



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



UTS

Institute for
Sustainable
Futures

World Vision

Building Climate-Adaptive Solutions Through Inclusive Market Networks (BASIN): Mekong Australia Partnership (MAP)

Background

The Lower Mekong River Basin—covering Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam—is highly vulnerable to climate-related disasters, including extreme weather, drought, and future uncertainty. This climate context threatens livelihoods and ecological integrity. Agri-food systems, including agriculture and aquaculture, are major drivers of economic activity in the region.

While agri-food systems face high vulnerabilities to climate impacts, they are also large drivers of greenhouse gas emissions, requiring mitigation efforts in agriculture and aquaculture systems.

Research Program 2025-9

The University of Technology Sydney, Institute for Sustainable Futures, is partnering with World Vision Australia to implement a transdisciplinary agri-food systems research agenda as part of the Mekong Australia Partnership Phase 2 investment funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Research agenda design and knowledge exchange outcome and evidence mapping

This will take place largely in Year 1 of the program (May 2025 – Feb 2026) in parallel to base-lines, and assessments and initial Year 1 activities. It will involve foundational activities as outlined below.

Mapping evidence gaps in the lower Mekong, good practices and policy environment in climate resilient agrifood systems

The main objectives are:

- Undertake a review of 'greening' policies, practices and programs that have been successfully included Mekong agrifood systems policy and practices, especially considering the selected sub-sectors and current climate context, e.g. aquaculture and rice sub-sectors.
- Identify where the BASIN project can contribute to regional and national policy dialogue, including proposed research questions and areas of focus

The output of this will be a journal text and a practitioner's brief on what is working and what is not working in the Mekong region linked to climate resilient agrifood systems, especially linked to the selected sub-sectors. This can complement the operational market assessment being contracted by World Vision Australia.



Mapping lower Mekong evidence-based learning and dialogues and knowledge exchange design activities

The main objectives are:

- Identify and map regional knowledge networks and evidence platforms related to inclusive and green agrifood systems.
- Conduct workshops and interviews to gather input on knowledge gaps and evidence priorities in climate-resilient agri-food research in the Mekong.
- Refine the process for knowledge exchange to support MAP outcomes.

The output of this will be a set of shared learning priorities for the stakeholders to be part of BASIN outcomes, and formalising the process and ways of working for learning exchange for the duration of MAP 2. Another outcome is the established network for the Outcome 3 KE activities, including building relationships with key stakeholders.

About the program

To address the climate and agri-food challenges in the Mekong, World Vision is implementing Building Climate-Adaptive Solutions through Inclusive Market Networks (BASIN). The Mekong Australia Partnership (MAP) is a 4-year (2025-29) regional project, funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT). It aims to fill a gap in the Mekong region by promoting climate-resilient, gender-inclusive agri-food systems in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos PDR.

Contacts

UTS-ISF Research Directors:

Dr Federico Davila

(Federico.Davila@uts.edu.au)

Associate Professor Naomi Carrard

(Naomi.Carrard@uts.edu.au)

World Vision Program Director:

Ellie Wong

(Ellie.Wong@worldvision.com.au)

