

Let's preserve our environment

LE Thi (Vietnam)

Man always lives in an interactive relation with natural and social environment. The humane environment of each nation or people is formed thence. It ensures a harmonious, sustainable development of man and nature, social justice and a equal opportunity between generations in development. The humane environment is expressed by the awareness and cultural behavior of man in his influence on nature and surrounding society.

Each nation or country has a specific humane environment based on its natural and social conditions.

Vietnam is a small country, spreading its land along a sea coast with tropical climate, and therefore suitable to agricultural development. Its population is big, with 86 million people in 2009, so the substantial needs are high, especially for the foods. This has given rise to the ongoing destruction of environment and pollution of the air due to the productive and living activities of its citizens.

Recent reports on environmental problems have given very worrying figures. Accordingly, 90% of factories, trading and service establishments do not treat their wastes before discharging them into the environment. More than 70% of industrial zones and 90% of urban areas do not have concentrated waste water treatment systems. Most of craft villages are experiencing environmental pollution which requires urgent treatment. Most solid waste landfill sites are rudimentary and fail to satisfy minimum technical requirements. Most of hazardous wastes accumulated in many places still remain pending while proper solution has not been found out. The most visible consequence of environmental degradation is that many rivers nationwide are seriously polluted. Many surface and underground water sources are contaminated. Polluted urban air has caused dangerous diseases to people. Specialists analyzed that environmental pollution and degradation have increased by 10 to 15 times in Vietnam for the past 20 years (1).

In Central Vietnam, the destruction of forest in Quang Ngai province by farmers due to lack of cultivation land and uncontrolled exploitation of forest products has led to hundreds of forest fires, burning off 500 ha of forest. Quang Binh province's forest,

with initial coverage of 60%, is now dying due to exhaustive exploitation by illegal forest exploiters (2). The ecology of Southern Vietnam is under the threat of destruction when farmers of Long An province, Dong Thap province, and Tien Giang province slash forest for land to cultivate rice. Currently, the forest coverage of Cuu Long River Delta is only 10%, compared to the required coverage 30% (3). Loss of forest causes serious damage to the environment, and when fresh water cannot be conserved, salty water will infiltrate. Deterring pollution and degradation of environment is an urgent task that requires the high awareness of citizens, a complete system of laws on environment protection and including pollution and punishment for polluting acts.

It is necessary to enhance people's knowledge and concerns, especially those of women, for the conservation and protection of the environment. As Vietnam's women constitute an important productive force, especially in agriculture and forestry, they need to know how to use natural resources in a proper way. As they are also consumers, they need to have consumption habits that are suitable to and respect the environment. For the sake of their children's futures, they need to educate their offspring about environmental sustainability.

(1) Dai Doan Ket newspaper of 18/5/2009. A seminar of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment on 15/5/2009 in Hanoi.

(2) Phu Nu Viet Nam Newspaper, Tien Phong Newspaper, 11/2005

(3) Lao Dong Newspaper, 10/2005.



Children's evacuation in Thanh Hoa province



Cross-road at rush-hour



Flood in Hue city