

Outline for FCZ and Migratory Fish School Presentation World Fish Migration Day 2018

Materials:

- Probarbus puppet print outs (left and right sides)
- Mekong fish coloring page
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Wooden chopsticks
- FCZ posters
- 5 pieces of rope (for FCZ tag game)
- Tape measure (to show length of *Probarbus*)

1) Introduction to fish migration in the Mekong River

- Who likes to eat fish? (have students raise their hands) What are some of your favorite kinds of fish to eat?
- Who has gone fishing before? What kinds of fish did you catch?
- Fish are very important for people in Laos for eating and for making a livelihood. We need healthy fish populations for healthy human populations!
- What do fish need to live? (food, water, oxygen, shelter)
- What is the life cycle of a fish? (They grow from eggs to larvae, grow from little fish into big fish, need to eat to survive, then grow big enough to lay their eggs)
- Most animals do not stay in one place for their whole lives. They move around.
- How many of you have traveled to another village? How did you travel there? How do you travel to the market to get food? (using a road).
- Fish also travel to find food or find the right place to lay their eggs. How do they travel? (They swim, and the river is like their road)
- When a fish travels a long distance, we call this a “*migration*.”
- Fish can migrate for more than 150 km, farther than the distance from Phalat to Vientiane Capital! It’s a long distance for a small fish to swim.
- The Mekong River is a very important home for many fish species. It’s also like a big road (or superhighway!) for fish to travel on!
- April 21 is a very special day around the world. It is called World Fish Migration Day, and people in many different countries are celebrating the fish that migrate in their rivers. We have a lot of fish species to celebrate in Laos – more than 500 species!

2) Introduction to Fish Conservation Zones

- It’s not easy to live as a fish. What are some things that make life dangerous for a fish? (They might get eaten by another fish or animal, they might get caught by a fisherman, they might run into pollution in the water).

- If a fish gets caught before it lays its eggs, then it will not produce any baby fish. Will the size of the fish population get bigger or smaller if there are no baby fish? (The fish population will get smaller if the fish can't lay their eggs.)
- We want people in this village to always be able to catch fish for many years to come. What can we do to prevent the fish population from getting smaller?
- One idea is to make sure that the fish can lay their eggs to help increase the fish population. This means we need to protect the places where fish lay their eggs and make safe places for them to travel.
- This kind of solution is called a Fish Conservation Zone. Who knows what a Fish Conservation Zone is?
- Do you have a Fish Conservation Zone in your village? (Yes) What is it for? (It is to provide a safe place for the fish to lay their eggs and help increase the fish population.)
- How does the Fish Conservation Zone work? What are the rules? (No fishing of any kind is allowed inside the Fish Conservation Zone.)
- Taking care of the Fish Conservation Zone is a way to help keep the fish population healthy!

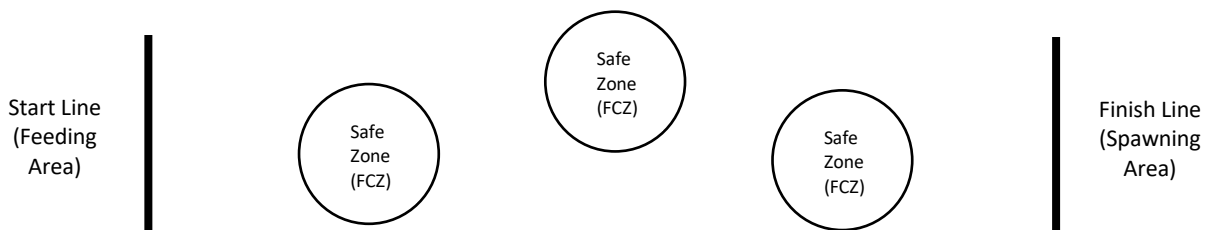
3) Play FCZ Tag Game

Round 1: No FCZ

- Set up a start and a finish line (use rope or other markers) on the playground. Choose 2 or 3 kids to be fishers, and the rest of the kids are fish.
- The goal of the fish is to run from the start line (feeding area) to the finish line (spawning area) to lay their eggs. They get tagged by one of the fishers, the fish is "caught" and is out of the game.
- Have the fish line up at the starting line. Say, "1, 2, 3, go!" and have the fish run toward the finish line. How many of them cross the finish line and survived to lay their eggs?

Round 2: With an FCZ

- Step up a start and a finish line (use rope or other markers) on the playground. This time, also make 2 or 3 "FCZs" with circles of rope between the start and finish line. These are "safe zones." Tell the fish that if they make it inside the safe zone, they can't be tagged.



- Choose 2 or 3 kids to be fishers, and the rest of the kids are fish.

- The goal of the fish is to run from the start line (feeding area) to the finish line (spawning area) to lay their eggs. They get tagged by one of the fishers, the fish is “caught” and is out of the game. If they make it to safe zone, they can’t be tagged.
- Have the fish line up at the starting line. Say, “1, 2, 3, go!” and have the fish run toward the finish line. How many of them cross the finish line and survive to lay their eggs?
- After the game, ask the kids:
 - Did more fish survive to lay their eggs with or without the safe zone?
 - Was it easier to survive as a fish with or without the safe zone?

4) Introduce students to *Probarbus* fish

- For World Fish Migration Day, we want to tell you about a very special fish called *Probarbus*.
- *Probarbus* is a very beautiful fish that lives in the Mekong River. It is gold in color, has black stripes, and red eyes.
- How many of you have seen a *Probarbus* fish before?
- *Probarbus* are special because they can grow to be some of the largest fish in the Mekong River! The record size for *Probarbus* is 1.5 m! How big is this compared to the span of your arms? (Get a volunteer student and use the tape measure how long 1.5 m compares to his or her outstretched arms).
- *Probarbus* can also grow as big as 60 kg!
- *Probarbus* fish are very special, but they are also in trouble. Their population has been very reduced because many people like to catch and eat them. There are not very many *Probarbus* fish left, and they are much smaller than they used to be.
- Your village is very lucky – you have a place in the Mekong River near your village where *Probarbus* come to lay their eggs. This place is called Kengmai Rapids.
- One of the reasons the Fish Conservation Zone was set up in Kengmai rapids was to protect the place where *Probarbus* fish spawn. We want to have *Probarbus* in our river for many, many years into the future!
- To celebrate World Fish Migration Day, we are going to make *Probarbus* puppets and take them on a migration parade around the school!

5) Puppet making

- Have students color their puppets, cut them out, stuff them with crumpled paper, and glue or tape them together on a wooden chopstick or other stick to hold them.
- Students can also color the picture of migratory fish species for their classroom
- Finish the school visit with a parade!