Mekong River Commission

Regional Flood Management and Mitigation Centre

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8th Annual Mekong Flood Forum

'Flood risk management and mitigation in the Mekong River Basin'

26-27 May, 2010
Don Chan Palace Hotel, Vientiane, Lao PDR

Call for Papers

Background

Under the umbrella of the Mekong River Commission (MRC), the Regional Flood Management and Mitigation Centre (MRC-RFMMC) operates from Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The Centre plays an important role in developing and maintaining (national and regional) availability of flood-related tools, data and knowledge; in producing reliable regional forecasts with suitable lead time and a timely and effective dissemination; and in providing accurate, well documented and consistent tools for basin-wide flood risks management and mitigation in the Mekong River Basin.

One of the important tasks of the MRC-RFMMC is to organize the Annual Mekong Flood Forum. The Forum provides the floor to present completed activities, to discuss emerging needs and to review the progress each country has made towards holistic and balanced flood risk management and mitigation planning. As an on-going activity, the Forum provides a suitable framework to strengthen cooperation and information exchange among the MRC Member Countries - Cambodia, Lao DPR, Thailand and Viet Nam - the Dialogue Partners - China and Myanmar - and the international community, International Organisations (IO), consultants, manufacturers and Civil Society Organisations (CSO).

Since 2002 seven Annual Mekong Flood Forums have been organised with the following themes '*Flood Preparedness*', '*Information Flow, Networking and Partnership*', '*Flood Management and Mitigation in the Mekong Basin*', '*Improving Flood Forecasting and Early Warning Systems for Flood Management and Mitigation in the Lower Mekong Basin*', '*Improving Inputs Towards Medium-term Flood Forecasting and Warning in the Mekong Basin'*, '*Integrated approaches and applicable systems for medium term flood forecasting and early warning in the Mekong River Basin, and* '*Integrated flood risk management in the Mekong River Basin*' respectively. Proceedings of these forums can be downloaded from the MRC website (www.mrcmekong.org).

The 8th Annual Mekong Flood Forum will be held on 26 - 27 May 2009, Vientiane, Lao PDR, under the theme *'Flood risk management and mitigation in the Mekong River Basin'*. This

theme is chosen in close consultation with the MRC Member Countries as well as the feedbacks received from different funding donors of the last AMFF-7, based on their requirements with respect to the programme and activities by the MRC-RFMMC.

Rapid population growth in the Mekong River Basin, urbanisation, intensification of agriculture, changes in land use and river morphology, rapid technology development and impacts of climate change require approaches to flood risk management and mitigation, which must be based on improved data inputs, modern technology and tools, and application of effective flood risk management and mitigation measures under difficult conditions. Therefore, among others, the Mekong River Flood Forecasting System (MRFFS) for the mainstream of the Mekong River has been developed and the new MRC Flash Flood Guidance System (MRCFFGS) has been introduced to the region. In addition, guidelines for the preparation of flood risk management plans and for evaluation of the impacts of flood risk management measures have been developed, potential trans-boundary flood issues are being identified for enhancing cooperation and negotiation towards conflict prevention.

The Forum will be focused and be result-oriented in order to assure that the results can be applied by the MRC-RFMMC, the MRC Member Countries and Civil Society Organisations (CSO) in their pursuit of improving flood risk management and mitigation approaches and measures in the Mekong River Basin.

During the two-day Forum the following issues will be presented and discussed:

- lessons learned based on the 2009 floods by the concerned line agencies of the MRC Member Countries;
- achievements, progress and future outlook with respect to the five components of the Flood Management and Mitigation Programme (FMMP), being: *1. Establishing a Regional Flood Management and Mitigation Centre; 2. Structural measures and flood proofing 3. Enhancing cooperation in addressing trans-boundary flood and related issues 4. Flood emergency management strengthening. 5. Land management*;
- current status of and future outlook on flood risk management and mitigation approaches and measures;
- experiences with the MRFFS and systems for flood forecasting and early warning in use and under development by the National Centres. To keep the MRC Member Countries, their concerned line agencies and CSOs informed on the progress with respect to the MRC-RFMMC flood forecasting database system, as well as on the exchange of data and data sharing among the MRC Member Countries and the MRC-RFMMC. This is essential for operational flood forecasting for the mainstream of the Mekong River, based on basin wide rainfall and water level data availability;
- experiences and best practices with CSOs, International Organisations (IO), academic institutions, consultants and manufacturers on the various elements of flood risk management and mitigation. To strengthen cooperation and information exchange among the international community, IOs and CSOs;
- information on the requirements that the different types of land use and various types of measures pose to flood risk management and mitigation in the conditions of the Mekong River Basin;
- information on to what extent integrated flood risk management results in information that enables institutions or individuals to take the best possible measures to reduce damage and number of casualties.

The terms 'flood' and 'flooding' are often used in different ways. In the 8th Annual Mekong Flood Forum the words will be based on the following definitions:

- a flood is a natural abundance of water in response to storm rainfall, snowmelt, etc., ergo the flood season on the Mekong.....however, this does not necessarily lead to flooding;
- flooding is the inundation of areas not usually submersed.

Submission of Abstracts and Papers

Each of the MRC Member Countries will prepare and present a country paper on the flooding during 2009 and its progress with respect to data collection, flood forecasting, flood warning, flood damage assessment, organisation of emergency measures, relief and reconstruction. The MCR-RFMMC will prepare and present the 2009 Flood Report for the Lower Mekong River Basin (LMB).

In addition IOs, CSOs, institutions, companies, or individuals work in the fields relating to the theme of the forum: *'Flood risk management and mitigation in the Mekong River Basin'* are invited to submit a paper or an exhibit on one of the following topics.

Topic I Community focused approach to flood risk management and mitigation

Flood preparedness and emergency management of local authorities and communities is at the forefront to encounter flood disasters. This non-structural community focused approach forms an important part of flood risk management and mitigation, which is only recently being applied in the LMB. Programmes of enhancing the competence of civil authorities at various levels, emergency managers and communities in flood preparedness and mitigation will ultimately help facilitate the objective that emergency management systems in the riparian countries are more effectively dealing with Mekong floods. Therefore assistance and technical support to disaster management authorities, particularly at sub-national levels (province, district and commune) may help to fill the gaps and needs of existing systems. Local disaster management authorities may take the lead in the development and implementation of flood preparedness programs in which clear roles and responsibilities are defined for each line department of provincial, district and commune disaster management offices. Various innovative approaches to flood risk reduction can be carried out in support to flood preparedness programmes, including promoting local, national and regional knowledge sharing, trans-boundary province to province cooperation in flood emergency assistance, and in ensuring sustainability of flood preparedness programme activities by integrating them into the local development planning process. People-centred approaches are generally low-cost, effective, and relevant to local conditions in a flood prone area. Ownership may gradually evolve and sustainability can be secured. Under this Topic I papers are invited that present approaches and experiences of community focused flood risk management and mitigation.

Topic II Flood forecasting and flash flood guidance

The meteorology, the weather forecast and conditions in a river basin create the basis for producing flood forecasts and early warnings. An efficient data collection, processing and retrieval system for meteorological and weather forecast data will be of utmost importance to enable adequate input to river flow modelling and finally the issuing of forecasts. In case of the Mekong River Basin most of the data are collected by the agencies in the riparian

countries, while forecasts for the mainstream of the Mekong River are given by the MRC-RFMMC as well as by most of the riparian countries. This requires a good compatibility and timely provision of the data, based on agreed accuracy and protocols. The forecasts need to be based on up to date technology for data collection, processing, retrieval and subsequent river modelling, with a focus on flood forecasting, related to the risks in the flood prone areas. In addition to floods in the mainstream, increasingly flash floods occur in the tributaries, especially in sloping and urbanised areas. The preparation of such forecasts requires quite different ways of data/information collection and forecasting mechanisms. With respect to these two aspects a wide range of new developments need to be employed such as weather models, satellite technology, remote sensing techniques, global positioning systems, geographic information systems, automation in data collection, transmission, storage and retrieval, and actual issuing of forecasts and warnings. The applicability of new developments for the conditions of the Mekong River and its tributaries will be an important aspect of this Topic II. Papers on new developments and successful experiences are invited under this topic.

Topic III Structural measures and flood proofing

The main objective of structural measures and flood proving in the LMB will be to reduce the vulnerability of people living in the LMB to the negative impacts of floods. This requires the preparation of concrete measures at all steps that are crucial for a socio-economic and environmentally sound flood risk management and mitigation by applying the most attractive mix of possible measures, hard and soft, for the reduction of flood damage risk. This is generally implemented in five steps. The first step in the process is the proper assessment of flood damage risk. Secondly formulation of structural flood risk management and mitigation measures. The third step involves the evaluation of the effects and impacts of the different types of measures and development of a strategy for flood risk management - for different types of flooding. In the fourth step, Integrated Flood Risk Management (IFRM) plans are to be developed on the basis of the three previous steps. These plans will include a specific set of measures and projects for the reduction of flood damage risk in a certain area. In the fifth step these measures and projects are prepared for implementation. Under this Topic III papers are invited that present methods of and experiences with structural methods of flood proofing.

Topic IV Trans-boundary cooperation for managing floods and related issues

The Mekong River Basin covers parts of six countries, which implies the importance of coherent approaches in river management. This will especially be of importance during extreme conditions of floods and droughts, while under such conditions measures taken in an upstream country may have a negative impact in a downstream country. Under certain conditions measures in a downstream country may even have impacts in an upstream country. In several river basins experience has been, or is being obtained with approaches to cooperation among the riparian countries. In light of the on-going developments in the Mekong River Basin it will be of importance to present such experiences, both for the Mekong River Basin, as well as for other trans-boundary river basins in the World. Therefore papers on experiences with effective approaches towards trans-boundary flood management will be welcome under this Topic IV.

Topic V Land use and climate change impacts on flood management

Rapid population growth, a significant increase in agricultural exploitation, urbanisation and industrialisation may be observed in most of the lowland, flood prone areas. In addition there

may be impacts of land subsidence and climate change. Although the changes due to these processes may be of different speed and magnitude, they all result in an increase in vulnerability for extreme weather conditions and the requirement of an increase in measures to be taken with respect to flood management. Therefore countries would have to develop a strategy and approach with respect to flood probability based land management. Current land management practices may be an important factor contributing to a situation where already regular floods may cause substantial damage to agriculture, buildings and infrastructure. More effective decision making in these fields, as well as disaster management, require on the one hand the provision of more relevant and accurate flood related information and on the other hand how conditions with respect to flood vulnerability may change in the short and longer term future under the influence of the impacts of changes as mentioned above. Improvements in land management by considering flood probability information do not only provide direct positive impacts through the reduction of damage to agriculture, buildings and infrastructure, but also indirect benefits through the avoidance of damage to the most vulnerable parts of the population living and working in the flood prone areas. Under this Topic V papers are invited that present cases where experience has been obtained with the impacts of land use and climate changes on flood management.

Deadlines

Abstracts and papers

Submission of abstract (200 – 400 words) and paper submission form (Annex to this call)	29 January 2010
Notification of acceptance of abstract	12 February 2010
Submission of full paper (max. 8 pages)	26 March 2010
Notification of acceptance of paper and specification on presentation	16 April 2010
Submission of powerpoint presentation	20 May 2010

Note: The organisation will inform you whether your accepted paper can be presented in the plenary or parallel sessions, or be presented as a poster.

Contact address

Please submit abstracts, papers, and paper submission and registration forms as attached word file to: amff8@mrcmekong.org. For large files, please upload to: ftp://amff8:amff8@fftp.mrcmekong.org

For further information please contact:

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Authors instructions

Abstracts will be printed as camera-ready copy in the Forum Abstract Book. The full papers will be published as pdf file on memory stick that will be handed to the participants upon registration and later on published as the proceedings. Abstracts should be 200-400 words. Papers should be limited to 8 pages (A4 size).

For submitting papers, please follow the instructions below:

- Use A4 format, with on all sides a margin of 3 cm. Don't add page numbers;
- Abstracts and papers have to be submitted by e-mail as an attached word file;
- Check the paper with the UK spelling checker;
- Use the following letter type and letter size:
  - Heading: Capitals, Times New Roman 12 pt bold, centred
  - Author(s) name(s): Capitals, Times New Roman 11 pt, centred
  - Footnote: Full affiliation, address and e-mail of the corresponding author, Times New Roman 10 pt, justified
  - Main text: Times New Roman 11 pt, justified
    Line spacing: single

  - Tables:
    - heading: On top of Table, Times New Roman 11 pt, justified
    - auto format: Elegant
    - text in Table: Times New Roman 10 pt
    - Note: All tables have to be referred to in the text by (Table ..)
  - Figures, graphs and photos:
    - Insert figures, graphs and photos at the right place in the text
    - Provide the figures, graphs and photos as separate files (tiff, jpg at resolution of at least 600 dpi)
    - heading: Under the figure, graph, or photo, Times New Roman 10 pt, centred
    - text in figures: Times New Roman 11 pt
    - colour: Figures can be in colour
    - Note: All figures have to be referred to in the text by (Figure ..)

  - References:
    - in the text: References have to be shown as (name author, or organisation, year of publication)
    - in the list: Name of first author, initial(s), Name of second author, initial(s), etc., year of publication. Title of publication (italic), publisher, or Journal, city, country, Times New Roman 10 pt.

Please note that submitted manuscripts may not have been previously published and may not be submitted for publication elsewhere while they are under consideration for inclusion in the Forum proceedings. Submitted material will not be returned to the author(s) unless specifically requested.

PAPER SUBMISSION FORM FOR THE 8TH ANNUAL MEKONG FLOOD FORUM

DON CHAN PALACE HOTEL, VIENTIANE, LAO PDR

26 - 27 MAY 2010

Title of abstract/paper : ……..

Full name of corresponding author : ……..

Address of corresponding author : ……..

……..

Telephone office : ……..

Telephone mobile : ……..

Fax : ……..

E-mail : ……..

Relation of abstract/paper to forum topics (cross out the concerned box):

☐ I. Community focused approach to flood risk management and mitigation

☐ II. Flood forecasting and flash flood guidance

☐ III. Structural measures and flood proofing

☐ IV. Trans-boundary cooperation for managing floods and related issues

☐ V. Land use and climate change impacts on flood management

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