



Mekong Wetlands Biodiversity Programme WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2005 - SUMMARY REPORT

World Wetlands Day (WWD) provides an ideal opportunity for government agencies, NGOs and people from all levels of the community to undertake activities aimed at raising public awareness of the values of wetlands, and to celebrate their achievements in wetland conservation and management.

For WWD 2005, a variety of activities were organised at a number of sites in the four countries of the Lower Mekong Basin - Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam.

The governments of these nations worked the UNDP-IUCN-MRC Mekong Wetlands Biodiversity Programme (funded by GEF), to celebrate WWD and raise awareness of the Ramsar Convention, the importance of wetland resources, and the management challenges and sustainable use issues.

Activities organised were fun and informative, and included field visits, essay and painting competitions, plays and dance performances, official meetings and lectures, boat races and fishing competitions.

People of all ages and backgrounds were involved in the programmes, the activities received good media coverage, and the celebrations were heralded a great success.

Activity summary by country

CAMBODIA

Phnom Penh

- Large celebration was held at the Royal University, many officials and other participants attended.
- Agenda included many speeches, a short video, and a participatory Smart Game.
- A mini exhibit of displays, street banners, and other publicity on national radio and TV.

Stoeng Treng

- Large celebration was held at the Ramsar site for the second year running.
- Agenda included official speeches, an art exhibition, a video show, quizzes about wetlands and prize distribution, plays by local school children.
- A variety of materials were prepared and distributed.
- Many people from the local villages participated in the event.

LAO PDR

The focus of the WWD 2005 activity in Laos was in Attapeu Province, although some Ramsar t-shirts were distributed to key line departments and ministries in Vientiane.

The main activities of the celebration included:

- a boat racing competition at Ban Saysi in Sekong river,
- a local fishing gear competition at Ban Sisomphone in Nonglom wetland,
- a boat trip for the Provincial Steering Committee along the Sekong River, and
- a celebration in Attapeu town including a public lecture, natural resources picture draw, and question and answers play.

All activities, as well as some village interviews, were recorded during the four days, and put onto CD. It is planned for copies of the CD will be made and distributed to all concerned departments within the province, including schools.

THAILAND

Sri Songkhram

The event was held at the Ban Yang Ngoy School and activities included:

- Tent exhibitions and demonstrations
- Panel seminar discussions
- Games, traditional music and dance
- Local food tastings
- Art and writing competitions

Activities focused on sharing information and local experiences and brought together people from a broad range of institutions, backgrounds and interests.

VIETNAM

Tram Chim National Park

- A field excursion was organised for the secondary school
- World Wetland Day meeting with the attendance of more than 150 people was conducted in front of the district cultural house
- Photograph exhibition and other fun games were organised

Lang Sen Wetland Reserve

- A field excursion was organised for secondary school students
- Wetland painting and essay writing contest
- WWD meeting including school students and teachers, government officials, farmers, wetland researchers and lecturers from universities and research institutions
- Interesting interaction between the younger generation and the old timers who have been living in the Plain of Reeds for a long time