

## Manisone Saysongkham

**Country:** Laos

**Course:** Diploma of Conservation and Land Management

**Institute:** TAFE NSW – North Coast Institute, Trenayr College

**Scholarship:** Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships



Through her Endeavour Award, Manisone Saysongkham has discovered for herself that Australian beaches really are beautiful and Australian wildlife really is marvellous.

But more importantly, she returns to Laos in 2009 equipped to contribute to the country's development with a Diploma of Conservation and Land Management and improved skills in her main discipline as an English language teacher.

Manisone teaches English for agriculture at Champassak Agriculture and Forestry College in Laos. She believed that, with a better grasp of technical language across a variety of disciplines, she could help her students and her colleagues in many ways, from clarity in the classroom and document translation to more effective collaborations with the many international practitioners and researchers who visit Champassak.

Manisone's diploma from TAFE NSW – North Coast Institute, Trenayr College, city of Grafton, will also boost her capacity to contribute to another passion – the Mekong Learning Initiative Project. Her English language skills are important for communications among collaborators within this teaching and learning initiative in natural resource management, which is funded by Oxfam.

### Opening up the options

Over the 28 months of her diploma studies, Manisone is undertaking a variety of intensive workshops and field excursions around northern New South Wales. She has a special interest in forestry management, particularly in the erosion effects of logging, since it is an important issue in Laos. She is also keenly concerned about how agricultural productivity can be increased without harm to biodiversity.

"I have experienced both theory and field practice I have never had before," Manisone says. "My experience has opened up many more options for me."

"I hope to increase the emphasis on conservation and land management in Champassak College's curriculum, and to take an active role in helping our teachers teach it well."

The Endeavour Awards are the Australian Government's internationally competitive, merit-based program which provides opportunities for citizens of the Asia-Pacific, Middle East, Europe and the Americas to undertake study, research and professional development in Australia. Awards are also available for Australians to do similar programs abroad.

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