

Bridging Procedural Gaps in Environmental Governance: Community Perceptions from Indawgyi Lake, Myanmar

 **Date: August 26, 2025 (Tuesday)**

 **Time: 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (Myanmar Time/ GMT + 06:30)**

 **Online: Zoom**

 **Language: English**

 **Register [here](#). (For Reminders and Calendar Invitation)**

Event Description

Environmental protection initiatives make little impact without cooperation and awareness from local communities. This is particularly true in the context of weak regulations and enforcement, such as in conflict-driven Myanmar. Local population's awareness of environmental changes and their participation in environmental governance bear important implications for coalitions towards successful environmental governance.

Dr. Nyein Chan, May Thazin Phoo, and La Minn Ko Ko endeavored to identify such gaps in environmental governance by exploring environmental awareness, access to information, and participation in environmental governance. You are cordially invited to join our 8th chapter of our research seminar series 'Exploring Contemporary Issues in Myanmar', based on a research project of three researchers. Your participation is also welcome in the Q&A and the plenary session following the research presentation and moderated discussion.

Researchers' Profile

Dr. Nyein Chan is currently a Junior Associate Professor at Kyoto University of Advanced Science, Kyoto, Japan. He earned his bachelor's degree in forestry from the University of Forestry in Myanmar, followed by a master's and Ph.D. in Area Studies from the Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies at Kyoto University. He has numerous publications in high-impact international peer-reviewed journals and has led multiple research projects, focusing on forest biomass/carbon, ethnic land use, socio-economic studies, forest management, resource federalism, biodiversity conservation, gender, and environmental rights.

May Thazin Phoo is a freelance researcher with backgrounds in forest ecology, water resource conservation and waste management. She holds a master degree in Forestry and Water Resource Management from University of Forestry and Environmental Science, Nay Pyi Taw. She has previous research experiences working in Integrated Water Resource Management Projects and Waste Management Sectors. She is eager to advance her knowledge in sustainable environmental management focusing on plastics monitoring for healthy river ecosystems.

La Minn Ko Ko is a freelance researcher with expertise in biodiversity conservation, remote sensing, forest ecology, environmental pollution, and climate change. He earned his Master of Engineering in Environmental Science from Saitama University, Japan, and his B.Sc. in Forestry from the University of Forestry and Environmental Science, Nay Pyi Taw. Passionate about applying science to real-world environmental solutions, especially in biodiversity conservation, he is now pursuing opportunities for doctoral studies and collaborative research in Southeast Asia and beyond.

Event Agenda

2:00 PM	Greetings and Introduction	Strategy and Communication Adviser
2:05 PM	Keynote Speech	Senior Research Adviser
2:10 PM	Introduction to the Researchers	Strategy and Communications Adviser
2:15 PM	Research Presentation of <i>“Bridging Procedural Gaps in Environmental Governance: Community Perceptions from Indawgyi Lake, Myanmar”</i>	Dr. Nyein Chan La Minn Ko Ko May Thazin Phoo

2:45 PM	Discussion Session with moderated questions	Researchers moderated by SCA
3:15 PM	Break Time (5 minutes)	
3:20 PM	Plenary discussion with participants	Participants, led by SCA and researchers
3:50 PM	Evaluation	YRI

Abstract

Bridging Procedural Gaps in Environmental Governance: Community Perceptions from Indawgyi Lake, Myanmar

Dr. Nyein Chan, May Thazin Phoo and La Minn Ko Ko

This study investigates how rural communities in Myanmar perceive and engage with procedural environmental rights—specifically, the rights to access information and participate in environmental decision-making. Focusing on villages around Indawgyi Lake, an ecologically significant area in Kachin State, the study draws on household surveys (n=58) and key informant interviews (n=27) to assess environmental awareness, information access, and participation levels. Findings reveal high concern for environmental degradation, including climate impacts, mining pollution, and biodiversity loss, but limited understanding of environmental rights and formal regulations. While most respondents accessed information through digital media or civil society organizations, barriers such as language, weak infrastructure, and limited outreach persist. Participation in decision-making processes was minimal, despite strong willingness among community members. The study highlights the need for inclusive environmental governance models that combine legal provisions with institutional accountability, localized communication strategies, and support for community-based organizations. Policy recommendations include strengthening environmental education, expanding access to information, institutionalizing participatory frameworks, and harmonizing legal mandates. These findings contribute to regional and global discussions on environmental rights in politically and institutionally fragile contexts.

KEYWORDS: Procedural environmental rights; public participation; access to information; environmental governance; Indawgyi Lake; Myanmar