



# Regulation, Management, and Research in Inland Fisheries

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Joint Presentation on Accomplishments: TA 4025–CAM: Capacity Building of the Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute and TA 3993–CAM: Improving the Regulatory and Management Framework for Inland Fisheries

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On 11 February 2003, Prime Minister Hun Sen opened in Phnom Penh the Second International Symposium on the Management of Large Rivers for Fisheries. He talked about *Sustaining Livelihoods and Biodiversity in the New Millennium*, a very ambitious endeavor that he placed at the center of his Government's agenda. We all know why: Cambodia's inland fisheries provide irreplaceable social and economic benefits to growing millions of people. And we also know that, over the last ten years, the Tonle Sap has been the site of much conflict as population and development pressures take their toll ...

In particular, the Prime Minister mentioned the bold step that he took in October 2000 when he released 56% of the commercial fishing lots to communities. He wanted, in so doing, to ensure that the poor have access to assets. In the same breath, he announced the establishment of the Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute.

I did not attend the symposium and must confess that I read the Prime Minister's address several months later. But I was happy to note then that ADB was extending dedicated support in the very same areas. In November 2002, ADB had approved technical assistance to improve the regulatory and management framework for inland fisheries. In December 2002, it had approved technical assistance for capacity building of the Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute. The rest is history, which will be related to us today. It is good history too for the outset was bleak. Notwithstanding, these two technical assistance projects have delivered very tangible positive results in less than one year, in close collaboration with the Department of Fisheries and after exhaustive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders.

The first technical assistance has produced (i) comments and recommendations on the draft Fisheries Law and its Subdecree on Community Fisheries, which are now in the National Assembly, (ii) the draft Proclamation on Community Fisheries By-Laws and Area Agreement, (iii) revised Guidelines for the Establishment of Community Fisheries Management Organizations, and (iv) the first-ever Five-Year General Fisheries Plan for the Tonle Sap. These outputs will play vital roles in improving the regulatory and management framework for inland fisheries. They will also facilitate implementation of the ADB-assisted Tonle Sap Environmental Management Project, to which many in Cambodia and elsewhere pay close attention.

The second technical assistance has resulted in much-enhanced, if not newly created, capacity for (i) institute management, (ii) research and development, (iii) technology transfer, and (iv) policy development and dialogue. Throughout implementation, unremitting efforts were deployed to train staffs of the Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute.

Much, from now on, will depend on the degree to which the Department of Fisheries acts through the improved regulatory and management framework and leverages the Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute. But it is certainly in a much better position to do so than one year ago, and can surely face the future with more confidence. I would like to thank FAO and the WorldFish Center for extending their help to the Department, and I would like to congratulate the Department wholeheartedly for making the most of it. Well done!