MRC Gender tools • The number (or percentage) of LAs that adopts and apply MRC Gender tools <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change manager or change management advisor to the CEO has been mobilized and on board in 2015 • In-depth analysis of the existing working groups, expert groups, steering committees, and proposal to streamline and reorganise these groups has been done in 2015 (reorganised groups with new TORs), as part of the operational reform <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2020
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<p>Output 7.2</p>	<p>MRCs human resources reform implemented</p> <p>Description</p> <p>A streamlined, financially self-sustaining MRCs requires a staged reduction in staffing numbers in professional and support areas and a concurrent emphasis on staff productivity. Future MRCs staff members will be required to facilitate and support intergovernmental coordination, negotiation and consultation and facilitate the proposed Expert Groups which will provide the main future implementation focus for the MRC in the future. They will do this by executing centralised activities, supporting Member Countries in the implementation of the decentralised activities and assist Member Countries in identifying and designing responses to emerging issues.</p> <p>During the period of 2016-2020, the MRCs of approximately 165 full time staff will transition to a target of between 90-100 full time staff by 2020 (as approved in Roadmap in 2014), supported by possible secondments from Member Countries and partner organisations, and expert short term consultancies as necessary. There will be an adjustment of skill sets amongst professional staff to align with core functions, reduce duplicated skills sets to achieve efficiencies and to focus the organization fully on delivery of core functions. As a new structure of the MRCs is to be in place in 2016 with existing Programmes rearranged in new organisational units and programmatic activities gradually phased out, there will be a process to communicate, consult and negotiate with staff on the changes that affect them (including on new roles and JDs, or termination terms and benefits), and staffing policies and processes reviewed and improved.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New staff plan is approved • New Performance Appraisal Review is in place • A reduction in staff turnover • HR policies and manuals are revised in accordance with the staffing reform plan (part of the overall reform implementation plan) <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All positions for new organisational units have already been identified, described with detailed JDs/TORs by end 2015 • Analysis of the existing staff structure/ positions and positions of the new structure has already been carried out and results (plan for staff change/transition) available by end 2015 • Qualified staff are recruited • Capacity of selection/interview panel improved <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2020
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Output 7.3

MRCS financial and administrative reforms implemented and operationalized

Description

Based on the First MRC's Summit's commitment for MRC to become financially self-sustainable by 2030 and through the decentralisation, the Member Countries will be gradually taking over the whole value of MRC cooperation through increased contributions to the MRC Secretariat for regional activities and within each country for national level activities. The existing Member Country contribution formula is being reviewed in 2014-2015 and will be updated to set a clear pathway towards realisation of the 2030 target.

A new financing mechanism, basket fund, is being proposed to replace the current dual budget mechanism of the MRC – the OEB and Programme Budgets, within the framework of the MRC reform. It is aimed to provide more flexible and stable funding modality to support the implementation of the MRC core functions and to ensure adequate funding for strategic priorities of the MRC's Council throughout the transition to sustainable self-financing by 2030. The new financial mechanism once adopted requires some significant improvements to the Secretariat's financial management and reporting system including designing and implementing a cost-centre based accounting system with a unified dual chart of accounts (cost coding system) in line with the MRC's core functions and the new internal structure of the Secretariat. In addition, the current Accounting Method of the Secretariat will change from Cash Basis to Accrual Basis for the benefits of both MRC and Development Partners.

Indicators

- Basket fund & overseeing committee (Budget Committee) is established
- MS Dynamic Solomon is upgraded or changed with new accounting system and accounting method
- New management reporting tools are in place
- The MRCS administrative, financial and procurement manuals are revised in accordance with the new administrative and financial system
- Increase in Member Country contributions to MRCS during 2016-2020
- Financial plan for Member Country contributions to MRCS towards achieving the 2030 target adopted by Council by 2020

Assumptions

- Funding mechanism/modalities and arrangements have been identified, agreed upon with Member Countries and Development Partners (including the establishment of a Basket Fund, and the Budget Committee established with agreed TORs)

A Budget Committee comprising representatives of Member Countries and of Development Partners and assisted by MRCS is proposed to be established for annual budget planning and oversight, until the phasing out of DP support is complete.

During the change from the existing to the new system, adequate process controls need to be put in place to mitigate potential interruption and to back up potential failures of the system; administrative, financial management and reporting procedures and policies be revised, adapted and implemented in support of the reform strategy.

Assumptions

- Funding mechanism/modalities and arrangements have been identified, agreed upon with Member Countries and Development Partners (including the establishment of a Basket Fund, and the Budget Committee established with agreed TORs)
- Appropriate level of ear-marking in the funding figures
- Cost-centre based Accounting System is established and ready for implementation in January 2016
- Change Accounting Method from Cash Basis to Accrual Basis established (new standard chart of accounts established in 2015 and be ready for implementation in January 2016)
- Financial management and reporting tools improved in line with the changes to the financial management practices and system by January 2016
- Administrative management tools, procurement management tools and document management tools improved in 2015

Timeline

- By 2020

<p>Output 7.4</p>	<p>Annual work plans, and results-based monitoring, evaluation and reporting system for MRC SP and NIPs prepared and fully operationalized</p> <p>Description The current MRCS M&E manual will be revised to reflect the change of new organisational structure and reporting lines. National M&E systems will be reviewed and adjusted as needed to support M&E of national activities under NIPS. With the change in M&E and reporting systems, capacity building on various aspects will be provided at both regional and national levels.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RBM&E system manual is revised and approved • The extent to which the national & regional RBM&E reports are evidence based • The extent to which the RBM&E reports are used for management decision making <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from NMCSs is provided timely <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manual by 2016, thereafter continuous
<p>Output 7.5</p>	<p>MRC Strategic Plan for 2021-2025 prepared and approved</p> <p>Description The MRC Strategic Plan 2021-2025 will be prepared to implement the updated Basin Development Strategy for 2021-2020 as well as other institutional directions from the JC and Council. In line with streamlined strategic planning process, technical support will be provided to the updating of the National Indicative Plans for 2021-2025.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRC SP 2021-25 is endorsed by JC and approved by Council in 2020 • National Indicative Plans 2021-2025 are prepared and ready for national approval in 2020 <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NMCs and key line agencies engage in NIP preparation process <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRC SP 2021-25 by mid-2020 • NIPs by end 2020







Annex B:

Linkages between Core Functions/ CRBMF activities (functional) and MRC Strategic Plan's activities (5-year)



The **CRBMF activities** are of *functional* nature. They, as described in the decentralisation Roadmap, are being updated in 2015 and will be updated periodically every 5 years – the next one in 2019/2020. They are listed here to indicate that the outputs to be delivered under the MRC SP are within the scope of the MRC functions to deliver. They provide a general framework through which specific activities are identified in the MRC SP for implementation during the 5-year period to achieve the SP Outcomes and Outputs.

The **SP activities (5-year)** identified in this Annex are considered preliminary and indicative, pending fund availability, further consultations within Member Countries, emerging issues and priorities, and progress made in preceding years. The final definition of activities will be determined at the operational level through an Annual Work Planning process as described in Section 4.4 of the Plan. The activities identified in this Strategic Plan will serve as a reference to prepare annual work plan for further consultations with Member Countries.

Outputs and SP-activities marked with asterisk symbol (*) are those of on-going commitments with on-going funds.

SP Outcomes, Outputs		CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
1	Outcome 1: Increased common understanding and application of evidence-based knowledge by policy makers and project planners		
1.1	Output 1.1: Study on water requirement and availability for specific land uses completed for flood and drought management and impacts adaptation and mitigation purposes* ¹	210 Transboundary modeling	1.1.1 Develop models (IQQM, Source Model, etc.) and conduct consultations with national stakeholders and agencies
		332 Transboundary flood and drought impact assessment	1.1.2 Update land-suitability estimates and rural agro-land zoning
			1.1.3 Conduct land use and water resource planning and development
			1.1.4 Carry out land use and scenario analysis and drought adaptation measures
			1.1.5 Prepare ... the study report [on water requirement and availability for specific land uses for drought management and mitigation]
1.2	Output 1.2: Study of fish ecology and capture fisheries productivity and value completed and promoted with a view to mitigating impacts from development	241 Assessment of fish and fisheries	1.2.1 Carry out a survey of fish yield at a landscape scale on a scientific basis (scope to be further defined with MCs)
			1.2.2 Complete the valuation of the Mekong fisheries
			1.2.3 Review existing studies and further assess if needed the ecology of key transboundary migratory fish species, including the production of interactive maps
			1.2.4 Finalize the assessment of socioeconomic impacts and social implications from reduced capture fisheries in the LMB
1.3	Output 1.3: Study of rural livelihoods and measures to cope with transboundary changes by which	152 Social and economic assessments for basin planning	1.3.1 Review the outcomes of the Council Study and the contents of the existing SIMVA/BDP database to identify data gaps on the issue concerning the Study [on rural livelihoods and measures to cope with transboundary changes]

¹ Including existing commitment on drought study

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
1.3 Output 1.3: Study of rural livelihoods and measures to cope with transboundary changes by which sector development plans can adopt a pro-poor agenda completed and promoted	152 Social and economic assessments for basin planning	1.3.1 Review the outcomes of the Council Study and the contents of the existing SIMVA/BDP database to identify data gaps on the issue concerning the Study [on rural livelihoods and measures to cope with transboundary changes]
		1.3.2 Assess livelihood vulnerability to the sector development plans, including related activities under the “Assessment of fish food and nutrition security vulnerability to water development projects in the LMB”, including identification of options for pro-poor considerations in development plans ²
	252a Assessment of social impacts and vulnerability in the LMB	1.3.3 Design a participatory process to collect the missing data as required (including definition of geographical scope, areas of impacts/vulnerability)
	252b Field data collection for SIMVA survey	1.3.4 Collect the data, including related activities under the “Assessment of fish food and nutrition security vulnerability to water development projects in the LMB”
1.4: Output 1.4: Basin-wide development and climate scenarios and related assessments including Council Study completed and findings agreed and disseminated	131 Maintenance and improvement of the regional data and information system	1.4.1 Update sector databases and relevant data for [basin-wide development and climate scenario] assessments
	334 Development and assessment of basin-wide development scenarios in water and related sectors	1.4.2 Review basin development scenarios (of all sectors)
		1.4.3 Complete the basin-wide assessment on climate change impacts on water and water related resources and sectors in the Lower Mekong Basin
		1.4.4 Complete assessment of formulated and agreed development scenarios under the Council Study

² Also covering “assess water security of the rural people for livelihood development and as measure to cope with transboundary impacts of water sector development on their livelihoods”; This is also part of the Study under Output 1.7

SP Outcomes, Outputs		CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
			1.4.5 Finalise, review and update the regional climate change scenarios (including performance evaluation of the selected GCMs and downscaling approaches)
			1.4.6 Update [development and climate change] scenario assessment (including methodology) based on a triple bottom line integrated and cross-sectoral approach
			1.4.7 Complete analysis of long term exploratory scenarios to examine trade-offs
		210 Transboundary modeling	1.4.8 Develop and assess alternative medium term scenarios
		311 Basin Development Plan preparation, updating and monitoring	1.4.9 Prepare and implement a consultation plan and capacity development for scenario development and their assessment
			1.4.10 Integrate [development & climate change scenario] assessment findings with regional sector strategies and Basin Development Strategy
1.5	Output 1.5: Study of basin-wide biodiversity to establish baseline environmental conditions and trends completed	254 Regional environmental assessment and reporting	1.5.1 Develop and test biodiversity indicator framework
			1.5.2 Assess status and trends in biodiversity
1.6	Output 1.6: Study of options to increase storage within LMB for flood, drought and environment/ecosystem management purposes completed and promoted	332 Transboundary flood and drought impact assessment	1.6.1 Identify and assess water storage opportunities (reservoirs, floodplains, groundwater)
			1.6.2 Assess the cost and impact of storage creation

SP Outcomes, Outputs		CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
1.7	Output 1.7: Study on transboundary impacts of water and related projects completed and promoted ^{d*3}	331 Assessment of projects with potential for transboundary implications	1.7.1 Conduct a basin-wide survey to identify potential areas of transboundary impacts and where irrigation project should be promoted or avoided 1.7.2 Conduct a survey of current groundwater use and the potential of new developments in the LMB 1.7.3 Conduct a study on groundwater sustainable yield management for crop production
All	Studies	103 Reporting and dissemination	9.9.1 Disseminate and promote the use of MRC's knowledge products including strategies, guidelines, studies, technical reports, tools and processes, in national systems and in the region through publications, workshops, websites and other means

³ Including existing commitment on study on transboundary impacts of irrigation projects and sustainable groundwater management for production.

SP Outcomes, Outputs		CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
2	Outcome 2: Environment management and sustainable water resources development optimised for basin-wide benefits by national sector planning agencies		
2.1	Output 2.1: Basin-wide strategy for sustainable hydropower updated and approved	334 Development and assessment of basin-wide development scenarios in water and related sectors	2.1.1 Review findings of the exploratory scenarios and related assessments to identify potential joint and basin-wide projects with large transboundary benefits and minimal impacts
		345 Identification and promotion of regional cost and benefit sharing mechanisms for sustainable water resource utilization	2.1.2 Review with GMS and ASEAN electricity demand, cost-effective power supply, power inter-connection and regional power integration plans under the GMS Regional investment framework and jointly assess energy supply alternatives
			2.1.3 Review mechanisms for raising and managing funds from multiple sources to be used for Mekong River Basin management and capacity building of sustainable hydropower
		311 Basin Development Plan preparation, updating and monitoring	2.1.4 Update and further develop a basin-wide strategy for sustainable hydropower to optimise national plans and identify joint opportunities for basin wide benefits and use this as a development proposal assessment framework in cooperation from GMS and ASEAN
2.2	Output 2.2: Regional strategies for flood management updated and approved	332 Transboundary flood and drought impact assessment	2.2.1 Continuation of the Initial Studies
			2.2.2 Management of Thailand-Cambodia transboundary floods

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
2.3 Output 2.3: Basin-wide fisheries management and development strategy (BFMS) approved and action plan developed and implemented	347 Planning, updating and monitoring of basin-wide fisheries management and development strategy	2.3.1 Facilitate the process of endorsement and approval of the Basin-wide Fisheries Management and Development Strategy (BFMS) 2.3.2 Develop an action plan for implementing the BFMS 2.3.3 Support the implementation of the BFMS: (1) develop guidelines for good aquaculture practices 2.3.4 Support the implementation of the BFMS: (2) develop a basin-wide aquaculture development strategy 2.3.5 Support the implementation of the BFMS: (3) develop an action plan for implementation of the guidelines for better stock enhancement in the LMB 2.3.6 Support the implementation of the BFMS: (4) develop an action plan for implementing a code of practice for transboundary movement of aquatic organisms 2.3.7 Support the implementation of the BFMS: (5) develop guidelines for transboundary fisheries management in the LMB 2.3.8 Support the implementation of the BFMS: (6) develop guidelines for fisheries co-management at local/sub-basin levels in the LMB 2.3.9 Support institutional strengthening of the regional technical advisory body and its capacity for implementing and updating the BFMS

SP Outcomes, Outputs		CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
2.4	Output 2.4: Joint enabling, infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects and mechanisms between two or more member countries initiated, further developed and carried out	345 Identification and promotion of regional cost and benefit sharing mechanisms for sustainable water resource utilisation	2.4.1 Review existing joint mechanisms and projects within the basin in water and related sectors
			2.4.2 Facilitate establishment of further joint projects between countries that optimise the full potential of basin-wide sustainable benefits based on existing knowledge and emerging basin-wide sector and cross-cutting strategies through the basin development planning process
			2.4.3 Provide technical support to the implementation of mutually agreed joint projects, including communication
			2.4.4 Provide support to the 5 MIWRMP transboundary projects, and national components*
2.5	Output 2.5: Mekong climate change adaptation strategy and action plan finalized, approved and implemented	242 Assessment of climate change impacts and adaptation measures for water & related sectors	2.5.1 Finalize the Mekong Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (MASAP) and facilitate the process of endorsement and approval of the MASAP
			2.5.2 Review and integrate climate change adaptation actions into the MRC sector plans and strategies
			2.5.3 Formulate guidance on addressing climate change issues for the next BDS updating including recommendations on measures to address transboundary impacts of climate change
			2.5.4 Draft, test, refine the Guidelines for climate change impact assessments and adaptation planning, and support its implementation
		103 Reporting and dissemination	2.5.5 Conduct the 3rd Mekong Climate Change Forum including dissemination of information on the MASAP and the Regional Reports on Status of Climate Change and Adaptation in the LMB

SP Outcomes, Outputs		CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
2.6	Output 2.6: Basin development strategy, including a new Indicative Basin Development Plan, updated and approved for 2021-2025	311 Basin Development Plan preparation, updating and monitoring	2.6.1 Strategically engage with senior policy makers, partners and stakeholders to promote updated BDS perspectives
			2.6.2 Review State of Basin Report, national policies and plans, scenario and other major assessment findings and emerging basin-wide strategies
			2.6.3 Draft, consult, negotiate and finalize BDS for 2021-2025
2.7	Output 2.7: Master plan for regional waterborne transport implemented	345 Identification and promotion of regional cost and benefit sharing mechanisms for sustainable water resource utilisation	2.7.1 Facilitate and coordinate implementation of the cross-border projects derived from the Master Plan
			346 Facilitation of the unification of navigation related regulations and operations, and of improvement of navigation conditions
		2.7.2 Procure, provide and install visual and digital aids to navigation where needed	
		2.7.3 Promote and organise the “Mekong Patent” (skippers certificate required to be able to navigate commercial ships on the Mekong – valid in all Member Countries)	
		2.7.4 Promote “green ships”	
2.7.5 Promote public-private partnerships in Mekong waterborne transportation and tourism			
2.8	Output 2.8: Strategy for basin-wide environmental management for prioritised environmental assets developed and approved	254 Regional environmental assessment and reporting	2.8.1 Conduct an inventory of the environmental assets of regional significance, including transboundary biodiversity protection sites
			2.8.2 Analyse challenges and opportunities for environmental management of basin-wide assets

SP Outcomes, Outputs		CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
			2.8.3 Agree on criteria for the selection and protection/management of prioritized environmental assets (considering their economic, social and environmental values), and identify priority environmental assets
			2.8.4 Develop and consult on the environmental management strategy
2.9	Output 2.9: Regional strategy for drought management and mitigation developed and approved* ⁴	332 Transboundary flood and drought impact assessment	2.9.1 Conduct drought impacts and vulnerability assessment in drought prone areas with stakeholders and identify transboundary issues (continued from 2015)
			2.9.2 Prepare drought management strategy, taking into account any synergies with the relevant flood management strategies, and facilitate the adoption by MCs
			2.9.3 Finalise [regional] Strategy [for drought management and mitigation] for adoption by MRC
All	Strategies & plans	103 Reporting and dissemination	9.9.1 Disseminate and promote the use of MRC's knowledge products including strategies, guidelines, studies, technical reports, tools and processes, in national systems and in the region through publications, workshops, websites and other means

⁴ Including existing commitment on study on transboundary impacts of irrigation projects and sustainable groundwater management for production.

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
3 Outcome 3: Guidance for the development and management of water and related projects and resources shared and applied by national planning and implementing agencies		
3.1 Output 3.1: Preliminary design guidance for mainstream dams reviewed, updated and implementation supported	361 Development and maintenance of design guidance and assessment tools for regional hydropower sustainability	<p>3.1.1 Finalise the development of Guidelines for Hydropower Environmental Impact Mitigation and Risk Management in the Lower Mekong mainstream and tributaries (ISH0306)</p> <p>3.1.2 Review and update the current preliminary design guidance based on lessons learnt (including PNPCA) and suggestions from stakeholders including private sector, including fisheries, sediments, dam safety and navigation aspects</p> <p>3.1.3 Review and establish ecologically acceptable measures for flow variation and sediment retention and discharge on the mainstream</p> <p>3.1.4 Expand the current design guidance with inclusion of additional key topics such as social safeguards, climate change resilience, reservoir management and grievance procedures</p> <p>3.1.5 Promote and facilitate implementation [of the preliminary design guidance]</p>
3.2 Output 3.2: Integrated Flood Risk Management guidelines promoted and implementation supported	332 Transboundary flood and drought impact assessment 472 Planning for transboundary pollution incident mitigation and response	<p>3.2.1 Review and update existing guidelines, facilitate approval of the guidelines on transboundary flood risk management</p> <p>3.2.2 Review the existing guidelines, develop and get approval of guidelines for transboundary flood emergency communication and response</p>

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
<p>3.3 Output 3.3: A set of guidelines and frameworks on waterborne transport management prepared and promoted</p>	<p>346 Facilitation of the unification of navigation related regulations and operations, and of improvement of navigation conditions</p>	<p>3.3.1 Develop and implement the legislation and operational frameworks for cross-border transport and regional trade</p> <hr/> <p>3.3.2 Prepare, develop and harmonize technical standards, rules and regulations on waterway transport management and safety</p> <hr/> <p>3.3.3 Support the implementation of the agreement between Viet Nam and Cambodia on waterborne transportation</p> <hr/> <p>3.3.4 Harmonize the regulatory framework for navigation between Lao PDR and Thailand</p>
<p>3.4 Output 3.4: The sharing and learning of “best practice” guidelines and tools to support the development and operation of water and related projects on tributaries of transboundary significance</p>	<p>361 Development and maintenance of design guidance and assessment tools for regional hydropower sustainability</p>	<p>3.4.1 Review and share current practice and national guidelines related to the design and operation of tributary dams of transboundary significance (irrigation, hydropower, flood management, etc)</p> <hr/> <p>3.4.2 Produce or update as requested by MCs a guideline for dams (irrigation, hydropower, flood management, etc) of specific tributary of transboundary significance that could cover: water quality, navigation (navigation locks), sediment transport and river morphology, fish passage, dam safety, social safeguards, climate change resilience, reservoir management and grievance procedures</p>

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
3.5 Output 3.5: Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transportation of Dangerous Goods implemented	346 Facilitation of the unification of navigation related regulations and operations, and of improvement of navigation conditions	3.5.1 Support the implementation of the Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transportation of Dangerous Goods. 3.5.2 Implement cross-border vessel and port waste management 3.5.3 Implement vessel management systems such as Mekong tanker safety management, minimum standards for vessels design, construction and equipment, safe manning on Inland waterway vessels 3.5.4 Implement port management systems such as emergency and oil spill response in ports and terminals 3.5.5 Implement waterway management systems such as introducing geographical zones in the Mekong River and related technical and operational requirements for tankers
3.6 Output 3.6: Sustainable Management of Watersheds in the Lower Mekong Basin Project supported *	254 Regional environmental assessment and reporting	3.6.1 Support the implementation of the national component of the ongoing Sustainable Management of Watersheds in the Lower Mekong Basin Cooperation Project (SUMALOM) 3.6.2 Promote the lessons and experiences of the SUMALOM project to the MRC Member Countries, including conducting regional workshop and exchange
3.7 Output 3.7: The implementation of the guidelines for improvement of watershed management practices supported	103 Reporting and dissemination	3.7.1 Maintain and promote a MRC dedicated watershed management webpage and knowledge site 3.7.2 Promote the lessons and experiences including upland watershed management model and planning frameworks to the MRC member countries

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
3.8 Output 3.8: Guidelines to adapt to water shortage and drought impacts prepared and implemented*	242 Assessment of climate change impacts and adaptation measures for water & related sectors	3.8.1 Develop guidelines for water resource management to adapt to water shortage and drought impacts in specific drought prone areas of each Member Country
3.9 Output 3.9: Methodologies for sustainable use and management of wetlands developed and implementation supported	131 Maintenance and improvement of the regional data and information system	3.9.1 Develop and implement wetland inventory method and database system, and review and update database, information and maps
		3.9.2 Develop and test wetland inventory method and database system
		3.9.3 Prepare the inventory of selected wetland sites and priority list
		3.9.4 Capacity building and training in wetland management
	254 Regional environmental assessment and reporting	3.9.5 Develop and test method for WEFASAM for use in LMB countries
3.10 Output 3.10: Guidance for design and operation of irrigation systems with transboundary implications prepared and implementation supported*	331 Assessment of projects with potential for transboundary implications	3.10.1 Develop, test validity and finalise the draft guidance at selected sites
		3.10.2 Support national planning and implementing designed projects based on the guidance
		3.10.3 Monitor and evaluate the designed project implementation
		3.10.4 Enhance capacity of Line Agencies in the application of the guidance

* During 2011-2015, this is a joint project between AIP and FP. As not completed in 2015, it requires more rounds of testing in different agro-ecological zones until 2016 or even later. By the end of the first round of testing, the guideline will be complete by 2015; after that the guideline will need revision and maybe one or two times of additional testing. In addition, there is also a need for evaluation and monitoring for some period of time.

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
3.11 Output 3.11: Guidelines for fish friendly irrigation schemes promoted and implementation supported	347 Planning, updating and monitoring of basin-wide fisheries management and development strategy	3.11.1 Draft, test and refine guidelines of fish-friendly irrigation schemes, including facilitating the process of endorsement and approval 3.11.2 Document lessons learnt of the implementation and develop an action plan for the implementation of the guidelines for fish friendly irrigation schemes by the Member Countries 3.11.3 Monitor and evaluate project implementation [on fish-friendly irrigation] 3.11.4 Enhance capacity of Line Agencies [on fish-friendly irrigation]
3.12 Output 3.12: Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment (TbEIA) guidelines established, approved and promoted	331 Assessment of projects with potential for transboundary implications	3.12.1 Review the current status of the transboundary EIA framework (TbEIA) and identify actions needed to overcome constraints 3.12.2 Implement the identified actions to support adoption and implementation of the TbEIA framework 3.12.3 Develop a guidance document for TbEIA implementation 3.12.4 Facilitate implementation [of the TbEIA]
All Guidelines	103 Reporting and dissemination	9.9.1 Disseminate and promote the use of MRC's knowledge products including strategies, guidelines, studies, technical reports, tools and processes, in national systems and in the region through publications, workshops, websites and other means

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
4 Outcome 4: Effective and coherent implementation of MRC Procedures by the Member Countries		
4.1 Output 4.1: MRC Procedures and associated technical guidelines reviewed and updated	511 Establish and strengthen platform for coordinated implementation of MRC Procedures	4.1.1 Report on and update as needed technical guidelines for PMFM 4.1.2 Review experience & lessons learned in implementing MRC Procedures for PDIES, PWUM and PNPCA, and propose actions 4.1.3 Review and propose measures to harmonize MRC Procedures with basin development planning and management 4.1.4 Support implementation of agreed improvement measures
4.2 Output 4.2: MRC Joint Platform and working groups for MRC Procedures implementation supported	511 Establish ⁵ and strengthen platform for coordinated implementation of MRC Procedures 512 Regional reporting on implementation of all MRC Procedures	4.2.1 Support implementation mechanisms including Joint Platform 4.2.2 Support implementation of MRC Procedure working groups 4.2.3 Report on implementation of MRC Procedures
4.3 Output 4.3: Common understanding of the Procedures implementation by Member Countries promoted	511 Establish and strengthen platform for coordinated implementation of MRC Procedures	4.3.1 Promote common understanding in Member Countries of MRC Procedures 4.3.2 Reduce identified national capacity constraints to implement MRC Procedures 4.3.3 Promote implementation of the MRC Procedures in key water sectors in national and sub-national levels

⁵ Thailand suggested to delete “Establish” but this is to state the general function in all time; the act of establishing the Joint Platform is in line with this function.

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
5.3 Output 5.3: Regional Stakeholder Forum established and implemented for enhanced dialogue and collaboration with broader stakeholders	102 Promoting dialogue and cooperation	5.3.1 Develop and implement in agreement with Member Countries a Regional Stakeholder Forum, with annual fora and specific interest-based working groups 5.3.2 Organise MRC's International Conference(s) to demonstrate MRC's results and for technical exchange with MRC's international partners and organisations
SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
6 Outcome 6: Basin-wide monitoring, forecasting, impact assessment and dissemination of results strengthened for better decision-making by Member Countries		
6.1 Output 6.1: Monitoring and forecasting systems for MRC Procedures and Indicator Framework developed and maintained	131 Maintenance and improvement of the regional data and information system	6.1.1 Maintain and improve, and expand if needed, the harmonized MRC monitoring system including hydro-meteorology, water quality, sediment transport, fisheries, biodiversity, water use, ground water, and climate change and adaptation, across the Mekong Basin 6.1.2 Joint monitoring of mainstream development impacts (both positive & negative)
	411 Regional flood forecasting	6.1.3 Routine river flood forecasting 6.1.4 Application and improvement of the flash flood guidance system 6.1.5 River monitoring in dry season
	421 Regional drought forecasting	6.1.6 Assess feasibility of and develop and implement a drought assessment and forecasting system (continued from 2015)

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
	111 Monitoring near real-time hydro meteorological parameters	6.1.7 Implement the Mekong-HYCOS according to the agreed plan (including activity continued from JAIF for droughts and activity funded by AFD for hydro-met network expansion)
	112 Monitoring rainfall and water levels	
	113 Sediment monitoring	6.1.8 Support national discharge and sediment monitoring in all countries (to be further decentralised during 2016-2020)
	114 Monitoring water quality (routine)	6.1.9 Support routine water quality monitoring in Cambodia and Lao PDR (to be further decentralised during 2016-2020)
	115 Ecosystem health monitoring	6.1.10 Ecosystem health monitoring
	116 Fisheries monitoring	6.1.11 Support national fisheries routine monitoring in all countries (for decentralisation during 2016-2020)
	252b Field data collection for SIMVA survey	6.1.12 Support national SIMVA routine data collection in all countries (for decentralisation during 2016-2020)
6.2 Output 6.2: Regional information system and databases quality assured, standardized, improved and maintained information system and databases quality assured, standardized, improved and maintained	131 Maintenance and improvement of the regional data and information system	6.2.1 Establish and maintain a harmonized MRC data delivery schedule and data infrastructure (MRC-IS and National IS)
		6.2.2 Develop, implement and enhance a medium and long term plan for the information system management, including quality control mechanisms

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
		6.2.3 Improve/develop MRC standard methodologies for data collection, analysis, compilation and quality assurance (including for river monitoring networks) and implement up-to-date regional data collection and generation based on the need for strategic studies and assessments
		6.2.4 Improve, maintain and update regional databases (on flows, ground water, water quality, sediments, socio-economics, etc.) in line with agreed standard methodologies
		6.2.5 Provide capacity building to Member Countries in the use of the databases and tools
	214 Maintenance and improvement of the Decision Support Framework (DSF)	6.2.6 Regularly update and maintain the MRC-IS and its tools and functionalities
	472 Planning for transboundary pollution incident mitigation and response	6.2.7 Establish a River Information Service (RIS) for navigation
6.3 Output 6.3: MRC modeling and related impact assessment tools updated and approved for use by MRC and Member Countries	210 Transboundary modeling	6.3.1 Improve and enhance cross-cutting / cross-sector modeling and assessment services
	214 Maintenance and improvement of the Decision Support Framework (DSF)	6.3.2 Improve and maintain Decision Support Framework (DSF) tools and toolbox including remote sensing and geospatial and databases tools
		6.3.3 Improve and maintain MRC's mapping capabilities (land use, flood and drought risks, socio-economic parameters, etc.) and include new geospatial data, techniques and tools

SP Outcomes, Outputs		CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)		
6.4	Output 6.4: State of Basin, Status of Climate Change, and technical reports based on MRC Indicator Framework prepared	103	Reporting and dissemination	6.4.1	Develop the approach and implement State of Basin (SOB) reporting including inputs from and consultations with Member Countries and Dialogue Partners (for Upper Mekong-Lancang Basin)
				6.4.2	Prepare the Regional Report on the Status of Climate Change, Impacts and Adaptation in the LMB including inputs on climate change to the SOB ⁶
				6.4.3	Assemble the required information based on MRC Indicator Framework
				9.9.2	Produce & disseminate monitoring, annual and periodic technical reports for the Procedures, hydrology, sediments, ecosystem biodiversity, fisheries, SIMVA, climate change and adaptation, etc.
		411 421	Regional flood forecasting Regional drought forecasting	6.4.4	Produce flood, drought warnings and annual flood reports
6.5	Output 6.5: Communication of and access to MRC data, information and knowledge developed and maintained	103	Reporting and dissemination	6.5.1	Improve, update and make easy access to the MRC Data portal, community site and forum to promote data, information and knowledge dissemination within MRCS, national line/implementing agencies, NMCSSs, and other stakeholders
				6.5.2	Develop Mekong fisheries data generation and sharing platform

⁶ Including Finalise and launch the 1st Regional Report on Status of Climate Change and Adaptation in the LMB and prepare the 2nd report.

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
		6.5.3 Integrate the forecasting and warning systems into the MRC Information System website at both regional and national levels
		6.5.4 Deliver properly processed and quality assured historical and real-time hydro-meteorological data and all other MRC's data to users via the Master Catalogue
		9.9.1 Disseminate and promote the use of MRC's knowledge products including strategies, guidelines, studies, technical reports, tools and processes, in national systems and in the region through publications, workshops, websites and other means
	472 Planning for transboundary pollution incident mitigation and response	6.5.5 Develop an online communication network for emergency response

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
7 Outcome 7: MRC transitioned to a more efficient and effective organisation in line with the Decentralisation Roadmap and related reform plans		
7.1 Output 7.1: MRCs structural reform implemented and linkages with Member Countries further improved	101 Corporate services (finance, administrative, human resource, governance, communication)	7.1.1 Support and strengthen the MRCS leadership team for steering and managing the reform process (including all aspects of reform: restructuring, operational, staffing, financial, admin) 7.1.2 Set up, manage and strengthen processes and mechanisms for implementing the reform strategy/plan for all aspects of the reform 7.1.3 Set up new arrangements concerning linkages between MRCS and Member Countries (NMCs, LAs) for SP implementation to focus on core functions (e.g. expert groups, working groups) 7.1.4 Review and update the restructuring implementation plan 7.1.5 Review and establish MRCS coordination mechanism and systems to align with the new structure
7.2 Output 7.2: MRCS human resources reform implemented	101 Corporate services (finance, administrative, human resource, governance, communication)	7.2.1 Recruitment for the new structure of the MRCS 7.2.2 Review and improve HR policies and HR management processes as required 7.2.3 Regularly communicate with staff, and report as required 7.2.4 Review and adjust HR reform implementation plan as required

SP Outcomes, Outputs	CF/CRBMF activities (functional)	Tentative SP activities (specific to 2016-2020)
7.3 Output 7.3: MRCs financial and administrative reforms implemented and operationalized	101 Corporate services (finance, administrative, human resource, governance, communication)	7.3.1 Maintain adequate process controls during transition 7.3.2 Integrate required changes into the current processes and systems 7.3.3 Facilitate discussions of Member Countries on member contributions to the overall budget of the MRC, if a resolution on contribution formula up to 2030 is not achieved by the end of 2015 7.3.4 Establish and monitor the operation of the Basket Fund and make proposed improvements as required
7.4 Output 7.4: Annual work plans and results-based monitoring, evaluation and reporting system for MRC SP and NIP prepared and fully operationalized	101 Corporate services (finance, administrative, human resource, governance, communication)	7.4.1 Implement results-based M&E mechanism to monitor MRC-SP & NIPs (including decentralisation implementation at both levels) 7.4.2 Establish regional & national results-based M&E information systems & databases for SP, NIPs & conduct regional and national capacity building 7.4.3 Review progress of decentralization and implementation of the MRC's CFs/CRBMFs 7.4.4 Establish the Annual Work Planning mechanism and process in line with the new organization structure & prepare AWP 7.4.5 Conduct Mid-term Review for the MRC-SP 2016-2020
7.5 Output 7.5: MRC Strategic Plan for 2021-2025 prepared and approved	101 Corporate services (finance, administrative, human resource, governance, communication)	7.5.1 Develop the MRC-SP for 2021-2025 based on the strategic direction provided in the updated BDS 2021-2025, the MTR of MRC-SP 2016-2020 and a review of the CRBMFs and the decentralisation progress 7.5.2 Provide technical support for preparation of the updated National Indicative Plans

Summary of CRBMF activities

Corporate Services Functions (CF1)

- 101** Corporate services (finance, administrative, human resource, governance, communication)
- 102** Promoting dialogue and cooperation
- 103** Reporting and dissemination

CRBMF Activities to Remain Centralised⁷

- 131** Maintenance and improvement of the regional data and information system
- 132** Maintenance of data-sharing arrangements with partner organisations
- 152a** Social and economic assessments for basin planning
- 210** Transboundary modelling
- 214** Maintenance and improvement of the Decision Support Framework (DSF)
- 241** Assessment of fish and fisheries
- 242** Assessment of climate change impacts and adaptation measures for water and related sectors
- 252a** Assessment of social impacts and vulnerability in the LMB
- 254** Regional environmental assessment and reporting
- 311** Basin Development Plan preparation, updating and monitoring
- 331** Assessment of projects with potential for transboundary implications
- 332** Transboundary flood and drought impact assessment
- 334** Development and assessment of basin-wide development scenarios in water and related sectors
- 345** Identification and promotion of regional cost and benefit sharing mechanisms for sustainable water resource utilisation
- 346** Facilitation of the unification of navigation related regulations and operations, and of improvement of navigation conditions
- 347** Planning, updating and monitoring of basin-wide fisheries management and development strategy
- 361** Development and maintenance of design guidance and assessment tools for regional hydropower sustainability
- 411** Regional flood forecasting
- 421** Regional drought forecasting
- 472** Planning for transboundary pollution incident mitigation and response
- 511** Establish and strengthen platform for coordinated implementation of MRC Procedures
- 512** Regional reporting on implementation of all MRC Procedures

⁷ Changes to the Centralised CRBMF activities were made at the 2nd Regional Meeting and Technical Forum on CRBMFs held on 7-8 July 2015. Discussion is ongoing to agree on the changes.

Activities fully decentralised by the end of 2015 (Batch 1), to be included in NIPs as national activities⁸

- 111 Monitoring near real-time hydro meteorological parameters
- 112 Monitoring rainfall and water levels
- 114 Monitoring water quality (routine) – for Thailand and Viet Nam
- 152b Ad-hoc provision of socio-economic data for basin planning

Activities for decentralisation during 2016-2020 (Batch 2)⁹

- 112 Monitoring rainfall and water levels – continuing from Batch 1, until June 2016 for Thailand and Viet Nam, and until June 2017 for Cambodia and Lao PDR
- 113 Sediment monitoring – continuing from Batch 1
- 114 Monitoring water quality (routine) – for Cambodia and Lao PDR
- 115 Ecosystem health monitoring
- 116 Fisheries monitoring
- 252b Field data collection for SIMVA survey
- 300 Preparation of National Indicative Plan for basin planning

National activities requiring no decentralisation process

- 312 Implement National Indicative Plan
- 320 Sectoral and economic reviews from national perspective to contribute to basin planning
- 336 National to local level benefit sharing for sustainable water resource utilisation
- 451 Implement the critical low water level alert system
- 461 Install aids to navigation
- 471 Monitoring of and response to pollution spills and navigation accidents
- 521 National implementation for PNPCHA
- 522 National implementation for PMFM
- 523 National implementation of PWQ
- 524 National implementation of PDIES
- 525 National implementation of PWUM

Activities still under development, D/C status to be determined during 2016-2020

- 110 Biodiversity monitoring
- 122 Wetland ecosystem assessment

⁸ As agreed to by the Joint Committee at its 42nd Meeting held in September 2015

⁹ As agreed to by the Joint Committee at its 42nd Meeting held in September 2015







Annex C:

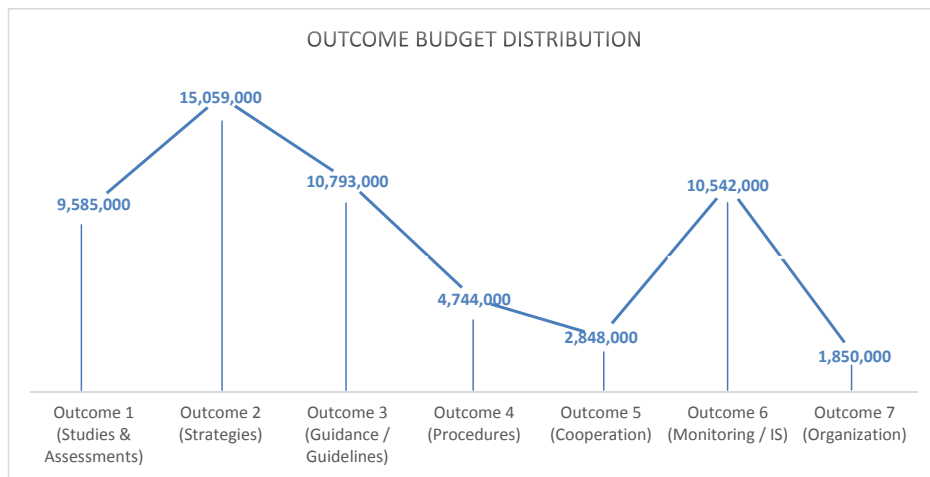
Budget & Contingency Plan



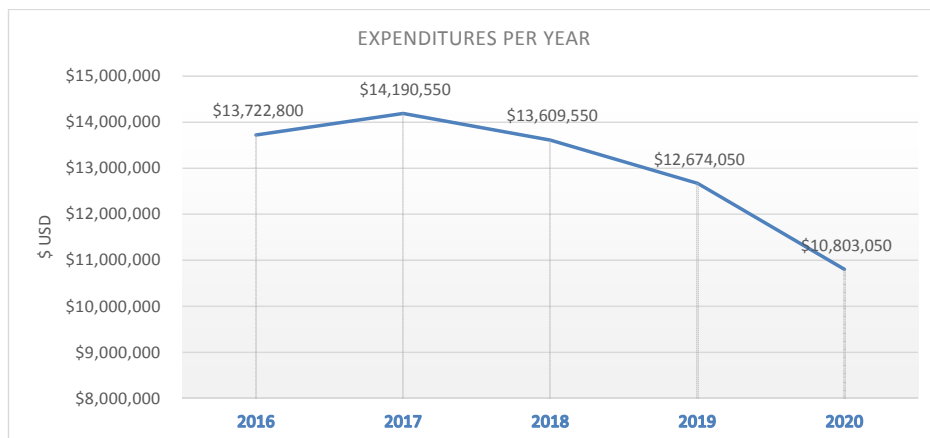
The budget estimated in this Strategic Plan has been taken into account the Value for Money principles. The cost of producing an output has been estimated based on cost saving, fitness for purpose, timeliness, and cost & benefits.

- Cost Saving - delivering the same level of service / output for less cost, time or effort.
- Fitness for purpose - careful use of resources to save expense, time or effort.
- Cost & Benefit - delivering a better service or getting a better return for the same amount of expense, time or effort.

Outcome budget distribution



Expenditures per year



Estimated regional budget per MRC SP outcome

		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals	Share
1	Increased common understanding and application of evidence-based knowledge by policy makers and project planners	2,049,380	2,130,060	2,017,000	1,855,640	1,532,920	\$ 9,585,000	14.7%
2	Environment management and water resources development optimised for basin-wide sustainable benefits by national sector planning agencies	2,612,080	2,756,710	3,615,750	3,326,490	2,747,970	\$ 15,059,000	23.2%
3	Guidance for the development and management of water and related projects shared and applied by national planning and implementing agencies	3,948,100	3,990,700	1,065,000	979,800	809,400	\$ 10,793,000	16.6%
4	Effective and coherent implementation of MRC Procedures by the Member Countries	759,040	806,480	1,186,000	1,091,120	901,360	\$ 4,744,000	7.3%
5	Effective dialogue and cooperation between Member Countries and strategic engagement of regional partners and stakeholders on transboundary water management	455,680	484,160	712,000	655,040	541,120	\$ 2,848,000	4.4%
6	Conditions of the Basin monitored and communicated for better decision making by Member Countries	1,686,720	1,792,140	2,635,500	2,424,660	2,002,980	\$ 10,542,000	16.2%
7	MRC transitioned to a more efficient and effective organisation in line with the Decentralisation Roadmap	296,000	314,500	462,500	425,500	351,500	\$ 1,850,000	2.8%
	Total Outcomes	11,807,000	12,274,750	11,693,750	10,758,250	8,887,250	\$ 55,421,000	85.3%
	Administration & Operations	1,915,800	1,915,800	1,915,800	1,915,800	1,915,800	\$ 9,579,000	14.7%
	Total	13,722,800	14,190,550	3,609,550	12,674,050	10,803,050	\$ 65,000,000	100%

Budget per Core Functions

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals	Share
CF1 - Corporate services core functions							
CF1.1 - Secretariat administration and management	\$ 1,555,800	\$ 1,560,800	\$ 1,600,800	\$ 1,590,800	\$ 1,570,800	\$ 7,879,000	12%
CF1.2 - Promoting dialogue, coordination, facilitation	\$ 638,920	\$ 653,540	\$ 770,500	\$ 741,260	\$ 682,780	\$ 3,487,000	5%
CF1.3 - Communication, reporting and dissemination	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 175,000	0.3%
CF2 - Core river basin management functions						\$ 11,541,000	
CRBMF1 - Data acquisition, exchange and monitoring	\$ 1,388,480	\$ 1,475,260	\$ 2,169,500	\$ 1,995,940	\$ 1,648,820	\$ 8,678,000	13%
CRBMF2 - Analysis, modelling and assessment	\$ 3,486,620	\$ 3,585,940	\$ 2,483,000	\$ 2,284,360	\$ 1,887,080	\$ 13,727,000	21%
CRBMF3 - Planning support	\$ 5,127,380	\$ 5,319,060	\$ 4,792,000	\$ 4,408,640	\$ 3,641,920	\$ 23,289,000	36%
CRBMF4 - Forecasting, warning and emergency response	\$ 731,560	\$ 754,470	\$ 572,750	\$ 526,930	\$ 435,290	\$ 3,021,000	5%
CRBMF5 - Implementing MRC Procedures	\$ 759,040	\$ 806,480	\$ 1,186,000	\$ 1,091,120	\$ 901,360	\$ 4,744,000	7%
CF3 - Consulting and advisory services						\$ 53,459,000	
Totals	\$13,722,800	\$14,190,550	\$ 13,609,550	\$ 12,674,050	\$ 10,803,050	\$ 65,000,000	100%

New Funding and Ongoing Funding

		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals	Share
A	Outputs with New Funding:	\$ 7,484,000	\$ 7,951,750	\$ 11,693,750	\$ 10,758,250	\$ 8,887,250	\$ 7,879,000	72.0%
B	Outputs with Ongoing Funding:	\$ 4,323,000	\$ 4,323,000	-	-	-	\$ 3,487,000	13.3%
C	Administration & operation	\$ 1,915,800	\$ 1,915,800	\$ 1,915,800	\$ 1,915,800	\$ 1,915,800	\$ 175,000	14.7%
	Total	\$ 13,722,800	\$ 14,190,550	\$ 13,609,550	\$ 12,674,050	\$ 10,803,050	\$ 65,000,000	100.0%

Contingency Plan Budget

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Budget	Unit
(i) Immediate (New Funding)	\$ 5,728,960	\$ 6,087,020	\$ 8,951,500	\$ 8,235,380	\$ 6,803,140	\$ 35,806,000	27
(io) Immediate (Ongoing Funding)	\$ 4,323,000	\$ 4,323,000	-	-	-	\$ 8,646,000	9
(a) Anticipated	\$ 1,755,040	\$ 1,864,730	\$ 2,742,250	\$ 2,522,870	\$ 2,084,110	\$ 10,969,000	8
Administration & operation	\$ 1,915,800	\$ 1,915,800	\$ 1,915,800	\$ 1,915,800	\$ 1,915,800	\$ 9,579,000	
Total	\$ 13,722,800	\$ 14,190,550	\$ 13,609,550	\$ 12,674,050	\$ 10,803,050	\$ 65,000,000	44

Estimated regional budget per output

		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals		
1		Increased common understanding and application of evidence-based knowledge by policy makers and project planners							
		Outputs with new funding:							Share
i	1.2	Study of fish ecology and capture fisheries productivity and value completed and promoted with a view to mitigating impacts from development	224,000	238,000	350,000	322,000	266,000	\$ 1,400,000	14.6%
i	1.3	Study of rural livelihoods and measures to cope with transboundary changes by which sector development plans can adopt a pro-poor agenda completed and promoted	146,240	155,380	228,500	210,220	73,660	\$ 914,000	9.5%
i	1.4	Basin-wide development and climate change scenarios and related assessments including Council Study completed and findings agreed and disseminated	649,600	690,200	1,015,000	933,800	771,400	\$ 4,060,000	42.4%
a	1.5	Study of biodiversity to establish baseline environmental conditions and trends completed and promoted	136,960	145,520	214,000	196,880	162,640	\$ 856,000	8.9%
a	1.6	Study of options to increase storage within LMB for flood, drought and environment/ecosystem management purposes completed and promoted	134,080	142,460	209,500	192,740	159,220	\$ 838,000	8.7%
		Sub-total:	1,290,880	1,371,560	2,017,000	1,855,640	1,532,920	\$ 8,068,000	
		Outputs with ongoing funding:							
io	1.1	Study on water requirement and availability for specific land uses completed for drought management and impacts adaptation and mitigation purposes	341,000	341,000	-	-	-	\$ 682,000	7.1%
io	1.7	Study on transboundary impacts of water and related projects completed and promoted	417,500	417,500	-	-	-	\$ 835,000	8.7%
		Sub-total:	758,500	758,500	-	-	-	\$ 1,517,000	
		Outcome 1 Total:	2,049,380	2,130,060	2,017,000	1,855,640	1,532,920	\$ 9,585,000	14.7%

A = Anticipated
I = Immediate
IO = Ongoing

		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals		
2		Environment management and water resources development optimised for basin-wide sustainable benefits by national sector planning agencies							
		Outputs with new funding:						Share	
i	2.1	Basin-wide strategy for sustainable hydropower developed and approved	169,760	180,370	265,250	244,030	201,590	\$ 1,061,000	7.0%
i	2.2	Regional strategies for flood management developed and approved	162,720	172,890	254,250	233,910	193,230	\$ 1,017,000	6.8%
i	2.3	Basin-wide strategy for fisheries management and development approved and action plan developed and supported	355,360	377,570	555,250	510,830	421,990	\$ 2,221,000	14.7%
i	2.4	Joint enabling, infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects and mechanisms between two or more member countries initiated, further developed and carried out	240,480	255,510	375,750	345,690	285,570	\$ 1,503,000	10.0%
i	2.5	Mekong climate change adaptation strategy and action plan finalised, approved and implemented	140,800	149,600	220,000	202,400	167,200	\$ 880,000	5.8%
a	2.6	Basin Development Strategy, including a new Indicative Basin Development Plan, updated and approved for 2021-2025	369,280	392,360	577,000	530,840	438,520	\$ 2,308,000	15.3%
a	2.7	Master plan for regional waterborne transport implemented	640,000	680,000	1,000,000	920,000	760,000	\$ 4,000,000	26.6%
a	2.8	Strategy for basin-wide environmental management for prioritised environmental assets developed and approved	235,680	250,410	368,250	338,790	279,870	\$ 1,473,000	9.8%
		Sub-total:	2,314,080	2,458,710	3,615,750	3,326,490	2,747,970	\$ 14,463,000	
		Outputs with new funding:							
io	2.9	Regional strategy for drought management and mitigation developed, approved and adopted	298,000	298,000	-	-	-	\$ 596,000	4.0%
		Sub-total:	298,000	298,000	-	-	-	\$ 596,000	
		Outcome 2 Total:	2,612,080	2,756,710	3,615,750	3,326,490	2,747,970	\$ 15,059,000	23.2%

A = Anticipated
I = Immediate
IO = Ongoing

		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals		
3		Guidance for the development and management of water and related projects shared and applied by national planning and implementing agencies							
		Outputs with new funding:							Share
i	3.1	Preliminary design guidance for mainstream dams reviewed, updated and implementation supported	86,080	91,460	134,500	123,740	102,220	\$ 538,000	5.0%
i	3.2	Integrated Flood Risk Management guidelines promoted and implementation supported	51,680	54,910	80,750	74,290	61,370	\$ 323,000	3.0%
i	3.3	A set of guidelines and frameworks on waterborne transport management prepared and promoted	163,840	174,080	256,000	235,520	194,560	\$ 1,024,000	9.5%
i	3.4	Sharing and learning of “best practice” guidelines and tools to support the development and operation of water and related projects on tributaries of transboundary significance	196,960	209,270	307,750	283,130	233,890	\$ 1,231,000	11.4%
a	3.5	Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Transportation of Dangerous Goods implemented	151,040	160,480	236,000	217,120	179,360	\$ 944,000	8.7%
a	3.7	The implementation of the guidelines for improvement of watershed management practices supported	32,000	34,000	50,000	46,000	38,000	\$ 200,000	1.9%
		Sub-total:	681,600	724,200	1,065,000	979,800	809,400	\$ 4,260,000	

A = Anticipated
I = Immediate
IO = Ongoing

		Outputs with ongoing funding:							
io	3.8	Guidelines to adapt to water shortage and drought impacts prepared and implemented	365,000	365,000	-	-	-	\$ 730,000	6.8%
io	3.6	Sustainable Management of Watersheds in the Lower Mekong Basin Project supported *	178,000	178,000	-	-	-	\$ 356,000	3.3%
io	3.9	Methodologies for sustainable use and management of wetlands developed and implementation supported	1,139,000	1,139,000	-	-	-	\$ 2,278,000	21.1%
io	3.10	Guidance for design and operation of irrigation systems with transboundary implications prepared and implementation supported	341,000	341,000	-	-	-	\$ 682,000	6.3%
io	3.11	Guidelines for fish-friendly irrigation schemes adopted and implementation supported	907,000	907,000	-	-	-	\$ 1,814,000	16.8%
io	3.12	Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment (TbEIA) guidelines established, approved and promoted	336,500	336,500	-	-	-	\$ 673,000	6.2%
Sub-total:			3,266,500	3,266,500	-	-	-	\$ 6,533,000	
Outcome 3 Total:			3,948,100	3,990,700	1,065,000	979,800	809,400	\$ 10,793,000	16.6%

			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals		
4			Effective and coherent implementation of MRC Procedures by the Member Countries							
			Outputs with new funding:						Share	
i	4.1	MRC Procedures and associated technical guidelines reviewed and updated	310,080	329,460	484,500	445,740	368,220	\$ 1,938,000	40.9%	
i	4.2	MRC Joint Platform and working groups for MRC Procedures implementation supported	382,880	406,810	598,250	550,390	454,670	\$ 2,393,000	50.4%	
i	4.3	Common understanding of the Procedures implementation by Member Countries promoted	66,080	70,210	103,250	94,990	78,470	\$ 413,000	8.7%	
Sub-total:			759,040	806,480	1,186,000	1,091,120	901,360	\$ 4,744,000		
Outcome 4 Total:			759,040	806,480	1,186,000	1,091,120	901,360	\$ 4,744,000	7.3%	

A = Anticipated
I = Immediate
IO = Ongoing

			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals		
5			Effective dialogue and cooperation between Member Countries and strategic engagement of regional partners and stakeholders on transboundary water management							
			Outputs with new funding:						Share	
i	5.1	Partnerships with China and Myanmar further developed and implemented	81,440	86,530	127,250	117,070	96,710	\$ 509,000	17.9%	
i	5.2	Partnerships with ASEAN, GMS and other relevant regional initiatives and international RBOs updated and implemented	152,480	162,010	238,250	219,190	181,070	\$ 953,000	33.5%	
i	5.3	Regional Stakeholder Platform established and implemented for enhanced dialogue and collaboration with broader stakeholders (including International conference)	221,760	235,620	346,500	318,780	263,340	\$ 1,386,000	48.7%	
Sub-total:			455,680	484,160	712,000	655,040	541,120	\$ 2,848,000		
Outcome 4 Total:			455,680	484,160	712,000	655,040	541,120	\$ 2,848,000	4.4%	

A = Anticipated
I = Immediate
IO = Ongoing

		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals		
6		Effective dialogue and cooperation between Member Countries and strategic engagement of regional partners and stakeholders on transboundary water management							
		Outputs with new funding:						Share	
i	6.1	Monitoring and forecasting systems for MRC Procedures and Indicator Framework developed and maintained	705,280	749,360	1,102,000	1,013,840	837,520	\$ 4,408,000	8.1%
i	6.2	Regional information systems and databases quality assured, standardised and maintained	248,480	264,010	388,250	357,190	295,070	\$ 1,553,000	10.8%
i	6.3	MRC modelling and related analysis tools updated and approved for use by MRC and Member Countries	241,280	256,360	377,000	346,840	286,520	\$ 1,508,000	8.1%
	6.4	State of the Basin report based on MRC indicator framework prepared and widely disseminated	298,240	316,880	466,000	428,720	354,160	\$ 1,864,000	54.1%
	6.5	Communication of and access to MRC data and information developed and maintained	193,440	205,530	302,250	278,070	229,710	\$ 1,209,000	18.9%
		Sub-total:	1,686,720	1,792,140	2,635,500	2,424,660	2,002,980	\$ 10,542,000	
		Outcome 4 Total:	1,686,720	1,792,140	2,635,500	2,424,660	2,002,980	\$ 10,542,000	16.2%

A = Anticipated
I = Immediate
IO = Ongoing

		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Totals		
7		MRC transitioned to a more efficient and effective organisation in line with the Decentralisation Roadmap							
		Outputs with new funding:							Share
i	7.1	MRCs structural reform implemented and linkages with Member Countries improved	24,000	25,500	37,500	34,500	28,500	\$ 150,000	8.1%
i	7.2	MRCs human resources reform implemented	32,000	34,000	50,000	46,000	38,000	\$ 200,000	10.8%
i	7.3	MRCs financial and administrative reforms implemented and operationalised	24,000	25,500	37,500	34,500	28,500	\$ 150,000	8.1%
	7.4	Results-based monitoring and evaluation and reporting system for MRC SP and NIP revised and operationalized (MTR & SP Completion Evaluation, Annual Work Planning & Budget Committee)	160,000	170,000	250,000	230,000	190,000	\$ 1,000,000	54.1%
	7.5	MRC SP for 2021-2025 prepared and approved	56,000	59,500	87,500	80,500	66,500	\$ 350,000	18.9%
Sub-total:			296,000	314,500	462,500	425,500	351,500	\$ 1,850,000	
Outcome 4 Total:			296,000	314,500	462,500	425,500	351,500	\$ 1,850,000	2.8%

A = Anticipated
I = Immediate
IO = Ongoing

Administration & Operation

Secretariat administration and management	1,475,800	1,475,800	1,475,800	1,475,800	1,475,800	\$ 7,379,000	77%
Promoting dialogue, coordination, facilitation of governance meetings	405,000	405,000	405,000	405,000	405,000	\$ 2,025,000	21%
Communication, reporting and dissemination	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	\$ 175,000	2%
Total:	1,915,800	1,915,800	1,915,800	1,915,800	1,915,800	\$ 9,579,000	

		Totals	
Grand Total		\$ 65,000,000	100%
Total for New Funding:		\$ 46,775,000	
Total for Ongoing Funding:		\$ 8,646,000	





Mekong River Commission

Cambodia . Lao PDR . Thailand . Viet Nam

For more information, visit
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March 2016

Spire

