



Opening remarks for the ESV Training Workshop

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Good Morning, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great pleasure to be part of this training workshop on Ecosystem Services Valuation, jointly organized by USAID Mekong ARCC and ADB GMS Core Environment Program. In addition to this training today, the partnership between these two programs have been the backbone of Climate Change Adaptation Roundtable that has been promoting sharing of experiences, dialogue, and joint action on adaptation.

The roundtable meetings are now established as a regular platform for development organizations with active adaptation programs in the GMS to collectively synthesize and share knowledge. The roundtable meeting partners continued to collectively engage in ongoing dialogues including for the Fourth GMS Environment Ministers' Meeting (EMM4) held early this year, where they raised the awareness of high level officials on the benefits of natural capital and means to mainstream it in development planning, including ecosystem based adaptation to climate change.

Recently, a joint knowledge product has been initiated by the Roundtable partners, on watershed and landscape-scale vulnerability and adaptation assessment guidelines. During the last roundtable meeting – the Ninth – held on 2 Nov, partners reviewed draft chapters of the knowledge product, which will be jointly produced. The guidelines consist of best practice guidance supported by case studies. We will take this opportunity today to share brief introduction and the progress on the guidelines.

Back to the important topic of our training today: Ecosystem Services Valuation (ESV). GMS countries are challenged by measures to integrate natural capital considerations in development planning and decision making. Leaders of GMS countries recognize the importance of maintaining and restoring the subregion's natural capital and the need to take proactive measures in this regard. However GMS governments, not unlike others, face complex challenges — mainly due to inadequate planning and regulatory frameworks, insufficient technical and human resources capacity, fragmented institutional structures, and the lack of financing. These factors individually or in combination weaken strategic planning and decision making with regard to natural capital. Foremost is the persistent challenge of internalizing the value of ecosystem goods and services in development planning and decision making. The Ecosystem Valuation Estimator will be a useful online tool for policy makers to promote recognition and incorporation of key natural capital values in development plans and investments decisions.

I am confident this training on the ecosystem valuation will be relevant to all of us and rich in substance. This is an opportunity for all of us here to learn from each other.

I wish everyone a very fruitful and successful training today.

Thank you very much.