MEKONG WETLANDS GOVERNACE: CHALLENGES, PROGRESS AND THE WAY FORWARD

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GOVERNANCE IS ABOUT....

- ***who*** **has the power to make decisions that affect wetlands and wetland users and *how* those decisions are made**

- ***who*** **has the power and responsibility to implement those decisions and *how* those decisions are implemented**

- ***who*** **is held accountable, and *how*, for implementation.**

WETLANDS GOVERNANCE

Wetlands Governance is:

the interaction of policies, laws and other norms; institutions; and processes; through which a society exercises powers and responsibilities to make and implement decisions affecting wetlands and wetland users, and to hold decision makers accountable.

GOVERNANCE HAS COMPONENTS AND PRINCIPLES

	Principles of Governance			
Components of Governance	**Transparency**	**Predictability/ "Rule of Law"**	**Accountability**	**Participation**
Laws and other norms				
Institutions				
Processes				

Policy and Law

- Lack of clear and specific national wetlands policy
- Lack of specific laws for wetlands
- Many other laws affect wetlands
- Many Ramsar sites have dual legal status .
- Many wetlands have no legal status at all and are effectively open-access resources
- Local user rights often not legally recognised

Institutions

- National Wetland Committees
- National agency mandates unclear/overlap
- Protected Area Management Boards
- Provincial Wetland Committees
- Local government
- Community Institutions

Processes

- X-sectoral planning
- Promoting civil society/community participation in wetlands planning and management
- Co-/community-based management
- Participatory and Integrated Assessments
- Tai Baan and Salaphoum
- Traditional management practices breaking down because of modern external pressures

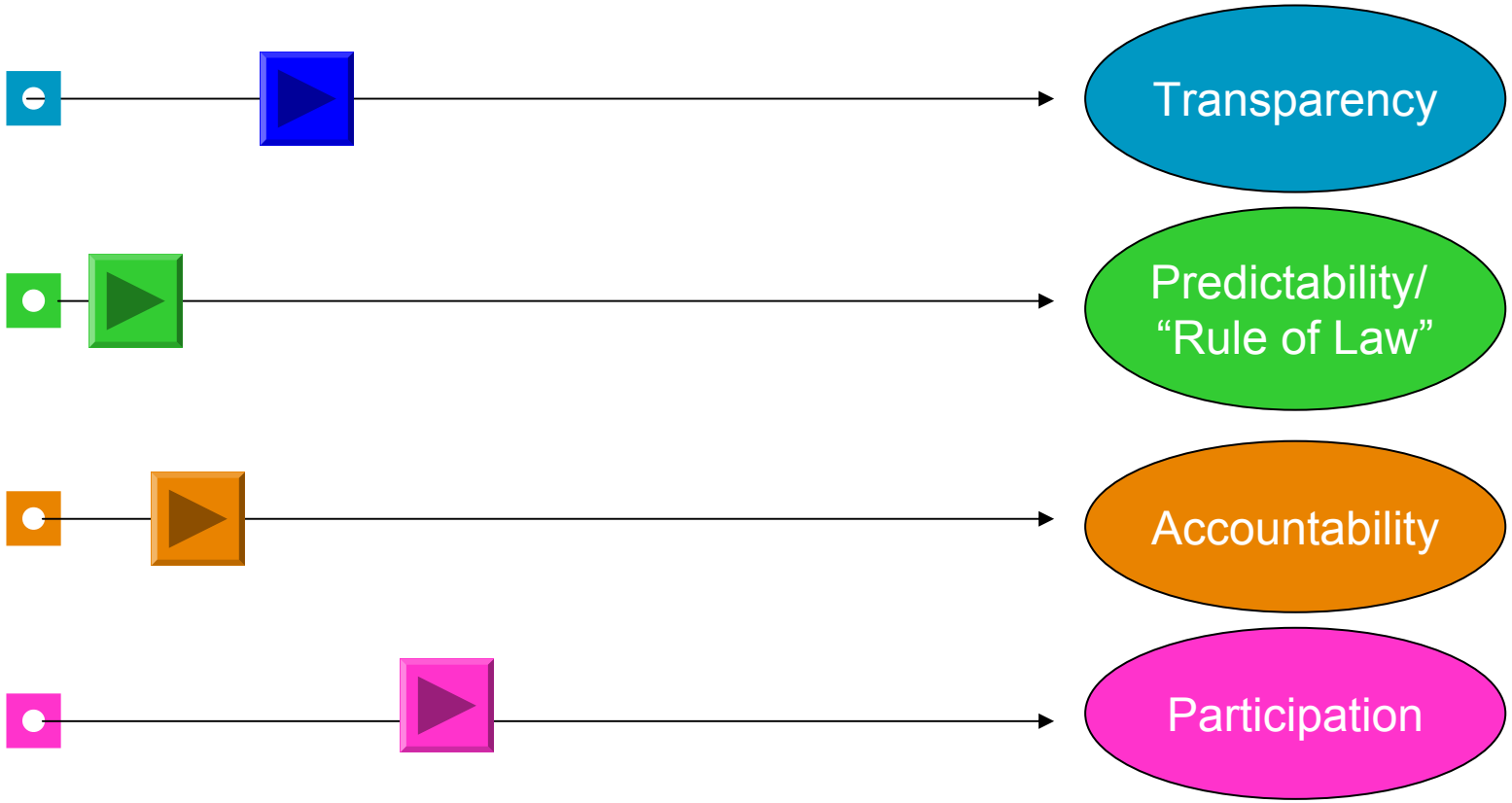
Recent Progress

- Cambodia Community Fisheries Sub-Decree 2006
- Laos Fisheries Law 2009
- Vietnam Decree 120 – CS involvement in RBOs
- Provincial/local new institutional arrangements for Beung Kong Long/Koot Ting Thailand, Beung Kiat Ngong Lao PDR, Tam Giang & Tram Chim Vietnam
- >100 fisheries co-management agreements Laos

FINAL THOUGHTS ON THE WAY FORWARD

- There is still a need for all Mekong countries to have comprehensive National Wetlands Policies
- There is still a need for all Mekong countries to have laws that recognise local community rights and responsibilities to manage “open access” wetlands
- Attempts to foster multi-sector collaboration should be vigorously pursued at provincial level
- Institutional innovation at the local level has frequently been the key to improved wetland biodiversity & livelihood outcomes

Governance Track



THANK YOU!