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SUMERNET

# TALENT BOOK

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This publication was funded by The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) through the Sustainable Mekong Research Network ([www.sumernet.org](http://www.sumernet.org)).

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## CHANTANA BANPASIRICHOTE WUNGAEO

A retired professor of political science from Chulalongkorn University, serving as a Co-Chair of SUMERNET Steering Committee. She is a member of the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies at Chulalongkorn University.

Her research interests include multiple subjects covering peace and conflict studies, social movements and nonviolence, development and political crisis, and sustainability transition.

Ongoing research projects include sustainability transition, creative tourism and strategic non-violence supported by Thailand Science Research and Innovation- TSRI. Other international research networks are on Creating Safer Space: Strengthening Unarmed Civilian Protection supported by the Arts & Humanities Research Council under the Global Challenge Research Fund, UK.



### Perception for socially just and environmentally sound Mekong

Chantana hopes that the research-policy architecture designed and implemented in the SUMERNET community will eventually reach a critical mass and pave the way towards a more just and sustainable Mekong Region.



## KAREN DELFAU

A PhD candidate and lecturer with Sciences Po, University of Toulouse in France, Karen Delfau's work bridges research and practice to address water governance complexities, focusing on questions of knowledge co-production/co-creation and inclusion. She brings 20 years' applied knowledge addressing the intersection of water governance, water science, gender equality and social inclusion, and climate change resilience in Western Europe, Australia, Southeast Asia, and the US/Mexico border. Karen holds University degrees and professional postgraduate certification in Geology, Public International Law, Integrated Water Management, and Nonprofit Leadership and Management. Her transdisciplinary background provides the basis for analysis and assessment of systemic complexities, and the ability to undertake multi-criteria analysis to address trade-offs in human-environment challenges.

In addition to teaching and research, Karen assists regional NGOs in incorporating knowledge co-creation approaches and in incorporating inclusive approaches to gender equity & equality, disability, and indigenous knowledge. She is also Executive Director of the International Water Centre Network, based in Brisbane, Australia. Current roles and projects are available at: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/karendelfau/>

Current research and professional areas include knowledge co-creation and gender-inclusive Mekong water governance, gender equality and social inclusion in water management and governance and related research, feminist Political Ecologies, Indigenous cosmologies for governing water; co-creation and knowledge inclusion and the commons and commoning of waters.



### Contribution to Mekong sustainability

Karen's work as an educator, researcher, facilitator, and knowledge broker is to support inclusive and sustainable water governance.

Knowledge co-creation can provide an approach to allowing for inclusive water co-governance, and she hopes to be able to provide support to researchers, practitioners, and leaders looking to explore deeper participatory methods in their work, in particular regarding gender. Knowledge co-creation can take place at multiple scales, and sometimes a powerful conversation is all that is needed to catalyze new ways of working, governing, or understanding our waters.



### Perception for socially just and environmentally sound Mekong

Our global systems sit at a crossroads, where the path we are currently on does not hold much promise for either human or more-than-human futures. We have the knowledge and ability to bring positive changes, but there are powerful barriers that stand in the way of being able to address and hopefully reverse the current trajectory of climate change and biodiversity collapse. Her dreams and ideas for a socially just and environmentally sound Mekong Region involve new ways of working, thinking, and envisioning the future to be able to shift current systems and allow for the emergence of new ways of connecting and governing. This change will require new forms of leadership, and new values-driven collaborative relationships that consider divergent, non-system conforming knowledge systems and worldviews.



**BACH TAN SINH**

Is currently associate senior advisor to the Institute for Policy and Management (IPAM), University of Social Sciences and Humanities/ Vietnam National University (VNU) Hanoi and the Institute for Circular Economy Development (ICED), VNU Ho Chi Minh City. He was a senior fellow at the Institute for Science and Technology Policy and Strategy Studies (NISTPASS) and Vietnam Institute for Science, Technology, and Innovation (VISTI) during 1995-2021.

He received his Ph.D. in Social Environmental Science from Alborg University, Denmark, Master of Science and Technology Policy from Research Policy Institute, University of Lund, Sweden, and B.Sc. in Precision Mechanical Engineering from Ilmenau Technical University, Germany in 1998, 1993, and 1985 respectively. Dr. Sinh was a post-doctoral Fulbright Scholar at the University of California, Berkeley, USA during 1999-2000 and a visiting lecturer and scholar at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University, the USA in 2011.

He has more than thirty-five years' experience on policy analysis in the field of science, technology and innovation policy, environment, and sustainable development. Over the last twenty years, he has been conducting research on governance and institutions of disaster risk management including flood management and climate change adaptation. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the Asian Journal of Technology Innovation since 2004

and the Regional Editor of the International Journal of Development, Learning, and Innovation since 2006. Dr Sinh was the co-chair of the Steering Committee for SUMERNET, and a founding member of Asialics Innovation Study Network since 2004.



### **Contribution to Mekong sustainability**

Sinh's work is in strengthening the local communities in responding actively to the emerging shocks and risks associated with economic crises and climate-related change and disasters in the context of uncertainties. This can be achieved through promoting sustainability experiments and initiatives such as community engagement in co-managing local natural resources, social innovation, transforming agri-food systems (e.g. combining rice cultivation with shrimp-farming) to green, circular and inclusive development. His recent work in transforming agro-ecological farming for accelerating an inclusive innovation and green transition in Mekong Delta of Vietnam can be illustrated in the below figure.



### **Perception for socially just and environmentally sound Mekong**

His dream for a socially just and environmentally sound Mekong Region would be the one where the benefits from smart utilization of limited natural resources could be shared fairly among concerned stakeholders involved in the development at various levels (from regional, national, local and community) among countries in the region through the dialogue and collaboration. To achieve this goal, science, technology, and innovation could play a very important role.



**LOUIS LABEL**

Has been at Chiang Mai University since 1999 and began working in Thailand in 1991. He has on-going research interests in ecology, epidemiology and public health, political science, aquaculture, climate change, water governance and sustainability. He has led several multi-centre comparative studies and contributed significantly to several long-lasting research networks in the Southeast Asia Region including the Mekong Program on Water, Environment and Resilience (M-POWER), and the Sustainable Mekong Region Network (SUMERNET). He has mentored, advised and helped build the capacity of many researchers in the Mekong Region. His special areas of expertise include quantitative and qualitative methods and interdisciplinary research design.



### **Contribution to Mekong sustainability**

Over years of his work, Louis has worked towards changing the way people think about (or frame) sustainability problems to reveal alternative and novel solutions. In the aquaculture sector, for instance, he has provided farmers and other stakeholders entry points to climate change adaptation that fit more closely with existing needs to manage climate-related risks now, while building foundations for innovation and climate resilient development. In the water sector, he has contributed to diagnostic tools to identify governance challenges in multi-level water systems, opening up the possibility of polycentric governance arrangements.



### **Perception for socially just and environmentally sound Mekong**

Environmentally sound and socially just Mekong Region should not be just a dream. Residents need to accept and praise or be proud of biological and cultural diversity. It is about recognizing others. Incomplete democracies make it more difficult. Deliberative modes of governance hold some promise to improving decision-making despite the wider political constraints. This underlines the need for more science and more local knowledge based on experience and less assumptions by the ruling elites that it is just a technical and managerial problem and solution.

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