



ASIA-EUROPE MEETING

ASEM SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE

CONCEPT PAPER

The 6th ASEM Seminar on Water Resources Management and Sustainable Development
“Integrated Water Resources Management for Sustainable Development”
(25 – 26 October 2017, Pakse, Champasak Province, Lao PDR)

Background:

To follow up the outcome of the 5th ASEM Sustainable Development Dialogue Mekong - Danube Cooperation Initiative Water Nexus Agenda for the Third ASEM Decade. Held in RUSE, Bulgaria 1-3 December 2016.

To increase the recognition by the international community of the urgency of water resources management incorporated in sustainable development and as a follow up to our leader's commitments. In this regard, the upcoming 11th ASEM Leaders Meeting reaffirmed their engagement to address emerging challenges through trans-boundary cooperation and collective efforts, with the view to promoting sustainable water management and flood risk control and to ensuring access to safe drinking water and sanitation. ASEM leaders committed to stimulate tangible cooperation between Europe and Asia in water-related issues, reaffirming ASEM's engagement to concrete bi-regional cooperation between the Mekong and Danube regions in order to transform the shared challenges related to food, water and energy security into opportunities for growth and sustainable development. In this context, Lao PDR proposes to host the 6th Integrated Water Resources management for Sustainable Development.

At the present, development is rapidly increased in many countries. Development on water sector is also one priority of ASEM countries especially clean energy, irrigation, industry, agriculture, livestock, fishery, sanitation, etc. Therefore, we need to manage the water resources ensuring to sustainable development.

The utilization of water for socio-economic development in Asia and Europe particularly in Mekong basin and Danube river continue to increase, which likely to face water scarcity and generate impacts on water quality, human and environment in the future. At the same time, natural disasters such as flood and drought will be more exacerbated and frequent because of climate change. Therefore it is necessary to increase role, responsibilities, and rice capacity of organizations involving in water resource management. Development of plans and utilization of tools appropriately in planning are needed to guide both public and private sector investment, to create a balance between economic development and environmental protection with aim to reduce poverty and accomplish socio-economic development goals.

The Government agencies, academia, international organizations, general public and private sectors need greater awareness and in - depth understanding of the importance of water resources, priority areas in water resource management and sustainable development , the Government, direction and decisions. Mechanisms are needed to coordinate activities and to resolve disputes on water use and other matters to ensure equity and sustainability.