

PRESS RELEASE

Vietnam Ministry of Construction and the French Agency for Development (AFD) join forces to support the resilience of Vietnam's cities

Hanoi, 12 May 2022- HE. Le Quang Hung, Deputy Minister of Construction of Vietnam, and HE. Philippe Orliange, Executive Director of Geographies of the French Agency for Development (AFD) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen their cooperation on the resilience of the country's cities to climate change and natural hazards. The signing took place in the presence of the Vietnamese Minister of Construction, HE. Nguyen Thanh Nghi, and the French Ambassador to Vietnam, HE. Nicolas Warnery.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) formalises and deepens the existing cooperation between the Ministry of Construction of Vietnam and AFD towards sustainable and resilient cities. Launched in 2017, the cooperation between the Ministry of Construction and AFD started through several training workshops and a joint seminar on resilient cities. AFD has already supported Quang Tri Province and the City of Dong Ha in the preparation of an urban project aiming to protect the city from floods and to strengthen the resilience of its population to natural disasters and to climate change.

Vietnam is considered to be one of the most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change in the world. Rising temperatures and sea levels, increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, combined with population growth and urbanisation, are increasing the risk of hazards, coastal erosion and flooding throughout the country.

The growth of cities, which has been one of the main drivers of Vietnam's economic growth since the 1990s, has significantly improved people's access to employment and essential services such as energy, water, health, education and recreation, and has provided an essential infrastructure base for the country's development. However, this rapid urbanisation may also have led to increased vulnerability of the population to climatic hazards, particularly due to the artificialisation of land and urban sprawl in natural risk areas such as river flood plains.

At the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), Vietnam made a determined commitment to address the effects of climate change, including the goal of achieving "net zero emissions" by 2050. The choice of a sustainable and decarbonised development must contribute both to solving the climate crisis and to accelerating the country's economic transition.

The Ministry of Construction of Vietnam and AFD are therefore joining forces, through this Memorandum of Understanding, to implement the ambitious commitments made by Vietnam at COP26 in the urban sector. Cities have a key role to play in achieving these ambitions: they contribute to a majority of carbon emissions (particularly through the construction and transport sectors) and are responsible for urbanisation choices that will determine the country's future (taking into account natural vulnerable areas such as floods or landslides when locating new buildings, ecological and low-emission construction techniques, etc.). Cities are also the most likely to strengthen the resilience of their inhabitants to climate change by protecting them from the risks of natural disasters while facilitating their access to essential services such as health and employment.

The MOU signed by Vietnam's Ministry of Construction and AFD sets out a 5-year action and cooperation program (2022-2027). It includes support to Urban Development Agency (UDA) for the

development of public policies and regulatory texts relating to climate change, resilience and green growth in cities; support to several cities and provinces in the implementation of pilot projects; and the organisation of seminars and joint awareness-raising actions.

These activities will serve to implement the commitments made by Vietnam at COP26 and will be served by the Water and Natural Resources Management (WARM) Facility through funds of Euro 20 Million delegated to AFD by the European Union .

About the Ministry of Construction

The Ministry of Construction, an authority under the Vietnamese Government, is responsible for public management in planning and construction, architecture, infrastructure and civil engineering, urban development, real estate market, building materials and all public service sectors defined by law.

About the Urban Development Agency of the Ministry of Construction

The Urban Development Agency is a structure belonging to the Ministry of Construction. It is in charge of supporting the Ministry in all its missions of urban public management and execution of regulations in the urban sector. It also supports the Ministry in the implementation and operational management of urban development programmes and projects under the responsibility of the Ministry and delegated by the Minister. It is responsible for coordinating the resources allocated to the country's urban development, and in this sense plays an important interface role with international donors.

About the French Agency for Development (AFD)

Agence Française de Développement Group (AFD) is a public establishment of the French State and a financial institution belonging to the French Official Development Assistance (ODA) system.

AFD finances, supports and accelerates transitions towards a more just and sustainable world. As a donor "100% aligned with the Paris Climate Agreement", AFD promotes the development of cities that are resilient to climate change, and supports public policies and projects that aim to make rational use of resources (whether land, energy or natural resources).

AFD's teams are present in more than 115 countries and in the French Overseas Departments and Territories and are working on more than 4,000 projects to promote health, education and gender equality and to protect our common resources: peace, education, health, biodiversity and a stable climate. This is our way of honouring the commitment of France and the French people to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, *towards a world in common*.

AFD has been operating in Vietnam since 1994 and has financed over 90 projects worth almost 2.1 billion euros in various sectors: transport, infrastructure, energy and agriculture. In line with the priorities of French cooperation to Vietnam, AFD is positioning its operations to support the implementation of the Paris Agreement. <http://www.afd.fr>

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