

Catchment systems-In both the highlands and in the Mekong Delta I witnessed water catchment in large ceramic jugs which rest on the ground underneath roofs, eaves, and downspouts. Locals report that having a coconut leaf roof sweetens the water and is preferable to corrugated steel.

Multi-use source- Water source is home to ducks. This means that there will be feces from these animals in the water. This also means that neighbors need to work out plans about how their shared water source can be maintained. People who raise ducks are often disliked for their disregard for the water supply of those around them.

Multi-use source- The same rivers that are the source of cooking and drinking water are used for daily transportation by gasoline powered boats. Still many boats are powered by paddling, which leaves the water source as clean as it was found.

Multi-use source- Locals bathe and play in the same water that is used for cooking, washing dishes, and sometimes drinking. This is convenient only if you are upstream. However, isn't someone always downstream from you, and aren't you always downstream from somebody?

Water for irrigation- In the highlands I witnessed many inventive irrigation systems fabricated from local materials. Using cut bamboo locals divert and channel river water in a system of gutters which supply fresh water to both the home and crops.

Waste and water- In the most sustainable of household systems human waste is put into a waste pond where it can be filtered through catfish, sparing the local water sources of raw sewage. These fish are also a source of income once they are sold for food.

Laundry in the river- In both the highlands and the Mekong Delta I witnessed locals washing laundry in rivers. In the Delta washtubs are used, and in the highlands clothes are beaten against rocky outcroppings in the river.