

Tropenbos International Viet Nam

Making Knowledge Work for Forests and People



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Program Director of Tropenbos International Viet Nam participated in International Union for Conservation of Nature's World Parks Congress

Mr. Tran Huu Nghi, Program Director of Tropenbos International (TBI) Viet Nam, participated in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)'s World Parks Congress in Sydney from 12 to 19 November 2014. This year, the global forum's theme was Parks, People, Planet: Inspiring Solutions.

More than 5,000 delegates from over 160 countries that included heads of state, park rangers, business executives and Indigenous leaders gathered in Sydney to take stock of progress made towards achieving global targets to protect at least 17% of land and 10% of oceans by 2020, address the contemporary threats facing protected lands, and promote nature's solutions to global sustainability challenges. The Congress hosted several stream sessions that focused on reaching conservation goals, responding to climate change, supporting human life, reconciling development challenges, enhancing diversity and quality governance, respecting indigenous and traditional knowledge and culture, and inspiring new generations. (continued)



Program Director of Tropenbos International Viet Nam participated in International Union for Conservation of Nature's World Parks Congress

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Mr. Nghi attended a number of these sessions and chaired a discussion forum entitled "Impacts of Payment for Environment Services (PES) on the Livelihoods of Local People Surrounding National Parks in Viet Nam." His presentation highlighted some PES models set up for key protected areas (PAs) in Viet Nam, and his key talking points included funding sources for these PES and the pre-conditions for PES to be effectively implemented.

The Congress closed with the formation of an ambitious agenda to safeguard the planet's natural assets, which included pledges from governments, international organizations, and members of the private sector, indigenous leaders, community groups, and individuals.

National Meeting to Identify Forest Research Priorities

On 18 December 2014, TBI Viet Nam, in cooperation with Viet Nam's Academy of Forest Science (VAFS) and the Department of Science, Technology, and Environment under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MARD), organized a national meeting in Ha Noi to identify forestry research priorities for the years 2015-2020 in the context of forestry sector restructuring.



Around 120 representatives from INGOs, forestry organizations/agencies, governmental agencies, research institutes, and Universities in Viet Nam attended this conference.

The Vice-Minister of MARD, Mr Ha Cong Tuan, opened the event with an overview of the responsibilities, advancements, and discoveries achieved by forest research from 2005 to the present. He also pointed out the constraints and challenges the research initiatives will face in the future.

Viet Nam's Forest Development Strategy for the period 2006-2020 and Forest Research Strategy till 2020 affirmed the important role of forest research towards Viet Nam's forest sector development. The comments and ideas of participants served as valuable foundations for VAFS to formulate forest research action plan till 2020.

Improved capacity of geographic information system and remote sensing for forest planning and management

In an effort to improve the capacity of geographic information system (GIS) and remote sensing for individuals and organizations in central Viet Nam's natural resources management sector, TBI Viet Nam organized the training course "Application of GIS and Remote Sensing in Forest Planning and Management" from 3-6 December 2014 in Hue.



The training course focused on designing and developing a geo-database; exploring Landsat images to aid in the understanding of conservation efforts; and updating data from smartphones and simple tools combined with productive software.



The course was part of TBI Viet Nam's capacity building component, which aims to improve the capacity of TBI Viet Nam's counterpart agencies and relevant organizations working in agro-forestry field in Viet Nam so that they can plan and manage forest effectively. Participants were offered the chance to develop their existing knowledge and skills regarding GIS while learning how to incorporate data from various management and oversight software programs including MapInfo, Microstation and Excel.

Dialogue for aid mobilization between provincial agencies and international non-governmental organizations

On 2 December 2014, Mr. Tran Huu Nghi and Mrs. Ha Tu Anh attended the International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) Aid Mobilization Plan Period 2015-2020 conference organized by the Provincial Department of Planning and Investment and the Provincial Department of Foreign Affairs in Hue. Also participating in the conference were Mr. Nguyen Dzung, Vice Chairman of the Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee (PPC) and various leaders from the National Union of Friendship Organization, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, various provincial departments/organizations, and more than twenty INGOs working in Thua Thien Hue Province.



In the conference's opening speech, Mr. Nguyen Dzung acknowledged the contributions of INGOs and local NGOs to provincial development and noted that their associated financial and technical support have positively contributed to improved agro-forestry development and new production and rural livelihood models.

Participants later discussed supporting mechanisms between governmental and non-governmental organizations, funding utilization, strategies for strengthening the cooperation between governmental management agencies and non-governmental counterparts, future orientations of granting funds of INGOs, and the direction of future funding initiatives.

Mr. Tran Huu Nghi, on behalf of TBI Viet Nam, pointed out obstacles regarding delays in issuing working permits for TBI Viet Nam and its foreign volunteers. Mr. Nghi further suggested that more transparent and consistent information should be implemented at all administrative levels to minimize constraints that may occur during procedural implementation and to foster cooperation with governmental management agencies.



Training workshop on Communication in Policy Advocacy

On 21 November 2014, the Climate Change Working Group (CCWG) organized a training workshop for agro-forestry NGO entitled Communication in Policy Advocacy in Ha Noi. The workshop was designed to promote the exchange of experiences and promote dialogue on how to make best use of communication techniques for advocacy purposes, of effective communication strategies for advocacy, and the best means to use specific tools to better communicate with target groups.



Participants were divided into groups to practice making a communication plan for policy advocacy based upon a specific project/theme. Group members discussed key steps, key messages and tools, and they then reviewed feedback and commentary from other groups and the course instructor.

Ms. Thu, TBI Viet Nam's Program Officer, found the conference interesting and engaging as it created dynamic opportunities for workshopping, brainstorming, and idea exchange.

TBI Viet Nam seeks cooperation of Chinese University of Hong Kong

Professor Lawal Mohammed Marafa from the Chinese University of Hong Kong will pay a visit to TBI Viet Nam's office on 20 December 2014 to seek cooperation in the field of forestland allocation and REDD+.

Accompanying Professor Marafa is Mucahic Mustafa Bayrak, his PhD student and TBI alumni, whose research project focuses on "Adopting REDD+ for Conservation, Sustainable Community Livelihood and Climate Change Mitigation". Mucahid's research aims to give answers to questions like how carbon stocks are measured, verified and tracked over time; how financial incentives can be equally spread among the affected (indigenous) communities who are living in the forests targeted by the UN-REDD+ program; and how local communities can be effectively involved in the program.

Professor Marafa and Mucahid will meet with Mr. Nghi, TBI Viet Nam's Program Director, to get to know TBI's activities, priorities, and projects pertaining to forest land allocation, community forest, payment for environmental services, benefit-sharing mechanisms and forest-dependent communities.

During his stay, the research team will travel to Nam Dong District to explore the district and how its residents are involved in REDD+ activities.



Amsterdam's mayor promotes green metropolitan solutions in Ha Noi

From 8-12 December 2014, Mr. Eberhard van der Laan, the Mayor of Amsterdam, led a business delegation to Ha Noi to boost cooperation in urban planning, water management, and waste treatment.

These "green metropolitan solutions" will be beneficial for both Ha Noi and Amsterdam as the two cities confront similar challenges regarding climate change and economic growth, the release pointed out.



Mayor Eberhard van der Laan and Chairman of the Hanoi People's Committee Nguyen The Thao signed a Memorandum of Understanding featuring cooperation in several fields. The two leaders discussed ways to build prosperous and livable cities.

During the visit, Mayor Van der Laan attended an exhibition on Anne Frank held at the Hanoi- Amsterdam high school. Mayor Van der Laan talked with young students on the heritage of Anne Frank's war diary and related the message of peace to the story of Vietnamese Dang Thuy Tram.

The Mayor also spoke with alumni who studied in Amsterdam or studied urban planning in the Netherlands. The Mayor also met Deputy Prime Minister Hoang Trung Hai, who paid a visit to Amsterdam recently, to promote close diplomatic ties between Viet Nam and the Netherlands.

(Source: Tuoi Tre News)

Announcement of forest area in five river basins for payment for environmental services

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam (MARD) has issued Decision 5234/QĐ-BNN-TCLN that allows payment for environmental services (PES) for forest in five river basins.

There were five river basins taken into account, including Vinh Son (64,245 ha), Song Tranh (63,439 ha), An Khe (68,257 ha), Dak Drinh (31,020 ha) and the Quang Ngai Sugar Factory (179,266 ha).

MARD also requested that the National Forest Protection and Development Fund closely work with relevant provincial people's committees and provincial forest protection and development funds to make a list of PES Fund recipients and conduct PES based on forest area in each concerned province and current regulations.

(Source: Viet Nam Administration of Forestry)

Plan to protect forests given green light

Nguyễn Tấn Dũng, Viet Nam's Prime Minister, has approved a plan to improve management of logging in natural forests from 2014-2020. The policy aims to develop high quality production forests to meet domestic demands for timber.



Under the plan, logging will only be allowed in Kon Tum Province (in the central highlands) and Quang Binh Province (in the country's central region).

Wood processing and trade will undergo inspection in order to regulate legitimate sources of timber. New processors will also face more restrictive licensing procedures. Additionally, individual households will not be allowed to exploit more than 10cu.m of timber at a time.

(Source: Vietnam News)



Illegal logging destroys Dak Lak pine forests

Over 90% of the pine forest in Krong Buk District of Dak Lak Province has been destroyed by the actions of illegal loggers, leaving only a few dozen of the more than 2,040ha of forest intact.

The deforested land has been used to build houses or establish coffee or vegetable gardens.

According to the Deputy Chairman of the Cu Ne Commune People's Committee, Y Thanh, local administrations were to blame for the deforestation. "Both the Kinh (the majority community in Viet Nam) and the Ede illegally cleared out the forest to farm crops or build houses, and some administrative units took the land to construct their office buildings," he is quoted as saying.

(Source: Vietnam Net)



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