



# ADAPTS: Exploring adaptation priorities of communities Vietnam case study

P. Thi Dieu My<sup>1</sup>, P. Bubeck<sup>2</sup>, and A. Douma<sup>3</sup>

1) Centre for Social Research and Development, 2) Institute for Environmental Studies / VU University, and 3) Both ENDS

## GOAL OF ADAPTS

Climate change is expected to increase the severity, duration and frequency of weather related extreme events, threatening water availability and food security for millions of poor people. Hence, it is clear that adaptation strategies have to be implemented from the level of communities to national governments.

The Institute for Environmental Studies, ACACIA Water and Both ENDS have started the ADAPTS project in 2008. The overall aim of ADAPTS is: *“to increase developing countries’ adaptive capacities by achieving the inclusion of climate change and adaptation considerations in water policies, local planning and investment decisions”*.



Fig. 1 The six case study areas.

## SUB-OBJECTIVES

To achieve this goal, ADAPTS focuses on:

- 1. **Knowledge development:** develop climate change information and study how local water management can be made climate proof.
- 2. **Local Action:** identification, support, documentation, analysis and dissemination of innovative, locally-based interventions to assure that local knowledge and visions are included in basin and national policy dialogues
- 3. **Dialogue:** Establish policy dialogues between local and national stakeholders on the issues of sustainable water management and adaptation to climate change.

The project is being implemented in six river basins around the world. Three year projects have started in Ethiopia, Ghana and Peru. One year ago case studies have started in Botswana, Brazil and Vietnam. This fact sheet will provide a current overview of the main challenges and activities in the Huong river basin in Vietnam.

## VIETNAM CASE STUDY

The impact of climate change is an important issue for the Huong River basin area in Thua Thien Hue province in Central Vietnam. Around 800,000 people live in the basin. Their livelihoods, mainly small-scale agriculture and fisheries, largely depend on the river and the lagoon into which the river drains. The region is already heavily impacted by natural disasters, which are projected to occur with increasing frequency and intensity due to climate change.

The main objective of the project was to collect information about climate change and adaptive measures of local people in the Huong River Basin, in order to further implement successful adaptation measures and integrate local needs and solutions into the provincial plan on climate change and adaptation. Central in the approach was setting up a dialogue between communities, researchers and relevant authorities in the Province.

The project is carried out in conjunction with the Centre for Social Research and Development (CSR), in close cooperation with Both ENDS and the Institute for Environmental Studies (IVM).

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND VULNERABILITY

Climate change is currently high on the political agenda in Vietnam. Also local people have often heard about climate change and the need for adaptation. However, there is little knowledge about the order of magnitude of climate change and the time horizon and potential consequences.

Also, negative interventions such as deforestation, lack of capacity, and lack of coordination between Civil Society Organisations, authorities and research institutes has also hampered the development of effective adaptation strategies.

## CONTEXT

On 27/05/2009, the Department of Planning and Investment received the ADAPTS project proposal to address “Adaptation to Climate Change in Thua Thien Hue province” submitted by the Centre for Social Research and Development (CSRD). In one year, the ADAPTS project in Vietnam has led to significant results, both related to knowledge development, local action and dialogue. On 28/8/2010, the Provincial People’s Committee (PPC) of Thua Thien Hue province officially approved the provincial Action Plan on Climate Change and Adaptation. This plan was largely based on the findings from the project and the proposal of CSRD.



## KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT

During the project phase, Local Partner Centre for Social Research and Development (CSRD) has collected information on vulnerabilities, existing coping mechanisms and adaptation priorities of local people. This information was used to select and support a specific adaptation measure and to integrate the perspective of local communities on climate change adaptation into the dialogue between communities, researchers and relevant local and regional governmental authorities.

## LOCAL ADAPTATION

Based on the information collected to develop adaptation measures, it was decided to plant mangroves in different parts of the basin. Mangroves can serve as a buffer against floods and related erosion and provide other beneficial functions such as habitat for species. The planted mangroves have grown very well, 50 % of the plants are 1.2m high and the planted roots have come out from the ground. The mangroves are looked after by the Veteran Association. These pilot activities of ADAPTS have attracted different organisations and projects, and a news item on the mangrove planting of the ADAPTS project was broadcasted on provincial television.



## DIALOGUE AND UP-SCALING

In May 2009, a provincial stakeholder workshop was successfully organised by local partner CSRD and used to draft first ideas towards an action plan on climate change adaptation in Thua Thien Hue province. CSRD signed a memorandum of understanding with the Environmental Protection Branch (DONRE) to a draft part of the provincial action plan on climate change adaptation. Such an action plan is to be developed as part of the National Target Program on Climate Change Adaptation. This action plan represented a unique opportunity to integrate the findings of the ADAPTS study into provincial policies and local planning.



Based on a another workshop organised in April 2010, bringing together 50 provincial stakeholders and policy makers, a second draft action plan was developed and submitted to the Provincial People's Committee (PPC) in May 2010. The action plan was officially approved by the PPC on the 28th of August 2010.

## SUCCESES

The mangroves were planted and the trees have grown very well. The pilot activities of ADAPTS have been visited by various national and international organisations. CSRD also was asked to draft a part of the Provincial Action Plan on Climate Change Adaptation, which is developed within the framework of the National Target Program on Climate Change.

This is a unique opportunity to integrate the findings on local vulnerabilities and adaptation priorities into provincial policies and local planning. The ADAPTS project in Vietnam has thus shown that findings from a bottom-up process looking at local priorities and activities can significantly contribute to provincial policies on climate change and adaptation.



## OUTREACH

The ADAPTS results have been actively and successfully communicated. The study report and action plan were posted on the website of VUSTA (Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Association), the Vietnam River Network, the NGO Resource Centre, and the website of Thua Thien Hue province. Manuals on effective adaptative measures that were found in the survey were developed and shared with communities, authorities and other organisations in the area.

In addition, presenting the outcomes of ADAPTS at national and international workshops and conferences has contributed to drawing attention and mobilising resources to those who are interested in climate change issue in the region. In September 2010, Ms Lam Thi Thu Suu, director from CSRD, presented the results of the ADAPTS project at the 6th EuroSEAS Conference in Gothenburg 2010 and received additional invitations to share the ADAPTS experience with other projects and programmes in the region and worldwide. CSRD also gave a presentation on ADAPTS to the RMIT - VASS (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology – Vietnam Academy of Social Science) workshop and participated in Research Development of RMIT - VASS workshop, which led to a possible follow up commitment and cooperation between CSRD, RMIT and VASS. This again exemplifies that the capacity building activities of the ADAPTS project were truly successful.



## PARTICIPATING INSTITUTES

Centre for Social Research and Development

IVM/VU University

Both ENDS

## CONTACT

Pham Thi Dieu Mu, [dieumy.csrd@gmail.com](mailto:dieumy.csrd@gmail.com)

Philip Bubeck, [philip.bubeck@ivm.vu.nl](mailto:philip.bubeck@ivm.vu.nl)

Annelieke Douma, [ad@bothends.org](mailto:ad@bothends.org)

For more information visit: [www.adaptation.nl](http://www.adaptation.nl)