

For immediate release

Climate change solutions for the coasts of Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam

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Around the world coastal communities are struggling to understand what climate change means for them and what they should do about it. While the global discussion about what the world should do about climate change lingers on, for coastal communities the effects are very real and happening now.

Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam are among the most vulnerable in the world to the impacts of climate change. Higher sea levels, coastal erosion, stronger and more frequent cyclones, warmer sea surface temperatures and increased high intensity rainfall and floods threaten the way of life of 20 million inhabitants of the coastal zone between Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City, as well as food security and the national economies in these countries.

To address these issues, the European Union is providing a grant of 2,450,000 EUR to the *Building Resilience to Climate Change Impacts in Coastal Southeast Asia project*, which held its first Coastal Forum from February 28th to March 2nd in Chanthaburi, Thailand. The project is implemented by IUCN in partnership with GIZ, the Sustainable Development Foundation, and the Viet Nam Administration of Seas and Islands (VASI). The Coastal Forum brought together over 200 representatives from all three countries to share experiences and solutions.

*The Coastal Forum is an exciting mixture of people from the community level, local, provincial and national governments, and technical specialists in a very rich exchange of learning.” says **Robert Mather, Head of IUCN’s Southeast Asia Group.** What we are seeing here is mix of scientific research on what can be done, combined with examples of what local people are already doing. This learning needs to be taken up in the development agenda’s of these countries and expanded in broader geographic areas.”*

The forum provided opportunities for participant to learn how climate change impacts coastal areas, how nature can be used to address these issues and the role of communities in leading change. The forum featured technical sessions on vulnerability, shoreline video assessments, and local innovation among others. These were complemented by sessions on global policies, land rights in Thailand, protected area zoning in Cambodia and co-management of coastal Mangroves in Viet Nam. Participants learned from local communities at field trips in Chanthaburi Province.

Building Resilience to Climate Change Impacts in Coastal Southeast Asia is working to strengthen the ability of local government and local people to plan for, and adapt to, future climate risks in eight coastal provinces between Ho Chi Minh City and Bangkok. In 2013, the Coastal Forum will be held in Viet Nam.

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About Building Coastal Resilience in Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam

The European Union funded project is working to strengthen the ability of local government and local people to plan for, and adapt to, future climate risks in eight coastal provinces between Ho Chi Minh City and Bangkok.

IUCN, GIZ, the Sustainable Development Foundation, and the Viet Nam Administration of Sea's and Islands (VASI) work together to build capacity in these provinces so that local government agencies can conduct vulnerability assessments; identify pilot activities to reduce vulnerability; design, implement, monitor the success of these activities; and carry out cost benefit analysis and feasibility assessments for replicating pilot actions over a wider coastal area.

The project identifies best practices developed by local people and provides opportunities for communities in different parts of the coastline to learn from each other. Networking, study visits, and the annual Coastal Forum are used to share knowledge with the other 12 provinces that make up the coastal corridor between Ho Chi Minh City and Bangkok.

www.iucn.org/asia/building-coastal-resilience

About IUCN

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges.

IUCN works on biodiversity, climate change, energy, human livelihoods and greening the world economy by supporting scientific research, managing field projects all over the world, and bringing governments, NGOs, the UN and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice.

IUCN is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organization, with more than 1,200 government and NGO members and almost 11,000 volunteer experts in some 160 countries. IUCN's work is supported by over 1,000 staff in 45 offices and hundreds of partners in public, NGO and private sectors around the world.

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