

# Summary Report

## APBON 5<sup>th</sup> Web Seminar

1. Date: 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2021

Time: 15:00-17:00 in Japanese Standard Time (UTC 06:00-08:00am)

(13:00-15:00 in Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia)

(14:00-16:00 in Malaysia, Philippines, China)

2. Location, Participants

- Webex Meeting Room
- 26 participants (22 participants and 4 from secretariat) from 9 Nationalities
- MC: Mr. Tze Leong Yao  
(Forest Research Institute Malaysia)

3. Program:

### **Opening and Announcement:**

Secretariat of APBON (Mr. Saito: Biodiversity Center of Japan)

- welcomed all of the participants to join this 5<sup>th</sup> APBON web seminar
- The agenda and rules of meeting were proposed
- Introduced today's MC

### **Presentation1:**

Dr. Bunthang Touch (Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute)

“Fish Spawning Habitats in the Mekong and 3S (\*) Rivers in Cambodia ”

(\*)3S Rivers: 3 rivers that flow into Mekong River; Sesan, Srepok and Sekong Rivers

### **Q&A Session**

**Q:** Are there protected areas close to the three rivers and have the results this study influenced fisheries policies?

**A:** There is one conservation area (6000ha) and 10 Community Fisheries (CFi) along 3S rivers. Result of this study, we have produced policy brief which contains key results, key message and recommendations to national government, policymakers, dam development and relevant stakeholders. The study results have been presented to stakeholders at national and sub-national level. Of course, it's very important to fisheries management

and conservation, especially for non-migratory fish species in the Mekong river and 3S rivers.

**Q:** Considering the 3S rivers basin that originated from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and the construction of outstream will negatively impact fish habitat. I wonder if there is any international collaboration among the involved countries to mitigate the impact that would affect fish production.

**A:** Yes, of course there is a collaboration among MRC member countries as regional inter-governmental organization consisting of Cambodia, Lao, Thailand and Vietnam. For instance, in Cambodia, EIA has been studied before building the dam by Ministry of Environment. Fish passage has been built to mitigate the impacts on fish population, especially long-distance migratory fish species. The efficiency of fish passage at Sesan II Hydropower Dam in Sesan River in Cambodia is not known yet. The study of the efficiency of this fish passage is needed in the future.

**Q:** Is there protection or regulation of spawning sites or fish going to spawn? How does fishing effort correspond to such patterns? (Just stop fishing and do other works? or do they move to other place where they can fish?)

In other words: How do fishermen make their living while fishing is regulated?

**A:** People can fish anywhere in water body in Open season (Nov-May) by legal fishing gears stated in Fisheries Law, and in Close Season (June-Oct), only by small scale/family scale is legal. There are conservation areas in water body (Mekong River, 3S Rivers and Tonle Sap Lake) and protected conservation areas in Community Fisheries.

**Q:** How about climate change or global warming impact on fisheries and water resources in Mekong/Tonle sap lake? I was wondering if frequent floods and drought could have strong impact on spawning behavior of fishes.

**A:** Yes, of course. Climate change, especially drought, brings the impact to the fishery resources. For example, the annual water level is usually keeping high in June or July, but the year 2020 water level continued to rise until September. It affected on fish larvae drift in Mekong and Tonle Sap Rivers and impacted on fisheries resources in Cambodia. Fish production in 2020 decreased around 30% compared to 2019. For inland fisheries in Cambodia, it's very related to the climate factors such as flood.

## **Presentaton2:**

Mr. Hort Sothea (Forestry Administration, Cambodia)(\*)

“Cambodia’s Forests and Biodiversity Management: Paradigm Shift, Challenges and Opportunities”

(\*)Mr. Sothea presented on behalf of Dr.Chheang Danny, Director of Forestry Administration, Cambodia, who could not make it to the Web Seminar for another duty.

## **Q&A Session**

**Q:** Are there statistics or policies on forest, rather than monoculture plantation? Plantations of Eucalyptus are not good for native species.

**A:** Related to statistics or policies on forest, so far the FA has produced a series of forest cover maps (2002, 2006, 2010, 2014, and 2018) in terms of forest cover assessment, and also documents related to forest policies such as Cambodian National Forest Policy Statement, National Forest Program, Strategies for Forest Production (draft), Guideline for Private Forest Plantation.

Related to Eucalyptus plantations: There are growing demand for wood supply from private plantations due to supplies from natural forest are on decline. Fast growing trees including Eucalyptus have been planted for commercial purpose to supply paper making and furniture manufacturing industries. Fast growing trees have short period of time to harvest and can make profits while native species need longer period to harvest and need substantial investment at the beginning.

However, there are also plantations of teak, rosewood and agarwood in Cambodia.

**Q:** Our team of Kyushu University have been collaborating with Phourin Chhnang and other staffs of Forestry Administration in Cambodia to explore the forest flora of Cambodia and published four volumes of Picture Guide. Those are available at: <https://sites.google.com/site/pictureguides/home/cambodia> . My first question is: how familiar are these picture guides to forestry administration staffs of Cambodia? On the other hand, many tree species are threatened in forests of Cambodia. My second question is: Do you have any project to edit Red List of forest tree species in Cambodia as a base of conservation and sustainable use?

**A:** First, thanks for a bunch of picture guides of flora species in Cambodia, which were compiled and published by the Team of Kyushu University. Although the picture guides are not enough to distribute to all the staff of FA and relevant users, these guides are more familiar to them to identify flora species relatively quickly. The picture guides are

very important for forestry administration staff, especially for FA staff working in provinces, local communities (community forestry members), and for the academy, because they would most often use these picture guides to identify tree species. At the moment, we implement the CITES convention, and mostly we focus on the tree species listed in CITES appendixes.

Hence, we don't have any project yet which is related to edit Red List of forest tree species in Cambodia, but we have the project related to the CITES.

**Q:** Very informative presentation. Thanks. I understand that there are 2 Departments managing forest resources: 1) FA and 2) Nature Conservation and protection. What are the policy targets (%) for each Department? Next question: Do they manage forest land separately or joint manage?

**A:** The Forestry Administration has a mandate to manage and use forest resources in a sustainable way in Cambodia. In addition, FA manages Protection Forest in Cambodia as well. The General Department of the Administration for the Nature Conservation and Protection (GDACP) of the Ministry of Environment manages Protected Areas in Cambodia. It means that there are two systems of Protection Forest under FA and Protected Areas under GDACP. After 2016, The Government of Cambodia transferred all Protected Forests (approximately 1.5 million hectares) to The Ministry of Environment as part of National Forest Sector Reform.

**Q:** Excellent presentation for us to better understand the situation of forests and biodiversity in Cambodia! The estimated decline in mean species abundance in greater Mekong sub-region looks dramatic in a decade scale. Which type of the forests do you think is the most vulnerable one to the conversion of the forestland to agricultural land, among evergreen, mixed, deciduous or flooded forests in Cambodia? And why?

**A:** All of forest types are vulnerable to conversion of forest land to agriculture land. There is a rapid growing population of Cambodia in recent years. There are migration of population to upland where forest resources are abundant. The migrants find better economic opportunities, so they need land for settlement and agriculture. Evergreen is considered to be fertile soil so migrants and local communities need to converse evergreen forest into agriculture land to cultivate agriculture crops. Flooded forest and deciduous forest are also vulnerable to conversion because these types of forest are converted to rice production. There are several conversion factors affecting forest types in Cambodia. There were issuances of large scale economic land concessions in Cambodia for agro-industry and for forest plantations. In addition, social land concession is also

part of forest land conversion because the government provided land to landless families in the form of social land concession.

### **Information exchange on APBON:** (Dr. Muraoka)

- Announcement about APBON meetings (Dr. Muraoka)
- The schedule of APBON related meetings from January to March in 2021 was shared, which are 5<sup>th</sup> APBON web seminar scheduled on January 21, 12<sup>th</sup> APBON Workshop scheduled on January 22, and 6<sup>th</sup> APBON web seminar scheduled on February 25. And also the 13<sup>th</sup> Asia Oceania GEO Symposium is scheduled on March 3-5.
- The draft agenda of 12<sup>th</sup> APBON Workshop was also shared, which is still under consideration. And the committee will work on the agenda of 12<sup>th</sup> APBON Workshop and will share to all members as soon as the agenda is fixed.

### **Closing and Announcements:** Secretariat to APBON

- Today's presentation materials are uploaded at APBON website.
- If you are not registered to APBON workshop on January 22, please let the Secretariat know.
- The 6<sup>th</sup> APBON Web Seminar will be held on February 25 (Thu.) 3PM-5PM (JST). (speakers: Dr. Eun-Shik Kim and Dr. Tomoaki Miura).
- The agenda for the 6<sup>th</sup> APBON Web Seminar will be informed by Secretariats as soon as it is fixed.

### **Photo session:**

