

# Building water sector youth leadership network in the Lancang-Mekong Region



SEI fact sheet

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Project duration: 2023-2024

## Background

In the Mekong-Lancang Region, many projects focus on education, awareness-raising, and capacity-building for youth groups and networks; however, it is often difficult to sustain these efforts beyond volunteerism.

The Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (MLC) has always been interested in young experts, their capacity and their social contribution to the development and environmental work in the region. As early as in the Sanya Declaration of the First MLC Leaders' Meeting in 2016, MLC **encouraged exchanges among the youth to build a think tank network across the six countries.**

Most recently, the joint statement of the Sixth MLC Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 8 June 2021 reaffirmed "MLC's commitment to deepening cooperation in youth to deliver more benefits to the people. Cooperation in education and human resources will be enhanced to help the Mekong-Lancang countries train more science and engineering professionals and a high-caliber and skilled workforce."

## Goals



**Mission:** Build a regional Water Sector Youth Leadership Network (WSYLN) consisting of a new generation of practitioners, researchers, and community leaders for inclusive governance and management of water resources and related issues, by sharing knowledge, best practices, and cooperating on research and other joint actions across the basin and beyond, building on existing youth networks in the Mekong-Lancang Region."



**Vision:** Regional water governance and cooperation under the MLC framework will be enhanced to be more inclusive, through active participation from youth leaders and network members.

## Objectives

- ▶ To design and establish the Water Sector Youth Leadership Network (WSYLN) for the MLC based on the success and lessons learned from existing youth/young professional networks in the water sector in the region.
- ▶ To improve the knowledge and capacity of the youth members/young professionals, so they can meaningfully engage in or take the lead in some of MLC's activities in the future.
- ▶ To enhance the partnership between researchers, practitioners, and policymakers with the water sector in the region through WSYLN activities.
- ▶ To publicize and promote ongoing positive cooperation among the MLC countries related to youth/young professional activities.

## Expected outcomes



Water Sector Youth Leadership Network (WSYLN), including the youth members/young professionals from all MLC countries, is initially established by building on the experience, membership, capacity, and governance of existing youth networks/programs in the region.



Improved leadership, knowledge, and capacity of the members of youth/young professional networks working on water resources and river basin management in the region.

IMAGE (ABOVE) by Frimufilms from Freepik



Strengthened partnerships between researchers, practitioners, and policymakers working in the water sector in the region through cooperation within WSYLN project activities and beyond.










A greater understanding of the public on ongoing cooperation among the MLC countries, through communication products and connecting with youth/young professional network members that highlight both knowledge sharing, telling compelling stories and having engaging dialogues.

## Activities

- ▶ Design and establishment of the WSYLN based on the review of existing youth/young professional networks and programs in the water sector in the region and consultations with stakeholders.
- ▶ Trainings and capacity building to enhance youth leaders/young professionals' knowledge and capacity to meaningfully engage in the future think tank network or take the lead in water resources cooperation in the future.
- ▶ Regional consultation workshops to exchange knowledge and lessons from the activities that they have been engaged in under the MLC or other activities.
- ▶ Promotion of cooperation on youth/young professional activities under the MLC framework.

## Key deliverables

-  Project brochure to promote the project to the public and external audiences
-  Training materials prepared for the youth leaders/young professionals
-  Proceedings of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Consultation Workshops
-  Synthesis report including key findings and recommendations from the review of existing youth networks/programs and the needs of young professionals for active engagement in the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation. The results from this report will be useful for the future design of WSYLN in the MLC region.
-  Final design of Water Sector Youth Leadership Network.
-  Final design of project proposal focusing on the engagement of young professionals in the MLC member countries for further building of the youth leadership network.
-  One short film to reflect the voices of young professionals and highlight key findings and positive cooperation among the MLC countries under this project.

## Gender equality and social equity

The project considers gender equality and social equity throughout its design and implementation. It aims to ensure equal opportunities and benefits for all stakeholders, contributing to achieving SDGs 2, 5, 6, 13, and 17.



## Project implementing agencies:

- ▶ Office of the National Water Resources (ONWR), Thailand
- ▶ Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) Asia Centre
- ▶ Environmental Research Institute Chulalongkorn University (ERIC)
- ▶ Lancang-Mekong Water Resources Cooperation Center (LMC Water Centre)

The project implementing agencies will collaborate closely with other concerned agencies in the MLC countries for the sustainability of youth/young professional engagement in the region.



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