

Session IV – Reducing the Mekong Delta’s Climate Change Vulnerability Through Regional Cooperation and Local Adaptations
11:15 AM

Climate Change in the Mekong River Delta and Key Concerns on Future Climate Threats

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Abstract

The Mekong River Delta (MD) in Vietnam, home to in excess of 16 million people, is the nation’s largest and most important region for agriculture and aquaculture production. Human life, agriculture and aquaculture production, and domestic water supplies in the Delta are critically dependent on the meteorological and hydrological regime. Most of the Mekong Delta in Vietnam is less than two meters above mean sea level, so it is highly vulnerable to changes in climate and rising seas levels. Predictions generally suggest that climate change will bring higher peaks in water flow during flood periods and hotter conditions during the dry season. These, together with rising sea level and salt intrusion into water supplies, are likely have a severe impact on water resources in the Mekong Delta, with potentially serious adverse environmental, agricultural and socio-economic consequences for the region.

This paper assesses the likely impacts of climate change on the water resources of the Mekong River Delta and examines some key concerns on the vulnerability of cropping systems to changing climate in the Delta under different scenarios.