

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy Services for Initial Drought Management Study Project

Title: International Expert on Initial Drought Management Study Project

Duty station: Mekong River Commission Secretariat (MRCS), Vientiane, Lao PDR

Duration: 60 days, part-time

Expected date: As soon as possible

1. Background and Rationale: Droughts are not new to the Lower Mekong Basin, and measures to mitigate the negative socio-economic impacts have been frequently considered under the work of the MRC and its predecessor bodies. The recent attention of the MRC originated with the regional drought of 2004 to 2005 where unusually low flows in the Mekong River and seasonal deficiencies in regional rainfall led to severe agricultural losses in North-east Thailand and Cambodia and to critical levels of saline intrusion in the Delta. These impacts resulted in calls for national and regional action at the highest political levels, including within the MRC.

In March 2009 the MRC JC at its 29th meeting agreed to implement some initial drought management activities related to Drought Risk Analysis and Mapping using available MRC reserve fund. The main objective of this Initial Drought Management Study Project is to provide some significant results related to drought impact assessment on social, economic and environmental factors of vulnerable people, drought risk and vulnerability indicators and drought indicator thresholds which will be used for further development of Drought Management Project Proposal.

2. Objectives: The International Expert is required to provide full technical advisory assistance to the Initial Drought Management Study Project Manager to implement the project as approved by the MRC JC at its 29th meeting and to prepare Drought Management Project Proposal for fund raising purpose. This also includes drought risk analysis for drought indicator thresholds identification and drought mapping. The proposal shall be technically sound; addressing immediate, medium and long term problems; proposing practical solutions; strongly meeting MRC and riparian country objectives and highly attractive to donors. Also concept, strategy and logical framework analysis shall be made to justify the proposed activities in the proposal.

3. Outputs: Key outputs are expected as follows:

- a. Drought risk and vulnerability indicators: appropriate drought indicators/indices established integrating both probability and vulnerability

- b. Drought indicator thresholds: critical regional and local thresholds reflecting increasing levels of risk and vulnerability to drought agreed by stakeholders
 - c. Drought impacts on economic, social and environmental factors of vulnerable people and impacts on water related natural resources
 - d. Detailed and attractive Drought Management Project proposal for fund raising purpose.
- 4. Responsibilities and tasks:** The International Expert will carry out the following duties and responsibilities, under supervision by Information and Knowledge Management Programme (IKMP) and Technical Support Division:
- a. Work closely with the Regional Expert for Initial Drought Management Study to modify the existing work plan based on the real needs and availability of the data
 - b. Provide technical advice to the national experts on national consultation meetings and field survey for data collection required for drought impact analysis, drought management strategies and the overall project proposal for Drought Management Project
 - c. Develop drought risk vulnerability indicators and indicator thresholds based on real situation in the Lower Mekong Basin
 - d. Identify appropriate drought indices for drought distributions assessment for a certain time frame to produce drought maps of the entire Lower Mekong Basin region
 - e. Prepare an overall proposal for Drought Management Project for fund raising purpose
 - f. Other relevant and related activities
- 5. Tentative Work Schedule:** Tentatively the whole consultation work is divided into 3 phases as follows:
- a. Phase 1: 10 working days tentatively in May 2010
 - b. Phase 2: 20 working days tentatively in July and August 2010
 - c. Phase 3: 30 working days in November and December 2010
(The schedules of consultancy work are subject to change according to the work plan)
- 6. Working Principles/Reporting:** Reporting to IKMP Coordinator and TSD director.
- 7. Qualifications:**
- a. At least a Master's degree in water resources management/engineering or a related relevant discipline, preferably with 5 years experience in drought management and mitigation projects.

- b. At least 10 years of demonstrated experience in natural resource management related programme with international level of proposal writing capability.
- c. Abilities to lead and coordinate a wide variety of multi-disciplinary activities in a multi-cultural context
- d. Previous experience with international river basin organizations or similar, in SE Asia is an asset
- e. Fluency in English language.