JOINT PROJECT ON TRANSBOUNDARY FLOOD AND DROUGHT MANAGEMENT

How the Mekong River Commission fosters transboundary

Khmer Times,, Sept 2023: Throughout the Cambodian province Banteay Meanchey, it was reported that more than 6,000 families have been affected by the severe flood […] It was also reported that after some provinces in Thailand were also hit with floods, the water from those floods began to drain into Banteay Meanchey

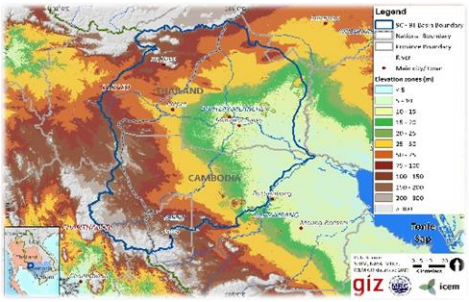

Figure 1: Map of the 9C-9T Joint Project

The so-called **"9C-9T Sub-River Basin"** is a shared river network between Cambodia and Thailand that is part of the Mekong River's hydrological system comprising about 15,000 km2. It is a complex network of small streams and rivers that are hydrologically connected to the Tonle Sap, South-East Asias largest freshwater lake. Floods usually hit the sub-basin between August and October. In October 2023 approximately 14,800 people were seeking refuge in shelters in Banteay Meanchey Province in Cambodia due to flooding. Moreover, 11 schools, 144 roads and several houses have been damaged. Approximately 2,850 ha of crops and more than 100 livestock have been reported lost.

Figure 2: Officials in Cambodia evacuating residents from their flooded home

(Source:kohsantepheapdaily.com.kh)

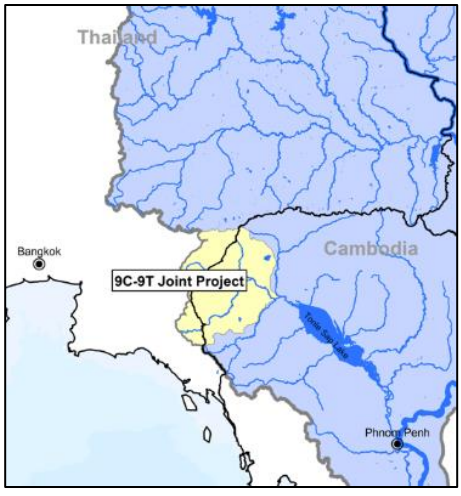

Figure 3: Map of 9C-9T project area between Thailand and Cambodia.

(Source: kohsantepheapdaily.com.kh)

Cambodia and Thailand established a partnership to jointly manage flood and droughts facilitated by the the Mekong River Commission (MRC) with the support from GIZ and funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

" It is called the 9C-9T Joint Project. "

The 9C-9T Joint Project is strengthening joint planning, management, monitoring, and investment. It is unique in its cross-sectoral transboundary nature and strategic focus on ecosystem resilience. With the endorsement of the 9C-9T Flood and Drought Master Plan in December 2021 it set out a dynamic framework for joint investment priorities. The Master Plan comprises a 20-year strategic vision to sustainably manage flood and drought and provide ecosystem services for all.

One Step ahead: Upscaling in the Lower Mekong Basin

Initiation of a new Joint Project in the Sesan, Srepok and

Based on the success of the implementation of the 9C-9T Joint Project and funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Mekong River Commission the approach is about to get scaled up to another sub-basin of the Lower Mekong:

Sesan, Srepok and Sekong sub-basin (3S)

• Comprising three Countries

• A total catchment area of 78,650 km2

• Contributing 20% of all freshwater and sediments of the Mekong River

The 3S sub-basin is crucial for functioning ecosystems and livelihoods. But the region is under pressure from the negative effects from climate change and continuous human interventions like hydropower dams. The livelihoods of almost 3 million people living in the 3S sub-region are at risk, with additional cascading negative impacts for the socio-economic development of the entire Mekong.

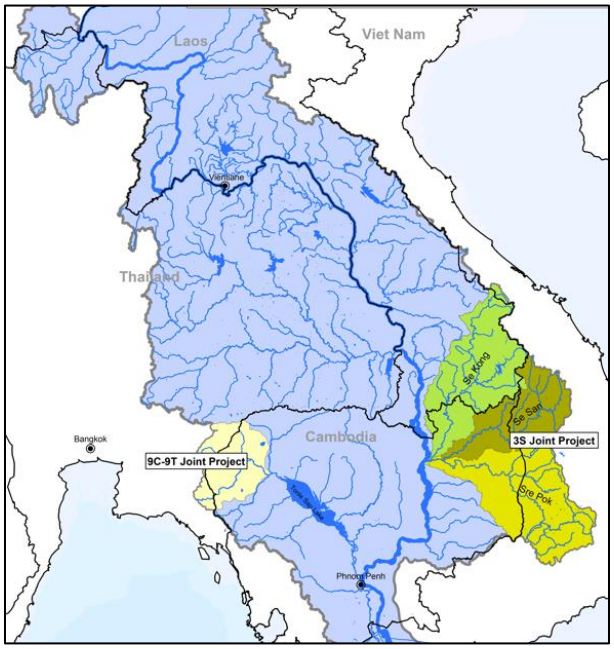

Figure 4: Map of Sekong, Sesan and Srepok (3S) sub-basin of the Mekong River in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam.

Climate change related extreme weather events have already increased over the last 20 years and caused severe floods and droughts. Besides a lack of freshwater supply for households and agriculture of the rural poor, floods have led to riverbank erosion and landslides, leading to failure, and destroyed infrastructure such as dams, roads, and buildings, jeopardizing especially the most vulnerable of the society.

The activity of the 3S Joint Project follows the successful transboundary cooperation in the 9C-9T, aiming to agree on jint priorities for future cooperation of the three countries.

Figure 5: Natural wetland and a house damaged by the dam failure in 2018, Champassak and Attapeu Provinces in Lao