

Supporting Information

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SI Discussion

Impacts of Dams on Upstream Fisheries and Downstream Habitat Quality. Beyond blocking migration routes, hydropower dams can have numerous other upstream and downstream impacts (1–3). Dams alter the habitat of nonmigratory fish species, risk extinction of local endemic populations, reduce sediment and nutrient flows toward downstream habitats, river deltas, and estuaries, impact water quality and temperature downstream, cause eutrophication and deoxygenation by decomposing organic matter, and even emit greenhouse gas from their reservoirs. Damming might also change the timing of hydrological cues that set the onset of fish migration. Many of these impacts depend on the dam's design and operation. In this work we choose to concentrate on the unique aspect of the Mekong River Basin (MRB) fisheries, namely their reliance on migratory fish species. Thus, our findings are conservative because migratory—as well as nonmigratory—fish will have to struggle with additional dam-related issues not covered by our model.

Climate Change and Other Anthropogenic Drivers. The impact of climate change and demographic growth by the year 2030 has recently been the focus of a detailed study (4). From the projected rainfall and evapotranspiration patterns, it is estimated that the Mekong River runoff will increase by roughly 21%. This increase

is mainly because of wet-season runoff, with dry-season runoff nearly unchanged (or slightly decreased) across most of the MRB. In our model, these changes would reflect in a small ($\sim 10\%$ in most catchments) decrease in f_i . For the Basin Development Plan 2 (BDP2) Definite Future scenario, the decrease in migratory species' relative abundance would roughly translate into a 18% decrease in floodplain fish productivity. Nevertheless, the additional biomass loss because of the 27 tributary dams planned by 2030 would not change ($\sim 39\%$ decrease instead of $\sim 36\%$ decrease). Thus, although climate change would have significant impacts on flood risk and food scarcity (4), the potential deleterious impacts of tributary dams would still be a major concern.

Net runoff, evapotranspiration from nonagricultural land, and rain-fed agriculture constitute $\sim 82\%$ of the water use in the MRB. Of the remaining 18%, most of the water is used for irrigation (16%), and the remaining 2% is for domestic (0.8%) and industrial (1.2%) use (4). Although the population is expected to grow to ~ 111 million by 2030, this growth would not change these numbers significantly (4). Furthermore, because almost all arable land in the MRB is already cultivated, we do not foresee net runoff to decrease much because of further land use change.

1. Rosenberg DM, et al. (1997) Large-scale impacts of hydroelectric development. *Environ Rev* 5:27–54.
2. Rosenberg DM, McCully P, Pringle CM (2000) Global-scale environmental effects of hydrological alterations: Introduction. *Bioscience* 50:746–751.

3. Marmulla G (2001) *FAO Fisheries Technical Paper. no. 419*, ed Marmulla G (FAO, Rome, Italy).
4. Eastham J, et al. (2008) *Mekong River Basin Water Resources Assessment: Impacts of Climate Change* (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Clayton South, Australia).

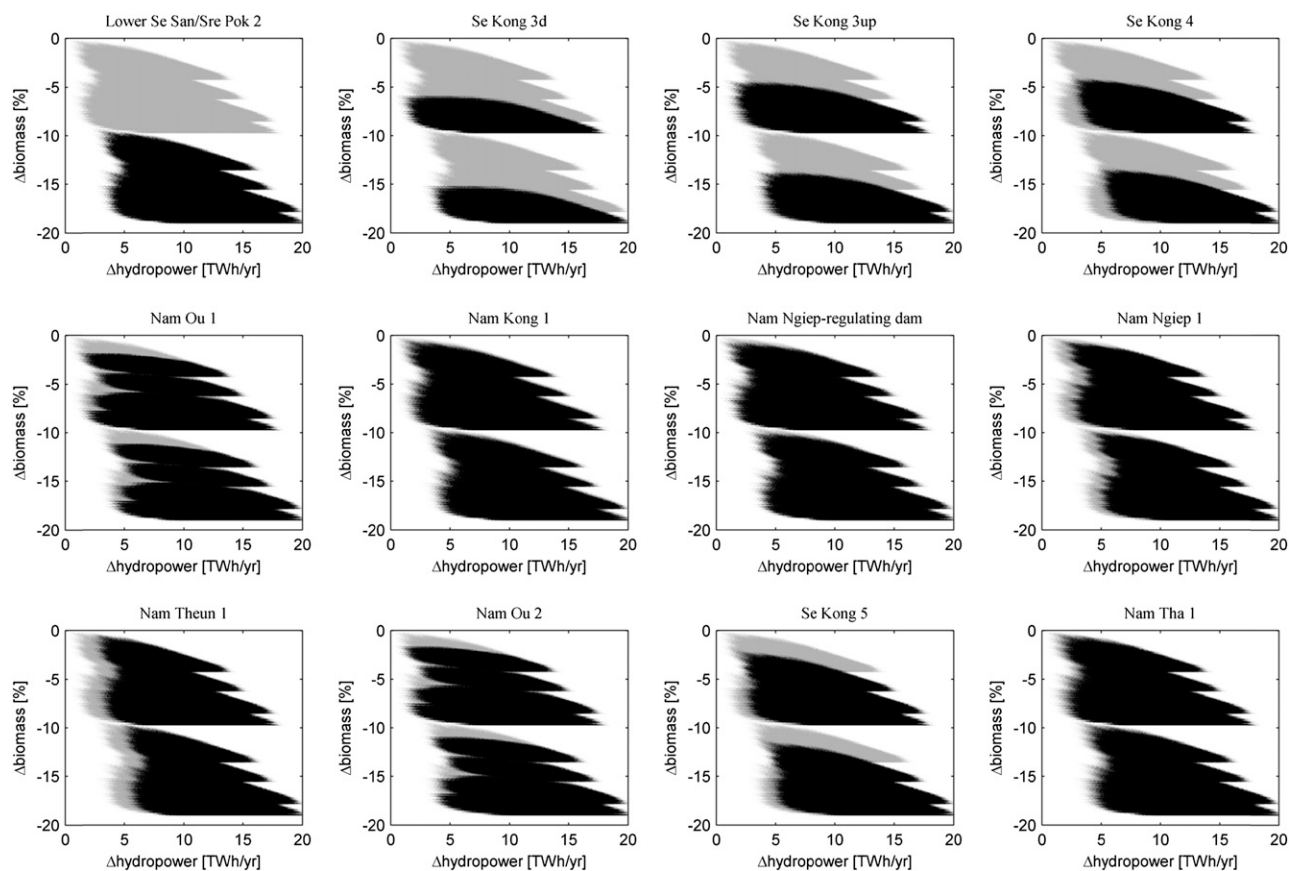


Fig. S1. (Continued)

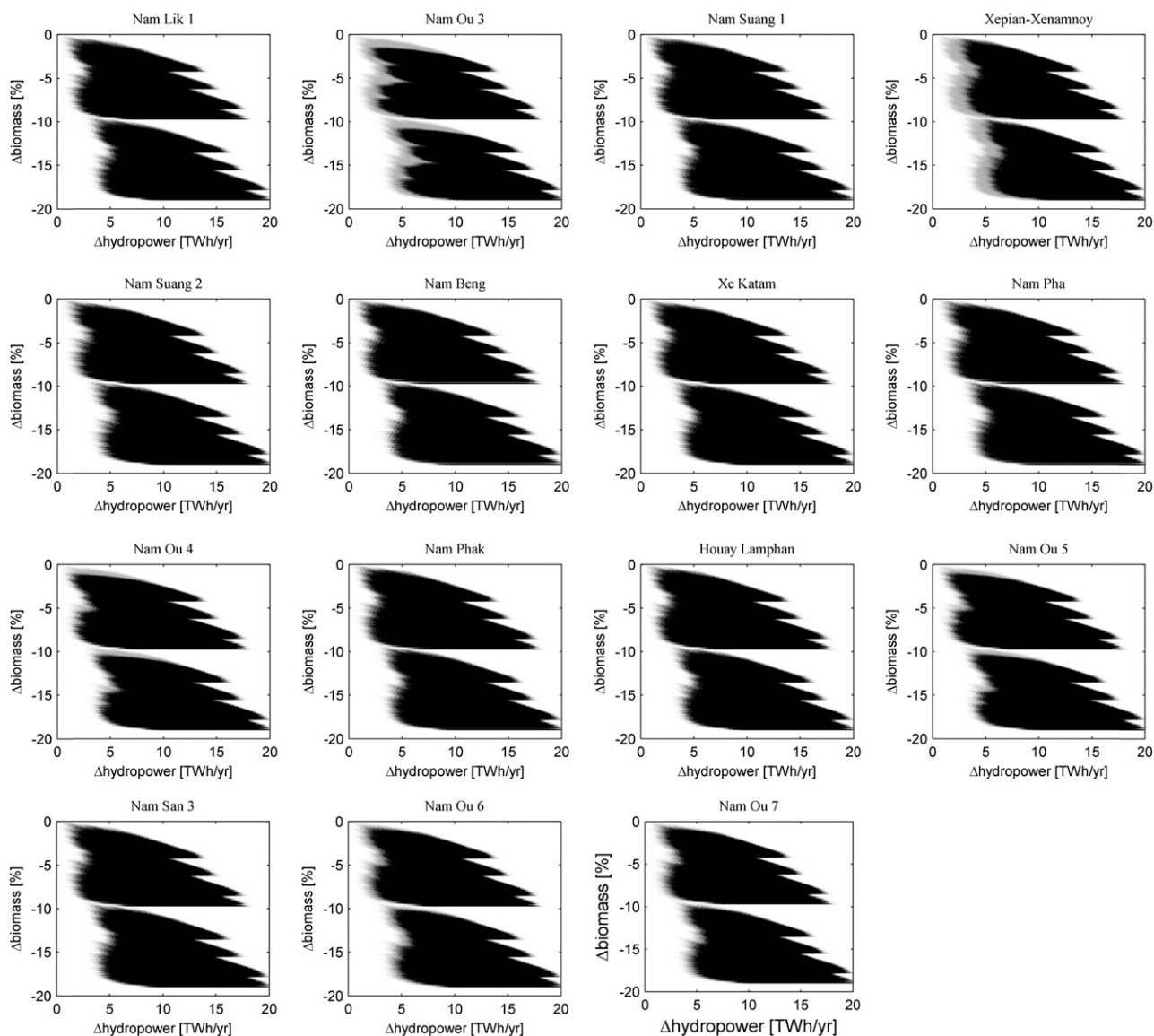


Fig. S1. Trade-off analysis between hydropower generation and fish biomass for all 27 dams on Mekong tributaries. Scenarios including each particular dam are marked black. Scenarios without the dam are drawn in gray. All dams, except Lower Se San 2 (LSS2) and the dams on the Se Kong River (Se Kong 3d, Se Kong 3u, Se Kong 4, and Se Kong 5) have some scenarios in all areas I to VIII, defined in Fig. 2A.

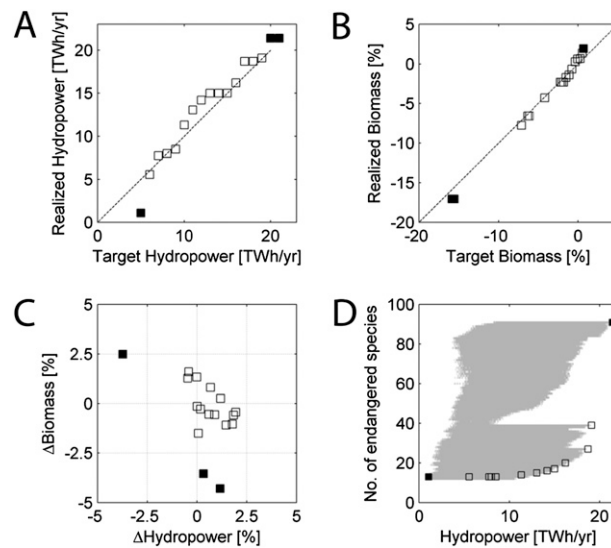


Fig. S2. Testing decision-tool for dam design. Comparison of “target” and “realized” results of using the threshold rule. *A* and *B* show the realized vs. target energy production (*A*) or fish biomass (*B*), which are within 2.5% (*C*) deviation for all but three scenarios (black symbol, corresponding to target energy level below 5 TWh/y and above 20 TWh/y). *D* shows that those scenarios, which are optimized based on trade-off between biomass loss and hydropower production, also achieves good conservation goals, with all scenarios falling close to the “Pareto-Efficient” scenarios (PESN) of Fig. 2*B*. Fig. S3 compares this optimal trade-off analysis to other dams ranking options.

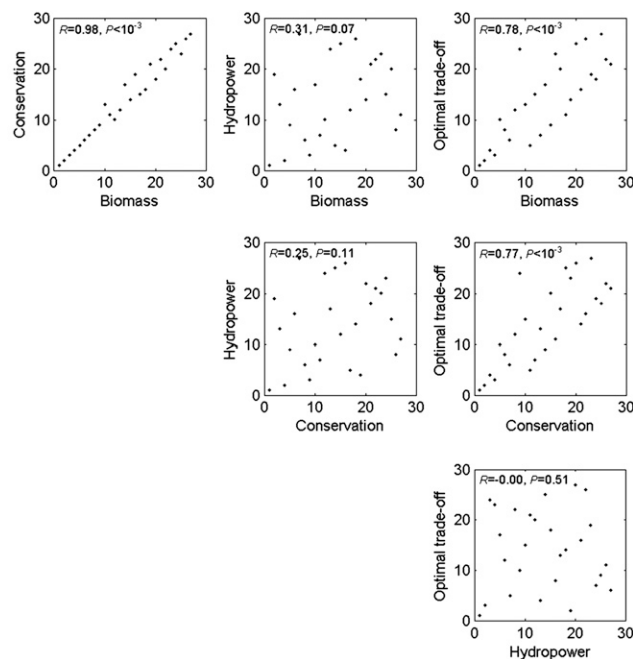


Fig. S3. Comparison of different dam projects ranking. As an alternative to our optimal trade-off analysis, decision-makers may use individual the dam's impacts to decide which dams to avoid. Here we show three other rankings and compare them to the optimal trade-off results. First, each of the 27 dams planned by 2030 was ranked according to four different perspectives: (i) Impact on floodplain fish production (Biomass, third column in Table S2); (ii) Impact on fish species richness (Conservation, fifth column in Table S2); (iii) Impact based on amount of hydropower produced (Hydropower, assuming larger plants have larger impacts); and (iv) Our optimized trade-off analysis (Fig. 3: ranking starts at LS2 and continues upwards). We plot all pair-comparisons, as well as Pearson's R coefficient and P value (calculated by bootstrapping, $n = 27$). We find that none of the other ranking methods would give the same recommendations as our optimal trade-off decision-tool, although conservation and biomass do correlate with the optimal trade-off ranking.

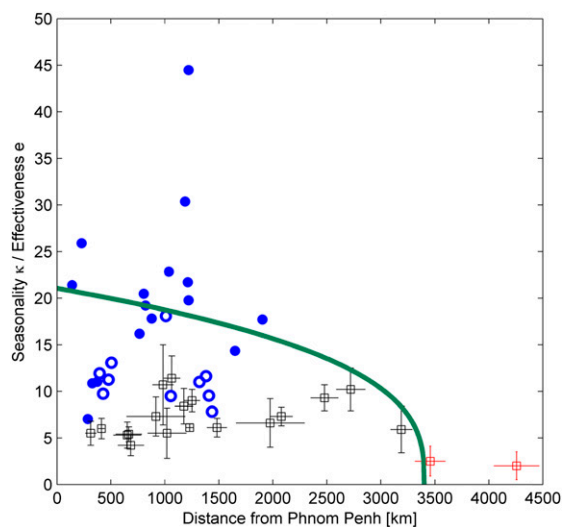


Fig. S4. Distance dependence of migration effectiveness. The migration effectiveness $e(d)$ is the number of successfully returning offspring per individual migrant, and is a function of the distance d (measured for convenience in kilometers from Phnom Penh). For two subbasins (China upper reach and China headwaters, red squares) we find no migratory species, which by our theoretical model requires that $e(d) < \kappa$ for these habitats. For the other subbasins we demand that $e(d) > \kappa$ so migration is maintained (black squares). Each square symbol shows the average (and SD) of one subbasin's seasonality κ . The fraction of migratory species (f) is also known at several villages along the Mekong main stem and some tributaries (Table S4). From these, and the respective seasonalities at each village location, the local migration effectiveness is estimated in main-stem villages (filled circles) and tributary villages (empty circles). The function $e(d) \equiv 1.4 \cdot (3400 - d)^{1/3}$ (green line) was adjusted to obey the abovementioned inequalities and pass through the average value of all points. (The exact functional form for $e(d)$ is unimportant, as it does not change any of the conclusions in this article.)



Table S1. Number of Mekong fish species in basin and subbasin level

We compiled 70 publications and references into a list of species in 21 Mekong subbasins and main-stem sections. We identified 877 unique species in the entire MRB, from which 103 are long-distance migratory species potentially impacted by dam construction. This table shows the total number of species and the number of migratory species (in parenthesis) in each subbasin and in sections of the main stem. The complete list of sources and species is available upon request. See Fig. S5 for geographic location of each subbasin.

Dam	Average Δ (migratory biomass) (%)	Rank (impact on fish biomass)	Average Δ (number of newly endangered species)	Rank (impact on fish species richness)
Lower Se San 2	9.29	1	56.29	1
Se Kong 3d	2.29	2	9.42	2
Se Kong 3up	0.90	3	3.47	3
Se Kong 4	0.75	4	3.02	4
Nam Ou 1	0.49	5	1.99	5
Nam Kong 1	0.35	6	1.77	6
Nam Ngiep-regulating dam	0.28	7	1.76	7
Nam Ngiep 1	0.28	8	1.70	8
Nam Theun 1	0.26	9	1.43	9
Nam Ou 2	0.26	10	0.86	12
Se Kong 5	0.25	11	0.93	11
Nam Tha 1	0.22	12	1.33	13
Nam Lik 1	0.22	13	0.89	10
Nam Ou 3	0.16	14	0.46	15
Nam Suang 1	0.13	15	0.76	17
Xepian-Xenamnoy	0.11	16	0.36	18
Nam Suang 2	0.10	17	0.49	14
Nam Beng	0.07	18	0.49	20
Xe Katam	0.06	19	0.19	16
Nam Pha	0.06	20	0.40	22
Nam Ou 4	0.05	21	0.15	19
Nam Phak	0.03	22	0.23	21
Houay Lamphan	0.03	23	0.10	25
Nam Ou 5	0.03	24	0.06	23
Nam San 3	0.02	25	0.13	24
Nam Ou 6	0.01	26	0.02	26
Nam Ou 7	0.01	27	0.01	27

For each of the 27 dams we calculate the difference between mean fish biomass and number of endangered species in all scenarios with and without that dam. Dams are ranked starting at the worst dam (i.e., the one having the largest impact). The correlation between average fish biomass loss and average number of endangered species is nearly 1 (Pearson $R = 0.996$, $P < 0.001$, $n = 27$).

Table S3. Cont.

Latin name	STK	KFST	VKF	CSV	CL	CM	CU	CH	SP	SS	SK	MC	XBF	XBH	SG	NK	NM	NN	NO
<i>Pangasius elongatus</i>	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Pangasius krempfi</i>	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Pangasius kunyit</i>	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Pangasius larnaudii</i>	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	●
<i>Pangasius macronema</i>	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	○	○	●	●
<i>Pangasius mekongensis</i>	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Pangasius nasutus</i>	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Pangasius pangasius*</i>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Pangasius polyuranodon</i>	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Pangasius sanitwongsei</i>	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●
<i>Paralauca harmandi</i>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Paralauca riveroi</i>	●	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Paralauca typus</i>	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Phalacrodon apogon</i>	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	●
<i>Phalacrodon bleekeri</i>	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Probarbus jullieni</i>	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Probarbus labeamajor</i>	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Probarbus labeaminor</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Pseudolais micronemus</i>	●	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Pseudolais pleurotaenia</i>	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Puntioplites bulu</i>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Puntioplites falcifer</i>	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Puntioplites proctozystron</i>	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Puntioplites waandersi</i>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Raiamas guttatus</i>	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Rasbora aurotaenia</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Scaphognathops bandanensis</i>	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Scaphognathops stejneri</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Setipinna melanocheir</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Sikukia gudgeri</i>	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Sikukia stejneri</i>	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Syncrossus beauforti</i>	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Syncrossus helodes</i>	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Tenualosa thibaudeau</i>	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Tenualosa toli</i>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Thynnichthys thynnoides</i>	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Tor sinensis</i>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Tor tambroides</i>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Wallago leerii</i>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Yasuhikotakia modesta</i>	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

The presence (●) or absence (○) of each of the 103 species we identified as migrating upstream of Kratie toward 19 subbasins and main-stem sections. CH, China headwaters; CL, China lower reach; CM, China middle reach; CSV, main-stem Chiang Saen to Vientiane; CU, China upper reach; KFST, main-stem Khone Falls to Stung Treng; MC, Mun/Chi; NK, Nam Kading; NM, Nam Mang; NN, Nam Ngum; NO, Nam Ou; SG, Songkhram; SK, Se Kong; SP, Sre Pok SS, Se San; STK, main-stem Stung Treng to Kratie; VKF, main-stem Vientiane to Khone Falls; XBF, Xe Bang Fai; XBH, Xe Bang Hiang.

*These species have no specific subbasin data. Hence we could not evaluate their extinction risk because of damming, and they were removed from the analysis.

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Table S5. Relative abundance of migratory fish species in the Cambodian floodplains

Latin name	$\zeta^{(m)}$	Latin name	$\zeta^{(m)}$
<i>Henicorhynchus lobatus</i>	0.234025	<i>Cyclocheilichthys armatus</i>	0.0019
<i>Lobocheilos cryptopogon</i>	0.192042	<i>Luciosoma bleekeri</i>	0.000928
<i>Henicorhynchus siamensis</i>	0.144327	<i>Pangasius bocourti</i>	0.000734
<i>Labiobarbus lineatus</i>	0.095536	<i>Probarbus labeamajor</i>	0.000724
<i>Puntioplites proctozystron</i>	0.037989	<i>Hemibagrus wyckii</i>	0.000672
<i>Thynnichthys thynnoides</i>	0.036847	<i>Hemisilurus mekongensis</i>	0.000661
<i>Cirrhinus microlepis</i>	0.032626	<i>Catlocarpio siamensis</i>	0.000626
<i>Labiobarbus siamensis</i>	0.030607	<i>Clupisoma sinense</i>	0.000597
<i>Cyclocheilichthys enoplus</i>	0.029903	<i>Osteochilus schlegelii</i>	0.000468
<i>Pangasius larnaudii</i>	0.025448	<i>Puntioplites bulu</i>	0.000244
<i>Yasuhikotakia modesta</i>	0.021483	<i>Hemibagrus filamentus</i>	0.000178
<i>Pseudolais pleurotaenia</i>	0.018927	<i>Hypsibarbus vernayi</i>	0.000173
<i>Syncrossus helodes</i>	0.014678	<i>Cirrhinus jullieni</i>	0.000159
<i>Amblyrhynchichthys truncatus</i>	0.014298	<i>Pangasius sanitwongsei</i>	0.0001
<i>Hypsibarbus malcolmi</i>	0.012884	<i>Raiamas guttatus</i>	8.12E-05
<i>Cosmochilus harmandi</i>	0.009584	<i>Epalzeorhynchus frenatus</i>	7.49E-05
<i>Pangasianodon hypophthalmus</i>	0.009159	<i>Pangasius krempfi</i>	6.32E-05
<i>Pangasius conchophilus</i>	0.007945	<i>Epalzeorhynchus munense</i>	4.13E-05
<i>Probarbus jullieni</i>	0.007105	<i>Cyclocheilichthys furcatus</i>	3.55E-05
<i>Helicophagus waandersii</i>	0.004939	<i>Bagarius yarrelli</i>	2.81E-05
<i>Barbichthys laevis</i>	0.003411	<i>Pangasianodon gigas</i>	2.53E-05
<i>Tenualosa thibaudeaui</i>	0.002671	<i>Hypsibarbus wetmorei</i>	1.71E-05
<i>Leptobarbus hoevenii</i>	0.002562	<i>Bangana behri</i>	5.76E-06
<i>Setipinna melanochir</i>	0.002469	<i>Tenualosa toli</i>	4.48E-07

Species not listed in table are rare, or were otherwise not caught in the years and lots surveyed. Our analysis assumes the contribution of these to floodplains biomass is negligible. Values are based on total catch between 1998 and 2009 in stratified survey of fishing lots ("dais") along the Tonle Sap River, conducted as part of the Fisheries, Ecology Valuation and Mitigation component of the MRC Fisheries Program in cooperation with the Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute.