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## Climate change and population problem in Vietnam

**According to the scenario, nearly 90% of Vietnam's population are under the impacts of storms; nearly 70% of the population living in the lowlands, deltas or coastal areas, mountainous region are under impacts of climate change ... It requires Vietnam to propose a resolution to response.**

### Facing many challenges

It is forecasted with current birth-rate, the population of Vietnam will have reached 95.29 million people by 2019, and nearly 103 million people by 2029 and nearly 109 million people by 2049. It means that Vietnam will become one of three most populous countries in Southeast Asia and rank 13<sup>th</sup> in the world by population. Meanwhile, according to the UN, the continuous growth in population is also a factor of causing climate change by leading to the consumption growth and high amount of greenhouse gas emissions.

The scientists predict Vietnam is one of the countries which suffer from the most severe impacts of global warming and sea level rise. In recent years, El Nino, La Nina, extreme weather conditions constantly appear with increasingly higher density, longer time and wider coverage across Vietnam.

According to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Vietnam is among 10 countries regularly suffering from natural disasters, namely storms, floods, landslides and drought. 80% -90% of Vietnam's population are affected by storms. Mekong Delta suffers the most by sea level rise. Mountainous and midland region of the North, Central region and Central Highlands are often affected by floods, flash floods, landslides, forest fires and droughts. Urban areas are severely damaged from the phenomenon of sea level rise, storms, floods because most of large urban areas of our country are plains and coastal areas.

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment warned if sea level increases by 1 meter, approximately 35% of Mekong Delta provinces' population, over 9% of Red River Delta and Quang Ninh's, nearly 9% of Central coastal provinces' and about 7% of Ho Chi Minh City's will be under direct affection. If sea level increases by 3 meters, about 25% of population will be under direct affection. The problem is should or should not people emigrate to a new place? Where to emigrate? How about livelihoods?

### Preparedness for response

Being proactive in response preparedness, Vietnam has been proposing numerous policies to improve the population quality; especially for vulnerable groups of population in disasters such as the Sustainable Development Strategy in the period 2011-2020.


National Strategy on Climate Change of Vietnam (2011) also posed the strategic tasks: climate monitoring, food security and water resources, positive response to sea level rise in accordance with the vulnerable areas ... including the task of upgrading public health care system (including reproductive health and family planning) to cope with climate change, especially focusing on the vulnerable social groups such as women, children, the elderly, the needy, ethnic minorities, etc.

Regarding suggestions for Vietnam, Ralph Central, senior advisor to Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (USA) proposed three response plans. Firstly, implement measures to protect land, especially coastal areas. Secondly, develop adaptation measures such as improving the structure or create movable structure. Thirdly, evacuate people out of the affected area temporarily or permanently. After evacuation, these areas could be used as agricultural land or for other suitable purposes.

Vietnam also believes that, when effective response measures are not available, the most important currently is evacuating people out of the areas affected by sea level rise, areas threatened by wetland, areas affected by the floods, flash floods, landslides, etc.

Currently, in Vietnam, there are annually ten thousands of households moving to a new place not only to cope with climate change; but also ensure the livelihood and living standard. In particular, people in Northern mountainous region and Central Highlands move out of flash flood, mudslide and landslide areas; people in Red River Delta move out of erosion area along river and sea; people in southeast region are encouraged to move out of the areas affected by floods from Dong Nai river and Saigon River ...

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) evaluate: In the context of increasingly severe climate change nowadays, migration and resettlement are regarded as quite effective response strategies of Vietnam.

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