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WONDERS OF THE MEKONG

A FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND RESILIENCE

The Wonders of the Mekong project will conduct applied research, build capacity, and develop outreach and communications products to highlight the economic, ecological, and cultural values of biodiversity and ecosystem services associated with the Lower Mekong River. The outputs and resulting products, developed as an integrated package, will lead to better protection of a vibrant and healthy Lower Mekong system.

WHY THE LOWER MEKONG RIVER BASIN?

A biodiversity hotspot, the Mekong is the most productive river on Earth, supporting over 70 million people. From the tributary headwaters to the fertile delta and “rice bowl” of Vietnam, the Mekong supports almost 1000 species of freshwater fish, countless rare and endangered species, flood plains and flooded forests that sustain wildlife and local people. Ancient civilizations, like Angkor Wat, depended on its bounty. Today, the river supports a fishery valued at between \$5.6 and \$9.4 billion per year. Overall, the river- its ecosystems services valued at hundreds billions of dollars - supports modern day cities like Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, agriculture, aquaculture, and hydropower. The Mekong is truly a river of wonder, but also a river facing many complex challenges from a growing human population and accelerating regional development.

WONDERS OF THE MEKONG PROJECT GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

The Wonders of the Mekong project aims to maintain the ecological, cultural, and economic integrity of the most important river and delta system in the world.

These goals will be accomplished through:

- Applied, interdisciplinary research to improve understanding, management capacity, and appreciation of a functional and healthy Mekong River for fish, wildlife, and people
- Training, capacity building, and workshops to share knowledge and perspectives on sustainably managing the Mekong system, particularly in the context of a changing climate.
- Communications and media products designed to increase the public's and government's valuation and conservation of the Mekong River's ecosystem services, habitats, cultural heritage, and biodiversity.

PROJECT PARTNERS

USAID, University of Nevada Global Water Center, Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute of Cambodia

PROJECT CONTACT

Dr. Zeb Hogan
University of Nevada Global Water Center
Email: zhogan@unr.edu

