

MEKONG REGION WATER DIALOGUES

WATER AND WETLANDS, THE MEKONG'S BLOOD AND HEART

January 2010

On November 30-December 1, 2009, 40 representatives from government, NGO, and business from Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, and Lao PDR met in HCMC to discuss the role of civil society in water resource management decision-making. The workshop was part of the Mekong Region Water Dialogues (MRWD), a project supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland to address water governance issues in the four Lower Mekong countries.

This meeting focused on wetlands management, particularly in the Vietnamese portion of the Mekong Delta. According to one of the presentations, the government of Vietnam has spent billions of dollars on flood control projects but the disruption of the delta's natural hydrology has creupy

collection of data on the park's water quality were essential to persuading the provincial and ultimately the national government. Dr. Ni also works with local communities around the park on alternatives to a second rice crop such as sesame and water melon, and to promote organic farming that minimizes the use of fertilizers and pesticides and offers both health and economic benefits to the farmers.