

The Role Of NGOs in the Implementation of Policies and Program in Response to Climate Change Impacts in the Mekong Delta

Abstract

Mekong Delta is the largest agriculture and aquaculture production region in Vietnam, covering 2.4 million hectares of agricultural land. This region supplies more than 50% of national rice production, 65% of its combined fisheries and aquaculture output and 70% of fruit production. According to the results of “*modeling based on sea level rise scenario of 75 cm by 2100*”, 25% of agricultural land area in Mekong Delta will be completely flooded; 75% of current cultivation area will be salinity intrusion; 40-50% of agricultural land will be difficult to grow rice; Rice yields will decrease by 10%; Farmers' incomes will drop by 20-40% (NA Tuan, 2012). Therefore, the Vietnamese Government has released number of policies and programs to support provinces in the Mekong Delta region to response to to climate change (CC). Local authorities in the Mekong Delta have also been actively implementing the national policies, programs and plans related to climate change.

Currently, there are about 900 International NGOs (INGOs) and nearly 1,000 Vietnamese NGOs (VNGOs) operating in Vietnam, of which many organizations have been working in the fields of: Communications, Community Awareness/Capacity building for CC responses; CC trainings; Field intervention implementation, supporting community response to CC; Research and surveys on CC; CC consultation and advocacy. Results from a survey among 45 different NGOs in 2012 show that a number of models supporting communities for CC adaptation have been piloted successfully in Mekong Delta region, such as: Fish – rice model, rice cultivation reducing green house gas emission model, mushroom growing model, fresh water distilling equipment in household scale model, etc. Most local authorities strongly supported and assisted in piloting those models, as they were the implementing partners in the projects/ programs of those NGOs. But the fact shows that a few of those successful models and ideas were replicated by using government budget. The reason was mainly that most models piloted by the NGOs were in small-scale and in short of uniformity, integrity, scientific evidences and arguments.

To enhance the contribution of NGOs in responding to CC, the NGOs have linked into networks and working groups such as the Network of VNGOs and Climate Change (VNGO & CC) and the Climate Change Working Group (CCWG). Since its inception in 2008, VNGO & CC network has shared its knowledge, experiences and strengthened its capacity on CC; synthesized and disseminated the successful models/methods responding to CC for replication; joined the dialogues, suggested good practices for policies and the CC adaptation programs of some industries and countries in the regions.