

Tropenbos International Viet Nam

Making Knowledge Work for Forests and People



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Boost Cooperation with TBI Viet Nam's Partners

During his recent visit to Viet Nam from 14-18 December 2015, Prof. Dr. Rene Boot, the Director of Tropenbos International, paid several visits to key organizations and agencies in Viet Nam. The aim of the visits was to strengthen cooperation with relevant agencies in the field of natural resource management while updating Tropenbos' partners on TBI Viet Nam's strategy and priorities in the future.

At the meeting with Dr. Tran Kim Long, a representative of MARD and Director of International Cooperation Department (part of MARD), Dr. Tran place high value on Tropenbos' contribution in terms of forest research and capacity building activities, while looking forward to upscaling future cooperation. In addition, he mentioned key priorities indicated in the MoU signed between MARD Minister Cao Duc Phat and Vice Minister for Agriculture of the Netherlands Hans Hoogeveen, including supporting Viet Nam to implement and duplicate climate-smart agricultural models. He emphasized that for the regional conference on Climate Smart Agriculture in May 2016 in Ha Noi, TBI should be proactive and make its contribution in technical advice and presentations.



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Boost Cooperation with TBI Viet Nam's Partners

(continued)

Prof. Boot also had a meeting with Mr. Cas van der Horst, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Netherlands Embassy in Viet Nam to seek cooperation opportunities in the field of Public-Private Partners and natural resource management and to get an overview of cooperation between Vietnamese and Dutch institutes.

During the meeting with the Viet Nam Academy of Forest Science, the two sides updated each other on their work and priorities and discussed the possibility of co-developing research proposals incorporated with capacity building.

Also in Ha Noi, Prof. René Boot visited the World Agroforestry Center (ICRAF) to seek cooperation in applying for Calls for Proposals for Viet Nam in particular and South East Asia in general and collaboration between TBI and ICRAF within CGIAR programmes in the future.



At Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry (HUAF), apart from the meeting with Ass. Prof. Dr. Le Van An, the Rector of HUAF to boost cooperation ties, he also made a presentation entitled "Landscape and the Landscape Approach" for lecturers and young researchers. He briefly explained concepts and usages, emphasizing that the landscape approach is about shared objectives, adaptive management, participation, monitoring, and responsibilities, and that the approach can be applied for diverse land uses.

(TBI Viet Nam)

Exchange Information about Excessive Forestland Conversion for Hydropower Plant Development in Viet Nam

Excessive forestland conversion for hydropower plant development and the constraints of rewarding plantation policy implementation will be discussed at the workshop "Current status of and solutions to forestland conversion for hydropower plant development in the Central Zone and Central Highlands of Viet Nam" to be organized by TBI Viet Nam and Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry (HUAF) on 26 December 2015 in Binh Dinh province.

Participants include representatives from the Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development, Provincial Department of Forest Protection, Provincial Department of Forest, Forest Protection Funds, Provincial Department of Natural Resources and Environment, hydropower enterprises, Department of Industry and Trade of six provinces of Khanh Hoa, Gia Lai, Kontum, Phu Yen, Binh Dinh, and Quang Nam.



In addition, participants will have the chance to be updated with new knowledge from presentations by researchers and provincial leaders. They will then discuss current constraints of rewarding plantation policy implementation at the local level.

Ideas contributed at the workshop will serve as valuable inputs for improved field data while enabling project researchers to formulate future policy recommendations.

The project "Hydropower Plant Development and Rewarding Plantation in Viet Nam" has been implemented by TBI Viet Nam in partnership with the Viet Nam Forest Administration and Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry. The project aims to provide policy makers with information about the policymaking process regarding tree replacement as well as implementation at local levels. Additionally, the project will point out the negative impacts of hydropower plant development on forest protection efforts and biodiversity conservation.

(TBI Viet Nam)

Seeking Solutions for Rubber Industry in Viet Nam

Recommendations for the challenges faced by the rubber industry in Viet Nam were the outcomes of the workshop “Rubber Trees, Transparent Accountability and Sustainable Development” organized by the Union of Science and Technology Associations of Thua Thien Hue and Quang Nam provinces, and FORLAND (a local NGO) on 17 November 2015 in Quang Nam province. Participants in the workshop came to the agreement that the productivity of rubber trees should be enhanced while more efforts should be made to add value to complete rubber products. In addition, rubber companies’ commitments with local people must be done to encourage their active involvement, combined with an improved information-sharing mechanism set up between rubber companies and households. Commune People’s Committees and relevant local agencies should also take a lead role in cooperative models of rubber development.



Viet Nam is fifth in the world for area of rubber planted and fourth within ASEAN in terms of rubber latex exported. During recent years, rubber plantation area has increased at approximately 4% per year while the Central Highlands, Northwest and Southeast regions have witnessed a sharper increase.

The livelihoods of local people have been improved through participation in rubber plantation maintenance but the fluctuation of rubber prices has generated negative impacts for rubber development and thus local livelihoods.

At the workshop, Mr. Tran Huu Nghi, TBI Viet Nam’s Director, made a presentation on “Rubber Development and Forest Protection in Viet Nam” in which he indicated new findings from rubber development models in the Northwest and the Central Highlands of Viet Nam. The findings are mainly extracted from research conducted by TBI Viet Nam in the two regions in 2013. Nghi also highlighted the negative impacts of massive rubber development on forest protection efforts as well as implications for FLEGT and REDD+ in Viet Nam.

(TBI Viet Nam)



IDH Planning Workshop in Da Lat

Remarkable outcomes and an action plan for key 2016 activities of the IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative were shared at a workshop organized by Lam Dong Provincial People’s Committee, the Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development (IPSARD), and IDH on 26 November 2015 in Da Lat city.

In 2015, IDH formulated its steering committee in the Central Highlands’ Lam Dong province and established two working groups: one dealing with water related issues and the other agroforestry. The two groups held several strategic meetings to bring together governmental and technical experts to discuss possibilities of intercropping trees in coffee farms in the region as a means to conserve water and biodiversity as well as storing carbon. Further private sector involvement was also a major discussion point.

In 2016, IDH plans to establish an information-sharing mechanism between relevant sectors, promoting inter-level dialogues to integrate IDH activities into Lam Dong provincial socio-political and environmental programmes.

Additionally, participants shared information about potential interventions regarding: sustainable water supplies; chemical/pesticide use; productivity management; and improving agroforestry in Lam Dong province.

Launched in 2014, the IDH (the Sustainable Trade Initiative) has gathered public and private partners to build programmes for sustainable management of land and water in six vulnerable landscapes worldwide, the Central Highlands of Viet Nam included. In Viet Nam, the programme focuses on three urgent issues: diminishing water supply, deforestation, and land degradation.

(TBI Viet Nam)



Workshop on Natural Resources Management in the Context of Climate Change

A network of national and international research institutes and organizations has been set up and strengthened at the workshop “Natural Resources Management in the Context of Climate Change” organized by the Faculty of Land Resources and Agricultural Environment (part of Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry) from 12-13 November 2015 in Hue city.

Participating in the workshop were representatives of national universities, research institutes, and NGOs across Viet Nam alongside lecturers and MSc students from Gottingen University (Germany).

Apart from various presentations on forest land management and risks of landslides and floods, participants enjoyed a field trip to Bach Ma National Park to learn about landscape conservation as well as climate change impacts in the Park.

Mr. Tran Huu Nghi made the presentation “Forestland Conversion in Viet Nam,” providing an overview of forest land in Viet Nam and challenges faced by sustainable forest management efforts: forest conversion, encroachment, and increasing demands for timber and timber products. Additionally, he pointed out adverse impacts noted to biodiversity and local livelihoods at TBI Viet Nam’s research sites due to land use change.

The workshop also celebrated the 10-year anniversary of the Faculty of Land Resources and Agricultural Environment and served to boost research cooperation between Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry and national and international institutions.

(TBI Viet Nam)

Improved Capacity Building on VPA/FLEGT

The two-day training course “Socio-political Issues Affecting the Effective Involvement of CSO in VPA/FLEGT Process in Viet Nam” discussed factors hindering the involvement of civil society organizations and solutions as FLEGT moves forward in Viet Nam. The event was organized by the FLEGT project from 18-19 November 2015 in Da Nang.

CSOs in Viet Nam have been operating under the management of the Vietnamese government and thus do not have the independent, strong voices they need. Improving the knowledge and capacity of the group will improve their input to the VPA/FLEGT process between the EU and Viet Nam, which aims to ensure legality of timber products imported into EU countries.



During the course, participants were provided with practical lessons-learned from various VPA partner countries: Ghana, Indonesia, Liberia, the Republic of Congo, and Cameroon.

The trainees also discussed and reflected on socio-political issues that may influence CSO’s involvement in Viet Nam’s VPA process.



Based on their discussions, trainees came to agreed solutions that enhanced involvement of CSO into VPA/FLEGT process: fostering communication about VPA/FLEGT; promoting the involvement of CSOs in Viet Nam’s NGO-FLEGT network; and improving capacity of CSOs through further short training courses.

(TBI Viet Nam)

Promoting Public-Private Partnership in Forest Protection

At the conference “Evaluating the Effect of Payment for Forest Environmental Services (PFES) and the Involvement of Relevant Actors at Local Levels,” organized by the Viet Nam Union of Science and Technology Associations (VUSTA), Viet Nam’s Forest Administration, and FORLAND, VUSTA Vice-Chairman Nghiem Vu Khai indicated that apart from economic impacts, PFES policy has brought about considerable changes in social institutions and implementation arrangement of the forest sector in Viet Nam.



Since its official launch in 2011, the policy has created a stable source of finance for forest protection and development activities, increased the forest sector’s contribution to the national economy, and stabilized the livelihoods of forest-dependent people, especially those in mountainous areas.

Participants shared lessons-learned about potential tools for independent assessment of PFES performance at local levels while proposing solutions to forest management, for instance cooperative forest models in protection forest management and public-private partnerships in forest protection and development. Participants also discussed the incorporation of PFES into other forest initiatives and the general restructure of Viet Nam’s forest sector.

(Source: Lao Dong Thu Do)

Moving Towards Strict Control over Forestland Conversion

At the “Preliminary Conclusion of Forest Protection and Development Plan for the Period 2011-2015” workshop on 9 December 2015 in Ha Noi, Vice Prime Minister Hoang Trung Hai offered targets for increasing forest cover and quality with a renewed focus on forestland conversion in the time to come.

The Vice Minister affirmed the vital roles of forest for local livelihoods and ecosystems, noting that forest protection is the most economical and feasible solution to climate change.

Minister Hai also pointed out current constraints to forest management and protection efforts, for instance the low percentage of forest cover and limited economic value per forest hectare. The forest sector’s aim for the 2016-2020 period is to improve awareness about the role of forests, strictly control forestland conversion, promote the quality of plantations, and effectively use resources.

It is also planned that by the end of 2016, cities and provinces across Viet Nam will offer up-to-date forest inventory based upon digital maps.

(Source: Bao Chinh Phu)

PM at COP21: Viet Nam to donate US\$1 million to Green Climate Fund

During a speech at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris, Viet Nam’s Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung announced that Viet Nam would contribute US\$1 million to the Green Climate Fund from 2016-2020.



The Premier indicated Viet Nam’s pledge to support and step up the negotiations and adoption of the post-2020 global climate agreement while actively carrying out strategies, programmes and plans to tackle climate change on diverse fronts, fulfilling its obligations set in the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol.

In addition, Viet Nam will keep its commitment of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 8 per cent by 2030 and up to 25 per cent with international support.

(Source: Viet Nam News)

2016
Happy New Year



Tropenbos International Viet Nam
would like to wish you a Merry Christmas
and a Successful New Year.



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