

**Summary of the report on the state of the environment in Vietnam
for the period 2016 – 2020**

Innovations in Environmental Protection Policy in 2020

“The Law on Environmental Protection 2020 marks a new step”

Over the years, Vietnam has achieved great achievements in all fields, especially the fast-growing economy, the material and spiritual life of the people has been continuously improved. However, the process of socio-economic development has revealed many shortcomings and created great pressure on the environment, ecosystems, and biodiversity of the country. The situation of environmental pollution continues to be complicated, with many hot spots, and the quality of the environment in many places has declined sharply. Worryingly, environmental incidents continue to increase in severity, many of which effect on a large scale, with complicated developments, making it difficult for management and remedial work. Most of the environmental incidents occur because the owners of production and business establishments illegally dumping waste or because the waste treatment and storage works have problems, fires, explosions, chemical leaks, oil spills, etc. large amounts of untreated waste discharged into the environment. Typically, the marine environmental incident in four central provinces related to Hung Nghiep Formosa Ha Tinh Co., Ltd (FHS); Fire and explosion incidents at Rang Dong Lamp Joint Stock Company... not only directly affect the environment and people's health but also threaten the social order and security of the country.

On the other hand, the air quality in urban areas, especially big cities like Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, tends to decrease and become increasingly serious. With the increase in air pollution sources, the air quality exceeds the allowable threshold, which has greatly affected people's life and health. Meanwhile, domestic solid waste has not been classified at the source; burial rate accounts for more than 70%, mainly unsanitary; still, nearly 36.5% of domestic waste in rural areas has not been collected and treated [Institute of Natural Resources and Environment, Vietnam National University, Hanoi].

The causes of environmental degradation in our country in recent years, first of all, are due to the increasing scale of our economy and population, the increasing degree of industrialization and urbanization; Massive and uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources generates many sources of pollution and wastes increasing in composition and volume. Meanwhile, the infrastructure for waste collection and treatment is still lacking and has not been synchronously invested, leading to increasing pressures on the environment, adversely affecting environmental quality, especially leading to environmental pollution. degradation of ecosystems and biodiversity. Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Tran Hong Ha said: In order to promote the effective management and use of natural resources, protect the environment, proactively respond to climate change for the development of the country in the coming time. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment will coordinate with ministries, branches and local authorities to continue focusing on developing national, sectoral and local planning in order

to harmonize the relationship between economic development and economic development with environmental protection. Prepare necessary conditions and resources for the implementation of the Law on Environmental Protection (2020) so that the new provisions of the law come into practice. People's Committees of provinces and cities need to focus on developing and promulgating regulations, mechanisms and policies such as:

- Building and perfecting the system of policies and laws.
- Strengthen the organizational structure, train human resources on environmental protection.
- Increase resources for environmental protection, especially from socialization and international cooperation.
- Strictly control large waste sources; strengthen measures to prevent the risk of environmental incidents; proactively monitor objects and projects with potential risks of causing environmental pollution and environmental incidents.
- Solid waste management with a focus on good management of domestic solid waste and plastic waste.
- Strengthen measures to manage, improve and restore environmental quality and respond to climate change.
- Enhance conservation of nature and biodiversity.
- Push the network to propagate, educate and raise awareness. promote typical models of environmental protection.

On November 17, 2020, at the 10th session of the XIV term, the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam approved the Law on Environmental Protection. The Law on Environmental Protection 2020 includes 16 chapters, 171 articles (down 04 (four) chapters, an increase of 1 (one) article compared to the Law on Environmental Protection 2014). The Law takes effect from January 1, 2022; Specifically, Clause 3, Article 29 of this Law takes effect from February 1, 2021.

Basically, the Law has inherited and promoted positive factors in the implementation of legal regulations on environmental protection over time, added new contents, overcome shortcomings and limitations. and inadequacies on environmental protection of previous regulations. The Law on Environmental Protection in 2020 has put the regulations on protection of environmental components first, clearly showing the cross-cutting goal of protecting environmental components, and protecting people's health as the central and decisive content. for other environmental protection policies. The Law has also synchronized environmental management tools for each phase of the project, starting from the consideration of investment policy, project appraisal, project implementation until the project goes into official operation. and finalize the project.

The Law on Environmental Protection 2020 has new points and main provisions as follows:

1. Environmental protection of natural heritage

2. Issuing environmental criteria to classify investment projects, preliminary assessment of environmental impacts
3. Enhance information disclosure, consultation, and promote the role of the community in environmental protection activities
4. Environmental License
5. Environmental protection by industry and field
6. Waste management and control of other pollutants
7. Concretize regulations on responding to climate change (CC), promoting the development of the domestic carbon market
8. For the first time, regulations on environmental economic development and environmental audit in order to strengthen the capacity and efficiency of environmental management

In 2020, the Law on Environmental Protection (amended) was passed by the National Assembly. Compared with other Laws, the amendment of this Law is much more difficult because it directly affects the quality of life and human rights to development. Not only that, it also involves many other Laws.

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Nguyen Thi Truc Mai,

Center for Environmental Toxin and Emerging Contaminant Research, Cheng Shiu University, Taiwan