

September 8, 2022

## Improving Natural Capital Management in Lao PDR - A Discussion on the Methodology, Process and Lessons Learned

[Seminar Recording](#)



*Rice fields in Laos (Photo credit: Kjetil Taksdal)*

Natural capital is a major component of Lao PDR's total wealth and is an important component of the country's economy and source of employment for approximately a third of the labor force. Yet, natural capital is being depleted, posing a significant challenge to achieving poverty reduction and sustainable development objectives.

[GPS](#) is working with countries such as Lao to strengthen the management and accounting of natural capital to promote sustainable development and livelihoods.

A part of the ongoing GPS Seminar Series, this webinar discussed: the value of Laos' natural capital and its contribution to the economy; (ii) strategies maximize the potential of Laos' natural resources; and (iii)

Government efforts to manage environmental data to support decision-making.

## Speakers



**Richard Damania** is the Chief Economist of the Sustainable Development Practice Group, effective March 1, 2020. He has held several positions in the World Bank including as Senior Economic Advisor in the Water Practice, Lead Economist in the Africa Region's Sustainable Development Department, in the South Asia and Latin America and Caribbean Regions of the World Bank. His work has spanned across multiple sectors and has helped the World Bank become an acknowledged thought-leader on matters relating to environment, water and the economy. Prior to joining the World Bank, he was Professor of Economics at the University of Adelaide. He has published extensively with over 100 papers in scientific journals, has held numerous advisory positions with governments and in international organizations and serves on the Editorial Board of several prestigious scientific journals.



**Salika Chanthavong** is a Deputy Director General of Economics and Statistics Department in the Lao Statistics Bureau. She oversees the National Accounts division and Sector and Prices Division, and she is also a founder of the environment statistics development in Lao PDR. Salika holds a master's degree in international economics and Development from ANU.



**Bjorn Larsen** is an environmental economist and consultant and former staff of the World Bank with over thirty years of professional experience from more than fifty countries. His primary fields of expertise include environmental health and natural resource valuation, cost-benefit analysis, and environmental priority setting. He has also provided training and conference presentations in over twenty countries.

## Discussant



**Thatheva Saphangthong** is a senior natural resource management planner with experience in area-based planning, watershed planning, landscape and land use planning, strategic environmental assessment and participatory upland development. He initiated coordination on the information knowledge management focusing on cross-sectoral information systems linkage to all key datasets in the Lao PDR for the past fifteen years. He holds the position of Deputy Director General at the Department of Agricultural Land Management. Currently, he leads land use planning, agricultural land development land zoning, and land investment, as well as Responsible Agriculture Investment (RIA) and Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT) implementation in the Lao PDR.