



# IHDP Open Meeting 2009

7th International  
Science Conference on the  
Human Dimensions of  
Global Environmental Change

26-30 April 2009  
World Conference Center Bonn  
UN Campus  
Bonn, Germany

The Social  
Challenges of  
Global Change

IHDP Secretariat | Hermann-Ehlers-Str. 10 | D-53113 Bonn | P +49 (0)228 815 0600 | F +49 (0)228 815 0620  
www.openmeeting2009.org | openmeeting@ihdp.unu.edu

Time: Tuesday 28 April 11:00 - 12:30

## Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessments to Climate Change and Extreme Events

Organised by: UNU-EHS and IHDP

Convenor: Prof Dr. Janos Bogardi

Panelists: Dr. Bach Tan Sinh, National Institute for Science and Technology Policy and Strategy Studies, Vietnam, Prof. Dr. Siri Hettige, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, Prof. Dr. David Alexander, University of Florence, Italy, Prof. Sander van der Leeuw., Arizona State University, United States, Prof. Anthony Oliver-Smith, University of Florida, United States

Venue: Deutsche Welle Gremiensaal

Vulnerability assessments on the one hand and climate change related adaptation strategies on the other hand develop in most cases in parallel, rather than in a synergetic mode.

Present adaptation measures and strategies often focus on potential impacts of climate change related changes, while traditional vulnerability assessment often puts emphasis on the most vulnerable groups based on past events and local knowledge. However, it is likely that coping and adaptation strategies to natural hazards applied in the past might not be a sufficient basis to deal with hazard phenomena not yet experienced by local communities. Additionally, one also has to consider the limits of adaptation for some regions and groups, often not considered in present concepts. Based on this general findings, the high level panel discussion organized by UNU-EHS and IHDP will focus on requirements for vulnerability and adaptation assessments and the option to link both successfully. Emphasis will also be given to the question on whether and how disaster risk reduction can support adaptation to climate change in the medium and long run, or why that might be insufficient. Lastly, speakers from different world regions will present practical challenges for example when dealing with vulnerability and adaptation to floods and sea level rise in the Mekong Delta. Key questions are: What do we need to know?, What can science develop?, and What is applicable in policy making?