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ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE IN SOUTH KOREA –
VALUABLE REFERENCES TO VIETNAM

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INTRODUCTION

1. Needs and Urgency

Entering 21st century, Vietnam has faced with several environmental problems and challenges caused from both subjectively and objectively¹:

- (i) Being ranked as 5th vulnerable to climate change risks worldwide
- (ii) Energy shortage to meet the needs for socio-economic development and highly depending on the energy sources causing high pollution.
- (iii) Coastal and sea water has been polluted and degraded, especially in central region where coastal areas have high potential for tourism development
- (iv) Some key river basin areas are polluted at alarming level
- (v) Wastes are increased rapidly due to poor management
- (vi) Spontaneous immigration from rural areas into big cities brought pressures on urban environment management
- (vii) Air pollution by transport activities causes economic loss estimated at 5% of GDP annually
- (viii) Public health is threatened by environmental risks such as polluted water and food
- (ix) Obstacles in forest, biodiversity and soil resources management
- (x) Innovative technologies are not applied in environmental governance and management

Therefore, the renovation of thinking and methods on state management of environment and natural resources has been an urgent need to solve the environmental problems and challenges mentioned above.

Since the country reunion in 1975 and the adoption of ‘Doimoi’ policy in late 1990s, Vietnam has gained enormous achievements in economic development with steadily increased growth at high rate. Those economic achievements had brought Vietnam out of poor to become a low middle income country in 2008. However, according to many economists both international and domestic, Vietnam economy growth rate has been declined in recent years and being at risk to fall in “middle income trap”. Environmental protection and the maintenance of environmental sustainability are critical to ensure the sustainable development of society and economy. Vietnam had joined the group of low middle income countries recently and being faced

¹Summarized by the author on the basis of data and information published by Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment in annual report on National State of Environment.

with many new challenges such as the depletion of natural resources, the degradation of living environment affecting public health and the quality of labour forces. In this context, deeply studying about the experiences and the lessons from successful countries like Japan and South Korea those are recognized worldwide is urgent and necessary for Vietnam.

2. Research objectives and tasks

2.1. Research objectives:the research is designed to study, analyze, evaluate, and compare the practices of environmental governance in Vietnam and South Korea in various periods of socio-economic development course in order to determine the lessons from South Korea that can be the valuable references to Vietnam for its development and industrialization process towards 2030.

2.2. Research tasks

In order to achieve the objectives above, the research will focus on the following tasks:

- (i) **Making overview on the development of thoughts and practices on environmental governance in the world** (with the focus on 1. policy and legislation system; 2. administration system; 3. Resource (including human resource, financial resources and information) development and effective use; and 4. Attracting the participation of stakeholders).
- (ii) **Conduct case studies on South Korea and Vietnam systems**in specific periods of socio-economic development course to link and to determine experience lessons based on the application of worldwide thoughts and practices.
- (iii) **Recommend the lessons from South Korea case that is worth to refer to Vietnam case**for the duplication of those lessons in Vietnam during its process of industrialization acceleration on the basis of in-depth comparison of socio-economic development, environment status and government’s responses and environmental governance systems between the two countries in each specific development period.

3. Research objects and scope

Objects of this research are ‘**Models of government structure and modalities of governance operation** in the fields of **environmental governance** to preserve environment and natural resources with the following foci:

- 1. Socio-economic development and the impacts of socio-economic development policies in environment quality.

- 2. Policy and legislation framework to serve for environmental governance (state management of environment and natural resources).
- 3. Institutional arrangement and government structure for state management of environment and natural resources.
- 4. Human resources allocation and personnel structure in institutional and government system of state management of environment and natural resources.
- 5. Budget allocation, financial ensuring and public financial management, application of financial and economic tools in state management of environment and natural resources.
- 6. Mobilization of the participation of social stakeholders in state management of environment and natural resources

Geographically, the author focused on the cases of South Korea and Vietnam with state management system at macro level (central government and provincial authorities). Besides, the author also reviewed the models applied in other 30 European, American and Asian countries.

The research focuses on the analysis of environmental governance practices in South Korea since 1950 and in Vietnam since 1975. The study problems and issues will be reviewed and analyzed in according to the timeframe described in the table below.

Development Period	South Korea	Vietnam
(-) Development from a poor country (just came out of war and starting socio-economic rehabilitation process, belonging the low income country group) to a developing country (belonging the middle income country group).	1950-1980	1975-2010
(-) Development from a developing country into a developed and industrialized country (belonging the high income country group)	1980-2007	2011-2030
(-) Development towards green growth under strong globalization process	After 2008	

Based on the analysis and the evaluation regarding the environmental governance practices in the two countries in the various stages of their socio-economic development, experiences and lessons derived from South Korea development will serve to make some suggestions suitable to the socio-economic development of Vietnam in coming years in its industrialization process until 2030.

4. Methodologies and research methods

4.1. Methodologies: in this thesis the thoughts and the theories in the fields of politics, governance, administration, environmental politics are applied to analyze the issues and the problems of environmental governance, the state management of natural resources and environment both at national level with the focus on the two case studies for South Korea and Vietnam.

4.2. Research methods: The thesis uses a combination of 5 popular research methods those are normally applied in social and managerial sciences include the followings:

(A) Information collection and retrieval from various sources: over 15,000 pages of documents in English, Vietnamese and Korean had been reviewed from 6 English books, 4 Korean books, 5 Vietnamese books and over 50 articles and mange official web pages as well.

(B) Intensive interview with experts working for Vietnam MoNRE and Korea Ministry of Environment

(C) Desk-review of collected information: review, analyze the collected information to prepare co-reports and to write the thesis during 2012-2014

(D) Conduct case studies for Vietnam and South Korea: Apply the thoughts on environmental governance to analyze the cases of South Korea and Vietnam

(E) Consultation with experts: the co-reports were presented in front of panels officially and/or consulted with experts of the Faculty of Urban & Rural State Management under NAPA where the author has been designated to work with under PhD research program.

5. New contributions derived from this thesis

This is a comprehensive and thorough research on the trends of environmental governance system development worldwide with two case studies for South Korea and Vietnam. The followings are new contributions derived from the research:

- i. Systematical overview of on the development and the trend of thoughts on environmental governance and the application of those thoughts into practical life worldwide in Vietnamese;
- ii. Comprehensive overview of trends on the development of environmental administration systems worldwide in Vietnamese;
- iii. Compare and summarize the experiences and the lessons on governance, administration structure and operation in the fields of natural resources and environment in South Korea and Vietnam through the indepth analysis of and the case studies conducted for the developments of governmental structures and operations in

these fields in various stages of the country socio-economic context.

- iv. Provide some recommendations for the renovation of governmental organization and operation in the sector of natural resources and environment for Vietnam during its socio-economic development process to become an industrialization country by 2030. This will help Vietnam to achieve its green growth targets with minimized resources (administrative efforts/human resources and financial resources) and environmental losses.

6. The research meaningfulness

6.1. Theoretical meaningfulness: Based on the overview on the development and the trend of thoughts on environmental governance and the application of those thoughts into practical life worldwide, this thesis will contribute on the consolidating of theoretical rationales serving for the application of those thoughts in Vietnam socio-economic context.

6.2. Practical meaningfulness: Although having specific differences, South Korea and Vietnam still have shared many similarities in their experiences gained through the historical development of each country under global context. Thoroughly studying on the administration systems in each country in order to shape the lessons learnt from each case will contribute in the renovation process of public administration systems in each country. Especially, recommendations made in the thesis derived from the analysis of South Korean experiences are worthy for Vietnam to refer and will be useful sources for Vietnamese experts and managers to use for their policy making and formulation process for the consolidation and the finalization of Vietnam environment governance system (institutional structure of government system serving for environment and natural resource management) during its industrialization process until 2030.

7. The thesis structure

Besides the introduction, the list of references and relating annexes, the key contents of this research are presented in 4 following chapters:

- Chapter 1: Overview of relevant researches
- Chapter 2: Environmental Governance – Some Prevalent Thoughts and Trends Worldwide
- Chapter 3: Environmental Governance in South Korea – Development History and Experiences

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT RESEARCHES

1.1. Researches and studies conducted abroad

While the development and the consolidation of public administration systems had been strongly promoted in many countries since World War 2, the promotion of environmental administration systems was started in early 1970s, first in advanced countries. The development of environmental administration systems in developing and poor countries had been formed little bit later at around middle 1980s. Entering 1990s, people has gained clearer understanding oftransboundary environmental problems and together with the wider and wider globalization trends, the state management of environment or environmental governance is greatly boosted to a new stage. How to improve the effectiveness of the state management of environment and to achieve economic development targets at the same time has be incorporated not in national agenda of many countries but also in most of international discussions regarding the existence and the development of human being both at regional and global levels.

Since late 1960s, there has been a range of studies and researches implemented at various levels in order to understand the nature of and the meaningness of environmental governance and to recommend best solutions for the establishment of environmental administration systems at various levels of governance within a nation or a territory. Several comparative researches on the practices of environmental governance in various countries with different conditions of geography, culture, economy and political system as well have been carried out in order to define the best practices those can serve as typical practice for developing countries to refer to.

Under the framework of this research, the publications and works described below had been thoroughly reviewed by the author and significantly helped to shape the interests and the scope of this research:

- (i) “Rethinking Public Administration – an Overview”published by UN in 1996 in English
- (ii) “After the Earth Summit: The Future of Environmental Governance”published by WorldWatch Institutein 1992 in English
- (iii) Capacity Building in National Environmental Policy – A comparative Study of 17 countries published by Springer in 2002 in English

- (iv) “Environmental Governance Reconsidered) published by MIT Press in 2004 in English
- (v) Urban Environmental Governance for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific: A regional Overview published by UN in 2005 in English
- (vi) Environmental Fiscal Reform for Poverty Reduction published by OECD in 2005 in English
- (vii) Effective National Environmental Governance – A Key to Sustainable Development) **presented in Preparatory meeting for Rio+20Summit in 2012**

1.2. Researches and studies conducted in South Korea

South Korea had been experienced a very speedy development process from a poor economy in the 1950s and the 1960s of the last century to become the 11th economy of the world in 2010. It can be said that the continuous studying and learning for the renovation of governmental bodies in order to administer the country development and to operate the public administration systems in South Korea have contributed in generating dynamics for the socio-economic development of South Korea. Being experiencing the period when almost the entire social efforts were spent for the fostering of its economy to get out of the poor, like other developing countries, South Korea had to pay for overcoming the side-effects of its economic development and been facing with environmental problems. However, recognized serious affects of economic development process which was implemented at any cost during its early stage of the country economy acceleration process without enough environmental consideration taken into account, South Korea had focused its efforts to form its environmental administration since late 1970s. Thanks to enormous efforts spent in last three decades, South Korea nowadays (since the first decade of 21st century) is a pioneer nation who launch many initiatives on the integration of the environmental consideration into economic development agenda although its public administration systems in general and environmental administration systems in particular were reformed later than those in the developed countries of the Europe and the America. In order to achieve such that progress, in last three decades, the Korean experts, researchers and administrators as well have continuously studies, learnt the lessons serving for the renovation of the country environmental administration.

Under the framework of this research, the following works have been thoroughly reviewed by the authors:

- (i) (Urbanization, Industrialization and Sustainable Development in Korea - The Case Study on Ulsan and Ansan)

published by Institute of Global Environmental Strategy (IGES) in 1999 in English

- (ii) Research on the effectiveness and the orientations for environmental governance and administration serving for sustainable development published by Korea Public Administration Association in 2003 in Korean
- (iii) Three Decades of Environmental Governance published by Korea Ministry of Environment in 2010 in Korean
- (iv) Green Growth – Issues and Policies published by Random House Korea in 2011 in English

In addition, tens of articles and other works evaluating the environmental governance in South Korea and comparison of Korean systems to those of other advanced countries and Korean legislation of environment (see more in annex 1) had also been reviewed by the author to refer in this research. Several researches on Korean environmental governance conducted by foreign authors had been reviewed by the author too in order to shape an objective view on Korean lessons. Of which, the successful and failure lessons referable to Vietnamese context are defined.

Besides the researching of environmental governance, the environmental legislation systems, environmental policies and socio-economic development and environmental data had also been deeply studied by the author in order to gain personal view for the determination of the Korean lessons referable to and making recommendations suitable to Vietnamese context.

1.3. Researches and studies conducted in Vietnam

In Vietnam, the state management of environment had been formed in 1993 with the establishment of National Environment Agency under the former Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment and the enactment of the 1st law on environment by National Assembly on 27th December 1993. Since then, many researches have been carried out to study, analyze and evaluate international experiences learnt from advanced countries to recommend environmental administration models and to improve the effectiveness of environmental administration systems. However, most of the researches were conducted by Vietnamese governance bodies while just a few studies were conducted independently by international and domestic scholars in Vietnam.

Most of the researches conducted by Vietnamese government bodies had mainly focused on the investigation and the survey in order to evaluate the limitations and the shortages of Vietnamese administration at different periods serving for the planning of mid-

term and long-term development strategies. There are little theoretical studies on environmental governance and administration systems. Especially, a comprehensive research on the evaluation of environmental issues affected by each stage of its socio-economic development process has not existed yet.

Besides the researches and studies conducted by the Governmental bodies, since 1993, some studies on environmental governance have been conducted independently by Vietnamese and foreign experts and scientists. However, these independent studies normally focus on some specific issues of a specific sub-sector or a case study of a specific location. Moreover, these independent studies mainly focus on technical aspects serving for environmental management rather than on government structure serving for the operation of environmental administration systems or national environmental governance.

1.4. The issues of state management of environment referring to this research that should be furthermore studies

This thesis has mentioned on both the prevalent theories and the practical practices of the state management of environment in many countries worldwide. However, under the framework of a PhD research implemented for 3 years (November 2011 to December 2014), the author decided to focus on the governmental structures and its operation serving for the implementation of state management of environment only. The techniques on how to apply those theories and practices for the operation of state management of environment such as the application of charges/fees/taxes on environment and natural resources, the establishmen and the operation of green accounts, community based management practices, environmental impact assessment, pollution control and natural resource preservation, environmental quality enhancement, etc... These technical issues and the experiences on how to apply those techniques in other countries should be studied more thoroughly by Vietnamese cholars and scientists in order to define the proper applications suitable for Vietnam context. The analyses and evaluations made by the author in chapter 2 – Environmental Governance – Some Prevalent Thoughts and Trends Worldwide will serve as valuable resources for Vietnamese scholars and scientists to furthermore study on the environmental governance techniques and methods to derive the lessons and recommendations suitable for Vietnam.

This thesis has made several conclusions and recommendations based on the analysis of, the comparison of government structure and institutional systems in environmental sectors for South Korea and

Vietnam. However, the analyses and the comparisons were only made with the focus on macro management issues and government structure at national level. Therefore, Vietnamese scholars should furthermore study on environmental governance at micro levels such as the governmental structure and administration system operation at local levels. Especially, environmental management at enterprise and business level which plays an important role to decide the successful implementation of legislation and policies on environment and natural resources and to ensure the sustainable development of the nation, should be thoroughly studied in order to publish those knowledge to various society groups for making dynamics boosting for sustainable development.

The studies on the in-depth comparison of Vietnamese environmental governance systems and those of other countries similar to the research conducted under the framework of this thesis should be carried out in order to shape proper policies on the consolidation of public administration systems in general and environmental administration systems in particular in Vietnam.

The recommendations made by the author should be furthermore reviewed and studied by Vietnamese scholars and scientists in the fields of environmental management science in order to propose specific measures and solutions to apply good lessons learnt from South Korea's experiences that are proper and suitable to Vietnamese context.

CHAPTER2

ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE – SOME PREVALENT THOUGHTS AND TRENDS WORLDWIDE

State management systems for environment and natural resources had been received with high attention to be developed in Vietnam since early 1990s. Over 25 years, Vietnam has gained significant achievements in the development of its state management system for environment and natural resources, especially in the strengthening of technical and institutional capacities serving for this sector. However, the theoretical studies focusing on the comprehensive reviewing of the political thoughts and theories applying in the fields of state management of environment and natural resources and the international experiences on the application of those works into practical life have not been available in Vietnamese. Therefore, in chapter 1, a comprehensive overview of the thoughts and trends on the development of and the renovation of governance and public administration in general and of the state management in the sectors of

environment and natural resources in particular worldwide after the world war 2 was presented by the author. Besides, in the chapter 1, a summary on how the advanced countries in Europe, United State of America and Japan applying those thoughts to develop their environmental administration systems is also made by the author. Chapter 2 is structured into the following sections:

2.1. Trends on the development of and the rennovation of state management activities in general

2.2. Trends on the development of and the renovation of state management activities in the fields of environment and natural resources

2.3. Some models on the development of state management system in environmental sectors worldwide

2.3.1. Brief summary on the development of national environmental governance in Europe

2.3.2. State Management of Environmental in the United State of Environment

2.3.3. State Management of Environment in Japan

2.4. Conclusion of chapter 2

Before world war 2, according to traditional political thoughts, “Governance is defined as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development”.

As from 1950s – Colonial systems had been eliminated and many poor but independent countries were formed in the world. Since then, sate management activities have been changed to be more suitable to new context of socio-economic development. Accordingly, public officials would serve the people rather than ‘control and regulate the people’ like previous practices.

As from end of 1970s, the facts such as ecological crisis due to environment degradation and natural resource depletion, increased gap between the rich and the poor, the weakness and the loss of government corporations, the view on sustainable development and participatory management is widely recognized and advocated. State management process involved the participation of various stakeholders has become the new trend of public administration.

Entering the 21st century, with prevalent trends of globalization and rapid development of ICTs worldwide, adjustment of public administration both in its style and nature to respond to the challenges has been carried out in all the countries, especially in developing world. Accordingly a good public system should include the following components: (i) Technical and Management Capacity; (ii)

Institutional Capacity; (iii) Incredibility, the Capacity of prediction and sound legislation system; (iv) Accountability; (v) Transparency and accessible information system; and (vi) Ensuring the participation of various stakeholders.

In order to conclude the chapter 2, several lessons learnt from the development of environmental governance systems in advanced countries to share with developing countries are summarized as follows:

- Public awareness on environmental issues is critical to bring the pressure on political systems in order to solve environmental problems quickly. However, due to the differences in terms of culture, political systems and socio-economic conditions as well, the public awareness and its capacity to understand the environmental problems in different countries will be not the same level. In some cases, the public pressures might lead to make wrong or hasty decisions. Therefore, in order to use public power in effective way, the methods used for information disclosure and data interpretation should be suitable and proper to the public knowledge level.
- Besides taking advantage of the public power, another important factor that should be highly interested by the governments is the strengthening of both technical and institutional capacities for the environmental administration systems to make them capable enough for wiselydecision making in defining the priorities set for the promotion of socio-economic development to ensure the creation of the benefits for the whole society at lowest costs.
- Environmental issues are normally interactively linked together, not being limited in a specifically geographical location and transboundary spread. Therefore, the policies on state management of environment should be formulated unifiedly throughout the national territory with enough consideration of global environment state taken into account in order to ensure the entireness of natural ecology systems.
- Environmental management is a complicated system required the incorporation of different considerations in terms of geographical space, socio-economic development level and political will. Therefore, decision making processese on state management of environment normally face with many difficulties and obstacles arose from practical life like the ‘trade-off’ between environmental solutions and development priorities. It is not easy to predict the real effectiveness of those trade-off dur to the fact that the prediction is normally made depending existing limited

knowledge about environmental issues and debatable suppositions used for making such prediction. Even in many cases, the obstacles are created due to the conflicts of opinions and interests between the central government and the local governments. Therefore, the establishment of consultation mechanisms supporting for the broad consensus among various stakeholders and the groups of interests within environmental administration systems is of vital importance.

- The administration of environmental issues performed independently by each line ministry has shown its ineffectiveness as making decision in such conditions could not reflect the complexity of and the interactiveness of environmental issues. In addition, this model of environmental governance also highly costs due to the overlapping of functions and efforts by different ministries.
- The model of environmental governance only based on technological knowledge and control and command approaches has also shown its effectiveness and highly costed when it was adopted in many advanced countries. Therefore, since the end of 1980s, command and control administrative policies and incentive mechanisms through the application of information and economic tools and community based management approaches have been combined to be applied in many advanced countries in order to improve the effectiveness of state management activities in environmental sectors. These new models of state management activity performance have helped not only for the improvement of the effectiveness of environmental administration activities but also for state budget saving purpose.

CHAPTER 3

ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE IN SOUTH KOREA – DEVELOPMENT HISTORY AND EXPERIENCES

South Korea has been experiencing a vigorous and rapid development process from a poor country between 1950s and 1960s to become the 11th world large economy 2010. It can be said that the continuous studying and learning for the renovation of governmental bodies in order to administer the country development and to operate the public administration systems in South Korea have contributed in generating dynamics for the socio-economic development of South Korea.

Being experiencing the period when almost the entire social efforts were spent for the fostering of its economy to escape the poor, like other developing countries, South Korea had to pay for

overcoming the side-effects of its economic development and been facing with environmental problems. However, recognized serious affects of economic development process which was implemented at any cost during its early stage of the country economy acceleration process without enough environmental consideration taken into account, South Korea had focused its efforts to form its environmental administration since late 1970s.

Thanks to enormous efforts spent in last three decades, South Korea nowadays (since the first decade of 21st century) is a pioneer nation who launch many initiatives on the integration of the environmental consideration into economic development agenda although its public administration systems in general and environmental administration systems in particular were formed later than those in the developed countries of the Europe and the America. In order to achieve such that progress, in last three decades, the Korean experts, researchers and administrators as well have continuously studies, learnt the lessons serving for the renovation of the country environmental administration. In chapter 3, a brief history on the development of environmental governance in South Korea and the lessons learnt from Korean experiences referable to other developing countries is compiled by the author to present. The chapter is structured into following sections:

3.1. Socio-economic Development and Its Environmental Impacts in Various Periods

3.1.1. Economic Development Boosting at Any Cost (1961-1990)

3.1.2. Promotion of Sustainable Development (1991until now)

3.2. Environmental Policies and Legislation System

3.2.1. Awareness and Government Responses over Various Periods of Socio-economic Development Process

3.2.2. Procedures on Environmental Legislation Elaboration and Execution

3.2.3. Current status of Environmental Legislation System

3.3. Government Structure Serving for the Exercise of State Management Functions on Environment

3.3.1. Development of Environmental Administration Body at Central Level

3.3.2. The Role of Korea Ministry of Environment and Its Relationship with Other Line Ministries in National Environmental Administration System

3.3.3. The Relationship between Korea Ministry of Environment and Local Government within National Environmental Administration Systems

3.4. Resources for the operation of environmental administration systems

3.4.1. Financial resource mobilization and allocation

3.4.2. Development of human resources and technical capacities serving for the operation of environmental administration systems

3.4.3. Information and Reporting System serving for the operation of Environmental Administration Systems

3.5. Participatory Approaches Applied in State Management of Environment

3.6. Conclusions of chapter 3

To conclude this chapter, the author presents a brief summary on the characteristics of the development of environmental governance and administration systems in South Korea as from 1950s until now as follows:

- Although environmental administration system had been formed rather early with the enactment of Law on pollution prevention in 1963 and the establishment of the Unit specialized on environmental issues under Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in 1967, for long period during 1960s and 1970s, the exercise of this established state management system of environmental issues was not given with enough attention to take place practically and effectively.
- Being established about 10 years later than that of other advanced countries in Europe, United State and Japan, the environmental administration system in South Korea had just been boosted by Korean Government since early 1980s when the nation got out of the poor and joining the group of low middle income countries.
- Korean government had strongly promoted its efforts to finalize the environmental administration system since early 1990s with the enactment of the law on environmental framework policy and other environmental laws and the upgrading of central environmental administrator to become General Department of Environment under the direct management of Prime Minister Office in 1990 and then becoming Korea Ministry of Environment in 1994.
- After the establishment of Korea Ministry of Environment in 1994, South Korea quickly adopted the lessons learnt from other European countries in order to renovate its environmental administration systems to consolidate an unifiedly management system from central government to local authorities.
- A legal framework facilitating the financial resource mobilization, allocation and use in an effective way had been firmly formed

through the application of environmental charges, fees and taxes and the enactment of Law on special accounts used for environment improvement activities in 1994 in order to support the Government in the mobilization of all resources from entire society for the improvement of the nation environment quality serving for its sustainable development.

- Only within 3 decades since the establishment of Genreal Department of Environment under Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in 1986, with the clear recognition of the vital importance of environment for ensuring the sustainable development of the country, South Korean government has continuously set priorities for the renovation of and the finalization of its environmental administration systems. In 2007 right afterjoining the G20, South Korea is always a pioneer country launching new initiatives on environmental protection andits environmental administration systems have been as advanced as those of OECD advanced countries.

The above achievements had been gained as South Korea had thoroughly reviewed and quickly adopted the international lessons to apply in accordance to specific characteristics of the country and on the basis of the effective mobilization of the entire society resources. The participation of civil organizations in various forms have been institutionalized and played active roles in the process of decision making and policy formulation, legislation development and the construction of the infrastructure serving for environmental quality improvement and protection as well.

CHAPTER4

CURRENT STATE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT IN VIETNAM – KEY KOREAN LESSONS REFERABLE TO VIETNAM

Since the country reunion in 1975 and especially the adoption of ‘Doi moi’ policy in early 1990s, Vietnam has gained enormous economic development achievements with the continuously high growth rate. These economic achievements contributed significantly to help Vietnam escaping the poor and joining the group of low middle income countries in 2011. However, in recent years, the growth of Vietnamese economy has been declined to make Vietnam at the risk of falling into “middle income trap”. According to a study conducted by the World Bank, ‘middle income trap’ can be avoidable. It will not happen if the government takes proper actions timely. According to an evaluation made by the World Bank on the development process of 124 economies worldwide between 1950

and 2010, 35 out of 52 investigated economies belonging the group of middle income countries fell into ‘middle income trap’. Only 13 out of 52 investigated economies have been developed to become the group members of high income countries, including 5 East Asian countries (e.g. Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore). Therefore, studying thoroughly the experiences and lessons from those East Asian Economies during their transition process from a middle income country to a high income country, especially South Korea – an Asian country sharing many similarities with Vietnam in terms of culture and historical development, to draw the specific lessons referable to Vietnam will have both theoretical and practical meaningfulness.

Protection of environment to ensure its sustainability is of a vital importance for sustainable development of the country socio-economy. Vietnam had just joined the group of low middle income countries and being faced with many difficulties such as causing from the depletion of natural resources, the degradation of living environment quality that affects human health and labour force quality. In this context, the in-depth study of worldwide recognized successful lessons from other Asian advanced countries like Japan or South Korea is urgent and necessary for consolidation of its socio-economic development achievements.

Therefore, in this chapter, the author presents a comprehensive comparison on the development of environmental governance system between South Korea and Vietnam since 1970s in order to draw good lessons that Vietnam can refer. Chapter 4 is structured into the following sections:

4.1. State Management System for Environment Protection in Vietnam

4.1.1. Brief History of Environmental Legislation and Policies

4.1.2. The Development of Central Environmental Administration Bodies

4.1.3. Resources Serving for State Management of Environment

4.2. Comparison between South Korea and Vietnam over time

4.2.1. Socio-economic development and its environmental impacts

4.2.2. Policy Responses and Legislation System

4.2.3. Administration System Structure

4.2.4. Resource Mobilization

4.2.5. Participatory Management Approaches

4.3. Korean Lessons Referable to Vietnam context

4.3.1. Good Lessons from South Korea Worthful for Vietnam

4.3.2. Recommendations for Vietnam

4.4. Conclusion of chapter 4

Based on the analysis of theories and practical practices on environmental governance in South Korea and Vietnam, the following lessons learnt from Korean experiences are worthful for Vietnam during its development process to become an industrialization country by 2030:

1. Promptly and drastically apply strict pollution prevention policies in every economic sector (adopted in South Korea in early 1980s)
2. Renovate administrative systems to centralize environmental governance and strengthen its effectiveness by unifying coordination through a unique focal point in order to save budget, to minimize overlapping, double counting and to ensure the successful supervision of pollution control implementation (Adopted in South Korea in early 1990s)
3. Effectively apply participatory environmental governance involving the participation of various stakeholders (Adopted in South Korea in late 1980s)

Specifically, some recommendations are made by the author for Vietnamese scholars and scientists furthermore study in order to propose proper solutions and measures to adopt those lessons from South Korea:

1. Consider to establish Ministry of Environment on the basis of incorporation of VEA with environmental departments under line ministries. Reviewing and re-assigning the functions and the competences of environmental governance decentralized to provincial authorities and have to establish proper mechanisms to oversee the deployment of decentralized power in order to avoid the trading off the country environmental benefits for economic development.
2. Consider to apply the system of special accounts for environmental protection activities like South Korea to unify the administration of revenues and expenses in relation to environment protection in order to avoid overlapping, wasteful and ineffective budget spending.
3. Promote the development of and the operation of public disclosure of environmental performance by various economic sector and information on environment quality to be accessed by every citizen.

LIST OF RELATED PUBLICATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

1. 정건영 (2012), “베트남환경관리체계와환경산업투자전망”, Special Issues on Global Green Growth Policy Published by Korea Industry & Technology Institute, (제 87, 2012), page 1-15

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