

**United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**

**Socialist Republic of Vietnam**

**National report  
on the unccd implementation**

**Hanoi, April 2000**

## Table of Contents

	Page
1. Table of contents	1
2. Summary	3
3. Strategies and priorities established within the framework of sustainable development plans and/or policies	7
3.1 National plans and strategies available in other social and economic sectors	7
3.2 National plans or strategies in the field of combating desertification developed prior to the UNCCD	9
4. Institutional measures taken to implement the Convention	10
4.1 Establish and functional National Coordination Body (NCB) and the role of National Focal Point (NFP)	10
4.2 Institutional framework for coherent and functional desertification control	11
4.3 National Action Programme on Environment (NAPE) as part of the National economic and social development and environment protection plans	11
4.4 Coherent and functional legal and regulatory framework	12
5. Participatory process in support of preparation and implementation of action programmes	13
5.1 People with the public communication means	13
5.2 Women with gender issue	13
5.3 The local authorities and consulting agencies	14
6. Consultative process in support of the preparation and implementation of national action programmes and the partnership agreements with developed country and other interested entities	15
6.1 Effective support from international partners for cooperation	15
6.2 Communication mechanism among partners, NCB and NFP	15

7.	Measures taken or planned within the framework of national action programmes, including measures to improve the economic environment, to conserve natural resources, to improve institutional organization, to enhance knowledge on desertification and its control and to monitor and assess desertification and drought	16
7.1	Adequate diagnosis of past experiences	16
7.2	Establish technical programmes and functional integrated projects to combat desertification	17
7.3	Action programme implemented in compliance with priority fields set out in the Convention	18
7.4	Linkage achieved with sub-regional and regional action programmes	19
7.5	Effectiveness of measures in local capacity building	19
8.	Financial allocation from national budgets in support of implementation as well as financial assistance and technical cooperation including their inflows, and the process to identify their requirements, areas of funding and set a priority	19
8.1	Adopted financial mechanisms	19
8.2	NAP financing	20
8.3	Technical cooperation developed	21
9.	Review of benchmarks and indicators utilized to measure process and an assessment thereof	21
9.1	Mechanism of monitoring and assessment of the environment	21
9.2	Measures taken for harmonization of existing mechanisms/systems	22
9.3	Planned national methodology for elaboration of impact indicators	22
10.	References	23
11.	Appendixes	24

## 2. SUMMARY

Nowadays the environment protection is not only an important national own interest but also a great global concerned aspect. In Vietnam, this issue has become a great concern of the State since 1980' years. It has also been mentioned in the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam since 1980. The National Action Programme on Environment and Sustainable Development for the period 1991-2000 and the Law on Forest Protection and Development approved in 1991 had set a very important start for the follow-up activities in environment protection progress in Vietnam.

Recognizing the important global meaning of environment protection, Vietnam has signed and become a member of several conventions on environment protection and the 134<sup>th</sup> country member of the Convention to Combat Desertification (since August 1998).

Vietnam has long and narrow deserts. The yellow and white sand areas are located along the central coastal areas with 400,000 ha and in Cuu Long River Delta with 43,000 ha. According to a map drawn by FAO and UNESCO, there are about 462,000 ha of coastal sand area (1.4% of the total geographical area of the country) and 87,800 ha out of this are the yellow sand dunes. The sand areas are concentrated in 10 central coastal provinces from Quang Binh to Binh Thuan with the total area of 400,000 ha. During the last thirty-two years (1967-1999) there has been a serious desertification process. Every year, there is a loss of 10-20 ha of agriculture land due to the sand dune moving. In the above mentioned provinces there is a very arid hot climate with annual rain fall only 500-700 mm (the arid hottest is Binh Thuan province).

Besides sand areas, there are more than 2 million hectares of degraded land scattered all over the country. This degradation happens mainly in Northern mountainous areas. The desertification process is summarized and characterized by the following factors:

- It is the process of land degradation, unfertilized for flora growing;
- It is the result of deforestation by inappropriate agricultural practices, extensive logging and chemical using during the wars;
- It is the cause of soil erosion;
- It is caused by unsustainable land use;
- It is cause of extensive water use;
- It is caused by sand dune moving;
- It is a result of water and soil pollution;
- And it is the impact of extensive silvopastoral practices.

Nowadays, in Vietnam there are still about 7 million hectares of bare land. The fertility of soil has been dropped or seriously degraded. Forests have been seriously depleted. The forest cover is today only 33%, 10% less than the one in 1945. The deforestation happened seriously in the two periods: 1960-1970 and 1976-1990. The underground water has been deteriorated in quantity as well as in quality, and mainly by water exploitation for coffee production in Central Highland. The water has also been polluted by chemical industry. It is estimated that the lack of water will be a serious problem in the next decade. During the last 5 years, the drought have happened more seriously in the whole country, but especially in central region. The most serious and longest drought over the last 60 years happened and lasted 6 months during the dry season of 1998 due to the El'nino, which has been causing very bad impact on agriculture and forestry in 8 provinces of central coastal region and Central Highland. Land cracking and soil erosion have also become more and more serious in Cuu Long river delta. A survey has recorded 51 cracking points with 350 ha of land lost every year. It is estimated that the total land lost by cracking and erosion will reach to 10,000 ha. The sea resource exploitation has also been another reason of water and land pollution. The sea products have been mainly exploited near coastal areas by the use of poisonous chemicals or explosives. Oil is the main chemical causing water and soil pollution (during the period 1992-1996, the oil content in the sea water increased from 7 to 20 times).

Since 1989, the economic system has changed from the concentrated planned mechanism to market oriented mechanism. And since then several programmes and projects not only in socio-economic development but also on environment protection have been intensively implemented. Vietnam, since that time benchmark, has not only presented its great progress in hunger eradication (today as the third biggest country of the world in the rice export, in 1999 with 4.55 million tons) but also committed its responsibilities in global environment protection propagation. Year 1990 has been the milestone marking a significant achievement of Vietnam in environment protection. A number of laws relating to desertification combating process had been formulated during the period 1990-1998. Vietnam has stressed its responsibilities/commitments in joining the world in global environmental issues by signing agreements to become a member of several international conventions on environment. A number of programmes and projects have also been intensively implemented since 1990.

Beside the great achievement, there are still, however, many problems and constraints caused by the economic changes. There is still lack of adequate knowledge of people on environment protection. The environment protection is still not mentioned as the major issue to be taken in many provincial plans on socio-economic development. A more appropriate policy system for environment protection is still to be adjusted and adopted. The Decree 36-CT/TW, June 1998 of the Communist Party to strengthen activities on environment protection in the modernization and industrialization period has developed the strategy to adopt the

environment protection as an important issue of every national socio-economic development action.

In this situation, being a member of several international conventions on environment issues as well as of UNCCD is an essential further step of Vietnam in joining to the global environment propagation and in setting up long-term strategies of the country on environment protection and sustainable development.

The national report has followed exactly the Guidelines of UNCCD, the Decision 11 of the COP1. It has drawn briefly the main information on environment protection as well as in land conservation, forest protection and development, water conservation and sand dune fixation activities of Vietnam. This report is the result of the collaboration/cooperation among the representatives of the Government Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Planning and Investment, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Vietnam Forestry Science Association, UNDP, FAO and the executing agencies of international programmes and projects ongoing in Vietnam. The report is also the result of a National workshop with the participation of many other social, economical, environmental sectors and institutions relating to the environment protection and sustainable development in Vietnam.

The main content of the report is divided into 8 parts:

1. Summary.
2. Strategies and priorities established within the framework of sustainable development plans and/or policies.
3. Institutional measures taken to implement the Convention.
4. Participatory process in support of preparation and implementation of action programmes.
5. Consultative process in support of the preparation and implementation of national action programmes and the partnership agreements with developed country and other interested entities.
6. Measures taken or planned within the framework of national action programmes.
7. Financial allocation from national budgets in support of implementation as well as financial assistance and technical cooperation including their inflows, and the process to identify their requirements, areas of funding and set a priority.
8. Review of benchmarks and indicators utilized to measure progress and an assessment thereof.

The priorities and strategies of the country relating to desertification combating are indicated as follows:

1. Population growth control to release the pressure to natural resources;
2. Sustainable management of natural resources;
3. Forest protection and development;
4. Urban and industrial zones development planning;
5. Research, training and extension activities on environment;
6. Disaster control and forecasting system;
7. Planning and policy formulating on environment;
8. Control the process of desertification, forecast the impacts of this process to the most endangered provinces/areas and support these localities in setting up socio-economic development plan with environment protection concern.

The report also draws up some models on sand dune fixation along the central coastal areas, of which the successful implementation is the result of the Prof. Lam Cong Dinh's works on application of some specific species for sand dune fixation as *Casuarina equisetifolia* and *Azadiracta indica* in setting up forests against sand dune moving in some central provinces of Vietnam. Prof. Dinh has been nominated for Ho Chi Minh Award in 2000.

The report stresses the important role of local people and women in activities related to desertification control. If the programmes and projects on environment protection are not implemented by the local people, they will hardly be successful.

The report has also mentioned a tentative organization structure of National Coordination Body and the proposed National Focal Point and the mobilization of organizations and people to participate the National Action Programme on Environment.

The important role of international cooperation and the necessity of integrated programmes/projects on environment to high up the efficiency of the cooperation have been emphasized. The great contribution in term of financial support and technical assistance of international organizations, of government and non-government organizations in activities on desertification combating in Vietnam has also been highly appreciated.

### **3. Strategies and priorities established within the framework of sustainable development plans and/or policies.**

#### **3.1 National plans and strategies available in other social and economic sectors**

Vietnam is the country which pays great interest on environment protection. The desertification combating is the one most important issue of the National Action Programme on Environment (NAPE), because it relates with the two very important natural resources - soil and water. The main activities of desertification combating process are as follows:

- Land degradation prevention;
- Sand dune fixation;
- Water resource protection;
- Drought and flood forecast and protection.

Vietnam has been the member of several international conventions, among which there are some main conventions on environment protection as follows:

- Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage;
- Convention on Wetland of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (RAMSAR);
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);
- Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer;
- Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal;
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- Convention on Biological Diversity,
- Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

Before becoming a member of UNCCD, there had already been formulated a NAPE for the period 1991-2000. In the National conference in 1998, the results and achievements of implementation of this programme were reviewed. Some proposals and recommendations for the next NAPE in the period 2001-2010 were also discussed and concluded. The main activities of the Second NAPE are as follows:

- To establish of standards and methodology for planning on environment;
- To implement researches on environment management;
- To set up a database and the system of environment impact indicators.



In 1991, the National Assembly was approved the Law on Forest Protection and Development. The Land Law was also approved in 1993. The Law on Environment Protection got the approval in 1994 and 4 years later the Law on Water Resource was completely in force. This was the great effort of the country focusing on land and water protection, forests development – the major factors to support the desertification combating process before becoming a member of UNCCD.

As mentioned earlier, in Vietnam there is not existing a specific national action programme on desertification, but the component is included in NAPEs. Among the activities, there are some major priorities related to desertification control as follows:

- Population growth control to release the pressure on natural resources as land, water, forests, etc.;
- Sustainable management of land, water and forests;
- Forest protection and development;
- Pollution control in urban and industrial zone;
- Education and training on forest, land and water sustainable management;
- Drought and flood forecast and prevention;
- Participatory management and policy system formulation on harvesting, utilization of water, land and forests.

The projects/programmes are divided into two groups:

- Integrated programmes/projects: desertification is the one of many other activities, with the annual budget specifically for desertification control from 10-12 % of the total programme budget;
- Specific programmes/projects: only on desertification.

Among the integrated, the main programmes and projects are as follows:

- 5 Million Hectare Afforestation Programme (5MHAP);
- Project on Forest Ecology Conservation in Watershed Areas ;
- Rural Development with Environment Protection Programme;
- Education and Training Programme on Environment;
- Strengthen Capacity of Institutions at Central and Local Level on Environment Protection Programme;
- Sustainable Forest Management and Forests Certification Programme;
- Social Forestry Development Project Song Da;
- Sustainable Management of Resources in Mekong Basin Project.
- Establishment and Implementation of Legal Documents and Policy Systems on Sustainable Natural Resource Management and Environment Protection;
- Water Resource Protection in Red River Delta;
- Programme 135 on poverty alleviation and infrastructure improvement in 1,700 the poorest communes located in remote areas.

The major projects (ongoing and pipeline) specifically on desertification are as below:

- Land Resource Protection to Release of Bad Impacts of Unsuitable Cultivating Practices;
- Release of Impacts of Industrial Pollution on Soil and Water;
- Water Resource Protection in Mekong River Delta;
- Sand Dune Fixation by Forest Establishment in Quang Tri Province;
- Underground Water Protection and Sustainable Harvesting in Central Highland;
- Afforestation in Seriously Degraded Land Areas of Ha Tinh, Quang Binh and Quang Tri Province.
- Afforestation for Sand Dune Fixation in Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Phu Yen and Khanh Hoa, period 2001-2004;
- Project on Assessment the Situation of Environment, Ecology of Sand Areas, Wetland Areas in Coastal Central Region to Combat Desertification, Protect Environment, Support Socio-economic Development in 10 Coastal Central Provinces, since 2002;
- Forest Planting in Quang Ninh, Bac Giang and Lang Son, period 2000-2004, to set up 13,000 ha of forests in bare land;
- Assessment and Control of Disaster Forecasting System, period 2000-2001;
- Dam Programme VIE/87/021, period 2000-2001;

### **3.2 National plans or strategies in the field of combating desertification developed prior to the UNCCD**

In the past, Vietnam implemented a number of projects/programmes on desertification combating with good results. It was and still is the annual Tree Planting Spring Festival with the participation of all people (the initiative of the former president Ho Chi Minh). It was the Programme 327 focusing on reforestation in bare degraded land with the total financing of 3,000 billion VND, Afforestation Programme of WFP, Social Forestry Development Programme, Agroforestry Programme, Forest Establishment in Sand Dune Areas of Quang Binh by *Casuarina equisetifolia*. The results of these projects/programmes is that the forest cover on one hand has been increases from 28% in 1995 to 33% by the end of 1999 (about 2 million hectares more) and the knowledge, technical skill, the research capacity and the experience of experts on the other hand have been improved; millions of people have been trained and educated in field practice.

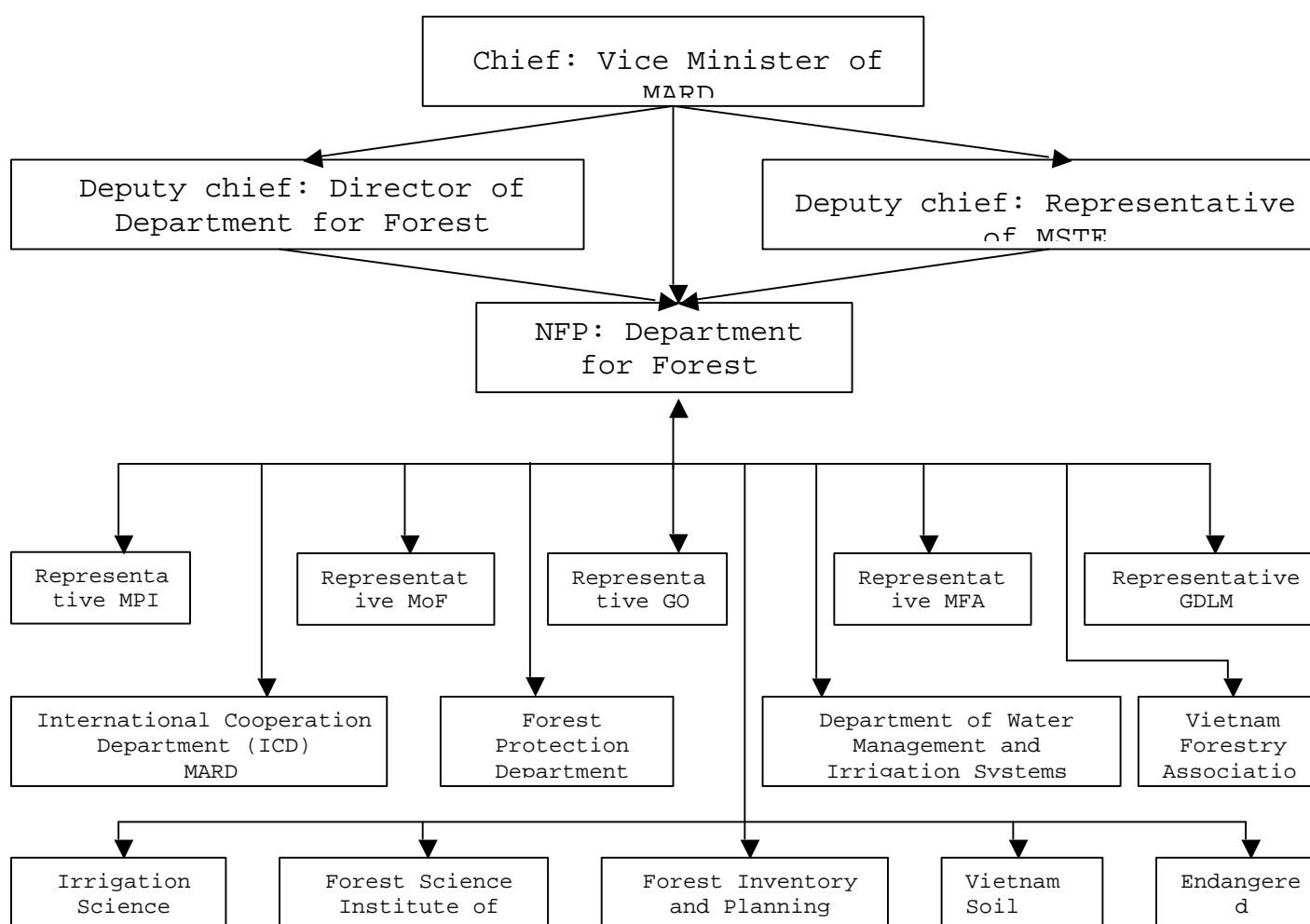
#### 4. Institutional measures taken to implement the Convention

##### 4.1 Establish and functional National Coordination Body (NCB) and the role of National Focal Point (NFP)

Legal status:

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) is proposed by the Government Office (GO), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MSTE), the General Department of Land Management (GDLM) to be the NFP of UNCCD. All the ministries have submitted the proposal for establishment of NCB and NFP to the Government and this proposal is supposed to be officially approved by the Government in May 2000.

The tentative organization chart of NCB



It needs time for careful consideration by the Government. The country is at the moment on the process of administrative capacity strengthening in order to use more effectively the available human and financial resources.

The functions of NCB are to follow exactly the Article 4- Annex II of the UNCCD legal document.

The information related to the institutional framework, mandate, financial autonomy, human resources and other facility of NCB and NFP will be updated to the UNCCD Secretariat after the proposal of ministries on NCB and NFP becomes approved by the Government.

#### **4.2 Institutional framework for coherent and functional desertification control**

Though the NCB and NFP are still not officially approved, the activities on desertification control have continued being implemented by a close cooperation between ministries, organizations and institutions. There are annually organized workshops, conferences at national or provincial level to assess the implementation of plans on land degradation combating. Through these meetings land degradation process is carefully analyzed, assessed and recommended.

In the above mentioned meetings, leaders of ministries/sectors and local authorities have been invited to actively participate and give comments. The decisions of the meetings have been distributed to all participants and reported to the related ministries, sectors and provinces. This ensures the follow-up activities be closely cooperative and efficient.

There are also existing programmes on capacity building on land degradation control, on land use planning, forest planting, water management and disaster forecasting/prevention.

The Government annually approves a certain budget for training and education programme, which is focusing on upgrading of knowledge, experience and technical skill of central and local staff as well as of local people in soil analysis, land use planning, GIS technology, silviculture technique, agro-forestry technique, sustainable upland crop system, monitoring and assessment methodology of impact indicators, policy making, etc.

#### **4.3 NAPE as part of the National Economic and Social Development and Environment protection plans**

The plans and strategies related to land conservation are studied and analyzed so that the socio-economic development and environment protection activities will be

conducted by close collaboration. The control of the Government and the coordination of the MPI ensures to avoid overlapping or dis-concentrating of activities.

NAPE with the desertification combating activities is considered as the framework in National socio-economic development and environment plans of the country. The principles of UNCCD have been highly respected during the process of setting National plans. This strategy however has not been fully and carefully mentioned in socio-economic development plan of some provinces or of some economic sectors. The market oriented policy with “open door” export but lack of import control is still the major gaps for some provinces, companies or individuals to utilize in increasing production capacity without concerning the environment issue.

NAPE has been set up by a great concern with Regional Environment Programme (REP). Some REPs are indicated as follows:

- Poverty Alleviation and Environment Management in Mekong Basin, which are being conducted in Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and Yuan Nan China;
- Sustainable Management of Resources in Mekong Basin, which are at present implemented in the same four mentioned above countries;
- Sustainable Forest Management and Forest Certification, in which Vietnam as a member of ASEAN has cooperated in developing the Regional Criteria and Indicators for FSC Certification.

All NAPEs, according to the country policy, have to be concurrent with the REPs and have to be approved by the Government.

As reported in Clause 3.1, Vietnam has given priorities on environment issues, which are clearly mentioned in NAPEs for the period 1991-2000 and 2001-2010. In those programmes, the land degradation control, sand dune fixation, irrigation system development, water sustainable management, forest protection and development etc. have been concerned as the major issues.

#### **4.4 Coherent and functional legal and regulatory framework**

Legal documents are set up based on careful studies. All activities related to desertification combating are conducted with the “socialization” principle. It means that every resident can have long-term land tenure, can participate in land use planning and setting up their production plan as well as have to commit his/her respect to sustainable development and environment protection principles.

In the most critical and critical watershed areas the people will have incentive policies when participating in the forest protection and development activities. The people are to be trained to upgrade their capacity in active participation in all activities related to afforestation, environment protection, irrigation development

and soil conservation when taking part in the processes. Therefore, the capacity of institutions and people in participatory planning, land use planning, decision making, crop system selection, irrigation system maintenance, water resource protection etc. are be strengthened.

## **5. Participatory process in support of preparation and implementation of action programmes**

### **5.1 People with the public communication means**

All the magazines, newspapers, TV and broadcasting stations, from central to local level have the programme on environment. In some cases, the programme has transferred in ethnic minority languages in a certain schedule and with an interesting performance. The information and content of the newspapers, magazines and TV and radio broadcasting stations are always selected carefully by General Editors of the newspapers or by Directors of the stations.

The programmes on environment related to land conservation, watershed protection, irrigation development, soil rehabilitation, sand dune fixation and afforestation always call a great interest of the large population, because there is more than 70% of Vietnamese population living by agriculture and forestry practices. Through this communication system, people can have better understanding in impact of inappropriate land use, of deforestation, water pollution and therefore can get better concept on their role in the national activities on living environment protection. By these communication channels, the local people, local authorities as well as the ethnic communities can update new technique and advanced technology in afforestation, soil rehabilitation, agro-forestry development and water conservation, etc.

UNCCD documents, therefore, have also been translated into Vietnamese. However they are still not yet available in ethnic languages.

### **5.2 Women with gender issue**

Women are the main force in environment protection (in general) and in forest protection, land conservation and land use (in particular). Realizing the role of women in this process, the proposed NCB has also women members.

The gender issue is concerned in every activity of programmes related to environment. About 76.6% of women participate in agriculture and forestry production, while men form only 75.6%. In the poor country, which has been under feudalism for a long time as Vietnam, gender issue is quite new. However it has already called a great concern of the Government and international organizations in formulating the socio-economic rural development programme at national and local level. One of the 10 objectives of the National Action Programme for

Women's Advance is "To strengthen women capacity in management and in decision making". The women form 26.2% of the 10<sup>th</sup> National Assembly, 8% more than of the previous one. The number of women is however still very low in local authority leadership. The Government has drawn up the target that 25% of people committee membership will be women in order to strengthen their role in rural development and poverty alleviation activities.

### **5.3 The local authorities and consulting agencies**

Besides the State organizations and the Government organizations, consulting agencies, local authorities and individual experts also actively participate in supply information and consulting services. These institutions can also edit their own newspapers, magazines, if having the permission of the Government and committing to follow all the principles of communication. The non-government organizations and individuals can supply the consulting services if they are required. The provinces and districts are provided a fund to establish and maintain activities related to forestry and agriculture extension. The centre for agriculture and forestry extension, diseases control centre, flora protection centre, disaster prevention and forecasting centre, climate forecasting centre are normally consulting agencies at local level. This organization mechanism ensures the timely provision of consulting services to local people.

However, due to the very limited fund, the investment for construction of infrastructure such as roads, bridges, electricity network, post offices, schools and communication equipment in out-of-road and remote areas is still very short. Therefore, the communication in these areas still faces with many difficulties, most of ethnic people can not join the communication channel. The country has great efforts in improving the situation. One of the biggest national programmes is the Programme 135, which focuses on improvement of infra-structural conditions for 1,700 the poorest communes of the country.

The selection of representatives of central and local authorities has followed the public balloting principle. It means that every Vietnamese resident can elect his/her representatives. The members of local and central level authorities have consulting cooperation with return-way principle, from the top to the bottom and back. Decisions and strategies are formulated from local level and when being approved the legal documents must be strictly followed by the localities. During the implementation of these decisions, if some problems occur, the localities can raise comments, proposals to the central level for solutions or adjustment.

## **6. Consultative process in support of the preparation and implementation of national action programmes and the partnership agreements with developed country and other interested entities**

### **6.1 Effective support from international partners for cooperation**

The Government always encourages all international organizations, individuals to take part in natural resources conservation and sustainable development of the country. By approving the Foreign Investment Promotion Law, the National Assembly opens the door and creates good conditions for all international organizations and individuals to participate in all socio-economic and environment protection sectors. The partners can participate in all activities related to investment and implementation of national programmes on socio-economic development and environment protection. When the partners have signed agreement, the country will organize a conference of partnerships and a Partnership Steering Committee (PSC) will be established. The steering committee will have a secretariat and working groups. The secretariat will work full-time and be operated by a trust fund, which has an office with adequate equipment. The experts working in each working group will work as part-time staff for the partnership programme. Therefore, the specific tasks do not have overlaps and can concentrate high efforts of the available resources and strength of each partner thus the cooperation will be more efficient.

The Government also encourages the domestic organizations to create bilateral and multilateral cooperation with international, governmental and non-governmental organizations, overseas companies etc. in rural development programmes, among which the environment protection, capacity building, infrastructure improvement are always the main components to be considered. The laws of Vietnam ensure a good environment for foreign investments, especially in environment protection issues. Foreign investment issue is still new for Vietnamese people so that the international cooperation creates opportunities for people to learn experiences from the ASEAN region as well as from other countries with similar socio-economic and environmental conditions as Vietnam.

### **6.2 Communication mechanism among partners, NCB and NFP**

In Vietnam, there is not yet any partnership programme specifically for desertification combating, but there are already existing a partnership programmes for NAPE and for 5MHAP, of which the environment and forest reforestation and protection are the major issues. The members of NCB and NFP are also the members of Steering Committee of 5MHAP and of the Secretariat of 5MHAP Partnership Programme.

The 5MHAP Secretariat works every working day in it's office, the consultants and members of each working group work half-week per month and have regular



monthly meeting by the end of each month. The partners have been assigned several specific tasks and been divided into three main Task forces:

- Task Force 1: includes representatives MARD, UNDP, IUCN, ADB, Netherlands Embassy, GTZ etc. with the main tasks as compilation and analysis, assessment and recommendation on implementation of 5MHAP;
- Task force 2: includes representatives of MARD, UNDP, IUCN, JICA, ADB, WB, FAO, GTZ, Netherlands Embassy etc. with assessment of existing policies, institution mechanism related to 5MHAP as the main tasks;
- Task force 3: includes representatives of MARD, JICA, JBIC, ADB, GTZ, EU, WWF, FAO, UNDP, ICD, Netherlands Embassy, Finland Embassy etc. with the main activities as study on the investment environment and investment policies, strategies for forestry sector.

Vietnam considers this 5MHAP Partnership Programme as the main information sources and the key partner to cooperate with to implement desertification combating in the country.

## **7. Measures taken or planned within the framework of national action programmes, including measures to improve the economic environment. To conserve natural resources, to improve institutional organization, to enhance knowledge on desertification and its control and to monitor and assess desertification and drought**

### **7.1 Adequate diagnosis of past experiences**

The lessons learnt from the implemented programmes related to desertification combating process have been reviewed at national conferences, workshops held by the Government and international organizations. The participants of the conferences and workshops are local authorities, the leaders of central institutions, representatives of local people (the main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the programmes) and international as well as national consultants working in environment protection, natural resource conservation, capacity building etc. The lessons can be summarized as follows:

- The key and very essential factor for the success of rural development programme as generally and of soil conservation, land use planning and water protection as specific is to ensure the long-term land tenure for local people and to strengthen their active capacity in planning;
- The staff has to work closely in the field, update the proposals, the comments of local people. The Government has to formulate appropriate policy system to encourage local people to involve in programme implementation and has to upgrade the knowledge of people in their role as the key actors and beneficiaries of the programmes;

- The environment protection is the work of all people and the long-term strategy for each country and for the world. Therefore, the programmes on socio-economic development have to include the environment issue as the main important activity and objective. All people have to be encouraged in these programmes;
- Training to upgrade the capacity of project executing and project implementing agencies is the main methodology/activity to be considered. Besides this, to upgrade the knowledge on environment, to strengthen technical capability of people and local authorities as well as to improve skills in monitoring and assessment of project/programme results and in policy making/planning of central agencies are also very important. The cooperation between the central and local levels is also very essential;
- Only based on a close cooperation, on-time updating problems and constraints for analysis and assessment to find out the follow up activities and to formulate the long-term strategy in order to avoid overlapping and dis-concentrating, the programmes and projects can be efficiently and successfully implemented;
- The lessons are the base for establishment of national action programmes, among which there is also NAPE.

## **7.2 Established technical programmes and functional integrated projects to combat desertification**

The projects related to resource management, especially to desertification have been reviewed by the Government and international organizations/donors. Within the programmes, the activities of existing projects have been integrated with the guiding role of Government and the coordination mission of MPI. To create good integration, there are the main necessary factors as follows:

- The Government conducts good guiding role;
- MPI plays effective coordination mission;
- The related ministries have close cooperation and consensus action plan in one synchronous framework;
- NCB and NFP have to work out a clear workplan, clear working schedule and have to be well equipped for good communication channel. The members of the NCB have to be representatives of all important sectors, institutions and social organizations relating to desertification combating. The selection of members is based on the right qualification, efficient work and active participation in consulting and decision making on desertification;
- NFP works closely with international organizations, governmental and non-governmental agencies and with existing partnership members working on desertification issues. NFP has to be provided adequate and correct information and consulting services.

### **7.3 Action programmes implemented in compliance with priority fields set out in the Convention**

The planned objectives are as follows:

- Continue to strengthen capacity building of local and central level;
- Adopt the adequate policy systems on environment protection, formulate the legal documents on socio-economic development plan/strategy with environment consideration and encourage local people to be involved in NAPE;
- Upgrade the active role of localities to prevent negative impacts on environment and to find solutions for environment protection;
- Make sustainable harvesting and efficient utilization of land, water and forests to ensure bio-diversity conservation and sustainable development;
- Encourage multi-source investment and partnership programmes for environment protection;
- Enhance the State management on environment protection from central to local levels;
- Strengthen the research and transfer of advanced technology on monitoring and assessment of impact indicators on environment;
- Create and maintain international cooperation on environment protection;
- Strengthen the capacity building of technical as well as management staff.

The main pipeline programmes/projects specifically related to desertification combating with total annual budget of about USD 25 million as follows:

- Afforestation for Sand Dune Fixation in Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Phu Yen and Khanh Hoa, period 2001-2004;
- Project on Assessment the Situation of Environment, Ecology of Sand Areas, Wetland Areas in Coastal Central Region to Combat Desertification, Protect Environment, Support Socio-economic Development in 10 Coastal Central Provinces, since 2002;
- Forest Planting in Quang Ninh, Bac Giang and Lang Son, period 2000-2004, to set up 13,000 ha of forests in bare land;
- Assessment and Control of Disaster Forecasting System, period 2000-2001;
- Dam Programme VIE/87/021, period 2000-2001;

#### Training programmes

- Strengthen lab systems of the National Centre of Natural Sciences and Technologies to control and assess the bad impacts on environment;
- Capacity building of researchers on water protection of Water Protection Research Centre;
- Strengthen planning and policy making capacity for rural development and poverty alleviation.

The main objectives of each project/programme are presented by its own names.

#### **7.4 Linkage achieved with sub-regional and regional action programmes (SRAP & RAP)**

All the programmes have been identified and taken as proposed in Article 4 of the Regional Implementation Annex for Asia of the UNCCD. The components of desertification have been taken into all programmes related to agriculture, trade, poverty eradication, energy, financial instruments, migration, environment conservation, etc.

The sub-regional and regional programmes have been developed concurrently with the NAPE and national policies and vice versa.

Vietnam has nominated a number of research and training organizations to TPN1, TPN2 and TPN3. The actions, however, need to wait for the approval of the Government on NCB and NFP.

#### **7.5 Effectiveness of measures in local capacity building**

Priorities for capacity building of local level are given as follows:

- Strengthen capacity in planning and land use planning;
- Update the techniques on agro-forestry and crop selection for upland areas;
- Upgrade knowledge on roles of forests in water protection, land conservation, ecology and environment protection;
- Strengthen capacity in project implementation assessment.

### **8. Financial allocation from national budgets in support of implementation as well as financial assistance and technical cooperation including their inflows, and the process to identify their requirements, areas of funding and set a priority**

#### **8.1 Adopted financial mechanisms**

The Domestic Investment Promotion Law encourages all Vietnamese people to invest in desertification programmes. The Decree 163/1999/ND-CP on 16 November 1999 of the Government on land allocation, forestry land rental for long-term land tenure in forestry activities of organizations, households and individuals ensures the rights and the benefits of stakeholders, which are indicated clearly in land allocation documents.

The Government has given specific priorities in financing for land conservation, sand dune fixation, land erosion control and drought/flood prevention. Vietnam has

annual financial plan for these objectives and at the same time encourages the international and national organizations to join in the investment process.

The existing financial sources are as follows:

- The State sources;
- The ODA sources ( including loan and grant);
- Sources of Government and non-government organizations, foreign companies and joint-ventures;
- Sources of localities;
- Sources of domestic enterprises;
- Sources of local people.

The sources of international organizations with the rate for projects are as below:

- For natural resource management: 65%
- For disaster forecasting and prevention management: 3 %
- For training and research on environment: 6%.

The organizations and individuals can participate in investment and implementation process of desertification combating, if they respect the following points:

- Commit their respect to Vietnam laws, do not have bad impacts on Vietnam sovereignty and interests;
- Obey legal documents, regulations on investment, environment protection and natural resource management;
- Have interest with bilateral and multi-lateral benefit;
- Have the permission of the Government for investment and cooperation in environment protection activities.

## **8.2 NAP financing**

Vietnam still does not have NAP specifically on desertification control. The components of desertification control such as land degradation protection, erosion control, sand dune fixation, water protection, etc. have been included in NAPE. The mobilization of funding for this programme has been described in the Clause 8.1.

Realizing the importance of the concerned matters but due to financial difficulties so that the annual budget for desertification combating activities within NAPE is still very far from the actual requirements, about 12-15 million USD (10% of the demand).

### **8.3 Technical cooperation developed**

In the future (2000-2010) the technical assistance will form 95% of total bilateral grant and 6% of multilateral grant fund. Besides being financially supported, Vietnam is also technically assisted through getting advises from international consultants working in Vietnam, through receiving equipment, documents and books, through capacity building programmes. The main donors for specific projects/programmes on desertification control are ADB, JICA, UNDP, BMZ.

The requirements and priorities in technical assistance on desertification control are as follows:

- Conduct large-scale use of GIS in land degradation process assessment and monitoring;
- Study the methodology in analysis and assessment of impact indicators;
- Study and apply different technical solutions in forest establishment in sand dune areas;
- Select of suitable and stable crop system for upland areas;
- Research of methodology on water resource assessment and technical solutions for drought and flood prevention and for water pollution prevention;
- Review and adjustment of policy systems to promote desertification activities;
- Study on organization structure and incentive systems to encourage people participating in desertification combating process;
- Strengthen knowledge transfer on land and water protection activities;
- Elaborate a capacity building action plan for desertification control process with the emphasis of plan for local people.

## **9. Review of benchmarks and indicators utilized to measure progress and an assessment thereof**

### **9.1 Mechanism of monitoring and assessment of the environment**

The Department of Environment of MSTE has conducted out the monitoring and assessment of environment at central level. In provinces, there is the Department of Science, Technology and Environment (DSTE) in every province, who is in charge of monitoring and assessment of environment at local level. Though there is still not existing the national monitoring mechanism, the cooperation on monitoring and assessment of environment between central and local level already exists.

## **9.2 Measures taken for harmonization of existing mechanisms/systems**

There are already existing 20 environment impact-recording stations in the whole country, of which 18 stations are in charge of recording technical data on soil, water and air and conducting preliminary impact assessment. The distribution of the stations is indicated in the map (Annex 3). The existing mechanism is technically and financially supported by the Government (annually about USD 300,000 with total 350 people working in all levels), which elaborates technical documents and works out reports to submit to the Government. There is available equipment with total investment of USD 1,8000,000 to facilitate the monitoring system.

## **9.3 Planned national methodology for elaboration of impact indicators**

There are already available national standards on monitoring and assessment for water, soil, air, hard wastes and poisonous chemicals. There is still a need of elaborating the national standard on monitoring and assessment of biological diversity such as ecological conditions, change in species composition (flora and fauna) and genetic variation.

It is required to set up 30 more environment impact-recording stations in the future with the estimated annual investment for equipment about USD 600,000.

## 10. References

1. **Department of Environment**, Proceedings of National Conference on Environment, 1998, Agriculture Publishing House, 1998
2. **Department for Forestry Development**, Legal Documents on Forestry, Agriculture Publishing House, 1999
3. **Department for Forestry Development**, Preliminary Research on watershed protection effects of some tree species and principles of establishment of watershed protection forests, Agriculture Publishing House, 1997
4. **Lam Cong Dinh**, Report submitted to Ho Chi Minh Award Committee, 1999
5. **Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development**, Document of 5 Million Hectare Afforestation Programme, 1998
6. **Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development**, Proceedings of National Seminar on Vietnam Agriculture and Rural Development Strategies, Agriculture Publishing House, 1997
7. **Ministry of Forestry**, Vietnam Forestry Sector Review, Tropical Forestry Action Programme, Main Report, 1991
8. **United Nations Organization**, International Conventions on Environment Protection, National Political Publishing House, 1995.
9. **UNDP**, Compendium of Rural Development Assistance in Vietnam, 2000
10. **UNDP**, Compendium of Environmental Projects in Vietnam, 1999.
11. **UNDP**, Vietnam: Programme Portfolio, 1999.



## **11. Appendixes**

Annex 1: Sand dune fixation by *Casuarina equisetifolia*

Annex 2: Sand dune fixation by *Azadirachta indica*

Annex 3: National Network on Monitoring of Environment