

# THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION: INSIGHTS FROM A FISHING COMMUNITY IN VIET NAM\*

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**Abstracts:** *Disaster risk reduction is one of the foci of the national policies of Viet Nam, one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change. Recent work by international scholars shows how the link between culture and disaster risk reduction is essential to climate change adaptation but to date work in this area is totally absent in Vietnam.*

*This paper examines the role of culture in climate change adaptation through the practice of Whale worship of the fishing community in Viet Nam. Religious beliefs influence the perception of natural hazards and thus impact their behaviors towards these risks. Besides that, the local ecological knowledge of fishermen can contribute to scientific knowledge in assessing the impacts of climate change and determining appropriate adaptation strategies. In addition, the social network created by the religious institution such as Whale worship produces social capital which has an important role in building capacity to respond to natural hazards and in disaster recovery. Findings of this research confirm the need to incorporate culture into policies and climate change adaptation actions that have focused mainly on technical issues.*

**Keywords:** *Culture, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, fishing community, Whale worship, local ecological knowledge.*