

# Project launch meeting report

Promoting climate-smart water technologies and innovations for sustainable water resources and rice production under climate change in the Lancang-Mekong Region

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SEI report June 2023

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Project launch meeting

**Promoting climate-smart water technologies and innovations for sustainable water resources and rice production under climate change in the Lancang-Mekong Region**

13:00-16:00 Monday 26th June 2023 (ICT, Bangkok Time)  
Pasak room, 8th floor, Office of the National Water Resources (ONWR)  
Juthamard Building, Vibhavadi Rangsit Road, Lak Si, Bangkok



สถาบันวิจัยสภาวะแวดล้อม  
ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
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## Project launch meeting

The meeting was conducted in a hybrid mode, accommodating both onsite participation at ONWR, Thailand, and online participation via the Webex platform.

The objectives of the meeting were multifaceted.

- To have a common understanding of the project objectives, scope, and work plan.
- To present a preliminary review of the state of knowledge of climate-smart water technologies and innovations.
- A significant portion of the meeting was dedicated to discussing the organization of a regional meeting and the potential visitation of demonstration sites in China, Thailand, and Lao PDR.

The meeting's agenda was comprehensive, starting with registration facilitated by Unchulee (SEI) and proceeding with opening remarks by representatives from ONWR, ERIC, and SEI. This was followed by an introduction to all members, both onsite and online. Dr Thanapon Piman (SEI Asia) presented a project overview which included a Q&A session. The meeting also featured presentations on a preliminary review of the state of knowledge of climate-smart water technologies and innovations, with contributions from SEI Asia, IWHR+CRSRI, and LNMC+NUOL.

The latter part of the meeting focused on organizing a regional meeting and visiting demonstration sites, discussing potential dates, months, and locations for these activities in Thailand, China, and Lao PDR. The meeting concluded with steps forward and closing remarks from representatives of SEI and ONWR.



This project launch meeting highlighted the collaborative efforts across various countries and organizations in advancing sustainable agricultural practices in the Lancang-Mekong Region amid the challenges of climate change.

The meeting notes on comprehensive discussion during the three sessions.

### **Session 1: Project overview**

Led by ONWR, the session stressed the practical application of technologies for farmers, aiming to broaden the scope beyond alternative wetland paddy methods. Key focuses included identifying drought-prone provinces, engaging youth through farmers' organizations, and considering gender contributions in the field. Ms. Chawee Wongprasttiporn from ONWR and the President of Thai Society Agri-engineering emphasized the need to clarify the concept, solution area, and rice variety. Suggestions included focusing on drought-prone areas like northeastern Thailand, using real farms for plot sites, and conducting comprehensive research on irrigation systems and drainage.



The importance of recording gender contributions, considering ploughing, sowing, and harvest timing, and making comparative plots was highlighted. Discussions also covered government policies on rice production, the potential of northeast Thailand, and the need for team structuring and literature review.

### **Session 2: Preliminary results**

ONWR discussed revisiting the review method and policy results. Challenges in implementing AWD in the rainfed Mekong region were noted, with an emphasis on identifying the project's main concerns. A private tech agency suggested examining the disadvantages of existing technologies and optimizing soil analysis, machine linkage, and fertilizer application. The Royal Irrigation Department underscored the need for climate-smart technology, and Charlie Mahidol stressed the importance of considering soil properties and rice varieties.

Dr Winai pointed out the complications of AWD implementation in rainfed areas. Discussions included learning from past project successes and failures, sharing field stories, and focusing on smart technologies relevant to climate change. ONWR recommended methods for reducing water usage, establishing criteria for plot site selection, and simplifying water footprint calculations.

### **Session 3: Regional meeting**

ONWR detailed the pilot selection process and technology focus on climate-smart agriculture. The scope of the meeting included work plan sharing, stakeholder involvement, and site selection based on the NAP report. Ms. Chawee advised on the importance of updating partners through printable reports and creating an inception report. Niall suggested minimizing reporting to conserve budget and focus on research.

The Chairwoman and Dr Dares from Thai Society Agri-engineering discussed site selection criteria and the creation of an online database for technology collection. Involvement of farmers' organizations and the potential of Nakhon Ratchasima as a site were also mentioned.

In summary, the meeting highlighted the importance of practical technology application, comprehensive research, cross-sector collaboration, and a focus on environmental and societal aspects for sustainable water resources and rice production amidst climate change challenges.



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