

Bush, S.R. (2004) Scales and Sales: changing social and spatial fish trading networks in the ...

Bush, S.R. (2004) Scales and Sales: changing social and spatial fish trading networks in the Siiphandone fishery, Lao PDR. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 25(1), 32-50.

The Siphandone wetland in Champasak province, Lao PDR, is one of the most important fisheries in the Mekong River basin. The resource, situated along the border with Cambodia, supports the livelihoods of around 65000 inhabitants who are mainly semi-subsistence rice farmers or fishers. In January 2000 the provincial authority was given a special dispensation by the Government of Laos (GoL) to allow the importation of Cambodian fish through Khong district for the purposes of exporting it to Thailand. This was in large part due to the government's policy of food self-sufficiency under which the export of Lao fish previously remained illegal. This paper examines how the implementation of this law influenced existing legal and illegal trade networks from the Siphandone fishery by comparing one study conducted before, and one study carried out after the change. In doing so the transition of the fishery from a local, food-important resource to an increasingly regional, market-oriented resource is examined. Conclusions are then made as to the impact that this change has had on the livelihoods of fishers and traders involved in the fishery.