



Centre for Supporting Green Development - Vietnam



ANNUAL REPORT 2016

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Message from the Director

GreenHub's start-up year has been challenging, as it has been for many Vietnamese NGOs as funding has gotten more competitive. However, with the efforts of our co-founders, as well as the great support of senior advisors and volunteers, GreenHub has gradually built up trust and our image as a technology and science organization devoted to developing a green Vietnam. In 2016, GreenHub was been selected to develop the first Corporate Sustainability Reports for Vietnamese aquaculture and seafood companies, co-organized, with the National Poverty Reduction Office, initiatives for sustainable poverty reduction in ethnic minority communities, and co-organized, with IUCN and other partners, coastal clean-up initiatives in Ha Long Bay. This result is thanks to the spirit of solidarity, the on-going efforts of GreenHub's co-founders, and the trust and support of partners.



During the last year, GreenHub has been focusing on organizational strategic planning and developing partnerships. GreenHub has established partnerships with international organizations (International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), Centro Italiano per l'Adozione Internazionale (CIAI), Oxfam, Vietnamese organizations (International Collaborating Centre for Aquaculture and Fisheries Sustainability (ICAFIS), Vietnet Information Technology and Communication Centre (Vietnet ICT), Green DC, Live and Learn, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre (VNCPC)), universities, research institutes and government agencies. We have also started to build cooperation with the private sector to engage in development investment through public-private partnerships (PPP) for waste to energy in agriculture, and with youth networks to create plastic management innovations.

While the 2017 picture is seen as having ongoing fund raising challenges for VNGOs in general, and for GreenHub specifically, there are also many opportunities. We have a network of experts and collaborators in many localities, as well as strong experienced INGOs and VNGOs willing to share information and to cooperate with us. We believe that, with the determination, effort, and solidarity of co-founders, together with the support of board of advisors, volunteers, and partners, GreenHub will develop strongly and sustainably in the future.

Ms Tran Thi Hoa
Director

1. INTRODUCTION OF GREENHUB

1.1 Who we are

Centre for Supporting Green Development (GreenHub) is a Vietnamese, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization under the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations (VUSTA) with oversight by the Ministry of Science & Technology, and NGO Registration Number A-1555. GreenHub was legally established on March 15, 2016 by three Vietnamese experts with significant project experience in biodiversity conservation, community development, capacity building and networking.



GreenHub's Co-founders: Tran Thi Hoa, Nguyen Thi Thanh Van, and Nguyen Thi Thu Trang.

1.2 Vision and mission

VISION

A strong, inclusive and green development for a resilient Vietnam.

MISSION

Promote green production, sustainable lifestyles, and effective climate change responses with resilient communities.

1.3 Focus

GreenHub aims to develop effective practices as well as communication and policy advocacy to assist in advancing Vietnam's green growth and development. We do this by focusing our efforts on promoting sustainable consumption and production in the agricultural and fisheries supply chains, encouraging investment in energy efficient technology, best practice waste management, and collaborating with partners. Effective responses to climate change, biodiversity conservation, gender mainstreaming, youth engagement, and poverty alleviation are cross-cutting issues of our programmes.

Sustainable production in the agricultural supply chain:

During the last two decades, under the policy of industrialization, modernization and urbanization, Vietnam has made great economic achievements. However, a recent decline in the rate of GDP growth has been linked to low productivity, increased dependency on fossil fuels, and high consumption of natural resources. Input costs for production have also been increasing. Unwise and uneconomical exploitation of natural resources for the growth of production and consumption lifestyles, together with increasing waste generation and inappropriate waste disposal, have led to significant environmental pollution.



Developing a medical-agricultural cooperative in Ba Thuoc district, Thanh Hoa Province.

The Government of Vietnam has shown strong support towards sustainable consumption and production (SCP) through a number of key policy decisions and action plans, including the National Action Program on SCP by 2020, with Vision to 2030. Implementation of these plans has not been effective and more effort is needed from multi-actors, especially in the agricultural sector, which creates jobs and livelihoods for more than 50% of Vietnam's population.

GreenHub's programmes focus on the use of environmentally-friendly practices by agricultural cooperatives and Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs), strengthening supply chain links in agricultural production.

Energy Efficiency:

There is continued government commitment to enhance energy efficiency practices in both the supply and demand side of agricultural production. However, the uptake of energy efficiency technology is slow. The use of renewable energy is critical to achieve the changes needed to transition to a more sustainable and low emissions development trajectory that contributes to economic prosperity and poverty reduction in Vietnam.

GreenHub's work is focused on developing renewable energy projects that use agricultural waste products such as sawdust and rice husks, as a form of energy. The creation of briquettes as a replacement for coal or raw forest products as a fuel source aims to make better use of the available natural resources and to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural production.

Waste Management:

Only 10% of all waste generated in Vietnam is recovered for recycling or reuse. Vietnam has been found to be one of the five largest contributors of plastic waste entering the ocean. This marine debris is highly persistent in the environment, with a plastic bottle taking an estimated 450 years to decompose in the environment. Marine debris causes significant environmental issues, including injuring and killing sea-life, biodiversity loss and public health concerns from the accumulation of persistent organic compounds in the food chain. GreenHub is focused on raising citizen awareness and behavior change in the three R's (reuse, reduce, recycle) of waste management, marine debris data monitoring, and coastal clean-up campaigns.

Natural resource conservation:

Vietnam is a biodiversity hotspot in Southeast Asia with a high proportion of rare and endemic species, but threatened by a range of environmental factors. With the benefits of almost three decades of rapid economic development, Viet Nam is facing many environmental challenges including deforestation; depletion of natural resources; water, soil and air pollution in urban and rural areas; and the growing impacts of climate change. We recognize the close linkages of ecosystems and environment with the livelihoods and futures of local communities and society; and our important dependence on environmental goods and services. GreenHub focuses on empowering local communities to engage in conservation and management of priority key biodiversity area (Cat Ba, Hai Phong city).



Improving health and environment through the use of clean cookstoves.

1.4 Our team

GreenHub's staff members are highly experienced young professionals with, on average, more than 10 years' experience working in communications, climate change, sustainable energy, environment and natural resources. Our team has worked on national and international projects with governments, universities and private sector in Vietnam. We are active trainers and facilitators in communication events, environmental management, and community development.

GreenHub's board of advisors, as leaders in their fields, have on average more than 30 years' experience in the fields of environmental and natural resource management, economics, planning, climate change, and communication. They support GreenHub in developing strategies, partnerships, monitoring, and marketing.

With special emphasis on youth, GreenHub also hosts interns and volunteers to support our work and to provide them with an opportunity to develop their skills. This diversity makes GreenHub a stimulating, progressive and productive organization.



Tran Thi Hoa: Co-Founder, Director

Hoa has a Bachelor of Environmental Science from the Natural Sciences University (Vietnam), and Master of Water Resources and Coastal Management from Bergen University (Norway). Hoa has a strong record with international organizations and managing development projects on natural resources co-management, livelihood development, environmental protection and climate change adaptation.

Nguyen Thi Thu Trang: Co-Founder, Deputy Director

Trang has a Bachelor of Natural Sciences and a Master of Business Administration, with a major in Project Management from National Economics University (Vietnam). Trang has proven capacity in managing NGO development projects at local community level through to national geographic scales. Trang is especially skilled at training of trainers, working with community leaders in developing soft skills essential for community progress, and has extensive experience in marine debris and network development.



Nguyen Thi Thanh Van: Co-Founder, Deputy Director (Finance - Administration)

Van has a Bachelor of Finance and Accounting, and Master of Economics from Commercial University (Vietnam). She has extensive experience in financial management and accounting for private enterprise and NGOs, working on national and international projects supporting local communities in developing financial management skills.

2. Highlights and Achievements

2.1 Addressing marine debris for a sustainable marine ecosystem in Ha Long Bay (Quang Ninh province, Vietnam)

Considered one of the biggest global challenges in the 21st century, together with climate change, ocean acidification, and biodiversity loss, plastic marine debris harms marine wildlife and effects human health. Studies have shown that more than 200 different marine species suffer from plastic debris entanglement and accidental ingestion leading to choking, physical blockage, malnutrition, and even death.

GreenHub was a partner in the initiative “Engaging youth and stakeholders in coastal clean-up campaign for sustainable marine ecosystems in Ha Long Bay”, which aimed to protect the marine ecosystem and assist in sustainable tourism development in Ha Long Bay through marine debris coastal clean-ups, data collection and collaborative partnerships. GreenHub assisted the project by acting as technical advisors and facilitators, contributing to knowledge sharing, the development of education materials and a protocol for coastal clean-ups, and data analysis which was also provided to local managers, the Ha Long Bay Waste Management Board, and to the Ocean Conservancy for on-going monitoring.

Using the momentum from the clean-up events, GreenHub established a youth network of volunteers to promote coastal clean-ups, monitor marine debris and to engage the community in these issues. The outcomes of the initiative were also shared at the 2016 Asia Pacific Environment Forum in Korea.



GreenHub meets the US Ambassador to Vietnam, Mr Ted Osius (pictured centre). Image © Phanh Davis (Flickr @davisphanh)



GreenHub participated in Asia Pacific Environment Forum in 2016 in Korea.



Polystyrene was the most common marine debris found during the coastal cleanups.



220

volunteers

joined the fight for a healthy ocean



1,570 kg
of marine debris was cleaned up

2.2 km

of coastline was cleaned



5,000

people were engaged through social media channels

“I was shocked to see the huge amount of trash on the beach, given that it didn’t look bad while we were travelling by boat to the area. I wondered how we could deal with that but eventually with the joint effort, we made it.”

- Pham Thi Thuy Duong, final year student at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities



2.2 Supporting poverty reduction through economic empowerment of ethnic minority communities



Supporting rattan and bamboo handicraft cooperative in Ban Diem, Nghe An Province.

From July to December 2016, GreenHub cooperated with the National Poverty Reduction Office and Vietnet ICT to organize the “Community driven initiatives for sustainable poverty reduction”. The festival was aimed at promoting, developing and implementing community livelihood development initiatives, the promotion of indigenous products, and the preservation of the environment.

60 groups, including 13 ethnic minorities from 16 mountainous provinces in the North, Central Highlands and South, registered to be involved in the festival. The festival supported the groups to connect with local associations, enterprises, non-governmental organizations and experienced independent consultants who provided technical support for capacity development, self-help, experience sharing and business development. The festival also honoured the communities’ ownership of their enterprises, with the top 10 participating groups chosen to receive further support to develop their businesses. Technical support provided by GreenHub, included assistance developing cooperative groups, providing access to loans, connecting to business partners and product development.



Supporting Brocade handicraft collaborative group in Sapa district, Lao Cai Province.



Field survey of microfinance for Dong Tam agricultural group, Soc Trang Province.

32 community leaders
19 organisations

from INGOs, VNGOs, government agencies, and research institutes at provincial, district, and commune levels supported and connected participants with technical advice and capacity development

Connecting resources in the community

Participating group's average monthly income increased from

US\$23
 to
US\$140



Participants have had an increase in access to loans for capital improvements from



Community Empowerment

Through the program, community leaders became more confident in sharing their community's issues in local stakeholder meetings, working with consultants and presenting their businesses.

2.3 Supporting aquaculture and seafood companies in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practice and Sustainability Reports

Aquaculture and seafood production is Vietnam's fifth highest export turnover industry, with about 5 million people engaged in the production, processing and distribution of seafood products. Over the past two decades, the booming growth of the industry has presented many challenges including negative impacts to the environmental and social aspects. Consumers are becoming more conscious of environmental and social impacts of the food they are eating and they are requiring greater transparency from businesses. One emerging tool used by businesses is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) which helps to ensure the integration of social and environmental concerns into operations, policies, and practices. The concept of CSR is still relatively new in Vietnam, and organizational performance so far remains limited, especially in seafood industry.

Under Oxfam's "Gender Transformative and Responsible Agribusiness Investments in South East Asia (GRAISEA)" project, GreenHub supported 6 aquaculture and seafood companies to prepare Sustainability Reports and to integrate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) operational practices into their businesses. GreenHub provided capacity development through training and technical support to allow the businesses to meet their sustainability requirements. It is hoped that the companies will implement the recommended measures outlined in the report to improve their businesses practices to become more financially, environmentally and socially responsible.

One seafood company has already committed to improve their waste water cleaning practices and to purchase air filters to reduce environmental discharge and pollution from their processing practices.



Waste treatment system at a seafood company.



GreenHub supports Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) training.

GreenHub developed the first Sustainability Reports for Vietnamese aquaculture and seafood companies.

2.4 Networking and partnership development

GreenHub considers networking and partnership development important for our organisational development, providing opportunities to learn, to access current information, and to build our reputation. GreenHub wants to contribute to capacity building for VNGOs as well as share experiences among networks, and identify concrete opportunities to collaborate in the future.

Fundraising training for VNGOs

Representatives from 10 of GreenHub's partner organizations attended fundraising training on July 13, 2016, facilitated by GreenHub's advisor, Mr Boris Fabres. Participants learnt about the importance of understanding the donor's expectations, selling the added value of investment, and creating strong relationships with the donor. Guest speaker, Ms Nguyen Ngoc Ly, the Director of the Center for Environment and Community Research (CECR), provided valuable advice to the participants including the need for NGOs to improve their organization's capacity in fund management, and the importance of having a clear and concrete mission.

Participating organizations found this training gave them very useful fund raising skills and allowed the development of potential partnerships with other organizations. They agreed that cooperation among NGOs is needed to make better use of resources, and they hoped to have opportunities for collaboration in the future.



Participants attend fundraising training workshop.



GreenHub's advisor- Mr Boris Fabres, fundraising workshop trainer.



Organic Agriculture Development Forum

On May 12, 2016 at the Hoa Vien Farm, Thach That District, Hanoi, the first Organic Agriculture Development Forum was co-organised by the Vietnam Organic Farmers Association and GreenHub. The Forum was focused on discussing the challenges, opportunities and solutions to organic farming in Vietnam, and provided a networking opportunity for people involved in the organic agricultural industry.

More than 160 participants attended the forum, including representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Science and Technology, research institutes, certification bodies, and farmer cooperatives. The forum provided an overview of organic farming in Vietnam and highlighted the challenges of traditional farming practices, including people's perceptions, the health impacts of pesticide use, the reduction in agricultural land, and the inadequacies of the current system of guidelines and regulations for organic production. The difficulties producers and farmers face around investment capital and certification for organic products was also discussed.

During the forum, the participants work shopped a number of potential solutions to overcome some of the industry's challenges, including:

- 🌿 The development of regulations to govern organic food production focused on traceability, compliance and accreditation to promote transparency and consumer confidence in the industry,
- 🌿 Planning to allocate land for organic farming at the local level,
- 🌿 The use of incentives to encourage scientific research into organic production and processing methods, and
- 🌿 The use of media to promote consumer awareness of the benefits of organic products, such as improved food safety and hygiene.

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all of our advisors, supporters, contributors, donors, and volunteers for your valuable contribution towards GreenHub's significant development over the last year.

First of all, we would like to thank Associate Professor Truong Manh Tien and Associate Professor Nguyen Chu Hoi for your guidance and support in our initial startup days, as well as your direction in our strategic development.

We would like to express our appreciation to Mr Boris Fabres who makes us work hard to improve, and cares for our wellbeing. Even though you are living far away from Vietnam, you are always there to help us.

We would like to thank Professor Nguyen Kim Thai and Associate Professor Nguyen Thi Ha for the technical support you provided.

Thank you also goes to Eco-Peace Leadership Center, Kangwon National University (South Korea) and IUCN for your support and collaboration with us in engaging our stakeholders in coastal cleanup campaigns to create sustainable marine ecosystem.

We want to give a big thank to GreenHub's interns and volunteers, Ms Tran Luong Anh, Ms Dang Trang, Ms Jessie Button, Mr Nguyen Hoang Tien, Ms Minh Ngoc, Ms Paula Gill, Ms Do Ngoc for their valuable support!

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GreenHub meeting with our advisors Mr Truong Manh Tien and Mr Nguyen Chu Hoi.



GreenHub meeting with Mr Nguyen Ngoc Anh (Nam Anh Wood pellet company Director)



GreenHub meeting with Mr Luca Penasa and Ms Elisabetta Borzini (CIAI -Italian NGO).

