



Quang Ninh improves marine environment for sustainable development

With the advantages of natural landscapes and beautiful waters, sea and island tourism has long been a tourism form of strength for Quang Ninh. In addition to Ha Long bay, the names such as Co To, Quan Lan, Minh Chau, and Tra Co have become more attractive, affirming the province's important position on the sea and island tourism map of the country.

EXPLOITING THE SEA AND ISLAND POTENTIAL

The tourism sector in the northern coastal province of Quang Ninh has been growing at a fast pace in recent years, establishing its important role in the province's economy and moving towards sustainability.

Quang Ninh is endowed with natural advantages for sea and island tourism. It is home to the Ha Long and Bai Tu Long bays, the Ha Long Bay National Park and some islands, the best known of which is Co To and Van Don. In particular, Ha Long bay has been twice recognized as a World Natural Heritage site by the UNESCO. The Heritage site has become a magnet drawing visitors to Quang Ninh. Quang Ninh has been expanded the space for sea and island tourism farther from Ha Long bay towards islands such as Co To, Van Don and Hai Ha. Quang Ninh is primed to develop tourism infrastructure to welcome millions of tourists every year. The province has set an objective to increase sea tourism's share to 75-80 per cent of its total number of visitors by 2030 or 28.5 million, of which 8 million would be foreign visitors.

In order to realize the said objective, Quang Ninh placed great importance on building a model of sustainable tourism and improving the quality of services across the board for visitors. Quang Ninh had made significant investments in developing and upgrading its infrastructure networks to connect all tourism hubs to the major road networks in the Red River Delta. The province had been working with businesses and developers to set up far-reaching systems of malls, supermarkets, convenience stores, vending machines and traditional markets, all situated in close proximity to local tourist attractions. In the coming years, more quality products and services were to become available to visitors, especially the high-

end segment of the market. The province has paid attention to the creation of new tourist products and improvement of service quality. A diverse range of sea and island tours are now available for visitors, from relaxation to entertainment and adventure.

Quang Ninh has traditionally played an important part in Vietnam northern region logistics network. The province is home to numerous seaports, some are among the most modern ports in the region. In addition, the province has set a course to expand its aquaculture production with a focus on improving connectivity with road infrastructure in the region. The province aims to increase seafood production to 225,000 tones and export value to half a billion dollars by the end of 2030.

With an eye on sustainable development, measures have been taken to raise awareness among fishing communities as well as the implementation of stricter environmental laws, aiming to protect and preserve the ocean's natural resources. Various projects have also received the go-ahead to set up logistic centres, food processing hubs and repair shops for fishing vessels as the province looks to improve efficiency and create added value for seafood products.

Equipped with a strategic vision for developing the sea-based economy, the province in 2014 approved an Overall Plan for tourism development to 2020 with a vision to 2030. Under the scheme, the sea



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space in Quang Ninh is divided into five zones, which are the strictly preserved Ha Long bay, the conservation area in Bai Tu Long National Park, the tourism zone, the zone with restricted development to serve national defense and security, and the zone with no development. Each zone, with their specific characteristics, has close links with each other to support the development of sea-based tourism and economy while ensuring national defense and security and serving the province's sustainable development.

BECOME A STRONG MARINE-BASED ECONOMIC HUB

Tourism and sea economy continue to play large parts in the development strategy for the Northern coastal province of Quang Ninh. The northern province of Quang Ninh has outlined key measures to develop its marine-based and coastal economy, with a focus on eco-friendly tourism, maritime services, and coastal industry. Quang Ninh is on the way to becoming one of the country's strong marine-based economic hubs, serving as a gateway and driving force of development in the northern key economic region with a network of deep-water seaports. Key localities such as Ha Long, Cam Pha, Mong Cai, Quang Yen, Van Don, Co To and Hai Ha have been connected to marine-based economic sectors and become national tourist destinations linked with major international tourism hubs in the region and the world via waterways.

Regarding maritime tourism and services, Quang Ninh is striving to become an international tourism hub with modern and concerted infrastructure, possess diversified and quality tourism products, a strong trademark imbued with the national cultural identity, and high competitiveness compared to countries in the region and the world, be a driving force of rapid and sustainable socio-economic development, and guarantee national defense and security.

The province will enhance investment in building tourism and trade infrastructure in coastal and island areas, making it easier for economic sectors to develop quality sea-island ecological tourism, community-based tourism, and international trade hubs. Ha Long will be developed into a modern and civilized marine tourist city while Van Don - Co To will become a high-quality sea and island tourism centre and a world-class regional entertainment hub by 2030.

The province will upgrade its fishing ports and wharves, offer fisheries logistics services in Co To and Van Don districts, and establish three key fishing centres in combination with aquaculture and key fishing grounds in localities and two seafood trade centres in Ha Long. It will also develop logistics infrastructure to make it a sector providing high added value in tandem with promoting foreign trade.

Regarding coastal industry and new-model economic sectors, Quang Ninh has prioritized eco-friendly high-tech industrial sectors, manufacturing and processing such as shipbuilding and repair, and cruise tourism, while boosting connectivity between shipbuilding and support industries and encouraging foreign investment in support industries for shipbuilding.

Quang Ninh will develop the processing of aquatic products by using modern technology and improving efficiency, with a focus on food safety, to meet the quality standards demanded by major markets globally. Quang Ninh will also make use of the achievements of Industry 4.0 to switch from the export of raw materials to deep processing, thus creating added value and saving marine resources. At the same time, it will study several industries in service of the marine-based economy, seaport-logistics services, the new materials industry, tourism, and entertainment.

The province will also pay attention to several marine-based economic sectors based on advantages in marine resources and biodiversity. The province has set a goal to have modern industry and service sectors and become one of the region's comprehensive and dynamic development hubs by 2025.

Quang Ninh has recently implemented many solutions to protect the marine environment and marine resources. Thanks to these actions, Quang Ninh's fishing grounds, especially in coastal areas, have witnessed the reappearance of schools of fish and shrimp while some estuary areas have welcomed herds of rare dolphins, whales, and sea turtles.

With enormous efforts in protecting the marine environment and resources, Quang Ninh's waters have become clean, beautiful, and rich in resources. This is an important condition for Quang Ninh to develop a sustainable marine economy, including marine exploitation, aquaculture, and tourism activities. Quang Ninh aims to develop a blue ocean economy, sustainably use marine resources for economic growth, improve people's livelihoods, and ensure the health of marine ecosystems rather than developing the marine economy at any cost ■

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