



SUMERNET Young Professionals

Thailand Youth Nexus

Aquatic threads: Unraveling the impacts of microplastics on Mekong's water and food security

Date: Sunday 11th August 2024

Duration: 09.30 am to 03.00 pm (BKK Time)

Format: Hybrid through:

- **Online:** Zoom meeting ([Registration Link](#))
- **Onsite Venue:** [Stockholm Environment Institute](#), Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Introduction:

The Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET) is dedicated to fostering research and collaboration for the sustainable development of the Mekong region. By engaging individuals from various countries, SUMERNET aims to build robust and impactful partnerships. One of the key components of our mission is empowering youth, who are recognized as future leaders and agents of change. Through strengthening connections at the national level, we aim to expand our influence internationally, ensuring a cohesive and collaborative approach to solving regional challenges.

This national event, themed "Aquatic threads: Unraveling the impacts of microplastics on Mekong's water and food security," serves as a crucial platform for networking and collective learning. It brings together the SUMERNET Young Professional (SYP) and young leaders in Thailand, all united by a common goal to create positive societal and environmental impacts.

Microplastics represents a significant global concern, posing serious threats to ecosystems by contaminating land, air, water, and food webs. While plastics offer numerous advantages, their extensive use has led to pervasive pollution. The degradation of plastics into microplastics severely affects the hydrosphere, including major water bodies such as the Mekong River, thereby compromising water quality and biodiversity. Furthermore, microplastics infiltrate the food chain, impacting the health of various species.

Despite considerable attention given to studying microplastics in marine environments, their presence in freshwater systems like the Mekong River has not been as thoroughly examined. This gap in research is concerning, given the equally detrimental effects of microplastics on human populations and ecosystems in these freshwater environments. The urgency of addressing this issue is underscored by the direct impact of these pollutants on communities that rely on these water resources for their daily needs, including drinking water, agriculture, and fishing.

This event will provide a space for young leaders and like-minded individuals to engage in meaningful discussions, share insights, and develop innovative solutions to address the pervasive issue of microplastics. Through collaborative efforts, we aim to raise awareness and drive action

towards mitigating the impact of microplastics in the Mekong region. Together, we strive to forge a path toward a more sustainable future for the Mekong River and its surrounding communities.

Objectives:

- a.) Fostering a sense of urgency and collective responsibility among SYP members about the problem of microplastic pollution in freshwater resources and Mekong tributary rivers in Thailand.
- b.) Facilitate learning opportunities, knowledge sharing and network among Thai young leaders and young professionals.
- c.) To strengthen the SYP network and discuss how SYP can move forward as a platform for young professionals in the Mekong region.

Language: Thai

Participants:

The event is targeted at SUMERNET Young Professionals members and other young leaders between age 18 – 35 years old in Thailand who can communicate Thai language fluently. Onsite participants are reserve for those residing in Bangkok or nearby, limited to total of 20 participants on a first come first serve basis.

Agenda:

Time	Session	Speaker or facilitator
09.30 am – 10.00 am	Registration	Kanrawee Sisandsaup Wichaya Punsawat <i>The event facilitator team</i>
10.00 am – 10.05 am	Opening remarks	<i>SYP Representative</i>
10.05 am – 10.15 am	SUMERNET and SYP Introduction	Suthinee Rakkusol <i>SYP Country Coordinator (Thailand)</i>
10.15 am – 10.35 am	Ice Breaking	Buratsakorn Rueankon <i>The event facilitator team</i>
10.35 am – 10:45 am	Introduction to plastic problems	Suthinee Rakkusol <i>SYP Country Coordinator (Thailand) & Precious Plastic Bangkok, Green World Foundation</i>

10.45 am – 11.45 am	Microplastics: A Hidden Danger in Water Stream <i>A learning session about plastic pollutions in Thailand and its damage to Thailand's freshwater resources, Mekong River, and food web along with solutions and engagement.</i>	Guest speaker: Punyathorn Jeungsmarn Plastic Policy Researcher, Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) Pattira Kasamesiri Associate Professor, Division of Fisheries, Department of Agricultural technology, Mahasarakham University Patiparn Boontarig Film Director, Chiang Rai Film Club Moderator: Suthinee Rakkusol SYP Country Coordinator (Thailand)
11.45 am - 12.00 pm	Q&A for presentation	
12.00 pm – 13.00 pm	Lunch break	End of online participation. In person participants proceed to lunch and continue afternoon session
13.00 pm – 13:45 pm	Dealing with the Difference <i>Role play and brainstorming session</i>	Group 1 Suthinee Rakkusol Buratsakorn Rueankon Group 2 Kanrawee Sisandsaup Wichaya Punsawat <i>The event facilitator team</i>
13.45 pm - 14.00 pm	Group reflection	
14.00 pm – 14.10 pm	Break	
14.10 pm – 14.25 pm	Looking forward: Future Pathway for SYP and Networking <i>Sharing expectations and capacity needs for the network, also discussing initiative ideas for the network collaboration in the future.</i>	Suthinee Rakkusol Buratsakorn Rueankon Kanrawee Sisandsaup Wichaya Punsawat <i>The event facilitator team</i>
14.25 pm – 14.30 pm	Conclusion and Closing remarks	Suthinee Rakkusol <i>SYP Country Coordinator</i>
14.30 pm – 15.00 pm	Networking	