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| | Transboundary Water Cooperation in the Lower Mekong Basin II |
| | https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/142752.html |
| | The project supports the Mekong River Commission in its efforts to promote cooperation between the countries along the Lower Mekong Basin to improve their joint water management as well as to strengthen resilience and sustainable development. |
| | Mekong River Commission, Mekong River, Core River Monitoring Network, flood and drought, transboundary basin planning, Early Warning System, climate change adaptation, organisational development, financial management, capacity building. |

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| | Transboundary Water Cooperation in the Lower Mekong Basin II (DE: Grenzüberschreitende Wasserkooperation im Unteren Mekong-Einzugsgebiet) |
| | German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) |
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| | Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam |
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| | The Mekong River Commission |
| | 2022 to 2024 |
| | 21.2241.4-001.00 |
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Over 70 million people in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Viet Nam depend on the Mekong and its tributary rivers. The river basin is critical to sustaining people's livelihoods by providing food, energy, and water security. Depending on the natural conditions, the Mekong River and its ecosystem can be used and developed by the riparian countries.

The need for economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic and socio-economic development can lead to over-exploration of the river beyond its natural boundaries. In such a situation in which countries may maximize the benefits and externalize the costs, a full depletion of the Mekong River is more than ever looming.

These human-induced impacts on water resources are further multiplied by climate change which underlines the need for Mekong River Commission (MRC) as a water diplomacy platform to promote sustainable water resources development at the transboundary level. The only way to balance economic, social, and environmental interests is for neighbouring states to cooperate.

To this end, MRC was established in 1995. Since then, the MRC has been developing as a key international organisation for the management of water resources. Nevertheless, its work must be improved at both regional and national levels to face the challenges in the Lower Mekong Basin. This requires strengthening the work of the national line agencies and stronger regional coordination.

The Transboundary Water Cooperation project aims to enforce the coordinating and management capabilities of the MRC, supporting river monitoring and the implementation of transboundary projects for flood and drought management.

MRC is the region's intergovernmental organization to steer cooperation between the countries along the Lower Mekong River, to improve their joint water management as well as to strengthen resilience and sustainable development.

The project has been supporting MRC in its efforts to establish a Mekong River Basin wide development strategy which tackles:

- The re-design of a Core River Monitoring Network (CRMN) to monitor environmental changes basin wide due to hydropower dams, or e.g., increasing plastic pollution. The project has been involved through the provision of trainings, increasing equipment contributions, as well as technical advice to elaborate monitoring methodologies. These activities have been contributing to the approval of integrating the Joint Environmental Monitoring Program for mainstream dams into the CRMN and a Capacity Development Action Plan.
- MRC's Joint Planning, a local cross-border approach, to mitigate flood and drought risks. This is being supported through the development of an early warning system and the identification of nature-based adaptation solutions to climate change. The project has been closely cooperating with MRC in transboundary subbasins to develop a digital atlas, a master plan and to prioritize on sustainable green-grey investments.
- Fostering the organisational development of the MRC Secretariat by supporting the implementation of the MRC Strategic Plan 2021-2025. This includes advice on compliance mechanisms, for example, internal controls and efficient use of the funds from international donors and member countries.

With support from Germany, the MRC has contributed to improving knowledge-based management of water resources, developing a shared vision for the basin, and strengthening the cooperation mechanisms between member countries. With this contribution, the MRC will be more efficient and effective on its way to becoming a world-leading organisation in the field of transboundary water cooperation, receiving increasing political and financial support.

More recently, project has achieved and progressing the following:

- Finalized the Joint Environmental Monitoring Program, integrated into the MRC Core River Monitoring Network, which covers the Mekong mainstream and its key tributaries, with decentralized some of key functions being transferred to the member countries.
- In total, seven sets of water quality monitoring equipment are provided for the MRC Core River Monitoring Network.

- In total, four sets of microplastic identification equipment are provided for the MRC Riverine Plastic Monitoring Programme
- A transboundary gender-sensitive flood and drought early-warning system between Cambodia and Thailand is under development including additional water level monitoring stations.
- The Digital Sub-Basin Atlas of Cambodia and Thailand has been finalized and translated into Khmer and Thai languages. An additional Atlas for a subbasin between Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam is under development.
- Promoting the usage of MRC M&E system for reporting, budgeting, and planning.

The gender-sensitive Capacity Development Action Plan for the Core River Monitoring Network is currently under preparation and expected to be finalised in 2024. The project also supports the Gender and Vulnerability Assessment in the sub-basin as well as the implementation of the MRC Gender Action Plan.

Last update: [April 2024](#)

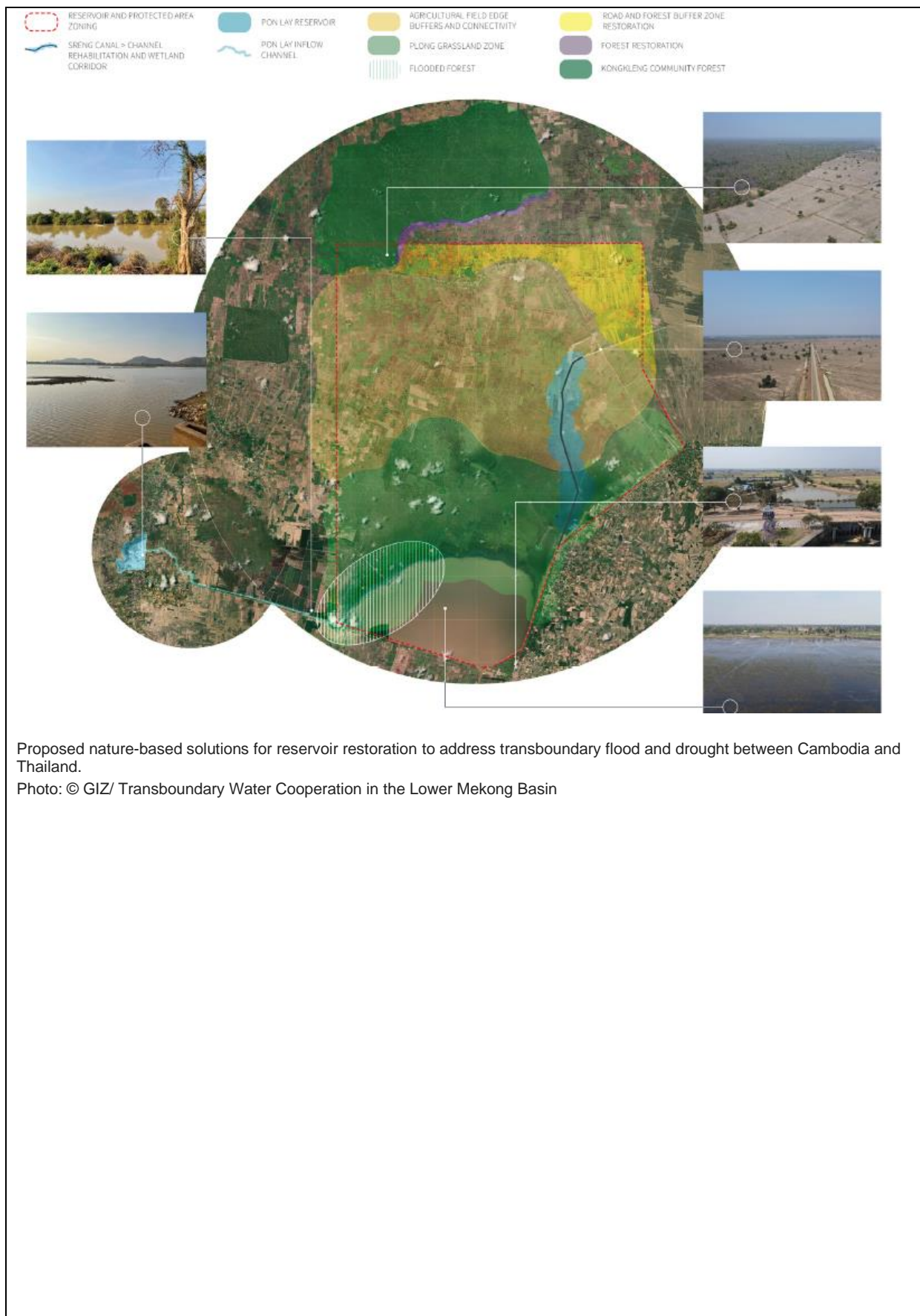
Factsheet: Transboundary Water Cooperation in the Lower Mekong Basin
https://www.giz.de/en/downloads_els/TWC_MRC%20Factsheet%202023_2.pdf

Factsheet: ການຮ່ວມມືທາງດ້ານລັບພະຍາກອນນໍ້າຂ້າມຊາຍແດນ
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[Mekong River Commission \(MRC\) \(mrcmekong.org\)](http://mrcmekong.org)



Signing Ceremony between MRC and GIZ in continuing of the Joint project until 2024.
Photo: © GIZ/Transboundary Water Cooperation in the Lower Mekong Basin



Proposed nature-based solutions for reservoir restoration to address transboundary flood and drought between Cambodia and Thailand.

Photo: © GIZ/ Transboundary Water Cooperation in the Lower Mekong Basin

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