



THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM  
MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE ON EVALUATION OF TWO-YEAR  
IMPLEMENTATION OF GOVERNMENT'S RESOLUTION ON CLIMATE RESILIENT  
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEKONG DELTA OF VIET NAM**



HA NOI, 2019



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## PREFACE

Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP dated November 17, 2017 is a Government's leading policy to extensively transform the Mekong Delta toward climate resilient and sustainable development.

After two years of active implementation, the Resolution has created a dramatic change in thinking of all levels and sectors in policy formulation, identification of strategic programs and urgent projects. The Party, the National Assembly and the Government have put focus on directing and removing bottlenecks on institutions? policies, resources, inter-regional linkage planning... The people have agreed, supported and actively participated. The provincial Party committees and governments in the Mekong Delta have strived to overcome difficulties and challenges. International organizations and development partners have actively participated and supported effectively. Since then, some positive results have been achieved, gradually removing resource bottlenecks, strengthening inter-regional linkage in infrastructure and economy; creating an impetus, promoting economic growth for the whole region.

However, the situation of climate change and natural disasters continues to develop rapidly, unpredictably and abnormally due to the irregularities and extremes, along with challenges from human activities that will result in a long-lasting impact on the well-being, livelihoods, assets and social services of people in the Mekong Delta.

In order to comprehensively evaluate the implementation of the tasks set out in the Resolution and propose breakthrough solutions to further remove institutional and resource bottlenecks, on June 18, 2019, the Prime Minister chaired the Conference on evaluation of two-year implementation of the Resolution. At the Conference, the Prime Minister concluded and directed many strategic solutions which were reflected in the Directive No. 23/CT-TTg dated September 5, 2019 on promoting the implementation of Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is honored to present the Proceeding of the Conference on evaluation of two-year implementation of Government's Resolution on Climate resilient and Sustainable development of the Mekong Delta of Viet Nam, which will become a reference for readers, policy makers, experts, scientists who are interested in the Mekong Delta. From that, there will be more passionate comments, contributing to the sustainable and prosperous development of this Delta./.



THE MEKONG DELTA OF VIET NAM

MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

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TRẦN HỒNG HÀ

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**DIRECTIVE**

**On strengthening the implementation of the Government Resolution  
No. 120/NQ-CP on Climate Resilient and Sustainable Development  
of the Mekong Delta**

Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP of the Government issued on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017 with the direction of transforming the thinking of diversified, large-scale and modern production in association with the consumer market for socio-economic development of the Mekong Delta in a sustainable and climate resilient way. After two years of implementation, ministries, sectors and local agencies have achieved some positive results in formulating policies, identifying urgent strategic programs and projects; gradually removing resource bottlenecks, strengthening inter-regional connectivity in infrastructure and economy; enabling economic and labor restructuring, promoting economic growth for the whole region.

However, the implementation of Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP is still moderate due to limitations and challenges such as: authorities, sectors and local agencies within the scope of their management and responsibilities are still passive in researching, mobilizing resources and organizing the implementation of solutions to overcome the negative impacts of climate change, meeting the requirements of local socio-economic sustainable development; regulations on intra-regional and inter-regional coordination and cooperation are insufficient and ineffective; resources for implementing key infrastructure programs and projects for the Mekong Delta are limited; the regional master plan is not yet available; basic survey activities, interdisciplinary data integration are still slow and not comprehensive and synchronous; lack of policies to free resources and mobilize the participation of businesses and the private sector for development investment.

Climate change becomes more extreme, unpredictable, and impactful and happens at a faster rate than previously forecasted. At the same time, the exploitation of water resources in the upstream and in the region continues to escalate; land subsidence, sea erosion, river and coastal erosion, water shortage, saline intrusion are becoming increasingly serious, potentially and negatively effecting the whole region.

The Prime Minister of the Government directs ministries, sectors, committees, authorities at all levels in the region according to their functions and tasks to continue to thoroughly comprehend and conduct drastic implementation of Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP on sustainable development of the Mekong Delta, adapting to climate change, which focuses on implementing the following main contents:

1. To urgently develop regional coordination institution, create mechanism for sustainable development of the Mekong River Delta; to promote the role of regional linkages in planning mechanisms and policies for economic development, infrastructure investment, linking production with consumption.

a) Ministry of Planning and Investment

- To assume prime responsibility and coordinate with Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and local agencies to urgently study and propose regional coordination institutions (in order to advise the Government and the Prime Minister on inter-regional development guidelines, intra-regional and inter-regional infrastructure and connection projects; comment on specific mechanisms and policies and implementation resources), among which a Regional Coordinating Council is established with Deputy Prime Minister acting as the Chairman; submit to the relevant authorities for consideration in 2019.

- To establish mechanisms of cooperation and connection, including connecting sub-regions and local areas in the region through cooperative models of households, businesses and people...

- To focus on developing the Mekong Delta region planning for the period 2021 - 2030, with a vision to 2050 in accordance with the Law on planning, and submit it to the Prime Minister for approval in the fourth quarter of 2020.

b) Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment shall assume the prime responsibility and coordinate with the ministries, sectors and local agencies to urgently develop criteria to identify projects and tasks to adapt to climate change; urgently accomplish research and basic survey programs which are being implemented in the Mekong Delta (national height network; surveys, search for underground water sources...), accelerate the establishment of the Data Integration Centre in the Mekong Delta.

c) Ministry of Transport shall assume the prime responsibility and coordinate with related ministries and sectors to focus investment resources in completing and operationalizing key transportation projects and works in order to synchronously connect Mekong Delta region with Ho Chi Minh City, the Southeast provinces and Cambodia.

d) Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development shall assume the prime responsibility and coordinate with the related ministries and sectors to urgently complete the Overall Program on sustainable agricultural development to adapt to climate change linked with the development of new rural in the Mekong Delta, to be submitted to the Prime Minister in the fourth quarter of 2019; direct and guide local agencies in the Mekong Delta to restructure agriculture toward increasing added value and sustainable development.

đ) Ministry of Industry and Trade shall assume the prime responsibility and coordinate with the related ministries and sectors to promote the development of renewable energy, low-emission industries and supporting the processing of agricultural and aquatic products; apply information technology, develop e-commerce, and expand consumption and export markets.

e) Ministry of Construction shall assume the prime responsibility and coordinate with the related ministries and sectors to propose solutions to develop urban and rural areas in the Mekong Delta to adapt to climate change; propose and implement solutions to ensure clean water supply for the whole region, including measures to promote socialization and attract non-public resources for investment; propose solutions to utilize thermal ash and new construction materials to replace river sand and gravel.

g) Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism shall assume the prime responsibility and coordinate with ministries, sectors and local agencies to develop the Strategy on tourism development in the Mekong Delta and submit to the Prime Minister in the third quarter of 2020; prioritize the development of models of horticultural tourism, river and eco-tourism in association with the protection of natural ecosystems.

h) The People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City shall strengthen its role in promoting linkage with local areas in the Mekong Delta and the Southeast region, especially connection in infrastructure, economy, supporting investment, expanding markets, consumption, forming a closed value chain.

i) The Provincial Party Committee, City Party Committee and People's Committees of provinces and municipality in the Mekong Delta urgently organize to thoroughly comprehend and materialize the views, objectives and tasks outlined in Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP into the content of the Party Congress Documents at all levels, the 10-year socio-economic development strategy (2021 - 2030), the 5-year socio-economic development plan (2021 - 2025) of the local areas. To assume the prime responsibility and coordinate closely with the related ministries and sectors to urgently develop provincial planning for the 2021-2030 period in accordance with the Mekong River Delta Planning for the 2021-2030 period, with a vision to 2050.

2. To strengthen resources and attract legal investment capital (including socialized capital), propose suitable financial mechanism for sustainable development of the Mekong Delta

a) Ministry of Planning and Investment

- To assume the prime responsibility and coordinate with Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, and related ministries and sectors to study and develop financial frameworks and mechanisms to attract resources for the Mekong Delta; Provinces give priority to allocating budgets for climate change adaptation tasks in accordance with the provisions under the State Budget Law, and the central budget will provide partial support in accordance with its capacity.

- To assume the prime responsibility for, and coordinate with related ministries and sectors to promote attraction and mobilization of investment resources for sustainable development of the Mekong Delta, seeking opportunities to exploit foreign capital inflows for investment in the Mekong Delta. To study the proposal of supplementing USD 2 billion for the 2021 - 2025 period to accomplish investment programs and projects appraised and approved by relevant state authorities according to the tasks in the Decision No. 417/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister dated April 13, 2019 promulgating the Overall Action Program to implement Resolution No. 120 / NQ-CP. The rest is prioritized for

new investments in intra-regional and inter-regional projects in the fields of transportation, agriculture, water supply, irrigation, climate change adaptation... according to the specific projects portfolio approved by relevant authorities in accordance with the Mekong Delta Planning period 2021 - 2030, with a vision to 2050.

- To assume the prime responsibility and coordinate with ministries, sectors and local agencies to facilitate the appraisal, approval and allocation of public investment capital to key regional and inter-regional investment projects and works to create momentum for sustainable socio-economic development of the whole region; further strengthen investment promotion; support domestic and foreign businesses and investors to implement projects.

b) Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

- To assume the prime responsibility and coordinate with related ministries and sectors to review and finalize policies and laws to promote concentration and transformation of land for modern and large-scale agricultural production; generate resources from land to attract and develop dynamic projects, climate change adaptation projects for sustainable development of the Mekong Delta, complete and submit to the Government and National Assembly in the first quarter of 2020.

- To soon propose to complete and supplement functions, increase charter capital and resources for the Vietnam Environment Protection Fund in the direction of adding the task of sustainable development of the Mekong Delta, and submit to the Prime Minister in 2019.

c) Ministry of Finance promptly allocates regular expenditures for activities implementing the Master Action Plan to implement Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP; assumes the prime responsibility and coordinate with the related ministries and sectors to finalize the mechanism to regulate, share benefits and allocate revenues from inter-regional and multi-objective projects.

d) Ministry of Construction assumes the prime responsibility and coordinate with the State Bank of Vietnam and related ministries and sectors in stepping up the implementation of mechanisms and policies on housing support credit for poor households and ethnic minority people; Program on constructing clusters, population lines and buildings in flooded areas in the Mekong Delta

đ) Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development assumes the prime responsibility and directly instruct the restructuring of the agricultural economy sector, in association with market demands, in coordination with the State Bank of Vietnam and related ministries and sectors to promote the implementation of projects to support production development, diversifying livelihoods for poor households.

e) People's Committees of Mekong Delta provinces and cities prioritize mobilizing and allocating resources, facilitating administrative procedure reforms, and proactively preparing infrastructure for large-scale and modern production projects.

g) Business associations, industries and investors actively participate in the transformation process; increase investment in financial resources, high technology;

build brands for regional products; innovate promotional activities, product consumption; actively participate in global value chains. Encourage enterprises and cooperatives to invest in modern production projects with large-scale and high-level scientific and technological content, coping with challenges from natural disasters and climate change.

3. To boost training and development of human resources in order to accelerate the restructuring of labour and population structures; promote scientific research and technological development for sustainable development of the Mekong Delta

a) Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs assumes the prime responsibility and coordinate with the Ministry of Education and Training, ministries, sectors and local agencies to urgently assess needs, formulate projects on training and developing human resources that meet production shifting trends in line with market demand.

b) Ministry of Science and Technology invests and strengthens the capacity of research institutions in the Mekong Delta in order to research and transfer technology for large scale, high tech, and modern production, and for sustainable development.

#### 4. Regarding international cooperation

a) Ministry of Foreign Affairs assumes the prime responsibility and coordinate with the ministries, sectors and local agencies to strengthen the coordination of bilateral and multilateral cooperation activities, especially with the countries upstream of the Mekong River, to promote the cooperation on sustainable development, response to climate change and water resources management.

b) Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment assumes the prime responsibility and coordinate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Mekong River Commission and relevant agencies to enhance cooperation with international organizations and countries in the Mekong River basin in order to ensure the harmonization of interests among stakeholders in managing, exploiting and using water resources in the Mekong River basin, supporting the sustainable development of the Mekong Delta in response to climate change, to soon establish a mechanism for sharing water resources across borders.

c) The Vietnam Mekong River Commission urgently finalizes the organization and mechanism to enhance cooperation with the member countries of the International Mekong River Commission as well as with other relevant cooperation mechanisms in the Mekong region.

5. Ministries, sectors and local agencies effectively carry out media activities, provide accurate and timely information in order to raise awareness about the impacts of climate change and create consciousness of proactive response to climate change; evaluate, disseminate and replicate effective models and initiatives to adapt to climate change.

6. To propose the Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee and the central agencies of organizations to mobilize all strata of people to actively participate in, comment and supervise the process of planning and implementing the mechanism; policies for

sustainable development of the Mekong Delta to adapt to climate change.

7. Ministers, heads of ministerial-level agencies, government-affiliated agencies, Chairmen of People's Committees of Ho Chi Minh City and provinces and cities in the Mekong Delta and heads of relevant agencies assume responsibilities for organizing and strictly implementing this Directive.

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment shall assume the prime responsibility in monitoring the implementation of the ministries, sectors and local agencies according to the above mentioned contents and promptly report to the Prime Minister on difficulties and problems for the effective implementation of Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP./.

#### **Recipients:**

- Central Committee of the Party;
- Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers;
- Ministries, ministerial-level agencies and government-affiliated agencies;
- National Committee on Climate Change;
- Provincial Party Committee, City Party Committee, People's Council, People's Committee of provinces and cities: HCMC, An Giang, Bac Lieu, Ben Tre, Ca Mau, Can Tho, Dong Thap, Hau Giang, Kien Giang Long An, Soc Trang, Tien Giang, Tra Vinh, Vinh Long;
- Central Office of the Party;
- Office of the President;
- Office of the National Assembly;
- Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee;
- Central agencies of organizations;
- Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- Government Office: Minister, Vice Ministers, PM assistants, General Director of Government Portal, Departments, and affiliated agencies;
- Archive: Offices, NN (3 copies).

**PRIME MINISTER**

*[signed]*

**Nguyễn Xuân Phúc**





**H.E. TRƯƠNG HÒA BÌNH**

*Member of the Politburo  
Permanent Deputy Prime Minister*

## OPENING SPEECH BY THE PERMANENT DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

*His Excellency, Nguyễn Xuân Phúc,  
Member of the Politburo, Prime Minister  
of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.*

*Leaders of Committees, Ministries,  
sectors and local agencies.*

*Distinguished international guests,  
delegates,*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

On behalf of the Prime Minister, I would like to warmly welcome leaders, committees, ministries and local authorities, representatives of international organizations, embassies, foreign diplomatic agencies and research institutes, universities, business community, industry associations, experts, scientists at home and abroad that have put effort to attend the Conference to evaluate the results of implementing the Government's Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP on Climate Resilient and Sustainable Development of the Mekong Delta.

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

The Mekong Delta occupies a strategic

position, especially in socio-economic development, ensuring national defense and security. The Party and the State have issued and implemented many specific mechanisms, policies, programs, plans and solutions to promote the development of this area. In the context, the Mekong Delta is increasingly facing great risks and challenges due to climate change, sea level rise, unreasonable and unsustainable exploitation and use of water and natural resources both within the country and in the upstream of the Mekong. The Government issued the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP on November 17, 2017 on Climate Resilient and Sustainable Development of the Mekong Delta, with many tasks and solutions for both immediate and long-term period. The promulgation of the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP marked a major breakthrough in strategies thinking for sustainable development of the Mekong Delta in the overall direction, integrating socio-economic development of the whole region with long-term vision, strengthening development connectivity among local provinces in the region,

ensuring inter-regional and inter-sectoral linkage, with focuses and key areas through unified coordination mechanism.

After two years of implementation, we have achieved many results as mentioned in the documentary we have just seen. The Government acknowledges and highly appreciates the efforts of the Party committees, authorities and people in the Mekong Delta region as well as the close cooperation, effective support and assistance and valuable experience sharing from the international community, development partners, governments and people of other countries. However, there are still many limitations and difficulties in implementing the Resolution, failing to meet the requirements and plans as well as the expectations of the authorities and people in the region. In order to accelerate the implementation, to ensure more practical efficiency and put the Resolution No.120/NQ-CP into real life, the Government organized this important Conference to review and evaluate achievements and especially the shortcomings, limitations, as well as objective and subjective reason to analyze and identify difficulties and challenges. From that basis, we will propose specific tasks, solutions and countermeasures to focus on in the coming time. This morning, we have 4 thematic forums on:

*Firstly,* water management, flooding, saline intrusion; response to coastal erosion and subsidence in Mekong River Delta;

*Secondly,* restructuring agriculture to adapt to climate change for Mekong River Delta;

*Thirdly,* development of transport, infrastructure and housing system for sustainable development of Mekong River Delta;

*Fourthly,* masterplanning, regional coordination mechanism and investment attraction for Mekong River Delta.

Through the reports of the Ministers, I learned that the delegates had contributed many enthusiastic and responsible comments, proposed many concrete and practical solutions in the above areas to promote practical and effective implementation of the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP in the future.

The Conference only takes place this afternoon. In a very limited time, the Prime Minister, who presides over the Conference, would like the Ministers to briefly present the summary of the results of the implementation of the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP, focusing on the shortcomings and summarizing the opinions discussed in this morning. We will then spend a lot of time listening to representatives of international organizations, experts, scientists, representatives of the business community, and professional associations continue to voice their opinions and contribute to the Government, especially on the comments, assessment of the current situation and proposal of specific, feasible and breakthrough solutions and measures in order to promote climate resilient and sustainable development of the Mekong Delta in the future.

Now, it is my pleasure to invite Prime Minister to chair the Conference.

*Thank you very much!*



**MR. TRẦN HỒNG HÀ**  
*Member of Central Committee of the Party*  
*Minister of Natural Resources and Environment*

## REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNMENT'S RESOLUTION NO. 120/NQ-CP ON CLIMATE RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEKONG DELTA

The Mekong Delta accounts for 19% of the country's population, contributing to 50% of rice production, 65% of aquaculture production and 70% of fruit production of the whole country; also contributing for 95% of rice export and 60% of fish export. It situates at a location convenient for trade with ASEAN countries and the Mekong sub-region but is under the double impact of climate change, unreasonable upstream activities and internal development. In 2017, after visiting and presiding over the Conference on Climate Resilient and Sustainable Development of the Mekong Delta, together with intellectual mobilization of ministries, sectors, local agencies, experts, scientists, international organizations, and inheriting the achievements of the policies of the Party, the National Assembly and the Government, the Prime Minister Nguyễn

Xuân Phúc on behalf of the Government issued the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP on Climate Resilient and Sustainable Development of the Mekong Delta.

After the Resolution was issued, there has been a drastic change in the perception of all levels and sectors regarding policy making logic and in identifying urgent programs and projects. The Party, the National Assembly and the Government have paid attention to directing and removing bottlenecks on institutions, policies, resources and regional planning. The support of the people, the urgency of the Party Committee and local authorities in the Mekong Delta, the support and participation of international organizations and development partners have, up to now, resulted in some important initial achievements.

## I. INITIAL RESULTS

### 1. The system of mechanisms and policies starts to be completed, to focus on promoting the development of modern, sustainable agriculture, transportation infrastructure, stabilization of population, development planning connection and integration of climate change

- The Government issued the Decree No. 57/2018/ND-CP on incentive policies for enterprises investing in agriculture and rural development sector; the Decree No. 98/2018/ND-CP on incentive policy for development of linkages in production and consumption of agricultural products; attracting enterprise to make significant investment in agriculture, strengthening the linkage among four factors (managers, investors, scientists and farmers) to enhance the value chain, creating a foothold for agricultural products in the world market.

- The Prime Minister has approved many projects and plans in order to implement the climate resilient and sustainable development of the Mekong Delta such as the approval of amendment and supplement to a number of mechanisms and policies under the Construction Program of developing residential clusters, routes and houses in flooded areas for the period of 2018-2020 to invest in additional construction of residential clusters and routes, as well as embankment of residential areas for 8 provinces: Dong Thap, An Giang, Kien Giang, Long An, Tien Giang, Vinh Long, Hau Giang and Can Tho city. The approval of the development scheme for building materials for sea and island constructions to 2050 in the Decision No. 126/QĐ-TTg dated January 25, 2019, in which the overall mechanisms and

policies have been studied and proposed to promote the development, production and use of building materials for coastal and island projects.

- Relevant ministries and sectors, based on their functions, duties and authorities have reviewed, developed and promulgated the sustainable development mechanisms of the Mekong Delta such as: (i) Assessing and developing preferential policies and mechanisms to encourage private investment in climate change adaptation activities in the Mekong Delta for the period of 2016-2020 and the period of 2021-2025; (ii) Pilot mechanism for regional coordination under the Prime Minister's Decision, proposing solutions to complete the coordination and development mechanism in the Mekong Delta in the direction of establishing a coordination organization in the Delta, creating synergy, tight chain linkages to enhance the region's value and competitiveness; (iii) Mechanisms and policies to prioritize the development of industries to support the agricultural economy, agricultural product processing industry, especially deep processing and fine processing; mechanisms and policies to support trade promotion activities; (iv) Integrating climate change response in the development of normative law, such as provisions on criteria for urban green growth, integrating climate change and sea level rise in planning inland waterway transportation; updating climate change into the transportation infrastructure development planning; (v) Supporting the application and transfer of technology, especially high technology in agricultural production, establishing high-tech application agricultural zones in Hau Giang, Phu Yen and Bac Lieu (shrimp industry).

- Currently researches have been conducted on developing and issuing mechanisms and policies such as: (i) The overall program of sustainable agricultural development to adapt to climate change associated with the construction of new rural areas in the Mekong Delta; (ii) Mechanisms and policies on large-scale centralization and accumulation of land for production; policies on management of water resources, mineral resources and environmental protection; (iii) The Government's Decree on specific policies to support socio-economic development for ethnic minorities in the Mekong Delta.

**2. Basic survey and monitoring have been strengthened; interdisciplinary data and figures are established, updated and systemized**

- Currently there has been review of basic survey data on natural resources and environment, update of data on meteorology, hydrology, oceanography and sediment in Mekong Delta and data on water resources; commission of Southwestern Environmental Monitoring Station; urgent development of a data integration center in the Mekong Delta as a basis for integrating ministries, sectors and local agencies' data; development of land database. The survey of Ca Mau peninsula was completed in 2018, updating environmental and biodiversity resources data of the region and the same process is currently being carried out for Long Xuyen quadrangle area in 2019. The project on investigating and assessing the state of erosion and landslide forecast as a basis for the integrated management of environmental resources and the coastal strip from Tien Giang, Kien Giang is also completed.

- Activities include investigating and evaluating of modern geodynamics to update climate change scenarios, proposing adaptation solutions in the Mekong Delta; investigating and assessing of land subsidence in the Mekong Delta, measuring and examining the height of state-level landmark in the South region, assessing the causes of land subsidence in Ca Mau peninsula; researching and evaluating causes of riverbank and coastline erosion in the Mekong Delta, proposing measures to prevent landslides in the Mekong Delta, especially for urgent and dangerous landslides; developing flood maps in 2018 in the Mekong Delta.

- The network of monitoring and supervising of hydro-meteorological and oceanographic factors and changes in sediment has been strengthened, with development and integration of information of automatic rain gauge network for disaster forecast and warning. In addition to the fundamental network of meteorological and hydrological stations including 98 meteorological stations, 145 rain measurement points, 139 hydrological stations, 6 oceanographic stations, the Southern region now sets up 154 new points of automatic measuring of rain, water and salinity level.

- Local agencies have conducted investigation, survey and issued warnings and forecasts in the field of environment and climate change to contribute to socio-economic development (Hau Giang province has developed a digital map of saline intrusion; surveyed and evaluated hydrological regime, bottom terrain and geological topography along main rivers and canals which are susceptible to erosion, built database and model of landslide warning in

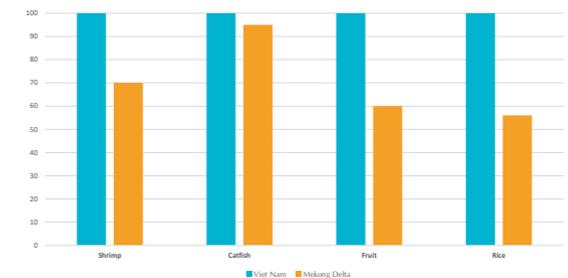
the period of 2018 – 2025; Long An province has conducted surveys and evaluated the current status of emission sources outside industrial zones and industrial clusters, environmental status in areas of rural clusters and constructed underground water resources monitoring networks...), transferred to 13/13 provinces and cities the database of labor supply and demand.

**3. Inter-regional planning and connectivity are being focused to implement**

- The Government approved the amendment of land use planning for Mekong Delta provinces and cities until 2020 and the 5-year land use plan for 2016-2020.

- The Prime Minister has approved the Construction Plan for the Mekong Delta region to 2030 with vision to 2050<sup>1</sup>; Scheme on sustainable smart urban development in Vietnam in the period 2018-2025 and orientation to 2030<sup>2</sup>, including research and development of a pilot program for smart urban development in the Mekong Delta.

- The Government is urgently developing the Master Plan for climate resilient and sustainable development of Mekong Delta to 2030 with a vision to 2050; reviewing and adjusting sectorial planning, with areas for sustainable and climate resilient development in Mekong Delta: water resources, irrigation, construction, transportation, biodiversity conservation...; and developing scheme for traffic network in Mekong Delta provinces.



*The output structure of some agricultural products of the Mekong Delta compared to the whole country*

- The local provinces in the Mekong Delta are actively reviewing the local socio-economic development planning for the period of 2021-2030 with a vision to 2050; modifying and adding the planning of rural transport development, inland waterway traffic... in accordance with the Master Plan<sup>3</sup>.

**4. The economic structure is being shifted positively towards modernization, with many industries and commodities have found their places in the world market**

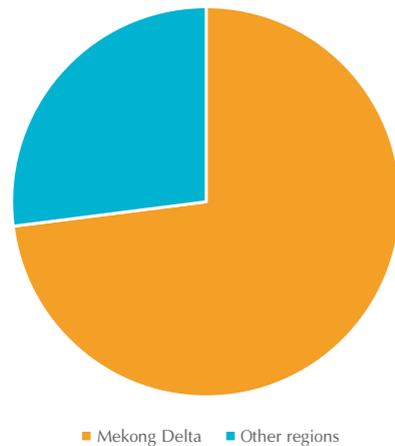
- With the efforts of the Government, ministries, sectors and local agencies in improving the investment environment, the Mekong Delta region has attracted a lot of investment capital and achieved impressive GDP growth. The Government has implemented many mechanisms and solutions to promote investment, expand markets and product industries; implemented many credit policies for the rice production industry, encouraging high technology agricultural production model.

- The structure of agricultural production is shifted towards increasing

<sup>1</sup> The Decision No. 68/QĐ-TTg dated January 15, 2018 of the Prime Minister.

<sup>2</sup> The Decision No. 950/QĐ-TTg dated August 1, 2018 of the Prime Minister.

<sup>3</sup> During the year of 2018, Dong Thap province adjusted 11 planning; An Giang province reviewed modified and supplemented spatial planning for urban development and rural population; Soc Trang worked on capital planning for economy - society development in period 2021-2030 under the Planning Law, reviewing the planning of land use, water resources, mineral ...). An Giang, Can Tho, Hau Giang and Kien Giang completed the construction of the content "Strategic vision for sustainable development of Long Xuyen quadrangle sub-region" to implement the association under the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP.



**Export turnover of key agricultural products (rice, catfish, shrimp, fruit) of the Mekong Delta compared to other regions**

fisheries, fruit production and reducing producing rice; step by step forming large-scale concentrated production areas, specializing in key agricultural products (shrimp, catfish, rice and fruits) in association with processing and consumption technologies according to the agricultural value chain. Thus, in 2018, shrimp production reached 0.623 million tons, accounting for 70% of the national production; catfish production is 1.41 million tons, or 95% of total national production; fruit production is 4.3 million tons, equivalent to 60%, rice production is 24.5 million tons, accounting for 56% of the national output.

- Export turnover of major agricultural products (rice, catfish, shrimp, and fruit) reached 8.43 billion USD, accounting for 73.34% of the export turnover of these key agricultural products of the country. Some high-value agricultural products for export such as dragon fruit, a key export product with a turnover of 1.1 billion USD in 2018; mangos (Hoa Loc and Cat Chu) are exported to Japan and South Korea markets; dragon fruit, longan, star apple and rambutan have been exported to the

US market with an annual increase in output. There are many concentratedly-established vegetable and fruit production areas in accordance with good agricultural practice standards, achieving a yield of 17 tons/ha and an output of 4,400 tons/year. Rural appearance has been changed with many innovations. By the end of June in 2019, there have been 528 communes in the whole region meeting new rural standards (reached 41.06%), averaging 15.43 criteria/commune (the national average is 15.26 criteria/commune).

- The plan to restructure the industry starts to be effectively implemented in the right direction, focusing on the development of green industry, less emission, enhancing the value of agricultural products by improving processing industry. As a result, the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) of the region has been continuously higher compared to the average IIP of the nation (those numbers are 8.41 %, 11.12% and 11.3% respectively in the years 2016, 2017 and 2018, the figure of the whole country respectively are 7.4%, 9.5% and 10.2%). Seafood processing industry still contributes a high proportion and the products with highest growth rate are mainly fish fillets, frozen shrimp and frozen squid<sup>1</sup>. Rice processing contributes more than 50% of rice production and 90% of rice export volume of the whole



**The IIP of the Mekong Delta region compared to the national average**

country, reaching export turnover in 2018 of 3.06 billion USD with 6.1 million tons.

- Focus has also been shifted toward exploiting the potential of renewable energy, primarily wind power and solar energy such as the commission of wind power plants Bac Lieu 1 and 2, initial construction of wind power plants: Bac Lieu 3, Khai Long - Ca Mau, Han Quoc - Tra Vinh, Binh Dai - Ben Tre... Wind power and renewable energy projects in the delta are encountering many opportunities for development as the industry is growing rapidly and the investment costs keep decreasing.

- Many local authorities have actively implemented economic models compatible with nature, using high-tech applications, adapting to climate change such as sustainable shrimp farming model; created and developed potential and advantageous seedlings, animals and aquatic species in the region; improved seed quality; carried out models of "Climate change adaptation livelihood" and "Clean water and environment" in Soc Trang province, or model of energy saving and efficiency office buildings; allocated investment in solar power system in Vinh Long province ...

<sup>1</sup> The whole region currently has 300 seafood processing establishments, accounting for nearly 50% of the country's establishments with a total processing capacity of about 1.4 million tons of products per year; annual export turnover reached more than 5 billion USD, accounting for more than 50% of the country's capacity and 60% of the country's export turnover.

- The task of preserving, renovating and developing cultural works and revolutionary historical relics has been focused, preserving and promoting cultural heritage such as don ca tai tu, or Khmer culture with 7 heritages being recognized as national heritage. In 2018, the Mekong Delta region welcomed more than 40 million visitors, including around 3.5 million international visitors. Some handicraft villages in the region are expected to become tourist attractions such as Cham Village of Chau Giang (An Giang), rice cake roll villages (Son Doc, Ben Tre), Sa Dec flower village (Dong Thap)...

### 5. The task of preventing and remedying subsidence, river bank and coastline erosion has been interested

- According to statistics, in the Mekong Delta, there are currently 564 landslides with a total length of over 834 km, of which 57 points landslides are highly dangerous (landslide causes direct danger to densely populated areas and important infrastructure) with a total length of 170 km (river bank has 39 areas with a total length of 85 km, and the coast line has 18 areas with a total length of 85 km).



- The National Target Program to Respond to Climate Change and Support Program to Respond to Climate Change have supported 28 projects (8 projects related to construction of sea dykes, river dykes in critical areas, 20 projects related to planting and restoration of coastal mangrove forests). The Target Program to Respond to Climate Change and Green Growth has supported 20 projects with a budget of VND 3,700 billion, which has been allocated in medium-term capital by the Prime Minister.

- Solutions for urgent river bank and coastal erosion have been implemented, guiding the implementation of technical solutions for key subsidence and landslides; other activities include setting up sea warnings, building a map of landslide in the Mekong Delta, allocating budget for construction of landslide prevention projects, and prioritizing 36 urgent projects with a total budget of VND 2,500 billion.

**6. Infrastructure receives more investment in developing and strengthening inter-regional connectivity, taking advantages of waterway transportation**

- For key traffic projects and works: in the 2016-2020 period, the total investment capital for transport infrastructure in the Mekong Delta is VND 65,056 billion, accounting for 15.15 % of the total investment capital of the whole country. Key constructions and projects include: the section Nam Can - Dat Mui in Ho Chi Minh Highway, Long Binh Bridge, large navigation channel to Hau River, Mekong Delta connection project, Lo Te - Rach Soi Route, expansion of Tan An bypass, Highway 91 section of Can Tho - An Giang, Cai Lay bypass,

Soc Trang bypass, expansion of Bac Lieu gateway, expansion of Highway 60 from Rach Mieu Bridge to Co Chien Bridge...

In which, since the issuance of the Resolution No.120, the National Assembly and the Government have agreed to allocate VND 10,607 billion to implement projects: My Thuan 2 Bridge on the North-South Expressway to the East, Long Xuyen City bypass route, Highway 57 section of Ben Tre - Vinh Long, Highway 53 section of Tra Vinh - Long Toan, Highway 30 section of Cao Lanh - Hong Ngu, upgrading the road surface of Quan Lo - Phung Hiep and Ke Cho Gao phase 2, with supporting state budget to invest in the construction of Trung Luong-My Thuan and My Thuan - Can Tho expressway under BOT...

- For irrigation works and projects, the Government has invested in developing many projects such as: Ben Tre Water Management Project; Northern Ben Tre Irrigation System Project Phase 1; Cai Lon - Cai Be irrigation system project - Phase 1; Irrigation system projects of Sub-region II, III and V of Ca Mau; Ninh Quoi Boat Culvert Project; Tha La project, Tra Su sewer; infrastructure projects for fisheries, fishing ports and anchorage area in Mekong Delta... Initially, climate change adaptation in agriculture is conducted through establishment of anti-salinity dykes, control of surges and high waves, to gradually increase the ability to cope with rising sea level resulted from storm and floods, enabling high effectiveness in salinity control.

- Local agencies in the region have also implemented infrastructure investment projects such as upgrading sea dykes in combination with construction of anti-salinity systems from My Thanh

2 Bridge to Bac Lieu, Soc Trang province (with a total cost of VND 263,564 million); developed a system of anti-salinity sluice gates and irrigation canals to create areas for storing freshwater in essential areas of Soc Trang province (with a total expense of VND 152,865 million). Vinh Long has invested over VND 2,000 billion to develop more than 1,300 irrigation infrastructure projects...

- Development of additional residential clusters and routes, embankments in the existing flooded areas are invested by the Government to ensure the safety of people living in flooded areas<sup>1</sup>.

- There are 20 standards and technical guidelines on the use of ash, slag and gypsum as raw materials for production of construction materials and use in construction works issued, contributing to limit the exploitation of sand from

riverbed for leveling, ensuring resource conservation and environmental protection.

- The protection of the rural environment in Mekong Delta has major breakthrough, creating the hallmark with widespread effects, especially in waste treatment and renovation of residential landscape. The project on safe water supply in Mekong Delta has been carried out in order to develop a water supply system at full capacity, ensuring quality and meeting the needs of water demand for the southwest provinces of the Hau River in 2025 and 2030, ensuring the security of water supply and social security. Solid waste management has been strengthened and investment projects are being developed on construction of solid waste treatment facilities, wastewater collection and treatment systems are also being invested in. All 13 local agencies in the region have invested in provincial

<sup>1)</sup> 4 provinces: An Giang, Dong Thap, Vinh Long and Hau Giang are implementing procedures to invest in building 49 additional residential clusters to relocate about 13,000 households, with a budget of 3,000 billion VND from the local budget; Tien Giang has implemented to build 10 additional banks of residential areas with a total length of 56.5 km, estimated budget of VND 87.8 billion.



general hospitals with modern and synchronous equipment.

**7. Investment of state resources and implementation of incentive mechanism to attract private capital has been receiving attention in order to create momentum for the sustainable development of the Mekong Delta**

- Investment through local provinces: total investment capital in medium-term public investment plan in the period of 2016-2020 for the Mekong Delta region (not including 10% contingency) is VND 193,967.151 billion, accounting for 16.53%<sup>1</sup> of national total, includes:

+ National budget aims to reach VND 79,905.9 billion which consists of: (i) capital for investment support VND 42,321.62 billion; (ii) capital from government bonds in about VND 20,673.097 billion; (iii) foreign capital VND 16,911.182 billion.

+ The local counterpart budget is VND 114,061,251 billion.

- Medium-term investment through ministries and sectors: medium-term investment for the period 2016-2020 in the Mekong Delta in some specific sectors as follow:

+ In the agricultural sector: the total investment is VND 28,200 billion.

+ In the transport sector: the total investment is VND 32,961 billion.

+ In the health sector: the total investment is VND 947.5 billion.

- In order to address urgent landslide dangers, additional funding of VND 1,500 billion was secured from the Central

Budget reserve in 2018, and it is necessary to continue to allocate VND 1,000 billion from the 2016-2020 medium-term reserve.

- Under the framework of the Target Program for Climate Change and Green Growth in the period of 2016-2020, the Prime Minister has allocated VND 3,700 billion from the central budget to 20 climate change projects in the Mekong Delta.

- Tax and fee incentives: the system of taxes, fees and charges currently includes some of the highest preferential rates to encourage investment and development of the agricultural sector such as exemption of corporate income tax for income from farming, animal husbandry, agricultural products processing from cooperatives; exemption of personal income tax for individuals directly engaged in agricultural, forestry and salt production...; exemption of agricultural land use tax; exemption of registration fee for land allocated by the State for agricultural production purposes; exemption of irrigation fees ...

- State preferential credit capital: there have been many preferential credit policies as credit and subsidizing interest for building and upgrading ships; credit for local socio-economic infrastructure development projects from the local Development Investment Fund (by the end of December 31, 2018, debt of 10 local Development Investment Funds in Mekong Delta region reached over VND 1,800 billion).

**8. Scientific and technological research is enhanced, providing scientific arguments, initiatives, solutions and technologies for sustainable development of the Mekong Delta**

<sup>1</sup> Compared with the period 2011-2015, the capital expenditure for the development of MKD change markedly, with capital expenditure for the period 2011-2015 for the whole MKD accounted for only 12.2% of the whole country.

- The Government has conducted synthesis, review and evaluation of outstanding research results of national Science and Technology programs<sup>1</sup> through the stages in order to: (i) transfer research results and interdisciplinary databases to promptly respond to climate change; (ii) provide scientific arguments for the implementation of solutions for sustainable and climate resilient development in Mekong Delta. The main outstanding results include: updating climate change scenarios and sea level rise; assessing the level of vulnerability caused by climate change to industries and sectors, especially water, land, fisheries and agricultural resources for industry and sector planning; creating seedlings, improving soil to adapt to climate change, sea level rise and saltwater intrusion; developing models of using renewable energy for domestic water supply in areas where water is scarce; disaster prevention, subsidence, river bank and coastal erosion; studying water resources situation, water quality and proposing appropriate exploitation solutions to transform production structure.

- Integration of science and technology tasks under the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP on research topics in the coming period of the National Science and Technology Program, includes: (i) monitoring surface water resources and warning drought in the Mekong Delta; (ii) assessing the causes of river bank erosion in some key areas and proposing some orientations on construction and non-construction solutions for preventing river bank erosion in the Mekong Delta; (iii) testing and

proposing solutions and technologies to prevent and mitigate impacts of natural disasters (droughts, saltwater intrusion, flooding, landslides, subsidence and river bank erosion); (iv) identifying impacts of climate change and changes of normal climatic phenomena for the assessment of climate change situation in Vietnam; (v) developing a climate change monitoring system and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with Viet Nam...

- Local agencies in the region have been actively carrying out science and technology activities such as Tien Giang province who conducts the study on production of genetically modified, bio products, proposing a model of changing seasonal production method in agriculture on rice-based land; Can Tho City who conducts research on and transfer of urban agricultural production models and high-tech agriculture...

**9. Training and improvement of the quality of human resources have been focused; communication activities in raising awareness are improved**

- Reviewing and reorganizing the vocational education network; changing professions, creating jobs for agricultural workers and rural areas in the Mekong Delta in the direction of specialization and professionalization, gradually moving agricultural labor into the service industry.

- Developing and carrying out the Propaganda Program for implementing the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP; actively using media to promote activities on sustainable and climate resilient development in the Mekong Delta. From 2017 to now, the

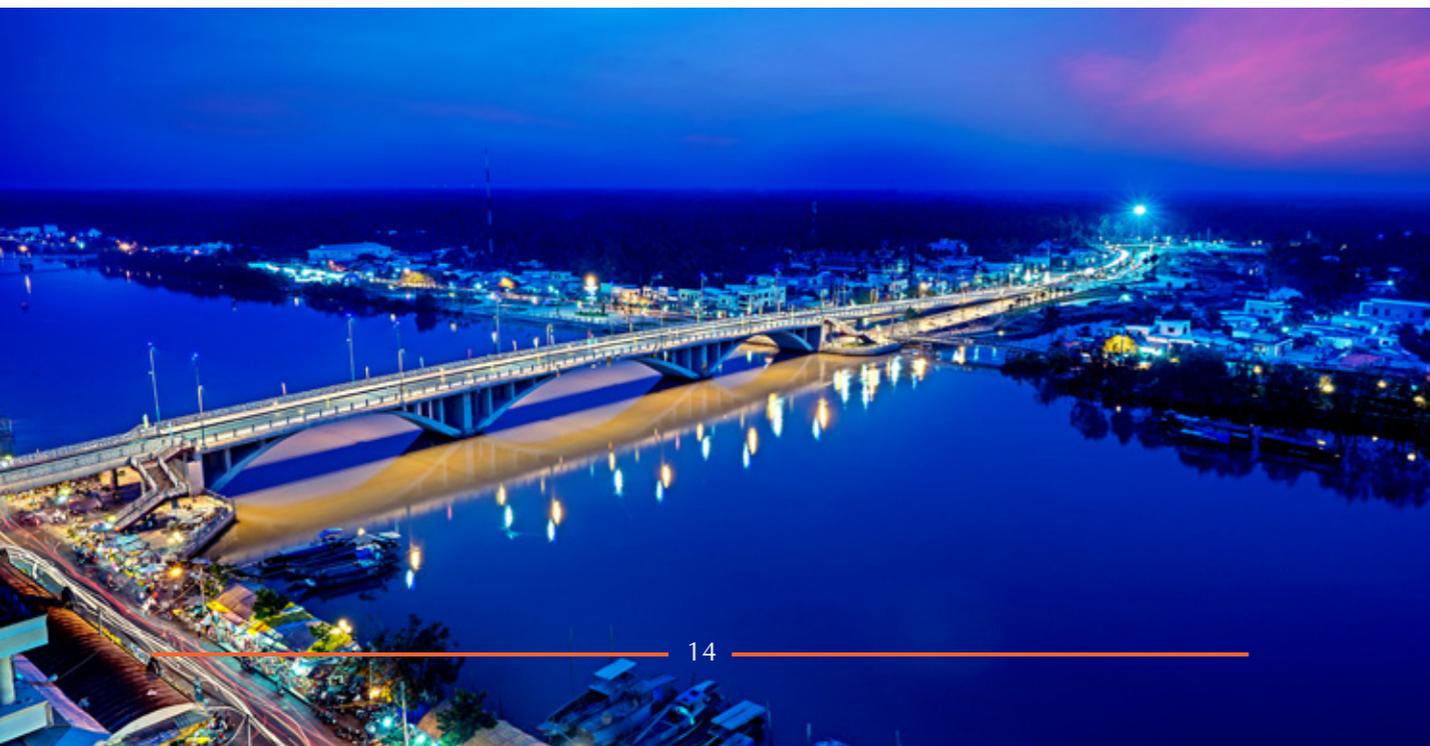
<sup>1</sup> Including Science and Technology Program to prevent natural disasters and environmental protection and science and technology program for marine and island management and marine economic development; Science and Technology Program serving the National Target Program to respond to climate change ( 12 national research projects on sustainable development solutions for the Mekong Delta ); Science and Technology Program for sustainable socio-economic development in the Southwest region ( 60 research projects on the Mekong Delta).

news agencies have published more than 150,000 news, articles, images on the topic of sustainable and climate resilient development in the Mekong Delta. In 2018, Ministry of Information and Communication organized and broadcasted 08 television programs (30 minutes/program) on the national television coverage channel, 25 radio programs (10 minutes/program) on the Voice of Vietnam. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has been making documentaries, articles, and disseminated materials to raise community awareness of mangrove forest development and protection in Mekong Delta provinces, and the Ministry of Industry and Trade has organized the training programs, workshops and seminars on market information, enhancing business capacity, promoting investment to enhance the value chain of processing agricultural and agricultural products ...).

#### 10. International cooperation is mobilized to attract resources, knowledge and technology for the Mekong Delta

- Viet Nam has actively participated in the framework of development cooperation

with Mekong sub-region countries and development partners. Calling on for the cooperation of countries in the region in exploiting and using resources sustainably and fairly, including water resources, on a basis of the harmony of interests with the goal of sustainable development. Broadening and strengthening strategic partnerships to cope with climate change (including cooperation mechanisms with important partners such as the Vietnam-Netherlands Intergovernmental Committee on climate change adaptation and water management, World Bank, GIZ, JICA...). Proposing the establishment of a new framework of cooperation with countries, organizations and international partners; maximizing the external resources, including investment capital, science and technology to support the Mekong Delta sustainable development plan. Thereby, sharing experience on changing the model of livelihoods, sustainable agricultural production, adjusting the planning on irrigation, urban infrastructure development in the Mekong Delta, and developing transport infrastructure to adapt to climate change.



- Evaluation and proposals of solution to effectively implement the 1995 Mekong Agreement was completed, strengthening cooperation with countries in the Mekong region for sustainable and climate resilient development in the Mekong Delta, implementing the Master Plan on the impact of hydropower development on the mainstream of the Mekong River to the Mekong Delta.

In general, in the past two years, the implementation of tasks and solutions for sustainable development of the Mekong Delta has achieved some important results: a number of mechanisms and policies have been reviewed and supplemented; the master plan for sustainable development in the Mekong Delta is being developed urgently. Mekong Delta's GDP growth in 2018 reached an impressive rate of 7.8%, the highest one in the last 4 years (GDP growth of the whole country is 7.08%). Regional export turnover has reached USD 15.7 billion for the first time. The economic restructuring has achieved positive results, especially in agriculture. Social welfare has been receiving attention, employment has been improving and people's livelihoods are gradually transforming towards sustainability. Infrastructure is identified as the top priority for investment to develop and strengthen inter-regional connectivity, especially roads, waterways and over-flooded residential routes.

The above achievements are due to the fact that the sustainable and climate resilient development of the Mekong Delta has received considerable attention from the Party, the National Assembly and the Government, attracting the attention of the international community. Immediately after the successful Conference on Sustainable Development of the Mekong Delta in 2017, the Government and the

Prime Minister closely directed and issued the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP and the overall action plan for implementation of the Resolution. Practical implementation shows that Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP is very relevant to the scenario and development trend of the Mekong Delta against the great challenges of climate change; inherited and integrated the results of science and technology programs and projects that have been implemented in recent years. The active participation of ministries, sectors and local agencies with high political determination, the support and consensus of the people, the enthusiastic and active participation of domestic and foreign experts on the basis of innovation and indigenous knowledge and the ascension of the people to transform challenges into new development opportunities. The strong participation of the business community contributes to promoting economic restructuring, improving the value chain and creating a momentum for capital for the Mekong Delta's development. It is also thanked to the effective support of international organizations and development partners on technical assistances and resources through Mekong Delta development programs and projects.

## II. LIMITATIONS, CAUSES AND CHALLENGES

### 1. Limitations

- Regional coordination and linking institutions have not been studied and implemented. There has been no mechanism for local agencies to select inter-regional issues in order to propose large projects with spreading effect, creating impetus for socio-economic development such as in infrastructure and transportation.

- The development thinking in accordance with nature, toward 3 eco-economic regions, remains slow to be put into practice, while the investment in infrastructure and planning in overall is still lacking.

- Mechanism for attracting investment resources from the private and social sectors has not been established yet. There are no breakthrough solutions in investment in the Mekong Delta: focusing resources from the state budget, ODA capital for programs and projects to create motivation for implementing large-scale transformation.

- Infrastructure projects still lack synchronous and multi-purpose connectivity, unable to connect with Ho Chi Minh City to break the isolation and create market-driven momentum for agricultural products which are regional strengths such as rice, fruit, and aquatic products.

- The application of science to create a synchronized agricultural economy in term of market, high technology, in order to improve the quality, value and competitiveness of goods is still lacking.

- The region's strengths in agriculture, tourism, and marine have not been clarified in order to have effective solutions to promote agricultural, marine, tourism and processing industries.

- It is still difficult to transform resources to meet the economic restructuring and large-scale transformation for the whole region.

## 2. Causes

- As the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP is a breakthrough innovating the thinking, ministries, sectors and local agencies still lack adequate capabilities to propose and prepare large projects with appropriate technology on climate change adaptation and large-scale transformation.

- The Resolution was issued after the approval of medium-term public investment plan by the National Assembly, so the proposed addition of resources for new projects still faces some difficulties.

- The results of basic surveys and developing database have not provided sufficient scientific bases for policy-making processes, planning formulation and proposals of programs and projects.

## 3. Challenges

- It is forecasted that in the upcoming time, climate change and natural disaster will happen more rapidly. The long-term impacts have been predicted and identified, but the short-term effects are unpredictable and difficult to estimate due to their irregular and extreme nature.

- Challenges from water exploitation and consumption in the upstream, especially hydropower projects on the Mekong mainstream, are becoming more and more complex. It is forecasted that shortage of sand, sediment, and water will continue to persist, negatively impacting the development of the Mekong Delta.

- The implementation of the Resolution is at the initial stages and thus, in order to achieve the targeted goals and strategic vision, it is required to conduct a large volume of tasks and solutions.

## III. SOME MOMENTUM PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEKONG DELTA

### 1. On agriculture

Restructuring agriculture towards innovating growth models; developing new rural areas; increasing added value, efficiency and competitiveness; adapting to climate change.

Sustainable agricultural development in 3 regions based on changes in water resources, land adaptation and market demand in upper, middle and coastal areas.

Upper area: developing diverse agriculture taking into account the adaptation to extreme scenarios, key areas of pangasius, rice production, and flood control and regulation for the Mekong Delta.

Middle area: developing concentrated rice and garden agriculture, forming a fruit center of the whole country combining freshwater aquaculture, industrial crops and vegetables. At the same time, the middle region should be developed with the role as water regulator for the coastal area.

Coastal area: developing agriculture based on saline and brackish water, promoting the advantages of fisheries combined with the production of specialty rice, plants that use less water and are salinity resistant; developing forest systems to utilize organic ecological agroforestry in combination with tourism.

### 2. On industry and commerce

Exploiting the advantages, pervasiveness and the transformation of development of Ho Chi Minh City to strongly develop industry to create a driving force for regional development; forming industrial parks and clusters specialized in key areas and advantages of localities in the region; focusing on developing processing and auxiliary industries to enhance the value of agricultural products; promoting the development of clean and renewable energy. Taking advantage of the connection between Ho Chi Minh City and Cambodia to promote the development of trade and services.

### 3. On construction

Developing the urban system of the

Mekong Delta under a multi-center model suitable to changes of natural ecology and climate change, moving towards sustainable development. Adjusting the urban network of strata in the direction of forming an ecological urban center, organizing a network of 37 key urban centers with 14 cities distributed in the region in plain area, 18 urban centers in the coastal sub-region and 5 urban areas in deep flooded areas, of which Can Tho city serves as a service, trade, health, education, training and processing industry center.

Regarding urban and rural areas concentrating resources on building new rural areas in the direction of combining old space with new urban centers in rural population areas in association with the characteristics of each sub-region. Reviewing, moving, and arranging residential areas and riverside areas at risk of landslides to ensure safety for people in flooded areas. Continuing to invest in additional clusters of over-flooded residential routes. Planning for development of regional and inter-regional solid waste treatment zones.

### 4. On transportation

Gradually completing the road traffic system in the region as well as connecting with Ho Chi Minh City to meet the transport demand in order to serve the socio-economic development, ensuring regional defense and security in the region. Focusing on completing the North-South East expressway from Ho Chi Minh City to Can Tho City, the North-South expressway from Chon Thanh to Rach Gia, completing the roads and building Rach Mieu 2 and Dai Ngai, the eastern longitudinal axis connecting Ho Chi Minh City through coastal provinces to Ca Mau province; step



Map of space development orientation in the Mekong Delta

by step upgrading key national highways in the region...; In addition, seeking capital to invest in vertical routes of Chau Doc - Can Tho - Soc Trang and Ha Tien - Rach Gia - Bac Lieu...

Researching to establish a gateway seaport for vessels of up to 100,000 tons and over 100,000 tons, serving the import and export direct wood in the Mekong Delta region; removing bottlenecks in inland waterways and maritime transport to promote the advantages of the region, strengthening connections between road and waterway transport modes connected to inland waterway ports, seaports and airports, focusing on completing a number of key projects such as upgrading Cho Gao Canal - Phase 2, project of large-capacity vessels to Hau river entrance in the completion phase, investment in the Project developing waterway corridors

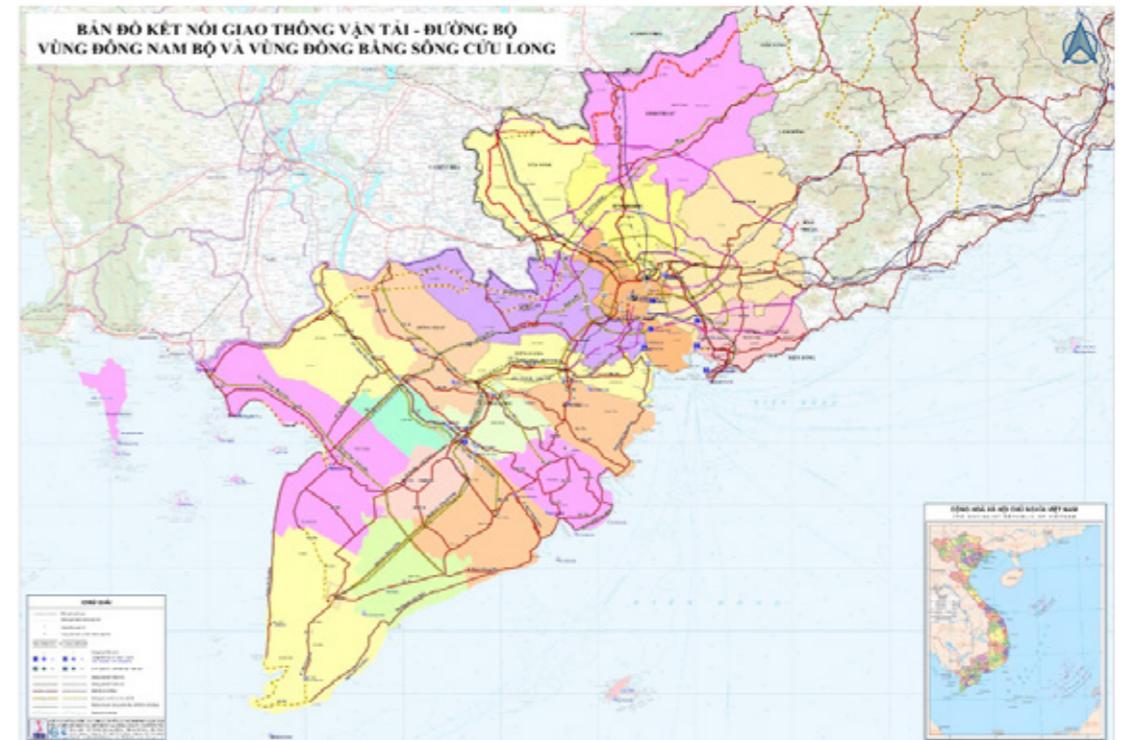
and logical services in the Southern region with loans from the World Bank...

Researching to increase the capacity of Phu Quoc International Airport to meet the increasing passenger's demand and having solutions to effectively exploit the existing airports in the region, reduce the load for Tan Son Nhat Airport.

#### 5. On marine economy and tourism

- Focusing on developing Phu Quoc into a strong international service and ecotourism center; promoting the development of gas industry, gas processing, renewable energy, aquaculture, fishing, logistics, fishery infrastructure industries; connecting with major economic centers in the region and the world.

- Attracting investment to develop tourist areas associated with protecting natural ecosystems including Phu Quoc - Nam Can



Map of transport connections in the Southeast and the Mekong Delta

- Mui Ca Mau, Tram Chim - Lang Sen - Sam mountain - The Son, Cu Lao Ho - Ninh Kieu - Ha Tien - Van Thanh Mieu. Investing in synchronous construction of material and technical infrastructure to ensure linkage between regions.

#### IV. RECOMMENDATION TO PROMOTE THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION NO.120/NQ-CP IN THE UPCOMING TIME

In order to promote the implementation of the Resolution, the urgent issue is to study and formulate suitable institutions for the Mekong Delta (such as the Delta Commissioner as in the Netherlands) with clear functions and tasks that have sufficient authority to represent the Mekong Delta, to select scientific and international consultants to determine the development priority, propose specific

policy mechanisms, identify priority targets, as well as to develop of investment projects for inter-regional beneficial works; to identify sources of capital to implement programs and projects that enable the transformation and solutions for transport and irrigation infrastructure for the Mekong Delta. It is necessary to identify multi-objective infrastructure development as a prerequisite for transformation in the direction of having three eco-economic regions.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment would like to propose the Prime Minister to consider and direct the ministries, sectors and local agencies to concentrate on prioritizing the implementation of a number of the following oriented tasks:

1. It is necessary to develop and implement large-scale projects; to develop

multi-purpose transport and irrigation infrastructure adapting to climate change to create large-scale transformation. To review and develop criteria for identifying and investing in large-scale, inter-regional projects and constructions to respond to climate change that create a positive impact on socio-economic development; to prioritize important and urgent projects in the period of 2021-2025 and until 2030. To accelerate the implementation of signed ODA programs, projects and large-scale domestic capital projects to promote efficiency in livelihood transformation. To supplement functions, increase charter capital for Vietnam Environmental Protection Fund to implement the Mekong Delta Development Assistance Fund.

2. It is necessary to have a master plan on land, water resources and marine spaces in accordance to 03 ecological economic zones. To accelerate the process of developing and approving the Master Plan for sustainable development of the Mekong Delta in the period of 2021-2030 with a vision to 2050 to adapt to climate change by applying the multidisciplinary integration method, to direct ministries, sectors and local agencies to review and adjust their socio-economic development planning, sector planning as well as to create incentive mechanisms to attract investment and to enhance inter-regional connectivity. To implement the Environmental Protection Planning for the Mekong Delta in the period of 2021-2030.

3. To promote economic restructuring, improve the value of agricultural products and have a mechanism to attract enterprises to invest in high technology in fisheries, marine farming and development of agricultural eco-tourism marine ecology. To continue to

restructure the industry in the direction of forming green, sustainable and high-tech economy. To develop renewable energy, protect environment with appropriate urban and rural waste treatment technologies. To ensure energy safety through development and efficient use of solar and wind energy in accordance with the requirements of economical and efficient use of land resources.

4. To urgently review, supplement and finalize the system of mechanisms and policies assigned in the Resolution and the Overall Action Plan, especially the mechanism of mobilizing resources from the private sector; to promote the implementation of public-private partnerships. To mobilize capital sources to create land reserves for state-invested infrastructure projects to free resources for infrastructure development. To exploit financial resources from state assets through rearrangement of state-owned buildings and land from infrastructure assets; to proactively create land reserves, encourage investment in momentum projects such as in tourism and industry; to plan areas for rice cultivation that can be converted flexibly so that farmers can take initiative in transforming crop structures according to the natural conditions of each year.

5. To promote surveying, evaluation, development and overall implementation of water storage solutions based on natural conditions of each region; to prevent river bank erosion, sea encroachment and land subsidence in the Mekong Delta. In the immediate future, to strengthen measures to cope with land subsidence and river and coastal erosion in order to concentrate resources and investment on focal and key points to synchronously implement inter-sectoral and inter-

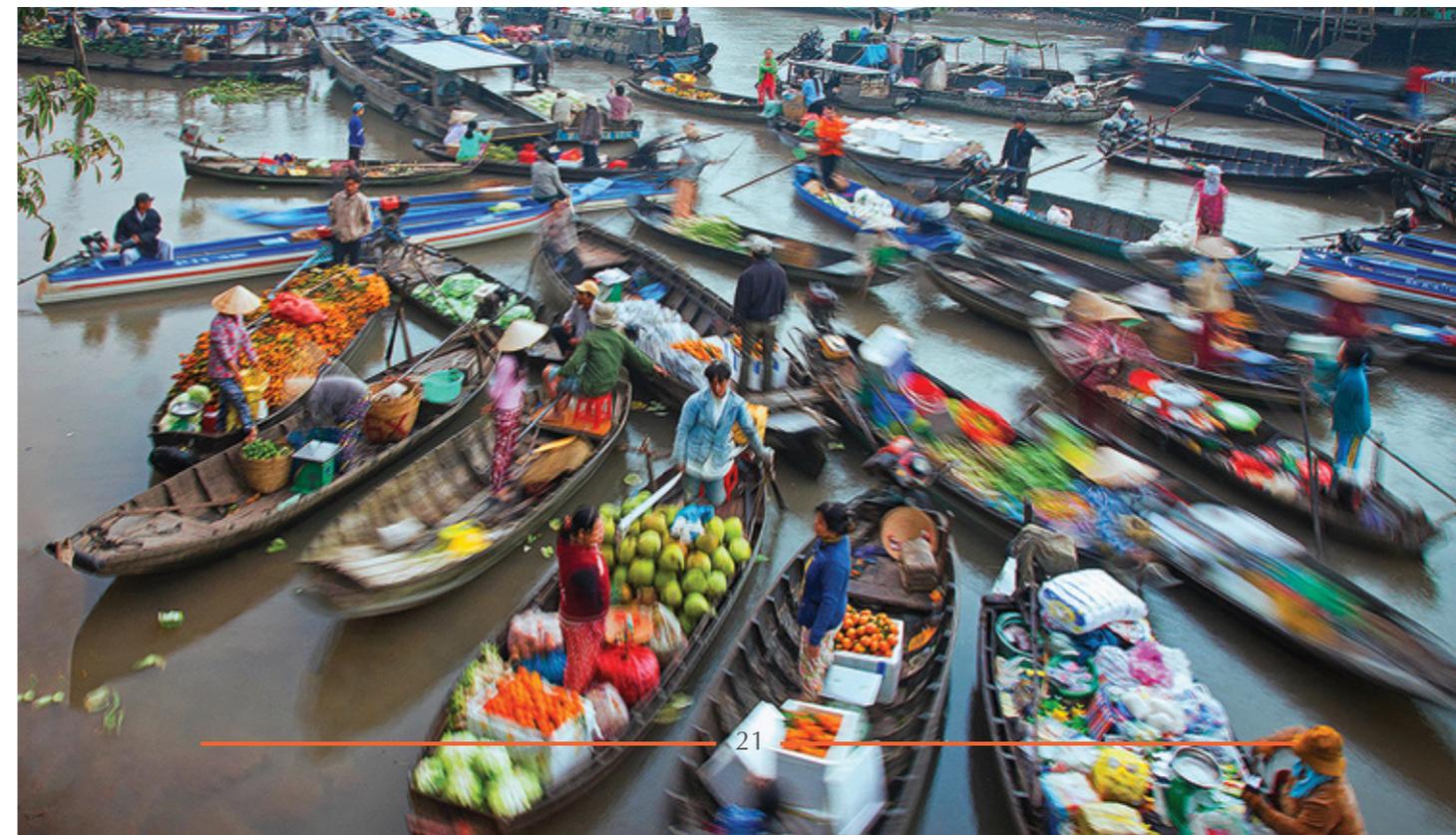
regional solutions. To quickly complete the interdisciplinary database for policy making, strategy development, planning, plan and investment decisions. To promptly complete the Data Integration Center in the Mekong Delta.

6. To promote scientific research and 4.0 technology application; to promote the formation of high technology development, receipt and transference centers associated with regional strengths. To develop science and technology programs to conduct a comprehensive assessment of impacts of climate change to propose long-term adaptation measures in the Mekong Delta. To promote vocational training, develop human resources linked to labor export market, innovate raising awareness and capacity building activities for local agencies.

7. To strengthen international cooperation, setting up new cooperation frameworks in the field of climate change and water resources in order to promote the

support and investment of development partners for sustainable development of the Mekong Delta; to promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation and coordination, especially among upstream countries to respond to climate change and for water management.

On this occasion, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment - the focal agency implementing the Resolution No.120/NQ-CP, would like to express our gratitude to development partners and international donors for their active coordination and participation. In the upcoming period, we would like the development partners and international donors to continue to join hands with the Government, ministries and local agencies in the Mekong Delta through consulting, experience, knowledge, technology, governance and resources to develop and implement tasks and solutions for sustainable and climate resilient development in Mekong Delta./.





**MR. NGUYỄN CHÍ DŨNG**

*Member of Central Committee of the Party  
Minister of Planning and Investment*

## REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTION NO.120/NQ-CP BY MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND INVESTMENT

### I. ACHIEVEMENTS

#### 1. On outlining a comprehensive plan for sustainable development in the Mekong Delta

In order to implement the assigned tasks in the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP, the Ministry of Planning and Investment is currently organizing the plan for the Mekong Delta region for the period of 2021-2030, with a vision to 2050, following the multi-sectoral integration method in accordance to in the Planning Law. The new Mekong Delta region planning will create a comprehensive strategic framework for the Mekong Delta region, which works as a basis for implementing investment programs and projects to synchronously develop technical and social infrastructure systems, manufacturing infrastructures as well as effective exploitation and use of resources on the basis of bringing into play the potentials and advantages of the Mekong

Delta in the context of climate change, saline intrusion to promote fast and sustainable socio-economic development.

Since then, the Ministry of Planning and Investment has implemented some of the following main activities:

Firstly, completing recruitment process to select an experienced international consultant<sup>1</sup> to organize regional planning.

Secondly, conducting surveys in a number of regional local areas to review and assess the implementation of the planning and identify inter-sectoral and inter-provincial issues that the regional plan needs to address; urgently studying and developing the Mekong Delta regional planning, which is expected to be appraised in September 2019.

Thirdly, instructing and closely coordinating with the regional provinces and cities in the process of organizing provincial planning for the period

of 2021-2020 to ensure the linkage between regional planning and provincial planning according to the regulations of the Planning Law.

Forthly, developing a national information system and database on pilot planning for the Mekong Delta to be timely used in regional, provincial and municipal planning in the region. In the intermediate term, the Ministry of Planning and Investment is cooperating with the World Bank to digitize the approved planning database in the region so that the ministries, sectors and local agencies can fully and timely access to the data on planning to conduct planning for the period 2021-2030.

Fifthly, organizing seminars with relevant agencies and organizations in the region to determine the regional development direction.

The planning content will focus on a number of strategic orientations based on the following preliminary research results:

*a) Developing agriculture with following two objectives*

- Adapting to climate change impacts, and using land and water resources sustainably.

- Becoming a driving force for economic growth of the Mekong Delta, supporting industries and services in terms of sustainable growth based on agricultural business.

*b) Developing transport and logistics in accordance with specific conditions of the region*

- Upgrading the water transport network between the Mekong Delta and Ho Chi Minh City;

- Developing logistics centers

(which can be combined with satellite centers) to concentrate, collect goods, support multimodal transport and provide added services;

- Upgrading the group of inland water transport vehicles, increasing depth of waterways to enhance their competitiveness with road transport.

*c) Identifying sub-regions to create a driving force for the Mekong Delta as well as for sub-regions*

*d) Responding to climate change and water resources*

It is expected that the plan will be completed in the third quarter of 2020 as stipulated in the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP.

#### 2. On reviewing and evaluating regional coordination mechanism under the Decision No. 593/QĐ-TTg dated April 6, 2016 and developing solutions to finalize the coordination mechanism in the Mekong Delta

The Ministry of Planning and Investment has issued the Official Letter No. 3975/BKHĐT-KTĐPLT dated June 11, 2019 to report the Prime Minister on reviewing and evaluating the regional coordination mechanism under the Decision No. 593/QĐ-TTg dated April 6, 2019 of the Prime Minister. Specifically, the report focuses on assessing the achievements, limitations, challenges as well as proposing solutions to complete the regional coordination mechanism. At the same time, the Ministry of Planning and Investment proposed to establish a Regional Coordination Council to create a synergy and close chain linkage to enhance the value and competitiveness of the region's commodities, agricultural and fishery products, with the following basic contents:

<sup>1)</sup>Haskaming DHV Nederland partnership B.V & Germany GIZ organization

*a) Organizational structure*

Chairman of the Regional Coordination Council of the Mekong River Delta is a Deputy Prime Minister; 2 Vice Chairmen of the Council include: Minister of Planning and Investment and 1 Chairman of People's Committee of provinces/cities in the Mekong Delta (through voting).

*b) Members of the Council*

13 Chairmen of provincial/municipal People's Committees; Leaders of Ministries of: Planning and Investment, Natural Resources and Environment, Agriculture and Rural Development, Transport, Finance, Industry and Trade, Construction, Health, Education and Training, Government Office.

The assisting agency of the Council includes offices, advisory groups and working groups, which are established according to tasks and self-dissolved after tasks completion.

*c) Functions, tasks and authorities*

- Coordinating with local agencies to implement the Mekong Delta Region Planning for the period of 2021-2030, vision to 2050; supervise the implementation of the planning in accordance with the Planning Law.

- Approving the annual regional linkage coordination plan, consolidate the local agency linkage plan, develop contents, scale and method of the plan implementation.

- Approving the portfolio of regional linkage programs and projects, monitor and inspect their implementation.

- Monitoring, urging, inspecting and evaluating the implementation of the regional linkage, removing obstacles and solving problems arising from

regional coordination.

The Mekong Delta Regional Coordination Council has an advantage that it not at administrative level, so it does not put a financial burden on the state. The Government directly instructs the Ministries, sectors and local agencies to address regional issues for a better regional linkage, then there would be timely solutions and recommendations for regional issues. It will also serve as a communication channel and become a direct link between the Government and the local agencies in the region.

After obtaining the direction of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Planning and Investment will coordinate with the ministries and local agencies to develop and submit to the Prime Minister for approval the Decision on the establishment of the Mekong Delta Regional Coordinating Council and its regulations.

**3. On the policy formulation that encourages Mekong Delta's development with regional and inter-sectoral scale, to 2030 and beyond to promote agricultural production and consumption**

- The Ministry of Planning and Investment has submitted to the Government for promulgation Decree No. 57/2018/ND-CP dated April 17, 2018 on mechanisms and policies to encourage enterprises to invest in agriculture and rural areas. At the same time, the Ministry of Planning and Investment issued Circular No. 04/2018/TT-BKHĐT dated December 6, 2018 guiding the implementation of Decree No. 57/2018/ND-CP. Specifically, Decree No. 57/2018/ND-CP and Circular No. 04/2018/TT-BKHĐT include articles regulating incentives, encouraging investing enterprises to become the nucleus of the agricultural restructuring process towards

modernization, promoting high-tech applications, enhancing the added value and competitiveness of the agricultural sector, adapting to climate change, drastically reforming administrative procedures in state management related to enterprises, in order to reduce the cost of enterprises (both formal and healthy environmental costs are likely to generate informal costs) to promote the start-up wave in agriculture and rural areas and in the Mekong Delta.

- The Ministry of Planning and Investment issued the Document No. 3460/BKHDT-KTNN dated May 24, 2019 to report the Prime Minister on the implementation of the Decree No. 57/2018/ND-CP in order to implement the Directive No. 09/CT-TTg on solutions that focus on tackling issues in production and business, ensuring the achievement of 6-month growth target as well as of the

whole 2019 growth. In this report, the Ministry of Planning and Investment has proposed to the Prime Minister:

+ To direct ministries and local agencies to urgently issue documents to implement the Decree No. 57/2018/ND-CP. This should be completed by the third quarter of 2019 at the latest.

+ To propose to the Prime Minister to support, through central budget reserve in 2019, a number of local projects under the Decree No. 57/2018/ND-CP, including projects in Mekong Delta's provinces.

+ For projects that do not yet have capital support, to allow enterprises to extend their tax payment time for payable taxes of enterprises. The extended amount of tax is equivalent to the expected money supported by the State according to provisions of the Decree No. 57/2018/ND-CP. The extension is proposed to be 2 years.



#### 4. On developing a mechanism to mobilize resources, encourage the participation of enterprises and citizens in infrastructure development investment, and tourism development

##### a) Regarding resource allocation

##### - Regarding public investment capital

+ Public investment capital in the medium-term public investment plan 2016-2020:

(i) Local investment: The total investment in the medium-term public investment plan for the 2016-2020 period in the Mekong Delta region (excluding 10% for contingency) is VND 193,967,151 billion, accounting for 16.53% of the whole country (accounting for 40% of the region's total development investment expenditures), in which:

The Central Budget support is expected to be VND 79,905.9 billion, including: targeted investment support capital from Central Budget VND 42,321.62 billion; government bond capital VND 20,673,097 billion; foreign capital VND 16,911,182 billion.

The capital balance of the local budget is VND 114,061,251 billion.

##### (ii) Investment in some specific sectors:

In the agricultural sector: the allocation of investment plan capital for the period 2016-2020 reaches VND 28,200 billion (accounting for 29% of the total capital of the industry) through the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

In the transport sector: the allocation of investment plan capital for the period 2016-2020 reaches VND 32,961 billion through the Ministry of Transport.

In the health sector: the investment

reaches VND 947.5 billion and all local agencies in the area have had provincial general hospitals with modern and synchronous equipment.

+ Additional capital outside the medium-term public investment plan 2016-2020

(i) Arrangements have been made to deal with urgent landslide dangers from the Central budget reserve in 2018 amounting to VND 1,500 billion.

(ii) Ministry of Planning and Investment is in the process of reviewing and consolidating to report the Government on the capital balance and requiring the relevant authorities to give budget priority to urgent projects, which are the bottle neck in transportation and climate change areas from the midterm budget for the period 2016-2020.

(iii) In addition, the Ministry of Planning and Investment is continuing to work with developed partners and donors to propose new projects, which will be implemented in the period 2021-2025 in Mekong Delta region.

##### - Regarding FDI attraction

By May 20, 2019, in Mekong Delta provinces, there have been 1,589 valid FDI projects, with a total registered investment capital of USD 22.3 billion, accounting for 6.4% of the total registered investment capital of the whole country and ranked 4<sup>th</sup> out of 6 regions in the country (after the Southeast, Red River Delta, North Central and Central Coast). The average capital size per project is USD 14 million, while it is USD 12.3 million on average for the whole country.

Since the implementation of the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP, in 2018, foreign investment in the Mekong

Delta region reached USD 2.59 billion, accounting for 7.12% of the total investment of the country, about 95.2% of 2017 and 10.7% higher than 2016.

Particularly in the first 5 months of 2019, the Mekong Delta local agencies have attracted 68 new projects with a total new registered capital of USD 855.8 million, with 36 projects having their capitals adjusted with a total additional capital of USD 96.4 million. There have been 106 projects of capital contribution and share purchase with total capital contribution of nearly USD 83.4 million. In general, the Mekong Delta has attracted USD 1.04 billion in the first 5 months of 2019, accounting for 6.21% of the total registered investment capital of the whole country and 30.9% in the first 5 months of 2018.

##### - Regarding enterprise development

In 2 years from 2017 to 2018, Mekong Delta region had 18,265 newly established enterprises (accounting for 7% of the whole country) with a total registered capital of VND 184,666 billion (accounting for 6.6% of the whole country), increasing by 21% in terms of number of enterprises and by 72.3% in terms of registered capital compared to the previous 2 years.

In the first 5 months of 2019, the Mekong Delta region has 3,823 newly established enterprises (accounting for 7.1% of the whole country) with a registered capital of VND 39,565 billion (accounting for 5.9% of the whole country), increasing by 0.16% of in terms of number of enterprises and by 6.4% in terms of registered capital over the same period in 2018. Meanwhile, the country has 53,998 newly established enterprises with a registered capital of VND 669,722

billion, increasing by 3.2% in terms of number of enterprises and by 29.6% in terms of capital compared to the same period in 2018.

The Mekong Delta has shown great efforts in improving the business investment atmosphere and has achieved positive results, leading the country in terms of land access, time savings, informal cost reduction as well as dynamism. At the Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI) report in 2018, the Mekong Delta region had 03 spots in the top 5 provinces in the country, which were Dong Thap, Long An, Ben Tre.

Currently, the average time to process enterprise registration documents is 1.12 days, much lower compared to the stipulated time of 03-working-day in accordance with the Enterprise Law 2014.

##### b) Regarding the development of a mechanism to mobilize resources and encourage the participation of enterprises

The Ministry of Planning and Investment is cooperating with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to complete the draft mechanism and priority policies to encourage private investment in the Mekong Delta. The Ministry is expected to consult with ministries, sectors and local agencies in the upcoming time to complete the draft report, including some specific solutions:

- To appropriately apply financial policies and tax policies towards green growth and climate change response, with specific guidelines.

- To address land and ground clearance problems for projects, to adjust the Land Law towards promoting the accumulation

of land, ensuring long-term access to land and legal rights of investors. To increase the linkage between specialized areas and industrial clusters with major export ports and trade centers;

- To enable sustainable development, on the basis of active adaptation; to shift from pure manufacturing agriculture thinking to economic agriculture thinking, from quantity to quality associated with value chains, from chemical agriculture to organic and high technology agriculture. To focus on processing industry and supporting industry associated with agricultural economic development;

- To choose ecological based adaptation model, without extreme intervention into nature, sustainable development under the motto of actively living with floods, salinity, drought, lack of water, in accordance with actual conditions. To simplify administrative procedures and apply e-government tools; to designate raw material areas for agricultural, forestry and fishery production with large sample fields and production and consumption chains;

- To develop models of cooperatives, agricultural development enterprise with large sample fields, representing enterprises or enterprises' supporters in implementing manufacturing according to procedures of GAPs product synchronization and closed chains in order to achieve stable and high quality products;

- To strengthen the transfer of scientific and technological advances into manufacturing, to increase the rights for small businesses to improve enterprise development and at the same time to develop technological demonstration models at every province to help people and businesses get access to the latest technologies;

- To standardize technologies and manufacturing processes to gradually increase the technology background, technological socialization and especially technologies for selecting and creating breeds so that products' qualities can be improved as quickly as possible.

*c) Regarding the portfolio of regional linkage projects*

The Ministry of Planning and Investment has collaborated with GIZ in developing a set of criteria for identifying regional linkage projects and issued in the Decision No. 625/QĐ-BKHĐT dated May 5, 2017 and the Official Letter No. 4259/BKHĐT-KHĐTTLT dated June 22, 2018 guiding the usage of criteria for determining projects in the Mekong Delta region.

At the same time, the Ministry of Planning and Investment cooperated with ministries, sectors and local agencies to develop proposals for the Mekong Delta regional linkage programs and projects. Up to now, the Ministry of Planning and Investment has reported to Prime Minister the Document No. 3974/BKHĐT-KTĐPLT dated June 11, 2019 on the portfolio of regional linkage programs and projects, including 38 projects qualified to be regarded as regional linkage projects with a total investment capital demand of VND 89,798.99 billion, including VND 88,557.39 billion from Central Budget, VND 397.4 billion from local budget, VND 319.2 billion from enterprise budget and VND 525 billion from others. However, at present, the medium-term public investment plan for the period 2016-2020 has been issued to ministries, sectors and local agencies. The general reserve fund of the Central Budget in the period of 2016-2020 has been reported to the National

Assembly in Report No. 238/TTr-CP of the Government May 28, 2019, so there has been not enough capital source to allocate for these projects. Therefore, the Ministry of Planning and Investment proposed to the Prime Minister to coordinate with the ministries and sectors to continue to review regional linkage projects. Those satisfying the criteria will be submitted to the Prime Minister and will be included in the medium-term public investment plan for the period of 2021-2025 after being approved by the relevant authorities.

**5. Regarding the task of focusing on addressing obstacles, expediting the disbursement progress, and ensuring the efficient use of the medium-term public investment capital period of 2016-2020**

- Annually, the Ministry of Planning and Investment reviews the allocation and disbursement of public investment projects in the period of 2016-2020 in general, including in the Mekong Delta region.

- For the policy mechanism to promote disbursement of public investment projects, the Ministry of Planning and Investment advised the Government to issue the Resolution No. 70/NQ-CP on August 3, 2017 on main tasks and solutions expediting the progress of implementation and disbursement of public investment capital plan and the Official Letter No. 2348/VPCP-KTTH dated March 15, 2018 of the Government Office on a number of key tasks to accelerate the implementation and disbursement of public investment plan in 2018, including a full range of solutions and specific tasks assigned to relevant ministries, sectors and local agencies.

- In 2018 and 2019, the Ministry of Planning and Investment cooperated with ministries, sectors, cities and local agencies in setting up working groups, with the aim to

facilitate disbursement in local provinces, promptly address difficulties during the implementation of public investment plan in local provinces, including ones in the Mekong Delta region.

**6. Limitations and shortcomings**

Beside the outgoing achievement, regional linkage activities in the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP have not yet been carried out effectively because of the following limitations:

- Regarding regional linkage targets: the new Decision No. 593/QĐ-TTg mainly focuses on strengthening exchanges at the policy level on regional linkage. There have been no binding regulations on the implementation of commitments on regional linkage among local agencies. At the same time, the defined objectives have not been implemented and led to actual impacts.

Some sectors of local agencies still develop in a separated manner, without close and unified connection in the whole region. The implementation of investment mechanisms and policies has not been as effective as expected. There are many shortcomings, affecting policy making as well as regional development planning. In terms of economic structure, provinces and cities in the Mekong Delta region generally have similar economic structures and are unable to promote their comparative advantage, leading to overlapping and spreading investments. The economic space is also divided as there are some conflicts of interests in the development priorities among local agencies. The exploitation and use of water resources as well as the development of regional key products have not been linked well, leading to local agencies having mutual competition, threatening to

disrupt planning.

- Regarding the linkage mechanism: most of the tasks assigned in the Decision No. 593/QD-TTg and the Decision No. 2220/QD-TTg on the implementation plan of the Decision No. 593/QD-TTg are to study mechanisms and policies. Thus, although the ministries, sectors and local agencies have actively implemented, then it is necessary to have more time to thoroughly study, evaluate and propose appropriate policies and solutions. Therefore, some tasks assigned to ministries, sectors, local agencies have not been completed according to schedule.

- Regarding the planning: regional planning is an important tool to direct regional coordination. However, international consultants were just recently selected for this task so it takes time to clarify the requirements and the role of each local provinces in the overall development of the region. Therefore, local agencies are having difficulties in identifying potential areas of linkage to recognize specific linkage activities. At the same time, central management agencies also lack foundation for organizing and managing regional activities, including the allocation and coordination of development resources.

In addition, there is no mechanism to build consensus and demonstrate collective benefits among related parties. For some regional or inter-provincial issues, such as regulating and sharing water resources or building infrastructure, local agencies lack mechanisms to discuss and examine issues thoroughly and effectively. Therefore, during the discussion, even though there have been many technical problems or legal basis issues, yet related parties are unable to identify solutions. This also

leads to difficulties in building consensus to implement specific linkage activities, including agreed ones through signed documents among local agencies.

- Regarding financial resources: there is no separated capital source for linkage activities. The current regulations do not have a specific regulation to prioritize the establishment of a separate financial mechanism for joint activities in the Mekong Delta. The article, which stipulates that the central budget shall support at least 10% compared to the total development source from the central budget allocated to local agencies in the region to implement linkage programs and projects, has not been implemented yet due to the fact that the Decision No. 593/QD-TTg was issued after the National Assembly decided the medium-term public investment plan for the period of 2016-2020. The mobilization of resources from the society remains limited.

- Regarding the structure of the coordinating agency: the Ministry of Planning and Investment is assigned to be responsible for the pilot implementation of the whole region. However, the Ministry of Planning and Investment is not a specialized agency, so it has insufficient or inadequate authorities to coordinate the overall development of the region. The Ministry of Planning and Investment has also actively implemented the tasks, but is limited to coordination to direct, inspect and urge the implementation of ministries, sectors and local agencies. However as the development of direction, strategy, planning and particular policies for the whole region is not yet completed, it results in the lack of cohesion in the division of tasks among local agencies in the region.

- Regarding the development of database: the inter-provincial and regional database has not been yet established. Existing data remain non-systematic and difficult to access. Technical assistance and consultancy activities have not played an appropriate role in the process of developing and implementing linkage activities. As a result, there has been lack of information and scientific grounds for decision making process on linkage issues among related parties.

## II. SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF IMPLEMENTING ASSIGNED TASKS IN THE RESOLUTION No.120/NQ-CP

### 1. Solutions on planning and strengthening information linkage

a) To accelerate the process of developing and approving the sustainable development master plan for the Mekong Delta for the period of 2021-2030 with a vision to 2050 adapting to climate change through integration method in order to form direction for ministries, sectors and local agencies to be able to review and adjust socio-economic development planning, sectoral planning as well as to develop incentive mechanisms, attracting investment and strengthening inter-regional linkage.

b) To urgently establish the interdisciplinary database on the Mekong Delta to provide comprehensive and systematic information for policy making, strategy formulating, development of planning, plans and investment decisions, activities to respond to climate change, natural disasters and other extreme weather. To urgently establish the Data Integration Center in the Mekong Delta which will be shared, exploited and

utilized for the development of the Mekong Delta.

### 2. Solutions on regional coordination mechanism

a) To continue to speed up the implementation of the tasks assigned by the Prime Minister in the Decision No. 593/QD-TTg and the Decision No. 2220/QD-TTg promulgating the Plan to implement Decision the No. 593/QD-TTg dated April 6, 2016 on the Regulation on piloting linking socio-economic development in the Mekong Delta in the period of 2016-2020.

b) To develop an effective coordinating mechanism and its implementation organisation: to study, develop and submit to the Prime Minister for promulgation a Decision on the establishment of the Regional Coordination Council for the Mekong Delta and operation regulations of the Regional Coordinating Council.

### 3. Solutions on mobilizing resources and attracting investment capital

a) To continue to review and compile the list of linkage programs and projects in the Mekong Delta region, on the basis of ensuring harmony with the Mekong Delta Planning for the period of 2021-2030 with vision to 2050 and to insert it into public medium-term public investment plan for the period 2021-2025 in case of receipt of the appropriate approval from relevant authority.

b) To research, and propose to develop a separate financial mechanism for the Mekong Delta region for the period 2021-2025; to support investment in regional linkage activities, regional linkage programs and projects (using ODA capital, concessional loans...) in the sectors of agriculture, transport, irrigation

and water resources., and to support research activities on policy development and regional coordination.

c) To continue to actively access international funds such as Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Environment Fund (GEF), green credit funds, and resources from partners of P4G Forum to supplement the state budget capital to boost investment in the development of the Mekong Delta.

d) To research and complete legal documents on investment and enterprises to improve investment and business environment. To quickly finalize mechanisms and solutions that encourage the investment of domestic and foreign enterprises, especially the investment in linkage areas in the Mekong Delta to adapt to climate change./.





**MR. NGUYỄN XUÂN CƯỜNG**

*Member of Central Committee of the Party  
Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development*

## REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF RESTRUCTURING SECTOR AND PRODUCTS IN AGRICULTURE IN THE MEKONG DELTA AND TASKS FOR THE UPCOMING TIME

### I. RESULTS OF AGRICULTURAL RESTRUCTURING IN MEKONG DELTA

#### 1. Results of agricultural development in the Mekong Delta

- Agriculture in the Mekong Delta has developed dramatically, comprehensively and accomplished many important achievements, transforming the Mekong Delta into a key agricultural region of Vietnam, contributing to economic development and poverty reduction, ensuring social security.

In the period 2016-2018, the Mekong Delta agriculture achieved a GDP growth rate of 3%/year, higher than the national average rate (2.67%/year); contributing about 34.6% of the GDP to the whole agricultural sector nationwide and accounting for 33.5% of the total GDP of the Mekong Delta.

In 2018, the Mekong Delta ranked first in the country for rice, shrimp, catfish and fruit production (rice production was 24.5 million tons, accounting for 56% of the national output; shrimp production was 0.623 million tons, accounting for 70%; catfish amount was 1.41 million tons, accounting for 95% nationwide, fruit production was 4.3 million tons, accounting for 60%. Export turnover of major agricultural products in the Mekong Delta (rice, catfishes, shrimp and fruits) reached USD 8.43 billion<sup>1</sup>, accounting for 73.34% of those nationwide.

- The Mekong Delta agriculture has gradually formed large-scale concentrated production areas, specializing in key agricultural products (shrimp, catfishes, rice and fruits) in association with processing and consumption technologies in the value chain of farm produce.

<sup>1</sup> Export turnover of major agricultural products in the Mekong Delta (rice, catfishes, shrimp, and fruits) reached USD 8.43 billion, accounting for 43.2% of export turnover of major agricultural products nationwide and accounting for 21.07% of total export turnover. of agricultural forestry and forestry (AFF) nationwide

Manufacturing structure has shifted positively to be more market oriented, more adaptive to climate change, ensuring quality and competitiveness.

The structure of agricultural production in the Mekong Delta shifted towards increasing production of fisheries and fruits and reducing production rice. Activities of changing crop structure, seasons, breeding structure and application of cultivation techniques and manufacturing processes to be more adaptive to climate change continue to be promoted<sup>1</sup>. In the period of 2015-2018, the area of rice cultivation decreased sharply by 195 thousand hectares (from 4,302 thousand hectares to 4,107 thousand hectares) mainly due to the reduction of crops, corresponding to the decrease in proportion from 27.7% to 26.4% of rice production value in the total agricultural production value. Aquaculture area increased from 742.7 thousand hectares to 807.3 thousand hectares, the proportion of aquaculture production value increased from 35.4% to 42%<sup>2</sup>. Fruit farming area increased from 308.6 thousand hectares to 347.6 thousand hectares, the proportion of fruit production value increased from 9.1% to 10.2%.

- Research, application, transference species, cultivation techniques and manufacturing processes, which are more adaptive to climate change, are promoted<sup>3</sup>. Standards such as VietGAP, GlobalGAP, ASC have been increasingly applied. There has been a strong shift in using high quality rice species, sticky rice, and

fragrant rice (accounting for about 83% of the area). The fruit seed system has been dramatically developed with a variety of high-yield species imported from abroad and alum-and-salinity-tolerant species have been studied and bred. By 2018, the Mekong Delta produced about 26 billion fries, and more than 2.6 billion of catfishes qualified for commercial farming.

- Agricultural product processing industry and post-harvest preservation achieved many results, contributing to the development of large-scale production and socio-economic stability; the rate of processed seafood increased in the fisheries sector, especially catfishes.

- Farm products' manufacture processing and consumption have been developed and promoted, forming concentrated production areas, thereby allowing the application of synchronously scientific and technical advances to produce large volume and qualified products. Particularly, the large rice field in the Mekong Delta has 427.8 thousand hectares (accounting for 73.9% of the large field area of the whole country).

- Irrigation and disaster prevention system has taken initial steps to transform agriculture towards climate-resilient. The irrigation system helps to ensure irrigation for 90% of the winter-spring and summer-autumn rice crop, and at the same time considering to develop irrigation for aquatic production and upland crops. A system of seawater prevention dikes, control high tides, high waves has been

<sup>1</sup> Shifting from rice to upland crops; restructuring crops, narrowing spring-summer rice and increasing autumn-winter crops; 41 sets of rice varieties were tested, many of which were short-term; the process of "3 tang 3 giam", "1 phai 5 giam", VietGAP, GlobalGAP...; large fields; organic aquaculture, intensive farming; breeding sea ducks, bird nest and bee...

<sup>2</sup> Mainly due to growth in shrimp farming area from 607.3 thousand hectares to 679.2 thousand hectares; corresponding to the proportion of shrimp production value in total AFF production value increased from 12.6% to 16.9%.

<sup>3</sup> Development and replication of high-quality, safe and organic production processes, such as "3 tang 3 giam", "1 phai 5 giam", "1 phai 6 giam", seeding focus on avoiding hoppers, reducing the amount of seeds to be sowed, fertilizing by regions, saving watering... The spraying program for 5 major fruits (mango, dragon fruit, longan, rambutan, durian) obtained good results.

formed and gradually raised the capability to cope with storm surges and floods, promoting the effectiveness of salt control. The database of irrigation and disaster prevention is categorized into 3 regions (upper, middle and coastal areas) serving management and direction. Activities of urgent landslide treatment of river and coast are implemented: issuing guidance on technical solutions, urgent handling of key subsidence and landslides areas; setting up warning signs, developing a map of landslide area in the Mekong Delta, allocating a budget to landslide prevention projects, prioritizing 36 urgent projects with a total budget of VND 2,500 billion.

- The appearance of rural areas in the Mekong Delta is prosper, with many innovations. As of May 2019, the whole region has 516 communes meeting new rural standards (accounting for 40.1%), 2.7

times higher than 2015, averaging 15.43 criteria/commune (increasing by 1.52 criteria from the end of 2015); 9 district-level units are recognized to complete the tasks/of meet the new rural standard (an increase of 08 units compared to the end of 2015).

## 2. Shortcomings, limitations and causes

### a) Shortcomings and limitation

- The structure shift and innovation of production organization have made some progress but still remains slow; small and scattered production has not been thoroughly overcome; there have not been many linkage and production cooperation among entities to form value chains.

- Application of high technology, modern technology in production, processing and preservation is still limited, unable to create a breakthrough to increase added value and competitiveness.

The market for agricultural products is unsustainable, unable to meet the large and growing production capability of commodity agriculture.

- Capacity to adapt to climate change and respond to natural disasters has not been improved significantly. There have not been enough sufficient technical and market bases as well as strong motivation and support to replicate the models of sustainable manufacturing and climate change adaptation. The environmental consequences are increasingly more evident, which leads to an increase in vulnerability.

- The development of new rural areas results in many achievements, but still lower than the average level of the whole country. Non-agricultural employment is unsustainable; migration rates out of the area are high and most of them go into the informal sector.

### b) Reasons

The main causes include:

- The process of developing and implementing policies, strategies, planning and development plans of all levels and sectors in general is still inconsistent and slow in compared to the actual and rapid changes of the market, climate change, upstream and internal development of the Mekong Delta.

- Industry, services, transportation and logistics have not yet effectively supported the development of the commodity agriculture.

- Investment attraction, creation and development of agricultural value chains associated with development, market expansion have not gain expected effect.

- Research and development, application and transfer of science and

technology are still limited.

- The work of forecasting climate change impacts and progress, upstream activities, impacts of natural disasters is not synchronized, sometimes not timely.

## II. THE IMPACT OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES ON AGRICULTURAL RESTRUCTURE IN MEKONG DELTA

### 1. Opportunities and advantages

a) The Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP and a series of policies show the Government's in sustainably developing of the Mekong Delta; in which, the vision to 2100 is "Mekong Delta's development is sustainable, safe, prosper, on the basis of suitable development of high quality agricultural goods, in combination with services, ecotourism, industry, focusing on processing industry, and improving the value and competitiveness of agricultural products; infrastructure systems are planned and developed synchronously and modernly in a proactive and intelligent manner, adapting to climate change, ensuring safety from natural disasters; natural resources are used reasonably; biodiversity and cultural and historical traditions are maintained and embellished, people's material and spiritual life is enhanced". The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has actively participated in the drastic implementation of the Resolution with 4 major tasks including:

- To develop an overall program for sustainable agricultural development to adapt to climate change in the Delta;

- To review irrigation and disaster prevention system;

- To develop and implement the



project to prevent river and coast erosion;

- To develop and implement the Mekong Delta key seed program.

The Ministry has submitted to the Government for promulgation and participated in developing a series of policies to promote agricultural development in general, including the Mekong Delta<sup>1</sup>; presiding over amending the Decree No. 35/2015/ND-CP on management of land used for rice cultivation...; has continued to promote the implementation of the Sustainable Agriculture Transformation Project VnSAT, including some Mekong Delta provinces, the Mekong Delta's Integrated Climate Resistant and Sustainable Livelihoods Project funded by the World Bank.

b) Market forecasts show great opportunities for fruit and seafood production, especially for processed products to go into high-end markets<sup>2</sup>. The application of science and technology, especially technology 4.0 and advanced quality management system to processing and mechanizing will lead to better quality, safety and traceability of agricultural products to meet the requirements of consumer market and environmental protection standards; opportunities are open to increase value and adaptability by dealing with major bottlenecks on input materials, processing, storage,

management and organization of value chain production. Transport infrastructure, logistics system invested in accordance with the planning will expand trade in agricultural products of the Mekong Delta.

c) Increased saline intrusion will promote a more efficient transformation of production and business structure by opening up opportunities to develop the potential of shrimp farming and other products, which could adapt to salinity, to form regional specialties. Local values, as a result, will be higher and more sustainable.

## 2. Difficulties and challenges

a) The Mekong Delta at the same time suffers great impacts:

- Firstly, the impact of climate change is one of the biggest challenges. Having the low ground, facing two oceans including one in the East and the other in the West, the Mekong Delta is one of the areas most severely affected by climate change;

- Secondly, the impact on the upper Mekong River due to economic activities using water resources, such as hydropower, water transfer from the basin, rapid decline in forest area and vegetation cover (where water is kept water and regulated) has increased and will always continue to seriously increase, fundamentally changing the rule of flows

<sup>1</sup> The Decision No. 245/QĐ-BNN-CBTNS dated January 16, 2019 on the plan for restructuring the processing sector until 2020; the Circular 37/2018/TT-BNN dated December 25, 2018 on the list of national key agricultural products; the Decision No. 738/QĐ-BNN-KHCN dated March 14, 2017 on criteria for defining high tech agricultural programs and projects; the Decree No. 57/2018/ND-CP dated April 17, 2018, encouraging investment in agriculture and rural development; the Decree No. 116/2018/ND-CP dated September 7, 2018 on credit for agriculture and rural development; the Decree No. 98/2018/ND-CP of July 5, 2018, encouraging the development of cooperation in the production and consumption of agricultural products; the Decree 109/2018/ND-CP dated August 29, 2018 on organic agriculture; the Decision No. 461/QĐ-TTg 2018 dated April 27, 2018, on the project of developing 15,000 cooperatives and associations of cooperatives until 2020; the Decree No. 58/2018/ND-CP dated April 18, 2018 on agricultural insurance; the Decree No. 107/2018/ND-CP dated August 15, 2018, on rice export business; Law on Breeding 2018; Law on Farming 2018.

<sup>2</sup> The demand for rice has decreased while the demand for fruits and seafood has increased. The total global rice trade has increased only about 1.5% (2016-2024) (OECD / FAO, 2015). Vietnam's rice price decreased by 10% to USD 380 /ton (2014 - 2025) (world Bank, 2016). The world fruit market reaches USD 200 billion in 2030 (Oliver Wynman, 2018), Vietnam's demand for fruits increases from 5 million tons to 7 million tons (2009-2030) (world Bank, 2016) but the supply fails to meet it. Global shrimp demand is about 5.25 million tons (about 1.03 million tons missing) (FAO, UNDP, 2015). catfish market also has a lot of potential, especially emerging markets such as Asia, South America and Africa.

when they enter Viet Nam;

- Thirdly, irrational areas in the internal economic development, such as triple crop intensification, forest resource degradation, and exploitation of sand and gravel resources, groundwater resources, construction of infrastructure and houses along riverside along with other economic activities also cause great damage to the delta and sustainable development.

b) The average rate of subsidence is expected to be 1.5-3cm/year by 2040 if groundwater exploitation cannot be controlled, the ground water table decreases by an average of 0.2-0.4m/year. The impact resonance also speeds up the rate of landslide, especially in those recent years, causing damage to properties and threatening people's lives as well as economic infrastructure institutions. Coastal erosion has reduced the area of mangroves quite quickly, in case of no action, mangrove forests will gradually disappear. Besides, the risk of flooding is about 38.9% of the area when the sea level rises by 1m according to the climate change scenario, in which some areas are locally inundated due to not being able to drain out during high tide and storm surge (the Northern of Quan Lo Phung Hiep in Hau Giang, Can Tho). In the next 50 years, about 47% of the area is affected by 4‰ salinity and up to 64% of the area is affected by 1‰ salinity, of which the Ca Mau peninsula is the most effected. In addition, floods are expected to be less "beautiful" and will be more extreme. In the years that El Nino occurs, it will be extremely dry and in the years that La Nina happens, there will be higher and consecutive flood. By 2050, the coastline eroded from 34-44m/year,

<sup>1</sup> ICEM/WB 2016

doubling that of the last 40 years<sup>1</sup>. Saline intrusion occurs more frequently, surface water environment is polluted, and more people will lack access to water for living in dry months.

All kinds of adverse effects are becoming more complex, causing greater damage; increased seasonal structure change and epidemics increase. The old cultivation system is no longer suitable:

- Drought and salinity lead to insufficient fresh water for rice production. The old cultivation season will face difficulties due to unusual changes of weather and climate;

- That also has a direct impact on saline aquaculture, due to rapid changes in salinity level and water environment;

- With fruit production, changes in the rainy season, frequency and intensity greatly effects the rule of growth. Hot and humid climatic conditions, high rainfall, flooding and closed dikes lead to nutrition decrease and soil compression, making the roots lack oxygen, making in many fruits, many gardens lose their crops because of no fruiting.

c) Unpredictable market changes, especially in the international market; and the control standards are becoming stricter. Vietnam's agriculture has participated in the integration and globalization of trade with FTAs. In that situation, Viet Nam commits to no protection and complying with most of the standards of member countries and the world market.

d) The limitations and internal weaknesses of small production are slow to be overcome, the agricultural and rural infrastructure still poses many weaknesses

and human resources are still limited, making it a big challenge to implement industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas in the Delta.

### III. ORIENTATIONS TO PROMOTE THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN THE MEKONG DELTA

#### 1. Development objectives

Developing the Mekong Delta's agriculture in a sustainable and safe manner on the basis of modern and high-quality commodity agricultural and production, in combination with eco-tourism and processing industry, raising the value and competitiveness of agriculture product. Infrastructure system is planned and developed synchronously and modernly in a proactive and intelligent manner, adapting climate change, ensuring safety from natural disasters; natural resources are managed and used reasonably; biodiversity and cultural and historical traditions are maintained and embellished; people's material and spiritual life is enhanced; per capita income is higher than the average one nationwide.

#### 2. Development orientation

##### a) General orientation

- The restructuring of agriculture in the Mekong Delta is associated with the renewal of the growth model and the construction of new rural areas, in order to create a breakthrough in modern and sustainable agricultural development, increasing added value, efficiency and competitiveness, adapt to climate change. Improving the quality and efficiency

of developing new rural areas, quickly improving farmers' life, contributing to poverty reduction and environmental protection in the Mekong Delta.

- Focusing on handling internal factors, along with efficient use of resources, human resources, science and technology, turning risk into opportunity. Developing the sustainable agriculture of the Mekong Delta in 3 regions (upper, middle and coastal areas). Based on fluctuations in water resources, land adaptation and market demand, strategic sectors are classified into stable areas, transition areas and flexible areas<sup>1</sup>. Restructuring manufacture in accordance with 3 product lines (national key product groups; provincial key product groups; local product groups - "One commune one product" program). Focusing on strategic development of seafood - fruit - rice. Developing the Mekong Delta into a special agricultural and ecological tourist area.

- Prioritizing in creating breakthroughs in the development of processing and commercialization of agricultural value chains and research and application of science and technology to solve three stages: seed, food and processing. By 2025, it is possible to identify the best breeds for 3 key commodities (seafood, fruit, rice); by 2030, mastering the domestic seed source and reach the international level. Increasing sustainable intensive farming, minimizing the use of chemical materials (chemical fertilizers, pesticides), protecting environment, ensuring food safety and hygiene.

<sup>(1)</sup> Stable area means an area with a safety level of 70% or more in the face of floods, flooding and saltwater intrusion and market demand; (ii) the transition area is a high-risk production area with 30% of safety level from flood, inundation and saline intrusion and market demand; (iii) the flexible area does not have enough information on the impact of saline, drought, waterlogging and freshwater availability.

Developing technical support centers for specialized areas, industrial processing clusters/zones, trading logistic systems, cold storage chains to connect markets.

- Developing integrated, multidisciplinary and sectoral planning, synchronous implementation of "no regrets" solutions with inter-regional coordination, sector and field coordination with the participation of the whole regional political system. Mobilizing the overall resources of the state, economic sectors, people and international cooperation.

##### b) Orientation of areas

- Upper area: developing diversified agriculture, adapting to extreme floods; becoming the key area for rice and catfish production on a modern and sustainable basis. The area plays a vital role in regulating and absorbing floods for the Mekong Delta.

- Middle area: developing horticulture, becoming the largest center for fruit cultivation in the Mekong Delta and the whole country. In addition, developing a number of areas of concentrated rice production, freshwater aquatic products,

vegetables, industrial plants and brackish water fisheries in a moderate level. The area plays a vital role in regulating fresh water for coastal areas.

- Coastal area: developing agriculture based mainly on saline and brackish water, promoting fishery advantages in combination with special rice and plants that use less fresh water and salt-tolerant. These areas having the largest forest area should be utilized to develop agro-forestry systems towards ecology, organic and ecotourism. Ensuring adequate fresh water for living. Preparing for prevention, response, mitigation of natural disasters and coastal erosion.

##### c) Orientation of strategic and key sectors and industries

- Rice: being not rigid in maintaining rice production and exporting rice in large quantities, keeping at a minimum quality with good quality and reasonable profit to maintain the traditional market, develop potential markets and exploit the domestic market. By 2030, in the Mekong Delta, the area of rice cultivation is expected to decrease by 220-300 thousand hectares along with a reduction



in the area of 3 crops of rice, strongly shifting to 1-2 rice crops or alternation of crops/fisheries. Increasing certified, high quality, better-salt-tolerant rice varieties. Synchronizing mechanization of production and application of science and technology to minimize production costs and agricultural materials.

- Fruits: developing fruits in accordance with market demand, towards high value domestic and foreign markets, especially 10 kinds of fruits such as mangoes, oranges, tangerines, grapefruit, longan, litchi, dragon fruit, bananas, durian, rambutan. By 2030, the concentrated area is expanded by about 200,000 hectares, bringing the total fruit area up to about 680 thousand hectares. Promoting the improvement of fruit and coconut mixed

gardens, diversifying farming systems, researching and mastering the source of key varieties, especially salt-tolerant ones.

- Seafood:

+ Farming: developing shrimp and catfish industry into a large, sustainable production industry, adapting to climate change and protecting ecological environment as well as focusing strongly on export. By 2030, the total farming area will increase by about 300 thousand hectares, bringing the total farming area to about 1 million hectares (including the alternation area with rice and shrimp, ecological forests). Strongly investing in deep processing and diversifying of seafood processing products. Actively producing and supplying high quality



shrimp and catfish for the market.

+ Exploiting: in order to exploit large fishing grounds in the West Sea and East Sea, the restructuring should be based on the development of large capacity teams, cooperatives management with logistic system, supporting services, fishing ports, storm shelters along the coast areas and islands, cooperating with other countries in the exploitation of common marine areas in accordance with international law. Maintaining rationally seafood inland fisheries. Sustainably exploiting, both harvesting and protecting, regenerating, developing resources of seafood and using professional and modern organized fleets suitable to sea areas and sea routes. Fighting against illegal fishing and seafood source destruction. Applying science and technology in aquatic exploitation, preservation product to reduce post-harvest losses.

- Livestock raising: developing sustainable livestock towards biosecurity, market attachment, climate change adaptation. Moving quickly to concentrated breeding outside residential areas; applying science and technology; organizing closed manufacture, linkage chain with centralized slaughtering system, processing factory, animal feed factory; strengthening disease control, quality and price of food, veterinary medicine, environmental treatment. In the upper region, focusing on poultry, waterfowl adapting to floods. In the middle area, developing cattle and pig breeding and at the same time associating with other farming systems, such as raising poultry in gardens and fruit gardens. In the coastal areas, promoting the development of breeding of ducks, livestock that use less water but have high value such as bee, birds..., in combination with grazing

under forest canopy (goat) in the ecological and organic manner. Developing export-oriented processing products (ecological duck, salted egg, bird nest ...).

- Forestry: considering forest recovery and development as a key task, a prerequisite for the survival and sustainable development of the whole region. Harmoniously combining the protection of melaleuca forests and mangrove forests with the development of livelihoods from forests, especially ecological fisheries under the forest canopy (shrimp, crab, fish) and ecotourism. Developing community-based forest management models.

- Ecotourism: developing agricultural ecosystems as a foundation for tourism development, associated with the protection and development of coastal mangrove forests and biodiversity conservation. Attracting investment in developing support services. Training tourism services for rural workers as their, sustainable jobs.

- Irrigation, natural disaster control and prevention:

+ Upper area: increasing flood absorption, flood drainage capacity, coping with extreme floods; reducing urban flooding, minimizing environmental pollution in the thoroughly embankment areas, and preventing river bank erosion. Limiting the development of thorough embankment, reinforcing the dike system in August, dredging canals, increasing their ability to actively get in and drain off water in August making it easy for water storage and flood control; at the same time supporting the development of other livelihoods besides 2 rice crops. Researching to improve the flood drainage in Dong Thap Muoi; Long Xuyen quadrangle to be suitable for construction

works around. Roads adapting to floods must ensure of flood drainage.

+ Middle area: limiting the development of additional dyke systems; dredging and upgrading canals connecting Tien River and Hau River, in order to increase the flood drainage capacity and redistribute the flow rate of the Mekong River. Protecting urban and rural areas, upgrading and constructing flood protection systems to increase drainage capacity, in combination with water storage to supply domestic water for coastal areas. Adjusting appropriate irrigation systems for vegetables, fruits and freshwater aquaculture.

+ Coastal area: ensuring its ability to actively regulate the supply of fresh and salty water for saltwater, brackish water and daily-life aquaculture; optimally minimizing the use of groundwater, preventing the subsidence and coastal erosion. Accordingly, considering the option of constructing water storage and fresh water storage works from the Hau River to Ca Mau peninsula in combination with rice intensification reduction and the appropriate production structure conversion.

- Rural development: developing models of new rural construction in association with stabilization of people's life, migration of people out of environmentally sensitive areas, agricultural conversion, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and strong promotion of the role of the people and communities. Reducing labor in agriculture, but ensuring their compliance with large-scale commodity production. Creating off-farm jobs in place under the OCOP Program and developing industries and services for agriculture; creating non-

agricultural jobs outside the region and promoting labor export in association with market demand.

### 3. Key solutions

a) To review and adjust the regional and provincial planning in the direction of multi-sectoral integration, close linkage of agricultural development with general development of the economy, society, industrial development and rural services, transportation, urban, residential and related fields.

b) To mobilize integrated resources to invest in sustainable agricultural development to adapt to climate change, in which the central budget prioritizes investment in infrastructure at sub-regions and regions, local budgets for infrastructure at provincial level and attracts private investment in the form of PPP, especially with the agricultural industrial services sectors and logistics systems for agricultural value chains.

c) To reform the organization of production and value chain development

- To form a regional coordination body.

- To develop a specialized group to support the establishment of cooperatives, and develop cooperatives to effectively operate and consolidate associations/enterprises.

- To develop a program to attract chain development investment and program for forecasting and developing markets.

- To effectively implement the OCOP Program.

- To strengthen community-based resource management.

d) To enhance the application and transfer of science and technology

- To develop regional research institutes with sufficient resources.

- To promote seed research program, focusing on fisheries, key fruits, high quality rice.

- To develop program to promote science and technology research, training and transfer.

- To pilot and replicate smart agricultural models adapting to scientific research.

- To develop agricultural and rural database integration center.

e) To improve capacity of management of natural resources and environment

- To develop databases and visual information and monitoring systems to support the operation and coordination of irrigation systems to regulate floods and salinity in an efficient and natural way.

- To develop projects/plans to respond to extreme floods and for flood absorption, flood drainage; treatment of surface water pollution and groundwater regeneration; fresh water supply; forest protection and development; management of agricultural material supply system.

- To provide early warning and agricultural advisory services.

- To develop and apply a common Code of Conduct for agricultural production to adapt to climate change in the region.

f) Human resource development

- To develop a program for professional farmer training, agricultural labor conversion and job creation.

- To develop a program to attract young experts and intellectuals to rural areas; strongly promoting creative entrepreneurial movement.

g) New rural development: to develop a scheme of new rural areas for the Mekong Delta with specific criteria, improving the quality of new rural construction criteria, which focuses on climate change adaptation, migration from environmentally sensitive areas, natural disaster prevention and community development. To continue to mobilize and invest in supporting the implementation of a comprehensive new rural construction and in-depth, directly improving the living conditions of rural residents. To support farmers to develop production and business to increase income. To mobilize resources to maintain and upgrade communal infrastructure, especially in transport and irrigation.

h) To develop specific mechanisms and policies

In order to develop agriculture in the Mekong Delta region in a favorable direction, it is necessary to institutionalize and implement specific mechanisms and policies:

- To convert inefficient rice land areas for the use of farming aquatic products, fruit trees;

- To promote concentration of land for large-scale agricultural production, following the model of linking "large fields" which are typical in the Mekong Delta;

- To attract businesses to invest in agriculture and rural areas, especially leading enterprises; to promote tax exemption and reduction, preferential credit and agricultural insurance policies for key products of the region, especially shrimp and catfishes.

i) To strengthen regional linkage

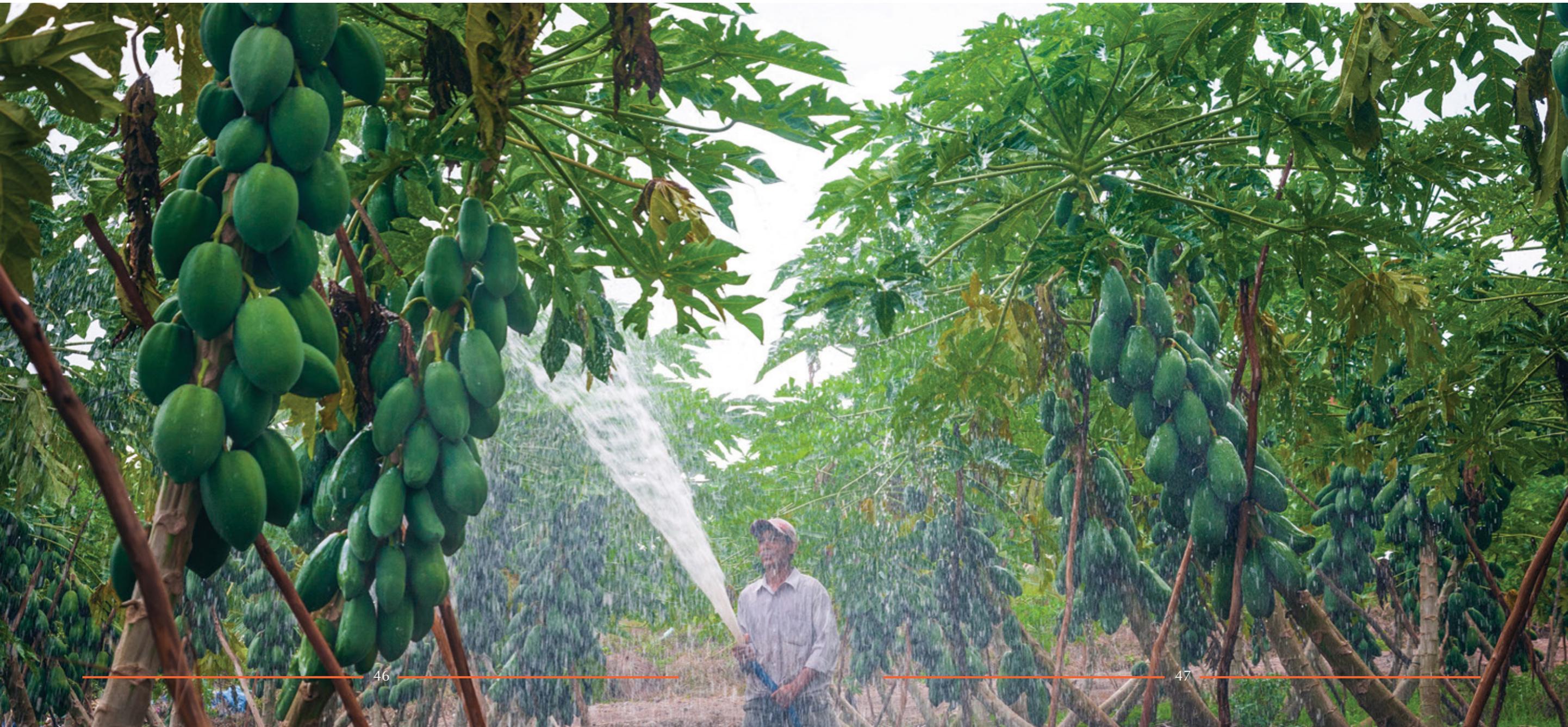
- To establish a coordinating committee for agricultural development in each sub-

region, directly or closely linking to the Regional Council;

- To experiment with a number of linkage models in each sub-region and the whole region, first of all to focus on water resource management, development of agricultural value chains (including logistics systems), market and development of attraction agricultural investment;

- To develop regional operating information system.

j) To enhance international cooperation to share information, enlist their experience, technology and administration; strengthen inter-sectoral and inter-regional coordination in mobilizing international resources to support agricultural development in the Mekong Delta./.





**MR. NGUYỄN VĂN THẾ**

*Member of Central Committee of the Party  
Minister of Transport*

## REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF DEVELOPING TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND SOLUTIONS FOR DEVELOPING TRANSPORT SYSTEMS CONNECTING WITH HO CHI MINH CITY

The Mekong Delta comprises of 13 provinces and municipalities under the central Government, being a large area accounting for 12% of the total area and 19% of the population of the country; having a dense network of rivers, canals and ditches; having advantages in agriculture, food industry, tourism, renewable energy; being the largest agricultural production center of Vietnam: contributing 50% of rice production, 65% of aquaculture production and 70% of fruits, 95% and 60% of rice and fish exports respectively of the country; being conveniently located in trade routes with ASEAN countries and Mekong Sub-region... Over the past years, with the attention of the National Assembly and the Government, many important projects on investment in construction of transport infrastructure in the Mekong Delta have been completed, contributing to the socio-economic development and security and defense strengthening of the region. However, there are still many transport

infrastructure limitations which failed to meet the regional development requirements. In order to sustainably develop the Mekong Delta in accordance with the spirit of the Resolution No.120/NQ-CP of the Government, making it become the economic and cultural center of the country, it is necessary to focus resources to invest in transport infrastructure in a synchronous manner, adapting to climate change, meeting the demand of import and export, improving the value of key products, promoting socio-economic development and ensuring the national defense and security. The Ministry of Transport would like to report the transport infrastructure planning, investment situation and development direction of the Mekong Delta in the coming time as follows:

### I. TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING AND INVESTMENT OF THE REGION

Transport plans are basically in line with the socio-economic development orientation of the region as well as the

national transport development strategy and planning. However, due to limited resources, the implementation of transport infrastructure construction investment has not achieved objectives and of the proposed planing, therefore the existing infrastructure system has failed to meet the transport demand and development requirements of the region.

Currently, complying with the Law on Planning and tasks assigned by the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Transport is directing agencies to review, evaluate and develop national plans relating to transportation, to make a proposal on connection transport network between the Mekong Delta provinces and on that basis, to compile a list of prior investment projects for the 5-year plan (2021 – 2025) and propose a development strategy for the period 2021 – 2030 with vision towards 2050.

#### 1. Transport infrastructure investment situation in the Mekong Delta

In the Mekong Delta, there are 4 main modes of transport namely roads, inland waterways, sea, air. Among those, roads and inland waterways are dominant. The road system has a total length of 44,352 km, including: 2,173km of highways; 3,450km of provincial road; 2,210km of urban roads, and 35,518 km of rural roads. Regarding waterways, over 13,000km of inland waterways distributed across the region has created an extremely great advantage in inland waterways transport exploitation; seaway has not been able to the develop because s some seaports are obstructed,significantly impacting the maritime transport exploitation Regarding airway, there are 2 international airports namely Can Tho, Phu Quoc and 2 airports of Rach Gia and

Ca Mau with the capacity of 7.6 million passengers, sufficiently meeting the transport demands after 2020.

- Roads: the road network in the Mekong Delta is formed on the basis of 5 vertical routes (excluding coastal routes) and horizontal routes connecting vertical routes, which are quite evenly distributed across the region. Namely:

+ For vertical routes: the National Route 1 has been invested basically in accordance with the plan and the remaining route from Nga Bay town, Hau Giang province to Chau Thanh district, Soc Trang province (20 km) has not been invested to expand; 40km of the Eastern Highway from Ho Chi Minh City to Trung Luong has just finished and the section from Trung Luong to Can Tho is currently being developed; the Ho Chi Minh road coinciding with the N2 road has not been invested and connected according to the plan; the Eastern coastal corridor route also has a number of obstruction points that frequently occur traffic jam such as Rach Mieu Bridge and Dai Ngai ferry; about 90km of the N1 road from Chau Doc to Ha Tien has been just completed, the rest has not been entitled to capital allocation for development.

+ For horizontal routes: due to limited resources and high construction investment cost, only some sections have been invested and upgraded in accordance with the plan, such as: the National Route 80 from My Thuan to Vam Cong, the National Route 91 from Can Tho to An Giang, Nam Song Hau, Quan Lo - Phung Hiep, and Southern coastal corridor road, some sections on the National Route 53, the National Route 54, the National Route 63... have not met the transport demands of the provinces in the region. According to

the plan, two horizontal highways will be formed, namely: Chau Doc - Can Tho - Soc Trang and Ha Tien - Rach Gia - Bac Lieu.

- Inland waterways: river transport is defined as an advantage of the Mekong Delta with 6 main waterways which connect Ho Chi Minh City (Southeast) to the Mekong Delta, including: Cua Tieu - Cambodia (class I); Dinh An estuary - Tay Chau (class I); Saigon - Ca Mau via Xa No canal (class III); Saigon - Kien Luong via Lap Vo canal (class III); Saigon - Ca Mau (coastal way); Saigon - Kien Luong (across Dong Thap Muoi and Long Xuyen quadrangle).

Waterways connecting Ho Chi Minh City to Mekong Delta provinces have been invested and upgraded to Class-III standards (only 28.5 km of Cho Gao canal has just been upgraded in Phase

1 to class II) for 800 - 1,000 tons ships to take advantages of the waterway tide, contributing to enhancing the region's waterway transport capacity, ensuring connectivity between the Mekong Delta's provinces and Ho Chi Minh City to promote the transport market and take advantages of the region.

- Airways: at present, there are 4 airports in the region: Can Tho International Airport (designed capacity of 3.0 million passengers per year), Phu Quoc International Airport (designed capacity of 4.0 million passengers per year), Rach Gia Airport (designed capacity of 0.3 million passengers per year) and Ca Mau Airport (designed capacity of 0.3 million passengers per year). These airports have not been fully exploited, especially Can Tho International Airport in 2018 just

welcomed 835,100 passengers, reaching 27.8% of capacity.

The airway connectivity between Ho Chi Minh City and Mekong Delta provinces through Tan Son Nhat International Airport (designed capacity of 50 million passengers per year) and Phu Quoc International Airport with the 34 flights per day, including, 17 trips from Tan Son Nhat Airport and just only 01 trip/day from Rach Gia Airport and Ca Mau Airport. Can Tho International Airport is not directly connected to Tan Son Nhat International Airport, however it will contribute to reducing the load of Tan Son Nhat Airport, which is currently overcrowded, if solutions to increase the number of passenger in Can Tho Airport are implemented.

- Maritime: the Mekong Delta currently has 12 seaports, 35 ports, 4.9 km of wharves, and the designed capacity of the ports in the region is 23.14-31.29 million tons/year. thanks to the continuous investment in a number of special ports, especially ports for thermal power plants, by 2020, the capacity will be 43.65-55.37 million tons/year. Up to now, the actual amount of goods transported is around 19.1 million tons in 2017 and 18.48 million tons in 2018. The current port infrastructure can meet the transport demand after 2020.

Currently, the Mekong Delta's seaports act as consolidators for ports in Ho Chi Minh City and Cai Mep - Thi Vai and serve short-distance inter-regional transportation. After the project on entrances for large vessels to Hau river has completed and put into use the Mekong Delta, unproves the effectiveness of exploitation of existing port for which accommodates 20,000-ton ships and develops next berths according

to planning. The Mekong Delta also forms new routes for container ships with a capacity of 500 - 1,000 TEU, contributing to reduction of cost and time, promoting the socio-economic development of the region and the country. However, it is necessary to research and invest in seaports as acting transshipment ports serving the import and export activities of the region.

- Railways: according to the orientation of the Railway Development Strategy and Planning approved by the Prime Minister, there will be a railway of Ho Chi Minh City - My Tho - Can Tho - Ca Mau whose length is 320 km and whose rail size is 1.435mm connects Ho Chi Minh City to some provinces in the Southwestern region. It is expected to be invested after 2020. Currently, the Ministry of Transport has developed and approved the detailed plan for the section from Ho Chi Minh City to Can Tho acting as a basis for local authorities to reserve land for the railways.

## 2. Shortcomings and limitations of the regional transport infrastructure

Complicated natural conditions with large rivers and weak geological formation require tremendous investment in transport works in the region. Although the transport investment in the region has been paid attention to, but due to difficulties in resources, the transport infrastructure system remains an obstruction and is unable to meet the requirements of the region's socio-economic development, namely:

- The vertical routes which have not been fully invested and connected in accordance with the planning (N1 road, N2 road, the highway of Trung Luong - My Thuan - Can Tho, the Eastern



vertical route,...), causing an obstruction, frequently leading to traffic jams, especially during rush hours, holidays and New Year. The horizontal routes have basically been formed but the scale and quality of roads are still very limited, and not invested and upgrade as planned because of inadequate resources.

- Large-scale logistics centers and dry ports to promote multi-modal transportation of the region have not been formed. Most of existing logistics centers are small-scale, have limited capacity and mainly connect to road transport. Therefore they have not played a role as transshipment center. Bottlenecks in the ability to connect inland waterways with roads and seaways have not been removed (the navigational clearance of a number of bridges has not been met the requirements as the planning), making it possible for some ships to pass. Especially only ships with two-layer of containers can pass the bridges, making transportation costs increase and reduce competitiveness.

- There have also been lack of passengers to fully exploit the capacity of airports in the region due to low attracting effort, especially Can Tho International Airport (only 28% of its capacity is exploited). Passengers also prefer using roadways to travel from Ho Chi Minh City to Ca Mau and Kien Giang provinces and vice versa, go to using Can Tho Airport.

- Congestion occurs frequently on routes connecting from Ho Chi Minh City to Mekong Delta's provinces. Therefore, the quality of transport and services are mediocre, the competitiveness is low, the cost is not reasonable, the connectivity between modes of transport is limited, and the regional connection effectiveness has not been fully promoted.

- The port system in the region is mainly located in the river but the access are limited. Even when the Project of entrances for large tonnage vessel to Hau River via Quan Chanh Bo canal is completed, it can only seve full load-10,000-ton vessels and off-loaded-20,000-ton vessels. There are very few specialized container ports, so more than 70% of the Mekong Delta's exports are moving to ports in the Eastern region of Viet Nam by road, inland waterways and coastal routes.

- The railway from Ho Chi Minh City to Can Tho city has not been developed.

## II. ORIENTATIONS, DUTIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Orientations and duties for infrastructure development in the coming time

#### a) General duties

- Organizing to research and develop the regional, provincial and national transportation planning for the period of 2021 - 2030, vision towards 2050, which forms a basis for determining and mobilizing resources to deploy the construction of overall infrastructure of the region in general and transport infrastructure in particular, contributing to motivating the region's socio-economic development.

- Focusing on direction to complete the transport infrastructure investment projects in the region which has been entitled to capital allocation.

#### b) Specific tasks for each field

- For roads

+ Step by step completing the construction of national routes and vertical

and horizontal highways in the region to connect Ho Chi Minh City to the Mekong Delta's provinces, to connect urban centers within the region, seaports and economic zones to the border gates such as: highways of Trung Luong - My Thuan - Can Tho, Ha Tien - Rach Gia - Bac Lieu route, Duc Hoa - My An - Vam Cong route, An Huu - Cao Lanh route, Rach Mieu 2 Bridge, Dai Ngai Bridge; upgrading the National Route 30, 53, 54, 61, 61B, 63,...

+ Gradually completing the Belt Road 3 and 4 of Ho Chi Minh City, connecting Ho Chi Minh City and the Southeastern provinces to the Mekong Delta region.

+ Researching to add the vertical route linking Ho Chi Minh City - Long An - Tien Giang to the national road network planning (the National Route 50B), in order to strengthen the connection between Ho Chi Minh City and Mekong Delta provinces.

- For inland waterways

+ Renovating, upgrading and completing of inland waterway routes such as Ho Chi Minh City to Kien Luong, Ho Chi Minh City to Ca Mau, Ho Chi Minh City to Ben Keo, Ho Chi Minh City to Ben Suc; upgrading and increasing the nagational clearance of bridges; improving the capacity of transport channels; improving the transport infrastructure system; reducing obstruction situation on main waterways; reducing freight costs from manufacturers to consumer market.

+ Promptly completing investment procedures of the project of waterway corridors and logistics development in the Southern region funded by the World Bank as the project is expected to start in 2020 and complete in 2025.

+ Researching and deploying the

project of dredging and improving the Muong Khai Doc Phu Hien canal for connection between the Tien and Hau rivers to shorten the transport distance between Can Tho port and the seaports in the Southeast region to reduce transportation and logistics costs.

- For maritime transport

+ Completing and submitting to the Prime Minister for approval the adjusted planning of Soc Trang and Tran De seaports; encouraging the investment from social capital to soon form a gateway port for ships with a tonnage of up to 100,000 tons and over 100,000 tons, to serve the direct import and export purpose in the Mekong Delta region.

+ Implementing the project on entraces for large vessel to the Hau river in the completion phase, to ensure stable flow of ships; effectively exploiting and forming routes for containers connecting the Mekong Delta region with the Southeastern seaports (Cat Lai, Cai Mep - Thi Vai).

- For air transport

Studying to raise the capacity of Phu Quoc International Airport to meet the increasing passengers' demand; studying and investing in new generation aircraft such as A319/320/neo/ceo with capacity from 160 to 165 passengers to exploit Tan Son Nhat - Rach Gia route and Tan Son Nhat - Ca Mau route; coordinating with Can Tho City and airlines to study and propose policies and mechanisms to encourage airlines to open new routes connecting Can Tho International Airport with domestic and international cities, reducing the load for critically overloaded Tan Son Nhat Airport.

- For railways

Calling for investment in the railway

connecting Ho Chi Minh City to Can Tho City in accordance with the orientation of the Railway Development Strategy and Planing approved by the Prime Minister.

## 2. Solutions and recommendations

### a) Solutions to mobilize resources

To mobilize a variety of resources to develop transport infrastructure, to prioritize resources to invest in important transport infrastructure projects which play a role of regional dynamic, spillover and connection (vertical national routes and highway connecting with Ho Chi Minh City, roads connecting economic zones, seaports and international transport corridors). To combine the efficiency of between the central and local capital sources, having appropriate mechanisms and policies to mobilize private capital and other lawful capital sources to invest in the construction of transport infrastructure.

### b) Transport connectivity solutions

- To research and implement mechanisms and policies to encourage investment in infrastructure improvement, to promote connectivity between road and waterway transport with inland waterway ports, seaports and airports.

- To focus on reforming administrative procedures; improve inland waterways service quality to reduce pressure on road transport, especially inter-regional and international transport. To create an equal business environment and encouraging all economic sectors to participate in transport and services business; innovate transport means, technology and equipment, prioritizing the development of container transport, multi-modal and logistics services to reasonably regulate transport modes. To renovate loading and unloading technology at transport hubs,

building and developing logistics service centers in the region.

### c) Recommendations

- It is recommended to research and soon develop the Law on Public Private Partnership Investment; supplement and amend the Law on Public Investment, serving as a basis to promote the progress of public investment projects and encourage the mobilization of social capital in transport infrastructure investment.

- It is recommended to give solutions to handle difficulties and obstacles in implementation of the Planning Law as a basis to continue the formulation of regional, provincial and national industry planning.

- To prioritize to balance and allocate investment resources for regional transport infrastructure, building effective coordination mechanism between the Central and local authorities in implementing the investment in belt roads and highways with stronger participation from local authorities in the region .

- To research and complete mechanisms and policies on infrastructure investment and business; transfer of the rights for exploiting and renting infrastructure; regarding using infrastructure fees, post-investment fees, with the State's regulation, to ensure interests of the people, on the basis of respecting market principles and ensuring healthy competition, anti-monopoly, publicity, transparency, harmonizing the relationship between the State and the market to mobilize resources to invest in new projects./.





**MR. PHẠM HỒNG HÀ**

*Member of Central Committee of the Party  
Minister of Construction*

**REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURE, URBAN AREAS AND HOUSING FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEKONG DELTA**

Immediately after the Government issued the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP, the Ministry of Construction developed and issued the Action Plan to implement the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP with 09 groups of specific tasks and solutions, simultaneously coordinating with the local agencies in the region in implementing the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP and strengthening the organization of working groups to understand the situation in the local provinces.

**1. Specific results on the development of infrastructure, urban areas, and housing**

*a) Basic completion of the regional construction planning, infrastructure planning and urban development program in the Mekong Delta, meeting requirements of the sustainable development, and active climate change resilience*

The Ministry of Construction submitted to the Prime Minister for approval the Adjusted Construction Planning of the Mekong Delta until 2030 with vision to

2050, together with specialized planning of technical infrastructure: water supply; construction of solid waste treatment areas; drainage; orientations, strategies and programs for urban development...

The result is considered to be crucial in creating legal basis to manage the regional development and implement investment projects in a systematic, consistent and more effective way.

*b) Proactive investment, development of urban areas, infrastructure and housing*

- 93% of Urban renovation programs in 6 Mekong Delta provinces/cities, funded by the World Bank for the period of 2012-2019, with a total funding of nearly USD 300 million, have been at 93% completed.

+ Water supply: the average rate of urban population having access to clean water is about 89.6%, higher than the national average (about 86%), increasing by 1% compared to that in 2017. Currently, the Ministry of Construction is supporting a technical project "Preparing for a safe

water supply project in the Mekong Delta", funded by the World Bank, to set up a water supply investment project to meet the demand for domestic and production use for provinces in the southwest of the Hau River by 2025 and 2030.

+ Solid waste treatment: the total volume of urban solid waste collected in the whole region is about 4,300 tons/day, reaching 78% of the total amount of solid waste generated (up by 3% compared to 2017). In the entire region, there are about 10 concentrated solid waste treatment plants in operation whose total designed capacity can treat about 30% of solid waste generated and the rest is buried.

+ Drainage and wastewater treatment: the total volume of domestic waste water in the whole region is at about 1 million m<sup>3</sup>/day. Currently, some local provinces in the region are implementing ODA projects to meet requirements of the wastewater treatment.

+ The rate of urbanization is increasing; the urban quality in the region has been gradually improved, ensuring better living conditions for people. The whole region has 169 cities including: 2 cities grade I, 9 cities of grade II, 8 cities of grade III, 26 cities of grades IV, and 124 center of grade V. Among them 5 cities have been newly upgraded and 3 cities



have been newly established compared to 2017. The rate of urbanization in the whole region reached over 27.2%, increasing by 0.7% compared to 2017.

*c) Positive results in the housing development in the Mekong Delta region*

Regarding the implementation of the program of developing residential clusters and houses in flooded areas in the Mekong Delta: from 2001 to 2015, 1,082 residential clusters and embankments were completed for nearly 192,220 households in flooded areas. In accordance with the request of the local authorities and at the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP, the Government approved additional 130 projects for more than 44,800 households in landslide areas in 6 provinces/cities to be deployed by the end of 2020.

In addition, the Program on housing for people with meritorious services, Program on housing for poor households in rural areas, Program on social housing in urban areas and industrial parks gave rise to new constructions or repairs of more than 87,100 apartments for beneficiaries.

Thus, the Government's policies on the Mekong Delta housing have so far supported the construction or repairs of over 279,300 apartments for beneficiaries, ensuring accommodation for more than 1.1 million people in the region.

However, in addition to positive results, the development of infrastructure, urban areas and housing in the Mekong Delta is still undergoing difficulties as follows: The urbanization rate and pace in the region are much lower than the national average. The technical infrastructure is weak and inconsistent. The collection and treatment of solid waste and waste water have not witnessed many changes, with

low treatment rates and most are outdated technologies. The housing support for beneficiaries in the Mekong Delta region is still slow compared to the plan...

**2. Causes of limitations and difficulties**

- Resources for the infrastructure and housing development in the Mekong Delta are still very limited, mainly based on the public budget, while the allocation and implementation of investment are still spreading; the implementation of socialization of investment and mobilization of non-state investment remains limited.

- Climate change and extreme weather phenomena such as floods and droughts leading to salinization, subsidence of the ground... become more complicated and difficult to predict, they cause much negative impact on the technical infrastructure and many difficulties in implementing the planning and investment projects.

- The coordination and development management mechanism in the whole region has not been well-defined.

**3. Proposals and recommendations**

In order to continue to promote the achieved results, overcome shortcomings, limitations and effectively address the challenges of developing infrastructure, urban areas and housing for sustainable development in the Mekong Delta region, the following tasks are recommended:

- To continue reviewing construction planning, urban planning, infrastructure planning to promote the identity of the Mekong Delta to ensure the sustainable development, savings resources and climate change adaptation. On this basis, to develop the regional planning in accordance with the Planning Law

to ensure the consistent and effective management and coordination of the regional development...

- To complete guidelines and specific standards on urban, areas infrastructure, construction investment in accordance with requirements of responding to climate change and sea level rise.

- To continue to clarify the model, content, method and organization of the regional development coordination. To develop an appropriate investment planning program in the direction of both strengthening the support from the Central Budget in the context of limited regional budgets and supplementing some mechanisms and policies to mobilize domestic and international financial resources for the urban area, infrastructure and housing development of the Mekong Delta.

In this regard, the Ministry of Construction would like to propose to the Government and the Prime Minister two specific suggestions:

- Firstly, on the basis of summarizing the programs on developing residential clusters and housing in flooded areas in the Mekong Delta, the Prime Minister assigns the Ministry of Construction to coordinate with local agencies to develop safe housing development projects to adapt to both flood, landslide, drought and saline intrusion.

- Secondly, the Prime Minister allows studying and supplementing support policies from the central and local budgets which are superior to the current policies in order to implement the Safe Water Supply Project in the Mekong Delta region with the funding from the World Bank. The Ministry of Construction think that, along with the

development of urban areas and transport systems, the implementation of projects on safe housing and safe water supply to actively deal with extreme conditions due to variable climate change and sea level rise is the most important in promoting the sustainable development and ensuring the social security of the Mekong Delta region. The Ministry of Construction will coordinate with ministries, sectors and local agencies to propose specific support policies and would like to receive instructions from the Government and the Prime Minister.

After two years of implementation of the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP, although it has not met the requirements and expectations, we have achieved some important results, demonstrating a more active and positive spirit and a better coordination. We believe that after this Conference, the Government and the Prime Minister will have specific policies to continue effectively addressing challenges in the sustainable development of the Mekong Delta region, which will act as an orientation for ministries, sectors, and local agencies in the region to continue making efforts and effectively implement the tasks assigned in the Resolution./.

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**MR. OUSMANE DIONE**

*World Bank Country Director for Viet Nam*

## JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE MEKONG DELTA WORKING GROUP

*Excellency Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc,*

*Excellency Permanent Deputy Prime Minister Trương Hòa Bình,*

*Excellency Deputy Prime Minister Trịnh Đình Dũng,*

*Ministers and leaders of central ministries and agencies,*

*Provincial Party Secretaries and Chairmen of Mekong Delta provinces, Can Tho City, and Ho Chi Minh City,*

*Ambassadors, Development Partners, representatives of the diplomatic corps,*

*Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,*

Firstly, your Excellency Prime Minister Phuc, on behalf of the Development Partners, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to you and your Government for its commitment to the Mekong Delta. In November 2017, when the Government issued Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP on Climate Resilient

and Sustainable Development of the Mekong Delta of Viet Nam, it recognized that a climate resilient, prosperous, and sustainable Delta is not an option, it is a must. More recently, this commitment was reinforced, with the approval of the overall Action Plan for the Resolution.

As your Development Partners, we too are committed to the Mekong Delta and the implementation of Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP.

Since 2015, we have mobilized approximately USD 1.6 billion for activities in the Mekong Delta, most of which are aligned with Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP. In partnership with government authorities at all levels we have used this financing for innovative pilots and large infrastructure investments aiming to bolster climate resilience and sustainability while fostering growth for people, rural areas, cities, provinces and the region. We have also worked closely with provincial and central authorities and other international and national partners

efficient mobilization and use of financial resources. To mobilize financing, it is important to first, establish an overarching financing platform that can bring together and leverage public and private resources, concessional loans, and grants, and efficiently allocate the financial resources to prioritized climate-smart investments. Second, prioritize an enabling regulatory environment for partnerships among provinces and with private sector. Third, establish a simplified and efficient budget allocation and execution system with robust and effective fiscal incentives for promoting regional investments.

The financing platform should provide dedicated financing for Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP and implementation of the Integrated Regional Master Plan and be properly monitored. The Government's commitment to the financing platform

and climate resilient regional investments must be reflected in the 2021-2025 central and provincial socio-economic development plans and accompanying medium-term investment plans. Available financing should also cover incentives for coordination, incentives for private sector engagement, formulation and implementation of innovative and transformative climate-smart solutions, and risk mitigation. International experiences with Trusts, Financing Facilities, umbrella financing mechanisms including for example regional targeted budget support programs, use of bonds, public private partnerships (PPP), and climate financing can offer insights for the Mekong Delta. As Development Partners we will continue to assist with identifying appropriate financing instruments, designing enabling regulations, and mobilization of financing.



**Innovation, information and involvement of stakeholders are also instrumental for effectiveness of future decisions and actions for the Delta.**

Latest technologies and innovations help anticipate and work with the continuously evolving dynamics of the Delta and the external challenges. Using technology, people at all levels can have access to current knowledge, data and information. Involvement of stakeholders is powerful when accompanied by a comprehensive data system with real time data, information and decision support tools. This helps stakeholders assess the impact of multiple drivers-of-change on the Delta, understand trends, and inform policies and investments. A comprehensive data system will also enable closer monitoring of activities in the Delta, supporting transparency and accountability. In line with the overall Action Plan for Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP, we will continue to help facilitate innovations and optimize the use of technology, including for the establishment of the Mekong Delta Center, associated integrated databases, and for evidence-based decision-making.

Strong institutions, implementation, information, innovation and involvement of stakeholders are essential ingredients for the Delta's future development. With these elements in place, the Mekong Delta will be climate resilient, help improve people's lives, include diverse and resilient production systems, have resilient and adaptable infrastructure, and promote wise use of its natural endowments. With these elements in place, key obstacles to sustainable development of the Delta can be effectively overcome.

Strong institutions, effective implementation, robust information,

innovation and involvement of stakeholders are also necessary to put in practice many of the technical sectoral solutions discussed today in the Mekong Delta Forum.

For example, coordinated cost-effective interprovincial investments are needed for water security and water resource management in the Delta. With increasing urbanization, investments must implement efficient and innovative measures to maintain access to potable water in low-lying areas of the Delta. Innovations include community-scale rainwater harvesting, desalinization, storage facilities, and maintaining future water supply through decentralized models where solutions are specific to local availability of fresh and brackish water resources. These innovations accompanied with policy measures, such as tariffs and subsidy schemes, could ensure access to safe water supply.

Integrated water resource management in the Delta requires coordination, including at the regional level, to living with water. This means low-regret or no-regret investments in water resources management, especially water infrastructure. For example, to increase water storage and retention in the upper Delta and rationalization of water use in agriculture, responding to emerging water and climate conditions throughout the Delta. Regional and interprovincial cooperation is also needed to minimize potential conflicts in operating water infrastructures.

Actively living with water means embracing floods, droughts and salinity, and reconsidering plans for high dykes, embankments, and sluices by providing room for natural flows and

floodplain functions. Living with water must be complemented with actions such as sustainable rice production and transformation of production systems, and effective measures to address flood risk, drought, coastal and river-bank erosion, water pollution and exploitation of the Delta's natural assets.

Coordinated interventions are also necessary to restore the Delta's sediment and slow down land subsidence, which is occurring at the rate of two to five centimeters per year, and coastal and river-bank erosion. This includes applying innovative measures and technologies to better regulate and monitor groundwater extraction, including pricing for water, and unauthorized sand-mining. It also requires Government of Vietnam to increase its engagement in transboundary water diplomacy to stop sediment and nutrient loss in the Delta. The innovative solutions and investments can be wide-ranging from increasing water retention to using nature-based solutions such as protection and rehabilitation of floodplain wetlands and mangroves.

Delivering Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP requires that climate-smart and low-impact agriculture and aquaculture in the Delta be professionalized and focus on adding value. Agriculture-based industry, a major player in the future development of the Delta, will have to focus its efforts on less volume and more value. More diversified climate-smart agriculture, adapted to local environmental contexts, natural endowments and sub-regional comparative advantages are the only way forward. Knowledge and support services, risk management instruments, supporting infrastructure, and private investment are all necessary for this change. For sector accumulation, which

is the future of agriculture in the Delta, agricultural cooperatives will need to build value chains, adopt helpful technologies and work closely with companies. The Delta can then become an agribusiness region that remains one of the most productive and sustainable agricultural regions worldwide.

Improved connectivity is also imperative for a climate resilient, prosperous and sustainable Mekong Delta. As a large wetland, the Delta is a complex and fragile entity. Greater connectivity should involve climate-resilient infrastructure and regionally suitable multimodal transport investments including inland waterways. The efficiency of logistic services can be raised by tapping into the Delta's inland waterway network, enhancing multi-modal connectivity and making investments on main supply corridors. Improvements in feeder waterways and roads at commune and provincial level will reduce transport costs from production points to markets and better link poorer and more remote producer communities with market centers. Improved connectivity also requires improving the efficiency and safety of South Waterways Logistic Corridors.

Active engagement of the Delta provinces and Can Tho is necessary to accelerate successful implementation of these technical solutions for delivering Resolution No. 120. They know their comparative advantages and challenges and bring important ideas for the future of the Delta. Delivering on Resolution 120 requires active involvement these thirteen Delta champions.

To accelerate the translation of Resolution No. 120 from policy to

practice, it is time to end business-as-usual and put in place strong institutions, support effective implementation, promote innovation, use current information, and promote stakeholder involvement. Having these elements underpin the technical solutions for a climate resilient, prosperous and sustainable Mekong Delta will deliver on the objectives of Resolution No. 120. Decisions and commitments made today will determine the future of

the Mekong Delta and its contribution to Vietnam's political, growth, and cultural aspirations in the short-and long-term. As Development Partners, we stand committed to work with you and, through our strong partnership, make a climate resilient, prosperous, and sustainable Mekong Delta a reality.

*Vì đồng bằng sông Cửu Long.*

*Thank you!*





**MR. ROBBERT MOREE**

*Delta Coordinator and Principal Adviser to Minister on climate adaptation  
Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management*

## SPEECH BY THE DELTA COORDINATOR OF NETHERLANDS

*Excellency Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc,*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

Thank you again, Prime Minister Phuc, for showing your continued personal interest in the Mekong Delta and commitment for water management and climate adaptation. Your personal attention is needed. Because there is a lot at stake.

The Mekong Delta is changing in terms of economic growth, climate, water conditions, agriculture, urbanisation, transport, etc.

Change in the Mekong has two sides: progress and vulnerability. Over the last decades, both have increased in the Mekong Delta. Progress was made due to low costs of labour, land, water, sand and commodities. Basically, the Mekong Delta's resources were exploited rather than sustainably managed.

The result is that the Mekong has become more vulnerable. More vulnerable

to subsidence, climate change, erosion and over exploitation of resources and farmers.

If we want to make the delta safe, sustainable and productive we will have to change. This counts for both the Dutch delta as the Vietnamese delta.

The challenge of today is to choose another development path. A path where progress is linked to reduced vulnerability. Change must result in resilience, in making the delta sustainable.

As Development Partner, we, of course, want to assist Viet Nam on this path. Viet Nam made a good start on this path with Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP of the Prime Minister. Clear and sustainable choices are made in this resolution.

In this framework, I like to ask you all something important. Something essential: If we, as Development Partners, are asked to assist you with changing the development path we must understand what drives the on-going trends in the Mekong and what drives the alternative of sustainable development?

In other words: I am from the Netherlands and I feel and think Dutch. I am used to Dutch governance, Dutch laws and the interests of Dutch farmers, industry and people. So I need your help in understanding what drives the Vietnamese, what are the clear processes and regulations to follow when we want to change the development path of the Mekong Delta into a path to resilience, sustainability and productivity?

Some say 'only when we can adapt to change we can survive'. But I want to add: only when we can change, we can survive.

As a Mekong Delta Community of Practice, today we come to the point that we understand we need to change our behaviour and our practices regarding water management and agriculture, but also our engineering, stakeholder consultation, planning and coordination practices.

Your Excellency Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc, what or who can change the development path and practices? And where can the development partners assist those stakeholders in their strive to a resilient, sustainable and productive Mekong Delta?

My experience in The Netherlands is that change on water and climate adaptation requires input and action from Local, Regional and National Government, from Industry, from Agriculture, from the People, from Financial institutions and from environmental NGO's.

Only then, there will be a plan that is widely supported, that takes into account all interests, that has the right goal and the right prioritization in implementation and realization. This requires consistent and strong government leadership at all levels. With a clear ambition and vision.

Your Excellency, identifying together with you the right change triggers is crucial to take today's reporting on Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP forward to the implementation of the identified solutions and recommendations.

Identifying together with you the right change triggers is crucial to align the Development Partners' support to the Vietnamese context. What works in the Netherlands might not work in Viet Nam and other countries, where change happens in different ways. The Dutch therefore take pride in an effort to provide tailor-made advice. We will do our utmost to inspire Viet Nam with our ways of delta planning, coordination and our planning and prioritization of projects and of finance. We can inspire you. But our way of working cannot be copied one on one in other countries.

So Viet Nam will have to mobilize its own positive change triggers. Viet Nam will have to develop its own common values towards a sustainable, resilient and productive Mekong Delta. The government already set important steps: Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP, the new planning law and the draft PPP law.

We, together with the other development partners, are ready to accompany you along your path.

The Mekong Delta is changing in terms of progress AND vulnerability. There are big interests in the on-going trends that prevent the change to happen. The Mekong Delta's resources are under a serious threat of human actions. This requires a change of course.

*Today. Together./.*

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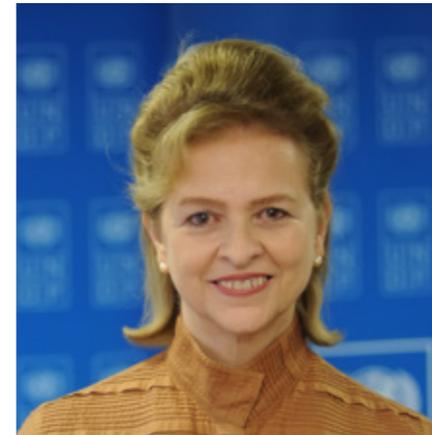
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*Today. Together./.*



**MS. CAITLIN WIESEN**

*Resident Representative of United Nations Development Programme in Viet Nam*

## **SPEECH BY THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE OF UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

*Excellency Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc,*

*Permanent Deputy Prime Minister Trương Hòa Bình,*

*Deputy Prime Minister Trịnh Đình Dũng,*

*President of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front Central Committee Trần Thanh Mẫn,*

*Ho Chi Minh City's Party Committee Secretary Nguyễn Thiện Nhân,*

*Ministers, Provincial Party Secretaries and provincial Chairmen,*

*Distinguished guests and representatives from ministries and provinces,*

*Colleagues from the Embassies and Development Agencies, UN system, NGOs, Research institutions and Academies, Media,*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

I have the great honor of addressing this important forum to take stock of progress in implementation of Resolution

No. 120/NQ-CP on Climate Resilient and Sustainable Development of the Mekong Delta of Viet Nam.

The adoption of the Action Plan for the Resolution No. 120, on April 13, 2019 sends clear signal on the Government's determination to the climate resilient and prosperous development of the Mekong Delta. UNDP is proud of having contributed to the preparation of the Action Plan.

It is very encouraging to see the start of the preparation of a new Integrated Master Plan for the Delta, for the period 2021-2030 with vision until 2050. The Delta is a unified region in terms of climate and natural resource endowments and the shared risks and effects of climate change, therefore the integrated approach is a must, not an option. The Integrated Master Plan must serve as a single framework for the abolishment and revision of the existing 2,538 master plans and plans, and the alignment of all the future investment plans by line ministries

Increasing transformation and climate ambition in sectors like agriculture, aiming to adapt to a changing climate, in effect presents many business and investment opportunities.

Climate actions also promote innovations and new approach to promote co-benefits of investments, as such combination between solar energy development and agriculture in the form of new land-use planning approaches.

UNDP is very committed to work working with the Government, and all key stakeholders to successfully implement Resolution 120 for climate resilient and prosperous Mekong Delta, where no one is left behind.

*Thank you!*



**MR. ERIC SIDGWICK**

*Country Director, Viet Nam Resident Mission  
Asian Development Bank*

### **SPEECH BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK**

*Excellency Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc,*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

On behalf of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), let me express our sincere appreciation for the opportunity to attend this afternoon's session on the Evaluation of the two-year Implementation of the Government's Resolution on Climate Resilient and Sustainable Development of the Mekong River Delta in Response to Climate Change, and to briefly present on ADB's support to this important undertaking.

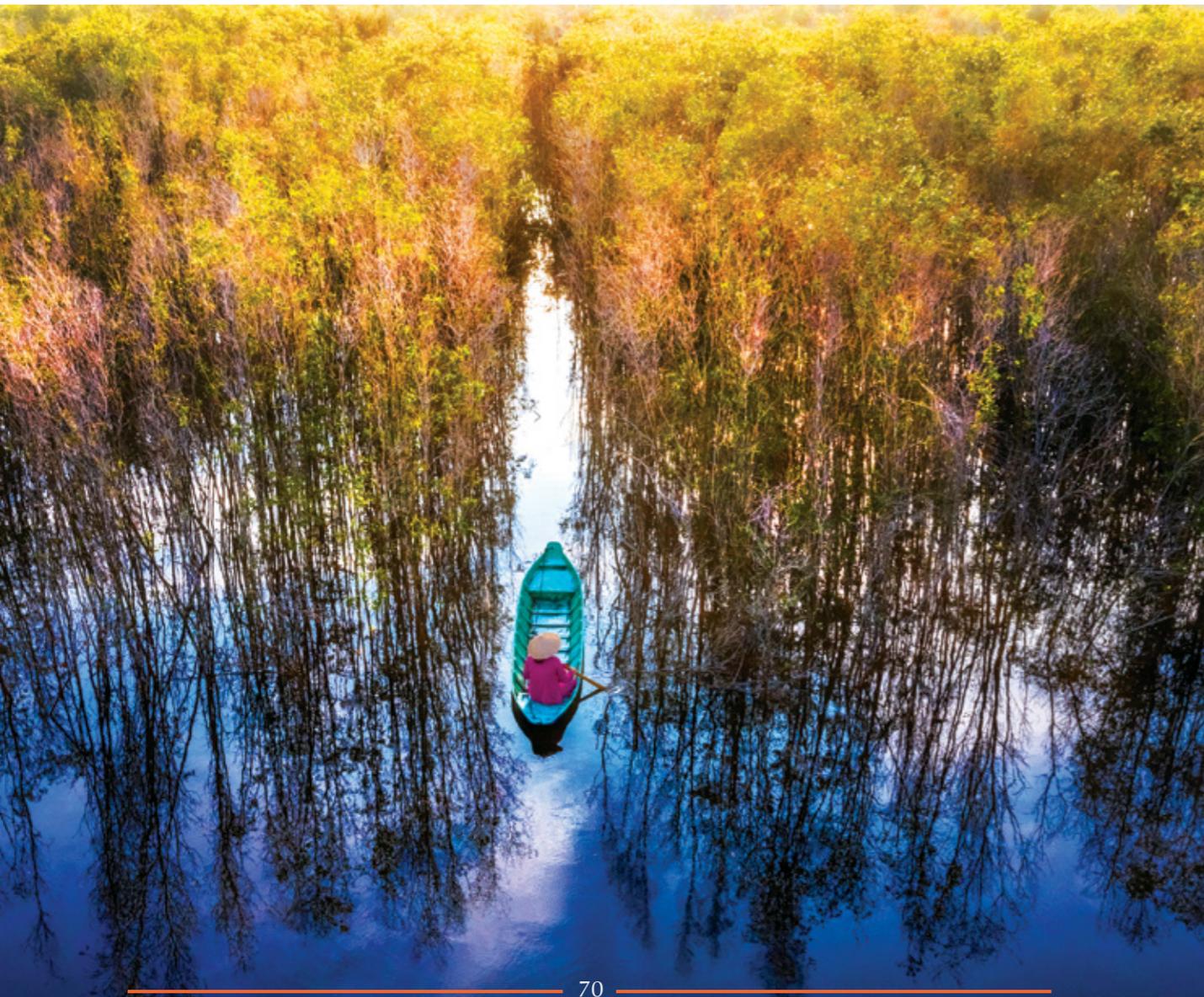
At the corporate level, ADB has committed to doubling its climate financing to \$6 billion by 2020, of which \$4 billion for mitigation and \$2 billion for adaptation. Looking forward, under ADB's new corporate strategy, Strategy 2030, ADB is aiming to ensure that 75% of the number of committed operations (on a 3-year rolling average, including sovereign and non-sovereign operations)

will support climate change mitigation and adaptation by 2030, and that climate financing from its own resources will reach \$80 billion cumulatively from 2019 to 2030.

In Viet Nam, ADB's support is guided by our ongoing Country Partnership Strategy (CPS), 2016-2020, which is anchored on the Government's Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP), 2016-2020. "Improving Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Response" is one of the three pillars of our CPS that we committed to support in the period to 2020.

ADB's financial and technical assistance support to enhancing climate change resilience in the Mekong Delta has been provided through the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) program and our national program.

Our on-going GMS investment projects that support the government's action plan to implement Resolution No.



120/NQ-CP cover several sectors. More specifically, consistent with the GMS Regional Investment Framework and the Ha Noi Action Plan which were both endorsed by the leaders at the 6<sup>th</sup> GMS Summit in Ha Noi in March 2018, ADB is supporting enhanced climate resilience of transport infrastructure and strengthened physical connectivity from within to outside the Mekong Delta region, from Long An to the South central economic zones of Ho Chi Minh City and Dong Nai province under the Ben Luc – Long Thanh Expressway Project, co-financed with JICA. We are also supporting the upgrade of water management infrastructure, and strengthening community-based disaster risk management. The project will pair upgrades in water management infrastructure with community-based disaster risk management and enhanced regional forecasting to improve disaster preparedness in the Greater Mekong Subregion. The project will pair upgrades in water management infrastructure with community-based disaster risk management and enhanced regional forecasting to improve disaster preparedness in the Greater Mekong Subregion. to help The project will pair upgrades in water management infrastructure with community-based disaster risk management and enhanced regional forecasting to improve disaster preparedness in the Greater Mekong Subregion. The project will pair upgrades in water management infrastructure with community-based disaster risk management and enhanced regional forecasting to improve disaster preparedness in the Greater Mekong Subregion. mitigate and manage the impacts of floods and droughts in Tien Giang and Dong Thap provinces under

the GMS Flood and Drought Mitigation and Management Project.

Under our national program, ADB is supporting internal connectivity within the Mekong Delta from Dong Thap to Can Tho province, under the Central Mekong Connectivity Project, cofinanced with the Government of Australia for the construction of the Cao Lanh Bridge, and with parallel co-financing with KEXIM for the connection to the Vam Cong Bridge. The Mekong Central Connectivity Project will also mitigate against and adapt to climate change impacts and strengthen institutional capacity of the targeted provinces.

ADB is also working increasingly with the private sector to leverage resources to bridge the financing gap and to incentivize environmentally sustainable growth through public private partnerships. ADB has launched a new agriculture technology accelerator program called 'MATCH', which will help transform agriculture industries into leading global suppliers of safe and nutritious food in the Mekong Delta. MATCH is an alliance of public and private partners including food industry corporations, universities, business providers and investors.

ADB's possible future support to strengthen the regional and sub-regional connectivity includes the proposed Ho Chi Minh City Ring Road 3 project connecting to the ongoing Ben Luc - Long Thanh Expressway. ADB is also preparing a project to support agriculture commercialization and value chain development in 4 southern provinces, 2 of which belong to the Mekong Delta (Can Tho and Hau Giang). The proposed project will promote climate-smart horticultural production using advanced technologies, strengthen horticulture

value chain infrastructure, and strengthen capacity to develop high-quality horticultural value chains, including with private sector participation.

ADB has also provided technical assistance to the Mekong Delta region. We have financed feasibility studies and guidance for integration of climate change impact into provincial master planning – to help with investing in “no regrets” options and the solutions to day-to-day environmental and development challenges. This has enhanced the capacity of Kien Giang province and Ca Mau province to better plan for climate resilient development. Further, we completed a city sanitation strategy for eight Mekong Delta cities. Based on this strategy some cities

have already completed the pre-feasibility studies for investment projects. We also provided technical support to improve trade facilitation for delivery of safe and value-adding agribusiness-food products targeting the Mekong Delta region.

These and other potential projects would be reflected in our next CPS, 2021-2025, which would be anchored on the Government's forthcoming SEDP, 2021-2025, with a view to provide additional support to sustainable and climate-resilient development of the Mekong Delta region, in close coordination with provinces, central line agencies, and other development partners.





**H.E. CRAIG CHITTICK**

*The Australian Ambassador to Viet Nam*

## SPEECH BY THE AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR TO VIET NAM

*Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc,*

*Ho Chi Minh City Party Secretary Nguyễn Thiện Nhân,*

*Deputy Prime Minister Trương Hòa Bình,*

*Deputy Prime Minister Trịnh Đình Dũng,*

*Ministers, Provincial leaders,*

*Development Partners,*

*Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,*

It is my great honour to be here today to discuss the implementation of Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP on the Climate Resilient and Sustainable Development of the Mekong Delta. Nearly two years ago, at the Mekong Delta Conference in Can Tho in September 2017, I witnessed Vietnam's commitment to the Mekong Delta with the issue of Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP.

Prime Minister Phuc, I congratulate you on your leadership in establishing

the vision for a safe, prosperous and sustainable Mekong Delta. Vietnam's vision for the Mekong Delta is a vision shared by Australia. Australia has long been Vietnam's trusted partner in the Mekong Delta. Together, we have built bridges, including the My Thuan Bridge, the first cable-stayed bridge over the Mekong River, and the Cao Lanh Bridge, which celebrated its 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary last month. We have brought together Vietnamese research institutions and leading Australian universities to produce cutting-edge agricultural research, and we have contributed Australia's expertise in water resources management, drawing on our experiences in Australia's Murray Darling Basin.

Since that Mekong Delta Conference in 2017, the relationship between Australia and Vietnam has continued to grow and strengthen. The elevation of our relationship to a Strategic Partnership last year reflects the growing importance both countries place on working together

to address regional and global issues. Australia cares deeply about the Mekong Delta, not just because we are a close friend of Vietnam, but because the Mekong Delta is critically important to our region, and to the world.

This is why Australia is working with the World Bank, through the Australia-World Bank Strategic Partnership in Vietnam, to support implementation of key aspects of Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP. It is in these areas of cooperation that I want to highlight the importance of continued progress, echoing points from the Development Partners joint statement delivered by the World Bank Country Director this afternoon.

My recommendations also draw on Australia's experience in the Murray Darling Basin, which – like the Mekong Delta – is a complex network of connected rivers, floodplains, lakes, wetlands and groundwater, which crosses state boundaries, and is under threat from climate change.

Firstly, it is critical that the Integrated Regional Master Plan is evidence-based, informed by comprehensive and inclusive consultation, and built on national and international experiences. It is only through bringing together all stakeholders – government, research institutions, civil society, development partners, the private sector and communities – that we can build a Master Plan that considers the Mekong Delta as a whole connected system.

Secondly, I emphasise the importance of having a strong regional coordination mechanism that has the power to drive progress on implementation, coordinate activities and resources across jurisdictions, and make decisions on

funding allocations.

In Australia, we continue to refine our approaches to governance and coordination, learning from our successes and failures, and we are willing to share these lessons with Vietnam to help identify an effective mechanism for the Mekong Delta.

Finally, I urge you to prioritise the establishment of a dedicated financing mechanism that meets the specific and urgent needs of the Mekong Delta, and can mobilise and allocate resources from government, development partners, global funds and the private sector.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am encouraged by what I have heard today from Government leaders on progress in implementing Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP. I congratulate you all for your efforts and achievements. Now, it is time to accelerate progress, to collaborate more, and to innovate so that we can all deliver the Government's vision for a safe, prosperous and sustainable Mekong Delta./.

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**H.E. CHRISTIAN BERGER**

*German Ambassador to Viet Nam*

## SPEECH BY THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR TO VIET NAM

*Excellency Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc,*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

I was impressed by the leadership of the Government when I attended the Mekong Delta Conference in 2017, but I am equally/even more impressed today: the Government managed to mobilize an equally high/even higher number of different representatives from central and provincial governments, universities, international and local NGOs, private sector and Development Partners in an extremely short time. This really shows the commitment of Government and of all other actors to tackle the challenges the Mekong Delta is facing.

With the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP on Climate Resilient and Sustainable Development of the Mekong Delta of Viet Nam, the policies are in place. Now it is time for implementation. I would like to congratulate the Government on the adoption of Decision No. 417/QĐ-TTg on the Master Action Plan of Resolution No.

120/NQ-CP.

I do not have much time to speak today, so I want to concentrate on four aspects: coastal protection, water management and land subsidence, transformation of agriculture, and regional planning and coordination.

### **1. Regarding the coastal protection**

The Mekong Delta coastline is being threatened. More than half of the total 720 km is being eroded at different rates. The situation is urgent and prompt and effective solutions are needed. This challenge can only be tackled through an integrated, cross-sectoral and cross-territorial planning approach on a large spatial scale (rather than focusing on solutions for single local problems at certain sites as being done currently).

This approach will need to ensure that well-designed structures, rehabilitated mangrove forests, available spaces for mangrove and water, and innovative tools and techniques to inform decision-making – are all brought together to combat

anthropogenic factors.

But we already know that the sinking of the delta and the sea-level rise will increase flood risks and threaten livelihoods in large parts of the delta, such as the Ca Mau Peninsula and many urban areas. Counter actions to mitigate this process are urgently needed.

### **3. Regarding transformation of agriculture**

Resolution No. 120 emphasizes the role of the agricultural sector in the further development of the Mekong Delta. This will require a transformation from quantity towards quality and sustainability, primarily relying on increased efficiency, innovation, diversification and value-addition.

Public Private Partnerships and agricultural cooperatives play a vital role in supporting farmers in the adoption of these types of innovative climate smart technologies. They facilitate access to finance for investments and to markets.

### **4. Regarding regional planning and coordination**

The establishment of the pilot regional master plan for the Mekong Delta is central to the Government's push for regional coordination in all eight regions of the country.

The regional master plan introduces a multi-sector integrated approach to planning and budgeting. To be successful, consensus needs to be established among national and provincial leaders where the regional master plan needs to be the principal vehicle for the territorial application and implementation of national strategy and policy initiatives and sectorial orientations, and so serve the purpose of a regional framework for socio-

economic and infrastructure development.

A new way of doing things is required if the Mekong Delta Master Plan is to be successfully prepared and implemented. This new way uses an integrated and consultative approach, which involves the main political structures in Vietnam: the National Assembly, the Party's Central Committee, Ministries such as Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Home Affairs and other line Ministries, the Office of the Government and provincial leaders from the 13 Provincial Party and People's Committees in the Mekong Delta.

Strong leadership and political will is required from the national government and the Central Party Committee to push down directives and policy to implement regional planning, coordination and investment in the Mekong Delta. The Prime Minister and key Central Committee members need to be "champions" of change as effective implementation of the Law on Planning requires strong cohesion between Party directives and government policy./.





**MR. LÊ MINH HOAN**

*Member of Central Committee of Party  
Secretary of Dong Thap Provincial Party Committee*

### SPEECH BY THE DONG THAP PARTY SECRETARY

*His Excellency Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc,*

*Leaders chairing the Conference,*

*Distinguished delegates,*

I came here with a mission and wishes of local people in the region. All the solutions that the Government proposed to implement the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP are becoming clearer such as the investment portfolio, key projects, capital resources... People in the Mekong Delta wish the Government to make a commitment on the progress of implementing the projects more certainly so that the people in the Delta can lessen their waiting and impatience.

First of all, I would like to speak about the connection of the Mekong Delta. I think that for the Delta is development, there must be a resonance between the completed infrastructure and the restructuring of the economy, especially the agriculture. The most important requirement is to have direction. This morning I attended the thematic forum

on planning and listened to some experts present ation on the issue of the regional coordination council. I think the integrated planning is a difficult and new issue, as the planning is not only to adapt to climate change but is also the foundation for the development of the Delta. Climate change is only a condition. I was very impressed with the ideas of the consulting group on developing the master plan for sustainable development of the Mekong Delta.

Regarding the agricultural development in the Mekong Delta, I have opportunities to accompany people who work as seasonal workers in Korea and have chances to interact with cooperatives and agricultural service centers. The Korean government introduces the slogan "Agriculture is life, rural is the future" which is popular from Seoul to rural cooperatives. A country which is the 12th largest economy in the world, still assertively makes such a slogan. How about us? Is it sometimes that we want to turn away from agriculture? All the Provincial Party Committee Secretaries of the Mekong Delta have confided with me

that whenever agriculture is mentioned, it means poverty and making rice means even poorer. But why are there people still be able to get rich from agriculture, or is it only us who keep thinking of agriculture in such semi-crude way? The Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP carries a clear message from the Prime Minister that attention should be focused on the shift from agricultural production thinking to agricultural economic thinking, taking added value as a measure of such transformation. I went to Korean agricultural agencies and they told us that Korea went through four stages of agricultural revolution from the green revolution to the white revolution, to the knowledge revolution and now the revolution focusing on high value agriculture. These make me feel that maybe we need a reposition otherwise we will struggle to find a Samsung, a Truong Hai Auto Corporation, or a My Son refinery and petrochemical complex. Could the Delta can do that? How many people among 20 million people in the delta, will leave the Delta? How many farmer households will still stay in the Delta? Who will take care of them? This morning, a very interesting idea was proposed: "How can the Delta locals and farmers turn into entrepreneurs right on their own land to do agricultural economy?" Although it seems difficult, it is the core value I received this morning. I often replay films from Vietnam television for farmers. A Japanese village which was called the miraculous village, in an isolated top of the mountain, in the 70s, was the poorest village in Japan. But now it has become the richest village in Japan by only growing lettuce. These farmers are now in Lam Dong Province to continue growing lettuce and export them to Japan. And I show the farmers how and why Japanese people plant and sell Hiroshi

rice that is 10 times more expensive than Dong Thap rice in Viet Nam. Farmers were so surprised. It is not necessary to sell at 10 times more than the normal price, even just at 1.5 times, the living of farmers of the Delta would change. Double price is a dream already, 10 time higher price is beyond expectation. Therefore, we need to look back on some issues.

This morning, I made a remark about the story of an Australian business investing in Dong Thap Province. We asked that business to organize an investment promotion conference with Australian businesses. When meeting in Hanoi, they told me: "Please don't be disappointed but when speaking about Dong Thap, Australians don't know where Dong Thap is, speaking about An Giang, Bac Lieu, Ca Mau, people have no idea. But when it comes to the Mekong Delta, people know, because the Delta is mentioned in a geographic lesson they learned when they were young". So, from such vision, we will together build a Mekong Delta brand in 13 provinces and cities in the region. Currently, facing the mentioned-above challenges, the issue of Mekong Delta development will need a pivot which it is similar to what the Prime Minister repeatedly shared: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together". The Infrastructure connection is important, but more important is the cooperation of leaders of 13 local provinces and even more important is the connection of the business community and the people in the Mekong Delta to create a regional brand that ensures the harmonization of interests of the state, businesses and people.

*Thank you very much./.*



**PROF. ĐÀO XUÂN HỌC**

*Chairman of Viet Nam Water Resources Development Association*

### REMARKS ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTION NO. 120/NQ-CP

*His Excellency Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc,*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

The Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP fully reflects the development viewpoint, development model and guideline for a number of specific solutions, serving as an important basis for the planning of technical infrastructure industries in the context of climate change. What is more special and important is the comprehensive direction from the Government in the implementation of the integrated planning in the Mekong Delta.

Our country is still poor, but the technical infrastructure is lacking connection, for example, as the dyke is not connected with roads, bridges are not combined with culverts and the technical infrastructure is not linked, even conflict with natural disaster prevention and mitigation works. Drainage problems in urban areas in the Mekong Delta are not well integrated with the irrigation

sector, the flow of rivers from upstream to the coast, as well as comprehensive solutions for water storage, water supply and subsidence in urban areas. It can be said that technical infrastructure has not created a solid premise for specialized cultivation areas, manufacturing industries and economic development.

The introduction of Planning Law and implementation of the integrated planning in the Mekong Delta is a very important breakthrough in Vietnam's planning work. Especially with the direction from the Government in the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP and the tight and synchronized instructions in the recent period, I personally do not expect anything more. This year, ministries and sectors will complete their own planning. In addition, with support from the World Bank, an integrated planning project in the Mekong Delta was carried out by Dutch experts, who have extensive experience in water management in a low-lying delta. The Ministry of Planning and Investment

will gather the plannings, indicating the suitability and mismatch among the technical infrastructure and industries in terms of the development of production and economy in the region. To assist the Ministry of Planning and Investment and the Government in assessing and integrating separate planning of ministries and sectors, 6 sector-based advisory groups and experts have developed of the mentioned above planning. If ministries and experts work seriously, I am confident that by the end of 2020 we will have an integrated planning with a overarching frame, long-term vision, serving as a basis for investing in technical infrastructure works that are "no regrets" in order to promote the sustainable development of the Mekong Delta.

During the period when ministries and agencies were implementing the planning, I found that the motto of actively living with floods has been defined and given specific solutions. However, the concepts of actively living with salinity and brackish water needs to be discussed and clarified in order to avoid misunderstandings and controversy in society. For example, the concept of "living in accordance with nature" has been misunderstood in an extreme manner, leading to many recommendations to the General Secretary, President, National Assembly and Prime Minister. In this regard, I would like to say boldly: If you live in accordance with nature in an extreme manner, this world does not need engineering anymore.

Regarding technical issues, I would like to emphasize and clarify the impact from upstream activities and propose a solution, which should be implemented as soon as possible, to minimize impacts from upstream activities, such as land

subsidence, erosion and inundation in urban areas.

The total volume of the 144 upstream hydroelectric lakes, accounting for about 26% of the total annual average flow of the Mekong River, makes the average flow in the flood season decrease, so the Mekong Delta will almost not have flood. However, large and largest flood flows still increase. Even in case of the extreme scenario when Cambodia constructs works on the Tonle Sap river to control the Tonle Sap, floods will have a great impact on the livelihood and production of the Mekong Delta people. The average flow in the dry season will increase, but the low and minimum dry season flow will still decrease and the dry season will come sooner.

The rate of land subsidence in the Mekong Delta, which is 5-6 times faster than the rate of sea level rise due to excessive groundwater exploitation, has become a vital issue in the Mekong Delta.

Landslides and fluctuations along the river and coastal strip in the Mekong Delta have continued to be very complicated. One of the three main reasons is the shortage of alluvium in the delta. As predicted by many experts, about 70% of sediment and mud will be deposited in the lake bed due to changes in river flow regime. Each river has a flow creating the river bed. The flow creating the river bed is the average flow for many years in the flood season. So when the flow creating the river bed changes, as a rule, the river bed will change to create a new balance. However, because the river flow regime no longer follows a natural rule and is highly dependent on the operation of upstream reservoirs. Thus when there is a sudden decrease in alluvium, it is difficult

to establish a new balance, leading to a complicated situation of erosion. In addition, the Mekong Delta is a young delta with soft soil, loose texture and foundations easily leading to erosion, water bodies and landslides. Also waves created by motor boats running with high density and speed impact the shore; habits and practices of the Mekong Delta people living near the river and canals also result in landslides ...

The shortage of sediment in the downstream rivers of the world during the developing period seems to be an inevitable rule. During the developing period, the increasing demand for electricity leads to an increase in construction of reservoirs, which retain sediment, to generate electricity. However, the demand for sand for leveling and construction also

increases, leading to serious shortage of sediment in downstream rivers and coastal areas. Viet Nam in general and the Mekong Delta in particular also follow that general rule. Vietnam is in the developing period, with growing demand for sand for construction and, leveling for urban areas, industrial parks and residences. However, this is a legitimate demand for development and as demand rises, there will be supply available even when sand prices rise further.

To change that rule, it is necessary for the Government to intervene by directing the development of regulations, mechanisms, policies and the coordination of ministries and agencies in licensing and managing sand exploitation. We would like to analyze in depth the proposal of developing a mechanism to achieve

many goals, towards building ecological urban areas and villages. If each urban area devotes 10% of its land to build an ecological lake, we will achieve many goals as follows:

Firstly, for the ecological lakes with an area of 10% of the land fund, depth of 5-6 m, we will have a volume of land to raise the ground about 60-70 cm, which reduces the need for sand from river. An urban area which has an average apartment building of 5 floors and have 40% of the total area used for construction, will require 80% of leveling sand and 20% of construction sand. This immediately reduces pressure on sand demand and sand mining, leading to a reduction in sediment imbalance, erosion of rivers, canals and coastal areas.

Secondly, reservoirs are ecological lakes, improving the microclimate for

urban areas. Everyone will agree to the suggestion of reservoir construction because everyone wants to live around the lake. Real estate investors will also not lose profit, because the value of the land will increase and the drainage infrastructure, raised floors, roadbeds will reduce investment capital. In fact there are many urban areas such as Ecopark, Vinhomes Riverside have constructed ecological lakes. Especially Saigon Binh Anh urban area has spent over 22% of the total area to construct ecological lakes...

Thirdly, solving the problem of inundation due to rain and land subsidence in urban areas is urgent in cities in the Mekong Delta. Over the past 20 years, the largest daily rainfall in Ho Chi Minh City and Mekong Delta provinces has increased at a remarkable level. In Ho



Chi Minh City, the rainfall over 100 mm in the 50s was 0 occasion, in the 1960s it was 1 time, 2 times in the 70s and 80s, and then increased significantly in the 90s with 4 times, and spiked in the 2000s with 11 times, in recent years there have been many heavy rains that have ever happened before. The rainfall in Ho Chi Minh City and Mekong Delta with frequency of 5-10% in all stations increased from 10-20 mm compared to before 1990, equivalent to the change of 9-17.5%. If the pond area is 10%, then heavy rains of 100 mm / hour, after seeping then flowing completely into the lake, will result in an increase in the water level of about 80 cm, which is unable to flood the urban area, the drainage infrastructure will reduce investment capital. In existing urban areas, only a lake area of 4-6% of the urban area is required to accommodate an increased rainfall (9-17%), which is suitable for existing infrastructure and sufficient to prevent flooding.

Fourthly, domestic water for urban areas in the Mekong Delta mainly comes from underground water sources. However, over-exploitation causes land subsidence in urban areas. The establishment of rainwater storage tanks to supply domestic water will bring many benefits such as reducing the exploitation of underground water - the cause of urban subsidence and rainwater quality decrease. The collection of domestic water which is separated from the one of wastewater is preferred. The reservoir whose area is from 7 to 10%, contains enough water for urban areas with high population density. This also results in adding groundwater, limiting the main cause of land subsidence.

Fifthly, thank to the construction of reservoirs for drainage in urban areas, the pressure on raised floors will decrease

and the demand for leveling sand will decrease. However, there is still a need for local regulations on the foundation for urban areas, to not make later urban areas' foundation higher than that of the previous ones.

Sixthly, if 50% of the lake area is used to generate solar energy, this will provide enough power to the entire urban area...

For ecological villages, we can learn from the model of the ancient house in ancient villages in the Red River Delta. Each household has a pond to extract soil to build the foundation and to prevent flooding; a water storage pond to cool the air; a pond for washing and for watering vegetables in gardens; a pond for fish farming, duckweed production and potato cultivation for pig raising. Duck weed and fish can even clean the pond water. In addition, the household also makes orchards of vines and raising ducks... It is a sustainable self-sufficiency model. In the development period, we do not need to follow such self-sufficiency model, but we can base on that model to draw many lessons to build new model of eco-village. Of course, we have to implement a proper planning, which requires the participation and coordination among ministries and sectors.

In short, if we require new urban areas to reserve about 10% of their land for the construction of an ecological lake, we will achieve a lot of goals in low-lying plains, especially in the Mekong Delta and the Red River Delta. And we will have many cities and ecological villages adapting to climate change and impacts from upstream activities./.



**PROF. VÕ TÒNG XUÂN**

*Rector of Nam Can Tho University*

### **STRONG COOPERATION BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURS AND FARMERS: DIRECTION FOR AGRICULTURAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEKONG DELTA**

*His Excellency Prime Minister,*

*Excellencies Deputy Prime Ministers and Leaders of Conference,*

*Party Secretaries of the provinces and cities in the Southwest and Southeast and His Excellency, Mr. Nguyễn Thiện Nhân, Secretary of Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee,*

*Distinguished local leaders, international guests,*

It is my great honor to have the opportunity to speak out about the thoughts and aspirations of farmers in the Mekong Delta. I remember that when the Mekong Delta Conference was about to end in 2017, Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc asked how farmers could become rich, similar to the question that the late General Võ Nguyên Giáp used to ask. After the presentation of experts, scientists, the Prime Minister had a clear conclusion and then the Government issued the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP, which is the policy to remove food security obstacle for

farmers. We know that Viet Nam exports large quantity of rice but with low quality, which in turn do not help farmers prosper. With this Resolution, I think the ultimate objective is to help rice farmers produce and make profit, escape from poverty and get rich. The followings are the root cause of farmers' poverty.

The first reason is small, fragmented land. Farmers do individual business in a discordant manner. After 40 years, they were affected by the first green revolution, which promoted the use of variants sensitive to chemical fertilizers. After 40 years, it is clear that the overuse of chemical fertilizer destroys ecosystems, making plants and animals lose their natural resistance. Since then, pests and diseases have grown substantially which in turn makes farmers use a lot of pesticides. Our food, rice, shrimp, fish are not safe, and we know it. So now it's not only the concern of Vietnamese farmers but also of the world. Since 2010, British, American and German scientists have

also raised the issue of the second green revolution to improve plant roots. The first reason explaining our farmers' poverty is high cost due to the overuse of fertilizer.

The second reason is the lack of stable consumption of agricultural goods. Farmers have repeatedly complained about the falling price of rice for 40 years. So in terms of evaluation of the achievements after the 2 year implementation of the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP, one issue should be included in evaluation reports of ministries is how to ensure stable consumption of agricultural goods and their prices for farmers. I feel that we need two things which were mentioned by the Prime Minister in the first 100 days of taking office. Firstly, the Prime Minister called on and encouraged businesses to consume farmers' products in a good way. Secondly, as businesses need good materials, the Prime Minister encouraged farmers to form new cooperatives. These two directions proposed by the Prime Minister are laudable. But after reviewing these 2 years, I witness that farmers work in cooperatives in a formal way. People are still not into the cooperatives because they haven't seen what benefits they bring for them. Unlike in Japan, with the Law of cooperatives, farmers see that if they do not enter the cooperatives, they will lose out on benefits. Cooperatives themselves in Viet Nam have not been able to do the same. The second problem is that we do not have entrepreneurs who are mindful, talented, and virtuous. Currently most entrepreneurs are distant from farmers, only cooperating with traders. Therefore, farmers are at disadvantage. I mean, while waiting for grand projects proposed by ministries to the Prime Minister, we should take action. Now, after this Conference, reading the conclusion of the Prime Minister, farmers should find it satisfactory that our State is wise and begins to direct farmers how to make more money.

Now, if farmers do not grow rice, they do not know what other plants to grow or should be grown and no one dares to suggest, because nobody knows who will buy them. The core issue is for talented entrepreneurs and farmers to get together with local governments. From there, we promote the connection between businesses and farmers, farmers and farmers to form a new type of cooperative. All farmers in a cooperative will produce raw materials which are clean, at good quality and cheap price for businesses. We think that the second green revolution should be applied so that our farmers will grow rice, fruit trees, vegetables at good quality, which are raw material for businesses to export abroad and sell domestically. Such goods will not be returned and consumers will not have to be afraid of unclean products. In this way, farmers and businesses will enjoy stable consumption of agricultural goods, so that the farmers' purchasing power will gradually increase. As a result, they will buy industrial goods and pay taxes for the state. Entrepreneurs will also have better domestic sales and exports and pay higher taxes, leading to an increase in GDP.

We have the presence of Ho Chi Minh City Provincial Party Committee Secretary. Ho Chi Minh City has thousands of businesses, shops, companies. I am looking forward to connecting every business in need of raw materials with an area in the Mekong Delta to see whether farmers actually enjoy a stable consumption of agricultural goods, whether businesses are more profitable. If so, the target of the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP will be achieved in a very short time.

*Thank you very much.*





**H.E. NGUYỄN THIỆN NHÂN**

*Member of the Politburo  
Secretary of Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee*

### **SPEECH BY THE PARTY SECRETARY OF HO CHI MINH CITY**

*His Excellency Nguyễn Xuân Phúc,  
Conference Chairmen,*

*Ministers, Party committee Secretaries,  
Chairmen of Provinces and Cities,*

*Distinguished domestic and  
international guests,*

We are very honored to have permission from Chairmen to speak about climate change and transport connection. However, as time is very limited, I just would like to talk a little bit about transportation. Regarding the issue of climate change, delegates have already discussed in detail.

Regarding transportation, we also agree that remarkable progress has been made recently as reported by newspapers. Especially we have relatively a clear and positive planning, however, its implementation remains slow. There are planned traffic routes around Ho Chi Minh City, Ring Road No.3 and Ring Road No.4, routes along and across the Mekong Delta. The Master Planning, as we see, is quite coherent, but the highlight is that

the infrastructure is still limited. Through discussions this morning on transportation and construction issues, the slow transport infrastructure has become the biggest obstacle for the economic development in the Mekong Delta and particularly in Ho Chi Minh City. Problems in Ho Chi Minh City is "famous" for garbage, flooding, about traffic jams, but transportation is Ho Chi Minh City's biggest obstacle. To remedy this situation, we must clarify the causes as the following:

*Firstly*, transport is to connect the economic development of areas, so it is necessary to identify which areas need connecting. Currently Ho Chi Minh City is geographically and economically part of the Southeast rather than Southwest. Therefore, in terms of administration, is exclude Ho Chi Minh City the Southwest. But in terms of economic activities, Ho Chi Minh City is actually more associated with the Southwest. We would like to give a few examples, the Southeast region, excluding Ho Chi Minh City, contributes 9.8% of the country's GDP. But the Southwest contributed 18%, 1.8

times higher. Thus, Ho Chi Minh City's partners in the Southwest contribute 1.8 times higher than ones in the Southeast. Regarding population, the Southeast has 8.4 million people, while the Southwest has 19.6 million, 2.3 times higher. Thus, the demand for transport in the Southwest is greater than the Southeast. The third is the total area: the Southwesterns' is more than 40,000 km<sup>2</sup> and the Southeast's is 21,400 km<sup>2</sup>. Thus, the Southwesterns' area is 1.9 times larger than the Southeast's. In terms of economic relations, the Southwest is more related to Ho Chi Minh City than the Southeast because it has twice the population, economic contribution and area. In addition, we should also mention about the gratitude. Ho Chi Minh City has a million migrant workers every 5 years, mostly coming from the Southwest, rather than the Southeast. The Southeast itself lacks the labor so Ho Chi Minh City also owes the Southwestern region a favor in terms of labor. We would like to say that, firstly, we need to solve the transportation problem, if Ho Chi Minh City is not integrated as the traffic hub in the planning, the planning will fail. It is necessary to adjust awareness of this issue. Therefore, in term of economic activities, Ho Chi Minh City belongs to both the Southeast and the Southwest. If it is left out, the planning will be entangled.

*Secondly*, in terms of awareness, we need to adjust the investment ratio in the transport infrastructure in Ho Chi Minh City, the Southwest and the Southeast to comply with their national economic contribution. This ratio is currently out of balance. For example, while the Southwest contributed about 18% to the national GDP, investment in the transport for the period of 2011-2015 only accounted for more than 12% and in recently grows, up

to about 15%. But when the Southwest and Ho Chi Minh City is an economic bloc, these two regions account for 42% of GDP but investment in the transport of Ho Chi Minh City and the Southwest only accounts for 20-25% of the total. Such imbalance needs chandling. Over the past 15 years, investment in the transport infrastructure in Ho Chi Minh City and the Southwest of Viet Nam has been low compared to the requirements and to the whole country, next 10 years, higher investment is required to overcome the insufficiency and ensure the common contribution of the two areas. The second reason is low public investment.

*Thirdly*, it is due to low rate of socialization. According to the report on investment in transport in the past 10 years, the social contribution only accounted for less than 4%, while 96% of transportation investment in Ho Chi Minh City and the Southwest was from the state budget, so the rate of socialization was too low. Therefore, we would like to propose the following. Firstly, it is necessary to adjust the proportion of investment in the transportation of the region from about 20-25% to about 30-35%. This coincides with proposal from Minister of Transport Nguyễn Văn Thể. If we only take into account the Southwest alone, the investment must increase from 15% to 20%. In terms of the two areas, investment must increase from 20 to 30-35%. What is the capital? I strongly agree with Minister of Planning and Investment and Minister of Transport that it is necessary to identify the target capital, otherwise if it is combined with national budget, the amount taken out a single time is too small to address anything. As far as I know, this capital has already existed, only whether or not to accept it. It is taken from the annual budget

of the city to submit to the Central, and a part of it should be separated for regional transportation investment. Currently, Ho Chi Minh City contributes about 80% to the Central, keeping about 20%. Of that 80%, we should set aside a portion of about 20% for investment in transport in the next 5-10 years for Ho Chi Minh City and the region, and this is a targeted investment from the budget. We already have the project portfolio. That is, before combining with state budget, we should set aside from the budget of Ho Chi Minh City, but for the whole region, both Ho Chi Minh City and the Southwest, about 20% of the central contribution. This can be categorized as local source. Secondly, we should increase rate of socialization. How to increase? Besides improving the BOT, I see that it is possible to issue government bonds, only to domestic sources and focus on transportation. Because our public debt is at about 62%, only 4% from the ceiling, so just increase of 2% by domestic bonds, especially for transport, will not exceed the public debt ceiling without taking foreign debt. This is a form of socialization

through government bonds with a goal of transport, and with about 2% of GDP we will be able to do this in the next 5-10 years. This is also a local and effective source.

*Fourthly*, what are the key projects? I agree with Minister Nguyen Van The, who would like to propose nine key works for the Mekong Delta, as in nine dragons, nine works. Minister Nguyen Van The said then I just summarized it as the formula 2-3-4. Two are Ho Chi Minh City's Ring Road Three and Ring Road Four. Three are three vertical highways along the Mekong Delta, which are Ho Chi Minh City - Can Tho - Ca Mau Highway, National Route 60 and Highway N2. Four are four horizontal roads, which are National Route 62, 30, 91 and 80. Put roughly, it can be summed up in the formula 2-3-4, and a total of 9 works for the Mekong Delta.

*Fifthly*, it is the lack of construction materials. As the Mekong Delta has many operating thermal power plants, discharging fly ash, we propose to announce the ash standards as construction materials soon and submit

a report to the Deputy Prime Minister Trinh Dinh Dung and the Minister of Construction to announce a technology to turn the thermal power plant fly ash into road construction material, thus solving the on-site requirement from the on-site source of imported coal to run the power plant. Solving this problem will bring many benefits.

*Sixthly*, as you may have already known, in the Mekong Delta, it is well understood that sand exploitation is the main cause of riverbank erosion. We propose that more determination is required to reduce or stop sand mining in the Mekong Delta. As wherever sand exploitation occurs, the Delta devastates. We would like to propose the Prime Minister to have a mechanism of commendation and proper enforcement. If any area can stop the issue of sand mining, there must be a commendation and for a long exploitation, there must be a penalty such as resignation. Otherwise, the Mekong Delta cannot withstand all the sand exploitation happening.

*Seventhly*, it is also very urgent to have a regional target for the Mekong Delta. Ho Chi Minh City has already set its own target. We must reduce groundwater extraction, and by 2025 there will be almost no more groundwater extraction. On average, each year the rate of subsidence in the whole area is about 1.5-3 cm and Ho Chi Minh City witnesses the same rate, and the main reason is due to groundwater exploitation. In my opinion, there must be a roadmap to reduce groundwater exploitation and a campaign for well filling.

Please allow me to report to the Prime Minister and leaders seven recommendations. On behalf of the 10 million people in the city, and including the South West region of nearly 20 million people, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Prime Minister for this important Conference and look forward to the recommendations to become a very important Resolution and to its effective implementation.

*Thank you very much!*





**H.E. NGUYỄN XUÂN PHÚC**

*Member of the Politburo*

*Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam*

## CLOSING SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER NGUYỄN XUÂN PHÚC

*Distinguished leaders and delegates,*

On behalf of the Government and leaders present today, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of you for your enthusiastic and profound comments, with 98 ideas expressed this morning and at this afternoon's conference.

These comments confirm that Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP issued in 2017 is precise and scientific. I highly appreciate the central agencies in Ho Chi Minh City, and especially the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment for excellent preparation of this Conference. We have evaluated the results of the past two years, to understand where we are and confirm that progress has been made. For example, the growth in the agricultural sector of the Mekong Delta has increased by 3%, while the whole country has increased by 2.67%; exports reach nearly USD 16 billion, people's lives are becoming better; especially production model, product structure, awareness of the Party Committee, management authorities and people are becoming more

active. Notably regarding international development cooperation, the initial results are exceptional as mentioned today at the Conference.

At this Conference, many shortcomings and drawbacks in directing and managing the implementation of the Resolution as well as in practice are proactively overcome by ministries, sectors and local agencies.

On behalf of the Government, I would like to acknowledge these issues and assign the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment to include them in the Proceedings to reflect your contributions. After this Conference, the Prime Minister will issue a Directive to further promote the implementation of Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP by specific administrative institutions.

### **The situation**

- *Firstly*, the extreme climate change of the world and Southeast Asia continues to be acknowledged that it threatens the development and safety of the people. We are aware of this problem, especially in

Southeast Asia, where heavy and unusual rains causing dams in Myanmar and Laos, super typhoons in the Philippines cause many people missing.

- *Secondly*, in Viet Nam, statistics of 2018 showed that natural disasters continuously occurred in many regions, especially with many big storms, record temperature increase in Viet Nam. In the Mekong Delta, or even in Viet Nam, the temperature increased rapidly, in some places rising as high as 41.6 degrees. In the Mekong Delta, large floods in the upper stream of the Mekong River occur in many places; storm surges, including in Ho Chi Minh City, surpassed historical benchmarks, causing great damage, not to mention other indirect damages.

- *Thirdly*, in many reports of international organizations, Viet Nam is one of the ten countries most seriously affected by climate change in Asia. Asian Development Bank estimates that nearly 55% of Vietnam's population will be vulnerable to the threat of nature. I want to say this to make us more fully aware.

- *Fourthly*, it is worrying that many of our people are not aware of these challenges, many businesses are not ready to respond to challenges from natural disasters, or global warming, as well as not yet consciously contributing to mitigating climate change. Many of our behaviors have contributed to making nature vulnerable to climate change.

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

Mekong Delta with a population of 20 million people, an area of over 4 million hectares, contributes to 50% of food production, 65% of fruit production, 75% of fishery production and 20% of GDP nationwide. If including Ho Chi Minh

City (including the Southeast provinces), the Mekong Delta and Ho Chi Minh City accounts for more than 60% of the national GDP. However, the role of the Mekong Delta, Ho Chi Minh City and Ho Chi Minh City region in the whole country is not simply reflected in the proportion of that contribution. In fact, local areas have mutual assistance. Excluding the Mekong Delta and Ho Chi Minh City, the contribution of other local areas will be much less than 40% of national GDP. Similarly, if there is no Mekong Delta, or when the Mekong Delta is affected, the Ho Chi Minh City cannot still contribute 23% of the GDP of the whole country as it is now or vice versa. This means that investing in the Mekong Delta is also investing for the whole country. Similarly, Ho Chi Minh City's investment and support for the Mekong Delta means investment in Ho Chi Minh City itself. This is an interactive and interrelated relationship.

Mekong Delta does not only have a vital role for Ho Chi Minh City or Viet Nam, but also for the world. The World Bank's assessment shows that the Mekong Delta is a granary of about 20% of the global trade of rice, contributing to food security in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. However, this area is heavily affected by climate change and sea level rise. If there is no suitable solution, it is forecasted that by 2100, sea level rise will cause flooding of about 40% of the area, affecting the livelihoods of 55% of the people living in the region, indirectly affecting world food prices. Today with the participation of financial institutions and international organizations here, I would like to state that this region affects global food production.

In particular, recent statistics show that in the last 10 years, 1.7 million people

have emigrated from Mekong Delta, while only 700,000 have immigrated to. This migration rate is double the national average, and even higher in the regions seriously affected by climate change. This creates challenges for many local areas, especially Ho Chi Minh City and the Southeast provinces.

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

As you know, the ancient Mayan state cities flourished in northern Mexico and the north of Central America for six centuries. Then around 900 A.D, the Maya civilization collapsed. Some studies showed that the reason for the collapse of the Mayan culture was caused by Mayans themselves. Using the weather pattern stimulation method, the scientists found that drought played a major role, but the Maya seemed to exacerbate the situation by deforestation for city construct and farming.

Many generations in the Mekong Delta have lived in association with the river and the abundance of Mekong Delta has helped shape a life of comfort. However, the livelihoods of tens of millions of people in the Mekong Delta are facing a colossal and turning point challenge. And if we manage to overcome it, we will create a tremendous momentum for growth, otherwise the worst will come, bearing enormous risk. By the way, we also need to acknowledge that opportunities or challenges sometimes depend on the way we perceive the problem. For example, saline intrusion causes as a challenge for rice production but presents as an opportunity for shrimp production.

Israel is known as an arid country, affected by desertification, lacking access to water, but thanks to science and technology, by awareness, the people's awareness and intelligence, Israel is now

a famous exporter of agricultural products in the world. I want to use this example to illustrate the relationship between risk and opportunity, great risks also present great opportunities if we know how to take advantage of opportunities to develop the Mekong Delta. The history of mankind is essentially the history of nature conquests. There has never been a historical period that nature is kind for mankind, but we continue to survive and develop as it is today, thanks to our bravery and intelligence. In the history of existence, there have been a number of species, including the human race diminishing and becoming extinct, but there are also species and human races that grow and prosper. The difference is adaptability and mastery of nature. I want us to have full awareness to protect ourselves.

Perhaps in any period of time, the saying that nature is increasingly cruel is also true. It is difficult to compare the severity of the weather and climate in the past and at present, but one thing which is for sure is that our ability to understand and respond is much better than before. But even with the old and simple technologies, our ancestors were able to cope with many fluctuations in natural disasters and weather, so why should we worry and be afraid of challenges from natural disasters? We will not be afraid of the challenges if we are fully aware and know how to address them well. I want to repeat this to all leaders and scientists and I am sure that scientists support this view.

At the same time, I want to remind that the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP asks us to "thuận thiên", which means that we base on the laws of nature to develop, without rough intervention disrupting the nature's inherent coherence; but this does not mean accepting the fate or

arrangement of nature. Our fate which is decline or prosperity depends on our own actions. Following nature does not mean to give up with eroded cities, residential areas, river banks and coastlines. We have to understand fully, not simply just the current situation.

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

I want to pose a question about what motivates people to invent technologies that are beneficial to humanity. After all, the answer lies in the need to conquer nature. If the weather were not too hot, maybe people wouldn't have invented air conditioners or fans. Vice versa, if it were not very cold, people wouldn't have invented heaters. And without rain, earthquakes, they wouldn't have known how to design extreme weather resilient construction works. Therefore, the current 4.0 revolution has created many breakthroughs for us to conquer and master nature, such as sensor technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and geographic information systems, internet of things... These technologies can help us effectively cope with the fluctuations of natural disasters, while increasing our capability of adapting to the adverse effects of climate change. We all take advantage of this digital revolution to respond to climate change in general and in Viet Nam in particular.

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

After the two year implementation of the Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP, we have achieved some important results as reported by the ministries. It can be said that the amount of work we have done is not less than the number of natural disasters that have occurred in the past two years. However, we can and must do better in future, especially to make our policies and

actions have stronger impact, spread out in the community to bring more practical and striking results. Therefore we must mobilize the intelligence of scientists, advisory organizations, promote the role of government at all levels and call for participation of the business community, especially of the people.

On this occasion, I would like to again appreciate opinions of Ministers, the development partners, Mr. Nguyễn Thiện Nhân, local agencies, especially two representative scientists. On basis of our discussion today, in addition the issues all of you have mentioned which will be summarized in the Proceedings by the Secretariat, I would like to clarify some of the following contents:

First of all, to determine the motto of the Government action in the coming time is the Government's promotion, businesses' action, people's response.

- The Government promotes by enabling and establishing mechanisms, policies. The Government continues to reallocate and supplement resources, first of all, for hard infrastructure and human resource training.

- Enterprises, cooperatives, farms, even large household economies take action with specific investment projects. In the ministries' reports, the role of enterprises has not yet been emphasized. The business sector's action for climate change prevention is very important. I also require our businesses to build famous brands as many scientists have said, our rice output is huge but it does not have a brand. It took 10 years for the mango to enter the US market, our product is excellent, but our shortcoming is not to make an impression of final consumption.

- People respond by increasing awareness, consensus and engagement with the Government and the community. Mr. Nguyễn Văn Linh once said: "Save ourselves before being saved". So restructuring is a duty of both provincial government, hamlets, household and district-level government. I want to emphasize the above motto in order to implement Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP more effectively.

### Main response measures

- *Firstly*, to create the best environment for businesses, promote flexibility of economic and policies factors. It's only enterprises' projects that help us neutralize the effects of climate change or sea level rise.

Specifically, for the labor market, local areas need to focus on training, retraining labor resources, anticipating production trends in order to prepare necessary skills for workers early to meet the market demand. The Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Training are requested to assume the prime responsibility over the formulation and implementation of this important Project.

For the land market, the scientific basis for reallocating land for rice, fruits, and seafood is associated with the processing industry and development of brands for high value-added products. Land conversion should be promoted to adapt to the needs and purposes of land use in the face of unpredictable changes in nature. To research on reducing the rice production on the basis of increasing rice yield per hectare. As we have exceptional rice varieties, we need to proceed to produce rice for medicinal purpose to create higher added value. The Ministry

of Natural Resources and Environment shall assume the prime responsibility over the implementation, to prepare to replace land use planning of Mekong Delta provinces and cities to 2020. Soil and water are very important and practical to local areas.

For the market, developing ecosystems for manufacturing industries, reducing transaction costs, promoting commodity circulation are vital. And, thus, the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development are assigned to assume the prime responsibility.

Regarding science and technology market, local agencies need to increase investment in science and technology, promote initiatives and solutions for climate resilient and sustainable development, including the dissemination of knowledge. Local agencies are requested to cooperate together, provide funding for related research, share research results to disseminate knowledge widely in the Mekong Delta. The Ministry of Science and Technology is assigned to assume the prime responsibility.

Regarding capital market development, in the Mekong Delta, the capital market is mostly underdeveloped. It is requested to promote the formation of investment funds and mechanisms to encourage lending to facilitate the restructuring; to enhance capacity. The State Bank of Vietnam is assigned to assume the prime responsibility, together with the Ministry of Finance, in studying capital mobilization mechanisms to promote the development of financial market to develop investment sources and projects to adapt to climate change.

Regarding capital sources, according to the Minister of Planning and

Investment, presentation of this morning, it is necessary to develop a separate financial mechanism for the region through mobilizing foreign resources, ODA capital and finalize institutions on business investment environment to attract private investment. To make effort to develop and implement a national key program for the Mekong Delta in the next term in direction of developing a priority mechanism for allocating resources from the state budget in the 2021-2025 period to the Mekong Delta. Accordingly, to study diversified capital resources from the central budget, local sources, ODA, FDI capital... with a commitment of an additional capital of about USD 2 billion compared to the period of 2016-2020 for the Mekong Delta to invest in inter-regional projects related to bottlenecks in the fields of transportation, climate change, in accordance with the approved regional planning, together with some solutions to improve the efficiency of capital use.

Investment policies for the structural transformation of the Delta, along with specific resources should be developed. Important infrastructures and capital resources such as Mekong Delta Development Fund, ODA capital should also be developed to promote the Delta's development.

- *Secondly*, priority should be given to infrastructure investment in the region. Projects should be soon completed in accordance with the planning improve the business environment, boost production, reduce costs and improve capacity to respond to climate change. Large roads means great prosperity, small road, moderate prosperity, and no roads, no prosperity. They are railways and waterways and especially roads. To make effort to complete Trung Luong - My Thuan

highway connecting Ho Chi Minh City to Ca Mau and then other roads. This is a pressing issue of provinces, so a specific infrastructure development program will be carried out.

- *Thirdly*, I suggest that the expenditure on climate change should be a major part of the local budget. We cannot remain passive in setting up contingency cost for natural disasters, but we need prepare for programs and resources to respond to climate change proactively. I propose local agencies to set aside a minimum budget for their climate change response programs, while the central budget will provide reciprocal support or provide specific portfolio programs. The Ministry of Finance is assigned to study this mechanism appropriately. Thus, finding for capital resources and soon establishing the Mekong Delta Development Fund are duties of both central and local authorities.

- *Fourthly*, to promote horizontal links, vertical linkage and creative cooperation. Provinces need to be proactive in the region linkage to cope with the challenges of climate change. Without regional cooperation, policies will not be successful. I require Ho Chi Minh City to be the "conductor" to effectively coordinate regional linkage mechanisms. Ho Chi Minh City is required to assume the prime responsibility and coordinate with local provinces in the region to develop a linkage mechanism and submit it to the Prime Minister for consideration. The regional council will inevitably be established but the regional council chairman will be carefully considered. There is no coherent, more effective and better regional linkage than the one between the Mekong Delta with Ho Chi Minh City. It is a reciprocal and mutual linkage. The Mekong Delta development

is an important condition for Ho Chi Minh City's development. I would like Ho Chi Minh City to pioneer the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Particular emphasis is placed on promoting the international cooperation. Development partners and financial institutions are interested in supporting Viet Nam and the Mekong Delta, not only resources but also knowledge and experience. The Netherlands, the Danube Delta and the deltas of Germany... offer a lot of experience for our Mekong Delta. International cooperation is what we need to focus earlier with more in-depth topics. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is assigned to assume the prime responsibility and coordinate with the Ministry of Planning and Investment, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and with other related ministries and sectors to implement the policies of taking advantage of international resources, international cooperation and international experience.

- *Fifthly*, there should be a program to support the most vulnerable groups, especially women and children to help them respond to climate change in accordance with the principle of the United Nations "leaving no one behind".

#### **Prevention measure**

- *Firstly*, to increase the awareness and understanding of the government, the people and the socio-political organizations is the key, namely the awareness of the people and the community is the most important. This task is assigned to all levels, sectors and local agencies and the system of the Fatherland Front having to proactively develop the implementation program. News agency, the Ministry of Information and Communications should

take the lead in information dissemination, communication, consultation and support to raise public and community awareness about the impacts of climate change and response measures. The Party committees, authorities, some ministries and sectors should be fully aware of the fluctuations of climate change and solutions.

- *Secondly*, to improve disaster forecasting and proactive responding capacity, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and Ministry of Science and Technology are responsible for studying and coordinating together to improve the forecasting capacity.

- *Thirdly*, Viet Nam has been integrating climate change response activities into the development planning strategies and plans in order to fulfil the commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 8% by 2030 by domestic resources and up to 25% with efficient international support. It is recommended that Viet Nam's major cities take the lead in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and take the first step in contributing to the achievement of Viet Nam's common goal with the international community.

- *Fourthly*, the Ministry of Finance is requested to submit to the Government for submission to the National Assembly a study of the emission tax mechanism to encourage the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and at the same time facilitate the mobilization of resources to support local areas severely affected by climate change.

I also propose to study to change the name of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment into the Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change.

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

More than 320 years ago, the Marquis of Ideal Ritual Observation Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh went to the South to expand the territory for us. In the past, we would not be able to envision all the difficulties and obstacles when coming to the region with low-lying and standing water all year round, with the sacred forest and poisonous water that our ancestor explored and conquered. How many lives have fallen here to provide us with the land of prosperity, potential, independence, and freedom like today? Our ancestors made effort to expand the realm of the land, then we have responsibility for protecting every inch of the sacred territory of our ancestors. Climate change can change production patterns, affecting the livelihoods and well-being of millions of people and the future of our children and grandchildren. However, after all, it is not as serious as the wavering of our will, our bravery, and our belief when we face the challenges of nature and environment. I believe in the bravery and will of the Vietnamese people, especially the Southern people. If we manage to retain the cultural roots and the land, we will get prosperous on the sacred land that our ancestor left to us.

The fight against climate change and natural disasters is a long, difficult and complex battle. Therefore, we must mobilize all resources, from the central to local government, from domestic to oversea ones, from the strength of the people, and the political system so that the sustainable and successful development can be achieved.

On this occasion, on behalf of the Government, I would like to thank countries, international organizations, donors, investors, businesses, experts...

for responding to the spirit of Viet Nam Government's Resolution No. 120/NQ-CP, helping Viet Nam strengthen its capacity to cope with climate change, supporting resources and intelligence, investing in climate change adaptation projects and promoting production shift, stabilize sustainable livelihoods and vulnerable groups over time. The Government hopes through the Conference today, to continue to receive more support and attention from countries, international organizations, donors and investors and the people in the future.

Based on the ideas, solutions and recommendations of the delegates that we received in the Conference, I would like to require the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment to be the focal point to consolidate and coordinate with ministries to soon submit to the Prime Minister a Directive to institutionalize and promote the implementation of initiatives and soon turn ideas and solutions into reality.

*Thank you very much./.*



Above: Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc and Delegates in the Conference

Below: The Mekong Delta of Viet Nam



*“The Mekong Delta will become a prosperous area of Viet Nam with nearly 100 million people. I am optimistic about our Delta.”*

Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc



# PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE ON EVALUATION OF TWO-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION OF GOVERNMENT'S RESOLUTION ON CLIMATE RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEKONG DELTA OF VIET NAM

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Responsible for content

MR. TRẦN HỒNG HÀ

Minister of Natural Resources and Environment

MR. LÊ CÔNG THÀNH

Deputy minister of Natural Resources and Environment

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Chief editor

MR. TĂNG THẾ CƯỜNG

Director General of Department of Climate Change

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Editors

Michael Parsons, Nguyễn Tuấn Quang, Nguyễn Thị Thu Linh, Huỳnh Thị Lan Hương, Nguyễn Hưng Thịnh, Nguyễn Vĩnh Khang, Lê Ngọc Tuấn, Mai Kim Liên, Chu Thị Thanh Hương, Vũ Đức Đàm Quang, Trần Thị Thanh Nga, Nguyễn Ngọc Phan, Nguyễn Thành Công, Trần Đỗ Bảo Trung, Nguyễn Nam Anh, Bùi Đức Hiếu, Trần Văn Trà

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Department of Climate Change (MONRE)

The book was completed with the support of The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)



Implemented by



Designed by VTK Media

Publisher

Dan Tri Publishing House

Co-publisher

Golden Sky Co., Ltd.

ISBN: 978-604-88-9850-2

Registration number: 1854-2020/CXBIPH/01-67/DT

