



มหาวิทยาลัยแม่ฟ้าหลวง • Mae Fah Luang University
สำนักวิชานวัตกรรมสังคม
 School of Social Innovation
 French-Upper Mekong Sub-region Academic Cooperation Centre

Social Innovation in Southeast Asia: From Control of Change to Socio-Ecological Transformation

Workshop co-organised by IRASEC,
 French-Upper Mekong Sub-Region Academic Cooperation Center (MFU),
 Asian Research Center for International Development (ARCID, MFU),
 and School of Social Innovation (MFU),
 as part of the 2023 “Year of Innovation (YOI)” programme,
 French Embassy in Thailand

Venue: M-Square Building, Mae Fah Luang University

1 st November, 2023	
09.00-09.15	Welcome Speech and Objective of Workshop
Morning	Moderator: Prof. Catherine BARON
09.15-09.55	Session 1 “Preliminary Survey on the Consumption Economy in Transboundary Haze Crisis” — Asst. Prof. Pathompong MANOHAN (School of Social Innovation, MFU) “Chiang Rai Partnership Model for Haze Crisis and Management” — Dr. Nichan SINGHAPUTARGUN (School of Social Innovation, MFU)
09.55-10.35	Session 2 Prof. Chayan VADDHANAPHUTI (RCSD, Chiang Mai Univ.)
10.35-10.55	Coffee Break
10.55-11.35	Session 3 “Community Based Economy and Social Entrepreneurship. Actions by Omah Lor and Yayasan BringIn” — Prof. Xavier GUILLOT (PASSAGES, Univ. Bordeaux) and Dwi PERTIWI (Yayasan BringIn)
11.35-12.15	Discussion
12.15-13.45	Lunch





Afternoon	Moderator: Dr. Chalongrat CHAROENSRI (School of Social Innovation, MFU)
13.45-14.25	<p>Session 4</p> <p>“The Role and Challenges of Lancang-Mekong Cooperation in the De-Securitization of Water Resources in the Mekong River Basin” — Yunke ZHAI & Simon Michael JONES (School of Sinology, MFU)</p> <p>“Nature Based Solutions for Water Governance” — Asst. Prof. Dr. Apisom INTRALAWAN (School of Management, MFU)</p>
14.25-15.05	<p>Session 5</p> <p>“EIA Ran Lab”: The Politics of EIA in Water Management of Thai State — Assist. Prof. Malee SITTHIKRIENGKRAI (RCSD, Chiang Mai Univ.)</p>
15.05-15.25	Coffee Break
15.25-16.05	<p>Session 6</p> <p>“Negotiating Social Aid for an Indigenous Society Newly Converted to Islam” — Dr. Gabriel FACAL (IRASEC)</p>
16.05-16.45	Discussion
16.45-17.00	Wrapping up
19.00	Dinner
2nd November, 2023	
09.00-10.30	<p>Work meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling scientific events • Publishing
10.30-10.45	Coffee Break
10.45-11.05	<p>“Cooperation with France: the MFU Example and Mobility Funds” — Flavie Lepoutre (French-Upper Mekong Sub-Region Academic Cooperation Center)</p>
11.05-12.00	<p>Work meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future collaboration





Addressing social innovations for sustainable development in Southeast Asia both inform on regional specificities and connect to more universal blind spots of social science research. Critical political ecology in Southeast Asia has focused on the compatibility of local access and use of ecological resources with environmental conservation (Peluso 1992), and scholars have underlined the often-ambiguous relationship between environmental policies and pro-democracy mobilizations (Elinoff and Lamb 2023). Some cases reveal contradictions over time, between direct actions (for example, supporting local communities to adapt to climate change) and failure to address systemic issues that constrain those actions (for instance, policies and actors causing climate change, cf. Hill et al 2020). Social innovation, as a process designed to more sustainable social and environmental practices and relationships is a good entry point to observe this congruence or dissociation between those two dimensions.

Social innovation is there understood as a more or less unexpected trigger for change in social organization, altering both the status of the “innovative” object and that of its designers and users. Social innovation is not only a way to grasp processes of creation, hybridization, reinterpretation and reorganization (Long 1989) it can also be understood through its political dynamic, as “an unprecedented graft, between two blurred sets, in an arena, via smugglers” (Olivier de Sardan 1993).

The degree to which projects are politicised determines the extent to which they are scaled-up, through levelling processes based on dialogue with state planners, activists, auxiliaries, and officials. In these public spaces, often agonistic (Mouffe 2013), the different stakeholders have logics and interests that do not always converge, between transformation processes and control strategies. For instance, while transboundary social movements are arenas for action where projects are constantly being redefined to bring together local demands, national contexts and transnational agendas (Borras, Edelman and Kay 2008), other participatory mechanisms aim, on the contrary, to capture initiatives or channel them into more manageable forms (Elinoff 2021). In addition, initiatives are sometimes more directly and radically constrained (Ubaldo, Caouette and Reyes 2023), as in the case of entrenched interests of extractive nature, resistant to visions for sustainable change.

To investigate those social innovations, research-action methods have also been designed through innovative fashions, under a variety of participatory methods: some currents are interested in the co-production of knowledge (Meadows et al 2015; Heis and Chayan 2020), while others take a more technicist (Jasanoff and Wynne 1998) or technocratic and economic (Ostrom 1996) approach. These methods each have their own virtues, for example, when systemic interpretations of agency contribute to reframe perspectives, while knowledge-focused and solution-oriented approaches are better suited to influence policy (Chambers et al 2021). Some approaches may also be appropriate in different stages of a change process, and further research may explore the role of certain approaches in varying contexts (Clark et al. 2016) and plural ecologies (Duile et al 2023).

On the basis of these milestones and theoretical propositions, the contributors will shed light on synergies and trade-offs between conceptual and practical, socio-technical, relational, organisational and institutional innovations rooted in the South-East Asian context. They will discuss the vernacular logics that preside over processes of selection or detour, experimentation, proposals and their unpredictable effects, as well as discursive universes, evaluation norms and conflicts of interest or values that can weigh down proposed innovations, contributing to social burdens, modes of conservation and rejection of change.





Researchers and practitioners with different angles of approach will address an array of social innovations: partnership for haze crisis management; inter-regional cooperation for the security of water resources management; nature-based solutions for water governance; participatory solutions of fishing communities threatened by dams; new lifestyles and meta-narratives in alternative settlements; and negotiations of vital yet disturbing external schemes of social aid for an indigenous society newly converted to Islam.

References

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