

Community Based Water Governance

A Briefing Report on

Daw Lar Lake

Daw Lar Lake is a seasonally river-fed wetland complex on the Western bank of the Salween River in Karen State, home to more than eight-thousand people living in the villages of Mi Kayin, Mote Kadi, Kan Gyi, Kan Kalay, and Ke Dauk. These five communities depend heavily on the lake, which provides them with food and their primary income. The health of the lake and its abundant fish life is greatly influenced by the Salween River, and the surrounding floodplains, naturally forested hills, limestone mountauns and their networks of caves. The ecological integrity of the lake area is vital to local communities, who for generations have practiced functional and sustainable forms of resource governance. For local people, the 'value' of the lake is not measured solely by the economic productivity of the lake but is grounded in a holistic set of practices embracing religious, cultural, economic, and customary legal systems which are interconnected with the rich biodiversity of the lake's watershed. In recent years, the sustainability of the lakes resources has come under increasing threat from many forms of government licensed natrural resource exploitation, such as major rubber plantations, rock quarries, cement factories and large-scale hydropower dams. In an effort to address these threats, the five village communities have been brought together in a collaborative process to engage the government and to conserve the Daw Lar Lake area. This initiative, known as Community Based Water Governance, has won support from local government departments who have shown an unprecedented willingness to support community-led conservation efforts.

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KESAN

Karen Environmental and Social Action Network

Biodiversity

Daw Lar Lake is the largest freshwater lake in Karen State, and its unique watershed provides a natural habitat for a diversity of plants, fish, birds, turtles, and other types of flora and fauna. Local people have identified more than thirty species of fish and at least fifty species of bird in the lake's watershed, alongside wild cats, oysters, lobsters, and Burmese pythons, among many others. Daw Lar Lake's watershed also provides a habitat for key arboreal species, including the Dusky Leaf Monkey (*Trachypithecus obscurus*), a 'Near Threatened' species on the IUCN Red List that is also listed on Appendix II of CITES. The landscape around the lake is also host to a diversity of aquatic and non-aquatic plant species.



Ke Dauk Natural Stream which connects Daw Lar Lake and Salween River, Photo: KESAN



Biodiversity in the Daw Lar Lake, Photo: KESAN

The overall health and abundance of this ecosystem is directly influenced by the condition of each of its components. Limestone mountains provide essential habitats to the watershed's wildlife: their slopes are homes to animal, bird, and plant life, and a network of caves beneath them provide a sanctuary for fish during hot season. Lush natural forest cover regulates the amount of sediment carried in from surrounding streams during the rainy season, and protects nearby farmlands from erosion and landslides. Local plants and animals also rely on each other for perpetuation. For example, certain fish species rely on the lake's grasses and trees as nurseries for their spawn. These fish play a key role in the diet of local wildlife, and thus in sustaining the larger ecosystem. All of this is tied together and sustained by the natural flows and floods of the Salween River and its tributaries.

The Lake and Local Livelihoods

Much like the watershed's mountains, forests, rivers, flora, and fauna, local communities both survive within and play a key role in the maintenance of the watershed. Thus they are keenly aware that the health of the ecosystem has direct impact on their own health and prosperity. Over generations, the local community have developed knowledge and livelihoods that allow them to subsist from the lake and its surrounding natural resources in a sustainable manner. This expertise, based on understanding the seasonal flows of water in and out of the lake and the relationships between diverse farming and fishing activities and the natural environment, has enabled the five villages to feed their families and raise income through local markets to cover basic expenses. The integration of local ecological knowledge and livelihood practices into community natural resource management and governance is at the centre of the CBWG process.

Water flows in and out of Daw Lar Lake depending on the season. During the rainy season the Salween's flow increases, and more water flows into the lake which expands and floods across the farms of the five villages. As the lake expands farmlands become fishing grounds. Water flows out of the lake during the dry season and steadily reduces in size allowing people to plant seasonal crops, graze livestock and gather vegetables and firewood. Local farmers' main cash crop is rice. Rice seeds are sown in late Thadingyut (September) and early Tanzaungmon (October) and the rice paddy is harvested between Tabaung (March) and Tagu (April). A complex network of small streams, lakes and canals provide water to irrigate farms. Fishing on the lake is carried out all year round, but the largest fish catch comes during the month of Tabaung (March) to the month of Tagu (April) when the water level of the lake is low.



Rice Harvesting in Daw Lar Lake area, Photo: KESAN



Daw Lar Lake Woman Villager Preparing Fishing net, Photo: KESAN

Threats to Daw Lar Lake

Lack of Justice and Security

The Daw Lar Lake communities face multiple threats to their land, water, and natural resources from extractive industries, agribusiness plantations, land and water grabs, and large hydropower dam projects. The villagers have united to defend their area against these threats and have had some success. However, in challenging powerful government and private interests, community members have been forced to confront government backed armed actors, powerful conglomerates, and the General Administration Department (GAD) of the military-led Ministry of Home Affairs.

This is complicated by local and national legal frameworks. The Union Government's current land and natural resource related legal frameworks fail

to provide small-holder farmers with tenure security, or to address how customary practices of land, water, and natural resource management are to be protected.

A growing number of domestic and international government and private sector actors are vying to access natural resources in the area via government concessions. The increasing influx of extractive industries, agribusiness and infrastructure projects have come hand-in-hand with the dispossession and displacement of small holder farmers from their ancestral territories.

The lack of justice and security for local communities continues to erode their right and ability to protect, develop, and determine their own livelihoods¹, and poses a significant threat to the ecological integrity of the Daw Lar Lake area.



Extractive Industries/ Quarry Mining area, Photo: KESAN

¹ Myanmar signed the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in July 2015. ICESCR Article 11 (1): "The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions." See for example: UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), General Comment No. 15: The Right to Water (Arts. 11 and 12 of the Covenant), 20 January 2003, E/C.12/2002/11, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4538838d11.html> [accessed 24 April 2017]

Land and Water Grabs

A clear example of land and water grabs is a 2013 plan by the Karen State government, led by U Aung Min², to sell Daw Lar lake to businesses interested in transforming the lake into a private fishing ground. Communities were not included in the decision-making process, and learned of the plan from a letter sent to Kan Kalay village by the Fisheries Department. Although villagers were able to mobilise on time and successfully call for a halt to the plan via a public signature campaign, thus preventing the lake from becoming commercial private property, it remains the fact that community members were excluded from the decision making process from the outset. At a June 2017 community forum, the Deputy Director of the Karen State Fisheries Department informed villagers that 31 of the 33 lakes recognised by the Karen State government have been put up for tender, allowing the government to auction these lakes as private concessions. While, due to community action, Daw Lar Lake is one of the two excluded from this process, it indicates that there is great potential for this to become a more widespread issue, accentuating the need for recognition of community decision-making power and the value of community managed initiatives like the CBWG project.

Rock Quarries

A further threat to the watershed area is limestone quarrying, used primarily for cement production. Between 2013 and 2016 rock quarrying projects have been proposed and enacted around Daw Lar Lake.

In 2013, local villagers successfully challenged plans to quarry Kaw Pyin Taung mountain through public protest, but continue to face the impacts of a GAD-approved limestone quarry at Ko Mo Ka Zine mountain. The project is a characteristic example of the lack of justice and security in the area. In contravention of incumbent laws, the project was approved without the prior consultation or consent of local communities, with no clear indication that an Environmental or Social Impact Assessment was conducted. Companies and organisations connected to the Burma Army and their Border Guard Forces (BGF) continue to benefit from local communities lack of recourse to justice, and the absence of tenure security for small-holder farmers in this mixed-administration area.

The health of Ko Mo Ka Zine mountain is vital to

² U Aung Min was appointed by the Thein Sein Government as Chief Minister of Karen State according to the 2008 Constitution. He previously held the rank of major general in the Tatmadaw.



Quarry Rock Mining near Daw Lar Lake Area, Photo: KESAN

the livelihoods of local communities. Local people collect wood, seasonal plants, and fungi from the mountain that have a high household value and important everyday uses. Villagers also used to catch fish in the waters cooled by a natural system of caves around the base of Ko Mo Ka Zine mountain. The quarry operators use of explosives to extract limestone have made it too dangerous for villagers to access the caves, the mountain, or the lands and waters surrounding it. The poisonous impacts of mining on fisheries have been recorded by KESAN on the Moei River. Chemicals trapped in rocks are released when they are broken and can poison fish, people and plants, degrading local ecologies. Despite calls from Kan Gyi and Mi Kayin villagers for the company to send them project information including the date when the quarry will close, the company has so far failed to respond, ignoring local people's calls for transparency and accountability. Villagers are also concerned that the BGF-linked company operating the quarry will further take advantage of weak government rules and regulations to expand the quarry area.

Rubber Plantations

Daw Lar Lake's natural forests provide a vital habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals that have important relationships with the ecosystem of the lake's watershed. For generations these natural forests were communally owned by local villagers under customary law and relied upon for their medicinal and edible plants, firewood, and other everyday household products. These forests are steadily under threat, though, with formerly communally-managed forest logged by companies and converted into privately owned rubber and cash crop plantations. Most of the rubber plantations are located on the hillsides to the west of the lake, from where some of the major fresh water streams feed into the lake. While some locals own 2- to 4-acre rubber plantations, most local forest conversion has been driven by external private interests who have developed larger 10-15-acre plots under 30 year leases from the Forest Department. Daw Lar Lake's natural forests help the land to absorb and hold water, regulating the flow of sediment into the lake. Unlike natural forests, rubber plantations do not hold the soil together, are water and land intensive, and rob the soil of its nutrients. Plantation owners continue to rely heavily on fertilisers and pesticides which reduce soil quality, increase erosion and pollute fresh water flowing into the lake area. The conversion of natural forests into rubber plantations has degraded the natural environment of the Daw Lar Lake watershed, as well as local farmlands and fisheries .

Responding to the Challenges: The Daw Lar Lake CBWG Process

In their response to the threats posed by land and natural resource intensive industries, Daw Lar Lake's communities have proven that they have both the tools, expertise and motivation to protect their livelihoods and the ecological integrity of the Daw Lar Lake area. This commitment has been clearly established through the CBWG process, supported by KESAN. CBWG is a community learning process that aims to strengthen local management and governance of water resources. This process is designed to assist affected or potentially affected communities to better understand their rights to water, land, and related natural resources; the long-term livelihoods security which would accrue to them; and to be able to influence the decision-making over water and other natural resource management at different levels.

Trust-Building

The CBWG process relies upon the development of trust and understanding between communities and KESAN. Communities have shouldered the burden of armed conflict and environmental destruction without access to justice. As a result, trust and understanding must be built slowly, and laying the groundwork for greater social and environmental justice must be built from the bottom-up. Working closely with the Daw Lar Lake communities has allowed KESAN to better understand the key issues that these communities are facing and cultivate trust. This has created space to work together and develop strategies and solutions to local issues using the CBWG process. After a successful 2013 KESAN-supported campaign to cancel a concession on village land for a proposed cement factory, Mi Kayin villagers expressed their ambition to develop a bottom-up conservation plan for the Daw Lar Lake area to protect their land and the natural environment, and to improve their resource management and livelihoods. This ambitious proposal would hinge on all of Daw Lar Lake's communities' participation. KESAN staff engaged with the other four villages, inviting them to public events and exposure trips to illustrate the CBWG process to them. The other communities, in turn, shared information about their culture, livelihoods, and village histories, and discussed with KESAN their visions of local conservation and development. Built on this foundation, the five villages began the CBWG process.



Interim Committee

Core to the initial phases of the CBWG process has been the establishment of an Interim Committee, formed in a public meeting after villagers and local leaders agreed to go ahead with the CBWG process. The Interim Committee has a large number of roles, including: guiding the opening phases of the CBWG process; recording the community's CBWG vision; mapping seasonal livelihoods and natural seasonal flows; demarcating the villages and harmonising their boundaries; and leading coordination between KESAN and the Daw Lar Lake communities. Interim Committee members also select Community Learning Facilitators (CLFs), village youth representatives who facilitate coordinated activities between the people of the Daw Lar Lake area and KESAN, act as mediators and facilitators of the CBWG community learning process, and monitor and evaluate the CBWG process. KESAN provided the selected CLFs with training on facilitation, leadership, and environmental issues.

Women and Water

Women's participation is encouraged at each meeting, including within the Daw Lar Lake Interim Committee. This has encouraged a younger generation of women to actively engage in the

decision-making processes around the management and governance of natural resources and environmental conservation. Women in rural and agricultural areas of Burma often carry a unique knowledge of the natural environment and local livelihoods and their active and meaningful inclusion in decision making will benefit the overall process. The challenge remains, though, that women in Burma face deep-rooted inequalities and discrimination that often bar them from leadership roles in society. Despite their central role in managing water and water related natural resources, they are often excluded from key decision-making processes over resource governance. KESAN staff have actively encouraged the involvement of both women and youth in the CBWG process. Through their participation in knowledge production, women's role in the management of water and water related natural resources has been integrated into the foundation and scope of the CBWG process.

Documenting Natural Resources

Over the past year, representatives of Daw Lar Lake have conducted community mapping and boundary harmonisation in order to clearly map out the Daw Lar Lake Watershed area and their customary territories within it. Communities mapped natural and man-made resources including village infrastructure, different land use types



Couple in the Salween River near Daw Lar Lake, Photo: KESAN

(including farmland, communal land and communal forests), water resources including canals, streams, and the lake area. Boundary Harmonisation has focused on mapping village boundaries using GPS tools. Combining the data generated from the GPS and community mapping processes, village representatives identified key issues, confirmed areas of shared resource management (eg. communal fishing areas), and clarified boundaries within the watershed.

Alongside building knowledge on their territory and natural resources, this process enables the communities to understand how different resources interact, and how they are influenced by different

livelihood practices and resource management systems, alongside local and upstream extractive industries, hydropower projects and agribusinesses. Alongside acting as an effective future tool for monitoring and evaluating environmental changes as the CBWG process moves forward, community mapping processes can help identify the areas where different livelihoods are focused. This, combined with increased knowledge on how various livelihoods and resources influence each other, can inform and harmonise village natural resource management plans, and reduce the chance of one livelihood activity negatively impacting another, eg. controlled use of fertilizer in agriculture to prevent the poisoning of fish during annual floods.

Community Mapping and the Boundary Harmonisation Process

- 1st Step** – Explain potential mapping activities and harmonisation process to all five villages;
- 2nd Step** – If communities collectively agree, begin by facilitating a ‘rough mapping’ exercise in individual villages, where community members draw a map of their area in relation to the lake;
- 3rd Step** – Use GPS tools to map individual village boundaries with support from village elders;
- 4th Step** – Using satellite mapping and drones, input the GPS data into GIS software and mark out the village boundaries;
- 5th Step** – Present the draft maps at a Community Forum to open review and discussion about flood areas; village boundaries; communal ownership areas (community forests, lake, canals, etc.); individual ownership areas; ancestral lands; private rubber plantations; limestone mountains; rock quarries, etc. This process and the mapping resources can be used as a tool for CBWG plans.

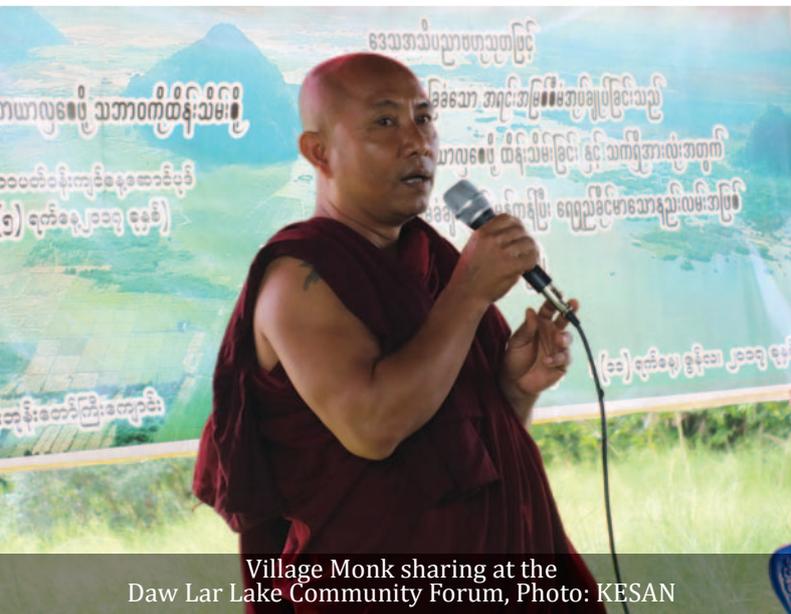


Field Study led by an elder in Daw Lar Lake, Photo: KESAN

Strengthening Community Governance for Lake Conservation

Based on their vision for community based lake conservation, and guided by the results of the mapping and resource documentation processes, Daw Lar Lake’s communities and the Interim Committee have developed a community management plan and a supporting set of rules and regulations. The next phase in the CBWG process is the institutionalisation of these. Institutionalising the Community Management Plan will require the formation of a formal Daw Lar Lake Committee to replace the current Interim Committee, and the creation of sub-committees that can guide the implementation of the CBWG process. This will play a key role in strengthening community governance of the Daw Lar Lake area.

A number of steps are being taken to facilitate this process. To strengthen the design, harmonisation, and enforcement of community rules and regulations KESAN conducted a legal awareness training with members of the Daw Lar Lake Interim Committee and CLFs. This training focused on building community knowledge of existing laws related to the environment and conservation and their legal rights regarding environmental conservation to facilitate the enforcement of the community management plan, and the associated rules and regulations. Research has also been pursued to seek a legal method to register Daw Lar Lake under the ownership of local communities. The groundwork is being laid for



Village Monk sharing at the Daw Lar Lake Community Forum, Photo: KESAN



Fishing competition held during the Daw Lar Lake Community Forum, Photo: KESAN



Lake Management Committee member speaking at the Daw Lar Lake Community Forum, Photo: KESAN

community by-laws to be established, which are being collectively negotiated at Interim Committee led meetings and community forums. This process has been supported with advice from the Karen State Fisheries Department, who have offered guidance on how to design rules and regulations in a way that will make them more likely to be recognised and approved by the Karen State authorities. This level of support from a key state government department has reinforced community confidence to move forward with their goals.

KESAN also helped to organise a community forum focused on farming and fishing livelihood practices and their seasonal changes, opening space for people to raise concerns and initiatives related to the CBWG process. To strengthen management plans, the forum further explored the cumulative impacts of one livelihood on another. Discussions have ranged from the knock-on effects of rubber plantation owners' reliance on chemical fertilisers on lakeside farms and fisheries, to plans for zoning the lake for the recognition of non-fishing, spawning, and habitat areas. The community forum was attended by local Buddhist leaders who also showed support and encouragement for the communities to commit to the CBWG process so that the natural heritage of the area can be protected. The cooperation of local religious leaders also strengthens the Interim Committee's legitimacy to commit to forming the Daw Lar Lake Committee.



Seasonal Rice Growing at Daw Lar Lake, Photo: KESAN



Traditional Fishing in Daw Lar Lake, Photo: KESAN



Fisherman in Daw Lar Lake, Photo: KESAN

Community Action Plan for Livelihoods

While developing the management plan, rules and regulations, and community by-laws the community are fully aware that it is essential not to lose focus on how the CBWG process will impact participants' livelihoods. The CBWG process holds the potential to bring greater livelihood security to participating communities, and to protect the area from outside threats such as land grabs for quarries, mining sites, agribusiness, and damaging development projects. The conservation of the lake also presents an opportunity for local people to generate new sources of income through ecotourism. It is likely, though, that some of the rules and regulations established to ensure the longevity of the watershed could restrict certain livelihoods. Integrating livelihood support into community management plans will be crucial to make sure the community by-laws and the overall community management plan are equitable for the people of all five villages. It is key that lake conservation is grounded in the reality of both local livelihoods and local ecological knowledge, working for the many- not just a few.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation has been constantly pursued throughout all phases of the CBWG community learning process. The Interim Committee is responsible for guiding and facilitating monitoring and evaluation of the Daw Lar Lake CBWG process, with KESAN staff assisting the Interim Committee to organise meetings and providing technical and analytical support to help guide the process. KESAN has also provided technical support to the Interim Committee, CLFs and the broader community on a range of issues including survey work, environmental conservation, natural resource management and land protection. Those who have engaged in these trainings have developed an understanding of the CBWG process, both the short- and long-term goals and how they can monitor and evaluate activities and developments throughout the process. Small public meetings and larger community forums have been organised to support communal design and implementation of CBWG. These meetings are a key aspect of monitoring and evaluation as they provide an inclusive space where people can raise questions and consult as to how community-led decisions may affect them in the future.

Challenges

For Women

In Burma, it is often the traditional responsibility of women to care for children, source and collect water and firewood, as well as manage food and prepare meals. Although women's everyday tasks are invariably linked to the natural environment, they have little decision-making power in water and natural resource management. This is a pressing issue among Daw Lar Lake communities. While KESAN and community members are working together to overcome this through the CBWG process itself, it has presented some challenges in the project's implementation. For example, women were involved

in the initial stages of community mapping and participated in identifying resources and the territory of the village. However, women didn't participate in the actual GPS mapping of the village boundary. The village headman selected an all-male team of village elders for this process as he judged them to have the greatest knowledge of the village boundaries.

There are also challenges in the design of community institutions. Women risk being adversely impacted if they are unable to participate in and influence the drafting of community by-laws. For example, families set seasonal traps using branches to catch fish, women help set the traps and sell caught fish and fish by-products. At a recent Interim Committee-led meeting participants decided to ban this fishing technique for conservation purposes. A number of women opposed the proposed ban, explaining the negative impact this would have on their livelihoods. Women's involvement in the community learning process is crucial to truly represent the diversity of local ecological knowledge held by the communities of Daw Lar Lake, and to ensure that there are sufficient safeguards for those whose livelihoods could be threatened by conservation rules.

There have also been some positive developments, though. Throughout the CBWG process KESAN has facilitated discussions on the importance of women's participation in the planning and implementation of conservation and natural resource management. This has translated into implementation, with women sharing local ecological knowledge on particular plants and conservation techniques and playing important roles within the Interim Committee. KESAN continues to work with communities to ensure that this local ecological knowledge influences the implementation, such as the mapping of seasonal conservation zones for particular plants, and further strengthens women's roles in the larger CBWG process.

For Youth

Young people from the five villages increasingly seek external opportunities in Burma's urban centres and across the border in Thailand. KESAN previously facilitated trainings for three CLFs, two of whom have since enrolled in higher education courses and left the Daw Lar Lake area. At a recent Community Forum CLFs were selected for all five villages. This may have to be an ongoing process, though, as local livelihood uncertainty, and the chance to travel in search of other opportunities is drawing many young people away from their traditional communities.



Women from Daw Lar Lake have many responsibilities, including raising children and collecting firewood for cooking.

CLFs often face challenges in community-mobilisation as their youth affords them little authority in the community. Village headmen and elders are the most influential decision makers in these communities, which can exclude women and youth from decision making processes. The key challenge is to strengthen the relationship between the CLFs and village authorities. Providing activity reports and process reports to village headmen may support a better relationship between village headmen and CLFs and may also strengthen community awareness and participation.

Many young people are leaving Daw Lar Lake to become migrant workers in Thailand. However, new restrictions established by Thai authorities are forcing many of them to return. If these young migrants return to Daw Lar Lake, there must be room for them to re-integrate. This will be considered in the CBWG process, where the community focuses on integrating livelihood support into the community management plan.

For Access to Public Goods

Government licensed natural resource exploitation continues to threaten communities' livelihoods. Opposition and public protest against these projects, though, does not indicate a rejection of local development. During meetings and community forums people expressed their desire to be connected to the national electricity grid and to be able to access more reliable transportation infrastructure. While communities clearly recognise the value of conservation, they also want to be able to travel more easily on good roads. The key challenge facing the community learning process is to create space for collective decision making between all five villages whereby they can seek a mutually beneficial method to access common public goods, such as electricity and good transport infrastructure, without damaging their conservation efforts.

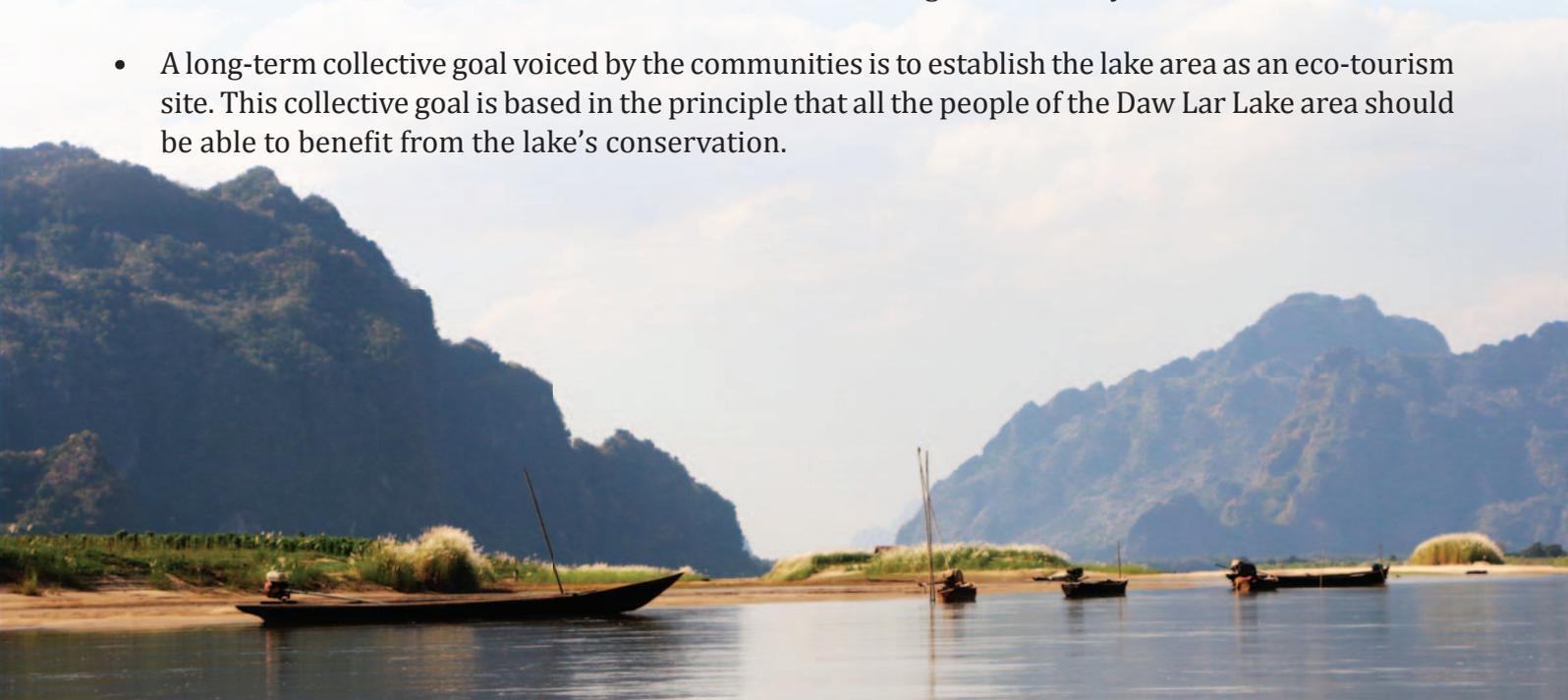
For Solidarity

Clear and transparent communication between parties is key to the success of the CBWG process. Strengthening the role of women and youth is crucial role in this context, alongside the frequent meetings and community fora. It also important, though, to make sure that stakeholders understand how their decisions impact each other, and that the community vision of lake and livelihood conservation driving the CBWG process is acceptable to all participants. KESAN and community members have endeavoured to explore this during meetings and forums, encouraging agriculturalists and fishermen to learn more about the influence of each other's livelihood techniques on one another, and encouraging stronger connections between youth and village authorities. Some villagers previously believed that the process would lead to heavy restrictions on their livelihoods, and some others even thought that KESAN would eventually take control of the lake. Though these misconceptions have been addressed, they serve to illustrate the importance of clear, accountable and transparent communication.

Although the communities around Daw Lar Lake face many challenges, community forums and regular village meetings have allowed for open discussion on issues and challenges facing people and the process. This methodology has become a central and influential part of the CBWG process, encouraging inclusive and critical discussion among people from all the five villages, opening space for collective decision making on key issues of concern.

Long-term Goals and Principles

- Daw Lar Lake communities have managed lands, water, and forests sustainably for generations. Local farmers and fishermen base their livelihoods on local ecological knowledge and an understanding that their livelihoods are dependent on the ecosystem's health.
- During meetings and community forums, representatives of the five villages have agreed that the lake and the area's rich biodiversity must be protected. They have also agreed that the best way to achieve this is by working together as part of a collective, through community based institutions, such as the Daw Lar Lake Interim Committee. People recognise that their aspirations for the future, such as maintaining their livelihoods, their cultures, their homes and sending their children to high school are threatened as mining and rubber plantations encroach on their ancestral land and exploit the resources their livelihoods rely on. However, they also recognise that as a unified voice they have a chance to defend their community rights and the natural environment and improve their current situation.
- One of the central goals of the CBWG process is that the knowledge and practice of local communities should be recognised in government policy. This is based on the principle that local communities have the right to self-determination, which includes the right to manage and govern their own lands, water, forests and natural resources through community based institutions. Therefore, environmental conservation must be led by local communities and based on local ecological knowledge.
- Using community learning processes like CBWG, communities such as those at Daw Lar Lake have a chance to establish and defend their rights to self-determination. Daw Lar Lake community members believe that these rights are an absolute necessity if the aspirations of the ethnic peoples of Burma for a democratic federal union are to become a genuine reality.
- A long-term collective goal voiced by the communities is to establish the lake area as an eco-tourism site. This collective goal is based in the principle that all the people of the Daw Lar Lake area should be able to benefit from the lake's conservation.



A view of Daw Lar Lake connected to the Salween River, Photo: KESAN

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The local people of the Daw Lar Lake area continue to play a leading role in the CBWG process. Their commitment, knowledge, expertise and collaborative engagement continues to form the foundations of the CBWG initiative, which is being built from the bottom-up.

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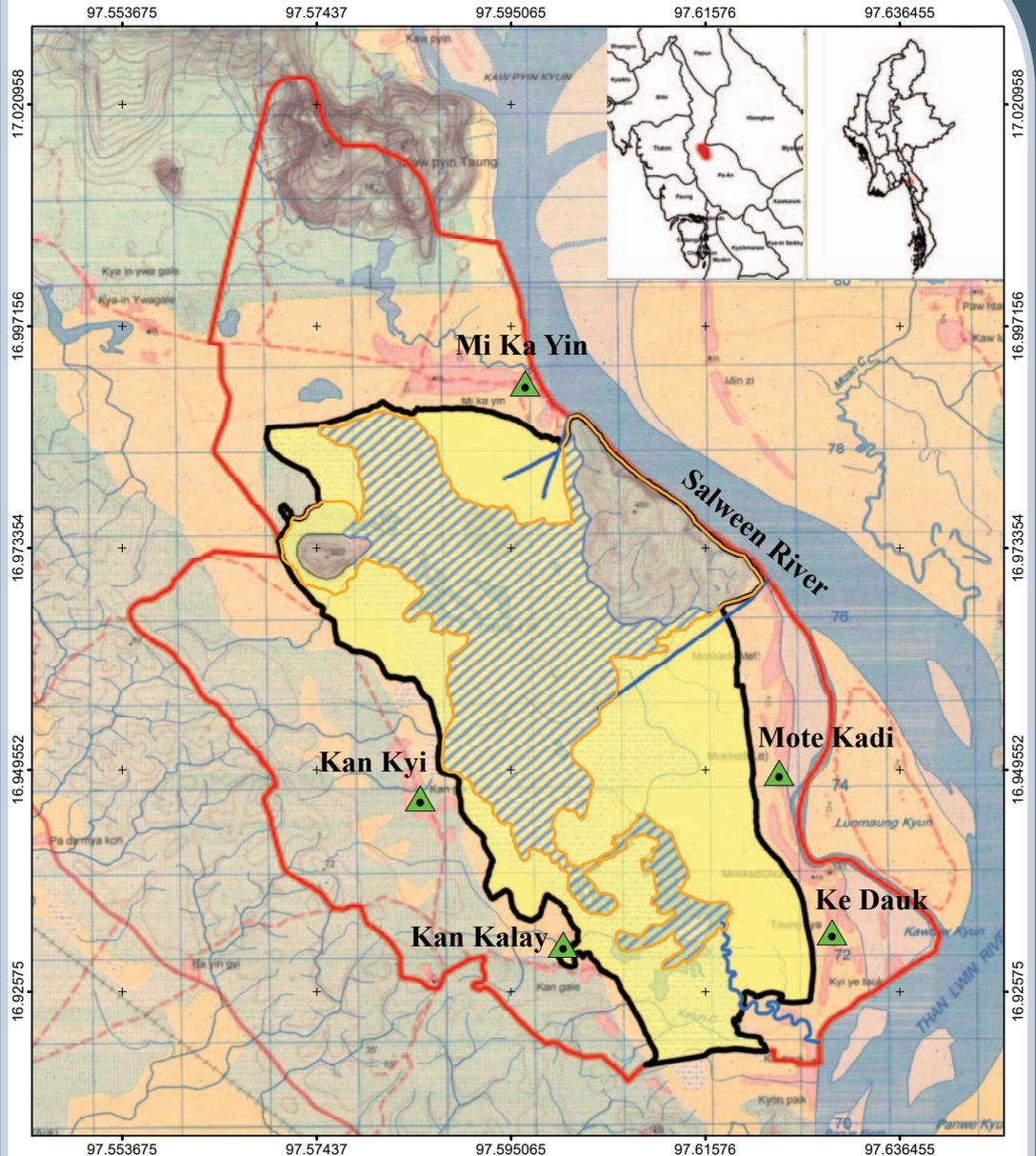
KESAN is a community-based, non-governmental, non-profit organisation that works to improve livelihood security and to gain respect for indigenous people’s knowledge and rights in Karen State of Burma.

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Daw Lar Lake Map



Legend

- Villages
- Canals
- Communal Area in Dry Season Area; 3,216 acres
- Water Area in Dry Season Area; 2,381 acres
- Communal Area in Rainy Season Area; 6,508 acres
- Water Area in Rainy Season Area; 5,773 acres
- Five Village Boundaries Area; 13,362 acres



No	Village	Households	Population	% of HHs Fishing	% of HHs with Rice Paddies	Remarks
1	Mote Kadi	446	1,519	10%	80%	Agriculture land is on both sides of the river
2	Mi Kayin	497	3,819	50%	40%	Some HHs work on both activities. Farming is done on both riversides and lakesides
3	Ke Dauk	239	1,494	80%	80%	Some HHs work on both activities-Farming is done on both riversides and lakesides
4	Kan Kyi	153	770	40%	60%	Most HHs have rubber plantations
5	Kan Kalay	150	842	80%	20%	Some HHs depend on both fishing and rice farming
TOTALS		1,485	8,444			