Press Review 09/2012 - Vietnam, Water and Environmental Technology,

For more information please contact: Ms. Pham Thi Viet Ha (hapham2310@gmail.com)

Short notice: Our new office address: 3rd floor – 170 Tran Duy Hung street, Cau Giay District, Hanoi - Tel/Fax: + 84 4 37835697

No	Title	Date	Source	Region	Catalogue	Description
1	The demand for water consumption in Phu Yen will reach 2,147.84 million m3 in 2015	1/9/2012	MONRE	Phu Yen	Water	DONRE has recently held a conference to announce the results of the general planning implementation to use water resources in Phu Yen province by 2015 and forecasting to 2020.
2	Temporary reservoirs tackle flooding	6/9/2012	VN News	HCM	Environment	The use of temporary reservoirs, which have been an effective remedy to prevent flooding for the past 10 years, is part of a water-supply project plan approved by the Prime Minister.
3	Billions of dong spent on water plants, but Hanoi still thirsty for clean water	7/9/2012	MONRE	Hanoi	Water	Despite the great efforts by the city's authorities to build water supply plants, the Hanoians' thirst for clean water has not been eased.
4	Plan to help seriously polluted trade villages	7/9/2012	VN News	Hanoi	Pollution	The seriously polluted environment surrounding 47 trade villages nation-wide is set to be gradually removed under the National Target Programme on Environmental Pollution Improvement during 2012-15.

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Address: 3rd Floor, 170 Tran Duy Hung Street, Cau Giay District, Hanoi
Tel/Fax : + 84 4 37835697
Website: www.vn-ger-wateroffice.vn

5	Experts doubt efficacy of Song Tranh 2 Hydropower dam	14/9/2012	VN Net Bridge	Quang Nam	Environment	On 12th September, the Quang Nam PPC and scientists of the Vietnam Institute of Science and Technology announced their initial conclusions on the phenomenon of recurring earthquakes in Bac Tra My District.
6	Mining companies forced to bear responsibility for environment protection	15/9/2012	VN Net Bridge	Vietnam	Environment	MONRE, which is compiling the new regulations on the environment restoration after mining activities, has stated that mining enterprises must bear the responsibility for environment protection.
7	Electronic wastes leave behind toxic headache	17/9/2012	VN News	Hanoi	Environemt	Viet Nam has not paid appropriate attention to controlling the impact of electronic waste and treating toxic chemicals.
8	Investment ties with Germany increased	20/9/2012	VN News	Vietnam - Germany	Other	A stable and transparent legal framework will help Viet Nam attract more investors from Germany, visiting German Vice Chancellor and Minister of Economics & Technology Philipp Roesler said yesterday.

9	Quake prompts probe at hydropower plant	20/9/2012	VN News	Quang Nam	Environment	Inspectors have been sent to the Song Tranh 2 Hydropower Plant in the central province of Quang Nam's Bac Tra My District to check on any damage caused by a series of recent earth tremors.
10	Excess arsenic found in water	20/9/2012	VN News	Hanoi	Environement	Residents in five tenement blocks in Phu My, My Dinh Commune, Tu Liem District are in shock after finding that the running water they have used for several years contains high levels of arsenic.
11	Floods inundate Mekong paddy	27/9/2012	VN News	Kien Giang	Environment	Days of heavy rain in Cuu Long (Mekong) Delta's Kien Giang Province have inundated over 31,000ha of rice, said Kien Giang's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.
12	HCM City awash with environmental pollution	28/9/2012	Vfej	HCM	Pollution	Roughly 40 tonnes of trash and 70,000 cubic metres of sewage are being dumped into HCM City's rivers and canals daily, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment estimates.

13	Nation approves green growth strategy	28/9/2012	VN News	Vietnam	Environment	Viet Nam has outlined its commitment to reducing greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions with the implementation of the Green Growth strategy, approved by the Prime Minister last week.
14	Drains, dredging ease floods in HCM City	28/9/2012	VN News	HCM	Environment	Flooding has been prevented in eight areas where the city has built new drains and dredged canals and sewers, according to the HCM City Steering Centre for the Anti-Flooding Programme.
15	Mekong Delta to reach high water mark in early October	29/9/2012	VN News	Mekong Delta	Water	Water levels in the Cuu Long (Mekong) Delta areas, including the Dong Thap Muoi (Plain of Reeds) and Long Xuyen Quadrilateral, have been on the rise.
16	Deutsch-vietnamesische Zusammenarbeit in der Wasserwirtschaft wird intensiviert	1/10/2012	GWP	Hanoi	Others	German Water Partnership (GWP), der Vietnamesische Wasser- und Abwasserverband (VWSA) und das vietnamesische Unternehmen BUSADCO unterzeichneten am 1. Oktober in Hanoi ein Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) zur Stärkung der Verbandskooperation.

1. The demand for water consumption in Phu Yen will reach 2,147.84 million m3 in 2015

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment has recently held a conference to announce the results of the general planning implementation to use water resources in Phu Yen province by 2015 and forecasting to 2020.

As informed by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, the annual average rainfall in Phu Yen province is from 1,800 to 2,100mm but unevenly distributed by space and time, so water excess during the rainy season and water shortages frequently occur during the dry season. The main reason is the lack of basic assessment of existing water sources; water resources exploitation and use hasn't been balanced for prior targets to the best interests, also, unreasonably ...

As well as the planning and forecasting of water demand by 2015 in the province of 2,147.84 million m3, by 2020, the figure is 2,613.98 million m3. Meanwhile, if the average water level to ensure Phu Yen 2005 was about 15,680 m3/person/year for the entire flow and 6,540 m3/person/year for domestic flows, forecasting to 2020, when the province's population increases to more than 1 million people, average water security will be reduced to 13,170 m3/person/year for the entire flow and 5,490 m3/person/year for domestic flow. Therefore, without harvesting planning, effective integration of water resources' use, in the future Phu Yen will lack water.

Besides, the analysis results of water samples and microquantity also showed that the quality of surface water in Phu Yen was only locally contaminated, still ensuring irrigation for agriculture, industrial production and daily use.

2. Temporary reservoirs tackle flooding

The use of temporary reservoirs, which have been an effective remedy to prevent flooding for the past 10 years, is part of a water-supply project plan approved by the Prime Minister.

The reservoirs would be used if the city's main water sources, Dong Nai and Sai Gon rivers, become polluted.

Reviewing 10 years of flood-prevention efforts in HCM City, Tran The Ky, deputy director of the city's Transport Department, said flooding had reduced in three areas, thanks to reservoirs.

The February 3 street in District 10, for example, was one of the worst flooded in the city due to small drains.

However, since the city requisitioned Ky Hoa lake nearby as a temporary reservoir to store water for the area during heavy rains, flooding has dramatically diminished.

Other affected areas include Dam Sen Park in District 11 and the Phu Lam Roundabout in District 6.

The city has used the lake in the amusement park and a lake in District 6 as "water bags" to prevent flooding.

Now, the three areas have built bigger drainage systems, and the temporary reservoirs are no longer needed.

However, Tran The Ky said the reservoir was one of the city's most effective solutions to prevent flooding, especially in the context of worsening climate change, which has led to an increase in the number of heavy rains.

Because of the latter, the new drainage systems could become out-of-date sooner than expected.

According to Ky, the city's Anti-Flooding Programme Management Center is considering installing a reservoir in the Go Dua area in Thu Duc District.

The area, located along the bank of Sai Gon River with low terrain, is one of the city's worst flooded areas.

Saline intrusion stopped

For many years, Sai Gon Water Company (Sawaco), which supplies 80 per cent of water to the city, has had a contract with Dau Tieng Lake's Management Board to prevent salt-water infiltration.

Whenever Sai Gon River, the main water source of Tan Hiep Water Plant, becomes seriously infiltrated by salt water, the board allows the release of Dau Tieng Lake's water in order to get rid of the salt.

Sawaco reports that it uses Dau Tieng Lake five to seven times or more a year, mainly in the dry, hot season. Expenses are paid by Sawaco.

Similarly, Tri An Lake is specified in the water- supply project to 2025 as a solution for deep-water infiltration into Dong Nai River. This affects the source of the Thu Duc Water Plant.

According to the project, Dong Nai River together with the Tri An reservoir will supply 2.5 million cubic metres a day for the city.

According to Sawaco, the Thu Duc Water Plant, which is located far from the river mouth, has not needed the help of the reservoir because salt-water infiltration rarely occurs.

However, Sawaco regards the role of Tri An Lake as important.

The project is also considering installing pipelines from Tri An, Dau Tieng and Phuoc Hoa lakes to water plants.

In this manner, the lakes could be used as water sources in case the Sai Gon and Dong Nai rivers are heavily polluted.

The city is also considering the practicality of installing the Thu Khuc reservoir in Cu Chi District, which would be invested in by Hung Thuan Phat Investment and Development Co. Ltd.

3. Billions of dong spent on water plants, but Hanoi still thirsty for clean water

Despite the great efforts by the city's authorities to build water supply plants, the Hanoians' thirst for clean water has not been eased.

Clean water getting more expensive than ever

The latest survey conducted by the Hanoi Department of Agriculture and Rural Development showed that 104 water supply plants have been implemented in the suburbs, but many of them still cannot provide clean water to local dwellers, especially in Ba Vi, Chuong My, Phu Xuyen, Soc Son and My Duc districts.

Therefore, people here have been using rainwater or the water from streams and lakes nearby for their daily use. In some communes, people have to sell rice to buy water.

"Clean water in rural areas has become a very expensive commodity," commented Deputy Chair of the Chang Son Commune People's Committee.

According to Le Van Duong, Director of the Center for Water and Sanitation in Rural Areas, 84 percent of households in rural areas, or 3.3 million people, now can use hygienic water, while 32 percent of population can access the clean water that meets the Ministry of Health's standards.

In fact, only two percent of people in rural areas can use clean water from the urban water supply system, mostly in the districts of Thanh Tri and Tu Liem. The other 7.9 percent of people use water from rural concentrated water supply systems. Meanwhile, 74.1 percent of people is applying the "self-sufficiency" policy.

The water sources for the 74.1 percent are getting exhausted, since the ponds, lakes and streams in rural areas have been seriously polluted.

50 percent of the rural concentrated water supply stations in Ung Hoa, Dong Anh, Thanh Tri, Tu Liem and Chuong My have been found as having the ammonia concentration exceeding the allowed level by 1.2-4.8 times. 12 stations have been found as having the KMnO4 oxidation, 12 stations having the turbidity, PH and higher colifom contents much higher than the allowed levels.

As for the small water supply works at households, the contents of iron, arsenic are higher by 2-10 times higher than the allowed levels.

Who will take responsibility for clean water for people?

Nguyen Van Son, a resident in Duong Lieu commune, said he has been taking water from a well for the last many years, even though his house is located next to the water supply station.

According to Duong, the percentage of people in rural areas using clean water in accordance with the Ministry of Health's standards has increased by 0.65 percent per annum only over the last few years (20,000 users more a year).

In early 2011, the Hanoi People's Committee kicked off the program to rescue 16 water supply stations which had been left idle in the suburb districts, while giving the go-ahead for six inter-commune water supply works.

However, the projects have been going very slowly, and only three out of the 16 projects have been put into operation. The other 13 projects have not been completed, partially because the investors and local authorities meet difficulties in accessing preferential loans stipulated in the Prime Minister's Decision No. 131.

The representatives of relevant departments have suggested to clarify the responsibilities of the authorities levels in implementing water supply works.

Hanoi's Deputy Mayor Tran Xuan Viet was very critical at the working session with the officials from relevant branches when mentioning the implementation of water supply projects in suburb areas. He has requested the localities – beneficiaries from the inter-commune water supply works to submit investment plans for approval prior to October 25, 2012.

4. Plan to help seriously polluted trade villages

The seriously polluted environment surrounding 47 trade villages nation-wide is set to be gradually removed under the National Target Programme on Environmental Pollution Improvement during 2012-15.

The programme, worth VND5.8 trillion (US$281 million), has been approved by Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung. The country now has about 4,500 trade villages, including 1,300 traditional ones,, which provide jobs for 11 million rural labourers.

Ho Kien Trung, head of the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry's Environment Improvement Office, said that a set of criteria to identify levels of environmental pollution in trade villages would soon be announced.

Under the criteria, a list of trade villages suffering from a seriously polluted environment would be made annually, he said.

A recent survey by Ha Noi University of Science and Technology's Environmental Sciences and Technology Institute showed that not a single sample of wastewater from the 47 trade villages met basic sanitary standards.

According to the survey, a metal-recycling trade village including 123 producers, located in northern Bac Ninh Province's Chau Khe Ward, has been operating without a wastewater treatment system.

They also failed to show reports on environmental impact assessment and commitments to environmental protection.

To return to the national target programme, the environment surrounding 100 areas that were seriously polluted due to pesticides will be improved.

In addition, projects to collect and treat waste discharged from type-2 urban areas into the Cau, Dong Nai and Nhue-Day Rivers will soon be implemented.

5. Experts doubt efficacy of Song Tranh 2 Hydropower dam

On September 12, the People's Committee of Quang Nam Province and scientists of the Vietnam Institute of Science and Technology announced their initial conclusions on the phenomenon of recurring earthquakes in Bac Tra My District.

However, these conclusions have failed to convince experts as they still believe that they do not identify the actual cause of the recurring earthquakes and their impact on the hydropower dam.

Dr. Le Huy Minh, deputy director of the Vietnam Institute of Science and Technology said that earthquakes in Bac Tra My District have become much more severe than they were in late 2011. However, these earthquakes were well below the magnitude capacity of the dam.

The experts, who are from the Institute of Global Physics and the Earthquake Information and Tsunami Warning Center, are now in Bac Tra My District, where the plant is located, to examine damages to the dam and find out realistic causes to the earthquakes.

They forecast that earthquakes may continue to occur in the near future but will likely not exceed 5.5 on the Richter scale.

However, Dr. Nguyen Hong Phuong, deputy director of the center said that more than 60 tremors have occurred in the area since 2011, but only 12 of them have been recorded due to lack of observation stations and equipment.

The country has 25 stations but they can only observe earthquakes measuring about 3.5 on the Richter scale.

There are now four accelerometers equipped for the plant by Electricity Vietnam Group (EVN) but only two of them are operational and only measure vibrations on the ground surface and fail to measure intensity of quakes, he added.

In the hydropower plant area, regional stations have recorded two quakes measuring 4.2 on the Richter scale in early September. Meanwhile, the stations missed smaller quakes while data recorded from them are necessary for experts to identify the scope and the cause of quakes.

There should be facilities installed right at the base of the hydropower plant to forecast and observe earthquakes, Phuong said.

It is worth mentioning that all scientists, including representatives of EVN have not affirmed with certainty that in future earthquakes may affect the Song Tranh 2 Hydropower Plant or not.

Meanwhile, both EVN and the Ministry of Industry and Trade have confirmed that the plant is safe after leakage repairs were completed in late August, but local residents are very worried about the series of tremors.

Locals are fearful for the safety of the plant, which is home to a reservoir that is among the largest in central Vietnam.
Dang Phong, chairman of the People’s Committee of Bac Tra My District said that people still worry that double earthquakes could break dams and they want scientists be sure about the consequences to the dam.

Tran Xuan Tho, member of the Standing Committee of the People’s Committee of Bac Tra My District urged scientists and EVN officials to give a definitive answer about the status of Song Tranh dam construction.

“With responsibility of 1.5 million people in Quang Nam, we firmly suggest that if Song Tranh dam is unsafe it should not accumulate water. We need a confidential report on how earthquakes affect dams so as to inform people to understand better,” said Mr. Tho categorically.

Le Phuoc Thanh, chairman of the People's Committee in Quang Nam Province, had earlier made a proposal to install earthquake monitoring systems to predict earthquakes, especially those near Song Tranh 2 Hydropower Plant.
We must place people's lives on priority, believes Thanh.

6. Mining companies forced to bear responsibility for environment protection

The Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (MONRE), which is compiling the new regulations on the environment restoration after mining activities, has stated that mining enterprises must bear the responsibility for environment protection.

Hoang Duong Tung, Deputy General Director of the Environment Directorate of MONRE, said when opening the draft regulation to the public that the legal document needs to be built up in the way, so that mining enterprises cannot reject their responsibilities in protecting the environment.

Duong said the drafted regulation would clearly stipulate the miners' responsibilities and the benefits of the miners in association with their responsibilities in the environment protection.

The draft document says individuals and institutions who develop new mining projects must submit to competent agencies, the plans to improve and restore the environment together with the reports on possible environmental impacts.

In case an enterprise has got approved environment improvement plan, but it wants to extend the exploitation, increase the capacity, it would still have to submit a new plan on environment improvement.

The currently applied Decision 71 stipulates that investors pay deposit for the environment protection for every project. Meanwhile, in fact, this may happen that one investor carries out many projects, or one project are implemented by many investors.

Therefore, the draft regulation has clarified that all the institutions and individuals getting involved in the mineral exploitation activities in the Vietnamese territory, and all institutions and individuals licensed to exploit minerals, must submit the plan to restore the environment to competent agencies.

Dau tu has quoted its sources as saying that the draft regulation, if approved, would have very big impacts on mining enterprises. However, to date, not many enterprises have heard about the content of the draft.

Vu Tien Trien, a senior executive of the Thai Nguyen Steel Corporation, said on the newspaper that he has not received any copy of the draft.

Trien complained that though the enterprise always fulfills the duty of paying deposit for the environment protection as required by the laws, but it always meets difficulties in getting the deposit backs after the environment improvement works finish.

According to Tung, the enterprises violating the laws, would be forced to halt the exploitation, or, in the worst case, would have the license revoked.

Tin tuc has reported that the Tuyen Quang provincial people's committee has released the

decision to revoke the license granted before to T&T Trade and Technology Investment Company, because the company did not follow the provisions in the license and caused serious pollution to the environment.

This is the first gold mining company in Tuyen Quang province since 2005 that had its licensed revoked and has to close the mine.

T&T not only broke the commitments relating to the project implementation, but also spontaneously adjusted the environment treatment works, and used chemicals without permission.

Scientists recently have repeatedly called on watchdog agencies to require higher responsibilities of mining enterprises in the environment protection.

There are 50 mines and mining areas nationwide with 40 kinds of minerals being exploited by 2000 enterprises.

The rapid increase in the number of mining enterprises and the exploitation output has raised the big worries about the devastation to the environment in the future.

7. Electronic wastes leave behind toxic headache

Viet Nam has not paid appropriate attention to controlling the impact of electronic waste and treating toxic chemicals, environmental experts have said.

Trinh Van Tuyen, deputy director of the Institute of Environmental Technology under the Viet Nam Academy of Science and Technology, said that an electronic product could last for several years before it became electronic waste.

This kind of waste was totally different from domestic waste that could be burnt or buried easily. It includes metal dust, electric wire, broken electrical circuits and components.

"All electronic equipment contains toxic chemicals. A computer, for example, might have hundreds of different kinds of chemicals, including toxic ones such as lead and cadmium," he said.

"These chemicals will escape from electronic waste and cause harm to humans and the environment when they are handled, dismantled or recycled improperly," Tuyen said.

According to the University of Technology Institute of Science and Environment Technology, the total electronic waste in Viet Nam was about 1,630 tonnes per year, of which 1,370 tonnes, accounting for 84 per cent of the total, were discharged from the key economic zone of the northern region.

In the key economic zone of the southern region, where 254 tonnes of electronic waste were collected annually, the waste was estimated to increase by 15 per cent due to the increase of electronic enterprises. It was mainly collected in Dong Nai, HCM City, Binh Duong and Long An provinces.

Tran Minh Chi, Director of the Institute of Tropical Technology and Environmental Protection, said that lead, cadmium and mercury were among some substances commonly found in electronic equipment that underwent backward treatment processes. These might cause liver, kidney and skin diseases, bone softening and memory loss in humans.

However, Chi said, electronic waste could contain valuable metals. According to mining experts, a tonne of electronic waste could hold at least 150 grammes of gold, 100 kilogrammes of copper and three kilogrammes of silver.

"The waste can be a treasure and studies show that recycling it is possible," he said.

According to Tuyen, the treatment of electronic waste was not standardized. The waste was collected from factories, workshops and households, classified and dismantled parts and accessories for re-sale by simple tools and methods.

He said the Ministry of Science and Technology's regulations on banning the import of second-hand electronic products, which took effect early this month, would help eliminate foreign electronic waste. Tuyen said that, "the Ministry of Science and Technology and Ministry of Industry and Trade are implementing two State-level projects on electronic waste treatment. These two projects would conduct chemical treatment, which separated chemicals from electronic waste for chemical collection."

The projects, which would undergo a trial period after getting approval, were expected to treat 50 tonnes of waste per day, he said.

8. Investment ties with Germany increased

A stable and transparent legal framework will help Viet Nam attract more investors from Germany, visiting German Vice Chancellor and Minister of Economics & Technology Philipp Roesler said yesterday.

Speaking at the third Viet Nam-German Economic Forum held in HCM City, Roesler said German enterprises were interested in participating in the healthcare, food processing, energy security, renewable energy and education sectors in Viet Nam.

Viet Nam Minister of Industry and Trade Vu Huy Hoang replied that Viet Nam would like to receive more support from the German government in three areas: improving the investment environment in Viet Nam, including strengthening legal capacity and carrying out administrative reforms; developing infrastructure; and training high-quality human resources.

"German investors will have many advantages in doing business in Viet Nam – a large market of 87 million people, a huge labour resource, political stability and the presence of many Vietnamese people fluent in the German language," Hoang said.

Elmar Dutt, head of the German Industry and Commerce delegation in Viet Nam, urged major improvements in the quality of vocational training to meet the needs of German investors.

This was echoed by Frank Schellenberg, CEO of GHP Far East Co. Ltd, who has been in Viet Nam since 2000.

Dr Le Van Hien of the vocational training college run by the Viet Nam Machinery Installation Corporation (LILAMA), said that international vocation training programmes should be introduced in Viet Nam and adapted to local conditions.

He stressed the need for trainers with more practical experience and training quality that passes tests by international organisations.

At present, 240 German enterprises are doing business in Viet Nam with 184 FDI projects valued at US$904 million. Germany ranks 24th in total of 94 countries investing in Viet Nam.

Germany is Viet Nam's leading economic partner in the EU, accounting for 19 per cent of export turnover to the bloc in 2011.

Reliable : Viet Nam was an attractive and reliable investment destination for German businesses, Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh said yesterday.

Minh made the statement at the opening of a Viet Nam-Germany trade and investment forum in Frankfurt/Main, in Germany's State of Hessen.

The one-day forum, jointly organised by the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry and Hessen State authorities, Frankfurt Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the East Asia Association, Deutch Bank and the World University Service, focused on potential for the development of infrastructure, finance and industry in Viet Nam.

Minh stressed the establishment of the Viet Nam-Germany strategic partnership had created a new impulse for the countries' economic co-operation.

Viet Nam imports $2 billion worth of goods from Germany and bilateral trade turnover is expected to reach $7 billion soon, Hoang Van Dung, vice chairman of the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), said at the forum.

9. Quake prompts probe at hydropower plant

Inspectors have been sent to the Song Tranh 2 Hydropower Plant in the central province of Quang Nam's Bac Tra My District to check on any damage caused by a series of recent earth tremors.
Five tremors were reported to hit the plant on Monday and Tuesday.

Deputy chairman of the district's People's Committee Tran Anh Tuan said that since the third of this month, about 20 similar earthquakes have hit the area.

The strongest recorded was a vibration of 4.2 degree on the Richter Scale and created cracks in many houses and schools in the district, said Tuan.

Though there were no injuries or causalities, the earthquakes left 17 houses and three buildings damaged and in need of urgent repairs.

More than 20,000 people live in vulnerable areas downstream from the dam, located in the district, on the Tranh River.

The inspection group, headed by the district's Steering Committee for Storm and Flood Prevention and Control, has 34 members from the district people's committee, commune and town leaders in the district and representatives from the hydroelectricity project No 3 management board.

The district authorities have asked for financial support from the provincial People's Committee and the Electricity of Viet Nam to handle the damage. It has already earmarked VND100 million (US$4,760) from the local budget for repairing work.

The district Military Commander had submitted its plan on evacuating residents from dangerous areas to the district People's Committee for approval, said Tuan.

Meanwhile, the provincial People's Committee agreed to supply the district with 100 tonnes of rice to support residents living in the Song Tranh 2 Hydroelectricity Plant's resettlement areas.

The Quang Nam People's Committee proposed a thorough study of safety at the Song Tranh 2 Hydroelectricity Plant, and urged careful consideration of water storage in the plant's reservoirs.

Earlier, experts from the Earthquake and Tsunami Warning Centre said that the tremors were not unusual, as minor tremors were caused by the construction and operation of hydropower plants around the world.

The document also asked the Ministry of Science and Technology to conduct research on earthquake in the district and neighbouring area this year.

Earthquake observatory stations should be set up to ensure safety at the Song Tranh 2 Hydroelectricity Plant, the document said.

The Electricity of Viet Nam should be prompt to set up a scheme on preventing floods and coping with consequences in case of breaches in the dam.

10. Excess arsenic found in water

Residents in five tenement blocks in Phu My, My Dinh Commune, Tu Liem District are in shock after finding that the running water they have used for several years contains high levels of arsenic.

Tests they had made at the Institute of Chemistry on August 21 revealed that the content of arsenic was 37-42 times higher than that allowed.

Five years ago, the tenements, built by Ha Noi Real Estate Investment Joint Stock Company (C'Land), were sold to about 150 families.

The water to the apartment block is provided by the company, which sources the water from a subterranean well.

Residents complain that the water is dirty, muddy and sometimes has a black colour like sewage.

"Although we reported the situation many times, the problem continues," resident Ngo Thu Thuy told Viet Nam News at her apartment on Tuesday.

She also said since living in the tenements, many people, including youngsters, had developed stomach and skin problems. Most families were now equipped with filters to clean out pollution.

Arsenic poisoning can cause vomiting, abdominal pain, blood filled diarrhoea. It is also linked with cancer of the skin, lungs, bladder and kidney.

Now, nearly three weeks after the test results were announced, Mai Hoang Anh, deputy general director of C'Land, told residents the company would send water samples for rechecking. However, two days later, residents caught two workers for Hoang Hai Anh Services and Trading Company Ltd employed by the developers, pouring chemicals, mainly permanganate, into the water treatment system at the drill site.

Do Tien Truong, a resident, said: "They did so to minimise the content of arsenic before taking samples for testing. The action is immoral and disregards people's lives," he said.

According to the residents, C'Land has now asked residents to pay 70 per cent of the cost of building a pipeline connected to the city's running water supply.

The company later halted the supply of well water. Residents have been using clean water the company bought from other localities until an agreement is reached.

However, according to the latest notice from the company on the notice board, water supplies meet standards. If residents want to use running water from the Da River, each household will have to pay VND3 million (US$143).

But the residents said it's the responsibility of the developers to supply power and clean water, as written in the purchase contracts.

Some residents plan to now sue the company. Viet Nam News tried unsuccessfully to reach the company's representative for further comment.

11. Floods inundate Mekong paddy

Days of heavy rain in Cuu Long (Mekong) Delta's Kien Giang Province have inundated over 31,000ha of rice, said Kien Giang's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The department also said that 6,000ha of the newly seeded autumn-winter rice crop were in danger of being completely destroyed in An Bien, An Minh and Vinh Thuan districts.

Local farmers now have to pump flood water out of their fields to minimise their losses. However, many farmers said if it continued to rain heavily, they would suffer huge losses because it would be too difficult to pump out all the water.

The provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has asked relevant agencies to speed up the building of provincial irrigation systems in U Minh Thuong District and reinforce the dyke system to better protect crops from natural disasters.

Farmers in Kien Giang province have planted 45,800ha of 10th Month rice crop in An Minh, An Bien, Vinh Thuan, U Minh Thuong, Go Quao and Ha Tien districts. They have also sown 8,894ha of early autumn-winter crop in U Minh Thuong and Chau Thanh districts.

According to the Plant Protection Department, farmers in the Cuu Long (Mekong) Delta - the country's rice granary - will plant 600,000ha, equal to last year's crop.

So far, they have planted 400,000ha of autumn-winter rice.

Tens of thousands of hectares of autumn winter rice crop in the Mekong that were ready for harvest have also been flooded or flattened. This has reduced output and increased harvesting costs.

12. HCM City awash with environmental pollution

Roughly 40 tonnes of trash and 70,000 cubic metres of sewage are being dumped into HCM City's rivers and canals daily, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment estimates.

Despite the city designating 2012 as the year to promote civilized urban lifestyles, residents' low awareness levels mean environmental pollution and littering continue.

Do Ngoc Nga, a resident who lives near Nhieu Loc Canal in Binh Thanh District, complained that dumping trash into canals and irrigation systems is an alarming habit of neighbours.

"Everyone thinks it's ok to simply throw their trash directly into the canals and rivers," she said.

Deputy Director of the city's Department of Natural Resources and Environment Nguyen Van Phuoc said many households living in alleys even sneak out to dump trash on the streets, while occupied pavements also make it difficult for cleaning workers.

"Many of the street vendors do not have trash cans so when the cleaning workers finish their shifts, everything looks just as dirty the following day," Phuoc said.

The littering also comes in the form of advertising brochures and pamphlets scattered across the streets, while the problem is compounded because efforts to highlight the importance of clean living are often ineffective.

The city's People's Committee has implemented some measures, such as reducing the number of impromptu trash dumping spots, punishing those who litter or dump waste water in rivers and canals (fines range from VND50,000-100,000) and increasing inspections.

However, the department admits it's difficult to enforce these measures as it does not have enough staff and most residents don't understand the benefits of keeping clean living environments.

The head of the Customer Services Department under Saigon Water Supply Company, Le Huu Quang, said the city did not have a specialised agency for monitoring those who litter publicly.

Nguyen Thi Thuy Linh, from the community relations programme at the Steering Centre of the Urban Flood Control Programme, said awareness was absolutely crucial to solving the problem.

"We need clear targets on improving communities' awareness on littering and other activities that pollute the environment," she said. "We should also use various media channels and integrate the advice into teaching programmes."

Luu Thi Trinh of Binh Thanh District said one strategy could be teaching residents how to divide trash for recycling purpose and calling on young people to take part in cleaning-up programmes.

Others call for harsher punishments for those who litter publicly.

13. Nation approves green growth strategy

Viet Nam has outlined its commitment to reducing greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions with the implementation of the Green Growth strategy, approved by the Prime Minister last week.

The document sets a number of targets for improving the environmental situation in the country between now and 2020, with a vision reaching even further ahead. It is hoped that GHG emissions will decrease by between 8 and 10 per cent in that time, compared to levels recorded in 2010.

The Director of the Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment, Nguyen Van Tai, said although GHG emissions in Viet Nam have increased rapidly over the last few decades, they still remain low compared with other developed countries.

"Technically, Viet Nam has not been subject to any international mandatory obligations to cut down its emission level. However, Viet Nam has formulated its Green Growth strategy on its own initiative to make use of international assistance on this issue," Tai said.

The total GHG emissions per capita in Viet Nam is estimated to be about 1.9 tonnes of CO2 per year, compared to 0.3 tonnes in 1990. It is forecast to reach 5 tonnes by 2030.

As energy-related activities are a major source of GHG emissions, a target has been set decreasing the amount coming from this source by 10 to 20 per cent before 2020.

The strategy outlines a number of key measures to achieve this target. The main plan is for energy use to become more efficient, with the reduction of energy consumption in industrial activities, transport and commerce. This is hoped to be achieved via technology renovation, adoption of advanced operation process and development of a modern infrastructure.

The strategy is also targeting an end to the dependence on fossil fuels, while increasing the use of renewable energies by using market tools. A plan has been implemented to gradually remove subsidies for fossil fuels, which have been widely used up to now.

Another mission is to promote environmentally friendly green production that uses natural resources more efficiently. This is a radical part of the green growth model because rapid economic development over the past decades has resulted in serious environmental degradation.

The economy will be restructured to see investment increase in ‘green' sectors such as high technology, recycling and environmental services. Resource-intense sectors will be required to adopt new ways of production to make better use of natural resources and assume greater control of waste management.

By 2020, the value of products from high-technology and green technology industries will account 42 to 45 per cent of the GDP while 80 per cent of manufacturing and trading establishments must meet environmental standards. Half of the manufacturing sites in the country are expected to adopt clean technologies for production.

Agriculture, known for being the largest GHG emitter in the economy, is going to adopt a more sustainable development model, with farmers being introduced to new procedures and technologies that enable a more efficient use of agricultural supplies, resources and technologies to process and reuse agricultural waste.

Forest plantation and conservation projects will be given a boost so that by 2020 forest coverage will be 45 per cent, allowing an increase in carbon dioxide absorption.

Another important goal is to foster a green lifestyle and sustainable consumption pattern. This will begin with the implementation of labelling informing the public about eco-friendly products. From now until 2020, a number of products including construction material, hospital equipment, transport vehicles and computers will become more green.

In the first ten years of this strategy, awareness-raising activities will be prioritised along with capacity-building for human resources and institutional frameworks. A database will be built alongside management tools and index sets relating to green growth models.

Viet Nam is the first developing country in the Asia-Pacific region to independently formulate its own Green Growth strategy with an aim to switch to a low-carbon economy.

14. Drains, dredging ease floods in HCM City

Flooding has been prevented in eight areas where the city has built new drains and dredged canals and sewers, according to the HCM City Steering Centre for the Anti-Flooding Programme.

The city also plans to do similar work on two other flood-prone spots this year.

The eight areas are located on Vu Tung, Ung Van Khiem, Lanh Binh Thang, Hau Giang, Do Xuan Hop, Quang Trung, Phan Anh and An Duong Vuong streets.

At a meeting with the city's People's Council's Economic and Budget Division this week, the centre representatives said it had completed work on 121 water-drainage sewers, with a total length of 234 kilometres.

It had also upgraded the drainage capacity of 172 water-drainage sewers, with a total length of 289km.

Dredging was also done on 1,261 km of water-drainage sewers and 57 canals and sluice gates totalling a length of 6.5 kilometres.

Construction projects, however, have caused flooding to return to 14 other areas in the city that had similar dredging work done in recent years.

Of the total number, seven spots flooded during rains because of the major project to upgrade the Tan Hoa – Lo Gom Canal basin.

Nguyen Phuoc Thao, the centre director, said delays in accessing, approving and granting licences had slowed down work on many flood-prevention projects.

In addition, many participants at the meeting said that some districts had not paid proper attention to educating local residents about flood prevention.

They said that local residents continued to throw rubbish in sewers, blocking water drainage.

To ensure the progress of the city's flood-prevention programme during the 2011-15 periods, the centre asked the People's Committee to develop specific policies for basic-construction investment for important and urgent projects. This would help investors speed up the construction of flood-prevention projects.

It also asked the committee to set up a zoning plan for water, similar to plans for transport and trees.

It also asked the committee to allocate more funds for managing, maintaining and repairing water-drainage systems to meet the current demand for better water drainage.

Nguyen Van Lam, deputy head of the city People's Council's Economic and Budget Division, said violators of regulations on water drainage systems must be penalised.

Lam also asked the centre to implement projects approved by the city's People's Committee.

He told the centre to work with agencies to seek measures to solve the recurrence of flooding in areas where previous drainage work had been completed.

The city has targeted eliminating all flooding spots in inner-city areas as well as parts of other districts by 2015.

15. Mekong Delta to reach high water mark in early October

Water levels in the Cuu Long (Mekong) Delta areas, including the Dong Thap Muoi (Plain of Reeds) and Long Xuyen Quadrilateral, have been on the rise.

According to the Centre for Hydro-Meteorological Forecasting, the highest level in Tan Chau Area in An Giang Province is forecast to reach 3.3 metres on October 1, while water levels in Chau Doc Town may reach 2.85 metres.

Water levels in the Plain of Reeds and Long Xuyen Quadrilateral are forecast to reach Alarm1 and 2 levels, and in some areas, Alarm 3.

The unrelenting rains and high tides last week caused water levels in the Mekong River's upstream areas to rise by 1-8cm a day and are expected to continue to increase late this week.

HCM City and the southeastern provinces have had showers and rains. Thus, residents should be on the alert against squalls and whirlwinds, the Centre for Hydro-Meteorological Forecasting has said.

The city's board for storm and flood prevention has asked authorities to carry out measures to ensure safety for people and their assets. Fifteen houses in Dak Buc So Commune, located on the lower section of Dak Buc So Irrigation Dam in the Central Highlands province of Dak Nong's Tuy Duc District, were buried under soil after a landslide on Wednesday.

No casualties were reported from the landslide, which was caused by prolonged and heavy rains on the upper section of Dak Buc So Irrigation Dam.

Tuy Duc District People's Committee donated VND6 million to each family who lost their homes and VND3 million to each family affected by the landslide.

The district authority also decided to re-settle the affected households to a new residential area.

16. Deutsch-vietnamesische Zusammenarbeit in der Wasserwirtschaft wird intensiviert

German Water Partnership (GWP), der Vietnamesische Wasser- und Abwasserverband (VWSA) und das vietnamesische Unternehmen BUSADCO unterzeichneten am 1. Oktober in Hanoi ein Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) zur Stärkung der Verbandskooperation.

Die deutsch-vietnamesische Zusammenarbeit im Wassersektor wird mit der Unterzeichnung eines MoUs im Rahmen einer Seminarreise des IWAS-Forschungsprojektes (Internationale WasserforschungsAllianz Sachsen) weiter vertieft. Beide Seiten arbeiten im wechselseitigen, fachlichen Austausch an der kontinuierlichen Entwicklung hin zu einer nachhaltigen vietnamesischen Wasserwirtschaft. Verschiedene Projekte stehen kurz vor dem Startschuss.

„Gemeinsam wollen wir den Verbandsausbau vorantreiben und betrachten diese Zusammenarbeit als strategische Partnerschaft, die langfristig Bestand haben soll. Auch einzelne Unternehmen sowie Bildungs- und Forschungsinstitutionen werden mit einbezogen und können so individuell und im wechselseitigen Interesse aus dieser Partnerschaft Nutzen ziehen," erklärt Gunda Röstel, Vorstandsmitglied von GWP.

Konkrete Maßnahmen, die zur zielgerichteten Entwicklung einer nachhaltigen Wasserwirtschaft in Vietnam mit Politik und Entscheidungsträgern diskutiert werden, sind neben der strukturellen Weiterentwicklung des Verbandes, u.a. der Aufbau eines Wasserkompetenzzentrums unter Begleitung des Ministry of Construction (MoC) Vietnam und des Bundesministeriums für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) sowie vielfältige Maßnahmen im Bereich der beruflichen Aus- und Weiterbildung. Das vietnamesische Unternehmen BUSADCO verfügt bereits über Erfahrungen im Bereich der Aus- und Weiterbildung im Wasserbereich und wird insbesondere in diesem Modul die Entwicklung und Umsetzung geeigneter Maßnahmen unterstützen.

Insgesamt wird die vietnamesische Regierung bis 2020 über 12 Mrd. US$ in die Wasserver- und Abwasserentsorgung investieren. Sie hat längst erkannt, dass dringender Handlungsbedarf besteht. „Das in Vietnam gelieferte Wasser hat vielfach gemessen am deutschen und europäischen Standard - noch keine Trinkwasserqualität. Auch Wasserverluste von bis zu 40 % durch marode Leitungen sind keine Seltenheit," erläutert Stefan Girod, Geschäftsführer von GWP. „Eine besondere Herausforderung besteht in der Abwassersammlung und -klärung. Bisher können in den Klärwerken in Vietnam lediglich rund 10 % der zu reinigenden Abwässer behandelt werden."

Im Rahmen der Seminarreise des IWAS-Forschungsprojektes vom 29.09. bis 05.10. nach Hanoi und Vung Tau werden in Fachvorträgen und Expertenworkshops die aktuellen Herausforderungen bezüglich eines nachhaltigen Wassermanagements diskutiert. Themen der Workshops sind etwa Regenwasserbewirtschaftung, Energieeffizienz, Rahmenbedingungen zur Verwaltung und Tarifkalkulation. Mit dem Vizeminister des MoC, Cao Lai Quang, wird es einen Austausch über den Stand des WKZ-Projektes geben. Die Ergebnisse werden in die aktuellen gemeinsamen Vorhaben einfließen.

Hintergrundinformationen

- Rasante Entwicklung von Vietnam macht Investitionen in Infrastrukturen in Milliardenhöhe notwendig

Sturmfluten und Binnenhochwasser fordern Menschenleben und sorgen für hohe ökonomische Schäden. Mit mehr als 87 Millionen Einwohnern und einem seit dem Jahr 2000 dynamischen Wirtschaftswachstum hat sich Vietnam in kurzer Zeit zu einem der politisch und wirtschaftlich führenden Akteure in Südostasien entwickelt. Dabei wächst insbesondere die städtische Bevölkerung rasant. Die vorhandene städtische Infrastruktur reicht jedoch nicht aus, die Systeme zur Abwassersammlung und -behandlung existieren fast nicht oder sind in sehr

schlechtem Zustand. Eine integrierte und nachhaltige Wasserwirtschaft ist daher dringend notwendig.

In Ho-Chi-Minh-City hat die Stadtverwaltung einen Wasserversorgungsplan verabschiedet, der von einer Erhöhung der Nachfrage nach Trinkwasser von 2,2 Millionen auf 3,6 Millionen Kubikmeter bis zum Jahr 2025 ausgeht. Die aktuelle Gesamtkapazität des zuständigen Versorgers beläuft sich derzeit jedoch auf 1,6 Millionen Kubikmeter. Die Kapazitäten müssen dementsprechend erhöht werden. In Hanoi werden rund 40% - 400.000 Kubikmeter - der täglichen Wasserverbrauchsmenge ungeregelt aus privaten Brunnen entnommen. Drei neue Wasserwerke sind geplant, so dass schließlich bis 2020 die Kapazitäten auf insgesamt 1,8 Millionen erweitert sein sollen.

Noch alarmierender steht es um die Entsorgung. Vietnam verfügt über 14 kommunale Kläranlagen. Mit einer Gesamtkapazität von 334.000 Kubikmeter bei einer zu entsorgenden Menge von 3,6 Millionen Kubikmeter ist hier dringender Handlungsbedarf. Zudem schätzen Fachleute die Entwicklung der städtischen Abwassermenge bis 2020 auf 4,5 Millionen Kubikmeter.

Vietnam plant vor diesem Hintergrund enorme Investitionen. Um diese für den Privatsektor attraktiver zu machen, ist ein neues Wassergesetz in der Diskussion. Die bisherigen Vorschriften sollen den Erfordernissen angepasst und speziell die Gebührenerhebung neu regeln, die derzeit die notwendigen Investitionskosten nicht annähernd decken. Auftragschancen eröffnen sich insbesondere über von internationalen Entwicklungsorganisationen geförderte Projekte.

(Quelle: GTAI, EUWID)

- IWAS - Internationale WasserforschungsAllianz Sachsen

Angesichts der wasserwirtschaftlichen Herausforderung haben sich rund 40 Wissenschaftler des Helmholtz-Zentrums für Umweltforschung – UFZ und der Technischen Universität Dresden mit der GELSENWASSER AG (GW AG) / Stadtentwässerung Dresden GmbH (GW AG ist Mitglied der German Water Partnership – GWP) und weiteren Partnern aus Wissenschaft, Wirtschaft und Politik aus Deutschland sowie international zur „Internationalen Wasserforschungs-Allianz Sachsen“ (IWAS) zusammengeschlossen, um sich gemeinsam den drängendsten Wasserproblemen in fünf Weltregionen zu stellen. Gefördert durch das Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF) im Rahmen des Programms „Spitzenforschung und Innovation in den Neuen Ländern“ werden gezielt angepasste Systemlösungen für die jeweiligen Wasserprobleme entwickelt. (Quelle: IWAS)

- VWSA - der Vietnamesische Wasser- und Abwasserverband

Der VWSA, gegründet 1988 und mit Sitz in Hanoi, ist eine gesellschaftliche berufsbegleitende Organisation, die erfahrene Leitungskräfte der Wasser- und Abwasserunternehmen Vietnams sowie zahlreiche Bildungs- und Forschungsinstitutionen angehören. Ziel des Verbandes ist es, die Entwicklung einer zufriedenstellenden Wasser-und Sanitärversorgung sowie umweltgerechten Abwasserbehandlung in Vietnam vorzutreiben. Die Mitglieder werden in den Bereichen Qualifikation und Ausbildung, Investition, Organisations- und Prozessoptimierung sowie im Kundenservice und im politischen Dialog unterstützt.

Bild1: Bild und Beschreibung liegt noch nicht vor (folgt am 01.10.12)

Bild2: Bild und Beschreibung liegt noch nicht vor (folgt am 01.10.12)

Die Bilder können auf Wunsch in höherer Auflösung zur Verfügung gestellt werden, Quelle: GWP

Mit Bitte um Zusendung von zwei Belegexemplaren oder dem Internetlink nach Publikation – danke

Mehr als 350 Unternehmen und Institutionen der deutschen Wirtschaft und Forschung aus dem Wassersektor sind im Netzwerk German Water Partnership organisiert. Vom Hochschulinstitut bis zum weltweit vertretenen Komponentenhersteller sind insgesamt über 25.000 Mitarbeiter für mehr als 80 Länder aktiv. GWP wird von fünf Bundesministerien (BMU, BMBF, BMWi, BMZ und AA) aktiv unterstützt.

Kontakt: Anke Ortmann, Presse- und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, T +49 (0)30 300199-1222,
M +49 (0)176 70547009, E ortmann@germanwaterpartnership.de,
www.germanwaterpartnership.de