

43002266 Status & Conservation of 2 Endangered Fish Species, the Mekong Giant Catfish *Pangasianodon Gigas* & the Giant Carp *Catlocarpio Siamensis*, in Cambodia's Tonle Sap River

Natural History Bulletin Vol.49 No.2

pp14

CAM

Zeb Hogan¹, Ngor Pengbun², and Niek van Zalinge²

¹Department of Wildlife, Fish, and Conservation Biology, University of California, Davis, One Shields Avenue, Davis, California 95616, U.S.A.

²Mekong River Commission/Department of Fisheries/ Danida, Project for Management of the Freshwater, Capture Fisheries of Cambodia, c/o Department of Fisheries, 186 Norodom Blvd, P.O. Box 582, Phnom Penh, CAMBODIA

The Mekong giant catfish *Pangasianodon gigas* and the giant carp *Catlocarpio siamensis* are two of the largest freshwater fish in the world, attaining 3 m and 300 kg. These two species are incidental catches of the Tonle Sap River bagnet fishery in Cambodia. A buy and release project was established in 2000 to help conserve *P. gigas* and *C. siamensis*. These species were purchased from bagnet operators and returned alive into the Tonle Sap River. In addition, two giant catfish were marked with external plastic tags prior to release. In the short term, the purchase and subsequent release of captured wild fish may decrease the probability of the extinction of *P. gigas* and *C. siamensis*. The tagging of *P. gigas* may provide information about the migratory behavior of this species.