Place, Date

Dear Dr. XXX (Chief Editor),

We hereby submit our manuscript titled “XXX” (by … and myself) to be considered for publication as an Article.

In our study, we identify the limits and opportunities of alternative dam management strategies in the Mekong, a major biodiversity hotspot. With the aid of a high-resolution hydrological-water management model, we show that re-operation efforts focused on the Lower Mekong could restore key elements of river flow variability—the principal driving force in river-floodplain systems. Importantly, we also show that the coordinated re-operation of hydropower dams is an economically and technically feasible strategy: our power system analysis indicates that changing the patterns of hydropower supply does not create regional power supply disruptions; in fact, the riparian countries could improve their hydropower revenues while cutting power production costs and CO2 emissions. We believe this is the tangible incentive that could reunite the interests of the many stakeholders characterizing international, institutionally-complex, river basins such as the Mekong.

Over the years, XXX has published seminal articles in the areas of river conservation, hydropower planning, and transboundary water management, some of which focussed on the Mekong River. Our methods, results, and their implications for the sustainable management of water-energy resources cut across all these domains, so this is why we believe the manuscript could be relevant to this journal.

Our list of suggested reviewers comprises experts in the aforementioned domains:

* Name Surname, Affiliation, Email, (expertise 1, expertise 2, …)
* Name Surname, Affiliation, Email, (expertise 1, expertise 2, …)
* Name Surname, Affiliation, Email, (expertise 1, expertise 2, …)
* Name Surname, Affiliation, Email, (expertise 1, expertise 2, …)
* Name Surname, Affiliation, Email, (expertise 1, expertise 2, …)

We take this opportunity to declare that the content of our manuscript is original and is not currently being considered for publication elsewhere. The manuscript has been read and approved by all authors. Finally, we note that we have not engaged in any pre-submission discussions with editors. All data underlying the study are available on Zenodo (link).

We thank you for your time in considering our paper and look forward to your decision.

Yours Sincerely,

XXX, PhD

*Signature*