Mr. Jeremy Bird is the former CEO of the Mekong River Commission based in Vientiane, Lao PDR, an intergovernmental body responsible for cooperation on the sustainable development and management of the Mekong River. At the end of his term in 2011, he advised the United Nations Environment Programme on development of an operational freshwater strategy and formulated policy recommendations on the Water, Energy and Food Security Nexus in conjunction with the Bonn2011 Nexus Conference.

Jeremy was born in the west of England in 1955 and graduated in civil engineering from Bristol University in 1978. He then joined consulting engineer WS Atkins working on projects in UK and the Middle East before becoming a Chartered Engineer of the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1982. Two years later he completed a Masters Degree in irrigation engineering from Southampton University and in 1986 joined Hydraulics Research, Wallingford to work on applied research in irrigation and water resources systems in Asia and Africa becoming Group Manager in 1990. From there he moved to the Philippines to join the Asian Development Bank in 1992 where he worked for six years on technical assistance and development funding of water resources projects in Lao PDR, Pakistan, and Viet Nam. During that period he was part of a team to develop ADBs water policy. In 1998, Jeremy joined the secretariat of a global multi-stakeholder policy initiative, the World Commission on Dams, mandated to formulate recommendations on improved planning and governance of dam large projects. After publication of the Commission’s report in 2000, he continued under the umbrella of UNEP to coordinate a global dialogue on dams and development with special emphasis on reform of national planning systems and adoption of good practice. In 2004 he was awarded a Masters Degree in Water Law and Policy from Dundee University for his research on transboundary rivers basins in Southern Africa. This was followed by five years working as an independent advisor to international organisations, international NGOs and governments on a mix of policy development, water law reform and project due diligence. This led to his appointment as CEO of the Mekong River Commission in 2008.