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National Action Plan on Biodiversity

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Report Highlights: The report provides an un-official translation of Vietnam's recently approved *National Action Plan on Biodiversity to 2010 and Orientation Towards 2020*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----------|
| Report summary | 3 |
| 1 Specific targets from now to 2010..... | 3 |
| a/ Conservation and development of terrestrial biodiversity: | 3 |
| b/ Biodiversity conservation and development in wetlands and coastal areas: | 3 |
| c/ Agricultural biodiversity conservation and development:..... | 3 |
| d/ Sustainable use of biological natural resources: | 3 |
| e/ Strengthen state management capacity on biodiversity and biosafety: | 4 |
| 2 Orientations towards 2020..... | 4 |
| II. MAJOR TASKS | 4 |
| 1 Conservation and development of terrestrial biodiversity | 4 |
| 2 Biodiversity conservation and development in wetlands and coastal areas..... | 5 |
| 3 Agricultural biodiversity conservation and development | 5 |
| 4 Sustainable use of biological resources..... | 6 |
| 5. Improvement of state management capacity for biodiversity and control over genetically modified organisms, and products and commodities originated from genetically modified organisms for effective protection of people's health, the environment and biodiversity | 6 |
| III . MAJOR SOLUTIONS | 7 |
| 1 Organizational consolidation and capacity building for biodiversity and biosafety state management agencies; improvement of the system of mechanisms, policies and legal documents on biodiversity and biosafety..... | 7 |
| 2 Application of scientific and technological solutions to conservation, and sustainable development and use of biological natural resources; | 8 |
| 3 Intensification of propagation, education and raising of public awareness to boost information sharing and active participation of people in biodiversity protection and biosafety management: | 8 |
| 4 Increase and diversification of investment capital sources for biodiversity and biosafety. | 8 |
| 5 Enhancement of international cooperation in biodiversity and biosafety..... | 8 |
| IV. ORGANIZATION OF IMPLEMENTATION..... | 9 |

Report summary

On May 31, 2007 Vietnam Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung signed Decision No.79/2007/QĐ-TTg approving the *National Action Plan for implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety*. For more detail, please see VM7048. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) was assigned as the lead agency for implementing this plan. The MONRE minister will chair a steering committee for the plan's implementation. The Government also assigned MONRE to develop a law on bio-diversity to be submitted to the National Assembly for review by the 4th quarter of 2008.

DECISION No. 79/2007/QĐ-TTg OF MAY 31, 2007, APPROVING THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON BIODIVERSITY UP TO 2010 AND ORIENTATIONS TOWARDS 2020 FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY

THE PRIME MINISTER

Pursuant to the December 25, 2001 Law on Organization of the Government;
Pursuant to the November 29, 2005 Law on Environmental Protection;
At the proposal of the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment,

DECIDES:

ARTICLE 1. To approve the national action plan on biodiversity up to 2010 and orientations towards 2020 for implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (below referred to as national action plan for short) with the following principal contents:

1 Specific targets from now to 2010

a/ Conservation and development of terrestrial biodiversity:

- * To improve, complete and develop the system of special-use forests (to reach a forest coverage of 42-43%);
- * To restore 50% of the area of degraded watershed forests;
- * To effectively protect precious, rare and endangered animals and plants;
- * To have three natural reserves accredited as world natural heritage or world biosphere reserve and five natural reserves accredited as ASEAN heritage.

b/ Biodiversity conservation and development in wetlands and coastal areas:

- * To increase the total area of wetlands and marine reserves of national and international importance to over 1.2 million hectares.
- * To restore 200,000 hectares of mangrove forests;
- * To build five (05) wetlands areas eligible for accreditation as wetlands of international importance (Ramsar sites).

c/ Agricultural biodiversity conservation and development:

To announce and complete a conservation system to efficiently conserve precious and rare livestock breeds, plant varieties and indigenous agricultural microorganisms of high socio-economic value.

d/ Sustainable use of biological natural resources:

- * To build and develop models of sustainable use of biological natural resources; to

monitor, prevent, stop and eliminate the exploitation, trading and consumption of precious, rare and endangered animals and plants;

- * To monitor, evaluate and prevent invasive alien species;
- * To check and verify 100% of the breeds, species and genetic sources of imported organisms.

e/ Strengthen state management capacity on biodiversity and biosafety:

- * To complete and enhance the state management capacity for the legislation system, especially national focal point and competent agencies in charge of biodiversity and bio-safety, to meet the management requirements of these two domains;
- To build and complete a system of mechanisms, policies and legal documents on biodiversity and biosafety management;
- * To improve technical and material bases, attach importance to training and developing personnel professionally and technically qualified for biodiversity conservation and development and biosafety management;
- * To conduct propaganda and education to raise public awareness about conservation, and sustainable development and use of biodiversity; to strive for the target that over 50% of the population have regular access to information on biodiversity and biosafety and give comments on the decision making in granting biosafety certificates;
- * To ensure that 100% of genetically modified organisms, and products and commodities originated from genetically modified organisms circulated on the market undergo risk assessment in Vietnam and are labeled, checked and monitored in accordance with law.

2 Orientations towards 2020

a/ To conserve, and sustainably develop and use, the biodiversity of genetic sources, biological species and the rich ecological system of Vietnam; to efficiently manage biosafety to protect the people's health, the environment and biodiversity; to make practical contributions to regional and global efforts in biodiversity conservation and development; to fully implement international commitments on biodiversity and biosafety to which Vietnam is a contracting party.

b/ To complete the organizational system, mechanisms, policies and legal documents on biodiversity and biosafety management in Vietnam;

c/ To complete the system of (terrestrial, wetlands and marine) natural reserves; to restore 50% of typical and sensitive ecosystems which have been destroyed.

II. MAJOR TASKS

1 Conservation and development of terrestrial biodiversity

a/ To adopt a unified rating system for special-use forests; to check, plan and develop the special-use forest system; to apply sustainable forest management models;

b/ To continue implementing efficiently the five-million-hectare forestation project in accordance with Resolution No. 73/2006/QH11 of November 29, 2006, of the Socialist

Republic of Vietnam's XIth National Assembly, the 10th session, adjusting the targets and tasks of the five-million-hectare forestation project in the 2006-2010 period;

c/ To build and nominate natural reserves eligible for accreditation as world natural heritage, world biosphere reserve or ASEAN heritage;

d/ To apply the ecosystem approach in biodiversity protection; to build up biodiversity corridors between sanctuaries and farm reserves suitable to Vietnam's conditions;

e/ To adopt a master plan on the ex-situ conservation system according to eight regions (northeastern, northwestern, northern plain, northern central, southern central, central highlands, southeastern and southwestern) and start construction in some regions

f/ To develop ex-situ conservation forms, especially for endemic, precious and rare animals and plants; to attach importance to multiplying and rearing a number of precious and rare animals and plants of high socio-economic value;

g/ To identify species in danger of extinction to be put under ex-situ conservation according to planning.

2 Biodiversity conservation and development in wetlands and coastal areas

a/ Building, developing and managing the wetlands and marine reserve system:

- * To adopt and carry out strategies, master plans, national and provincial plans on integrated management of coastal and marine zones;
- * To adopt and implement master plans on wetlands and marine reserves, paying due attention to functional zones and buffer zones; to adopt and implement conservation plans for each reserve;
- * To conduct investigations and surveys on, prepare application dossiers of, and request for accreditation of, wetlands of international importance (Ramsar sites).

b/ Rehabilitating and developing wetlands and marine ecosystems:

- * To restore and develop important coral reefs and seaweed covers;
- * To investigate and evaluate the current status of mangrove forests; to adopt and carry out plans on restoration and development of coastal mangrove forests of protection significance;
- * To restore wetlands ecosystems in environmentally vulnerable areas.

3 Agricultural biodiversity conservation and development

a/ To investigate, inventory and assess genetic sources of agricultural plants, livestock and microorganisms;

b/ To elaborate and implement a program on agricultural biodiversity conservation and development;

c/ To build up and apply conservation and development models for precious and rare indigenous plants and livestock;

d/ To apply advanced technologies, especially biotechnologies, to conserve and develop agricultural biodiversity.

4 Sustainable use of biological resources

a/ Sustainable use of timber resources and non-timber forest products:

- * To collect data on and assess the current status, exploitation and use of timber resources and non-timber forest products, paying due attention to pharmaceutical materials and ornamental trees; to apply advanced technologies to processing forest products to raise their use value and save natural resources;
- * To elaborate and implement an action plan on conservation and sustainable development of non-timber forest products;
- * To build up, apply, review and popularize sustainable development models for forest products;
- * To research into, apply and develop local knowledge, especially about medicinal plants and animals and traditional processing of non-timber forest products.

b/ Sustainable use of wetlands and marine natural resources:

- * To apply protective methods and wisely use wetlands of national and international importance;
- * To build up and apply comprehensive management models for wetlands and marine natural resources suitable to local communities' practices;
- * To strengthen monitoring networks for natural resources, environment and biodiversity in important wetlands and marine zones.

c/ Prevention, control and strict handling of illegal exploitation, trading and use of biological natural resources:

- * To closely monitor and strictly handle the illegal exploitation, trading and use of biological natural resources, especially wildlife, timber and coral;
- * To eliminate destructive methods of exploiting biological natural resources and the destruction of sensitive ecosystems;
- * To apply comprehensive measures to control the trading of precious and rare animals and plants in danger of extinction.

d/ Strictly control and management of invasive alien species:

- * To investigate and collect data on invasive alien species;
- * To adopt and carry out strategies on prevention and control of invasive alien species and handling of incidents caused by invasive alien species.

e/ Eco-tourism development:

- * To investigate and evaluate the potential of, and adopt planning on, the ecotourism network nationwide;
- * To develop ecotourism models in a number of natural reserves and national parks, giving priority to Cat Ba, Phong Nha-Ke Bang, Cat Tien and Phu Quoc national parks and Can Gio natural reserve;
- * To propose and carry out effective measures to reduce negative impacts of tourism on biodiversity.

5. Improvement of state management capacity for biodiversity and control over genetically modified organisms, and products and commodities originated from genetically modified organisms for effective protection of people's health, the environment and biodiversity

a/ To perform unified state management of biodiversity and biosafety toward genetically modified organisms, and products and commodities originated from genetically modified

organisms. To consolidate and improve state management capacity for the organizational system, especially key national agencies and competent agencies in charge of biodiversity and biosafety. To enhance the capacity of state management personnel in charge of biodiversity and biosafety;

b/ To elaborate, promulgate and complete a system of mechanisms, policies and legal documents on biodiversity management. Biodiversity conservation must be taken into thorough consideration upon approval of socio-economic development master plans, plans and projects;

c/ To elaborate, promulgate and complete a system of mechanisms, policies and legal documents on biosafety for genetically modified organisms, and products and commodities originated from genetically modified organisms;

d/ To develop and improve the potential, in terms of both material and technical bases and human resource training, for scientific research into modern biotechnologies and biosafety; to conduct research to create, safely use and manage genetically modified organisms, and products and commodities originated from genetically modified organisms. To study scientific grounds and elaborate technical instructions in service of risk assessment, risk level classification and risk management of genetically modified organisms, and products and commodities originated from genetically modified organisms. To research and successfully apply scientific solutions and advanced technologies to biodiversity and biosafety conservation and development;

e/ To build, upgrade, complete, license and put into efficient use of a system of labs, including key national labs qualified for analyzing and evaluating risks and precisely identifying genetically modified organisms, and products and commodities originated from genetically modified organisms;

f/ To establish, put into operation and perform the unified management of the database and information system of biodiversity and biosafety;

g/ To build and put into use the Biosafety Clearing House.

III . MAJOR SOLUTIONS

1 Organizational consolidation and capacity building for biodiversity and biosafety state management agencies; improvement of the system of mechanisms, policies and legal documents on biodiversity and biosafety

a/ To consolidate and raise the capacity of the system of state management agencies, especially key national agencies and competent agencies in charge of biodiversity and biosafety, to meet the management requirements of these two domains;

b/ Review, compile, amend, supplement and complete the system of mechanisms, policies and legal documents to ensure effective and efficient management of biodiversity and biosafety domains;

c/ To establish inter-ministerial and interregional mechanisms to coordinate branches' and localities' activities in biodiversity and biosafety management;

d/ To decentralize, and assist localities in, biodiversity and biosafety management;

e/ To integrate biodiversity and biosafety into socio-economic development strategies,

master plans, plans, programs and projects towards sustainable development.

2 Application of scientific and technological solutions to conservation, and sustainable development and use of biological natural resources;

a/ To intensify investigation and basic research into biological natural resources, focus studies on biological and ecological characteristics of endemic, precious and rare species and typical and sensitive ecosystems;

b/ To boost technological research and technology transfer to discover and precisely identify genetically modified organisms, and products and commodities originated from genetically modified organisms; to analyze and evaluate risks of, and safely and biologically manage, genetically modified organisms.

3 Intensification of propagation, education and raising of public awareness to boost information sharing and active participation of people in biodiversity protection and biosafety management:

a/ To intensify propagation, education and raising of public awareness about conservation, and sustainable development and use of biological natural resources; to actively carry out a movement involving all the people in biodiversity protection; to devise and regularly organize media programs and training courses on biodiversity and biosafety;

b/ To ensure the community's right and participation in the process of appraising investment policies, strategies, master plans, plans, programs and projects concerning natural reserves and in the biosafety decision making process;

c/ To diversify models of community-based management and sustainable development and use of biodiversity; to bring into play the nation's tradition of close attachment to nature.

4 Increase and diversification of investment capital sources for biodiversity and biosafety

a/ To ensure funds for biodiversity conservation from the state budget with a focus on direct investment in biodiversity conservation, development and management activities;

b/ To adopt favorable mechanisms to attract domestic and overseas organizations and individuals to make investment and transfer technologies in service of conservation and sustainable development and use of biodiversity and biosafety management;

c/ To apply financial instruments to biodiversity management such as taxes and fees on the exploitation and use of natural resources, environmental service fees and conservation funds;

d/ To integrate conservation and sustainable development of biodiversity and biosafety management into domains entitled to funding priority such as hunger eradication, poverty reduction, healthcare and rural development.

5 Enhancement of international cooperation in biodiversity and biosafety

a/ To expand cooperation with ASEAN countries in building up an information and database system, and organizing experience exchange forums and networks, on conservation and sustainable development of biodiversity and biosafety;

- b/ To boost international cooperation in transnational biodiversity protection;
- c/ To actively join and implement international and regional biodiversity and biosafety treaties and efforts;
- d/ To diversify bilateral and multilateral cooperation with nations, international and regional organizations on biodiversity conservation and biosafety, focusing on the exchange of experience and experts;
- e/ To raise the efficiency of international cooperation in training, technological transfer and technical consultation on biodiversity and biosafety.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF IMPLEMENTATION

1 The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

- a/ To be the National Focal Point for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; to assume the prime responsibility for, and coordinate with relevant ministries, branches and localities in efficiently and timely implementing the national action plan, and annually reporting implementation results to the Prime Minister;
- b/ To assume the prime responsibility for implementing the national action plan within the scope of its functions, tasks and powers. To assume the prime responsibility for elaborating, approving or submitting to competent authorities for approval, and implementing, the following contents:
 - * A scheme to consolidate the system of state management agencies in charge of biodiversity and biosafety;
 - * A scheme to raise the capacity of biosafety management of genetically modified organisms, and products and commodities originated from genetically modified organisms;
 - * A plan to prevent and monitor invasive alien species;
 - * A program on propagation and education to raise public awareness about biodiversity and biosafety;
 - * A project to form an information sharing and database system of biodiversity and biosafety;
 - * An action program on biodiversity suitable to the northeastern, northwestern, northern plain, northern central, southern central, central highlands, southeastern and southwestern regions.

c/ The Minister of Natural Resources and Environment shall establish an inter-ministerial steering committee of which he is the head to organize the implementation of the national action plan. The membership and the operation regulation of the steering committee and its office shall be decided on by the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment.

2 The Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development; Fisheries; Science and Technology; Education and Training; Culture and Information; Trade; Foreign Affairs; Planning and Investment; and Finance, the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, and the Vietnam Science and Technology Institute shall, based on their functions, tasks and powers, properly implement relevant contents in the national action plan.

3 The Ministry of Planning and Investment and the Ministry of Finance shall balance, allocate and guide the use of, capital to efficiently and timely implement the national action plan.

4 Provincial/municipal People's Committees shall properly implement the national action plan's contents related their localities, especially the elaboration and implementation of action plans on biodiversity of territories and localities with high biodiversity.

ARTICLE 2.- The Minister of Natural Resources and Environment is responsible for guiding and organizing the efficient and timely implementation of the national action plan on biodiversity up to 2010 and orientations towards 2020 for implementation of the Convention on Biodiversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

ARTICLE 3.- This Decision takes effect 15 days after its publication in "CONG BAO." Ministers, heads of ministerial-level agencies, heads of government-attached agencies, and presidents of provincial/municipal People's Committees shall implement this Decision.

THE PRIME MINISTER
(signed and sealed)
Nguyen Tan Dung