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Biological indicators in Ben Tre River System, Mekong Delta, Vietnam

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The Mekong River Delta is the final part of Mekong River Basin and Ben Tre River is the last distributary of its river system, bordering the East Sea in the Southern Vietnam. Ben Tre has a vast river network with a total length of 6000 km and contiguous to the East Sea with a sea length of about 65 km. Also, Ben Tre has huge network with a hundreds of rivers, channels and canals connecting locals together forming a communication network and convenient irrigation system (on average along the main river about 1 to 2 km has each of them with 50 divided 100 m wide). Therefore, the water source of Ben Tre province plays an important role in promoting its economy such as irrigation, aquaculture and fishing purpose as well as for supplying domestic for local people. However, it is most vulnerable to climate change and sea level rise among thirteen provinces in the MKD (JICA, 2013). But, up to now Ben Tre has not yet had a biological monitoring system and most of the environmental reports are purely based on physiological parameters, while information on aquatic biodiversity, organisms' indicators, as well as the biological health of biological communities are almost unnoticed. Therefore, the aim of this research is to develop an integrated monitoring network of the whole Ben Tre River and make an assessment regarding the major sources of disturbances, especially building modelling framework for benthic invertebrates in riverine ecosystems.

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