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CNR SIGNS A CONTRACT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF LAO PDR TO SET UP A COORDINATION AND MONITORING CENTER TO MANAGE THE MEKONG RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES

Elisabeth AYRAULT, Chairwoman and CEO of CNR and Dr Chansaveng BOUNGNONG, Director General of the Department of Energy Policy Planning (DEPP) at the Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM) signed a contract today in Vientiane to carry out a feasibility study for the implementation of a Coordination and Monitoring Center (CMC) for Hydroelectric Power Projects (HPP) development on the Mekong.

CNR, which has assisted the Government of Laos (GoL) in the sustainable development of hydroelectricity on the Mekong for nearly 25 years, will perform this feasibility study over 18 months, from January 2018 to June 2019. The study will allow defining the objectives, needs and future operation of the CMC. The feasibility study is mainly financed by the French Development Agency (AFD).

The CMC, a governmental body essential for the coordination and joint management of HPP development on the Mekong mainstream and its main tributaries

The CMC is part of “run-of-the-river” HPPs developed by different Independent Power Producers (IPP) on the Lao stretch of the Mekong River. The objective of this future coordination and monitoring centre is to provide a global overview and the information needed for the coordinated management of HPPs along the Mekong. In addition, it aims at developing and sharing reference databases regarding all water uses: hydroelectricity power production, navigation, irrigation, tourism, flood and low water forecasting, sediment management, the protection of biodiversity, fish migration monitoring, etc.

Thus the future centre fulfils the stipulations of the new Lao laws on both water and electricity that privilege integrated water resource management at the scale of the basin, coordinated from upstream to downstream between independent operators of different HPPs.

The CMC’s scope of action covers 5 main topics:

- Governance and capacity building,
- Dialogue and coordinated management,
- Water resources management and climate change adaptation,
- Environmental and social management,
- Dam management and safety.

A project embedded in the MoU signed in 2015 between GoL and CNR

The CMC project is being carried out in close collaboration between CNR and MEM. It concretises the MoU signed by CNR in 2015 to provide and share with Lao PDR CNR unique knowhow in run-of-river hydroelectric and river engineering, in the framework of the country’s integrated water resources management for the sustainable development of the Mekong. This MoU includes providing advice, technical assistance to projects and training, and building capacities.

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PRESS RELEASE

CNR has been working in the Mekong basin for nearly 25 years

Present for nearly 25 years in the Mekong Basin, CNR Engineering is now assisting Laos in the development of several run-of-the-river hydropower projects on the Mekong mainstream.

In particular, CNR is providing its knowhow in the design and operation of HPPs.

Thus, in 1993, CNR carried out the Mekong Master Plan in order to identify Mekong's potential for run-of-the-river HPPs development. This study is still used as a reference for all the projects planned or being developed in Laos on the Mekong mainstream.

Then, in 2009, on behalf of GoL, CNR Engineering carried out the hydraulic optimisation study of the cascade of five HPPs planned upstream Vientiane.

At the request of MEM, CNR is also providing its expertise in run-of-the-river energy management to assist the lead company of Xayaburi project, the first out of five HPPs planned upstream Vientiane, whose construction began in November 2012. This mission follows the independent peer-review, CNR performed for Xayaburi project on hydrology, navigation, sediment transport, and design improvements proposed by the developer.

MEM also entrusted CNR from 2014 to 2017 with the mission of reviewing the feasibility studies of the 4 hydropower projects of Pak Beng, Sanakham, Pak Lay and Phou Ngoy. This mission, covering hydrology, safety, navigation and sediment transport, has just been completed.

Lastly, since beginning of 2017, CNR has been working as Contract Engineer on behalf of GoL for Don Sahong HPP which is now under construction.

CNR

CNR is France's leading producer of 100% renewable electricity (water, wind, sun) and the holder of the multipurpose concession of the Rhone from the Swiss border to the Mediterranean Sea: hydroelectricity production, the deployment of navigation and port sites, irrigation for agriculture use. A joint stock company in the public interest, CNR adheres to a unique industrial model structured around territorial development and its original system of distributing the income generated locally with its stakeholders. For more than 10 years, its Missions in the General Interest, drawn up in consultation with the stakeholders, have strengthened this close link with the territories through actions relating to water resources and biodiversity, economic and tourism development, and more. It also participates actively in a vast environmental programme to restore the oxbows and alluvial flood plains of the bypassed sections of the Rhone. An integrated actor at the leading edge of energy trades that it constantly improves through its policy of active innovation, CNR offers its services to manage and sell intermittent energies and its engineering knowhow to clients in France and in thirty other countries. It has a laboratory – CACOH – for the analysis and physical modelling of hydraulic structures. It also works on smart grids, energy storage and the development of sustainable electric mobility.

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