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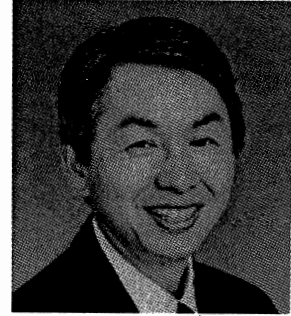
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Preface



Water management for international rivers that run through many countries has sometimes brought about international problems. Therefore, reliable information is quite important for mutual understanding in related countries. The Mekong River is one of such international rivers and it flows down from China to Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. Millions of people live in the Mekong River Basin and the influences of water management, such as dam constructions, are becoming quite serious in this region. However, the environmental information along the River Basin is not well exchanged among the countries because of several reasons; lack of information is one of them.

In Cambodia, there is very little information about its forest because of their unfortunate history, although the knowledge about forest characteristics, especially on their hydrological functions, is quite important for watershed management.

We, as researchers having experiences on watershed management in Japan, started two research projects related to the Mekong River Basin. The one is the five year project on "Development of Simulation Models for Hydrology and Water Resources in the Mekong River Basin" financed by the RR2002 of Ministry of Education, Culture Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) started in 2002 and the other is the five year project on "Assessment of Water Circulation Dynamics in the Mekong River Basin" of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in 2003.

Under these circumstances, Forestry and Forest Products Research Institute (FFPRI, Japan) and Forestry Administration (previously Department of Forestry and Wildlife, under Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, Cambodia) started the joint research project "Changes of Water Circulation in the Mekong River Basin (CWCM)" in 2002. Japanese researchers in FFPRI, Kyoto University, Nagoya University, Tokyo University as well as Tsukuba University are involved and they have conducted field studies in the Mekong River Basin. The permanent study fields have been set up and the soils, ground water level, stem flow, rainfall and other related data have been continuously measured in Cambodia since 2002. The weather observation tower 60 meters high was constructed in October 2003 in evergreen forest area in Kompong Thom Province and it is collecting three dimensional forest environment data along the tower.

The Cambodian researches are invited to Japan every year as the counterparts for the project and have chances to visit research fields as well as related institutions. These activities have already brought out many results for this region.

It was our great pleasure and honor to have the Workshop on "Forest Watershed 2004" based on the joint project between Cambodia and Japan. Although the Workshop was

held on the same day of the coronation of the King Norodom Sihamoni, there were more than 60 participants from the Forest and Wildlife Science Research Institute (FWSRI), Universities and other institutions in Cambodia. It was a testimony of their concerns on this project.

We would like to give our special thanks to the JICA project "Project-type Technical Cooperation for Capacity Building for the Forestry Sector" who allowed us to use their training room and equipments in the Training Center for Forestry and Wildlife for this workshop. We should also remember the day as our memorial day for celebrating our new relationships with other sectors. We do hope that the relationship between Cambodia and Japan makes great progress in this field.

Haruo Sawada

Japanese Leader for the CWCM project

Principal Research Coordinator

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