

**DECISION No. 204/2006/QĐ-TTg OF
SEPTEMBER 2, 2006, PROMULGATING THE
NATIONAL ACTION PROGRAM TO COMBAT
DESERTIFICATION IN THE 2006-2010 PERIOD
AND ORIENTATIONS TOWARD 2020**

THE PRIME MINISTER

*Pursuant to the December 25, 2001 Law on
Organization of the Government;*

*In order to implement Vietnam's commitments as
a contracting party to the United Nations Convention
to Combat Desertification;*

*Pursuant to the Prime Minister's Decision No. 153/
2004/QĐ-TTg of August 17, 2004, promulgating the
strategic orientation for sustainable development in
Vietnam (Agenda 21 of Vietnam);*

*At the proposal of the Agriculture and Rural
Development Minister,*

DECIDES:

Article 1.- To promulgate together with this

Decision the national action program to combat desertification in the 2006-2010 period and orientations toward 2020 in order to concretize the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and specify the strategic orientation for sustainable development in Vietnam (Agenda 21 of Vietnam).

Article 2.- Organization of implementation of the program

1. The National Coordinating Body for implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, which was established under the Prime Minister's Decision No. 68/2003/QĐ-TTg of April 28, 2003, shall have to perform the tasks assigned by the Prime Minister in this Decision.

2. The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry, the agency in prime charge of the national action program to combat desertification in the 2006-2010 period and orientations toward 2020, shall have to:

a/ Assume the prime responsibility for, and coordinate with concerned ministries, branches, provincial/municipal People's Committees, social organizations and international organizations in, organizing the implementation of the national action program to combat desertification in the 2006-2010 period and orientations toward 2020 already approved by the Prime Minister;

b/ Assume the prime responsibility for, and coordinate with the Planning and Investment Ministry, ministries, branches and provincial People's Committees in, integrating inter-branch and inter-territorial projects under the national action program to combat desertification in the 2006-2010 period and orientations toward 2020 already approved by the Prime Minister;

c/ Assume the prime responsibility for, and coordinate with the Finance Ministry and the concerned agencies in, formulating the financial

mechanism, ensuring the close and effective management of the program and projects;

d/ Annually report to the Prime Minister, concentrating on assessment of impacts of the program, projects and policies on state management of forest, land and water resources on the life of people in affected areas;

e/ Promptly report to the Prime Minister on newly emerging issues which go beyond its competence; propose the replacement, modification or addition of projects, the change of agencies with prime responsibility therefor when such projects fail to achieve objectives or keep up with set schedules.

3. The Planning and Investment Ministry and the Finance Ministry shall have the following responsibilities:

a/ To coordinate with the Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry, the agency in prime charge of the program, in integrating the tasks and projects with relevant socio-economic development tasks;

b/ To appraise projects under the program according to the provisions of law;

c/ To balance and allocate capital for implementation of the program.

4. Ministers, heads of ministerial-level agencies, heads of government-attached agencies, and presidents of provincial/municipal People's Committees shall organize the execution of projects assigned to them on the list of projects enclosed with this Decision.

Article 3.- This Decision shall take effect 15 days after its publication in "CONG BAO."

Ministers, heads of ministerial-level agencies, heads of government-attached agencies, and presidents of provincial/municipal People's Committees shall have to implement this Decision.

Prime Minister
NGUYEN TAN DUNG

NATIONAL ACTION PROGRAM TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THE 2006-2010 PERIOD AND ORIENTATIONS TOWARD 2020

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

(Promulgated together with the Prime Minister's Decision No. 204/2006/QĐ-TTg of September 2, 2006)

PREAMBLE

Desertification referred to in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification passed at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro means the land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas resulting from various factors, including climatic variations and human activities.

Land degradation means the reduction or loss of biological or economic productivity of land.

Arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas means areas in which the ratio of evapotranspiration falls within the range from 0.05 to 0.60.

For Vietnam, combating desertification means the prevention of the danger of land degradation, mitigation of land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas; the rehabilitation and reclamation of degraded and desertified land through enhancing the role and responsibility of state agencies simultaneously with stepping up the socialization so that each household, enterprise or social organization can participate in protection and sustainable development of land and forest resources, fight salination, acidulation and sand movement, development of irrigation in order to better the livelihood of people in geographical areas affected by desertification.

In the past years, for performance of the anti-desertification task, numerous programs and projects

on agricultural, forestry or fishery extension, credit provision, infrastructure construction, ect., have been executed nationwide.

These programs and projects have helped reclaim unused land, raise forest acreage and reserve, introduce models of combined agro-forestry development, thus creating jobs and increasing incomes for poor people in rural areas, contributing to hunger eradication and poverty alleviation, environmental improvement and social stability, and creating firm prerequisites for performance of the anti-desertification task.

However, the task of combating desertification remains heavy and needs to be further performed in a constant and consistent manner with feasible objectives and a clear and specific schedule so as to redress the situation of uncontrolled forest exploitation which causes the loss of forests, especially primitive and headwater forests; nomadic farming, deforestation for milpa, destruction of coastal submerged forests for aquaculture and forest fires still frequently occur, causing the loss of tens of thousands of hectares of forests every year and severely reducing the forest acreage; poor management, use and protection of water sources have caused the depletion or serious pollution thereof; land of all types is in danger of erosion, washing, skip, slide, low fertility, nutritional imbalance, hardening, salination, acidulation, drought, water logging, fixation of sand dunes, being covered with sand or polluted with chemicals, etc.

Total land area vulnerable to desertification is around 9.3 million hectares, where around 22 million people live. The above-said situation of cultivation land has caused great difficulties to households which make a living on forestry or agriculture, thus seriously affecting the socio-economic development in such a vast territory.

To early put an end to the above-said situation, the promulgation and organization of implementation of the national action program to combat desertification

in the 2006-2010 and orientations toward 2020 must be regarded as an urgent task.

Part I

GUIDING VIEWPOINTS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTION PROGRAM

I. Guiding viewpoints

1. Combating desertification constitutes an extremely important task, and contributes to sustainably managing forest resources, water sources and land, step by step increasing incomes of people, eradicating hunger, alleviating poverty and definitely completing the task of sedentarization.

2. Desertification combat must be conducted in a scientific and efficient manner, based on the system of uniform and consistent policies and laws of the State and achievements of the preceding period, subject to the concentrated and unified direction by the Government, concretized into projects to be executed by ministries, branches, socio-political organizations and People's Committees of localities having desertified areas and the capability to draw attention and mobilize contributions of the entire society.

3. Expanding, diversifying and multilateralizing international relations while selecting key domains in which investment should be concentrated and attracted from all economic sectors at home and abroad, fostering personnel, absorbing modern technologies and inheriting appropriate traditional experience, thus contributing to well implementing the national action program to combat desertification and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

4. Closely combining the economic and social development and environmental protection with the maintenance of defense, security and social order and safety; attaching the national action program to combat desertification with the comprehensive strategy on growth and poverty alleviation, and the national strategy

on environmental protection as well as other national strategies and programs with the fulfillment of the United Nations millenium development goals (MDGs).

II. Objectives

1. Objectives toward 2010

a/ To formulate national policies, set forth specific tasks, define responsibilities of ministries, branches and provincial People's Committees in performing these tasks, forge international ties, identify capital sources and capital management mechanisms so as to ensure a firm foundation for performing the tasks of preventing, combating and mitigating the desertification in areas in the territory of Vietnam as specified in this action program.

b/ To fulfill the urgent anti-desertification tasks, especially in four priority regions, including the northeastern region, the coastal Central Vietnam, the Central Highlands and Long Xuyen quadrilateral region.

2. Objectives toward 2020

To substantially eradicate desertification causal factors attributable to human activities, shape up solutions to preventing or mitigating the desertification caused by natural factors, rehabilitate to the utmost desertified areas, and definitely complete the task of sedentarization in reclaimed land areas through renewing land use methods, increasing inhabitants' incomes, eradicating hunger and alleviating poverty, thus ensuring that by 2020 the socio-economic development in areas affected by desertification basically harmonize with that of other regions throughout the country.

Part II

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE ACTION PROGRAM

I. Scope of the action program

The scope of the action program covers the desertified areas throughout the country, with priority given to desertified areas in the northwestern region, the coastal Central Vietnam, the Central Highlands and Long Xuyen quadrilateral region.

II. Tasks of the action program

1. Tasks of the national action program are divided into the following groups:

a/ Perfecting the legal framework for protecting land, forest and water resources in order to prevent and combat desertification and promptly satisfy new requirements.

b/ Raising public awareness, training human resources and consolidating material-technical foundations and research institutions in service of desertification prevention and combat.

c/ Investigating into and assessing the actual state of desertification, and researching and identifying major causes of desertification, proposing solutions to preventing and combating desertification in Vietnam.

d/ Organizing economic and technology transfer activities for the purposes of protecting, managing and developing land, forest and water resources, thus contributing to the socio-economic development, hunger eradication and poverty alleviation in desertified areas.

e/ Entering into international cooperation for implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification.

2. Projects, managing agencies and coordinating agencies, implementation duration, priority order in the 2006-2020 period are specified in the list of projects under the national action program to combat desertification in the 2006-2010 period and orientations toward 2020, promulgated together with this action program.

Part III

MAJOR SOLUTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTION PROGRAM

1. Raising public awareness about anti-desertification; mobilizing experts in ministries, branches, research institutes and professional associations to work out specific plans for scheduled implementation of this national action program.

2. Reviewing the division of tasks among ministries, branches and localities to combat desertification; strengthening the organization of the state management apparatus in charge of desertification combat from the central to local levels; perfecting legal documents on desertification combat, and raising the role and position of local administrations, especially grassroots administrations, in implementing this national action program.

3. Diversifying forms of cooperation with foreign countries on desertification combat in order to study and receive transferred technologies, receive models of combining agricultural and forestry production with market; organizing personnel training and re-training to form a contingent of experts, especially leading scientists and high-level state management officials in this domain.

4. Ensuring financial sources from the state budget for implementation of this national action program, and concurrently mobilizing ODA capital sources, capital from international cooperation programs and capital from other sources of organizations and individuals of all economic sectors at home and abroad.

5. Conducting the inspection, examination, supervision and periodical assessment of fulfillment of objectives and tasks of this national action program.

Prime Minister
NGUYEN TAN DUNG

**LIST OF PROJECTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE NATIONAL ACTION PROGRAM TO PREVENT AND COMBAT DESERTIFICATION
IN THE 2006 – 2010 PERIOD AND ORIENTATIONS TOWARD 2020**

*(Promulgated together with the Prime Minister's Decision No. 204/2006/QĐ-TTg
of September 2, 2006)*

No.	Names of projects	Managing agencies	Coordinating agencies	Priority order up to 2010 Implementation duration	Notes
I.	Perfection of legal framework for protection of land, forest and water resources for desertification prevention and combat				
1	Formulation, supplementation, amendment of policies and legal provisions on management organization in the Forest Protection and Development Law, the Water Resource Law, the Land Law, the <i>Environmental Protection Law</i> , etc., concerning the task of desertification prevention and combat	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry and the Government Office	1 2006 - 2009	Being at initial stage of implementation
2	Formulation of socialization policies, especially rural credit policy, policy on benefits of people and organizations in service of desertification prevention and combat, which shall serve as a basis for localities to take initiative in guiding the implementation thereof	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	The Finance Ministry; the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry, and the Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs Ministry	1 2006 - 2008	Currently implemented under Decision No.178/2001/QĐ-TTg
3	Formulation of a mechanism for coordination among ministries, branches, central government and localities, and a mechanism for management of programs and projects in the Convention to Combat Desertification in the direction of enhancing management responsibilities of branches and localities	The Planning and Investment Ministry	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry; and the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry	2 2007 - 2008	

II. Raising of public awareness, training of human resources and consolidation of material and technical foundations and research institutes in service of desertification prevention and combat					
4	Raising of public awareness about the tasks of desertification combat. Elaboration of a set of documents guiding the job training for peasants to cultivate plants or raise animals of economic value in desertified areas	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry; the Vietnam Union of Scientific and Technical Associations; the Vietnam Peasants' Association	The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry; the Radio Voice of Vietnam; and Vietnam Television Station	1	
				2006 - 2010	
5	Formulation and organization of implementation of policies, plannings and plans on training and retraining of personnel (especially grassroots personnel) in service of desertification prevention and combat	The Education and Training Ministry; the Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs Ministry	The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry; and People's Committees of concerned provinces	2	
				2007 - 2010	
6	Building and improvement of the system of general observation posts for desertification prevention and combat	The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	2	
				2007 - 2020	
7	Research into and application of information technology to collection, archive and processing of national information in service of desertification prevention and combat. Building of an archive center and a complete database in service of desertification prevention and combat	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	The Science and Technology Ministry; and the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry	2	
				2007 - 2009	
8	Research into and application of modern technologies and traditional technologies in use, protection and sustainable development of forest, land and water resources in service of desertification prevention and combat task	The Science and Technology Ministry	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry; and the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry	2	
				2007 - 2010	

III.	Survey and assessment of actual state of desertification and study and identification of major causes of desertification, proposal of solutions to desertification prevention and combat in Vietnam				
9	Basic survey and assessment of actual state of desertification in Vietnam and its impacts on socio-economic development, focusing on 4 priority regions: Northwestern region, coastal Central Vietnam, Central Highlands and Mekong River delta	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry	2	
				2007 - 2008	
10	Research into and identification of the causes of desertification in Vietnam attributable to natural and social conditions, especially in four priority regions; proposal of specific solutions to desertification prevention and combat	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	The Science and Technology Ministry; and the Vietnam Union of Scientific and Technical Associations	3	
				2008 - 2010	
11	Study and assessment of erosion, washing, salination and acidulation in Central Vietnam, Central Highlands and Mekong River delta	The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry	The Science and Technology Ministry; the Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry; and the Vietnam Union of Scientific and Technical Associations	3	
				2008 - 2010	
12	Elaboration of a planning on revamp of degraded agricultural land areas, barren hills and mountains and areas seriously affected by drought in Northwestern region, Central Vietnam, Central Highlands and Mekong River delta	The Science and Technology Ministry; the Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry; and the Vietnam Union of Scientific and Technical Associations	The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry	3	
				2008 - 2010	

13	Elaboration of a planning on three types of forest, demarcating boundaries afield and assigning forest land in service of desertification prevention and combat	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry	1 2006 - 2010	Currently implemented under Directive No. 2005/CT-TTg
14	Elaboration of planning and plans on use of surface and underground water resources in desertified areas	The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	1 2006 - 2010	Currently implemented under Decision No. 104/2000/QĐ-TTg
15	Development of pilot models of application of technologies to rehabilitate and increase fertility of land left unused due to pollution, water shortage, etc., and models of community-based activities combining agricultural and forestry production with product outlets for efficient and sustainable cultivation in desertified areas, attaching importance to four priority regions: Northwestern region, coastal Central Vietnam, Central Highlands and Mekong River delta	Provincial People's Committees (especially in four priority regions), the Vietnam Union of Scientific and Technical Associations	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	1 2006 - 2010	Financial aids of the EU and German Federal Republic for pilot models in Son La and Lai Chau provinces
16	Study of a strategy for growth, hunger eradication, poverty alleviation, socio-economic development investment in desertified areas in harmony with other territorial areas of the country	The Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs Ministry; and the Planning and Investment Ministry	The Vietnam Peasants' Association; and the Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	1 2006 - 2008	Currently implemented under Decision No. 168/2001/QĐ-TTg
17	Study and determination of total capital, capital sources, investment phases, mechanism for management of capital for desertification prevention and combat, so that by 2020 the socio-economic development in desertified areas will basically harmonize with that of other regions of the country	The Planning and Investment Ministry; and the Finance Ministry	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	2 2007 - 2008	

18	Study and assessment of actual hydrological conditions of forests in Vietnam and drought degree of each region or each system of rivers and streams in areas seriously affected by drought	The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	3 2008 - 2010	
IV	Organization of economic and technology transfer activities for protection, management and development of land, forest and water resources, contributing to socio-economic development, hunger eradication and poverty alleviation in areas vulnerable to desertification				
19	Sustainable management of landscape of forest areas vulnerable to desertification for economic development and natural disaster prevention and combat	People's Committees of concerned provinces	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry; and the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry	3 2008 - 2020	
20	Planting of sand-shielding forests, revamp of sand-covered fields, mitigation of drought and combat of land degradation in the coastal Central Vietnam	People's Committees of coastal central provinces	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	1 2006 - 2010	Funded by World Bank, being at initial stage
21	Application of anti-desertification models which have been successfully experimented, especially in four priority regions: Northwestern region, coastal Central Vietnam, Central Highlands and Mekong River delta	People's Committees of concerned provinces; and the Vietnam Union of Scientific and Technical Associations	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	3 2008 - 2010	Currently researched and experimented
22	Planting of semi-submerged protective forests in a number of big hydropower reservoirs (Hoa Binh, Tri An, Son La, etc.)	The Vietnam Peasants' Association, People's Committees of concerned provinces	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	1 2006 - 2020	Currently researched and experimented
23	Use and reclamation of degraded basalt soil in the Central Highlands	People's Committees of concerned provinces	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	2 2007 - 2010	

24	Intensification of commercial activities, complete building of information system and promotion of sale of agricultural and forest products in deserted areas	The Trade Ministry; and the Vietnam Peasants' Association	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	2	
				2007 - 2009	
V.	International cooperation for implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification				
25	Enhancement of capability of the Office for the Convention to Combat Desertification	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry		1	
				2006 - 2009	
26	Intensification of information exchange, setting up of bilateral and multilateral partnerships, formulation of mini-projects for enhancing cooperation with specialized networks for national-level operations in the course of implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	The Natural Resources and Environment Ministry	1	Initially implemented under the Prime Minister's Official Letter No.952/TTg-QHQT of June 21, 2006
				2006 - 2010	
27	Study and formulation of a mechanism for mobilization and use of support capital sources to combat desertification and set up a fund for desertification prevention and combat	The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry	The Planning and Investment Ministry; and the Finance Ministry	2	
				2007 - 2010	