

THE PRIME MINISTER

No. 1976/QĐ-TTg

THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
Independence - Freedom - Happiness

Hanoi, October 30, 2014

DECISION

Approving the master plan on the national special-use forest system through 2020, with a vision toward 2030^(*)

THE PRIME MINISTER

*Pursuant to the December 25, 2001 Law on Organization of the Government;
Pursuant to the December 3, 2004 Law on Forest Protection and Development;
Pursuant to the Government's Decree No. 117/2010/ND-CP of December 24, 2010, on organization and management of the special-use forest system;*

Pursuant to the Prime Minister's Decision No. 218/QĐ-TTg of February 7, 2014, approving the Strategy for management of systems of special-use forests, marine reserves and inland water reserves of Vietnam through 2020, with a vision toward 2030;

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

DECIDES:

Article 1: To approve the master plan on the national special-use forest system through 2020, with a vision toward 2030, with the following major contents:

1. Objectives

a/ Overall objective

To conserve and sustainably develop important natural eco-systems, values of natural landscapes, historical and cultural relics and scenic places and endangered, precious and rare species in the special-use forest system.

b/ Specific objectives

- To increase the total area of special-use forests from 2.2 million ha at present to 2.4 million ha by 2020, in line with the Strategy for management of systems of special-use forests, marine reserves and inland water reserves of Vietnam through 2020, with a vision toward 2030 under the Prime Minister's Decision No. 218/QĐ-TTg of February 7, 2014;

- To review, adjust and supplement the master plan on the special-use forest system according to the criteria provided in Article 5 of the Government's Decree No. 117/2010/ND-CP of December 24, 2010, on organization and management of the special-use forest system (below referred to as Decree No. 117/2010/ND-CP);

- To complete the determination of the boundary of and the placement of boundary markers for functional sub-zones and buffer zones of special-use forests; to clearly delineate the land area zoned off for purposes from the area zoned off for the special-use forest system in order to promote forest and environmental protection and the conservation of nature and endangered, precious and rare species in a harmonious manner.

^(*) *Công Báo Nos 979-980 (11/11/2014)*

2. Planning contents

a/ To review and adjust the master plan on 164 special-use forests in line with the result of reviewing the plan on three forest types according to the Prime Minister's Directive No. 38/2005/CT-TTg of December 5, 2005; and in consistence with the classification of forests meeting the prescribed criteria. To complete the nation's special-use forest system with 2.4 million ha by 2020, comprising 176 zones: 34 national parks, 58 nature reserves, 14 species/habitat reserves, 61 landscape protection zones and scientific research and experimentation forests of 9 units (Appendix 1);

b/ Zoning by region, specifically as follows:

- The northwestern region: To protect forest eco-systems in low- and medium-high mountains, endangered, precious and rare flora and fauna species such as tiger (*Panthera tigris corbetti*), elephant (*Elephas maximus*), pomu tree (*Fokienia hodginsii*), abies fansipanensis (*Abies delavayi* var. *nuliangensis*), the Paco pine (*Pinus kwangtungensis*) and a number of rare and valuable species in special-use forests with a total area of around 222,000 ha, including:

+ Transitional transformation of 10 nature reserves and one landscape protection zone; reduction of the area of the 1,114-hectare Ba Vi National Park for assignment to the Hoa Binh Provincial People's Committee for management and use; zoning off 332.7 ha of the scientific research and experimental forest of the Northwest Forestry Science Center.

+ Establishment of a new 17,000-hectare Muong La nature reserve for protection of the forest ecosystem and biodiversity as well as the river basin for Son La hydropower plant;

+ Abolition of one scientific research and experimentation forest of the Center for Application of Forestry Technology and Science on 150 hectares in Hoa Binh province.

- The northeastern region: To protect the transitional ecosystem from the coastal continental shelf through the delta, low mountains and hills to medium and high mountains. To protect the forest ecosystem associated with famous places such as Ha Long Bay, Tam Dao mountains, Ba Be lake, Hoang Lien Son mountain range-Sa Pa, etc., and a number of precious, rare and endemic plant and animal species such as the cypress plant (*Cupressus torulosa*), the almondwood plant (*Chukrasia tabularis*), the bignoniaceae plant (*Markhamia stipulata*), the Nghien plant (*Burretiodendron hsienmu*), the Trai plant (*Garcinia fagraeoides*), the snub-nosed langur (*Rhenopithecus avunculus*), the Cat Ba langur (*Trachypithecus poliocephalus*), the musk deer (*Moschus berezovskii*), the Tam Dao salamander (*Paramesotriton deloustali*) on a total area of around 400,000 ha, including:

+ Transitional transformation of existing 37 special-use forests, including 5 national parks, 13 nature reserves, 3 species/habitat reserves, 14 landscape protection zones and 2 scientific research and experimentation forests;

+ Establishment of three new nature reserves (Bat Xat in Lao Cai province, Nui Coc Lake in Thai Nguyen province, and Chi San in Ha Giang province); 2 species and habitat reserves (Mau Son and Bac Son in Lang Son province); 5 landscape protection zones (Ma Pi Leng in Ha Giang province, Suoi Mo in Bac Giang province, and the Ha Long City cultural and historical forest, the Yen Lap cultural and historical forest zone, and the Dong Trieu cultural and historical zone in Quang Ninh province) and 1 scientific research and experimentation forest for the Forestry Science Center in the northern central region;

+ Re-categorization of the Pia Oac-Phia Den nature reserve into the Pia Oac-Phia Den National Park in Cao Bang province. To merge the Du Gia nature reserve with the Khau Ca species reserve into Du Gia National Park-Dong Van Karst Plateau for conservation of the

limestone forest ecosystem with special precious and rare species, particularly the snub-nosed langur and the Dong Van Karst Plateau natural heritage;

+ Abolition of 1 scientific research and experimentation forest in Ha Long City;

- The Red River delta: To protect the forest ecosystem on the limestone mountains together with precious and rare species such as the white-rumped black langur (*Trachypithecus francoisi delacouri*) in Ninh Binh province; to conserve forest ecosystems associated with the wetland ecosystem such as the Xuan Thuy National Park in Nam Dinh province, the Tien Hai nature reserve in Thai Binh province; to protect forests and historical and cultural relics and environmental landscapes in Hanoi, Ninh Binh, Hai Duong and Nam Dinh on a total area of around 65,000 hectares, including:

+ Transitional transformation of 14 existing special-use forests, including 4 national parks, 2 nature reserves, 6 landscape protection zones and 2 scientific research and experimentation forests;

+ Establishment of the Kinh Mon landscape protection forest in Hai Duong province on around 323 hectares;

- The northern central region: To protect the forest ecosystems on limestone mountains, conserve endangered, precious and rare species such as tiger (*Panthera tigris corbetti*), elephant (*Elephas maximus*), Sao La deer (*Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*), big deer (*Muntiacus vuquangensis*), Truong Son muntjac (*Muntiacus truongsonensis*) and primates, namely the Ha Tinh langur (*Trachypithecus laotum hatinhensis*), the brown-legged langur (*Pygathrix Nemaeus*) in special-use forests with a total area of around 614,000 hectares, including:

+ Transitional transformation of 17 existing special-use forests, including 5 national parks, 9 nature reserves, 2 landscape protection zones, and 1 scientific research and experimentation forest;

+ Planning and establishment of the Nam Dong gymnospermae species and the Tam Quy bassia species nature reserve in Thanh Hoa province; 8 landscape protection zones, namely the Ba Trieu temple, Lam Kinh, Ham Rong and Truong Le mountain in Thanh Hoa province; Sang Le Tuong Duong, Nam Dan and Yen Thanh cultural and historical relics in Nghe An province, and Than Dinh mountain in Quang Binh province;

+ Re-categorization of the Sao La deer reserve in Thua Thien Hue province into the Sao La nature reserve in Thua Thien Hue province;

- The south central coastal region: to protect forest eco-systems, coral reefs, sea glass beds and endangered, precious and rare species such as tiger (*Panthera tigris corbetti*), elephant (*Elephas maximus*), Sao La deer (*Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*), big deer (*Muntiacus vuquangensis*), the Vietnamese ginseng (*Panax vietnamensis*) in Quang Nam province; to combine forest protection with the conservation of historical relics and landscapes and environmental protection on a total area of around 233,000 hectares, including:

+ Transitional transformation of 14 existing special-use forests, including 8 nature reserves and 6 landscape protection zones;

+ Establishment of 2 new species/habit reserves, namely Sao La deer species and elephant species reserves in Quang Nam province and 3 landscape protection zones, namely My Son cultural-historical site, Nui Thanh Victory and the Nam Tra My historical-cultural site in Quang Nam province;

- The Central Highlands region: To protect the ecosystem of forests on the medium-high mountains (Ngoc Linh and Chu Yang Sin), the semi-deciduous forest and Dipterocarpaceae tree family deciduous forest (dry dipterocarp forest); the flattened pine (*Ducampopinus krempfii*), the Vietnamese white pine (*Pinus dalatensis*), the pomu (*Fokienia hodginsii*), the incense cedar

(*Calocedrus macrolepis*), the conifer (*Amentotaxus poilanei*), the elephant (*Elephas maximus*), the banteng (*Bos javanicus*), the gaur (*Bos gaurus*), the Eld's deer (*Cervus eldi*) with a total area of around 510,000 hectares, including:

+ Transitional transformation of 19 existing special-use forests, namely 5 national parks, 5 nature reserves, 2 species/habitat reserves, 2 landscape protection zones and 5 scientific research and experimentation forests;

+ Re-categorization of the Ta Dung nature reserve in Dak Nong province into Ta Dung National Park;

+ Merger of the Trap K'so and Ea Ral reserves into the *Glyptostrobus pensilis* species reserve and planning on 5 scientific research and experimental forests in Lam Dong, Dak Nong and Gia Lai for 1 unit to manage;

- The southeastern region: To protect the typical forest ecosystems of sea and island and coastal areas and endangered, precious and rare species such as tiger (*Panthera tigris corbetti*), elephant (*Elephas maximus*), gaur (*Bos gaurus*), banteng (*Bos javanicus*), legume species in the Fabaceae family (*Dalbergia oliveri*, *Sindora siamensis*, *Dalbergia tonkinesis* and *Pterocarpus macrocarpus*) in special-use forests with a total area of around 271,000 hectares, including:

+ Transitional transformation of 16 existing special-use forests, namely 6 national parks, 4 nature reserves, 5 landscape protection zones and the merger of 4 scientific research and experimentation forests for 1 unit to manage;

- The southwestern region: To protect coastal mangrove forest ecosystems; coral reef and sea grass ecosystems; and cajeput forest ecosystems in Tram Chim, U Minh, Tra Su, and Ca Mau with a total area of around 95,000 hectares, including:

+ Transitional transformation of 18 existing special-use forests, namely 5 national parks, 2 nature reserves, 3 species/habitat reserves, 7 landscape protection zones and 1 scientific research and experimentation forest of the Southern Academy of Forest Sciences;

+ Establishment of the That Son National Park in An Giang province on around 14,000 hectares and one scientific research and experimental forest for the Southern Academy of Forest Sciences;

+ Re-categorization of the Lung Ngoc Hoang species and habitat reserve into the nature reserve;

+ Re-categorization of the Thach Phu nature reserve in Ben Tre province and the Hon Chuong nature reserve in Kien Giang province into a landscape protection zone;

+ Re-categorization of the Ap Canh Dien nature reserve in Bac Lieu province into a species/habitat reserve;

(Appendix II)

3. Solutions for implementation

a/ Reviewing, detailed planning, re-categorize and establishment

- To make dossiers for submission to competent authorities for approval: the re-categorization of 3 nature reserves into national parks; the establishment of 1 national park, 4 nature reserves, 6 species/habitat reserves, and 16 landscape protection zones;

- To review and work out measures to protect forests, conserve nature and biodiversity, restore ecosystems and embellish landscapes; to preserve cultural and historical values and protect the environment in special-use forests established under the targets of conservation and sustainable development through 2020.

b/ Improvement of mechanisms and policies and enhancement of law implementation

- To study, elaborate, amend, supplement and promptly promulgate legal documents on management of the special-use forest system. To assess and identify identical and overlapping issues and work out a roadmap for revision and proposal of legal documents to ensure uniformity and effectiveness;

- To develop and promulgate a uniform system of criteria, classification and establishment of functional sub-zones for each type of special-use forest;

- To evaluate and improve general regulations on sharing of benefits from services in special-use forests. By 2020, special-use forests will access new management methods to attach responsibility to organizations and individuals benefiting from special-use forests in the management of forest conservation and sustainable development.

- To promulgate regulations guiding inspection and supervision of forest resources and biodiversity in special-use forests so as to conserve and prevent illegal deforestation, encroachment and change of use purposes of special-use forests.

c/ Ensuring financial resources for the master plan

- The State shall ensure budget funds for the review, detailed planning, re-categorization and establishment of special-use forests through 2020 in the 2011-2020 forest protection and development plan under the Prime Minister's Decision No. 57/QD-TTg of January 9, 2011.

- Special-use forest and buffer zone development investment items may be funded with the state budget under the Prime Minister's Decision No. 24/2012/QD-TTg of June 1, 2012, on special-use forest development investment policies for the 2011-2020 period;

- State budget investment in special-use forests, including central and local budgets, shall be allocated in accordance with the State Budget Law;

- To encourage communities and enterprises to make financial investment in scientific research and eco-tourism development in special-use forests. To prioritize the creation of mechanisms to generate stable financial sources and mobilize different financial sources, especially from forest environment services and contributions of enterprises and involved parties toward socializing revenue sources to successfully conserve special-use forests.

- The State shall invest in infrastructure, train human resources and support international cooperation, survey and scientific research activities. To strive to gradually reduce dependence on state budget sources and gradually increase pro-activeness in the management of special-use forests.

d/ Increase of managerial personnel

After being established and having their managerial apparatus formed by competent authorities, special-use forests shall be prioritized in receiving sufficient resources, equipment and infrastructure facilities to ensure their effective operation, thus contributing to successfully implementing the Strategy for management of systems of special-use forests, marine reserves and inland water reserves under the Prime Minister's Decision No. 218/QD-TTg of February 7, 2014. To train and increase professional capacity and law enforcement skills of management units of special-use forests; to raise awareness about responsibilities and improve coordination of local administrations and resident communities in special-use forests' buffer zones.

4. Organization of implementation

a/ Ministries and central sectors

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development shall assume the prime responsibility for, and work with the Ministry of Planning and Investment, the Ministry of

Finance and provincial-level People's Committees in, implementing this Decision; guide localities to review, make detail plans, re-categorize and establish special-use forests under the approved master plan; make plans on the examination and inspection of the implementation of local special-use forest plans; and report on the results of implementation of the master plan on the national special-use forest system to the Prime Minister;

- The Ministry of Planning and Investment shall arrange investment funds for the master plan implementation under annual plans; arrange sufficient investment funds for the implementation of the master plan; and mobilize international assistance sources for nature and biodiversity conservation work in special-use forests;

- The Ministry of Finance shall arrange sufficient funds for non-business expenditures for the master plan implementation under annual plans; and guide the allocation, use management and payment and settlement of funds for the master plan implementation in accordance with the State Budget Law.

- The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment shall work closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and related ministries and sectors in performing the tasks within its scope, responsibilities and powers; and incorporate the special-use forest system master plan in the implementation of the master plan on biodiversity conservation in the country to 2020, with a vision toward 2030;

- Ministries, sectors and central agencies shall, according to their functions and tasks, work with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in organizing the effective implementation of this master plan.

b/ Provincial-level People's Committees

- To organize the implementation of the master plan on special-use forest zones in the localities under their management;

- To review, make detailed plans, re-categorize and establish special-use forests; to complete the placement of boundary markers for functional sub-zones and buffer zones of special-use forests after obtaining approval of competent authorities;

- To mobilize and arrange local funds to effectively implement the master plan. To organize supervision of conservation work and sustainable development of forest resources and biodiversity in special-use forests;

- To periodically report on the results of implementation of the master plan on special-use forest zones to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development for summarization and reporting to the Prime Minister.

Article 2. This Decision takes effect on the date of its signing.

Article 3. The Ministers of Agriculture and Rural Development; Planning and Investment; Finance; and Natural Resources and Environment, heads of government-attached agencies, chairpersons of provincial-level People's Committees and heads of related agencies shall implement this Decision.-

For the Prime Minister
Deputy Prime Minister
HOANG TRUNG HAI

**All appendices to this Decision are not translated.*