



# FLOATING LIVES AT RISK

**HYDROPOWER, PULSING ECOSYSTEMS AND WATER-BASED COMMUNITIES OF THE TONLE SAP**

17 February 2017, 3.30 - 5.30pm, Earth Lab (Geog Dept, AS2 02-03/04)

Chairperson: Prof. Alan Ziegler

The seminar will focus on critical challenges to a trans-boundary 'environmental commons', and to the Tonle Sap, created by simultaneous developments in hydropower, agriculture and land-use changes in the Mekong Basin. This seminar will be divided into discrete components focusing on human-nature relations, environmental policy fields, and the future of both water-based and terrestrial communities of the Tonle Sap or Great Lake of Cambodia. In the first part of the seminar there will be three related but overlapping short presentations by researchers working on Mekong and Tonle Sap issues. In the second part there will be short student videos and presentations based upon a GE 4221 field investigation to Chhnok Tru, a water-based community of the Tonle Sap.

## **PART 1: "RISKS AND CHALLENGES: HYDRO-POWER, THE 'FLOOD PULSE' AND FLOATING LIVES"**

Short ten minute presentations followed by Q&A.

### **Carl Grundy-Warr:**

'Going with or against 'the Flow': Socio-ecological dimensions of the annual trans-boundary flood pulse'

### **Mak Sithirith:**

Hydropower in Laos and the Vietnam-Cambodia 3 S Rivers: Securing 'the Flow' and its Implications for the Tonle Sap

### **Carl Middleton:**

"Socio-Technological Analysis and Material Politics of Hydropower in the Lower Mekong"

## **PART 2: "SHAKING HANDS WITH 'THE FLOW': FIELDWORK IN A WATER WORLD"**

Short field reports and video presentations based on the **GE 4221 Field Investigation to the Tonle Sap** – focusing on fishing, ethnic relations, waste on water, public health, and the flooded forest. Here we wish to highlight the importance of fieldwork in order to appreciate vital challenges confronting water-based communities in times of increasing uncertainty and risk.

# SPEAKERS



**Carl Middleton** is Deputy Director for Research Affairs on the MA in International Development Studies (MAIDS) Program and Director of the Center for Social Development Studies (CSDS) in the Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. His research interests orientate around the politics and policy of the environment in Southeast Asia, with a particular focus on environmental justice and the political ecology of water and energy. Carl has been heavily involved in writing, researching and networking in relation to the complex politics of hydropower, development issues and environmental policy in the Mekong region. He helps organise the Mekong Commons website, and he has written numerous academic papers focusing on water, energy and security issues.



**Mak Sithirith** received a PhD from the Department of Geography, National University of Singapore in 2011, and undertook post-doctoral research on transboundary water governance in the context of climate change. He teaches environment and natural resources management at the Faculty of Development Studies, Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) in Cambodia, and he is a full time research fellow and Head of the Environment Unit of Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI). He involves his students and colleagues in activities that support communities in the Tonle Sap Lake and the Lower Mekong Basin. Mak has written many papers focusing on fisheries, environmental issues and the communities of the Tonle Sap Lake.



**Carl Grundy-Warr** teaches political geography, geopolitics, and global political ecologies in the NUS Department of Geography. Carl has written numerous papers on trans-border geopolitics and environmental politics in the Mekong region. He has coordinated several student field investigations to the Tonle Sap and Mekong region, and one project called 'Waste on Water' is supported by the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Institute of Water Policy (IWP), and is one outcome of a field investigation to the Tonle Sap. Carl's current research is focusing on cross-border political geographies and environmental geopolitics in the Mekong region.

