

1 INTRODUCTION

In the following chapter is a brief review of the present situation, plans and development trends in the relevant sectors.

For the overall regional perspective this study has largely drawn on regional sector overviews recently prepared for the Mekong River Commission Secretariat as background documentation for the Basin Development Plan. The input to these studies has to a great extent been provided by governmental officials and reflects national priorities and plans.

Other sources of information are sector plans and programmes prepared by the relevant sector Ministries and Provinces and by International Funding Institutions and bilateral donors in co-operation with sector Ministries. Even with the official status of these documents, inconsistencies and differences in predictions as well as rather “over-optimistic” assumptions can be observed. To the degree possible the consultant has commented upon these matters and indicated what is seen to be the most realistic development.

The description of the developments in each sector is in most cases structured in three sections:

- The first covers the larger **regional** perspective, which for some issues coincide with the Mekong Basin.
- The second covers the **national Lao PDR** perspective.
- Finally the **local** perspective, which depending on the issue, sometimes will focus on the local river basins and sometimes focus on the 3 provinces directly influenced by the NT2 project.

As will be seen, the relevance and details given for each of these perspectives will differ depending on where its potential impacts will be seen when added to the potential impacts of the NT2 Project. The least developed sections are related to the local or provincial developments. as the time available did not allow for a comprehensive local information collection and consultation process.