



MEKONG FOR THE FUTURE

Natural Resources Governance and Transparency
in the Greater Mekong Region

Veerawit Tianchainan, Chief of Party, 31 Jul 24

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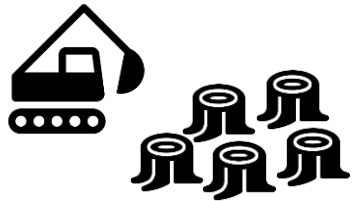
What's at stake?

25%

The Mekong River accounts for 25% of the global freshwater catch, making it the **world's largest inland fishery**.

200+
million people

The Lower Mekong Region is home to over 200 million people, many of whom directly rely on **natural resources as a vital source of food and income**.



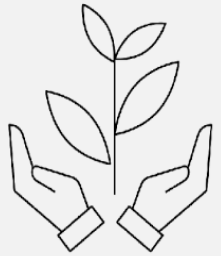
The Lower Mekong countries are facing **rapid infrastructural growth and development**. The region has lost a third of its natural forest cover over the past 40 years, with the pace of deforestation steadily increasing in recent years.



The region is also one of the most **climate-vulnerable** places on earth — with impacts already visible and felt.



MEKONG FOR THE FUTURE OBJECTIVE



To improve natural resource governance in the Greater Mekong through strengthening civil society's ability to engage in natural resource governance and improving their access to and understanding of environmental data from public and private actors.



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Youth for the Future of Mekong



**We believe in investing in
current and future
generations of youth, to
lead change and protect
the environment of the
Greater Mekong region.**

Empowering Digital Communities in GMS through Youth Participation



- Facilitate learning on Mekong's environmental issues to help maintain the river basin's capacity, sustain ecosystems, and preserve the identity, culture, and livelihoods of the communities.
- Equip communities, particularly youth, with the knowledge to support and empower them to become leaders in driving change.
- Utilize digital tools for monitoring environmental issues and informing community actions.
- Enable youth's participation for raising awareness and participating in advocacy efforts.

Example 1: CSOs and Youth Advocacy

- 56 Youth trained in soft skills, ground data surveying of the Mekong's ecosystem& biodiversity and media production in Loei and Nong Khai, Thailand to enhance their knowledge strengthening ability to protect the river.
- Media literacy and production skills empower youth to create impactful content, effectively communicating messages to support Mekong protection.
- CSOs can utilize the collected data and media for advocacy, incorporating fresh youth perspectives into their work.

**“The Youth is the future stewards of the
Mekong River”**



Example 2: How CSOs support youth to become 'Air Quality Heroes'

Blue School by Fulfill Social Enterprise Limited Partnership

- Raising awareness of PM2.5 and its impact for everyone, especially for youth, to safely cope with this crisis and mitigate its effects.
- 'Blue Schools' a platform for collaboration with local schools to transfer knowledge about PM2.5 and climate change to families, communities, and policymakers.
- Involving working with teachers to educate children and youth through active learning to become active citizens.
- More than 400 schools in Thailand have participated and received air quality monitoring stations that display current PM2.5 levels in their area.



How USAID support the CSOs to empower youth in climate action



SERVIR Southeast Asia provides Blue School with customized **fire hotspot data from NASA**, and a series of student-teacher workshops



Mekong for the Future support Fulfill to scale up the impacts of Blue School to Myanmar and Laos



Building network and cooperation of CSOs in 3 countries

Study of land use in relation to fire occurrence over the past five years in Thailand, Laos and Myanmar

Transforming the 'Blue School' into a web-based/ mobile application



To advocate for better land management, environmental protection and conservation, and subsequently, improved air quality at the regional scale.

Empowering Digital Communities in GMS through Youth Participation



- **Data-Driven Solutions** by utilizing Nasa's Satellite Data “**Connecting Space to Village**” for Improving Air Quality and informing community actions.
- **Empowering the Next Generation** by equipping students with digital literacy and problem-solving skills.
- **Creating a Sustainable Impact** by developing long-term strategies for community well-being and bottom-up policy influencing approach for environmental protection.



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