



Knowledge to Policy and Actions: Building a Water Secure Mekong

SUMERNET Lancang-Mekong Research to Policy Forum

Bangkok, 30 May 2024, 09:00 – 17:00 (Bangkok/ICT)

**Venue: SKY Ballroom, 6th Floor, SKYVIEW Hotel Bangkok (In-person)
and Zoom Meeting ([Online](#))**

Background

SUMERNET 4 All (2018-2024), the fourth phase of the Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET), a regional long-term research network including more than 600 network members aimed to proactively inform strategies and policies to mitigate water insecurity in the Mekong region.

Water insecurity, as defined by SUMERNET, encompasses issues of access, quality and vulnerability to water-related risks, with implications for gender equality, health, ecosystems and livelihoods. SUMERNET's approach in this phase while recognizing the complexities of water governance emphasized on multi-stakeholder engagement, scientific research collaboration and inclusivity to navigate trade-offs and promote sustainable water management practices. Through collaborative efforts, SUMERNET's project grantees and network members under the guidance of the SSC have made strides in documenting vulnerabilities, assessing drivers of water insecurity and fostering community resilience. Yet translating generated knowledge into policy and action remains a pressing challenge. There is a critical need for integrated and transdisciplinary approaches to address water insecurity while prioritising the needs of marginalised communities and promoting equitable water governance for a Water Secure Lancang -Mekong.

This Research to Policy Forum will provide a platform for both researchers and practitioners from the Lancang–Mekong Region to exchange knowledge and experiences on various interconnected issues related to water insecurity. The aim is to assess the current state of knowledge and emerging perspectives that can inform coherent policy-making addressing water insecurity to improve the sustainability and well-being of all in the Lancang–Mekong region. The dialogue among policymakers, researchers, and practitioners to explore how regional policy priorities have taken or have not taken into consideration the criticalities emerging in the Lancang–Mekong area concerning water insecurity. The discussion aims to feature some of the effective knowledge to policy engagement strategies that positively impact water security in the Lancang–Mekong region.

In view of this, SUMERNET Research and Policy forum has identified following objectives:

1. To facilitate knowledge exchange among academics, practitioners, and policymakers in the Lancang–Mekong Region on addressing water insecurity in the region.
2. To identify policy priorities on water insecurity in the Lancang–Mekong Region.
3. To identify relevant knowledge generated from collaborative research and actions and its potential policy applications in the Lancang–Mekong Region.
4. To highlight effective policy engagement strategies for real impacts.

Date and time:

Research and Policy forum: **30 May 2024, 09:00 -17:00 (Bangkok/Indochina Time)**

Mode of participation:

All participants are encouraged to participate onsite but online participation is also possible.

- In-person participation: **SKY Ballroom, 6th Floor, SKYVIEW Hotel Bangkok**
- Online platform will be held through **Zoom Meeting**. Registration link for online participants: [link](#).

Forum participants: 150-180 participants are expected to join the forum including:

- Representatives from the regional cooperation mechanisms e.g., LMC (Lancang Mekong Cooperation) Water Centre, MRC (Mekong River Commission).
- Representatives from the governmental agencies related to water, environment, energy, and agriculture from the Lancang–Mekong Countries
- Representatives from Sida, other donors and development agencies
- Media and other policy influence stakeholders
- Network members of SUMERNET and SUMERNET Young Professional (SYP)
- Other researchers, practitioners and policymakers from the region who are working or have an interest in the nexus approach to address the challenges spanning water, food, energy, and ecosystems and wish to participate in the forum

Agenda

Time/Duration	Session	Who
Overall facilitators: Sushmita Mandal (SUMERNET Research for Policy and Practice Coordinator), Ridhi Saluja (SUMERNET Multi-stakeholder Engagement Coordinator) Online facilitator: Ms. Bouanong Lathouly (SYP Regional Coordinator) Rapporteur – SUMERNET Fellows/Representatives from SUMERNET Youth Network		
08:30 – 09:00 (30 min)	Registration For in-person participants, please <u>use Whova App to check-in</u> to the forum. For online participants, please <u>use the zoom link sent to registered emails</u> . Zoom registration link: to be informed	Unchulee, Bouanong For online participants: please rename your name in Zoom as below: “Full name (Organisation)” Example: “Agus Nugroho (SEI)”
09:00 – 09:30 (30 min)	Session 1: Welcoming and opening remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Surasri Kidtimonton, Secretary-General of the Office of the National Water Resources (ONWR) Thailand, Secretary-General of the Thai National Mekong Committee Secretariat • Dr. Eren Zink, First Secretary, Senior Research Advisor, Embassy of Sweden, Thailand • John Francis, Counsellor, Development, Australian Embassy, Thailand 	Dr. Chayanis Krittasudthacheewa, SUMERNET Programme Director & MTT Programme Director

Time/Duration	Session	Who
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SUMERNET Steering Committee (SSC) Introduction to SUMERNET, Research-Policy Forum and participants 	
09:30 – 10:40 (70 min)	<p>Session 2: <i>Policy Panel: Framing the Challenges: A Regional Perspective</i> <i>This session sets the stage by highlighting the regional context of water insecurity issues.</i></p> <p>Keynote Speech :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theerawat Samphawamana, Director, Planning Division, Mekong River Commission Secretariat (MRCS) Shi Xinyan, Assistant Engineer, Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Water Centre <p>Panelist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representative from ONWR, Thailand (tbc.) Representative from Tonle Sap Authority, Cambodia (tbc.) Dr. Eren Zink, First Secretary, Senior Research Advisor, Embassy of Sweden, Thailand. Dr. John Dore, Lead Specialist, Mekong-Australia Partnership, Water, Energy and Climate (MAP-WEC), Australian Embassy. Dr. Wijarn Simachaya, President, Thailand Environment Institute (TEI). 	Sushmita Mandal, Research Coordinator
10:40 – 11:00 (20 min)	Group photo followed by Coffee Break	
11:00 – 12:10 (70 min)	<p>Session 3 <i>Knowledge Panel: Regional networks and their achievements in addressing water insecurity</i></p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Le Thanh Nhan, Deputy Director, Economy & Environment Partnership for Southeast Asia (EEPSEA) Yada Watanapornmongkol, USAID-WWF Mekong for the Future Dr. Lam Vu Thanh Noi, Southern Institute of Water Resources Research (SIWRR), Vietnam Representative from CSO Network (tbc.) 	Dr Ridhi Saluja (Multi-stakeholder engagement coordinator)
12:10 – 13:30 (80 minutes)	Lunch	
13:30- 14:00 (30 min)	SUMERNET 4 All Marketplace	
14:00 – 15:00 (60 min)	Session 4: <i>Deep Dives into Water Insecurity</i> 3 parallel sessions	Sushmita Mandal
	Parallel Session 4A: Water Scarcity	Albert Salamanca

Time/Duration	Session	Who
	Parallel Session 4B: Floods	Nhan Vo
	Parallel Session 4C: Transboundary Issues	Cynthia McDougall
15:00 – 15:30 (30 min)	Coffee Break	
15:30 – 16:30 (60 min)	<p>Session 5: <i>Plenary Panel on Bridging the Gap: Research to Policy</i></p> <p>Three rapporteurs from previous session report back the pointers from the discussions.</p> <p>Discussants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tong Yuchen, Engineer, Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Water Centre • Boripat Lebel, Unit for Social and Environmental Research (USER), Chiang Mai University, SUMERNET Young Professional • Karen Delfau, International WaterCentre Alumni Network (IWCAN), SUMERNET-MTT GEDSI Advisor • Choulay Mey, SUMERNET Media Partner • Representative from SUMERNET researcher 	Ridhi Saluja, Multistakeholder Engagement Coordinator
16:30 – 16:45 (15 min)	Session 6: Key Takeaways from the Forum	Sushmita Mandal, Research Coordinator
16:45: – 17:00 (15 min)	Session 7: Vote of Thanks and Closing Remarks	Dr. Chayanis Krittasudthacheewa, SUMERNET Programme Director SUMERNET Steering Committee (SSC) member
17:00 – 18:00 (60 min)	Session 8: Networking Session over Coffee	All participants
End of SUMERNET Lancang-Mekong Research to Policy Forum 2024		