

**SUMMARY REPORT
OF THE MEETING OF THE COLLABORATIVE NETWORK ON
INDIGENOUS MEDICINE IN THE MEKONG BASIN
7 September 2012
Nonthaburi, Thailand**

INTRODUCTION

1. **The Meeting of the Collaborative Network on Indigenous Medicine in the Mekong Basin** was held on 7 September 2012 at the Department for Development of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine (DTAM), Ministry of Public Health, Thailand. The Meeting was a part of the activities of **the Fifth Meeting on Indigenous Medicine in the Mekong Basin** organized by DTAM in collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine, Mahasarakham Province, Mahasarakham Province, Chao Phraya Abhaibhubejhr Hospital held during 5-7 September 2012 in Nonthaburi, Thailand. The Meeting was attended by delegates from the Kingdom of Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and the Kingdom of Thailand. The list of delegates and observers is attached as ANNEX 1.

AGENDA ITEM 1: ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON, CO-CHAIRPERSON AND APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEUR

2. Dr. Pramote Stienrut, Director of the Institute of Thai Traditional Medicine (ITTM), DTAM was elected as the chairperson of the meeting, while Professor Zheng Jin, Secretary of Yunnan Administration of TCM was elected as the co-chairperson and Dr. Anchalee Chutaputti, Deputy Director of ITTM, was appointed the rapporteur.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA

3. The Meeting adopted the proposed agenda, which appears as ANNEX 2.

AGENDA ITEM 3: BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT

4. The rapporteur provided information on business arrangement for the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 4: THE OFFICIAL ESTABLISHMENT OF "THE COLLABORATIVE NETWORK OF INDIGENOUS MEDICINE IN THE MEKONG RIVER BASIN"

5. The Meeting agreed on the benefit of forming a network comprising of 6 countries of the Mekong Basin; namely, Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam to collaborate in the area of indigenous medicine. The Meeting therefore agreed upon the official establishment of **"The Collaborative Network of Indigenous Medicine in the Mekong Basin"**.

6. It was suggested by China that the government office of each country should play a role to organize the meeting and form the platform for the folk healers to exchange their experience and document their knowledge. In addition, each country that holds the meeting should also organize the exposition and exhibition of traditional knowledge and medicinal plants used by folk healers. Member countries should help with fund raising for organizing the Network activities including biannual meeting, research, and capacity building.

7. In order to facilitate the cooperation and communication of the Collaborative Network Member countries therefore designated the following government offices to be the **"Point of Contact"** in their countries; namely: -

- 7.1 **The Kingdom of Cambodia** –National Center of Traditional Medicine, Ministry of Health
- 7.2 **The People’s Republic of China** – Yunnan Provincial Administration for Traditional Chinese Medicine
- 7.3 **The Lao’s People Democratic Republic** – Food and Drug Department, Ministry of Health
- 7.4 **The Republic of the Union of Myanmar** –Department of Traditional Medicine, Ministry of Health
- 7.5 **The Kingdom of Thailand** –Department for Development of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine, Ministry of Public Health
- 7.6 **The Socialist Republic of Vietnam** –Department of Traditional Medicine, Ministry of Health

8. Members of the Collaborative Network of Indigenous Medicine in the Mekong Basin should comprise of the head of delegates and focal point/point of contact from each member country, and chairperson of the Academic Committee of the Network and Chairperson of the Core Committee on the Protection of Traditional Medical Knowledge and Medicinal Genetic Resources. The chair of the Collaborative Network is the host of the next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 5: FORMULATION OF THE FRAMEWOR OF COLLABORATION

9. The Meeting discussed on the draft framework of cooperation and made some suggestions and amendments on the areas and forms of cooperation and agreed upon the following areas of indigenous medicine development and activities under each area of cooperation; namely: -

9.1 Exchange of information and experience on indigenous medicine

Action 1 – Organize biannual meeting of the Collaborative Network, the host country shall be rotated among member countries. However, meeting on particular issue of interest may be organized in between and any country interested will be encouraged to participate.

Action 2 – Prepare document on regulatory measures that each country utilizes to recognize the value of indigenous medicine and to promote the role of folk healers in community health care. Regarding this activity, each country will provide information on the regulatory measures in their country report to be compiled in the Proceedings of the Meeting.

9.2 Joint research in indigenous medicine

Action 1 – “*Academic Committee of the Network*” should be set up to carry out fund raising for research proposals from domestic and international funding agencies and set up research groups on specific topics

Action 2 – Jointly formulate research proposal and conduct joint research project in the area of indigenous medicine of communities along the Mekong River

Action 3 – Facilitate the exchange and collaboration of experts in the areas of ethnomedicine, ethnobotany, ethnopharmacology, medical anthropology among member countries

9.3 Protection of traditional medical knowledge and medicinal genetic resources

Action 1 – Set up “*Core Committee on the Protection of Traditional Medical Knowledge and Medicinal Genetic Resources*”

Action 2 – Hold the Meeting of the Core Committee to discuss and formulate action plans and to prepare and implement the Protection Guideline for member countries

Action 3 – Encourage member countries to establish herbal garden of medicinal plants for ethnomedicine in every member country for conservation and exchange of knowledge as well as propagation of medicinal plants for sustainable use of indigenous medicine

9.4 Human resource development

Action 1 – Organize training courses for researchers on particular issues related to traditional medical knowledge, e.g., Rapid Ethnobotany Appraisal

Action 2 – Organize technical visit, training and capacity building for folk healers to exchange knowledge and experience

10. The Meeting agreed to establish “**The Academic Committee of the Network**” which should comprise of 3 persons from each country representing government authority, folk healer/representative from TM or indigenous medicine Association, and researchers in the areas of medicinal plants and folk medicine. The names will be proposed by each country to rapporteur in one month.

11. The Meeting also agreed to establish “**The Core Committee on the Protection of Traditional Medical Knowledge and Medicinal Genetic Resources**” which should comprise of three persons from each country representing government authority, an expert in folk medicine and an expert in medicinal plants. The names will be proposed by each country to rapporteur in one month.

12. Regarding the issue of the resource for funding of the collaborative activities, the Meeting acknowledged the information from Thailand that there are several international organizations; e.g. People and Plant Network of UNESCO, WHO, WWF, the Ford Foundation, and IUCN, that are interested in funding the projects involving the study of indigenous medicine and related genetic resources in the Southeast Asia. Hence, such organizations should be potential sources of funding for the activities of the Network. The Academic Committee of the Network should prepare the grant proposal to submit to such organizations to cover the expense of the Network.

AGENDA ITEM 6: FORMULATION OF THE FOLLOW-UP PLAN

13. China as the head of the Collaborative Network should prepare the follow-up plan and the Logo of the network for consideration in the next meeting next year in China.

14. The finalized document on the Official Establishment of “**the Collaborative Network of Indigenous Medicine in the Mekong Basin**” and Framework of Cooperation is attached as ANNEX 3.

AGENDA ITEM 7: DATE AND VENUE OF THE 6TH MEETING ON INDIGENOUS MEDICINE IN THE MEKONG BASIN

15. Co-Chairperson informed the Meeting that the People’s Republic of China will host the 6th Meeting on Indigenous Medicine in the Mekong Basin in Lijiang or Wenshan, Yunnan Province around the month of August 2013. He invited delegates from the member countries to participate in the next meeting in China.

AGENDA ITEM 8: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

16. The Meeting considered and agreed to the Summary Report of the 5th Meeting on Indigenous Medicine in the Mekong Basin.

CLOSING REMARKS

17. In his closing remarks, Dr. Suphan Srithamma, Director-General of the Department for Development of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine, expressed his sincere appreciation to all top and senior health officials, researchers and experienced folk healers from member countries of the Mekong Basin for helping officially establish “**the Collaborative Network on Indigenous Medicine in the Mekong Basin**”. He also thanked the delegates for making the discussions meaningful for the formulation of the framework and the areas of cooperation and collaborative activities in indigenous medicine development in the Mekong Basin. He hoped that the point of contact in each country will jointly follow up on the activities agreed upon in this meeting. He expressed his confidence that all steps taken would bring the countries of the Mekong Basin closer and ensured that our indigenous medicine, traditional medical knowledge and indigenous medicinal plants in this region will be conserved and further developed so that indigenous medicine and folk healers will continuously contribute to the good health of the people in the Mekong Basin.

18. Dr. Suphan Srithamma expressed his hope to meet all colleagues of the Mekong Basin again at the next meeting in 2013 in Lijiang or Wenshan in Yunnan province and congratulated the People’s Republic of China as upcoming host.