**Mandate of the Forestry Department of MARD** (selected extracts):

1. To submit to the Minister legal normative document drafts under the mandate of the Department.

2. To present to the Minister strategies, development plans, policies, annual and five-year plans, programs, projects, and proposals with regards to forestry.

3. To organize to steer, guide, review and take responsibility for implementing legal normative documents, planning, plans, programs, projects, standards, processes, economic-technological norms approved and conduct legal dissemination, propaganda, and education.

4. On the specialized management for forestry sector:

a. Forestry resources management:

- Manage the basic investigation on forestry: appraise and manage the implementation of projects on forestry, monitor and evaluate the situation of forest resources and forestry land; make maps of forests and forestry land;

- State management for the planning of special use forests, protection forest, production forest; submit to Minister proposals for the establishment of special use forests and protection forests;

- Management for monitoring the situation of forestry resources and forestry land,

- Participate in the appraisal of planning of land use and changes in forest land use purposes.

b. Forestation:

- State management on planning and projects on forestation;

- Preside over the development of technological –economic processes and norms on forestation, mapping out recoverable forests and enriching forests;

c. State management of forest materials

d. On forest exploitation and utilization:

- Steer the development of and approve the plan for natural forests preparation;

- Submit an annual plan for timber exploitation and the exploitation of other forestry products;

- Appraise the general dossier designed for natural timber exploitation; present the Minister to make decision on opening natural forests for exploitation in provinces and government affiliated cities;

- Appraise the dossier designed for exploiting, making use of and gathering natural timber;

- Approve the timber exploitation in forests planted under the State budget of MARD affiliated agencies;

- Provide guidance for the use of timber and other forestry products;

- Participate in managing the export and import of timber and other forestry products;

e. Collect information, synthesize reports, develop database to serve the forestry speciality management.

5. On science and technology:

a. Develop and submit to the Minister programs, plans, scientific research subjects, application of technological advancements on forestry; manage and deploy the implementation of results in scientific research, application of technical, technological advancement under the Department.

b. Unify the management on gene funds of forest plant, microorganism, and forest animals;

c. Preside, take part in developing quality standard for forestry varieties, quality of forestry products and forestry materials;

d. Organize to collect and manage specialized science-technology information.

6. Submit the Minister mechanisms, policies for the development of forestry market, take part in developing and projecting the direction on the market development for timber and other forestry products; organize, participate in trade fairs, exhibitions on forestry achievements.

7. Develop programs, projects for international cooperation on forestry, take part in the negotiations to sign and get admission to international treaties and international organizations on forestry, deploy the implementation of programs and projects for international cooperation under the assignments of MARD Minister.

8. Conduct the inspection, review; handle complaints, accusation; fight against corruption and negative actions and deal with violations in accordance with management scope of the Department.

9. Perform tasks and organize the management of the Standing Office of the Steering Board for the 5–million-hectare reforestation Project ; carry out the tasks of the Standing Office of the UNCCD; implement the Protocol on forestry community development in Asia- Pacific region;

**Forest Sector Support Programme**

In 1997, the second session of the 10 th National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam passed a Resolution on “the National Five Million Hectares Reforestation Program 1998-2010” (5MHRP).

In 1998, the Prime Minister’s Office approved Decision 661 on implementation and funding of 5 MHRP. At the Consultative Group Meeting organized in Paris in December 1998, the donor community and the Vietnamese Government agreed to establish a Partnership Support Program for the 5MHRP.

In 1999, the Government and 15 international partners signed a Memorandum of Agreement for 5MHRP. After 2 years of implementing 5MHRP partnership activities (2000-2001), the broader Forest Sector Support Program and Partnership (FSSP & P) was formulated. The FSSP&P Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed in Nov. 2001 between the Vietnam Government and 19 international partners (now 25 signatories). The FSSP would support the implementation of the forest sector development strategy to 2010, which includes the 5MHRP.

As stated in the MOA, the FSSP & P has three objectives as follows:

* To put in place arrangements for continued collaboration in support of the forest sector of Vietnam on the basis of agreed policies, strategies, priorities and principles of implementation.
* Signatories to the partnership share a commitment to the sustainable management of forests and the conservation of biodiversity to achieve: (a) protection of the environment; (b) improved livelihood of people in forest areas; and (c) enhanced contribution of forestry to the national economy.
* By collaborating, the Government and the international partners aim to maximize effectiveness and efficiency in the use of all resources applied to the sector. A key effectiveness is greater harmonization of policies and programs in the context of shared objectives for the sector.

Now, after 5 years of operation, its institutional structure has been revised, to more effectively provide support to forest sector in Vietnam. Future support will focus on supporting implementation of the National Forest Strategy (NFS, 2006-2020). This approach is in line with the original aim for the Partnership to support a programmatic approach, as well as consistent with more recent agreements, such as the Hanoi Core Statement. As there is no longer a separate FSSP Program, the name is now the **Forest Sector Support Partnership (FSSP)**.

The FSSP is now reformulated with one set of interrelated Terms of Reference for its five institutions:

         the overall broad Partnership and its members, called FSSP Partners, open for voluntary participation (with no obligations) of all stakeholders interested in the forest sector, including local non-governmental organizations and private sector;

         a sub-set of the Partnership, called Partnership Steering Committee (PSC) Members, comprised of signatories of the FSSP Memorandum of Agreement and designated Vietnamese representatives;

         the standing committee of the Partnership, called the Technical / Executive Committee (TEC), comprised of representatives from the PSC members;

         the Regional Forestry Networks, comprised of representatives of forestry provinces and other key stakeholders, which participates in the Partnership, and has representatives to the PSC and TEC; and

         the Forest Sector Support Partnership Coordination Office (FSSP CO), which serves as the secretariat for the other Partnership institutions, and promotes coordination and information, and in collaboration with other relevant parties, helps to mobilize support for the sector.

Partners:

Netherlands, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, ADB, WB, Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), EU, UNDP, SNV, WWF, IUCN, FAO, Bird Life International, Fauna & Flora International (FFI), Great Britain Oxfam, Tropenbos, Helvetas, Care International, CIFOR, Australia Foundation for the people of Asia and the Pacific (AFAP)

**Trust Fund for Forests**

**Establishment of the TFF**

# The Trust Fund for Forests (TFF) was established in 2004. At the same time four bilateral donors (Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland) signed an MOU with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), which committed them to pool their ODA contributions in support of Vietnam’s forest sector during an initial three year transition phase of the TFF.

Vietnam’s Trust Fund for Forests will provide a grant facility to support pro-poor and sustainable approaches to forest management and a transition towards a comprehensive sector wide approach for development and cooperation in the forest sector.

The overall goal of the fund is consistent with that of the existing National Forest Development Strategy - “The sustainable management of forests and the conservation of biodiversity to achieve: a) protection of the environment, b) improved livelihoods of people in forest dependent areas, and c) enhanced contribution of forestry to the national economy.”

The TFF has four specific objectives:

* Aligning ODA support more closely with the agreed priorities identified in the FSSP framework
* Improving poverty targeting of ODA support to the forest sector, consistent with the CPRGS
* Harmonizing aid delivery from ODA to the forest sector and reducing transaction costs on GoV
* Supporting a transition towards a sector wide approach to ODA support in the forest sector

The Governments of Finland, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland contribute non-refundable ODA funds to the TFF. Germany provides support through provision of technical assistance for development and operation of the TFF.