



2017 Lower Mekong Policy Forum on Energy, Agriculture, and Natural Resources

*December 07 – 08, 2017,
Da Nang, Vietnam*

The Lower Mekong Public Policy Initiative (LMPPI) is a four-year project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). LMPPI is jointly managed by Fulbright University Vietnam and the Vietnam Program of Harvard Kennedy School's Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation in the United States.

LMPPI supports inter-disciplinary research, policy engagement, and capacity building on the environment, agriculture, and livelihoods across the Lower Mekong Basin (LMB). The research focuses on identifying how improved local and trans-boundary policy coordination can sustain the environment, boost agricultural productivity and raise standards of living for the Basin's residents. Numerous sub-topics are relevant in this endeavor. They include natural resource governance, water use and energy generation, climate change adaptation, sustainable agricultural systems, regional trade, gender empowerment, and integrated urban and rural planning.

The Lower Mekong Policy Forum is an annual event. Its themes this year are energy, agriculture, and natural resource management. Meeting in Da Nang City, Vietnam on December 07 & 08, the Forum examines recent research findings and stimulates policy dialogue on energy development, the transformation of agriculture, and efficiently managing natural resources. Participants in the Forum include policymakers, researchers, representatives of regional agencies, LMPPI's research partners, and other stakeholders.

This year's conference will feature three consecutive sessions. The first discusses the latest research on the role of hydropower within the Mekong Basin and its contribution to energy development within Lao PDR. The presenters will explore alternative approaches designed to move the region to a sustainable energy path. Increased national integration of power systems together with appropriate energy pricing will be critical in this effort.

The second session examines the continuing transformation of agriculture and its impact on national development. In Vietnam and Cambodia, the rice sector plays a central role in meeting domestic market demand and in generating foreign exchange. By exploring the role of intermediaries and land use policies, the session helps to identify the major factors which would boost the agricultural sector's contributions to the economy and raise its capacity to improve the income and welfare of farmers.

The third session focuses on the impacts of government policies to sustain the natural resources and the ecosystem services they generate. Researchers will share insights on the problems and opportunities of more efficiently and equitably managing key resources such as groundwater and ecosystem services through regulations and appropriate pricing. These mechanisms will play an increasingly important role in enabling LMB countries to reduce the over-exploitation of their natural resources as part of their response to the encroaching effects of Climate Change.

TENTATIVE AGENDA

Venue: Furama Resort Da Nang, 105 Vo Nguyen Giap Street, Ngu Hanh Son District, Da Nang City, Viet Nam.

07 DECEMBER 2017, MORNING	
8:00 - 8:30	Registration
8:30 - 9:15	<p><i>Opening Addresses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative of the Vietnam Government • Representative of U.S. Government • Representative of Fulbright University Vietnam <p><i>Key note speaker:</i></p> <p>Mekong Basin in Crisis: Reconciling Competing National Priorities on an International River</p> <p>Dr. Richard Cronin, Distinguished Fellow, Southeast Asia Program, Stimson Center, United States.</p>
<p>SESSION 1: Energy Policy and Viable Alternatives to Hydropower in the Lower Mekong Basin</p> <p>Moderator: Ms. Le Thi Quynh Tram</p>	
9:15 – 9:45	<p>China's Dam Diplomacy in the Mekong Region: Three Game Changers</p> <p>Dr. Pichamon Yeophantong, Director, Environmental Justice and Human Rights Project, University of New South Wales, Australia.</p>
9:45 – 10:15	<i>Group photo and Tea break</i>
10:15 – 10:45	<p>Power Expansion Alternatives for Economic Resilience and Diversity in Laos</p> <p>Dr. Noah Kittner , Renewable and Appropriate Energy Laboratory (RAEL), University of California Berkeley, United States.</p>
10:45 – 11:15	<p>The Macro Economic and Environmental Implications of Hydropower Development in Lao PDR</p> <p>Dr. Vatthanamixay Chansomphou, National University of Laos, Lao PDR.</p>
11:15 – 12:15	<p>Panel Discussion :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H.E Mr. Long Saravuth, Deputy Secretary General, Cambodia National Mekong Committee, Cambodia - Dr. Lilao Bouapao, Director, Mekong Development Center, Lao PDR - Dr. Diana Suhardiman, Research Group Leader - Governance and Gender , International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Lao DPR office - Mr. Tran Dinh Sinh, Vice Director, Green Innovation and Development Centre (GreenID), Vietnam. - Dr. Heng Pheakdey, Chairman, Enrich Institute, Cambodia - Mr. Witoon Permpongsacharoen, Director, Mekong Energy and Ecology Network (MEE Net), Thailand
12:15 – 13:30	<i>Lunch break</i>

07 DECEMBER 2017, AFTERNOON	
SESSION 2: Agricultural Transformation: Policies and Challenges Moderator: Dr. Le Viet Phu	
13:30 – 14:00	Agricultural transformation and policies in the Lower Mekong Dr. David W. Roland-Holst, Departments of Economics and Agricultural and Resource Economics, UC Berkeley, United States
14:00 – 14:30	Evaluation of New Rural Development Program in the Mekong delta of Vietnam Dr. Nguyen Van Giap, LMPPI Researcher
14:30 – 15:00	Implications of Vietnamese Rice Policy Changes for Cambodia’s Rice Production and Producers Mr. Sim Sokcheng, Cambodian Development Resource Institute, Cambodia.
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Tea break</i>
15:30 – 16:30	Panel Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Vu Thanh Tu Anh, Dean, Fulbright School of Public Policy and Management, Fulbright University Vietnam - Dr. Clemens Grünbühel, Senior Policy Expert, Stockholm Environment Institute in Asia, Thailand - Dr. Phousavanh Phouvin, Freshwater Fisheries Ecologist, Faculty of Agriculture, National University of Laos, Lao PDR. - Ms. Tran Thu Ha, Team Leader, AgResults Vietnam Emissions Reduction Pilot (AVERP), Vietnam - Mrs. Hap Navy, Deputy Director, Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute (IFRDI), Fisheries Administration, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia
19:00 – 21:00	Dinner and Networking
08 DECEMBER 2017, MORNING	
SESSION 3: Managing Natural Resources in an Era of Increasing Scarcity: Lessons from International Experience Moderator: Dr. Nguyen Van Giap	
8:30 – 9:00	International experience in sharing access to, charging for and managing water Professor Mike Young, Centre for Global Food and Resource Studies, The University of Adelaide, Australia.
9:00 – 9:30	Groundwater Management in Asian Cities Dr. Sangam Shrestha, Associate Professor and Chair of Water Engineering and Management (WEM) program, Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand.
9:30 – 10:00	Hidden in Plain Sight: The Value of Groundwater Irrigation in Vietnam Dr. Le Viet Phu, LMPPI Researcher
10:00 – 10:30	<i>Tea break</i>

10:30 – 11:00	<p>Appropriately Valuing Ecosystem Services in the Lower Mekong Basin Dr. Malcolm McPherson, LMPPI Advisor, Senior Fellow in Development, Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard University, United States</p>
11:00 - 12:00	<p>Panel Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Andrew Wyatt, Mekong Delta Programme Manager, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Vietnam - Dr. Outhai Soukkhy, Deputy Director, Northern agriculture and Forestry College (NAFC), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), Lao PDR - Mrs. Kaing Khim, Deputy Director General, Fisheries Administration (FiA), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Cambodia - Dr. Nguyen The Chinh, Director, Institute Of Strategy And Policy On Natural Resources And Environment (ISPONRE), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), Vietnam - Mr. Rattaphon Pitakthepsombat, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khon Kaen University, Thailand.
12:00 - 12:20	<p>Session summary: a summary of the discussion of the three sessions above Dr. Chu Thai Hoanh - LMPPI Advisor; Emeritus Principal Scientist, International Water Management Institute (IWMI)</p>
12:20 – 12:45	<p>Closing remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>LMPPI in its journey: achievements and future engagements</i> - <i>Announcing the establishment of the Mekong Institute for the Environment</i>
12:45 – 14:00	<p><i>Lunch</i></p>