

MEKONG RIVER COMMISSION

Past, Present and the Future

A Keynote Talk by

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Hua Hin, Thailand.

UNDP MOST PRIVILEGED AND THANKFUL FOR THE LONG AND EXTENSIVE TRUST AND CONFIDENCE ACCORDED BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE FOUR MEKONG RIVER LOWER BASIN COUNTRIES.

TRUST, CONFIDENCE, CONSISTENCY AND CONTINUITY ARE KEY IN FACILITATING COOPERATION BETWEEN AND AMONGST COUNTRIES.

SINCE 1960s HIGHLIGHTS OF UNDP SUPPORT, INCLUDED::

- **Appointed UNDP Senior person to the Chief Executive Officer position**
- **Oct 1992 sponsored consultation in Hong Kong for the four lower riparian countries to discuss status of Mekong Committee.**
- **Dec 1992 organized Kuala Lumpur meeting of the four riparian countries and UNDP , resulted in Draft Joint Communique of future cooperation framework and establishing Mekong Working Group**
- **Feb 1993 – April 1995 provided extensive support and facilitation for the drafting, negotiation, initialing , ratification and adoption of the Agreement. Made available the services and expertise of an outstanding Senior Advisor.**
- **Supported the establishment and relocation of the MRCS.**
- **1999 -2003 supported development of the first MRCS Strategic Plan.**

THE MEKONG RIVER

The Context.

- ✓ Ancient civilizations thrived in the six countries along the Mekong River' estimated 4,300 Kms.
- ✓ 60 million people in basin.
- ✓ One of the richest areas of biodiversity and culture in the world.
- ✓ Amazon has higher biodiversity, but the Mekong has more biodiversity per unit area.
- ✓ More than 1200 species of fish identified and as many as 1700.
- ✓ No other river is home to so many species of very large fish, including the giant river carp, freshwater stingray, giant catfish. Many endangered.

MEKONG COOPERATION

THE POLITICAL WILL

- ✓ **1957 Statute of the Committee for Coordination of Investigation of the Lower Mekong Basin. Mekong Committee established.**
- ✓ ***1957 – 1992 Tumultuous Period. Collaborative projects undertaken by Committee. US\$10 -20 million / yr.***
- ✓ **1992 Four Lower Riparian Countries agreed on Draft Joint Communique of Future Framework Cooperation for Sustainable Development. Mekong Working Group established.**
- ✓ **1993 Vice Ministers signed Communique.**
- ✓ **Feb 1993 – Nov 1994 MWG met 5 times, Technical Working group met twice**

✓ RECORD 22 MONTHS (FEB 1993 – NOV 1994)
AGREEMENT DRAFTED AND “INITIALED”

✓ RECORD 4 MONTHS (NOV 1994 – APRIL 1995)
“INITIALED” A AGREEMENT RATIFIED BY
PARLIAMENTS AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES
OF THE FOUR RIPARIAN COUNTRIES.

✓ PLENIPOTENTIARIES SIGNED AGREEMENT
ON 5 APRIL 1995

✓ APRIL 2010 HUA HIN. FIRST MEKONG
RIVER SUMMIT ATTENDED BY PMs FROM THE
FOUR LOWER BASIN AND FMs FROM THE
TWO UPPER RIPARIAN COUNTRIES,
PRECEDED BY INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON “TRANSBOUNDARY WATER
MANAGEMENT IN A CHANGING WORLD.”

AGREEMENT ON THE *COOPERATION* FOR THE
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEKONG
RIVER BASIN

1992 UN CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND
DEVELOPMENT. PRINCIPLES OF RIO
DECLARATION.

UN CHARTER PRINCIPLES

1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development

Principle 2

- “States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the *sovereign right* to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies, and the *responsibility* to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control *do not cause damage* to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.”

MEKONG AGREEMENT OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES INCORPORATE THE RIO PRINCIPLES: E.G.

- ✓ Protection of the Environment and Ecological Balance.
- ✓ Sovereign Equality and Territorial Integrity.
- ✓ Prevention and Cessation of Harmful Effects.
- ✓ State Responsibility for Damages.
- ✓ Addressing Differences and Disputes.

MEKONG RIVER COMMISSION HAS WELL STRUCTURED INSTITUTIONAL AND GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK.

- Ministerial Level Council.
- Joint Committee: Dept Head Level.
- Secretariat providing technical, administrative and coordinating support.
- ❖ National Mekong Committee.

**SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL AND
ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENTS
DURING PAST 15 YEARS IN
THE SIX MEKONG
COUNTRIES**

SOME SOCIAL INDICATORS

Form UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008

	POPULATION (Millions)			LIFE EXPECTANCY (YEARS)		POPULATION USING IMPROVED WATER (%)		POPULATION USING IMPROVED SANITATION(%)	
	<u>1975</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2004</u>
CHINA	927.8	1313	1388	68.6	72.5	70	77	23	44
CAMBODIA	7.3	14	16.6	51.9	58.0	--	44	---	17
LAO	2.9	5.7	6.7	51-3	63.2	-- 51		--	30
MYANMAR	29.8	48	52	57.9	60.8	57	78	24	77
THAILAND	42.2	63	66.8	69.2	69.6	96	99	80	99
VIETNAM	48	85	96.5	65.5	73.7	65	85	30	61

SOME ECONOMIC INDICATORS

From UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008

	URBAN POPULATION (% of TOTAL)			GDP (US\$) PPS		CO2 EMISSIONS PER CAPITA (tCO2)		CO2 EMISSIONS TOTAL (Mt CO2)	
	<u>1975</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2008</u>
CHINA	17.4	40.4	49.2	2,330	6,757	2.1	3.8	2,388.9	5,007.1
CAMBODIA	10.3	19.7	26.1	1,250	2,727	--	--	0.5	0.5
LAO	11.1	20.6	24.9	1,458	2,039	0.1	0.2	0.2	1.3
MYANMAR	23.9	30.6	37.4	650	1,027	0.1	0.2	4.3	9.8
THAILAND	23.8	32.3	36.2	6,350	8,677	1.7	4.2	95.7	267.9
VIETNAM	18.8	26.4	31.6	1,040	3,071	0.9	1.0	10.1	21.1

OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD UPON MRC ACHIEVEMENTS FOR A SUSTAINING, PROSPEROUS AND PEACEFUL FUTURE

BUILDING BLOCKS ARE IN PLACE.

- ✓ 35 PLUS 15 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND RECORD.
- ✓ POLITICAL WILL FOR COOPERATION.
- ✓ AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION RATIFIED.
- ✓ SIGNIFICANT HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
- ✓ MEKONG RIVER COUNTRIES ARE MEMBERS OF ASEAN +3. MOST DYNAMIC REGION
- ✓ ENDOWED WITH RICH NATURAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES.
- ✓ COUNTRIES WITH ANCIENT CULTURE, WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE AND EAGERNESS TO EMBRACE STATE OF THE ART SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

MRC BUILD UPON COPENHAGEN ACCORD

***Inter alia* some Important Features.**

- ❖ SOCIAL, ECONOMIC , POVERTY ERADICATION ARE THE FIRST AND OVERIDING PRIORITIES OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.
- ❖ A LOW EMISSION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IS INDISPENSIBLE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.
- ❖ USD 30 BILLION 2010 – 2102 AND DEVELOPED COUNTRIES COMMIT TO A GOAL OF JOINTLY MOBILIZING USD100 BILLIONS A YEAR BY 2020.
- ❖ ESTABLISHED COPENHAGEN GREEN FUND
- ❖ ESTABLISHED A TECHNOLOGY MECHANISM TO ACCELERATE TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER TO SUPPORT MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION GUIDED BY COUNTRY-DRIVEN APPROACH AND BASED ON NATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND PROIRITIES.

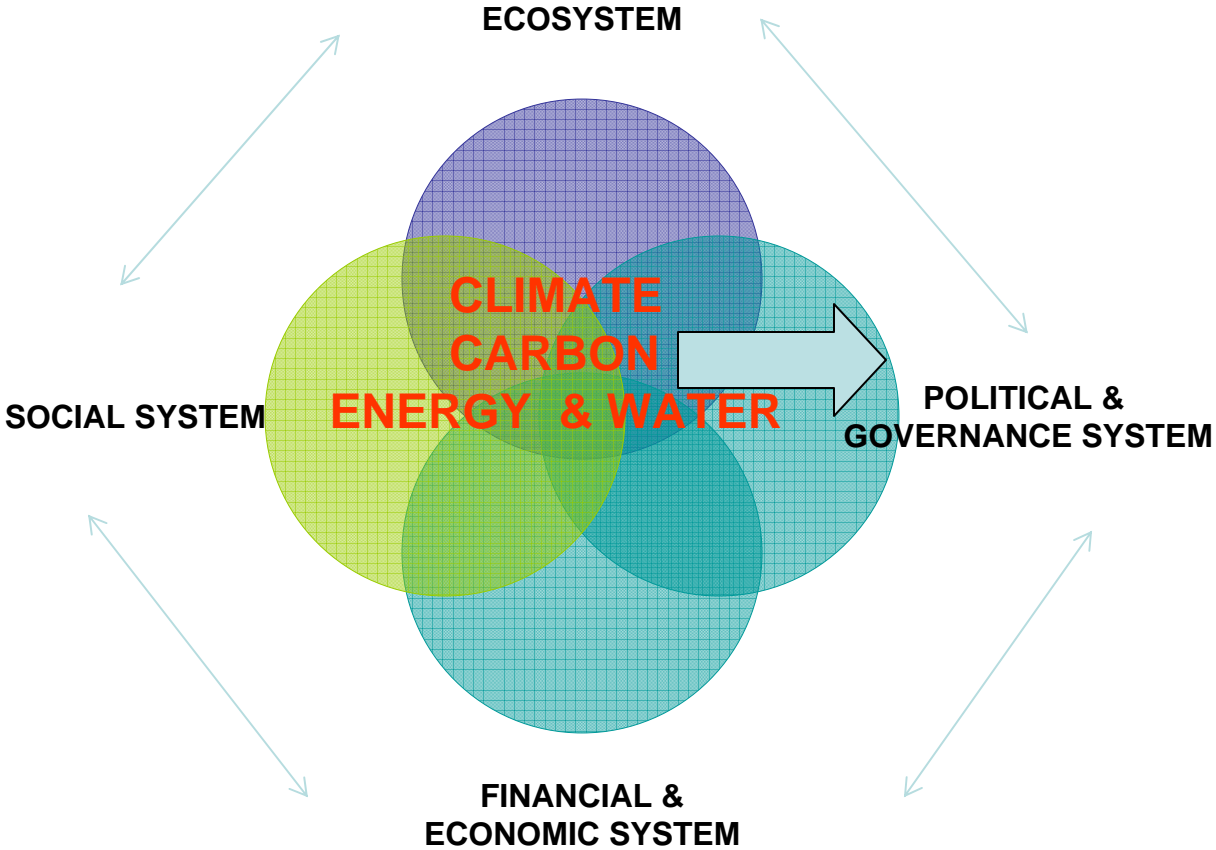
NINE PATHWAYS TO TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

Low-Carbon, Low-Water, Low-Material Paradigm.

- ✓ TECHNOLOGY.
- ✓ ECONOMICS.
- ✓ FINANCING MECHANISMS.
- ✓ SOCIAL AND SOCIETAL DETERMINANTS.
- ✓ INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS.
- ✓ CAPACITY BUILDING.
- ✓ NORMATIVE MEASURES.
- ✓ GOVERNANCE.
- ✓ POLICIES.

GREAT TRANSFORMATIONS

Systems & Systemic Drivers



FOOD SAFETY & SECURITY; HEALTH & WELL BEING

MRC TAKE LEAD IN TRANSFORMATION AL
CHANGE

TOWARDS

LOW-CARBON, LOW-WATER, LOW
MATERIAL PRODUCTION SYSTEMS AND
CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

TAKING
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PARADIGM

TO

THE NEXT LEVEL.