

# Review of: "The Political Ecologies of the Tonle Sap: Global, Regional and National Framework for Conservation and Development"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The author has demonstrable deep knowledge of the social-ecology of the Tonle Sap Lake, which is a strength. However, there are ways in which the manuscript can be improved:

1. Currently, the results and discussion section is very descriptive. There is very little link to the political ecology conceptual framework that the author had introduced earlier. While the descriptions of the socio-cultural ecological system of the TSL are fascinating, it is difficult to see how this relates to power, politics and policies. Only in section 4.6.2 does the author discuss the actors, but it lacks a more nuanced analysis of their interrelationships with the TSL (power dynamics, scales of influence etc). This could perhaps be done in a separate Discussion section, which the first two paragraphs of the Conclusion could contribute to.
2. In terms of showing how the results link to the political ecology conceptual framework, a diagram or a schematic might be helpful.
3. That said, the author may also want to consider other frameworks more suitable to the results, such as the social-ecological framework or other frameworks in environmental governance. I would recommend Kenney-Lazar et al (2023)'s paper on relational environmental governance.
4. The manuscript would benefit from foregrounding or signposting some of the issues mentioned in the Results section. For example, why are hydropower dams an issue? The reader is left wondering when reading section 4.4, and the answer only comes in the first sentence of section 4.5. Is fishing the crux of the issue? The reader is left wondering about the significance of section 4.3.2 as a result - perhaps it would do better in a separate section (e.g. Section 3) that describes the socio-ecology of the TSL. In this way, Section 4 can be used to answer the core question of this paper (which is yet to be defined) about the power, politics and policies in the TSL.
5. In the introduction, the mention of the 1995 MRC Agreement is rather abrupt. The reader is left wondering what is the MRC (what does this acronym stand for?). Only later in the paragraph does the reader get the idea that it is some form of governance mechanism.
6. There are a few typographical errors, e.g.: (i) end of page 2, "does not reflected in market prices" ; (ii) page 4 "between 2013 and 2013", (iii) page 11 "...in general, but what..." can be replaced by "...in general: What..."

Overall, the manuscript would benefit from better linkage of the results to the conceptual framework, perhaps through a standalone discussion section. Given the author's deep knowledge of the TSL, this is definitely possible.