

# Water Resources Management and River Basin Planning in Lao PDR

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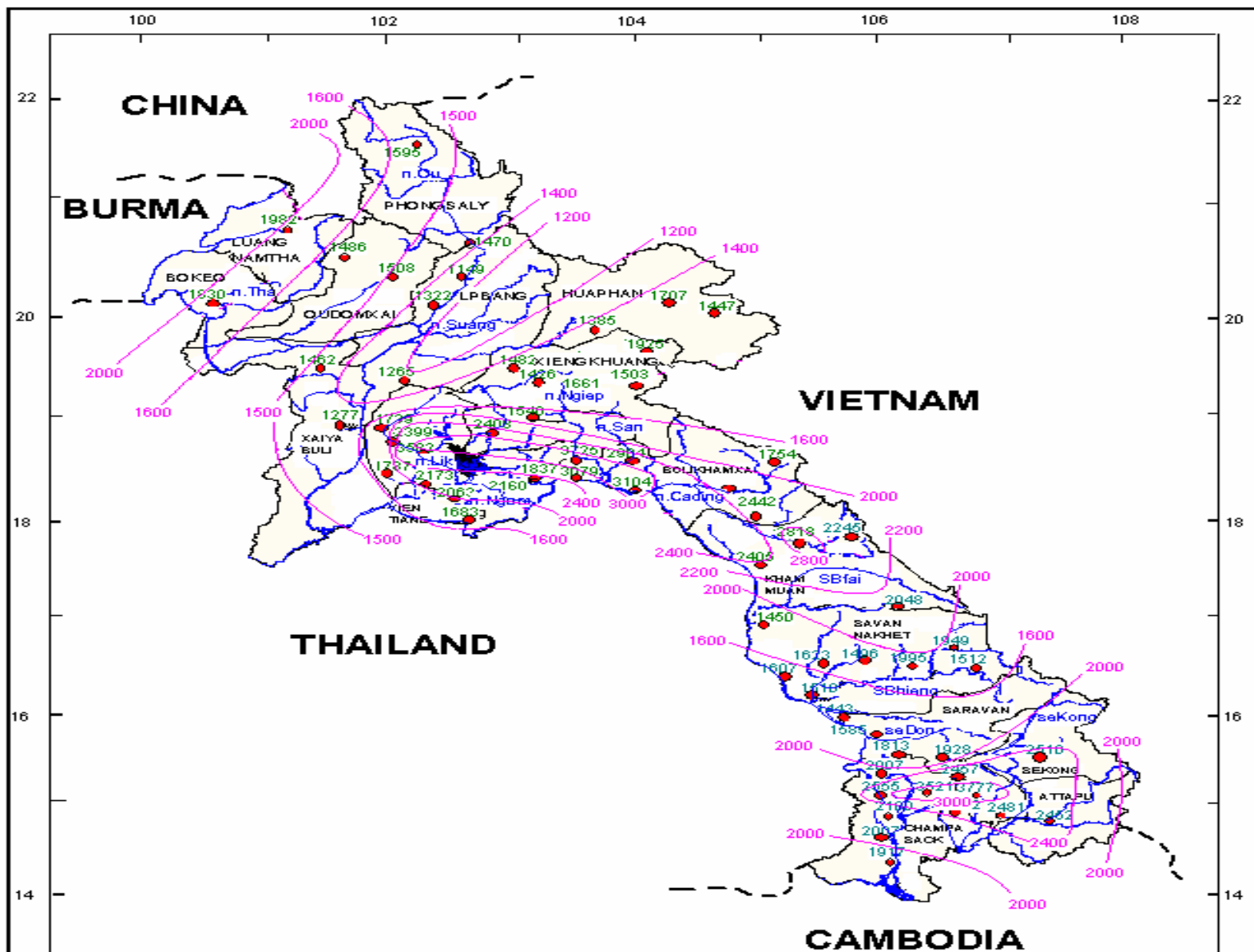
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# Main characteristics

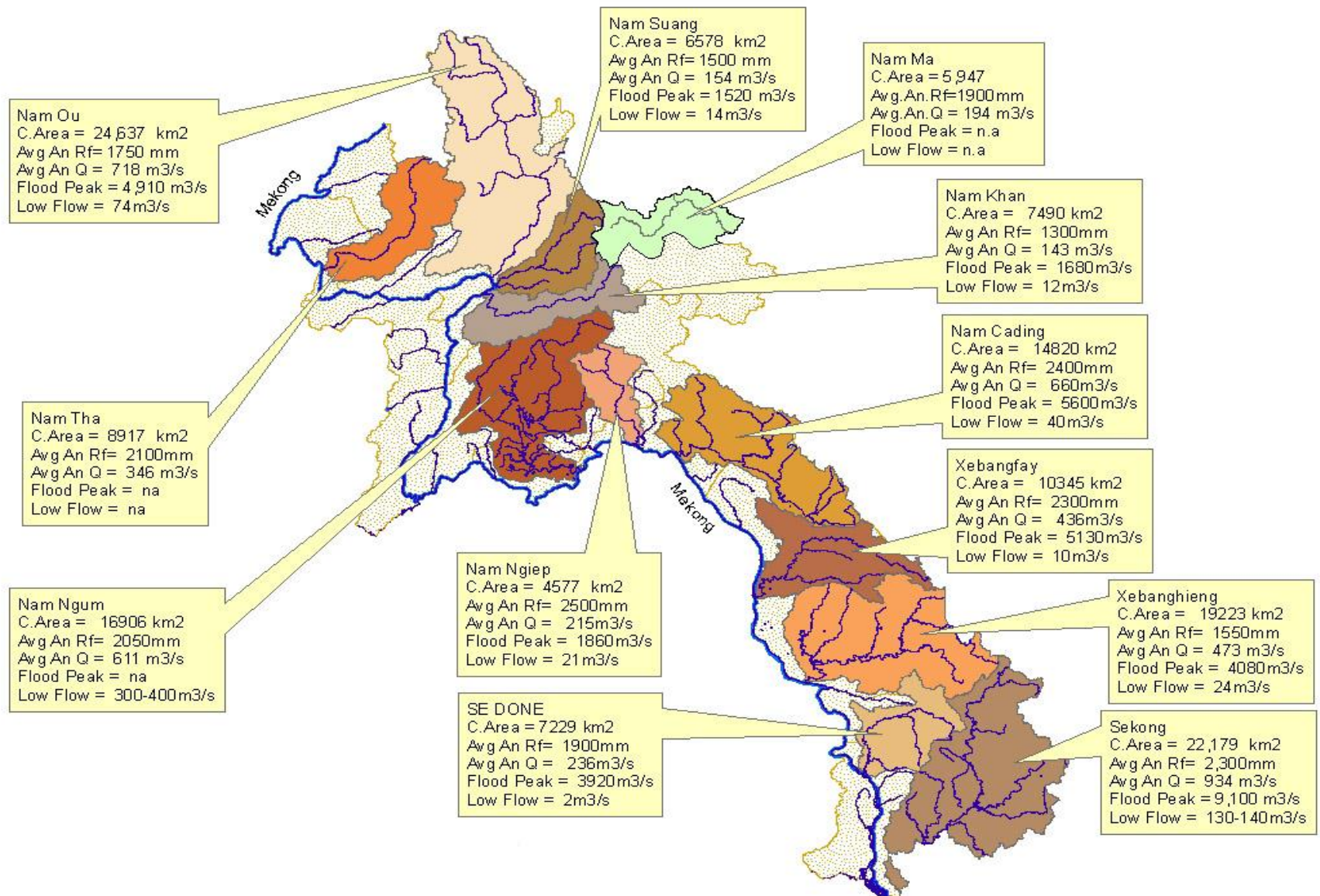
- ▶ Land locked country
- ▶ Area: 236,800 km<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ Population: 6 Millions
- ▶ Average rainfall: 1,900 mm<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Rivers and mountains cover 70% of the country
- ▶ The Mekong River flows nearly 1,800 km from north to south.
- ▶ Water resources per capita is around 55,000 m<sup>3</sup> per person per year
- ▶ The Mekong Basin covers more than 90% of the country and 35% of all water in the Mekong River originated from watersheds within the Lao territory.
- ▶ These watersheds form 26% of the total watershed area of the Mekong Basin.
- ▶ About 80% of the water flows in streams during the rainy season and the rest during the dry season



FIGURE 1. ANNUAL RAINFALL MAP OF LAO PDR



# River Basin Map In Lao PDR



# National Overview

- Review and revise water law
- Draft National Water resources Policy Strategy and Action plan
- River Basin Committee
- M-IWRMP

# National Overview

- in 1996: Law on Water and Water Resources (LWWR)
- In 2001 the Prime Minister issued its Implementing Decree 204/PM.
- In 2002 the Nam Ngum River Basin Development Sector Project (NNRBDSP) initiated integrated water resources management (IWRM) in the Lao PDR.
- In 2007 the Prime Minister issued Decree 149/PM establishing the national Water Resources and Environmental Administration (WREA).
- In 2008 WREA's National Water Resources Profile confirmed the need to revise the 1996 LWWR to reflect modern IWRM principles and updated institutional arrangements.
- In May 2011, WREA was transformed to be a ministry namely Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE).



# Review and revise Water Law

- Delegation of water resource management responsibilities to many ministries and agencies (regulatory functions and service delivery functions).

# Review and revise Water Law

Some important topics are not addressed (or not adequately addressed) in the legislation, such as management of watersheds, management of groundwater, sustainable financial arrangements for IWRM, water quality management, organizational arrangements (RBOs) for river basin and sub-basin management, and coordination with environmental legislation and procedures.



# National Water Resources Policy

The National Water Resources Policy reflects the Government's direction and decision making for water resources management, ensuring equity in water access and sharing of water development and use benefits for society, contributing for poverty reduction, protection and restoration of the water environment and increased water security.

# Vision

The vision of the National Water Resources Policy is: “coordinated, optimized and sustainable development and use of water resources, protection of the environment and improvement of social well being”.

# Mission

1. Ensure sustainable development and management of water resources and minimize water environment and social impacts
2. Management and protection of water sources and systematic, comprehensive planning for water resources development and use, balancing socioeconomic outcomes and water ecosystems
3. Strengthening ownership and participation of stakeholders on management of water resources development and use through capacity building and use of local knowledge
4. Prioritization of water allocation for basic human needs, ensure equitable water uses and sharing the benefits of water availability and development.

# Principles

1. Water is valuable national asset. The Government has the central role to regulate the management, development, use and protection of water resources.
2. Water must be conserved for basic human needs and for protection of ecosystems.
3. Water rights are separated from land rights. Land owners do not always have the right to use or control water adjacent to their property.
4. Water has both an economic value and also social and environmental values.
5. Decision making on water resources management should be based on consultation and involvement at the local level.

# POLICY STATEMENTS

- **1. Water resource management will take place under a unified and coordinated institutional structure at the central and local levels.**
- **2 .Water resource management will be carried out under a clear and complete set of official documents.**
- **3. Integrated water resource management plans will be prepared in priority river basins and sub-basins.**

# POLICY STATEMENTS

- **4. A coordinated and effective water resource data, information and analysis system will provide a basis for decision making.**
- **5. Water which is reserved for basic human needs and environmental purposes will be available for those uses with no requirement for water permits.**
- **6. Water quality will be protected to safeguard human health and water-related environmental values.**

# POLICY STATEMENTS

- 7. Coordinated programs will be undertaken to reduce the impacts of floods, drought and climate change.**
- 8. The benefits from water resource development will be shared according to Government decisions and official procedures.**
- 9. Central and local government agencies, communities and other stakeholders will be informed about, and participate in, water resource management activities.**



# IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Lao National Mekong Committee (LNMC) has a mandate as a coordinating body between the line agencies concerned and other National Mekong Committees and dialogue partner countries working under the 1995 Mekong Agreement.
- The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) has a mandate for management of natural resources activities throughout the country.

# IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- River Basin Committees (RBC) have a mandate to act as advisory bodies on water resource management in their respective river basins under the direction of The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) for the management, development, conservation, rehabilitation and utilization of water resources in the river basin area.

# National Water Resources Strategy

1. Institutional Strengthening and Coordination
2. Legislation, Plans and Their Implementation
3. River Basin and Sub-Basin Water Resources Planning
4. Data Collection and Analysis
5. Water Allocation
6. Protection of Water Quality and Ecosystems
7. Management of Floods, Drought and Climate Change
8. Financial Aspects of Water Resources Management
9. Awareness, Participation and Capacity Building

# River Basin Committee

*(No.293/PM, 15 June 2010)*

- The River Basin Committee (RBC) is a non-permanent organization. It has a mandate to act as a water resources executive in river basin under the direction of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) for management, development, conservation, rehabilitation and utilization of water resources (which will be called “water resources management”) in river basin area.

# Principles

- The RBC performs its activities according the following principles:
  - The IWRM through a consultative and participatory processes that includes all sectors, government organization, individuals, communities and other related sectors; on water resources management and development and other related resources in river basin area;
  - Insure equitable on water utilization and sustainable cycle ecology
  - Use mechanism of those “who pollute has the responsibility to clean”.

# Organizational Structure

The River Basin Committee consists of government and individual representatives and other related sectors.

- Provincial Governor Chairperson
- Vice provincial Governor Acting deputy Chairperson
- Vice provincial Governors Deputy Chairperson
- Vice Minister of MONRE Deputy Chairperson
- Department level representative from the Ministry concerned, Provincial Departments and Developers as Members
- RBC has five year chairperson rotating-system.

# Secretariat of RBC

- The RBC Secretariat acts as an advisory body to the RBC
  - Draft the annual action plans and budget plan of the RBC for proposal to the RBC for its consideration;
  - Draft the programs and river basin management projects in each period and cooperate with sectors concerned for proposal to the RBC for consideration;
  - Coordinate the development projects in the basin in order to avoid and solve the possible impacts on water resources;



# M-IWRM Project

- Three main pillars:
  - Regional pillars: focus on basin-wide development
  - Trans-boundary pillars: focus on development between two or three countries: 3S
  - National pillars: focus on national components of each country

# Perspective cooperation of Laos-VietNam on water resources

- Hydropower development: LuangPrabang hydropower project, Sekaman 3 & 4
- Proposal on Nam Ma development project
- Law on Water Resources

Thank you for your  
attention

