Nature-based Solutions in IUCN’s Asia Regional Office

Kathryn Bimson
Programme Officer, Water, Wetlands and Nature-based Solutions for Climate
IUCN Asia Regional Office
Kathryn.bimson@iucn.org
Best practices from the region: flood-based agriculture in the Mekong Delta, Viet Nam

The upper Mekong Delta is a 1.4 million hectare freshwater seasonal flood plain, producing >60% of Vietnam’s rice exports and providing habitat for over 100 aquatic species. Poldering has caused the loss of more than half the seasonal floodplain.

Goal: Develop profitable, low-risk, flood-based cropping systems that are a viable alternative to the third rice crop by:
- reducing inequality by increasing farmer incomes
- increasing resilience to climate change
- restoring aquatic habitats for commercially important fish species:
- conserve the remaining seasonal flood plain area
- restore lost flood plain areas inside the polders

Activities:
- Cost-benefit analysis and documentation of various flood-based crops practiced by farmers: environmental and social impacts of upscaling
- Small scale demonstrations (2016-2021) implemented by farmers and local governments to improve livelihood designs and address risks
- Co-organising high level dialogues with the government on policy change
- Working with the government and World Bank to design investment projects to upscale flood-based agriculture
Best practices from the region: flood-based agriculture in the Mekong Delta, Viet Nam

➢ 2013 Mekong Delta Plan included advice to trade-off rice intensification for increased climate resilience by adapting to the floods with higher value crops including flood-based crops.

➢ Policy change in 2017 – National Resolution 120 stipulated a deintensification of rice growing and adoption of nature based solutions.

➢ Over 500 hectares of farmer implemented profitable flood-based cropping demonstrations (2016-2021).

➢ Investment projects to upscale flood based agriculture:
  ➢ WB ICRSL (20 million USD, 2020-2023)
  ➢ GCF (40 million USD, 2024-2029)

Profiting from the floods: flood-based cropping systems are up to five times more profitable than double and triple rice cropping.