



## Climate Crisis?

House submerged by severe floods in October 06 - With a lot of its people and the most productive farmland lying close to sea-level, Thailand is one of the countries most at risk from climate change.

The capital city, Bangkok is only about 1-1.5 metres above sea-level yet some scientists are now predicting that seas could rise by 65 cm by the end of the century as the oceans warm up.

Some predictions are even worse. A Thai climate expert recently claimed that Bangkok will be underwater within twenty years unless drastic measures are taken to protect the city.





As well as rising sea-levels Bangkok is *sinking* by ten cm a year because of the soft underlying soil. Rubbish-choked sewers and canals also increase the risk of flooding as the rainwater cannot drain away easily.



About one hour's drive south of Bangkok, people living on the coast are on the frontline of the battle against climate change. Here, rates of erosion are some of the worst in the world. With rougher seas and higher waves during the monsoon season some coastal communities are experiencing erosion of up to 30 metres of land a year. In early 2007, an entire village called Khun Samutchine was swallowed up by the sea. Breakwaters made of cement pillars are being built in the sea to take the energy out of the eroding waves. Communities are also replanting mangrove forests as another cushion against rising seas.

Back in Bangkok, people are starting to think very big to save the city, including a huge wall (or dyke).



Climate change brought on by man-made CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is worrying people the world over. Thailand's emissions have doubled in the last ten years, but the country is still only responsible for about 1.5% of the world's total.

*Images: top – House submerged by severe floods Oct 06 - Angthong, by Simon Scoones.  
Bottom – flooded temple in Bangkok by Flickr user 'vard' shared under a Creative Commons license*