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For sustainable development



MRC stakeholder engagement

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Regional Stakeholder Forum for the CS and Pak Beng
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What did we do in the past?

MRC's stakeholder engagement confined to our institutional and programme arrangements

1. Governance level: Council, Joint Committee, JC task force (organisational reform) and working groups (prior consultation, Basin Development Strategy)

2. Programme/technical level:

- Regional: Steering committees, regional technical groups (for strategies, procedures), regional consultations
- National: national steering committees, national working groups, national consultations

What did we do in the past? (2)



3. Broader stakeholder forums (private sector, research, CSOs, media):

- Rely on ad-hoc Regional Forums (of various sizes) including:
 - Basin Development Plan (BDP) forums (the early pioneer, conducted 4 in total – last one in Nov 2014),
 - Initiative for Sustainable Hydropower forums
 - Climate change forums
 - Fisheries forums
- MRC International conferences (Mekong2Rio 2012, Ho Chi Minh 2014)



What did we learn?



Strengths

- MRC engagement focuses on the direct *owners/supporters* of MRC products: the countries' governments and development partners
- Many stakeholders appreciated information sharing and opportunities to provide feedback

Limitations

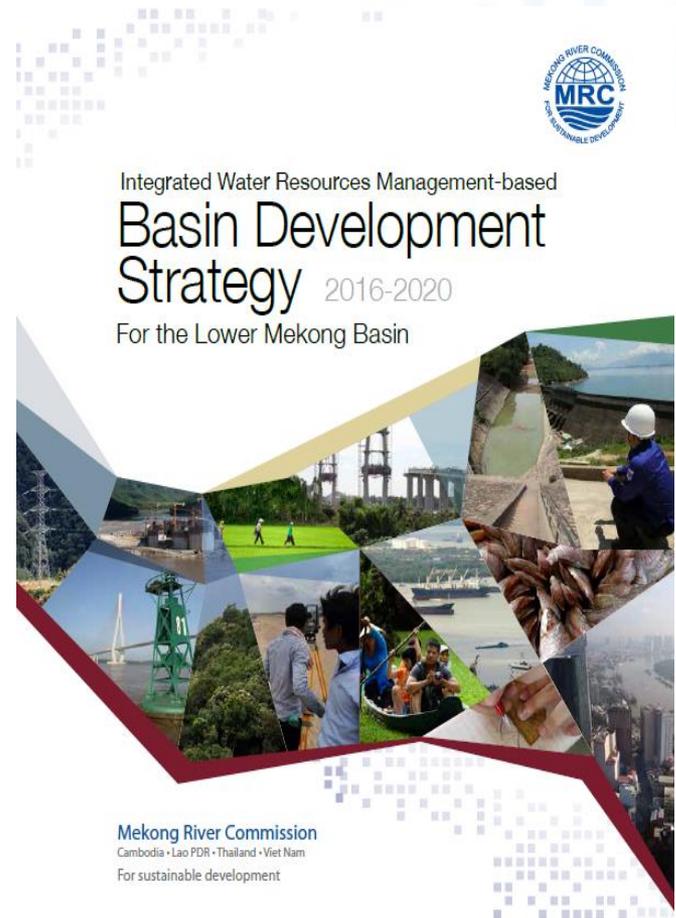
- Broader stakeholder forums were organized in an ad-hoc fashion with limited systematic mechanism or arrangement
- Some stakeholders view forums are held often too late or as one-off events for meaningful/continual inputs
- Limited feedback in terms of stakeholder comments

What is the new direction?



Basin Development Strategy 2016-2020 (Section 5.4 Engagement of broader stakeholders) stipulates priority #7 “increase cooperation with partners and stakeholders” and identifies the following key ones:

- MRC Council, JC, Secretariat
- NMC Secretariats
- Line agencies of the NMCs
- Dialogue Partners (China and Myanmar)
- Development Partners
- GMS, ASEAN
- Private Developers, consulting firms
- Scientific and advisory institutes
- Other NGOs

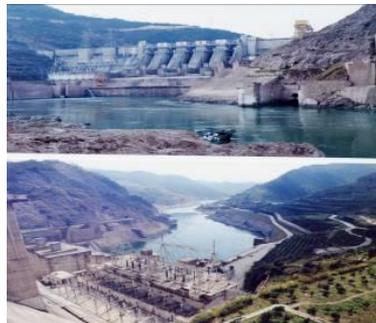
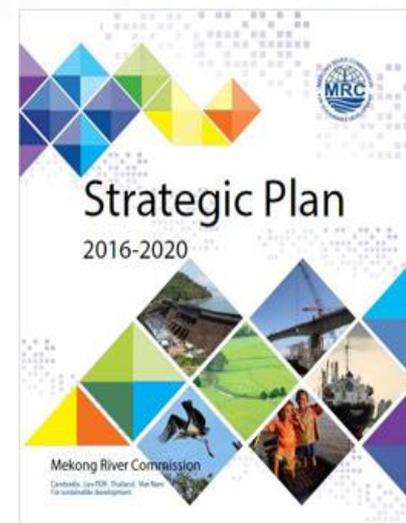


What is the new direction? (2)



In the MRC Strategic Plan 2016-2020, Result Area #2 (Strengthening regional cooperation) identifies various actions to enhance stakeholder engagement and water diplomacy.

- Implementing MRC Procedures
- Strengthening cooperation with China and Myanmar
- Leveraging partnerships with ASEAN and GMS
- Convening a Regional Stakeholder Platform
- Strengthening strategic engagement and water diplomacy



What is the new enhanced mechanism?



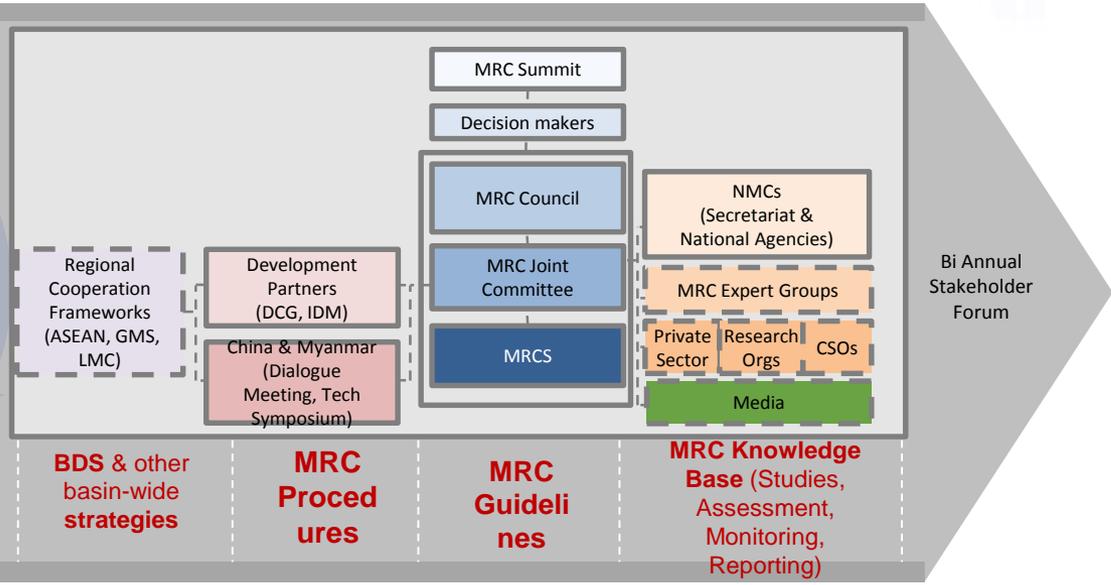
MRC Stakeholder Engagement Platform

2. MECHANISMS & GROUPS

3. PROCESS



4. TOOLS



1. MRC PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

5. MRC STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME

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

For meaningful and effective engagement...

What is the linkage between PNPCA & CS?



- The **Council Study** is part of the MRC basin planning process and the **PNPCA** is part of the MRC Procedures implementation. Both are: MRC core functions, two sides of the same coin, support sustainable development
- The Council Study is updating/enhancing **MRC knowledge base** (database, assessment methodologies and tools, and knowledge about development impacts – past, present, future)
- This knowledge base is used **for basin planning purposes** (Basin Development Strategy, hydropower strategy, etc) as well as infrastructure **project review/assessment** (such as during PNPCA)
- Knowledge gained so far from the CS in terms of hydrology, sediment, fisheries, environment, and socio-economic will contribute to review of and recommendations for Pak Beng project

What have been engagements so far for CS?



- ✓ 7 (seven) **Regional Technical Working Group (RTWG)** meetings – countries and development partners
- ✓ Numerous **national consultations** – mostly government representatives but occasionally national research institutes and CSOs
- ✓ **MRC BDP Regional Stakeholder Forum** in Nov 2014 in Siem Reap
- ✓ **Greater Mekong Forum** on Water, Food and Energy on 21-23 October 2015 in Phnom Penh
- ✓ CS Coordinator and other MRCS staff has met with a number of NGOs individually to provide status updates



10 What are the objectives for broader engagement for CS?



- ✓ To provide information and update on the CS
- ✓ To reiterate the central objectives of the Study and expected outcomes and how they will be used
- ✓ To provide an opportunity for external experts and interested parties to review the CS approach and methodologies for assessment of development impacts
- ✓ To provide an opportunity for interested parties to provide inputs to the Study including ways for collaboration

What had been engagements for previous PNPCA?



- ✓ For Xayaburi and Don Sahong Prior Consultations, **national meetings** were organized based on their national laws and procedures
- ✓ Before submitting the projects to the MRC, the Lao government, together with the developers, organised **consultation activities in Lao PDR** on the proposed dam projects as part of the Social Impact Assessment (SIA)
- ✓ At the regional level, MRCS facilitated one **regional stakeholder meeting for Don Sahong**.



What did we learn?



Lessons	Actions
need for documents to be released to the public in a timely manner	All project documents on website immediately after 1 st JCWG meeting
consultation meetings must be arranged much earlier in the process	National meetings arranged earlier, and at least two regional meetings
project developer should be present	Project developer is present
information about the project should be easily communicated & translated into the riparian languages	3 page fact sheet and overview of project are prepared
stakeholder involvement needs to be guided by the spirit of good faith and roles and expectations need to be clearly communicated	PNPCA brochure prepared, Q and A prepared, regional stakeholder forum organized early

What are the objectives for broader engagement for PNPCA?



- To provide information and build an understanding of the MRC's Prior Consultation process, clarify roles/responsibilities on all sides
- To provide information on the proposed Project and potential environmental and socio-economic impacts (positive and negative)
- To gain a representative range of views from interested stakeholders
- To document these views and identify action points to address them
- To reflect these views as part of the MRC Prior Consultation Technical Review Report for consideration by the MRC Joint Committee
- To provide feedback on how key concerns are addressed
- *Not about seeking endorsement or rejection of the proposed project*

What is the scope of engagement?



- All areas potentially affected by the proposed Pak Beng Project
- *Transboundary* impacts (positive and negative) that may be caused by changes to fisheries, livelihoods, water quality, ecology, hydrology, sediment transport, navigation and dam safety
- An understanding of the Prior Consultation process, as well as other issues about operation and coordination of existing dams upstream and downstream of the proposed project.
- Less emphasis will be given to direct resettlement aspects
- *Measures for the minimization of adverse impacts and enhancement of benefits and cooperation*

What are the agendas for the stakeholder meetings?



This meeting will:

- early information sharing,
- communicating the PNPCA process and mandate
- reaffirming the importance of stakeholder engagement in good faith and the enhanced MRC mechanism, and
- soliciting of preliminary views on the project, as well as
- MRC approach for review of the project

The **second meeting** will be to provide:

- update on the PNPCA process,
- how early views have been considered,
- the MRC review of the project,
- to gain additional views on that review,
- to visit the site, and
- to solicit further recommendations for the MRC JC.
- the next steps for the PNPCA process and post-consultation engagement plans



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Thank you

