WETLANDS IN VIET NAM: ACTION NEEDED NOW TO ADDRESS NEW THREATS

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His Excellency Prof. Dr. Bui Cach Tuyen – Director General – Viet Nam Enviroment Administration,

His Excellency Associate Prof. Dr. Truong Manh Tien – Director General – Viet Nam Environment Protection Fund,

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Viet Nam is rich in freshwater and marine wetlands. These are mainly distributed in the Red River and the Mekong River Deltas and along the 3,260 km coastline. Current estimates are that there are 1 million hectares of relatively natural wetlands mainly concentrated in river mouths and around some island lagoons, and with 100,000 hectares in 12 lagoons from Thua Thien Hue to Binh Thuan province.

The Mekong Delta is the furthest downstream portion of the Mekong River Basin. The Riv

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The Directory of Asian Wetlands lists over 25 wetland sites in Viet Nam that meet the criteria of Wetlands of International Importance. Despite this, only two wetlands are recognized as RAMSAR sites: Xuan Thuy National Park in the Red River Delta, and Bau Sau in Cat Tien National Park.

Issues in 2003, Decree 109 gave MONRE the authority to create wetlands conservation areas but in six years none have been created. This slow progress in the legal designation and protection of wetlands reflects a broader disregard for the goods and services that healthy ecosystems provide. Simply put, the

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That's why half the lakes in Ha Noi disappeared between 1995 and 2010.

The consequences of this growth at all costs approach to development are painfully clear in the Mekong Delta, which was until recently a vast natural wetland system. But over the last 30 years, tens of thousands of km of dykes and canals have converted the delta into something resembling a vast rice paddy. The delta's remaining natural wetlands survive as tiny fragments. Rice production has increased greatly. But

And there is a new threat to the Mekong Delta: the construction of dams on the Mekong River. Globally, all deltas are sinking naturally because of sediment compaction. What keeps them above water is the inflow of fresh sediment. But if dams are built, the sediment supply is cut off, and the delta sinks under the ocean. This is what has happened to the Mississippi Delta and is predicted to happen to the Mekong Delta under current scenarios. The rate of sinking will be even faster than the rate of sea level rise predicted in climate change scenarios, and the two forces combined could lead to a rapid land loss.

To address these threats requires strong government leadership because maintaining the Mekong Delta in a more natural state means relaxing rice production targets and dealing with complex international waters issues.

IUCN would like to continue to support MONRE's efforts to increase the number of RAMSAR sites and strengthen wetlands conservation in Viet Nam.

Thank you.



Kính th a Gs. Ts.Bùi Cách Tuy n – T ng c c tr ng – T ng c c Môi tr ng,

Kính th a Phó Gs. Ts. Tr ng M nh Ti n – Giám c – Qu Môi tr ng Vi t Nam,

Th a i di n các t ch c qu c t , các t ch c phi Chính ph , các c quan ban ngành có liên quan.

Th a các quý v i bi

nhân v n mà chúng ta phitr c ng ang t ng lên khivi c làm này gây gimm c n c ng m, suy gim ch t l ng n c ng t, ô nhim thu c tr sâu trong