

ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR APPLICATION

On behalf of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) the University of Siegen in cooperation with the Technische Universität Dresden, the Thuy Loi University and the Vietnamese-German University are organising the

International Germany Alumni Seminar 2022-2023 **Multinational cooperation on the River Mekong for sustainable development**

The seminar is organised in two parts:

Part 1: A series of six online training sessions in 2022

Part 2: A seven days training seminar in presence in March / April 2023

at Ho Chi Minh City, Thuy Loi University and Vietnamese-German University

followed by the participation in the

4th Mekong River Commission Summit (MRCS) 2023

April 2023 in Vientiane, Lao PDR

The four-yearly MRC Summit of Heads of Government is the highest political forum of the MRC whereby outcomes of cooperation are assessed, and directions set for the following four years.

Seminar aims

The lower Mekong catchment area provides an important livelihood for its more than 60 million inhabitants. More than two-thirds of the population in parts of Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam live directly from agriculture and fishing and are thus completely dependent on the water resources of the Mekong River. Especially for the people living directly on the banks, the river has a special significance in securing their nutritional basis. The river with its potential for transport, tourism and energy production is an important prerequisite for the socio-economic development of all riparian states. As demands on natural resources continue to grow, the system is coming under increasing pressure, which can only be countered with a well-thought-out management system.

Basis for the seminar are the following hypotheses:

- The Mekong River is of great importance for the economic development of the region.
- Currently, this river is facing great challenges as countries in the upper Mekong catchment are focusing on hydropower development, seriously affecting the sustainable development of the lower Mekong catchment region.
- The role of the MRC in the management of the Mekong can be significantly strengthened compared to other river basin organizations in Germany and Europe to provide effective solutions for sustainable management of the Mekong.
- The role of climate change impacts on the security of water supply in quality and quantity is significant.
- The socio-economic and -ecological impacts of intensified and regionally oriented management of the Mekong will have a major impact, especially in the middle and lower parts.

The online phase (2022) will prepare the Alumni to update on latest applied research developments and project activities in the Mekong area. Participants will prepare recommendations and a form of

presentation for the MRC Summit. Experts from Germany, Vietnam and other Mekong riparian states will present current research projects and show possible solutions for the complex situation. These issues will be further elaborated at the seminar to be held in presence (2023) a week before the 4th MRC summit 2023. Excursions to the provinces of the Mekong Delta are foreseen to get direct contact to the situation on site. Based on the experiences gained, the group of Alumni will develop recommendations for the sustainable and safe management of the Mekong. These recommendations will serve as a basis for the development of new co-operations with German universities and will also include recommendations for participants of the Mekong River Commission Summit. Subsequently, the participation in the 4th Summit of the Mekong River Commission 2023 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, is planned.

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) offers the participation in the seminar and the summit in the framework of the programme Alumni Special Projects (www.daad.de/alumni-special-projects). The International Germany Alumni Seminar is jointly organized by University of Siegen, Technische Universität Dresden, Thuy Loi University and Vietnamese-German University. The costs will be mainly covered by funds from the DAAD provided by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Tentative Programme

2022: The online part of the International Germany Alumni training seminar consists of:

- Six online training sessions, where each session takes around 3 hours. Two sessions at a time will be combined into a two-day event. In total, there will be three 2-day events in the period from April to November 2022. At least one session will be developed as a joint session with two further MRC Summit related alumni seminars of ITT Cologne and TU Dresden.

2023: The presence part of the International Germany Alumni training seminar consists of three components:

- 5 days of seminar training in Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam), organized by the Universities
- 2 days excursions in the Mekong Delta (Vietnam), organized by the Universities, and
- 3 days participation in the 4th Mekong River Commission Summit 2023 in Vientiane (Lao PDR), organized by the DAAD Alumni Team

The exact dates for the 4th MRC Summit are not yet fixed, below you will find the preliminary schedule

9 days before MRC Summit:	Arrival in Ho-Chi-Minh City, Vietnam
Seminar days 1 - 7:	5-day training seminar in Ho Chi Minh City plus 2-day excursions
1 day before MRC Summit:	Travel from Ho Chi Minh City to Vientiane, Lao PDR
4 days in April 2023:	Participation in the 4 th MRC Summit 2023
1 day after the MRC Summit:	Departure of participants from Vientiane, Lao PDR

The final programme of the training seminar in Ho Chi Minh City will be published once all applications have been reviewed. It is necessary to participate in the whole programme: online training seminar, presence training seminar, excursions, 4th MRCS and social programme.

Eligibility criteria for participation

This seminar targets Alumni of German universities

- from the riparian states of River Mekong listed on the DAC list of the Global South¹,
- who carried out research or studied in Germany for at least 3 months, and
- who are currently living and working in their home countries.

¹ Myanmar, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam

You should have

- (1) a **proven background in academic fields relevant to the topics** of water resources management, water security, watershed monitoring, and political activities related to water, natural resource management and environmental studies,
- (2) **professional experience and personal interest in one of the following areas**: research, education, NGOs, government agencies, policy making, project development, local communities, and related stakeholders,
- (3) the **requirements to act as a potential change agent (multiplier)** who will present the training seminar results in your home country and thus disseminate the acquired knowledge as well as develop ideas and projects for regional implementation,
- (4) **adequate language proficiency** which is essential to actively participate in the workshops and discussions as the seminar will be held **in English**.

Eligibility for repeated attendances at Alumni Special Projects:

Participations in Alumni Special Projects are limited to a maximum of 2 participations within 4 years. The year of participation, not the year of application, is decisive for the calculation. (This rule does not apply for attendance in a completely digital Alumni Special Project).

Cost coverage

- Internet costs will be reimbursed partly in form of a lump sum
- International Ticket to Tan Son Nhat airport (Ho Chi Minh City) and back from Wattay International airport (Vientiane) – lowest possible economy class airfare, max. 500 Euro from outside Vietnam, max. 200 Euro from inside Vietnam
- Travel health insurance (max. 30 Euro) and visa costs
- Accommodation and meals during the stay in Ho Chi Minh City during the training seminar 2023
- Transport on excursions
- Transport from Ho Chi Minh City to Vientiane
- Accommodation and partial living expenses during the stay in Vientiane
- Transport from the hotel in Vientiane to the departure airport

Please note: You must cover by yourself any other costs, such as transport costs between your place of residence and “your” airport, and travel costs for visa application in your country of residence. Please keep in mind that living expenses are only covered partly during your stay in Ho Chi Minh City and Vientiane.

Extensions of stays before the seminar/after the MRC Summit 2023 are only possible up to 5 working days and upon submission of a comparison of flight ticket prices before you start your travel. You will have to pay any difference between the flight ticket prices for the official arrival/return date (see below) and your actual date of travel before/after your extension. You must also cover by yourself any additional travel costs, subsistence costs and other additional costs of your extension.

Extensions beyond 5 days must be of an official nature which you need to justify, e.g. through visits to universities, organizations, institutions, companies etc. and with details about contact persons and a day-to-day programme of activities. These extensions must be approved by DAAD before you start your travel. Decisions by DAAD are made on an individual nature based upon your justification, your programme etc.

For any extension, you need to organize your accommodation by yourself, and, very important, you have to make sure to have a valid health insurance for the extension days.

It is essential that you participate at all online sessions 2022 and from the first day of the training seminar in presence 2023 in Ho Chi Minh City to the last day of the 4th MRC Summit in Vientiane.

Application procedure

Your application (in English language) should emphasize your motivation and personal/professional benefit of your participation. You should illustrate how you are planning to imply the gained knowledge and what possible stakeholders for collaboration you may identify for your professional career.

Your application (in English language) must include the following documents in one single pdf file:

- A filled out application form: The form is available on <https://gawn.alumniportal.com/expert-meetings-at-trade-fairs-and-conferences/2022-vietnamlaos-mekong-river.html>
- A short CV with photograph and relevant documentation of alumni status.
- An abstract related to water management at Mekong River with reference to the participants' home country and self-involvement in the field (abstracts must not exceed one page; please use font type "Arial", font size 11, 1.5 line spacing).
- A short description of your present duties/position and your personal professional goals, indicating your envisaged field of activities and duty level.
- An overview on seminars, workshops or conferences visited in Germany after finishing your studies in Germany.

The PDF-document should be named 'Last name_First name_country' (e.g. Meyer_Max_Germany).

Please send your application, **as one single pdf file**, latest by **March 04th, 2022**, 12 p.m. CET, via email to: Alumni-Seminar-HCM@tu-dresden.de

Please note: Completeness of personal data mentioned in the online application form will affect your eligibility as a participant.

After the review by the local organizing committee and DAAD, the invited participants will be notified -in March 2022.

Special Note

Given the world-wide pandemic and the status of uncertainty of its development, DAAD will decide in due course to replace the seminar in presence in 2023 by an online version. This will imply modifications of the programme which will be announced to participants.

For further questions, please contact Alumni-Seminar-HCM@tu-dresden.de

Dresden/Siegen, 22nd December 2021