

**INFORMATION****International Workshop on "Climate change and extreme climate in Vietnam"**

On 8/17/2012, in Hanoi, International Workshop on "Climate change and extreme climate in Vietnam" was held in collaboration of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. The workshop was attended by the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Nguyễn Minh Quang; Ms. Pratibha Mehta, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations in Viet Nam; Dr. Rajendra K. Pachauri, Chairman of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of the United Nations, together with a large number of scientists in the country.

At the workshop, participants agree that in recent years, the phenomenon of extreme weather, natural disasters in Vietnam has been complicated, incalculable. The biggest challenge is community's awareness about climate change and extreme climate phenomenon is limited; second is coordination between the ministries, agencies have not reached high consensus should not effectively integrate strategies to cope with climate change in the strategic development of the industry. In addition, the issue of technology, financial resources to

implement programs and strategies to cope with climate change is limited.

Assessing the negative effects of the weather, the workshop stresses, trends of the climatic extreme, natural disasters will occur in Vietnam, such as drizzling rain decrease significantly, cold air in northern reduce, cold, damaging cold reduce but there is anomaly cold. In addition, the heat rising in Central and South; unseasonal and anomalous rain and rainfall is more often. El Nino and La Nina impact on weather, climate of Vietnam,ect. From these factors lead to more severe floods and droughts, storms is more unusual and irregular. That is the challenge for disaster prevention and response to climate change.

Recognizing the serious impact of climate change on the country's sustainable development, the Vietnamese Government was soon joined and ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol and was soon approved the National Strategy on Climate Change, the National Target Programme to respond to climate change, the National Strategy on the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters...

The participants of the workshop also discuss models to cope with climate change. Notably is integrated disaster risk management, climate change adaptation and sustainable development,

with some important factors, emphasize the reconciliation of short-term and long-term goals; integrated risk management, adaptation to climate change into economic development; flexible coordination between sectors; identify and address the root causes of the injury; long-term commitment to risk management ... The disaster risk management and response to climate change must be implemented in many different scales, both local, national and international.

#### DIỆU LINH

#### **Fifth International Workshop: "Korea studies: new aspects of cooperation in Southeast Asia"**

With the aim of improving the quality of teaching and research in Korea, strengthen links and cooperation between universities of Vietnam and Korean partners as well as other countries in Southeast Asia, from August 28 to 31, 2012 at Hanoi, University of Social Sciences and Humanities (Hanoi National University) organized the Fifth International Conference *Korean Studies: new aspects of cooperation in Southeast Asia*. This is the annual conference of the Korean Study Association of Southeast Asia (KoSASA) that the University of Social Sciences and Humanities is a key member. The workshop took place with the support of the Korean Research Institute (KRI) at the University of New South Wales, Australia, Korea Fund

(KF) and the Academy of Korean Studies (AKS).

Attend the workshop were more than 80 domestic and international scientists from research institutions, universities in Vietnam, South Korea, Australia and some countries in Southeast Asia.

*Network of Korea studies in Southeast Asia* and the *core issues in Korea studies* are the two main topics discussed by representatives after the opening session. Next, participants worked in four sub-committees: *Training and studies of Korean in Southeast Asia; Teaching and linguistics; Political economy and public sector reform; Culture, industrialization and humanities*.

Moreover, the conference also held special exchange content related to *national development and share experiences* with three sub-themes, including: export policy, national renewal policy, and policy for small and medium-sized enterprises.

The workshop identified, Korea is of particular interest in South East Asian countries in recent years, especially research and learn experience from the effective development models of South Korea - a country with cultural characteristics quite similar to the area. With many international conferences and transnational projects have been implemented since 2005, South Korea studies in Southeast Asia has launched the influential research, an important contribution in academic cooperation

between countries. In 2010-2012 period, member of KoSASA have done some research on new trends in research and training in Korea from various academic approaches. At this workshop, many Korea research results have been published, aims to enhance cooperation of KoSASA members.

The participants at the workshop agreed that the Korean studies in Vietnam has made significant progress, showing the superiority compared to other countries in the region with 10 universities and one research institute for training and research about Korea. Through the workshop, researchers can facilitate the exchange of experience in research and teaching Korean to experts in the region to further develop Korea studies in Vietnam.

#### *HOÀI PHÚC*

#### **Conference: Constitution and issues of human rights, fundamental rights and obligation of citizen**

According to the Agreement between Vietnam and Denmark, the project “Researches and Education of human rights” was done by Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences. And the conference on “Constitution and Issues of Human rights, fundamental rights and obligations of citizen” was held in Hanoi in October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012 by the Vietnamese Academy of Social and Sciences.

Attendees are representatives from relevant offices, scientists from Institutes and universities which has law

specialization across the country, as well as, interested scholars.

As the Deputy of Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences, Professor – Dr. Võ Khánh Vinh has a speech in the opening ceremony. His speech once again confirmed the human rights have been a serious issue of whole society as well as the law in Vietnam. In the global integration, the protection of human rights, fundamental rights and obligations of citizen has become an important factor by which Vietnam can be the rule of law socialism. One of the purposes of this Conference was to contribute to the researches and modification of the Constitution 1992.

According to representatives, the Constitution 1992 which is the most effect legal documents in Vietnam today. This document ensures that all citizens are equal in politics, economy, social culture and law. They have rights to join in management of State and society, freedom of religion and rights of suing as well as education and working. On the basic of Constitution, Vietnam has issued a great amount of legal documents which meet the international standards about the human rights. Due to the requirements of the renewals as well as the establishment of Vietnam as a rule of law socialism, the Constitution 1992 needs the further modification and addition. Therefore, it is necessary to summarize, analyze, research, and evaluate the Constitution 1992.

As a result, the research works sent to the Conference basically focus on discussing issues related to human rights, fundamental rights and obligations of public through following dimensions: politic rights, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly; cultural and social rights as well as regulations on property rights...The priority is to point out limitations and unclear concepts before analyzing those current limitations. Representatives, afterwards, will offer their opinions about the modification and addition. For example, the politic rights should include both the election as well as the right dismiss... For the cultural and social rights, the Constitution 1992 does not have any protection on human rights while 50% of other nations' Constitution did establish a national human rights office. Moreover, the Constitution 1992 did not regulated on the limit as well as temporary suspension on implementing the cultural and social rights. About the freedom of speech, the regulations on registering press activities are also still complicated or being strictly managed while the regulation was far from the practice.

Being one of the main contacts which receive the opinions of experts as well as public about the change of Constitution, Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences has given the high evaluation on these opinions. The conference has also fulfilled the knowledge of human rights, fundamental rights and obligations of

citizens as well as provided precious evidence for the modification of Constitution 1992.

#### *HOÀI PHÚC*

#### **Conference: The renewal of financial structure in university education**

Recently, Ministry of Finance has worked with the Finance – Budget Committee of National Congress to have a conference on “The renewal of financial structure in university education” held in Hanoi. Attendees are the Deputy Minister of Finance, Vice Director of Finance – Budget Committee of National Congress and Congress’s representatives as well as experts from local offices, ministry and industry.

The conference aimed to build up a financial mechanism which is suitable with the target of establishing a modern education which has high quality, effectiveness and equality. The university education has to be able to catch up with the developing trend of the world as regulated in documents of Communist Party and State.

Those above financial institutions have become the important motivation for governmental universities. They improve universities’ independence as well as the responsibilities in exploring and promoting the potential materials, properties, teaching staff so that universities can expand their activities and diversify training types which meet the social demands. This, also, increases

the income for schools and staff; improve the reinvestment as well as the living standard of working people.

The limitations which most of representative discussed about are the new opening universities are independent in expenditure but not in collection. Moreover, the distribution of national budget for government schools is only average and not linked with the training demand, structure and quality. This showed the necessity of restructuring the distribution of national budget for universities based on the prior level. For example, it is the priority of building and improving the materials then the responsibility of those who study in these universities is to pay the essential expenditure for their study. The national budget will decrease which will play role in saving as well as increasing the expenditure of State to support industries which are necessary for society but do not have enough students.

Having a speech at the conference, Deputy Minister of Finance, Mrs Nguyễn Thị Minh has suggested that some solutions will be offered to higher authority for approval. For example: expenditure on university education will firstly include all training costs. After calculating training cost for each faculty, there will be the group classification. For those faculties which have ability to socialize and higher demand, they will have to have the additional collection together with the budget supported by

State. This, as a result, will ensure the training quality as the final target.

According to Deputy Minister, there are two sources of collection: the first sources are students who do not belong to the prior list and are able to afford their high quality education; the second sources are poor students located in remote areas. For the second parts, they will be supported by State so that they will be able to do university.

Experts also evaluated and shared their experiences about the process of independent mechanism and having responsibilities for themselves according to the Decree No. 43/2006/NĐ-CP on governmental university education during the period of 2008 to 2012 issued by Government. They also exchanged the difficulties, conflicts, reasons and suggestion related to solutions to expanding the independence on finance and responsibilities as well as promoting the scientific research in universities.

Also, experts have exchanged and discussed together about the pilot projects as “Education Ordering” and “Expanding the independence of operating mechanism and financial mechanism towards university education which have high demand on training in market.”

*TÚ AN*

**International Science Seminar “Green growth in the Mekong region”**

Recently in the city of Đà Nẵng, the international science seminar “Green growth in the Mekong region” was jointly hosted by the Korea Environmental Institute, the Global Green Growth Institute, and the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences. Over the course of the seminar’s four sessions, representatives were presented with reports and engaged in discussions.

According to a number of experts, the Mekong area, which has a surface area of 2.6 million km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 300 million, is one of the most biologically diverse places in the world. Few other places feature so rich an ecosystem that is home not only to humans but also to a multitude of animals. Roughly 80% of the population in the region live on what this ecosystem can organically produce, such as consumable water, food, and materials. Nowadays, the ecosystem is but a shadow of its former self, plagued by pollution, floods, droughts, and natural disasters brought about by global climate change.

Attendees arrived at the consensus that the Mekong area ought to invest in the preservation of the ecosystem and natural resources, thereby generating opportunities for economic growth and mitigating global climate changes that cause disasters. To promote green growth in the Mekong region, everyone, regardless of originating country, needs

to take proactive political measures. The people in this region must pursue a path that allows them to grow their economy without negatively affecting the environment. Instead of overdependence on such natural resources as gasoline, water, and food, they must determine how best to utilize them. To this end, we must raise awareness among the peoples of the Mekong region. In addition, economic regulations must be imposed to ensure that development transpires in line with the concept of global green growth. Given that environmental issues do not admit of borders, we must consider work models and methods of working along side one another. Additionally, we must promote foreign investment in the region. By setting objectives for green growth, we can formulate policies and regulations applicable to the entire region.

As a country situated at the terminus of the Mekong, Vietnam is able to observe the changes undergone by the river. Given its perspective, Vietnam makes it a priority to cooperate with other countries in the region in an effort to deal with such changes and preserve the mutual quality of water, food, and energy. Over the past 25 years, Vietnam’s economy has had remarkable accomplishments on numerous fronts, but sustainable achievement has not yet been achieved. The economy is still lacking in growth quality, efficiency, and competitive ability. Hence, Vietnam needs to make strategic adjustments

need to be made to restructure the economy, curb greenhouse waste gases, and cope with climate changes. One of the more important targets is to achieve a green economy, which involves meeting three development criteria: economic development, sustainable environment, and social security. It could be said that choosing a green growth strategy is a wise decision in line with modern trends. Vietnam is implementing its growth and economic restructuring model in conformance with sustainable growth. Preparatory measures are being taken prior to hosting the seminar “2011-2020 green growth strategy and 2050 vision.”

#### *DIỆU LINH*

#### **The 2012 Consultative Group Meeting for Vietnam**

The Consultative Group (CG) Meeting between the Government of Vietnam and Development Partners was held in Hanoi on December 10, 2012 with the focus on laying the foundation for Vietnam’s sustainable growth. Delegates agreed that ensuring macroeconomic stability, developing education and skills, and ensuring a sound land policy are some of the key priorities for a successful middle income country. Development Partners pledged 6,485 million USD for Vietnam’s development agenda in 2013.

Prime Minister Nguyễn Tấn Dũng attended the first part of the meeting and updated participants on Vietnam’s

performance in 2012 and the Government’s policy directions for 2013. He thanked the Development Partners for their constructive comments on the need to maintain macroeconomic stability and restructure the growth model for sustainable development, and thereby avoid falling into the middle income trap. He recognized the participants’ comments and advices for an equal and effective education and training system that prepare Vietnamese with skills needed for Vietnam’s middle income status.

#### **Vietnam’s economic update: enhancing efficiency and competitiveness**

While discussing about the economy, Delegates agreed that Vietnam’s macroeconomic conditions have improved during 2012, but expressed concern about the slowing economy and less than anticipated progress on the triple restructuring agenda: investment; banking and financial market, and SOE restructuring. They urged the government to maintain macroeconomic stability, undertake decisive action on structural reforms including resolution of non-performing loans, improve the corporate governance in SOEs and banks, and raise the level of transparency and disclosure in the state sector and better articulate policy actions and results of the restructuring process.

*"Over the past few years and before the recent slowdown, the economy grew at levels that could not be sustained in the*

*long run and accumulated vulnerabilities along the way. These vulnerabilities and structural constraints have diminished Vietnam's medium-term growth outlook. In 2013 and beyond, difficult challenges need to be tackled.*" said Sanjay Karla, Resident Representative of the International Monetary Fund to Vietnam.

To do this, the ADB Country Director Tomoyuki Kimura added that *"Enhancing inter-ministerial coordination is essential as there are significant sectoral linkages that cut across the reform program"*.

#### **Education and skills: laying foundations for sustainable growth**

This year, one of the main topics for discussion at the CG was how to ensure high quality education and skills, as the prerequisite for Vietnam's transition to an efficiency-driven, industrialized economy is a well-skilled labor force. The World Bank presented initial findings of the upcoming Vietnam Development Report on Skills. Based on a recent employer survey focused on skills the analysis shows that while Vietnam's workers are increasingly well educated, many employers in Vietnam are critical of the quality of education. In many cases, workers' skills do not match employer needs in an increasingly demanding and advanced labor market, where cognitive and behavioral skills are just as important as the pure technical skills.

Delegates agreed that Vietnam should focus more on: a) making sure that the technical skill development evolves along with the technological progress by promoting partnership between employers and education and training providers, b) ensuring that the country's skill strategy also promotes cognitive skills, such as problem solving and verbal abilities, and behavioral skills, such as social and interpersonal abilities, and c) ensuring that teaching methods are modernized to include less memorization and more interactive learning.

*"Development partners really welcome the focus this year on education and skills."* said Fiona Lappin, the Head of UK Department for International Development in Vietnam. *"The UK, including the British Council as well as DFID, work with Vietnam across the education spectrum and it's clear that human resources are absolutely critical to Vietnam's ability to sustain growth, fight poverty and avoid the middle income trap. It's not just about qualifications but about critical thinking and employability. This is an exciting opportunity to address this at the CG, and in doing so to forge a path to help Vietnam take full advantage of its young population. Development partners are ready to help Vietnam innovate by sharing lessons learned and experience."*

#### **Land issues: revision of land policy for inclusive and sustainable growth**

Discussing the revision of Vietnam's Land Law, delegates agreed that the process must create a favorable environment for more effective, equitable, and environmentally sustainable management of scarce land resources. Development Partners urge the Government to assure secure land rights for farmers, more flexible use of agricultural land, strengthening the land use rights of vulnerable groups such as women, the poor, and ethnic minority communities. They also recommended the establishment of a more transparent and equitable arrangements for land acquisition and compensation by the State and limiting the circumstances in which compulsory land acquisition may occur. Improving the effectiveness of land planning management systems within an overall enhanced framework for land governance will be critical for the efficiency and inclusiveness of Vietnam's future development.

*"This is a key reform for Viet Nam's future inclusive and equitable growth."* says Pratibha Mehta, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Vietnam. *"The reform provides an opportunity to promote greater transparency and accountability in Viet Nam's land governance and to ensure that market mechanisms are applied in the land law, particularly in relation to compensation for land users in the land recovery process."*

#### **Evolution of the CG process**

CG participants agreed on the evolution of the CG into the Vietnam

Development Partnership Forum (VDPF) from 2013 onwards, with the overall vision to support policy dialogue on areas of mutual interest in order to foster broad-based socio-economic development and improved well-being for all Vietnamese. The current CG format, designed 20 years ago, served primarily as a platform for ODA resource mobilization. Today most development partners have their own bilateral ODA discussions and the resource mobilization function of the CG is no longer relevant. What is needed now is a platform for substantive and meaningful dialogue between the Government and partners in Vietnam's development.

The new Forum will be both an annual event aimed at high-level policy dialogue as well as a process to support ongoing dialogue with a view to building consensus and generating commitments among different stakeholders toward actionable items of the Government of Vietnam's development and reform priorities.

In her summary of CG proceedings, the World Bank Country Director for Vietnam, Victoria Kwakwa, stated that *"The CG discussion demonstrates the continued strong partnership between Vietnam and development partners. We have agreed at least two important areas of follow up, one is to set up a forum for policy dialogue on education and skills, and to seek relevant experience on legislative frameworks to*

*support customary land use of ethnic minorities."*

Minister of Planning and Investment Bùi Quang Vinh concluded the meeting by thanking the Development Partners for the fruitful discussion. He expressed his belief that with the new phase of the CG evolution, relationship between Vietnam and Development Partners will be lifted to a new height to better serve Vietnam's development agenda.

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### **Revising the Land Law to Enable Sustainable Development in Vietnam**

The World Bank in Vietnam released its Policy Note "Revising the Land Law to Enable Sustainable Development in Vietnam" on November 5, 2012, during Vietnam's National Assembly's deliberations on changes to its Land Law, focusing on necessary reforms to address prevailing gaps and shortcomings. Several development partners including the UN are working together to prepare a joint policy note that reaffirms the same broad message.

*"It is critical that revisions to the Land Law create a more favorable environment for more effective, equitable, and environmentally sustainable management of scarce land resources,"* says Victoria Kwakwa, Country Director of the World Bank in Vietnam.

*"Equitable treatment of all land users is essential for more inclusive growth and human development in Vietnam. The revisions of the Land Law provide a key*

*opportunity to ensure a fair balance between the interests of developers and farmers, and to promote greater transparency and accountability in Vietnam's land governance"* says Pratibha Mehta, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Vietnam.

Land-related matters continue to dominate the complaints that the government receives, and corruption related to land matters is perceived to be widespread. The Note is expected to provide ideas on important institutional reforms to improve Vietnam's land management system, to reduce the instability associated with land disputes, and to better control corruption.

This Note outlines reforms related to four main themes: agriculture land use, transparent and equitable land acquisition and compensation, land use rights of vulnerable groups, and land planning management.

Creating transparent and equitable land acquisition and compensation are key priorities for the revision of the Land Law. The Note argues that an efficient and transparent mechanism for setting the land compensation price when land is acquired involuntarily is a top priority, and there are good examples in Vietnam and these need to be adopted more systematically.

According to the Policy Note, the state needs to use its authority sparingly, limiting the use of compulsory land acquisition only to cases for the public's benefit, giving land users more

confidence in their rights related to land. It states that disputes are inevitable and that improving grievance redress mechanisms would reduce complaints, speed up project implementation and facilitate social stability.

Changes related to agricultural land use would enhance effectiveness of land use as well as secure farmers' rights in land use, written the Policy Note. Prolonging the duration of agricultural land tenure would give land users greater incentives to invest and care for the land.

It also argues that agricultural land efficiency would be improved if the law allowed greater land accumulation and more flexibility over agricultural land

use purpose. Accordingly, Vietnam's food security objectives are largely met and the time has come to allow more flexibility over crop choice.

Revisions to the Land Law offer the opportunity to reaffirm and strengthen the land use rights of vulnerable groups, such as women, the poor and ethnic minority communities. The Note concludes that developing a more flexible and effective land management system, and improving transparency and reducing corruption in land management are all needed to make Vietnam's land governance system worthy of a middle income country.

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