



**HAL**  
open science

## Understanding sediment dynamics in rivers using fallout radionuclides: How to move forward from the lessons learnt in a tropical catchment

Olivier Evrard, Jean-Patrick Laceby, Sylvain Huon, Elian Gourdin, Irène Lefevre, Oloth Sengtaheuanghoung, Sophie Ayrault, Olivier Ribolzi

### ► To cite this version:

Olivier Evrard, Jean-Patrick Laceby, Sylvain Huon, Elian Gourdin, Irène Lefevre, et al.. Understanding sediment dynamics in rivers using fallout radionuclides: How to move forward from the lessons learnt in a tropical catchment. EGU General Assembly 2015, Apr 2015, Vienne, Austria. cea-02648206

**HAL Id: cea-02648206**

**<https://cea.hal.science/cea-02648206>**

Submitted on 29 May 2020

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License



## **Understanding sediment dynamics in rivers using fallout radionuclides: How to move forward from the lessons learnt in a tropical catchment**

Olivier Evrard (1), J. Patrick Laceby (1), Sylvain Huon (2), Elian Gourdin (1), Irène Lefèvre (1), Oloth Sengtaheuanghoung (3), Sophie Ayrault (1), and Olivier Ribolzi (4)

(1) Laboratoire des Sciences du Climat et de l'Environnement, Gif-sur-Yvette, France (olivier.evrard@lscce.ipsl.fr), (2) Université Pierre et Marie Curie (UPMC), UMR 7618 iEES, Paris, France, (3) Department of Agriculture Land Management (DALam), Vientiane, Lao PDR, (4) IRD, Géosciences Environnement Toulouse (GET), Toulouse, France

Land use change and the concomitant acceleration of soil erosion have led to an increase in sediment supply to rivers worldwide. This degradation results in significant on-site (e.g., decrease in soil fertility) and off-site impacts (e.g., reservoir siltation and degradation of water quality). To implement effective sediment mitigation measures, it is necessary to clearly understand catchment sediment sources and their spatial temporal dynamics. Fallout radionuclides characterized by different half-lives and origins (Be-7 – 53 d; Pb-210 – 22 y; Cs-137 – 30 y) provide important information required to quantify the dominant sources of sediment and also their temporal dynamics. However, the current methods have several limitations, and the hypotheses underpinning this technique require further verification.

To examine these assumptions, we investigated sediment dynamics in a 10-km<sup>2</sup> catchment in Northern Laos during the first flood of the monsoon in June 2014. Before this event, Be-7 that labelled soil and sediment during previous storms in 2013 had completely decayed, and the material stored in the river channel was shown to be depleted in Be-7. A large set of samples (n=97) was collected to characterize the sources that may supply sediment to the river. In addition, suspended sediment (n=17) was collected in the river at several stations during this the first flood of the monsoon. A distribution modelling approach was used to quantify the relative contributions of surface and subsurface sources. Further we modelled the proportions of material eroded during this storm compared to material that previously eroded before the storm and was remobilized during this recent event.

The results demonstrate that the majority of sediment transported during the first erosive storm of the year consists of older, remobilized material. Furthermore, the contribution of sediment supplied to the river by subsurface sources (i.e. channel bank erosion) increases downstream. In the future, this approach should be tested in larger catchments to improve our understanding of sediment propagation in river systems.