



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development



Mangroves for the Future
INVESTING IN COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS



The Water Lily of Southern Thailand

The Water Lily or *Yah Chong* as it is known locally, is unique to upper Phang-Nga and lower Ranong provinces in Thailand. Every year between October and December, bright pink flowers can be found blooming in the clear rivers and canals of Ta Kua Pa, Kuraburi, Suksamran and Kapoe.

In the last 5-10 years, Water Lily collection for commercial use has been on the rise which has greatly reduced the natural stores of these plants. In response, local conservation groups 'Plean Prai Sree Na Ca', 'Pa Sang Flan' and 'Water Lily Youth' have been working to conserve the Water Lily in Klong Na Ca, with remarkable success.

A recent socio-economic and resource assessment of the area conducted by IUCN Thailand found Water Lilies in 11 rivers and

canals in the area. The assessment found that Klong Na Ca river has highest Water Lily population, covering 8,825 m². This represents 56 percent of the existing Water Lilies in Thailand. The Bang Pong River has Water Lilies covering 3,754 m², found in a 6 km stretch of the river. This stretch of the river has good water quality with a healthy habitat on both sides of the river bank. The Klong Bang Pru canal has 1,484 m² of Water Lilies along a 2 km stretch. Klong Ta Pud canal also has high population of Water Lilies covering 873 m² in a 750 m stretch of the canal. In total, the assessment calculated Water Lily coverage at about 77 km² of from Kao Poe District to Ta Kua Pa.

The assessment recommends the following actions. Bang Pong River and Klong Ta Pud are high priority areas to conduct

conservation activities through local stakeholder management plans. These should be in place before the end of the year, prior to Water Lily collection in the dry season from January to April. For both Tam Nang River and Klong Kam Nan Had where there used to be a very high density of Water Lily it is recommended to engage in replanting and rehabilitation activities. The rest of the river areas are mostly in the private domain. Working with land owners to promote conservation is therefore required.



Recommendations

- Water Lilies are collected for commercial purposes in large numbers, especially in the dry season (January-April). To promote conservation of this endemic species, government agencies, local authorities and local people should coordinate their activities within the context of a long term management plan.
- Klong Bang Pong should be conserved urgently because it has the highest concentration of Water Lilies in Phang Nga province after Klong Na Ca. The canal is still very healthy, clean and clear.
- In the past local communities in Klong Nui and Klong Ta Put tried banning Water Lily collection with limited success. It is recommended to reengage these processes to promote successful management in Water Lily conservation.
- In the past, Klong Tumngang, Klong Bang Pow Moo and Klong Kamnanhad had a high density of Water Lilies and still have good conditions to support Water Lily rehabilitation. These are good areas to introduce Water Lily breeding.
- Almost all of the other canals are in private land, so it is recommended to work through local leaders to conserve the species.
- Klong Na Ca is an excellent case study of Water Lily conservation and organizations should use this area as a learning centre.

