

**MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT**

**WATER MANAGEMENT REFORM IN VIET NAM**  
**(New thinking on Water governance Conference)**

Le Bac Huynh, Phi Quoc Hao

Department of Water Resources Management

- ❑ CONTEXT
- ❑ INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT
- ❑ OVERVIEW OF WATER RESOURCE
- ❑ RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS
- ❑ CHALLENGES
- ❑ THE WAY FORWARD

# THE CONTEXT FOR WATER REFORM

- Water resources have long been recognised as a critical factor for the development of VN
- In the late 1990s, the process of Public Administration Reform and the emergence of the “resource management” concept coincided
- The results were:
  - Law on Water Resources
  - The creation of a new Ministry (MoNRE) as the water resource manager
  - The creation of the National Water Resources Council for inter-ministerial coordination



# Traditional planning v IWRM RB Planning

**Traditional water  
resource planning**

The water  
balance of the  
basin – now  
and future

**FOCUS**

**IWRM approach**

The community's  
priority issues and  
needs - resolve  
priority issues  
including water  
quantity, quality and  
the aquatic  
environment

# INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

- MoNRE was created in order to:
  - *separate the function of state unified management of natural resources from the function of state management of the exploitation and use of natural resources for economic and technical purposes ...*
- This also makes it possible to improve the coordination between water management and the management of the environment (including water quality) and land resources, and to achieve IWRM
- It also allows the operational agencies to progressively focus on their service accountabilities and to seek out efficiencies to provide better, lower cost services to their customers.

## ***State management on water resources :***

1. Legal documents
2. Strategies, River Basin Planning
3. Water Inventory & Assessment; Water Database and Information System
4. Water Allocation & Regulation Mechanism
5. Mitigation and protection against water pollution and exhaustion
6. Water Licensing and Sanction
7. International Cooperation Improvement
8. National Water Resources Council
9. Viet Nam National Mekong Committee



# Main River basin

## WR Overview

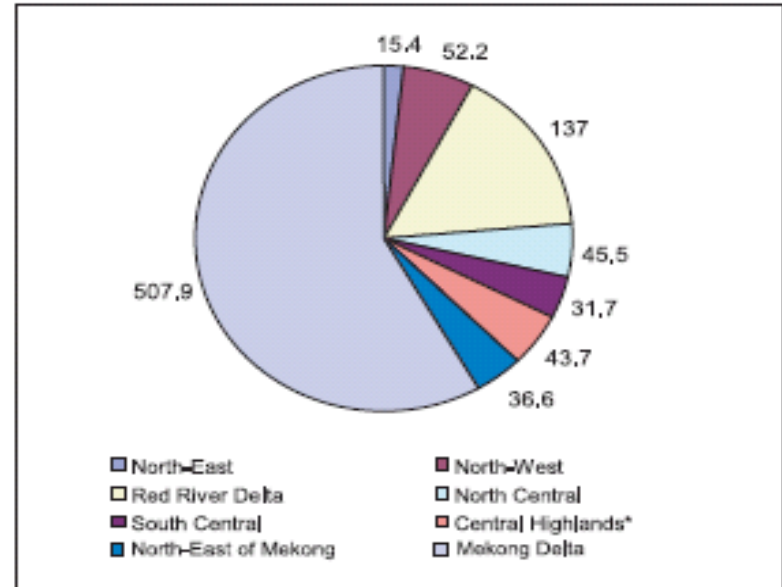
Viet Nam's water resources vary over time and space

- 60% originates from out side



- Viet Nam is generally a high rainfall country (1960mm/year) – but it is not “water rich”.
- It suffers from long dry seasons and nearly two thirds of its water is concentrated in the far south in the Mekong delta.

Fig 1. River run-off per Region (bill.m3/year)



Source: National Water Sector profile, 2002.



# RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

- One of the key initiatives was the finalisation of the NWR Strategy in 2006.
- The NWRS indicates how the Government plans to achieve goals and objectives in the water sector.
- The NWRS is intended to help to coordinate and guide the strategies, plans and activities of water-related ministries, provincial governments, and river basin organisations.
- Water sector review: review the status and issue of water sector, recommend the solution for sector improvement and reform

... recent achievements continued

- Decree 149 provides the framework on licensing of water resources exploration, exploitation and use, and wastewater in Viet Nam
- Decree 34 on administrative sanction of violation in water field in Vietnam
- Decree 162 on collection and management water resources data and information



- Decree 120 provides and assign the framework and power for river basin management and plan
- Decree 112 provides the framework for protection, management and integrated exploitation of the natural resources and environments of reservoirs in VN
- National Action Plan on WR and desertization prevention

... recent achievements continued





# CHALLENGES

- **Socio-economic**
- **Challenges**

- Population growth, Urbanisation
- Economic growth targets
- Democratisation and decentralisation
- Private sector participation

Leading to increasing water demand



- **Water Resource Challenges**

- Water quantity to meet all demands
- Water pollution
- Degradation of wetlands and estuaries, coastal areas, water catchments and river banks
- Draught, flood, land-slide
- Managing and preventing damage caused by water (particularly flooding)
- Climate change
- Impact from upstream country to Vietnam' WR





- **Governance Challenges**

- Law on Water resources revision and check other laws for overlap or conflict)
- Institutional arrangements (clarify mandates for all, at all administrative levels, National framework for water sector not really follow up with social, economic changes)
- Capacity building and Awareness raising at all levels
- International cooperation strengthen
- Financing structures (more efficient and strategic use of available finances)



# THE WAY FORWARD

- Future solutions:
  - New water Law: more comprehensive
  - NTP development: *Establish and support the framework, structures and coordination measures necessary to facilitate the effective development for Water Sector*
  - New National WR strategy to 2025 and toward 2050
  - Improve policy and planning at international, national, river basin, provincial / locals levels,
  - Establish regulatory frameworks to define clear rights and responsibilities including licensing and improved assessment procedures,

# THE WAY FORWARD

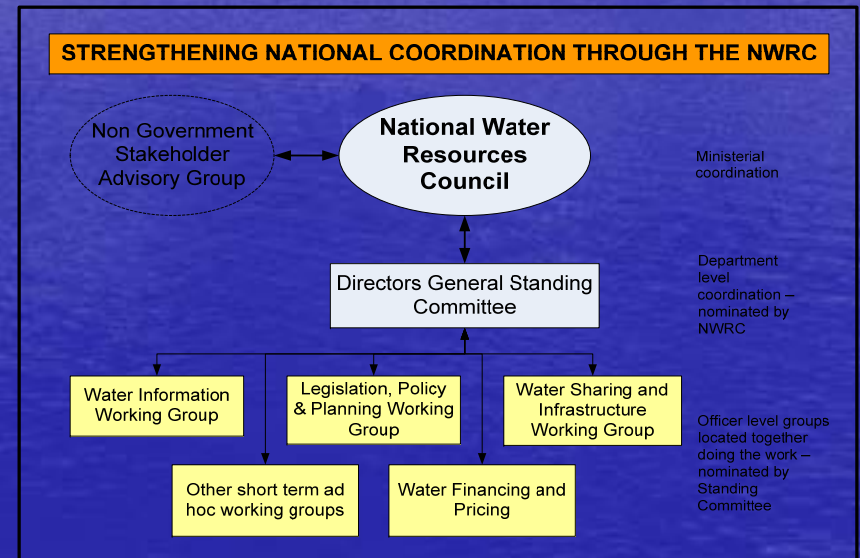
- Future solutions:
  - Water resources planning for nation-wide and river basin level (Decree 120)
  - Establish regulatory frameworks to define clear rights and responsibilities including licensing and improved assessment procedures,
  - Encourage best practice, water use efficiency, and efficient water service provision, economic tool
  - engage the community participatory mechanisms in water management
  - Formulation economic tools
  - Development cross-sector cooperation mechanism



...The way forwards continued

- Planning and coordination
  - *International Cooperation*
  - *National Planning and coordination*
  - *River basin planning*

River basin planning is an important aspect of future water management under this Strategy. Resolution of competing interests or conflicts over access to water, particularly in dry times, is best addressed on a river basin basis. Only at that level can the competing interests of the environment, water for living, towns, irrigation, industry, power generation, etc be assessed in terms of the highly variable natural flow regimes of each river source.





...The way forwards continued

– *Planning of land use activities that affect water*

- **Licensing**

A licence will be a legal right for individuals and organisations to exploit and use water, or to discharge wastewater at a specific location, for a specific purpose, and under certain conditions.

You will not need to apply for a licence if:

- you get your water from an Irrigation Management Company, a Water Supply Company, or any other local water authority
- you use rainwater in fish ponds or natural lakes or ponds that are contained entirely within the a single legal landholding
- you exploit surface water or groundwater for household or small scale use

- Economic and financial measures

**Water Pricing Principles**

- **There should be full-cost pricing complemented by targeted and transparent subsidies.**
- **Poverty should never be a barrier to access to a basic supply of clean water and to effective sanitation.**
- **Full cost water pricing policies must account for, as a minimum, the direct costs of water supply administration, operation and maintenance, capital costs and refurbishment costs based on an agreed infrastructure management plan.**
- **Full cost pricing should also consider the cost of state water resource management activities that benefit the water user and the externality costs of water service provision.**
- **Water pricing, and the use of any subsidies, should be transparent and also equitable between groups of users in similar circumstances.**
- **In general, subsidies should be reduced over time.**



Thank You very much  
for your attention !