

PARTNERSHIPS IN DEEP POOL CO-MANAGEMENT: LINKING CITIZENS, CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE STATE

WHY DEEP POOLS NEED TO BE MANAGED

While it is recognized by *Salaphoum*¹ researchers and fisheries scientists alike that deep pools have an important ecological and livelihood function, they are nevertheless under increasing pressure from a range of human activities. One of the sources of this pressure is illegal fishing practices such as electro and dynamite fishing. *Salaphoum* researchers from *Koh Khorndin* village in Northeastern Cambodia, estimate that in 2008, there were between 6 to 7 dynamite and several electro fishing cases in the deep pool of *Koh Yeay Chhim* alone.



LOCAL DEMAND

Salaphoum researchers know how important it is to manage deep pools effectively and have called upon local and national governments for support. Management, the village researchers say, 'will only be successful if it is done in

collaboration with local resource users, local and national authorities and other partners'.

Deep pools known locally as *Ung Loong*, are understood by local people to be large deep areas within a river channel often associated with flooded forest, and commonly formed in rock, stone, or gravel riverbeds. Both local people and scientific researchers recognize that deep pools play an important role as dry season refuge habitats for a variety of fish species. *Salaphoum* research findings also confirm that deep pools, as well as providing dry season refuges and spawning habitats for rare or endangered species such as the Irrawaddy Dolphin, also play an important role in income generation and food security.

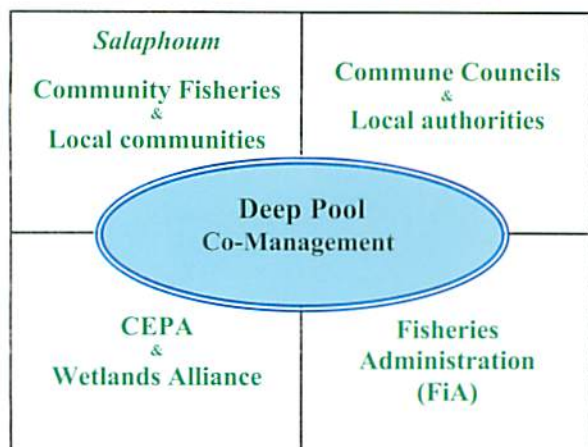
INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

In response to citizens' calls for support, the Fisheries Administration (FiA), the Culture and Environment Preservation Association (CEPA), a local NGO, and *Salaphoum* researchers, with technical and financial support from the Wetlands Alliance, have joined forces to manage deep pools in Cambodia's upper Mekong.

Following consultations in *Khorndin* and *Damrey Phong* with *Salaphoum* Researchers, villagers, CEPA staff, commune councilors, and FiA officials, local fishers agreed to the establishment of conservation zones spanning three deep pools, which are now pending legal recognition.

¹ *Salaphoum* research aims to document the relationship between natural resources and local communities. It is a process of participatory research that is driven by villagers themselves, right from the start, and knowledge generated is being communicated and used for engagement in local policy, planning and management.

PARTNERSHIPS IN CO-MANAGEMENT



Deep pool co-management, Stung Treng



Work already underway in the deep pools of *Koh Yeay Chhim*, *Tathav* and *Kaing Svay* showcase demand-led innovations in fisheries co-management through linking citizens, civil society and the state in meaningful partnerships for the wise use of wetlands.

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