



LAOS
ANNUAL
REPORT
2016

LAOS



WWF Greater Mekong | **LAOS 2016 ANNUAL REPORT**



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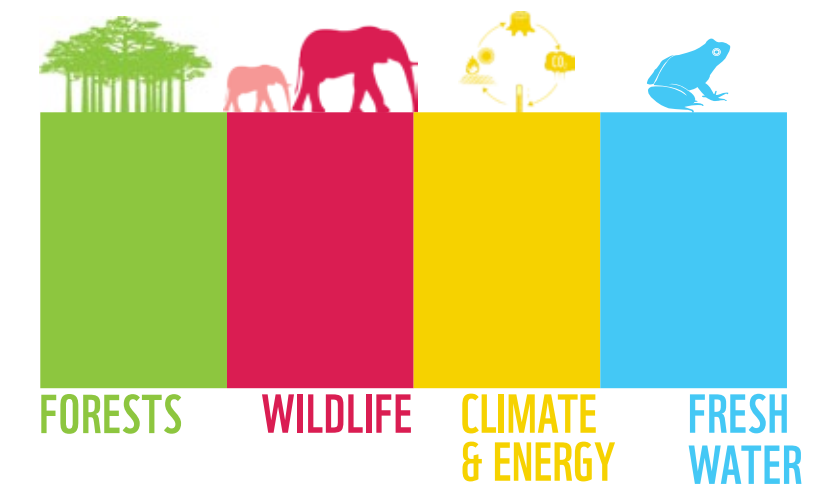
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FOREWORD

2016 was a good year. Of course, it had its shares of ups and downs, but if there is one predominant feeling that transpired through the Team's work this year here in Laos, it is hope. This hope does not come from a practice of hopeful thinking. It is rather a feeling linked with a number of positive developments in 2016 that WWF Laos, along with its partners in the international development network and with the cooperation and support from government partners from several line ministries, have been hard at work to achieve over the the course of the year.

The Prime Minister's order No.15 on strict enforcement of timber laws earlier this year, the recent declaration of the Lao government on its intentions to close down tiger farms and other illegal wildlife operations, and more recently, bilateral regional agreements to crackdown on illegal logging and wildlife trafficking in trans-boundary areas, are developments that truly inspire hope for the future of Laos, its ecosystems, its people, and in turn, its sustainable, balanced and equitable development.

Despite our programme having having faced hefty financial challenges in 2016 - with major projects closing and limited funding - 2016 was still a good year.

We have achieved a few milestones this year in the practices hosted by our Country Office. Freshwater: The community fisheries programme component is now being funded, with exciting work ahead in trans-boundary areas between Thailand and Laos. The latest numbers coming out of community fisheries work are good: 10 (166 ha) additional Fish Conservation Zones (FCZs) created in Central Laos, with 70 fishermen trained, bringing the total in 2016 to 258 (1659 ha) of FCZs in continued operation; while 39 ha of trans-boundary river areas remain protected in 8 FCZs on the Mekong River.

Our forests are doing better too: with more than 434,000 ha of protected areas maintained, and their management continuously improved, while 5,500 ha of natural forests have now achieved FSC certification for rattan & bamboo by 2016. The Eld's deer sanctuary has by 2016 tripled its population compared to when the WWF project started, reaching an estimated 100 individuals this year.

A total of 245,268 ha of High Conservation Value Forest were mapped in FY16, including 193,511 ha in the Eld's Deer Sanctuary,

which is now under consideration by the government for upgrading to a National Protected Area. Green School programmes are thriving in 8 schools in the Siphandone area, also know as the 'Four Thousand Islands', and fundraising is now in progress to scale up the Green School programme to other schools in National Protected Areas.

Climate change is a reality that can no longer be contested. And this reality goes beyond our desire to safeguard our environment and ecosystems. If the effects of climate change are not mitigated carefully, the consequences will be felt, economically, and geopolitically, all across the planet, the Greater Mekong region and here in Laos. At the occasion of the Launch of the WWF Power Sector Vision 2050 Report, we have been able to demonstrate to government and private sector partners that the using the Vision for 2050 which is now integrated into our National Power Strategy, can help Laos achieve a 100% shift towards sustainable renewable energy by 2050.

In this day and age, and faced with the reality that Laos is developing at an incredibly fast rate, hope is not a luxury. It is a necessity. Growing urban populations and expansion of the country's transport and energy

infrastructure, coupled with an ever-increasing number of Small to Medium Sized Enterprises and a growing number of industrial operations is taking its toll on the country's natural resources and ecosystems. We are now faced with a situation that calls for a systemic change needed to ensure that such rapid economic development is not short-sighted, and does not come at the price of destroying our forests, rivers and other natural resources.

Saying that we are, here in Laos, at the front-lines of the battle for saving the region's ecosystems, is not much of an overstatement, after all, but we remain hopeful that with the support of the network, our counterparts and our partners, we will continue to play our part in the solution, and that we will achieve our vision for this beautiful country.

**SOMPONE BOUASAVANH
COUNTRY DIRECTOR
WWF LAOS**



PRACTICES

For A Future In Harmony With Nature

We are living in a time of unprecedented risk but also unparalleled opportunity for the future of our planet and our society. It is also a time when the science is clearer than ever before, awareness is at an all-time high, commitments are more ambitious and innovation more impactful. These opportunities are why WWF, together with existing and new partners, is transforming the way we work. We will drive powerful and influential partnerships, innovative solutions, sustainable financing, in-depth monitoring and large-scale mobilization of people. From numerous initiatives, priority areas and priority species, the entire WWF Network now focuses on six major goals - forests, oceans, wildlife, food, climate & energy, and freshwater – and three key drivers of environmental problems – markets, finance and governance. Here in the Laos Country Office, we focus primarily on Forests, Wildlife, Fresh Water and Climate & Energy.

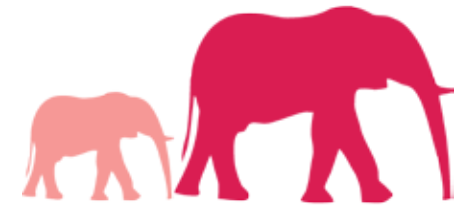
FORESTS

The integrity of the world's most important forests, including their benefits to human well-being, is enhanced and maintained. WWF Laos is contributing with work on Sustainable Rattan, Sustainable Timber Trade and inclusive international timber trade negotiations (FLEGT). **2016 Key Results:** The Lao Government has issued a ban for all raw and semi-processed timber export based on the CarBi study. An action plan for strengthening cooperation between Laos – Vietnam for the prevention of illegal timber trade has been developed and approved by the government with the help of WWF.



WILDLIFE

The world's most iconic and endangered species are secured and recovering in the wild. WWF Laos is contributing with preserving the Asian Elephants and the Eld's Deer and fighting International Wildlife Trade. **2016 Key Results:** Government banned illegal wildlife trade. Zero elephants poached in the Nam Pouy Protected Area and Eld's Deer project is now completed. WWF increased the Eld's Deer population in the Sanctuary from 6-20 estimated in 2006 individuals to 80-100 as of today.



CLIMATE & ENERGY

A global shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient future can be achieved in Laos. **2016 Key Results:** WWF contributed in 2016 with initiatives such the launch of the Power Sector Vision 2050 Report for Laos, alongside technical workshops for government and private sector partners on the report's findings, as well as a mini-university forum series in partnership with the National University of Laos.



FRESH WATER

Freshwater ecosystems and flow regimes in key river basins provide water for people and nature. WWF Laos is contributing with projects on Community Fisheries in 4 provinces. **2016 Key Results:** 1,500 ha of protected rivers areas in over 240 Fish Conservation Zones, 39 ha of protected transboundary river area in 8 FCZs on the Mekong River main stream.



FORESTS



WILDLIFE

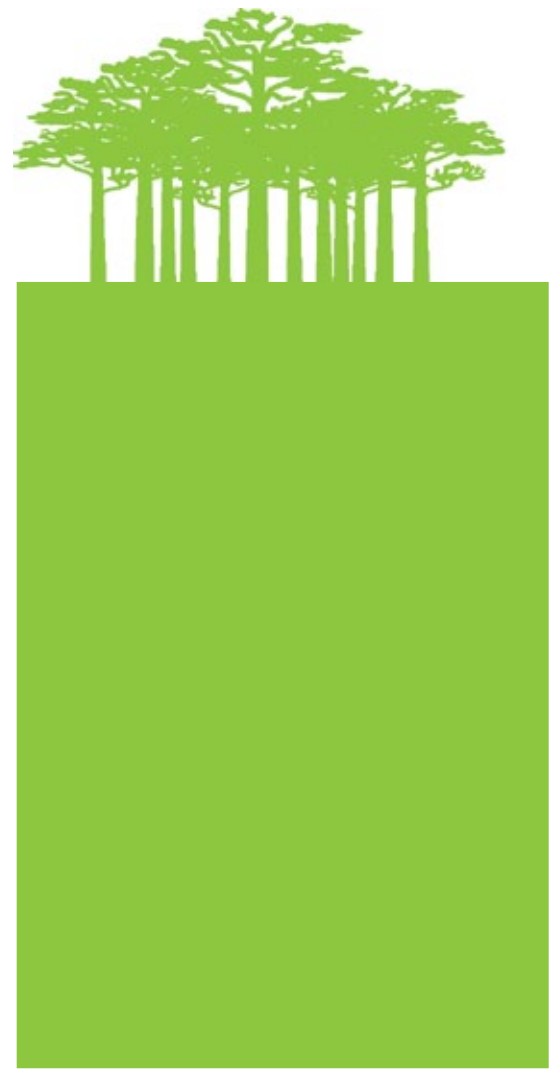


CLIMATE & ENERGY



FRESH WATER

AR16 LAOS
WWF Greater Mekong



FORESTS

FORESTS



51,757 ha of High Conservation Value Forest mapped

27,584 ha of Rattan & Bamboo forests managed by local communities



More than 5,500 ha of natural forest are currently FSC certified for rattan & bamboo

25,594 USD of alternative additional income generated

SUSTAINABLE RATTAN

Background: WWF's sustainable rattan project operates in Bolikhamxay, Xekong and Saravan provinces. The objective of the project is to secure credible forest certification, establish a more sustainable rattan production supply chain, and develop sustainable financing for small and medium sized enterprises to invest in the supply chain.

2016 main results: 51,757 ha of forest in Rattan project sites are currently benefitting the livelihoods of local communities. With the inception of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified Bamboo production, potential production sites in the Central Annamites Landscape were mapped. The landscape is a key area, but it is under logging pressure due to rapid economic development. 5,727 ha of Rattan with FSC certification and management plan during the year were achieved. 27,584 ha of Rattan & Bamboo forest are under Community management. In addition, 7 Villages (approx. 8,270 ha) were inventoried for 3 commercial species of Bamboo and Rattan.



Young Woman Weaving Rattan Stool In Rattan Production Village, Eastern Laos

Practice | FORESTS

Drivers and Cross-Cutting Themes | MARKETS

Trained **20 CSOs** to further ensure their engagement in the FLEGT process and wood supply chain systems in Laos.

Management Committee formed, with **20** government officials from related line ministries



Organized a **bilateral meeting** between Laos and Vietnam governments, which led to the drafting of an **action plan** for strengthening cooperation for the prevention of illegal timber trade.

8 Community Based Forest Committees being established as a way of building broader awareness and engagement in VPA process

Forest Law Enforcement
Governance and Trade

FLEGT

Background: FLEGT is the European Union's programme to reduce illegal logging by strengthening sustainable and legal forest management, improving governance, and promoting trade in legally produced timber. FLEGT works through Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs), which are legally binding trade agreements between the European Union (EU) and a timber-producing country outside the EU.

2016 main results: The FLEGT VPA technical working group, organized by WWF and partners and comprising multiple stakeholders including the Government of Laos, drafted the definition of Timber Legality. The definition is a key step for the future implementation of the Timber Legality Assessment System (TLAS). Moreover, an action plan for strengthening cooperation between Laos and Vietnam for the prevention of illegal timber trade has been developed and approved by the government with the help of WWF.



In 2016, The Lao Government has instructed authorities in charge to inspect wood processing plants nationwide to ensure that plant operations meet all production and environmental quality standards.

Practice | **FORESTS**

Drivers and Cross-Cutting Themes | GOVERNANCE



FORESTS



WILDLIFE



FORESTS & WILDLIFE

10 villages with sustainable land use plans

6 Rangers supported for 264 days-persons of patrolling



133,500 ha of Saola habitat protected

19 camera traps set up for biodiversity monitoring

Carbon & Bioiversity CARBI

Background: Aimed at halting deforestation, through forest protection and sustainable use of forest resources, and preserving the unique species diversity, the CARBI programme covers an area of more than 200,000 ha of forest along a vital mountain range that links Laos and Vietnam in South-east Asia.

2016 main results: The Lao Government has issued a strict ban for all raw and semi-processed timber export, based on a 2015 CARBI study. The national assembly has approved the Timber export ban after the head of DOFI (Department Of Forest Inspection) presented the WWF CARBI study.



Serow, Camera Trap Photo, Nam Pui Protected Area, Northwestern Laos.

Practice | FORESTS
WILDLIFE



0 Elephants poached

188,000 ha of Asian elephant, leopard and gibbon habitat effectively protected



30 rangers active and supported for 117 days-person of patrolling

1000 firecrackers provided and 1.8km of electric fence set up to avoid Human Elephants conflicts

NAM POUY Protected Area

Background: Nam Pouy National Protected Area (NPA) is located in Xayabouly Province in northwest Laos. This 188,000 ha site was identified as a top priority for elephant conservation by the government at a national elephant conservation meeting in 2008. WWF has been working on elephant issues in Laos since 2005, but given the government's prioritisation of Nam Pouy, WWF set out to develop a project in the protected area.

2016 main results: The elephant project site of Nam Pouy has recorded no dead Elephants found from poaching or Human Elephant Conflict. Human Elephant conflict in Nam Pouy has been minimized with only 0.2 ha crop fields damaged by elephants; now the area is protected by electric fences.



Ranger Team On Patrol, Nam Pouy Protected Area, Northwestern Laos.

Practice | **FORESTS**
WILDLIFE



The Sanctuary has increased its Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) score by **+15%** compared to the previous year. value is **46**.

Tripled the population of the Eld's Deer, reaching **100+** individuals in 2016.



Over **93,000 ha** of protected areas are currently maintained and management continuously improved.

45 villagers from local communities voluntarily patrolling the sanctuary.

ELD'S DEER Conservation Project

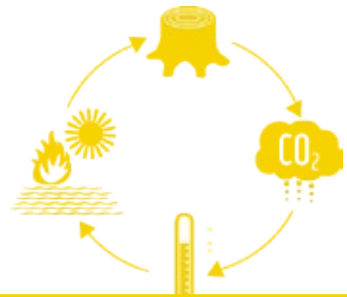
Background: The only known population of Eld's Deer in Laos occurs within the Savannakhet Eld's deer sanctuary, founded in 2005 in partnership with the Savannakhet provincial government and several NGOs. Threats to the ecological integrity of the landscape in which the Eld's deer sanctuary is located are escalating. Of particular concern is rapid habitat conversion of the dry forest to make way for high-intensity agriculture.

2016 main results: The Eld's Deer Sanctuary (approx. 93,000 ha) now has a functioning and trained patrolling team. The Sanctuary has increased its METT score by 15% compared to the previous year, achieving a current value of 46. Approx. 193,511 ha of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) was mapped in FY16, including 93,000 ha in the Eld's Deer Sanctuary – which is now under consideration by the government for upgrade to a National Protected Area (NPA).

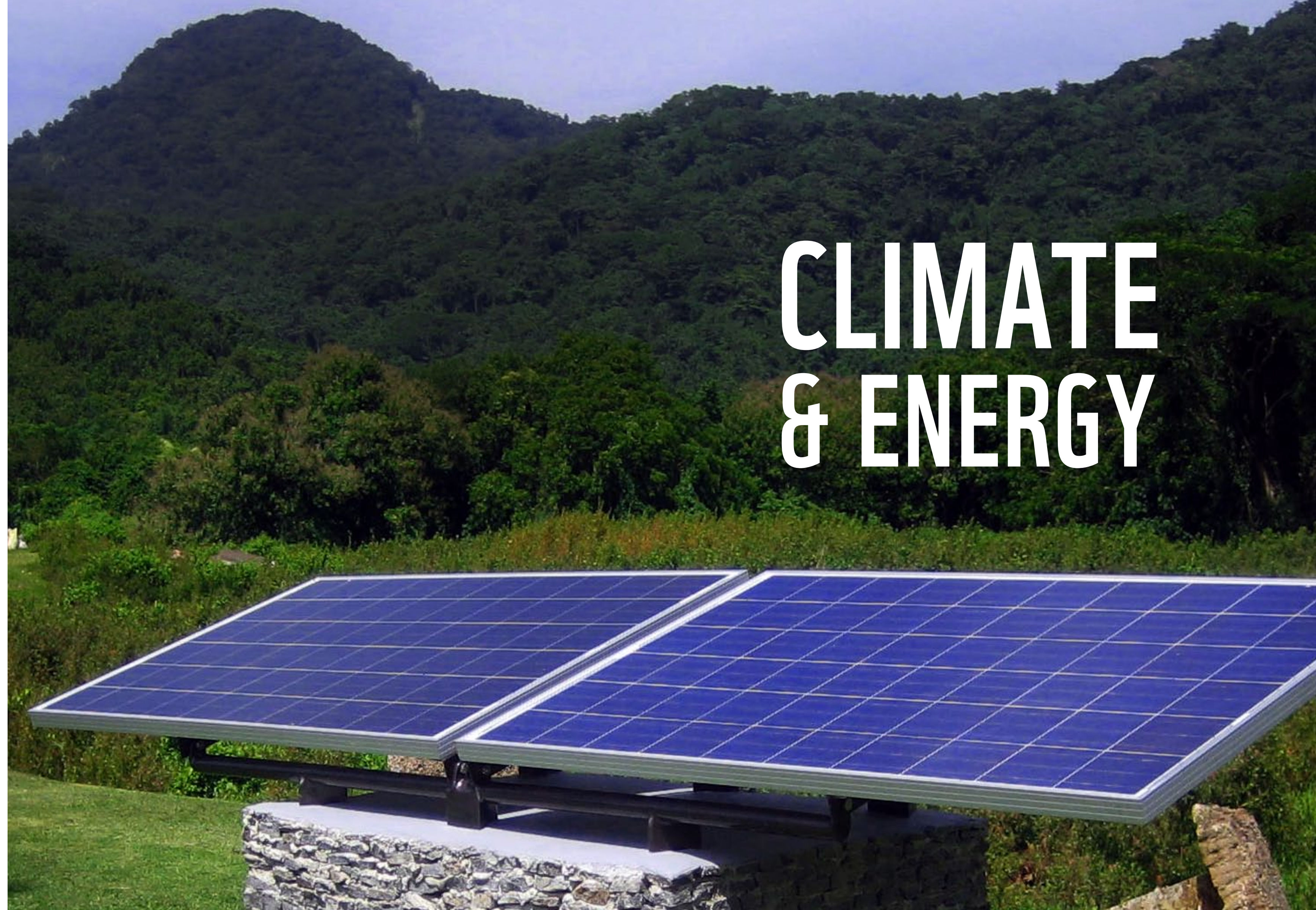


Rucervus eldii, also known as Eld's Deer. Adult Male, Southern Laos.

Practice | **FORESTS**
WILDLIFE



CLIMATE & ENERGY



**CLIMATE
& ENERGY**



Launched the Power Sector Vision report in Vientiane with extensive media coverage

Conducted a series of **technical workshops** on the Power Sector Vision with government and private sector entities



Conducted **four mini-forums** on renewable energy at the National University of Laos.

WWF's Power Sector Vision **integrated** into the National Power Strategy, focusing on a 100% shift towards sustainable renewable energy.

POWER SECTOR VISION 2050

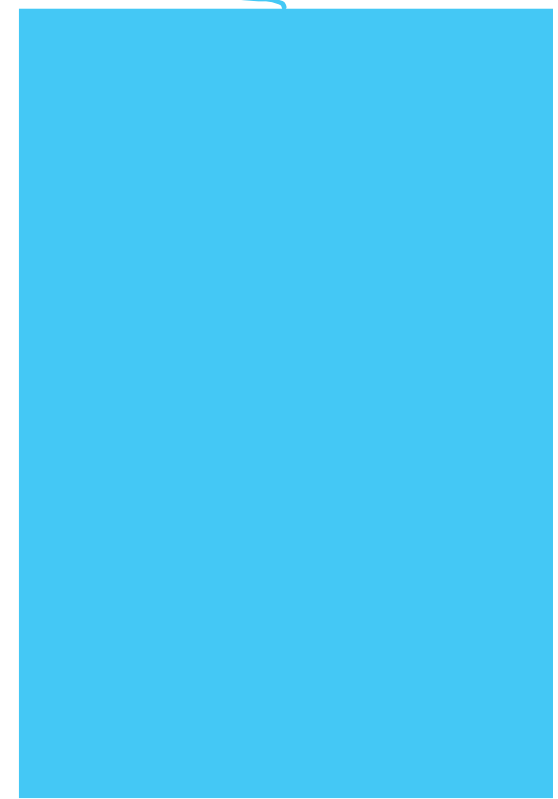
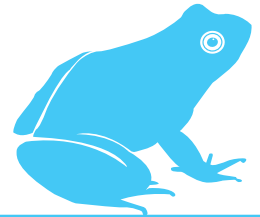
Background: Renewable energy prices have decreased dramatically, in particular for solar photovoltaic (PV) and wind, biomass, and geothermal power. For these reasons, WWF has developed a Renewable Energy Vision that aims to invigorate outdated power sector development plans that are often based on technologies from the 1950's or before.

2016 main results: The Study demonstrated that by 2050, Laos could have an energy mix comprising at least 76% of low environmental impact renewables, where solar and wind power could provide 30% and 19% of the country's power needs, respectively, while energy efficiency could further reduce Laos' electricity needs by 20% in the same period. The study was launched in Vientiane at a large event that was attended by representatives from a number of CSOs, the Lao Government, the Lao State Power Company, as well as several entities from the private sector.



Lao National University Forums And Practical Training Sessions on Renewable Energy to Combat Climate Change, Vientiane.

Practice | **CLIMATE & ENERGY**



FRESH WATER



**FRESH
WATER**



39 ha of protected transboundary river area in **8 FCZs** on the Mekong River main stream

Supported **194** days of river patrolling in Siphandone



10 new fish conservation zones established for a total of **166 ha** of rivers protected

8 freshwater species' populations monitored in Siphandone

COMMUNITY FISHERIES

Background: Securing people's livelihoods while reducing pressure on natural aquatic resources is the central objective of the joint WWF-Oxfam Novib Community Fisheries projects. These interventions are based right in the heart of the community. Seeking to strengthen local authorities' and villagers' ability to sustainably manage their freshwater resources, the project has the potential to improve the lives of people.

2016 main results: 10 new Fish Conservation Zones created in Central Laos with 70 fishermen trained. A total of 258 (1659 ha) of existing FCZs created by the project continue to be operational, while 39 ha of transboundary river areas in 8 FCZs on the Mekong River main stream were kept protected. Moreover, the project secured approx. USD 1M for Laos and Thailand with an MoU recently being signed with the Lao Government for the implementation of additional transboundary protected river areas along the Mekong river for the next 3 years.



Villagers Fishing On The Meking River, Southern Laos.

Practice | **FRESH WATER**



120 provincial and district officers trained in co-management of fisheries

72,000 local community residents benefitting from fisheries co-management projects



142 new fish conservation zones established as of 2016

30 water quality monitoring sites tested for impacts from coffee processing

PARTNERSHIPS

Background: The WWF-OXFAM partnership in Laos is recognized as a success by all stakeholders involved in project activities. This is evidenced through the Lao Government's continued engagement and support at all levels, from districts to national ministries. It is also evidenced by the desire and willingness of local communities and local authorities to continue and expand projects. The strategic advantages of this partnership include pooling together technical and financial resources, bringing forth both organisations' strengths and achieving balanced synergies, while delivering a multidisciplinary programme on protecting Laos' rich natural resources.

2016 main results: Increased fish stocks improved food security and nutrition for local communities, while increasing capacity of village level management to manage fisheries through the establishment of Fisheries Management Committees (or FMCs). The partnership also helped communities through trainings on livestock rearing and vegetable cultivation, and handicrafts production such as weaved fabrics, which are sold for extra income.



The Oxfam & WWF On-Going Partnership Continued In 2016 With Collaborations On Sustainable Water Use In Coffee Production , Community Fisheries And Gender Equity.

Practice | **FRESH WATER**



Provided equipment to support community enterprises (handicrafts, agriculture & tourism promotion.)

Organized marketing trainings based on specific vocational skills.



Formed women's production groups and conducted vocational training based on identified needs.

Provided conservation and water governance-related technical skills and knowledge training to women leaders.

GENDER EQUITY

Background: Gender inclusion plays a fundamental role in effectively bringing about sustained positive change to communities' livelihoods and quality of life. By creating an environment that fosters women's capacities in natural resources management and alternative income generation, gender equity projects of this nature drive sustainable development, through increased and more effective participation of women in the community's decision-making process.

2016 main results: Women who participated in the project learnt about the importance of reducing pressure on natural resources, and engaged with new opportunities for alternative income generation. Efforts on the ground to raise community awareness about the importance of gender equity also reiterated the importance of women's roles in the management of the community's natural resources, and enhanced their legitimacy as leaders.



Women fishing at a pond nearby their village, Southern Laos.

Practice | Cross-Cutting



Surface water quality **decreases** after coffee washing season. Overall the surface water quality is healthy, excluding several sites that indicate significant environmental impacts.

Underground water at sites with nearby coffee concessions, plantations, processing plants, factories, housing and hotels are **contaminated** by human activity.



Improved capacity of local stakeholders to conduct water monitoring measurements and water quality assessments before and after the washed coffee processing season.

30 water quality monitoring sites tested for impacts from coffee processing

SUSTAINABLE WATER IN COFFEE PRODUCTION

Background: Abundant rainfall and fertile soil of the Bolaven Plateau makes it well suited to coffee production, generating more than 90% of the national crop (30,000 tonnes of green coffee beans). In a country which remains heavily dependent on foreign aid, coffee makes an important contribution to the nation's economy. However, studies have revealed that untreated waste from coffee processing is affecting the quality of surface water. The Arabica Coffee wet-processing method requires a huge amount of water to produce the end product of clean green coffee beans, and it is estimated that 23 million litres of untreated coffee processing effluent flows into rivers on the Plateau each year.



Green Coffee Beans, Southern Laos.

2016 main results: A four-month study commissioned through the WWF-Laos & Oxfam partnership disseminated results and improved capacity of local stakeholders to conduct water monitoring measurements and water quality assessments before and after the washed coffee processing season. The study also explored engagement strategies to connect livelihood improvement and conservation. The study further assessed coffee-related encroachment in the Dong Hua Sao National Biodiversity Conservation Area (NBCA).

Practice | **FRESH WATER**



762 students in green education programmes by 2016

3 schools selected as 'model green schools' as positive examples for other schools around Laos.



1 new Green School this year

6 Green schools active in Southern Laos.

GREEN SCHOOLS

Background: The Green Schools Programme focuses on building environmental knowledge and Fish Biodiversity and Conservation for primary school students. With storybooks on fish conservation, tree planting activities, and taking care of flower gardens on school grounds, students develop early knowledge about the environment. Three of these schools will soon be selected as 'model schools' as positive examples for others around Laos.

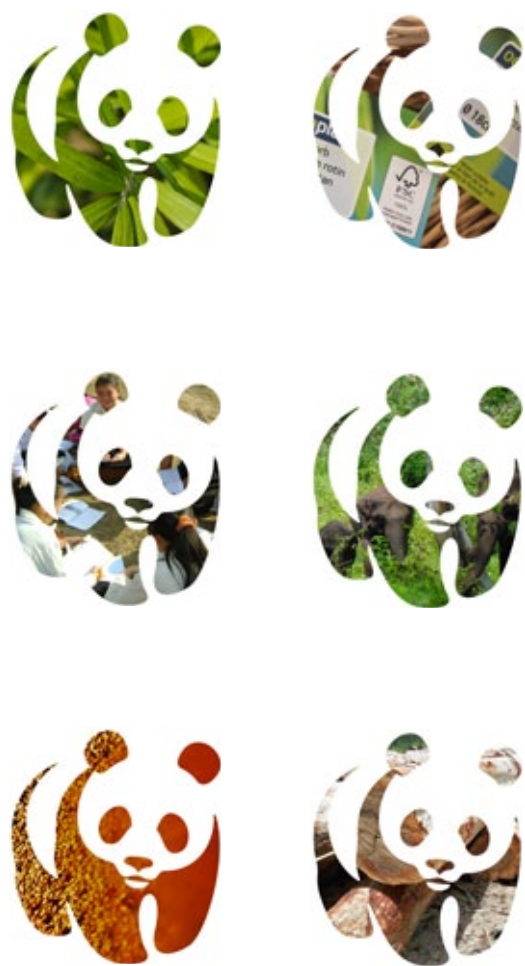
2016 main results: 7 Green school teaching environments and biodiversity conservation education programmes are now active in the Mekong Flooded forest with approximately 762 pupils, with one programme in a new school this year.



Green School Pupils Reading A Mekong Biodiversity Poster In A Group.

Practice | Cross-Cutting

LAOS



FORESTS



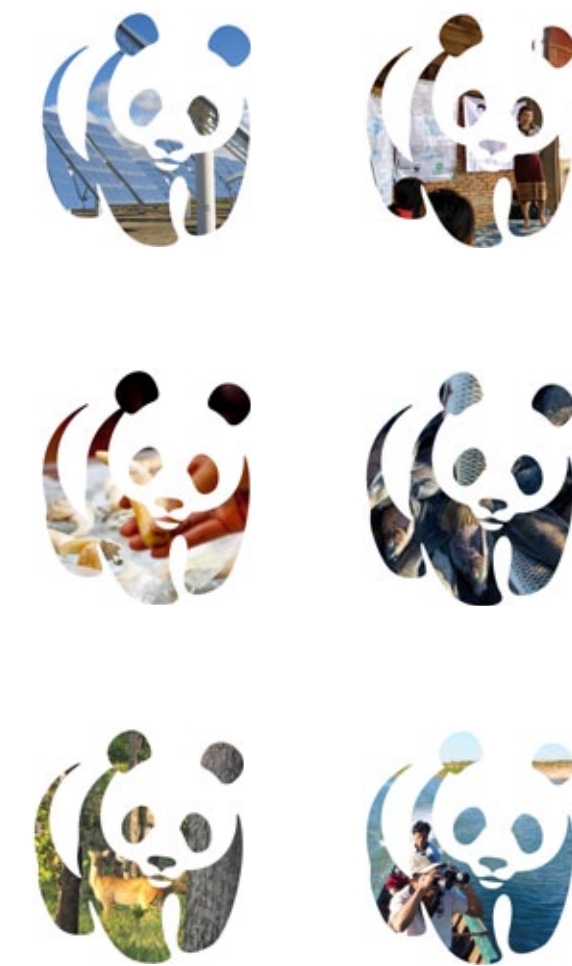
WILDLIFE



FRESH WATER



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