



WWF

PARTNERSHIPS

LAOS

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## WWF-OXFAM Partnership in Laos: Gains, Achievements, And Way Forward

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.

LAOS



# WWF-OXFAM:

## SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP, TANGIBLE RESULTS

### Community Fisheries and Gender Equity

An example of this successful partnership is the COMFISH project which included a key component on gender integration, whereby men and women were encouraged to participate in the project on an equal footing. The gender component focused on ensuring women's representation in Fisheries Management Committees (FMCs) and in all decisions related to the use of aquatic resources, while encouraging a genuine shift towards sustainable practices. As women are the main players in maintaining the household, inclusion of their knowledge, experiences, and opinion ensures that critical factors impacting resources management are addressed from their stance.

In the longer-term, livestock rearing, which was supported by the project, will also bring in additional revenue when animals are sold, with a portion of the proceeds re-invested into the village revolving fund. This benefits the community as funds can be used for the maintenance of village schools, roads, communal buildings, and health facilities.

Through COMFISH, local communities also learnt "floy" fish tagging to mark and recapture fish, tracking the movements and growth of fish released in Fish Conservation Zones (FCZs). Fish from FCZs along the Nam Kading River have been recaptured up to 10 km from the FCZs where they were first stocked. This is evidence that FCZs can not only protect fish, but also create a positive spill-over effect whereby protected fish within a certain zone can mature and move to areas beyond it, allowing local communities to benefit from increased fish stocks.

### COMFISH

Project initiated in 2008 and received support from OXFAM since 2011

Completed three phases of implementation ending in 2015

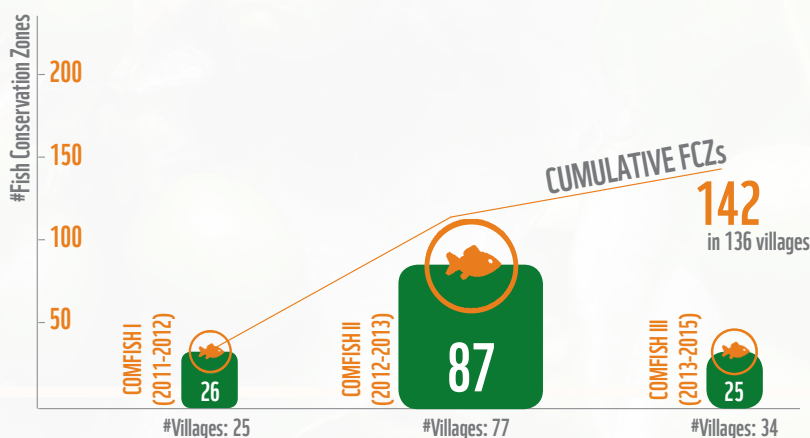
Together with the Department of Livestock and Fisheries of the Ministry of Agriculture, the WWF-OXFAM partnership increased the number of fish conservation zones throughout central and southern Laos by more than 140

### Impacts of FCZs

- Increased fish stocks
- Improved food security and nutrition for local communities
- Increased capacity of village level management to manage fisheries through the establishment of Fisheries Management Committees (or FMCs).

### Livelihood activities targeting women

- Technical training on livestock rearing and vegetable cultivation
- Handicrafts production: fabrics sold for extra income
- Provision of weaving equipment
- Processing of fish-based products



WWF has been working in Laos for over 30 years, and has developed a strong relationship with national, provincial and district authorities, and works extensively on the ground with local communities. These relationships have enabled WWF-Laos to improve conservation efforts, from operating development projects to influencing policies towards more sustainable use and management of the country's rich natural resources.



Many OXFAM offices have been operational in Laos for over 20 years. It was during the course of the past six years that Oxfam Novib, in particular, strengthened its partnership with WWF-Laos through implementing like-minded environment protection projects. These include projects on natural resources conservation, protected area management, gender integration, livelihood improvement, and capacity building on resources management and advocacy.



## Coffee Production: Improvements In Water Resources Management

### SUSTAINABLE WATER USE IN COFFEE PRODUCTION

Improved technical skills on water sampling and analysis

Knowledge gained by authorities on the most severely affected locations

Local communities trained on cleaner methods of coffee washing and wastewater treatment

### STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Pooling together technical and financial resources

Bringing forth individual organisations' strengths and achieving balanced synergies

Delivering a multidisciplinary programme on protecting Laos' rich natural resources for the benefit of the livelihoods of its people

Effecting science-based management

Providing alternative livelihoods

Influencing better natural resources management practices

In the coffee-growing Bolaven Plateau of southern Laos, local authorities were sensitized to the need for regular water quality monitoring, in order to keep the impacts of coffee processing on nearby streams and underground water in-check.

The project helped increase the capacity of local authorities in monitoring water quality. This plays a fundamental role in protecting not only ecosystems and fish stocks, but also public health. Water monitoring also improves business practices of water-based industries, and helps advocate for more effective policy execution.



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### The Partnership

In Laos, WWF has a long history of working to protect the country's rich biodiversity and driving conservation efforts on the ground. As conservation cannot be successful without addressing socio-economic factors, WWF and OXFAM, through their common objectives, are synergetic partners for initiatives that promote holistic, effective and sustainable development.

# Way Forward

Maintain partnership and collaboration on additional research, including fish stock assessment and water quality monitoring

Collaborate with universities and academia at large to improve skill-transfer to local practitioners and communities, and to help drive science-based management

Establish new FCZs and increase communities' and local authorities' capacity to manage river protected areas, with improved co-management structures

Support initiatives to ensure that alternative livelihoods and income generating opportunities remain within reach of communities

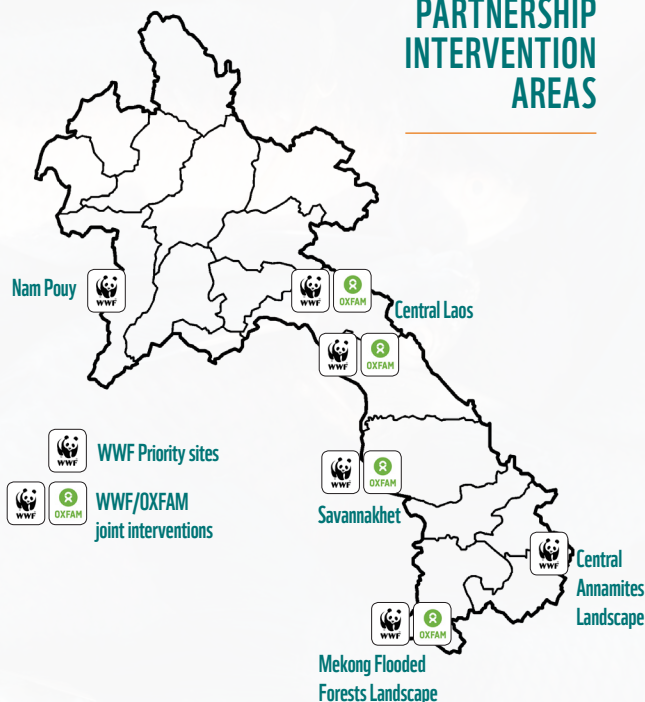
Strengthen ties to the agro-industrial sector coupled with the partnership's compounded expertise, to further promote a green economy in private-public partnerships

Continue finding common solutions with businesses in order to modify business practices, where revenues can be generated to satisfaction with minimal impact on the environment

## Results in Numbers

- 142 fish conservation zones established
- 120 provincial and district officers trained in co-management of fisheries
- 72,000 local community residents benefitting from fisheries co-management projects
- 30 water quality monitoring sites tested for impacts from coffee processing

## PARTNERSHIP INTERVENTION AREAS



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## There are many opportunities to replicate the results achieved by this partnership, and to expand these benefits to other parts of Laos.

The partnership will continue its strong working relationship with national, provincial and district authorities, civil society organisations and the community. Community-based resource management is a low-cost and effective method for local communities to protect their water, fish, and other natural resources. Advantages can be enjoyed within the short-term; they can also have long-lasting positive impacts if resources are properly managed. Community empowerment and balanced gender inclusion in natural resources management are excellent strategies that will be used to sustain community engagement.