

## Understanding shifting patterns of water use for irrigation in Prey Veng Province, Cambodia

### Context



The Prey Veng province is located in the Cambodian Upper Mekong delta. It is continuously flooded for several months every year. Yet, during the dry season, the population faces acute water shortages. Declining water tables threaten domestic water supplies and low surface availability impedes dry season cultivation despite an intense network of earthen channels that criss-cross the province.

### Objective

Groundwater monitoring indicates a steady decline in groundwater levels over the last 25 years but the reasons for this decline (increased local abstraction and/or underground water flows to Vietnam) is unclear. The study will aim at characterizing shifts in water use for irrigation in relation to an increase in agricultural wells and large-scale rehabilitation of earthen channels so as to assess the extent to which local abstraction contributes to declining water levels



### Methods

The study will consist in intensive periods of field work in Prey Veng province. This will involve semi-directed interviews with rural inhabitants to characterize their use of groundwater for domestic and other (agricultural) uses. Additional interviews will be conducted with key informants such as well dwellers, village chiefs, NGO staff, representative of the rural development and water ministries to better understand the determinants of groundwater decline in the area. The study will be conducted alongside groundwater level monitoring by other team members.

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