



SSEAC Emerging Scholars Conference

A conference for postgraduate students
and early career researchers

When: Wednesday 28 July 2021

Where: Online via Zoom



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

—
Sydney Southeast
Asia Centre

Sydney Southeast Asia Centre

The Sydney Southeast Asia Centre is forging Australia's relationship with one of the world's fastest growing regions by educating students and building new partnerships with academics and governments based on research excellence.

With more than 400 academics across all faculties and schools working on and in Southeast Asia, the University of Sydney has one of the highest concentrations of regional expertise in the world.

Event proceedings

The SSEAC Emerging Scholars Conference is an opportunity for postgraduates and early career researchers working on Southeast Asia-related topics to present their research in preparation for upcoming conferences. It's also a chance for academics, practitioners and the wider community to engage with the next generation of Southeast Asia research excellence.

The conference is multidisciplinary, with sessions organised across SSEAC's five areas of research strength to go beyond disciplinary boundaries:

- Economic and social development
- Environment and resources
- Health
- Heritage and the arts
- State and society

Prior to the conference, you are invited to watch the speakers' video presentations on our [YouTube channel](#).

On the day of the conference, Wednesday 28 July, you are invited to join live panel discussions with our speakers, organised by thematic cluster. Find out more information and all the links on the [SSEAC Emerging Scholars Conference webpage](#) or refer to the program on the subsequent pages.



Program - Wednesday 28 July 2021

| Time (AEST) | Session | Presenter | Paper | Link |
|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|
| 10:00-10:45 | Session 1: Heritage and the Arts | Dr Jarrah Sastrawan | A Methodology of Loss for Southeast Asian History | bit.ly/ESC21heritage |
| | | Dr Cheng Nien Yuan | 'The Theatre is Probably the Safest Place to Be': COVID-19 and the Arts in Singapore | |
| | | Pan Htwa Myo Sein | Cultural Evidence of the Buddha at the Borobudur | |
| 10:45-11:00 | Break | | | |
| 11:00-11:45 | Session 2: Health | Ratih Arruum Listiyandin | Cultural Adaptation of an Internet-Delivered Mindfulness Intervention for University Students in Indonesia | bit.ly/ESC21health |
| | | Nurhafilah Musa | Federalism and the Pandemic: The Malaysia Experience | |
| 11:45-12:00 | Break | | | |
| 12:00-12:45 | Session 3: State and Society | Dr Evan Doran | Carrots and Sticks for Quantity and Quality: Indonesian Social Science Research Productivity And Culture | bit.ly/ESC21statesoc |
| | | Ulfah Muhayanj | Am I Included? Educational Inclusion of Minority Children in Indonesia | |
| | | Dr Paul-David Lutz | 'We Used to Have Lice' – Ethnicity and Internal Orientalism in Upland Laos | |
| | | Zali Fung | The Uneven Geographies of the Nam Yuam Water Diversion Project in the Salween River Basin: Participation, Exclusion and Resistance | |

| Time (AEST) | Session | Presenter | Paper | Link |
|-------------|---|----------------------------|---|---|
| 12:45-13:00 | Break | | | |
| 13:00-13:45 | Session 4: Economic and Social Development | Georgia Fagan | Alleviating Gender-Based Disadvantage Among Forcibly Displaced Rohingya Populations | https://bit.ly/ESC21ecosoc1 |
| | | Daniel Howell | Knowledge, Perceptions and Management of Plant Diseases in the Rice-Growing Regions of Northwest Cambodia | |
| | | Porntida Tanjitpiyanond | How Counter-Mobilisation Strategies fuel Public Support for Social Change Movements in Thailand | |
| 13:45-14:00 | Break | | | |
| 14:00-14:45 | Session 5: Economic and Social Development | Tanvir Uddin | Is there an Ethical Alternative and Normatively Preferred Microfinance Model? | https://bit.ly/ESC21ecosoc2 |
| | | Muhammad Hafidz Lidinillah | Paradoxical Provision on the Hajj Funds Management Law of Indonesia | |
| | | Zuhairan Yunmi Yunan | The Causes and Consequences of Corruption in Indonesia at the Sub-National Level | |
| 14:45-15:00 | Break | | | |

| Time (AEST) | Session | Presenter | Paper | Link |
|-----------------|--|-----------------------|---|---|
| 15:00- 15:45 | Session 6: Environment and Resources | Aye Sandar Phyo | Farmers' Livelihood Strategies in Central Dry Zone of Myanmar: Not Sticking to Farming, but Sticking to the Land | https://bit.ly/ESC21environment1 |
| | | Abner Yalu | Social Network Measures Influencing Adoption of Ecological Sustainable Farming Practices: A Case Study of Cocoa Farmers in Southeast Sulawesi Province of Indonesia | |
| | | Mia Dunphy | Rural Households Entangled in the Edible Birds' Nest Trade: Shifting Rural Livelihoods Across Gender and Generation in Kapuas Hulu, Indonesia | |
| | | Thai Van Nguyen | Gender-Livelihoods-Water Nexus and Resilience to Flood Disasters: Case Studies in Flood-prone Areas of the Vietnamese Mekong Delta | |
| 15:45- 16:00 | Break | | | |
| 16:00- 16:45 | Session 7: Environment and Resources | Chieh-Ming Lai | Learn to Transform Bangkok: Urban Greenery as Workplace | https://bit.ly/ESC21environment2 |
| | | Dr Thong Tran | Responding to Transboundary Water Challenges in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta: In Search of Institutional Fit | |
| | | Emily Nabong | A Systematic Review of Climate Change and Migration Decision Factors in the Philippines | |
| | | Ruchie Mark Pototanon | Flood and Policy: Typhoon Frank and Government Intervention in Iloilo City | |

Sessions and paper abstracts

Session 1: Heritage and the Arts

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21heritage>

Chair: Dr Natali Pearson

A Methodology of Loss for Southeast Asian History

Dr Jarrah Sastrawan - École française d'Extrême-Orient

In the premodern period, Southeast Asian historians studied a past that they had almost lost. Written texts perished quickly in the region's tropical climate. Archival institutions were vulnerable to disruption and were widely dispersed, making them difficult to access. The historical record was unstable and presented irreconcilable contradictions. These were the characteristic conditions for history-making that made the Southeast Asian case remarkably different to those of Western Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia. The study of premodern Southeast Asia therefore requires a special approach, which I call the methodology of loss. Such a methodology treats the survival of written records as exceptional rather than normal and takes this condition as its central premise. This approach has major implications for how the extant historical record should be interpreted. It means we cannot assume that the surviving record is a representative sample of what once existed. It means we need to detect the effects of loss on premodern historians' practices, such as the juxtaposition of contradictory accounts and use of inference to give coherence to a fragmentary record. We need to take seriously the interplay of written and oral modes of transmitting and organising historical knowledge. This paper lays out the basic elements of a methodology of loss, demonstrates its usefulness to premodern Southeast Asian history, and points out some of its broader implications.

Session 1: Heritage and the Arts

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21heritage>

Chair: Dr Natali Pearson

"The Theatre is Probably the Safest Place to Be": COVID-19 and the Arts in Singapore

Dr Cheng Nien Yuan

The University of Sydney

This paper illustrates the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on the arts in Singapore from the perspective of an arts practitioner, researcher and audience member on the ground. In comparison with other countries in the region, Singapore's COVID-19 response has been successful, in large part due to both state intervention and population compliance. How have these measures impacted the arts sector in Singapore, in both quantitative and qualitative terms? What are some of the creative strategies being undertaken by arts groups and individual practitioners during this period? Finally, what has the pandemic highlighted or revealed about the form and function of the arts in Singapore?

Session 1: Heritage and the Arts

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21heritage>

Chair: Dr Natali Pearson

Cultural Evidence of the Buddha at the Borobudur

Pan Htwa Myo Sein

Independent researcher

Buddhism arrived in the Indonesian archipelago from the India subcontinent and began with trading along the sea routes during the second century. Around the 9th century, the rulers of the Sailendra Dynasty built the Buddhist temple in Java. The Candi Borobudur had unique connotations of Buddha statues with mudras, stupas, sculptural reliefs, and ornamental motifs, these were combined successfully. And the temple was decorated brilliantly with traditional Javanese arts with the influence of Hindu elements.

This paper will approach the creation of Borobudur as the acts of Gautama Buddha in his life until he attains Nirvana and focus on the Borobudur's crowning stupa. Did Borobudur's central dome contain the relics as a concept of the Buddhist stupa? If it did, what's inside the inner chambers of the central stupa? If it didn't, the inner chambers of the main stupa are supposed to be empty. Many Buddhist stupas, pagodas and temples contain relics such as the hair relics of Buddha, statues and the Buddhist credos enshrined in the chamber. The Borobudur's main stupa had two empty chambers, one above the other, and now there is nothing inside it.

Nevertheless, at the present time, Borobudur Temple has become the biggest Buddhist temple, an extraordinary quality of architecture and stone sculptural achievement of traditional Javanese arts in the world.

Session 2: Health

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21health>

Chair: Dr Paul-David Lutz

Cultural Adaptation of an Internet-Delivered Mindfulness Intervention for University Students in Indonesia

Ratih Arruum Listiyandini

UNSW Sydney

University student worldwide experience elevated levels of psychological distress (depression, anxiety, and stress). Meanwhile, mindfulness-based treatments have been growing in popularity to reduce distress including for students and are increasingly being delivered through the Internet. However, research is needed to develop and evaluate its application in people from Low and Middle-income countries (LMICs) and non-western cultural backgrounds, such as Indonesia. In this presentation, we will describe the process of developing a culturally attuned internet-delivered mindfulness intervention and the results about the first stage of cultural adaptation. We culturally adapted a 4-lesson Australian internet-delivered mindfulness intervention using the theoretical framework from Barrera et al. (2013). We conducted a preference survey with 245 Indonesian student's participants, qualitative interviews with six experts, and three focus group discussions with five to eight Indonesian university students per group. The preferences survey suggested that Indonesian university students have a positive attitude toward internet-delivered mindfulness intervention. They prefer the program to be guided and brief (between 3-4 sessions and 15-30 minutes long for each session), particularly on time management, stress, and depression or anxiety issues. End-user consultation informed further several improvements to the intervention to ensure it was culturally appropriate to Indonesian students, including in the aspects of delivery, clinician support, content focus, and relatable examples of the application of mindfulness. This is the first study designing a culturally attuned internet-delivered mindfulness intervention for university students in Indonesia. The methodology used to create a culturally-attuned intervention has great potential for application to other interventions and other low and middle-income countries, and increase access to evidence-based culturally relevant mental health care.

Session 2: Health

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21health>

Chair: Dr Paul-David Lutz

Federalism and the Pandemic: The Malaysia Experience

Nurhafilah Musa

National University Malaysia (UKM)

Fighting Covid-19 has been a long war for all countries including Malaysia. Never before the issue of federalism, especially public health, has been at the forefront in Malaysian Federalism. Public health is one of the items enumerated in the Concurrent List, Ninth Schedule of the Malaysian Federal Constitution. Public health, in the Malaysian context, includes sanitation and the prevention of diseases. Not much has been explored on how public health is governed and administered in Malaysia. However, with Covid-19 pandemic, the issue of prevention of infectious disease has become a vital one to be tackled by all levels of government. Nevertheless, certain hurdles exist in terms implementation of certain decisions relating to control and containing the Covid-19 spread. Conflicts between the federal and state governments occurred when state governments disagreed with the federal government on certain directives. Issues like speeding up the vaccination process for the public has created a tension between the federal government and the state of Selangor. This paper intends to provide a snapshot on how federalism especially the distribution of powers between the federal and the state government affects the administration and management of pandemic in Malaysia. The vaccination issue is used as an example to demonstrate how federal relationship in the area of public health developed between both levels of governments. The study suggests that robust intergovernmental relations in the area of public health is needed in Malaysia to ensure that the pandemic will come to a quicker end.

Session 3: State and Society

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21statesoc>

Chair: Dr Natali Pearson

Carrots and Sticks for Quantity and Quality: Indonesian Social Science Research Productivity And Culture

Dr Evan Doran

The University of Sydney

There has been increased pressure on Indonesian universities to improve their position in world university rankings. Climbing up the rankings boils down to Indonesian academics publishing where it counts for reputation—international English-language scientific journals. Historically, Indonesia's scientific publication output has been low, globally and compared to most of its ASEAN neighbours. The Indonesian government has initiated several reforms to incentivise publications such as additional income for international Scopus-indexed publication or loss of allowance for failing to reach publication output benchmarks. Since the introduction of these carrots and sticks measures Indonesia's scientific output has markedly increased across the board but is greater for STEM than HASS disciplines. The increase in publications has been welcomed but also questioned—such as whether the push to produce has induced a 'Scopus Frenzy' more concerned with quantity than quality. Such questions are particularly acute for Indonesian social science where producing quality likely to get internationally published relies on reflexive, critical, sometimes provocative, questioning of culture and political economy. This research explores whether the carrots and sticks are creating a research culture ready to produce quality as well as quantity.

Session 3: State and Society

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21statesoc>

Chair: Dr Natali Pearson

Am I Included? Educational Inclusion of Minority Children in Indonesia

Ulfah Muhayani

Queensland University of Technology

Despite widespread acceptance and promotion of equal rights in education, inclusion and opportunities for all, children from minority groups are children who remain have highest potential of being excluded. Even, when they are already at school, minority students do not always feel included, due to their minority status. In Indonesia, there are a considerable number of minority children such as children from ethnic and religion minorities, street children, refugee children, children of Masyarakat Adat, children with disability, and LGBTQI+ children. This present study investigates the state of educational inclusion of minority children in Indonesia by examining government policy and strategies on education, listening to the voices of teachers and administrative leaders of schools about their experiences with children from minority groups, and also by exploring minority students' experiences directly from the perspective of the children themselves and their classmates. Finding out how these children experience inclusion/exclusion is a crucial step for developing strategies and actions to address exclusion in education especially in the Indonesia context and understanding how these children experience inclusion/exclusion in education allows for sustainable and pro-active policy development to put inclusion for all into practice.

Session 3: State and Society

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21statesoc>

Chair: Dr Natali Pearson

'We Used to Have Lice' – Ethnicity and Internal Orientalism in Upland Laos

Dr Paul-David Lutz

The University of Sydney

Southeast Asia has long spawned research and debate on ethnic identity, encounter, and change. With its forty-nine officially recognized ethnicities, Laos provides particularly fertile ground for exploring these dynamics. However, studies on ethnicity in Laos have hitherto focused mainly on relations between the national majority Tai-Lao and upland minorities. There remains a palpable lack of scholarship on relations between Laos' upland groups. Drawing on twelve months of ethnographic fieldwork in the ridgetop hamlet of "Sanjing", my paper gives an up-close account of interethnic relations in upland Laos today.

I begin with a brief introduction to Sanjing's two ethnicities: the autochthonous Khmu and immigrant Akha. I then offer a series of ethnographic vignettes on the historical, socio-economic and cultural factors shaping relations between the two groups. Extracting from these vignettes, I showcase the multifaceted interplay of these factors. On one hand, I argue that relations between Sanjing's Khmu and Akha constitute a localized form of "internal Orientalism" (Schein 1997): a self-referential, power-laden process of othering driven by modernist revolution and post-colonial nation-building. On the other, I show Sanjing's interethnic relations to be crucially inflected by deep-rooted cultural dynamics, locally specific forms of intercultural competence and, not least, the intimacies of everyday life.

In sum, this paper shows the lived complexity of interethnic relations in contemporary upland Laos. Debates over ethnicity, civility, modernity, and multiculturalism are not limited to "the West" or national elites/majorities in "the Rest." They may also be generated, negotiated, and challenged in interactions amongst ostensible subalterns.

Session 3: State and Society

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21statesoc>

Chair: Dr Natali Pearson

The Uneven Geographies of the Nam Yuam Water Diversion Project in the Salween River Basin: Participation, Exclusion and Resistance

Zali Fung

The University of Melbourne

Overt forms of resistance against large hydropower dams has been examined extensively in human geography. Yet there has been limited critical geographic research on the politics of other contentious water infrastructure projects, such as water diversion projects. Furthermore, there has been a lack of critical engagement with the concept of resistance in human geography (Hughes 2020), particularly in authoritarian contexts (Malseed 2008), despite many accounts of resistance practices.

This research examines the uneven geographies of the Nam Yuam Water Diversion Project (NYWDP), located in the Salween River Basin in Northeast Thailand near the Thai-Myanmar border. More specifically, it examines who is excluded from participating in formal project development, such as those lacking Thai citizenship, and how they engage with and contest the project, including through resistance.

I engage with key debates about what constitutes resistance and intentionality, and develop a conceptual framing to analyse diverse strategies of resistance practiced by communities and activists to contest the NYWDP. In doing so, I highlight the importance of context and socio-political structures in how resistance is conceptualised and enacted. This addresses a key literature gap on forms of resistance in authoritarian environments, which may not be overt and organised. More broadly, these findings will generate new insights into participation and state-society relations in authoritarian contexts, which characterises much of mainland Southeast Asia at present. My research draws on a review of academic and grey literature and media sources, and preliminary online interviews with activists and NGO employees.

Session 4: Economic and Social Development

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21ecosoc1>

Chair: Dr Kristy Ward

Culture, Norms and Autonomy in Refugee Camp Settings: Alleviating Gender-Based Disadvantage Among Forcibly Displaced Rohingya Populations

Georgia Fagan

The University of Sydney

Global humanitarian aid agencies and international conventions unanimously assert that gender equality need be made a central priority of post-conflict humanitarian aid interventions. Instances of gender-based violence (GBV) occur in great numbers in post-conflict humanitarian settings such as refugee camps, degrading the mental and physical health of those who experience it. Gender inequality has been established to directly contribute to the levels of GBV faced by women and girls. Over the past decade, thousands of Rohingya have been forced out of Myanmar into neighbouring Bangladesh. In Bangladeshi refugee camps, these women and girls face severe gender-based violence and gender-based disadvantage more broadly. There is a marked absence of rigorous, evidence-based interventions which adequately and safely address gender-based disadvantage in these settings. This constitutes a failure of humanitarian aid action and researchers alike. I construct a preliminary intervention plan that may be utilised in Bangladeshi refugee camp settings. The proposed intervention aims to alleviate gender-based disadvantage among Rohingya refugee populations through the appraisal of both philosophical literature and global development research. This intervention is constructed in conjunction with an analysis of Rohingya cultural norms and attitudes, it ultimately aims to alleviate gender-based disadvantage by promoting and preserving the autonomy of these refugee populations.

Session 4: Economic and Social Development

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21ecosoc1>

Chair: Dr Kristy Ward

Knowledge, Perceptions and Management of Plant Diseases in the Rice-Growing Regions of Northwest Cambodia

Daniel Howell

The University of Sydney

Optimising rice production is critical for food and economic security in Northwest Cambodia, a region often referred to as “the rice bowl”. Rice blast (*Pyricularia oryzae* Cavara) and other plant diseases in this region can significantly hinder productivity by reducing the quality and overall yield of crops. Integrated approaches for disease management that combine chemical, biological, and cultural practices offer the best long-term results. In Cambodia there is a tendency to rely almost exclusively on chemical control, negatively impacting both human and environmental health, even resulting in resistant strains of human and plant diseases. This study aimed to identify where farmer practices can most readily be improved in two provincial contexts. Farmers (N = 240), in Battambang and Banteay Meanchey, were surveyed about their agronomic practices, disease knowledge, approaches to disease control, and their perceptions about chemical pesticides and associated health risks. Across both provinces, ~98 percent of farmers only sprayed pesticides to manage disease - curative rather than preventative - with very few farmers offering alternative methods of control. Farmers were overwhelmingly concerned about using chemicals. In both provinces, farmers had experienced mild symptoms from spraying (Battambang: 75 percent; Banteay Meanchey: 57 percent), however, reported that rice cannot be farmed successfully without using pesticides. There was a difference in the source of disease information between the provinces with input sellers being the primary information source in Battambang and other local farmers in Banteay Meanchey. These findings support the adoption of interventions that have considered farmer context and leverage off established information networks.

Session 4: Economic and Social Development

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21ecosoc1>

Chair: Dr Kristy Ward

How Counter-Mobilisation Strategies Fuel Public Support for Social Change Movements in Thailand

Porntida Tanjitpiyanond

The University of Queensland

Thailand is facing a period of ongoing social instability whereby pro-reform protestors are demanding for massive social change – that is, for the current government to resign and for the monarchy to reform (e.g., the *lèse-majesté* law). Like any mobilisation for social change, there are sometimes counter-mobilisations against it. In the case of Thailand, the pro-reform protestors have received push back from the anti-reform protestors who appear to be against social change and rather wish to uphold the current social system. The current study is part of a larger research project that examines how the occurrence of an opposing protest (i.e. anti-reform protestors) can influence public support for movement for social change (i.e. the pro-reform protestors). Participants completed an anonymous online survey posted on social media sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) between 2nd and 21st October 2020 which asked about their attitudes and experiences regarding the ongoing protests in Thailand. The findings suggest that greater perceived violence of the anti-reform protester may relate to participants' support for the pro-reform protestors to fight for social change. Importantly, there is evidence that this relationship may be in part explained by the perception that the anti-reform protestors were threatening the pro-reform protestors' rights to free speech. In sum, the current study provides initial evidence to suggest that counter-mobilisation strategies may be counterproductive in their goals because it can propel people to further vouch for social change.

Session 5: Economic and Social Development

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21ecosoc2>

Chair: Dr Elisabeth Kramer

Is there an Ethical Alternative and Normatively Preferred Microfinance Model?

Tanvir Uddin

The University of Sydney

The existence of both conventional and Islamic microfinance in Muslim-majority countries creates opportunities for competition and raises policy questions about whether they ought to be promoted for development. Emerging criticisms of microfinance (including lack of development impact; “mission drift” where microfinance institutions (MFIs) shift focus away from the poorest members of society; over-indebtedness; and unethical practices) have sparked calls for renewal and innovation. However, beyond cultural relevance, the policy case for Islamic microfinance has not been examined in detail in the literature.

This paper will make the policy case for Islamic microfinance through the evaluation of Islamic microfinance law and field observations from two Bangladeshi and Indonesian Islamic MFIs each. This paper makes three arguments. First, unlike conventional microfinance, Islamic MFIs can reach poorer beneficiaries through integration with Islamic philanthropy. Secondly, IMF offers a wider range of contracts that better suit the circumstances of the poor and provide controls against over-indebtedness and unethical conduct. Thirdly, field observations indicate that Islamic MFIs adhere to the Sharī'ah ethical framework and exercise compassionate customer treatment.

Through doctrinal and fieldwork analysis, this paper argues that Islamic microfinance addresses the underlying criticisms of microfinance and is better suited to fulfill the needs of impoverished beneficiaries in Muslim-majority countries.

Session 5: Economic and Social Development

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21ecosoc2>

Chair: Dr Elisabeth Kramer

Paradoxical Provision on the Hajj Funds Management Law of Indonesia

Muhammad Hafidz Lidinillah
Western Sydney University

In Indonesia, to make the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, would-be pilgrims are required to be financially able. This money is pooled by a new entity known as the Hajj Fund Management Agency, or BPKH. This Agency is a government body and is formally regulated by Law No. 34 of 2014 on Hajj Funds Management. Collected funds are managed by the Hajj Funds Management Agency and, after payment has been made, pilgrims must wait 11 to 40 years to make their pilgrimage. This arrangement was proposed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which has been the regulator, operator and evaluator of the hajj administration for decades. This paper aims to examine conflicts and inconsistencies in the Law regarding the Hajj Funds Management Agency's role and powers, and how they impact on pilgrims' interests in terms of efficiency and fairness.

Session 5: Economic and Social Development

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21ecosoc2>

Chair: Dr Elisabeth Kramer

The Causes and Consequences of Corruption in Indonesia at the Sub-National Level

Zuhairan Yunmi Yunan

The University of Canberra

The discussion on the economics of corruption studies has emphasized the need for research in investigating Indonesia context. Systemic corruption is widespread in Indonesia and as the decentralization of its government, disturbing signs soon emerged that the burden of corruption had also transferred to the district level. Nevertheless, these corruption levels also vary considerably across the country's complex geographical boundaries. This paper tries to provide empirical evidence on the causes and the impact of corruption in Indonesia's districts and municipalities. It begins with using the available corruption measurements, such as Judicial Report on corruption and Regional Corruption Perception Index. This paper investigates the determinant of corruption at district level and analyse its impact on their economy. The results indicate that the investigation of the determinants showed the significant role of economic, social demographic, infrastructure, and political factors affecting corruption. In addition, the previous corruption experience has also affected current level of corruption in Indonesia. Moreover, the results highlight the improvement of judicial system can be seen in the increasing number of judicial reports on corruption over the year. It also improves the perception on corruption in Indonesia region. Finally, the growth analysis suggests the significant impact of corruption to districts' economy. It is proven that, according to the "sand the wheel" hypothesis, corruption lowers economic growth in Indonesia.

Session 6: Environment and Resources

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21environment1>

Chair: Dr Natali Pearson

Farmers' Livelihood Strategies in Central Dry Zone of Myanmar: Not Sticking to Farming, but Sticking to the Land

Aye Sandar Phyo

The University of Sydney

Climate change has major effects on crop productivity in the global South, and as a result, has encouraged many farmers to engage more in non-farm livelihoods. However, even as farmers are moving away from farming as a livelihood activity, they are still retaining ownership of their farms, and the reason behind their clinging to farming is a puzzle for livelihoods analysis.

This paper addresses this puzzle using evidence from household interviews and a focus group discussion in a village with low crop productivity in the Central Dry Zone of Myanmar. The study finds that farmers have tried to adjust their livelihoods by engaging in non-farm work for more than twenty years in response to climate change. However, they still have strong attachment to the ownership of their farmland. Landownership gives hereditary pride that can be passed onto the next generation and, households believe that land is an important asset under conditions of uncertainty and keeping it could be favourable in the future (better market price). Moreover, incidental assets on the land, such as plum and toddy trees grown in the land boundary areas, can contribute their household livelihoods by providing extra household income, household consumption, firewood and buildings.

This study therefore acknowledges that while engaging in non-farm activities is an important adaptation strategy for rural households under conditions of climate change, households place importance in the continuing ownership of farmland. This consideration needs to be taken into the account for future policy implementation of climate change adaptation strategies in Myanmar.

Session 6: Environment and Resources

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21environment1>

Chair: Dr Natali Pearson

Social Network Measures Influencing Adoption of Ecological Sustainable Farming Practices: A Case Study of Cocoa Farmers in Southeast Sulawesi Province of Indonesia

Abner Yalu

The University of Sydney

The food security of the world depends on farmer production. Farmer production into the future depends on adopting ecologically sustainable farming practices. Studies have shown that social networks influence farmer adoption of farming technologies. Nevertheless, none has investigated the pattern of diversity of adopted technologies due to system-level social networks. The paper explores the adoption associated with the variety of adopted practices as influenced by system-level social networks. Secondary data on recommended farming technology adopted and information-seeking relationships were collected using the name generator sampling strategy of 7015 cocoa farmers in 72 villages in Southeast Sulawesi. Village-level social network measures relating to network size, connectivity, closeness, and fragmentation were generated for each village. Adopted practice diversity per village was estimated. Finally, a multiple linear regression model is applied to test whether network measures influence the variety of technology adopted. Results suggest that network measures of connectivity have a negative effect on driving the diversity of technology adoption. The network measure of 'closeness' has a significant negative impact on total adoption. The number of graph components in the village network, on the other hand, has a significant positive effect on adoption, suggesting that network fragmentation and diversity of adopted practice are positively associated with higher total adoption. The study contributes new insight to understanding the long-term impacts of project-driven environmental resource management interventions by showing how system-level social networks can affect local policies for sustainable technology adoption in rural areas.

Session 6: Environment and Resources

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21environment1>

Chair: Dr Natali Pearson

Rural Households Entangled in the Edible Birds' Nest Trade: Shifting Rural Livelihoods Across Gender and Generation in Kapuas Hulu, Indonesia

Mia Dunphy

The University of Melbourne

Across Southeast Asian frontiers, rural households are undergoing livelihood transformations away from subsistence-based livelihoods towards market-oriented activities in rural and urban areas – a broader process known as ‘agrarian change’. The intensifying harvest and sale of non-timber forest products (NTFP), such as rubber, is ‘opening up’ forest spaces, as more indigenous and (trans)migrant households, as well as large-scale companies, seek to capitalise from growing global demand. Rural livelihoods are thus unequally linked in global connection through local movements. As local households involve themselves in new lucrative livelihoods and income streams by specialising in the harvest of NTFPs, rural landscapes, and social and familial relations are changing in unanticipated ways. The changing systems, use, and trade of NTFP, are intrinsically shifting gender relations, roles, and aspirations across age, as livelihood trajectories twist and turn with opportunities and challenges from globalising NTFPs. Through an agrarian political economy and feminist political ecology framework, this study explores how and why rural household livelihoods impacted by the changing nature of intensifying edible birds’ nest (EBN) trade in Kapuas Hulu, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. Offering increasingly lucrative income, the EBN trade has rapidly altered space and place as it moves from caves localities to purpose build houses. This study aims to explore the shifting relationship between the intensifying EBN trade and rural household livelihoods, I will focus on the changing dynamics within the household, in terms of the movement of gender and generational roles, aspirations and livelihoods.

Session 6: Environment and Resources

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/ESC21environment1>

Chair: Dr Natali Pearson

Gender-Livelihoods-Water Nexus and Resilience to Flood Disasters: Case Studies in Flood-prone Areas of the Vietnamese Mekong Delta

Thai Van Nguyen

University of New England

It is estimated that some two-thirds of Vietnam's water resources come from neighbouring countries making water governance challenging. In recent years, upstream countries of Mekong region have increased their water use and Vietnam is currently facing increasingly the impacts from the water policies of upstream nationals, especially in relation to the hydropower and dam industry development. Moreover, as climate change is expected to strongly affect the country's water resources, causing more severe floods and increasing its damage. The flooding is considered one of the serious disasters in rural areas of Vietnam's Mekong Delta annually. It caused not only physical damage but also the human loss, creating the burden for women in that affected societies. In turn, the most vulnerable people, women are left behind in the governance and politics to mitigation strategies towards floods. The study aims to explore women's roles in flood risk adaptation, examine the key drivers of floods and raise women's concerns to water governance and resiliency. The study proposes to conduct a mixed method to obtain such objectives. The quantitative and qualitative research methods will be used to gain multi-level perspectives (provincial, district and commune levels) through semi-structured interviews, household surveys and focus group discussions. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools are applied to identify scenarios of both selected research sites in terms of flooding impacts on women. The study achievement is to raise more women's voice in political concerns in relation to flood resilience and governance. It narrows the gap of who and how men and women engage in the decision-making processes with regards to water governance and resilience.

Session 7: Environment and Resources

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Chair: Mr Daniel Howell

Learn to Transform Bangkok: Urban Greenery as Workplace

Chieh-Ming Lai

The University of Sydney

This paper draws on the notion of transformative learning in the workplace context to explain the outcomes of the Tree Care Training Program 2018, a citizen-driven inter-referencing effort that was aimed at improving tree pruning practices in Bangkok. With a quick introduction of Bangkok's treescapes and the 'pre-travel stories' that created this training program, I will focus on the learning outcomes of utilising the tree-climbing techniques for pruning in Bangkok's diverse green spaces. An array of challenges has been found, which can be attributed to the space features, urban rhythms, and logistical limitations of Bangkok. These critical factors, however, were hugely neglected in the Tree Care Training Program 2018, indicating a serious lack of communicative learning between the civil society organisation members and the municipal tree maintenance staff. Based on this finding, I firstly call for a different perspective to see the green spaces not only as recreational or ecological patches in the cities but also as workplace that is highly intertwined with specific and complex urban contexts. Secondly, I argue for a more inclusive approach of inter-referencing that enhances a better engagement between global expertise and local experiences.

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Responding to Transboundary Water Challenges in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta: In Search of Institutional Fit

Dr Thong Tran

The Australian National University

The operation of large hydropower dams in the Mekong basin has often had dramatic transboundary effects; however, this is not fully recognised in Vietnamese government policies. This paper investigates institutional gaps regarding transboundary water challenges, including plummeting floodwater flows and extreme saltwater intrusion events in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta. Based on interviews and discussions with key stakeholders (including central and provincial government officials, environmental experts, and academics) as well as desk reviews of policy documents, we argue that, while the transboundary water challenges are increasingly evident on the ground, they are largely overlooked in Vietnamese water management policies and strategic development planning for the delta. Failure to incorporate the combined impacts of climatic and hydropower development in the Mekong region into local water governance makes it difficult to deal with changing water dynamics. The study reveals an ongoing shift from command-and-control to process-oriented and from reactive to proactive approaches in guiding processes towards institutional fit. A search for institutional fit to address transboundary water challenges demands consideration of two key aspects: first, how, and in which forms, innovative management decisions and water governance policies can be effectively undertaken towards sustaining the living delta and its resilience to present and future environmental risks; and second, how reframed water policy and development agendas can holistically capture the transboundary hydrological complexities, while fostering the state government's engagement in decision-making processes at the higher level to tackle related impacts.

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A Systematic Review of Climate Change and Migration Decision Factors in the Philippines

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The University of Sydney

Disasters and environmental change have long been drivers for human migration. In the coming century, the impacts of climate change are expected to become more severe, creating exposure to new hazards, disrupting livelihoods, and exacerbating factors that induce migration. This process is likely to unfold incrementally as slow onset hazards force households and governments to decide whether to adapt infrastructure or abandon these assets altogether. While there is significant work currently focused on in situ adaptation – there remain gaps in understanding when social and economic trade-offs will outweigh continued investments and adaptation as migration becomes the best option. This research presents a systematic literature review which synthesises factors influencing migration decision-making by affect households in relation to climate change. A systematic literature review of peer-reviewed literature identified 665 relevant articles which were screened for relevancy, and qualitatively coded. Several themes emerged around the complexity and interrelatedness of overarching demographic, economic, environmental, political, and social migration drivers. Although threats are multiplied by climate change, the relationships between migration drivers highlight how multi-faceted decision-making is for those affected. This research may assist government agencies and communities to better understand climate related migration decision-making, leading to more informed adaptation investment. Broader work about how these decision factors influence critical tipping points between voluntary migration and forced displacement by climate change will also be discussed.

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Flood and Policy: Typhoon Frank and Government Intervention in Iloilo City

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Typhoon Frank (international name: Fengshen) ravaged the Philippines in June 2008 and inundated the city of Iloilo, an important commercial and cultural hub in Central Philippines. This study is a preliminary account of this disaster with prime focus on the activities of different state agents and actors. First it provides a reconstruction of existing conditions prior to the flood. Second, it looks at the immediate actions of government units and agencies. Lastly, it assesses the impacts of typhoon Frank on later policies and projects, especially in terms of flood prevention and rehabilitation. Iloilo City due to its location and topography, is prone to flooding and the Frank disaster has shown the extent of the damage that the waters can bring. The policies and projects by national and local government units have allowed the city to recover. Projects such as floodways, drainage repair, river dredging etc. have perhaps averted another big flood of the same intensity for more than 10 years. However, flooding in Iloilo City persists and Typhoon Frank remains a reminder and possibility.



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