



## Institutional Structure

This facts sheet highlights the institutional structure and mechanisms of the Mekong Wetlands Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use Programme (MWBP).

### Partnership between UNDP, IUCN and MRC

During the development of the Programme Document for the MWBP a particular institutional arrangement for implementing the programme was agreed between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the Mekong River Commission (MRC). The principles behind this agreement were described in the document along with co-operation agreements between UNDP and IUCN, and UNDP and MRC. One of the principles was that the agreement should play to the strengths of each of the three organisations – namely UNDP would be providing political linkages and underpinning of the programme, MRC would be providing its technical strengths and the MRC institutional structure and network that would enable regional policy decisions to be brought forward, and IUCN would be providing other technical strengths and working linkages with both government and civil society.

Under this agreement, UNDP is the GEF executing agency and IUCN and MRC are the two implementing agencies managing different specified outputs of the programme. UNDP appointed the Team Leader to provide overall supervision and direction to the programme, and IUCN and MRC appointed Programme Managers to manage their respective activities. The UNDP Team Leader reports to the Resident Representative of UNDP Lao PDR on the progress and management of the programme and through him to the GEF.

The MWBP is a directly executed (DEX) programme of UNDP, with contractual arrangements for implementation to IUCN and MRC. Under the agreements IUCN is responsible for much of the staffing of the Programme Management Unit, for some regional activities and for the national and provincial offices and activities. MRC is responsible for particular outputs and activities at the regional level, carried out more or less independently, and largely financed through a direct grant from the Royal Netherlands Embassy.

### Government Partners

In each country, the government has appointed a host agency with a National Programme Director (NPD) to direct the MWBP's implementation at the national and provincial levels and to represent the government at regional programme management meetings. The host agencies are:

- **Cambodia** – Ministry of Environment (MoE);
- **Lao PDR** - Living Aquatic Resources Research Centre (LARReC) of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry;
- **Thailand** – Office of Natural Resources and Environment Policy and Planning (ONEP) of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment;
- **Viet Nam** – Viet Nam Environment Protection Agency (VEPA) of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

### Offices and Staffing

There are a total of nine dedicated MWBP offices with about 55 staff:

**The Programme Management Unit (PMU)** is co-located in Vientiane nearby to the MRC Secretariat and hosted by IUCN Lao Country Office. The PMU consists of the following UNDP and IUCN staff – UNDP Team Leader, IUCN Programme Manager and Livelihoods Specialist, Wetland Ecologist, Environmental Economist, Ecosystems Management and M&E Coordinator, Communications and Networks Coordinator,

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Training Coordinator, Programme Administrator and three support staff. The MRC Programme Manager works in the MRC offices.

**The National Programme Offices (NPO)** in each of the four countries are located within the government host agencies. The NPOs have four principal staff headed by the National Programme Coordinator (NPC), National Communications and Training Coordinator (NCTC), Finance and Admin Officer (FAO) and Secretary and support staff. The National Programme Director is in regular contact with the NPC concerning the programme implementation and other government officers work closely with the NPOs. Since IUCN has the contractual responsibility for national and provincial offices, the NPC reports to the IUCN Programme Manager on programmatic and operational issues, in close consultation with the NPD.

**The Provincial Project Offices (PPO)** are located in the demonstration site provinces – Cambodia – Stung Treng province; Lao PDR – Attapeu Province, Thailand – Nakhon Phanom and Sakhon Nakhon Provinces, Viet Nam – Dong Thap and Long An Provinces. Usually they are located in or adjacent to provincial government offices, sometimes in rented accommodation. The PPOs have four principal staff headed by the Project Co-Manager (ProjCo-M), Outreach Officer, Finance and Admin Officer and Secretary and other support staff. In some locations, partner organisations working with the project, such as Care and Health Unlimited, may share the office. In each of the provincial governments there is a Provincial Co-Manager assigned to work with the project and facilitate coordination with the different provincial government agencies. The ProjCo-M reports to the IUCN Programme Manager on programmatic and operational issues, and to the NPD on programmatic issues through the NPC. The NPO and PPO are operated as parallel, rather than hierarchical, operations, with strong coordination between them.

### **Management Committees**

The MWBP has a number of different management committees at the appropriate levels:

**Executive Regional Steering Committee (ERSC)** meets once a year to supervise the progress and approve the workplans and budgets for the whole programme. The ERSC is chaired by the UNDP Resident Representative from Lao PDR and its members consist of the chairpersons and vice-chairpersons of the National Steering Committees (from the host agency and National Mekong Committees respectively), the CEO of MRC, the Asia Regional Director of IUCN, representatives from the GEF, Netherlands, ADB, World Bank, UNEP and the UNDP Team Leader and the two Programme Managers from IUCN and MRC.

**Programme Management Committee (PMC)** meets three or four times per year to manage the MWBP in the four countries by rotation. It is chaired by the host country NPD with the UNDP Resident Representative from Lao PDR as permanent Co-Chair. Its members consist of the NPDs and the representatives from the IUCN and MRC and the programme management team. Observers include representatives from the National Mekong Committees, UNDP country offices and IUCN country offices.

**National Steering Committees (NSC)** meet twice per year to manage the country component and to approve the national and provincial workplans and budgets. The NSC is chaired by a senior member of the host agency with vice chairs from National Mekong Committees. Members consist of representatives of other concerned ministries and agencies. Sometimes a Technical Advisory Group advises the NSC.

**Provincial Management Boards (PMB)** meet twice per year to manage the provincial activities and to agree the provincial workplans and budgets, before these are presented to the NSC. The PMBs are chaired by appropriate representatives of the provincial government and members consist of concerned departments and agencies working in the province.