

## Vietnam's Strategy on Forestry Development for 2006-2020

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Decision No. 18/2007/QĐ-TTg, 10 June 2007 of the Prime Minister ratifying Vietnam forest development strategy for 2006-2020. General objective of the Decision is to establish sustainable forest protection, development and use of 16.24 mil. ha planned for forestry sector, increase forest cover to 42-43% in 2010 and 47% by 2020, ensure participation of various economic sectors and social organizations in forest development; ecological environment protection; conserve bio-diversity and supply environmental services; contribute to poverty alleviation, improve livelihood of mountainous rural people to maintain national security.

- Economic objective: Forestry growth rate shall reach 4- 5%/year, contribute from 2-3% to national GDP by 2020; establish, protect, develop and use sustainably the three forest types, including: 8.4 mil.ha of production forest, 5.68 mil. ha of protection forest and 2.16 mil. ha of special use forest; harvested timber is 20-24 mil. m<sup>3</sup>/year; forest products export value is of US\$7.8 billion, forest environmental services is US\$2 billion by 2020.
- Social objectives: create additionally 2 million new employments, contribute to alleviate poverty and reduce 70% of poor households in key areas; complete forest allocation, lease to households, individuals, communities and organizations before 2010.
- Environment objective: forest cover reaches 42-43% in 2010 and 47% by 2020.
- Carry out various programs: sustainable forest management and development program; forest protection, bio-diversity conservation and environment service development; forest products processing and trade, support programs: research, education, training and forestry extension program; policy, planning and monitoring program.

After years of implementing the strategy, there is a positive contribution to the increase of forest cover for environmental protection goals although the forestry sector has not yet brought a positive impact on the environment. Although forest cover continues to rise in the coming years, the challenge of environmental sustainability remains while there is a trend of devastating the primitive forests with high biodiversity and the conversion of natural forest for the purpose economy still continues.

Besides, natural forests are still facing many challenges due to the solution of biodiversity conservation and the minimizing of current climate change impact have not been done well. Although the strategy recognizes that environmental protection and provision of environmental services are important goals of the forestry sector, current set of indicators to monitor and assess has not really focused on aspects of environmental sustainability. If sustainability is seen as the core purpose of the strategy, the forestry sector needs to reconsider the existing criteria sets in order to get a fuller picture.

On the other hand, forestry activities can also cause negative impacts on biodiversity and the environment. These effects may include loss of biodiversity, wildlife poaching, illegal settlements, livelihoods of the people living around the forest, and climate change. These effects need to be monitored and evaluated adequately, not just focusing on the positive aspects of the forestry sector.

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