

Session II – Envisioning New Approaches to Managing Great Deltas, Great Rivers, and Great Lakes

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The Role of Sustainable Fisheries Management: Fish and the Poor, the Case of Cambodia

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Abstract

Cambodia is a high poverty country where a large bulk of the poor, including women and children, depends on the inland fishery. The resource is widespread and accessible to the poor; culturally, fish is a typical part of the diet, either fresh or in processed form. Most capture fishery relies on simple traps or other gears, in both inland waters and rice fields. Pond or cage aquaculture is becoming popular. Fishing is seasonal, reaching its peak during the receding flood period. Many fish-dependent households have members engaged in part-time fishing. Fishing households earn only half of the income of non-fishing households. However in the fish-rich Tonle Sap region, catches per capita have been dropping in recent years, partly as a result of habitat degradation from rapid economic development. Indicated policies include: ecosystem protection, protection of wild fish bloodstock, capacity-building, promotion of ecologically-friendly aquaculture, stronger law enforcement, and development of an information database.