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**Recognition for coordination efforts
to control bird flu**

MARD Minister issued decision No. 287/QD/BNN-VP dated 24 January 2006 to grant the Certificate of Merit of the Ministry to organisation and individuals for its efforts and effective contributions to the successful control of the bird flu for the years 2004 and 2005. These organisation and people are:

1. International Support Group
2. Mrs. Nguyen Thi Tuyet Hoa, Deputy Director, International Cooperation Department
3. Mr. Chu Van Chuong, Principal Expert

Source: ISG Sec

**Major Joint Review Mission: FSSP
Partnership and Trust Fund for
Forests**

The FSSP partnership decided that its 2006 Annual Review should be combined with a review of the Trust Fund for Forests. A Major Joint Review Mission for the FSSP&P and TFF, with 3 Vietnamese and 4 international members, worked together in Hanoi between 27 February and 10 March 2006. They met with a wide range of stakeholders in the forest sector, and debriefed stakeholders on their preliminary ideas on 9 March. On 24

March, they submitted two draft reports, one on Partnership and TFF issues. (For copies, contact: fssp@hn.vnn.vn) The Review Mission will revise and submit final reports by 21 April.

Then a Partnership Steering Committee meeting will discuss what ideas, directions, or recommendations of the Review Mission it wishes to adopt, and agree upon an action plan for doing so. The FSSP partners will need to compare the Review with ideas being proposed in the draft National Forest Strategy and the draft decree for a new Fund for Forest Protection and Development. The Review Mission recommends that facilitated process to build consensus among stakeholders.

The Review Mission recommends that the Partnership align its support behind the forthcoming National Forest Strategy. It does not, however, recommend sector-wide direct budget support, but thinks it more feasible to look at how the TFF, and other ODA funds, could fill strategic financing gaps for NFS implementation, assuming that donors will commit more funds to TFF. They recommend such support begin in 2007: if so, then the international partners and MARD should discuss funding priorities already in June 2006. They also recommend that high priority be given to securing co-financing for

the Forests for Livelihood Improvements in the Central Highlands (FLITCH) project.

To support such a move, then, would require radical restructuring of the Partnership and the Trust Fund for Forests. The Review Mission proposes: (1) creating a broad Partnership Forum, for all stakeholders to discuss key sector issues once or twice a year; (2) establishing a smaller Partnership Steering Committee, to agree on strategic issues for the Partnership support of the NFS, including TFF support; and (3) setting up NFS working groups (or sub-partnerships) to replace the Technical Executive Committee (TEC). Additional recommendations concern extending donor support for the Partnership and Coordination Office, piloting decentralized activities, and the FSSP operational tools – the Forest Sector Manual, FOMIS monitoring system, ODA database and matrix of affiliation, and the Partnership annual (common) work plan.

Source: FSSP-CO

Japan grants 3 rural development projects

On March 23rd, Ninh Binh Province organized the inauguration ceremony for 2 primary schools, which have been financed from Japanese grant in Gia Tran and Quynh Luu communes - two agricultural and mountainous communes of the province.

The two schools which have been built with a grant of US\$ 156,118 and consist of 20 class rooms will help more than 1,300 children of the two communes access safety learning environment.

On the same day, Nghe An Province also held the inauguration ceremony of the "rural living environment improvement in Nam Dan district project" worth 1.227 billion Yen (more than US\$ 10 million) from Japanese grant. With main components of upgrading irrigational system, improving rural transportation system, rural electrification facilities, the project helps 36,000 citizens living in Nam Dan district to have better living and production conditions.

Source: VNA

The Project for Improvement of Plant Quarantine Treatment Techniques against Fruit Flies on Fresh Fruits

Specialized equipment hand-over ceremony

On March 16th 2006, at the Post-Entry Quarantine Center No. II (PEQC II) (No. 28 Mac Dinh Chi Street, District 1, HCMC), within the framework of The Project for Improvement of Plant Quarantine Treatment Techniques against Fruit Flies on Fresh Fruits, a ceremony on specialized equipment hand-over will be organized by Plant Protection Department (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development) and JICA Vietnam Office.

The Project for Improvement of Plant Quarantine Treatment Techniques against Fruit Flies on Fresh Fruits is a technical cooperation project implemented by Plant Protection Department and JICA Vietnam Office in 3 years from March 2005. Large equipment such as vapour heat treatment machines, auto rearing machines, cages for fly rearing, low temperature chamber, hot water baths, etc...valued at nearly 800,000 USD has been shipped to Vietnam from Japan and installed in the PEQC II laboratories. Together with the other inputs from Japanese side, namely dispatch of Japanese experts and counterpart training in Japan, the provision of these equipment items will support the both sides' effort in achieving the Project purpose - Vietnamese staff is capable of applying disinfestations technique of fruit flies that complies with international standard to improve Vietnamese dragon fruit's access to international market

Representatives from Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Planning and Investment and Consulate General of Japan attended the ceremony.

For further information, please contact with:
Mr. Watanabe Masao– Deputy Resident Representative

Ms. Tran Mai Anh – Assistant Program Officer

Source: Embassy of Japan

Kick off for Hanoi Core Statement implementation

In the framework of the Comprehensive Capacity Building Program in ODA Management (CCBP), Foreign Economic Relation Department, Ministry of Planning and Investment organized a seminar on dissemination of Hanoi Core Statement on improved aid effectiveness and introduction of new aid modalities during 20 and 21 March in Hai Phong and 23 and 24 March in HoChiMinh City with participation of representatives from ministries and central agencies as well as representatives from provinces and cities nationwide and some participants from international donors.

At the seminar, participants were introduced to: i) an overview of development cooperation between international community and Vietnam in order to improve aid effectiveness; ii) Hanoi Core Statement on improved aid effectiveness which have been approved by the Government of Vietnam and donors with 5 key contents: **Ownership, alignment, harmonization, results management and mutual accountability**. These rules are interpreted in 14 targets, which need to be achieved by 2010.

At the Seminar representatives from International Support Groups under Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (ISG) and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (ISGE) presented efforts made to implement the Statement in ministries as well as some initial experiences drawn from the development and consultation process of 5-year plans for each sector and future plans to promote implementation of Hanoi Core Statement in the sector.

Regarding new aid models, experts and representatives from donor agencies have analyzed the need to develop new aid modalities in order to meet the demand of improved aid effectiveness in the time to come, in which emphasis is put on awareness changes, approaches and behavior changes of both aid receivers and providers. International experiences and application experiences in Vietnam with practice exercises presented by international experts together with specific examples of experiences on application of new modalities delivered by representatives from Ministry of Training and Education, National Committee on Ethnic Minorities and Mountainous Areas, Phu Tho and Lao Cai Administration have

helped show the role and practical implications of new aid modalities.

Preparations of the seminar and its presentations have been highly appreciated, which will surely help improve the development and implementation of development plans of ministries, central agencies and localities in the time to come. Emphasis has been made on: (i) the need of continuous dissemination of the Hanoi Core Statement to reach consensus on understanding and action plans, (ii) the need to improve professional capacity to meet the targets written on the Statement, especially the need to draft and issue legal documents to guide the implementation of Hanoi Core Statement by ODA management and coordination agencies of the Government.

For more information please contact Mr Le Duc Chung, Information and training specialist at ccbp-pmu@hn.vnn.vn or chungld4consult@gmail.com

Source: CCBP

Workshop on RWSS National Target Program II Assistance

Hanoi, 2 March 06 - AusAID and DANIDA held a workshop on Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) National Target Program (NTP) II Assistance. The purpose of the workshop is to discuss the proposed joint AusAID/Danida program of assistance to the 2nd phase of the Government of Vietnam's National Target Program for Rural Water Supply and Sanitation.

AusAID and Danida's previous assistance has been in the form of projects that work with the national and provincial governments to implement activities but did not work within the government's own programs. Mr. Laurie Dunn, the counsellor of the Australian embassy, was quoted as saying that more effective outcomes may be achieved by providing support directly through the Government of Vietnam's own rural water supply and sanitation program. AusAID also believes that working jointly with other donors, and in this case specifically with Danida, will also lead to better outcomes rather than the current approach of separate donor projects".

Through this new joint AusAID/Danida program of assistance, the two donors hope that they can assist MARD and provincial governments to achieve better results in the

second phase of the National Target Program on Water Supply and Sanitation both through providing an increased level of financial resources but also by improving the management and implementation capacity of the Government of Vietnam so that the performance and effectiveness of NTP2 is much greater. This is a new approach in the rural water supply and sanitation sector in Vietnam, working in close partnership is needed. Contributions from stakeholders, particular from provinces, are essential for a successful program over the next 5 years.

For further information, please contact Mr. Nguyen Van Thuan of AusAID at Van-Thuan.Nguyen@dfat.gov.au, and Mrs. Nguyen Kim Quy at email: kimquy@um.dk

Source: AusAID

Conference on “Research for better forest management” Tropenbos International Vietnam

The Conference on “Research for Better Forest Management, Conservation, Sustainable Development and Human well being” was organized on February 23 and 24 in Hue. End of 2005, the research partners of Tropenbos International Vietnam (TBI-VN) had finalized their research projects developed during the 1st phase (2001-2005). New and relevant knowledge from our research projects became available on various topics of the forestry sector in Vietnam. This 2-day Conference was part of the efforts of TBI-VN to disseminate these outputs to our direct partners and interested organizations so that new knowledge can be used for improved decision making and forest management in Vietnam.

The objectives of the Conference were twofold:

- Present the outputs developed during the first phase from the TBI-VN program
- Discuss the information required for the three identified topics in the forestry sector in Vietnam

In total, around 60 participants from various organizations and nationalities participated. Research organizations were represented by various universities and research institutes from Vietnam and abroad. NGO representatives as well as governmental organizations were represented from a national and provincial level. This wide range

of participants partly contributed to the success of this conference.

The program of the Conference included three main sessions, which all focused on key issues on the national and international forest agenda. The first session dealt with ‘decision making and planning in the forestry sector in Vietnam’. This was followed by a session on ‘forests and local livelihoods’. The third session dealt with ‘forest functions, rehabilitation and management’. The Conference then proceeded to a group discussion session, which concentrate on (i) identify the critical issues of the sector with respect to each theme mentioned above; (ii) Discuss for each identified issue, based on the outcomes, the specific information and capacity needs.

A poster session during the 1st day of the Conference provided participants with the possibility to present their more scientific results to a wider audience. More than 10 posters were presented. This session also proved to be a good opportunity for participants to share information and discuss on their research projects and activities.

The final session of the Conference was the closing remark made by Vice Minister Hua Duc Nhi, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Mr. Nhi reaffirmed the need for further capacity building, research and information to improve the forestry sector in Vietnam. With this respect, he also acknowledged the contributions of TBI-VN to the development of the forestry sector.

Conference’s report and proceedings are in preparation and will be posted on Tropenbos website www.tropenbos.org. For more information on the Conference, please contact hue.tbi-vietnam@dng.vnn.vn or by phone (054-886-211)

Source: TBI-VN

ADB will increase the capital to support Vietnam to US\$ 300 million/year

Mr. Linqun Jin, Vice President of Asian Development Bank (ADB), says ADB has decided to increase preferential capital to support Vietnam to approximately US\$ 300 million/year in 2007 and 2008.

This decision was announced by Mr. Linqun Jin in a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Pham Gia Khiem in March 16, 2006.

Deputy Prime Minister Pham Gia Khiem clarified that the Government of Vietnam highly valued the role and assistance of ADB in the past time and committed continuous and effective optimization of ADB preferential loans. Deputy Prime Minister showed his wish to improve cooperation with ADB, especially in the field of poverty reduction, education and infrastructure development.

Mr. Linqun Jin appreciated socio-economic achievements made by Vietnam recently. He added that Vietnam at present is the country, which receives the biggest preferential loan from ADB among those eligible to access this capital. ADB has developed a strategic program to support Vietnam through economic development projects, especially infrastructure development such as transportation system and electricity plants. Additionally, ADB also support Vietnam with technical assistance projects in order to improve institutional capacity and contribute to improved investment environment.

Source: Vneconomy

The World Bank's latest East Asia Update

The World Bank's latest East Asia Update is now online at <http://www.worldbank.org/eapupdate>.

This edition finds the region's economies delivering another solid performance in 2005 with 8.2 percent growth in developing country economies, with an outlook for 2006 at 7.8 percent. East Asia has now surpassed Europe as the most open in the world.

The region's economies saw exports surging to over \$2 trillion last year, powering growth and poverty reduction. This impressive performance was in spite of rising oil prices - the highest in 25 years - rising interest rates, continued worries over the financing of the United States' current account deficit and over the prospect of the spread of avian flu.

On a more cautionary note, the report notes that investment in the region, which had rebounded in 2004, slowed in 2005, and capital flows in many countries reversed course last year, including short-term flows, which fell due to the narrowing of the interest-rate gap between Asia and the United States.

This edition also includes a special focus

section on Climate Change in East Asia and reviews the state of government programs for the jobless and elderly, as well as progress on innovation in the region.

The full report, data tables, country sections, Climate Change special focus, and other information are available for download at <http://www.worldbank.org/eapupdate>

Source: WB

First Annual Private Sector Development Research Competition

The Theme

"Business and Development: The Private Path to Prosperity"

The International Finance Corporation of the World Bank Group and the Financial Times (FT) invite entries for the first international private sector development research paper competition for 2005-2006. The competition is taken place from Mar 22, 2006 to Jun 30, 2006.

The competition seeks to promote the best thinking on the role of business in development. Papers should add to the global discussion on private sector development and economic growth by providing new and innovative analyses, perspectives, or ideas. The target audience can be economic and financial policymakers, the international financial community, or international/domestic investors.

Awards

Six awards will be granted to the top papers as judged by the Awards Committee

Gold Award

US\$30,000

2 Silver Awards each

US\$15,000

3 Bronze Awards each

US\$10,000

All papers must be submitted in English and have a maximum of 4,000 words. Abstracts must have a maximum of 300 words. All entries must be received on or before June 30th, 2006. See [Terms and Conditions](#) that apply to all entrants.

Also see:

Submission Procedures

More information, please visit:

<http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/economics.nsf/Content/competition>

Source: WB

Asia 2015: Promoting Growth, Ending Poverty

London 6-7 March 2006 - Asia 2015 is a major two-day conference that was hosted by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and co-sponsored by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. It involved around 150 delegates, mainly from Asia.

Asia has had notable success in the last twenty years, taking more people out of absolute poverty than anywhere in history. It's possible to virtually eradicate poverty in Asia in a generation – this is a success story poised to spread throughout Asia.

However Asia faces huge challenges in nutrition, health, education, water and sanitation, governance and social exclusion over the next decade.

The Asia 2015 conference provided a platform to raise the profile of these issues and discuss the changing face of development in Asia over the next decade and the implications for how DFID and the international community should respond.

More information:

Asia 2015 (official website):

<http://www.asia2015conference.org/>

Making Poverty History in Asia by 2015 (Op-Ed) by Shantayanan Devarajan and Homi Kharas, World Bank Regional Chief Economists for South Asia, and East Asia and Pacific, respectively.

Some 600 million people in Asia live on less than a dollar a day. Yet this fast-growing region stands a very good chance of eliminating poverty in a decade, two World Bank economists say. More at: <http://web.worldbank.org>

Source: WB

List of legal documents issued by

MARD in March 2006

1. Decision No. 13/2006/QD-BNN dated on March 7th 2006 defining functions, tasks and organizational structure of the Agricultural Science and Technology Institute in the South Central Coast.
2. Circular No. 14/2006/TT-BNN dated on March 7th 2006 guiding temporary implementation of leadership

- allowance mechanism for local forest protection contingent.
3. Decision No. 15/2006/QD-BNN dated on March 8th 2006 issuing regulations on process and procedures for animal and animal product quarantine and veterinary hygiene inspection.
4. Decision No. 16/2006/QD-BNN dated on March 8th 2006 defining functions, tasks and organizational structure of the Ministry Inspectorate.
5. Circular No. 17/2006/TT-BNN dated on March 14th 2006 guiding implementation of the Decision No. 304/2005/QD-TTg dated on November 23rd 2005 signed by the Prime Minister.
6. Circular No. 18/2006/TT-BNN dated on March 20th 2006 guiding some contents in implementation of the Decree No. 16/2005/ND-CP dated on February 7th 2005 of the Government defining the management of construction investment projects (financed from the State budget) under the management of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.
7. Decision No. 19/2006/QD-BNN dated on March 21st 2006 defining experiment, pilot and naming new agricultural seedlings.
8. Decision No. 20/2006/QD-BNN dated on March 28th 2006 on temporary issuance of manpower norm and appraisal of forest exploitation design.
9. Decision No. 21/2006/QD-BNN dated on March 28th 2006 on amendment and supplementation of some articles of the Decision No. 09/2006/QD-BNN dated on February 8th 2006 signed by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development defining functions, tasks, mandate and organizational structure of the Southern Water Resources Planning Institute.

Source: WB

Avian Influenza (H5N1) Update

29 March 2006

Viet Nam

H5N1 in humans

No new human cases of Avian Influenza have been reported since mid-November 2005.

Since mid-December 2003, there have been a total of 93 confirmed human cases of H5N1 in Viet Nam, including 42 deaths.

The WHO global pandemic alert remains unchanged, at level three. To move to phase four, we would need to see evidence of improved transmissibility of the virus among people, which has not yet occurred.

H5N1 in poultry

As reported by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development- Department of Animal Health: 26 March 2006

I- Avian influenza update

No new outbreaks have been reported for more than three months. The last outbreak was detected on 15 December 2005.

II- AI prevention and control

On March 24, 2006, Deputy Prime Minister, Pham Gia Khiem chaired a progress meeting on avian influenza prevention and control in poultry and pandemic influenza in humans.

AI vaccination is currently being carried out in the provinces of Ha Nam, Phu Tho, Ha Tay, Bac Giang, Hai Duong, Hau Giang, Dong Thap and An Giang. A total of 2,581,350 poultry

have received the first vaccination round for this year, including 1,120,935 chickens and 1,460,415 ducks.

Provinces are organizing the "Month of Action for hygiene and disinfection" for AI prevention and control.

III - Post-vaccination surveillance

15,491 serum samples have been tested showing a protection rate reaching over 80%; 2,563 swab samples have tested negative to the H5 influenza strain.

For further information, please contact:
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Tel: (84 4) 943 3734/5/6;
Fax: (84 4) 943 3740;
Mobile: (84) 09154 13814;
E-mail: didac@vtn.wpro.who.int
Or visit the WHO website at <http://www.who.int>, WHO Avian Influenza website in Vietnam: <http://www.un.org.vn/who/avian>

Summary of Avian Influenza (H5N1) Global Update

Total number of human AI A/H5 cases reported to WHO since Dec 2003 to 24 March 2006

Country	2003		2004		2005		2006		Total	
	case	death	case	death	case	death	case	death	case	death
Azerbaijan	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	5	7	5
Cambodia	0	0	0	0	4	4	1	1	5	5
China	0	0	0	0	8	5	8	6	16	11
Indonesia	0	0	0	0	17	11	12	11	29	22
Iraq	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	2
Thailand	0	0	17	12	5	2	0	0	22	14
Turkey	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	4	12	4
Viet Nam	3	3	29	20	61	19	0	0	93	42
Total	3	3	46	32	95	41	42	29	186	105

Note: Total number of cases includes number of deaths. WHO reports only laboratory-confirmed and officially reported cases.

Source: WHO