

Introduction to the 1st Rhine-Mekong Symposium



1st Rhine-Mekong Symposium
"Climate change and its influence on water and related sectors"
8-9 May 2014, Koblenz, Germany

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Introduction

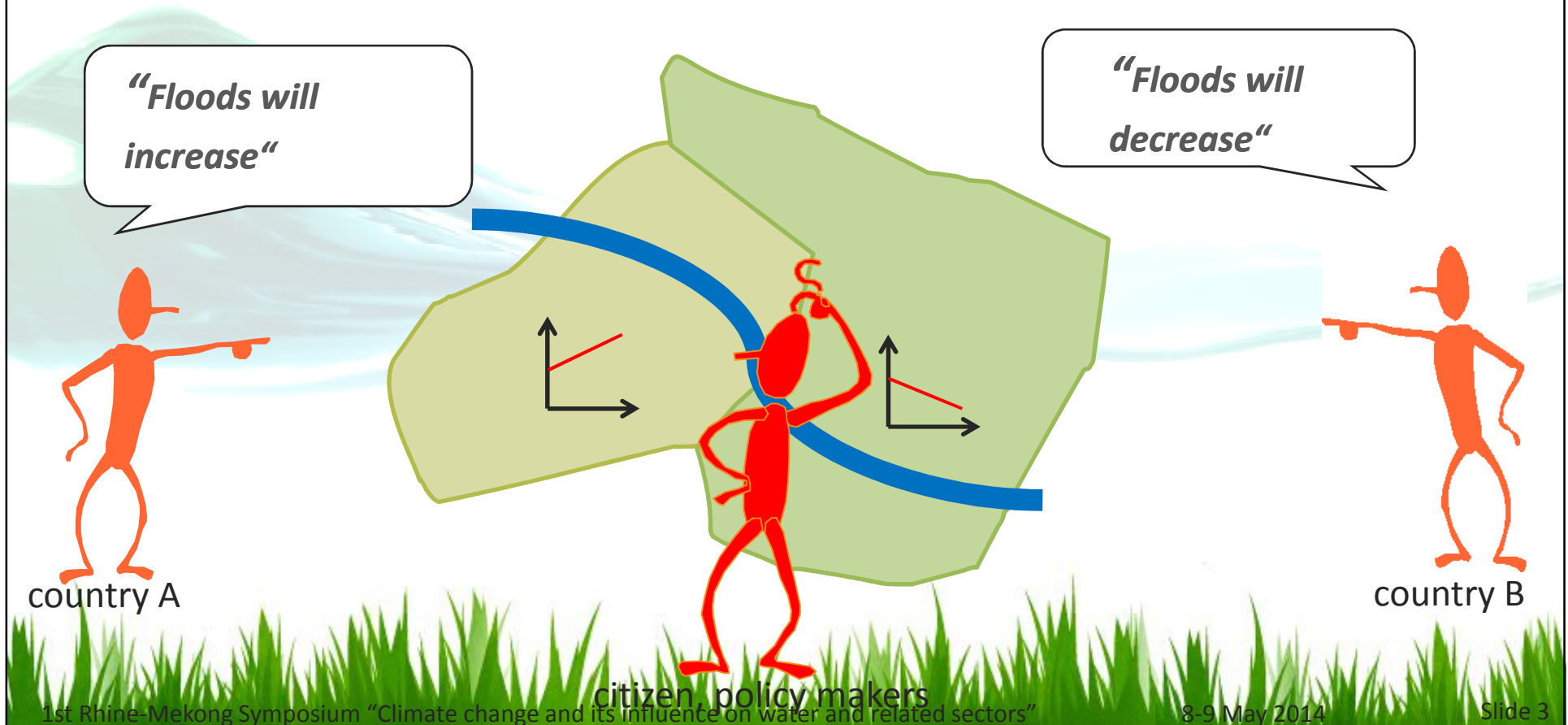
- Why am I here?
- Why are you here?
- Why is cooperation useful?
- Why is a cooperation between the Mekong and the Rhine institutions useful?



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Need for common results

- The Mekong and Rhine basins are transboundary water systems
- Hydrology and climate change are both transboundary subjects
- Transboundary cooperation in the assessment of climate change and its impact on water is desirable



Need for joining forces

- The assessment of climate change and its impact is time consuming and requires considerable financial resources.
- Basins should join their forces in order to get synergy effects and to control if their approaches are appropriate.



Objectives and outcomes of the symposium

- Initiation of a dialogue between MRC and CHR/ICPR:
 - regarding the assessment of climate change,
 - its influence on the hydrological regime and
 - impacts on relevant sectors and people in the basin in a transboundary context
- Identification of possible options for further collaboration between MRC, CHR and ICPR

➡ Enhanced understanding on key technical issues related to climate change

➡ Increased exchange of knowledge among transboundary river basins

➡ Enhanced cooperation between the MRC, CHR and ICPR

Output of the symposium

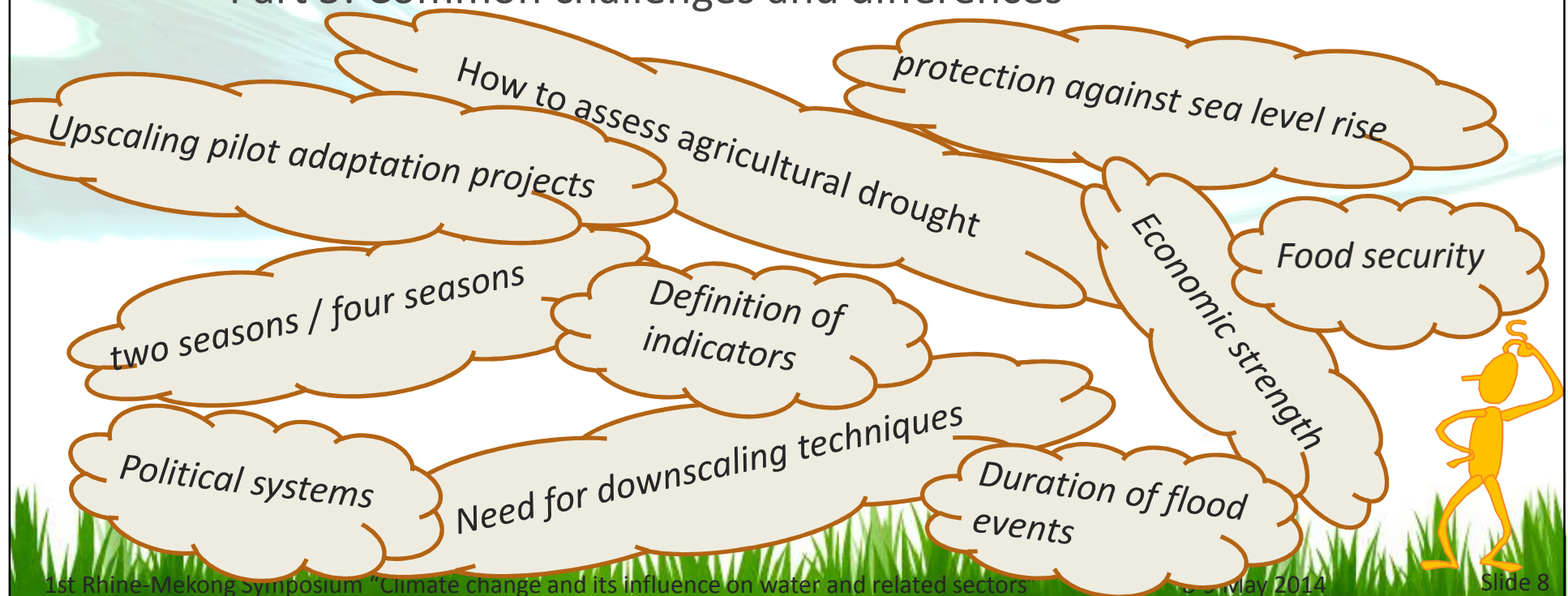
- ➔ Symposium presentations as knowledge products
- ➔ Results of working groups
- ➔ Themes for future cooperation and exchange
- ➔ Conclusion of the symposium
- ➔ Symposium report

Overview of the agenda

- Day 1: Common challenges and differences in the Rhine and Mekong basins
- Day 2: Coming to joint results

Agenda Day 1: Common challenges and differences

- Day 1: Common challenges and differences
 - Part 1: Opening and introduction
 - Part 2: Common knowledge on both catchments
 - Part 3: Common knowledge of the Rhine and country examples
 - Part 4: Common knowledge of the Mekong and country examples
 - Part 5: Common challenges and differences



Common challenges and differences

- Contribution of participants
 - Hand out: sheet of paper with two columns: one for common challenges and one for different challenges of the Rhine and Mekong basins.
 - Note in these columns during the first day (until the end of Part 4) common challenges and differences. Be specific (e.g.: not only “different hydrology” but “different duration of flood events”).

Common issues and challenges:

- How to assess agricultural drought
- Upscaling pilot adaptation projects
- Protection against sea level rise
- Definition of indicators
- Need for downscaling techniques

Different issues and challenges:

- Political systems
- Different duration of flood events
- Food security
- Two seasons versus four seasons
- Economic strength

EXAMPLE!

Common challenges and differences

- Contribution of participants
 - Group discussion: assignment to group according to the number (not color!) on your badge
 - Each group will get 10 cards before the group discussion.
 - Find in your group the 5 most relevant common challenges and the 5 most relevant differences. They are presented to all participants during reporting back.
 - At the end of Part 5, all cards will be collected and analyzed
 - Results thereof will be presented tomorrow during the Recap of Day1

Agenda Day 2: Coming to joint results

- Day 2: Coming to joint results
 - Part 6: Formulation of transboundary climate change adaptation strategy
 - Part 7: Rhine-Mekong cooperation
 - Comparative overview
 - Parallel group discussion
 1. Climate and hydrological changes and assessment including flood and drought
 2. Addressing climate change impacts and assessment in water related sectors
 3. Transboundary and policy issues in climate change adaptation
 - Panel discussion
 - Part 8: Closing

Introduction of participants

- Rhine
 - Federal Institute of Hydrology (BfG)
 - International Commission for the Hydrology of the Rhine basin (CHR)
 - International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR)
- Mekong
 - MRCS (OSV and OSP)
 - National Mekong Committees, national members of ministries and departments
- Consultants, staff of universities, other institutions, ...

Mekong teams



- Cambodia



- Thailand



- Lao PDR



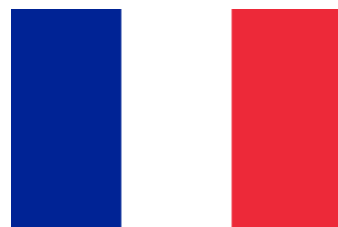
- Vietnam



Rhine teams



- France



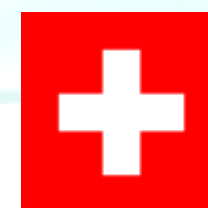
- Netherlands



- Germany



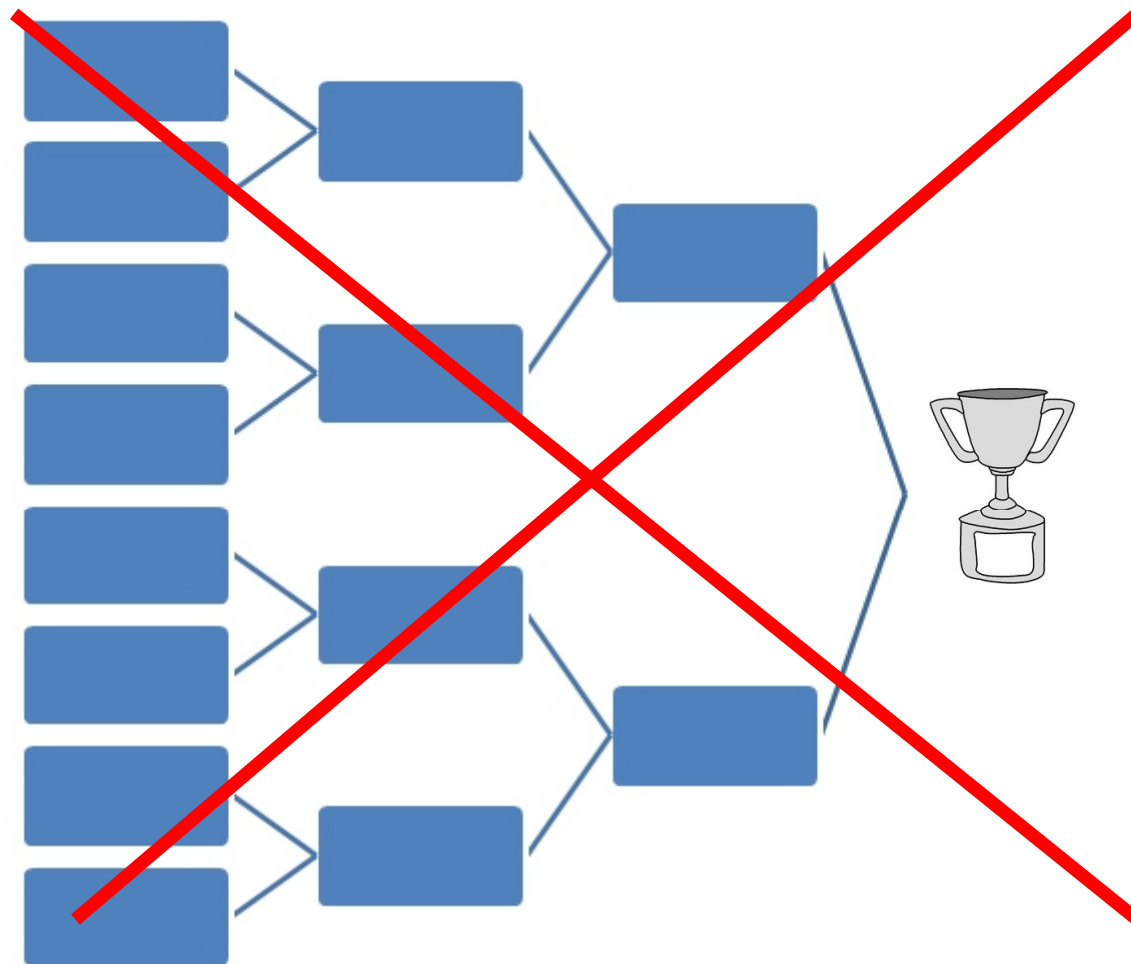
- Switzerland



„Referees“: Canada, Sweden

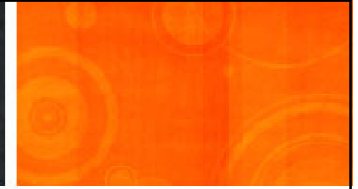


Draw of the order of the teams



No competition but cooperation!

Pulling in the same direction



Let us identify our common challenges to join our forces!

