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Innovations in Land, Water and Energy for Vietnam's Sustainable Development



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Editor

Innovations in Land, Water and Energy for Vietnam's Sustainable Development



Editor

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Preface

The recent steep economic growth of South East Asia, and particularly of Vietnam, poses challenges to land, water and energy management as well as to urban environment and nature protection. In the last years, the Italy–Vietnam research cooperation supported by the governments of the two countries has explored these hot topics underlining the existing close linkages between the various sectors.

The aim of this manuscript is thus to show what the most innovative trends in land, water and energy management are, using also advanced information and communication technologies developed by Italian and Vietnamese researchers.

Vietnam is a fast-growing country with an average gross domestic product (GDP) increase each year of around 7%. At the same time, investments in higher education, research and industrial innovation have been increased.

Fundings in research and development are around 0.40% of the GDP. In respect to all other national public spending, the amount dedicated to science and technology is around 1.6% with a workforce involved in research of 700 full-time researchers per million inhabitants.

Alongside research, Vietnam also invests in the higher education sector. Indeed, estimates by the Ministry of Education and Training in August 2018 show a total of 0.5% of the GDP for that sector.

Italy enjoys Vietnamese's respect and recognition. This recognition, where properly oriented, allows the research system to be focused on areas advantageous for the development of economic and commercial partnership between the two countries. Particularly relevant in this sense are the applied researches in the agri-food, medicine and health, biotechnologies and genomics, nanotechnologies, energy and environment, physics and space.

Moreover, the mature competences of the Italian research system, accustomed to international visibility, have backed up Vietnamese researchers and allowed them to enter in scientific organizations promoting research dissemination.

Bilateral cooperation in science and technology between Italy and Vietnam is regulated by an Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, signed in Hanoi on January 5, 1992. Since then, executive protocols for scientific and technological cooperation have supported, on a regular deadline schedule, the

implementation of bilateral projects. The last one, valid for the period 2017–2019, was signed in Rome in November 2016 between the Ministry of Science and Technology of Vietnam and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy. In the framework of this executive protocol, a call for bilateral projects is typically launched and a few projects are selected and financed. During this last triennium—with the seal of the “1st Italy–Vietnam conference on science and technology-bilateral research experiences and projects: results and perspectives” held in Hanoi on November 17, 2017, and organized by the Embassy of Italy in Vietnam with the collaboration of Vietnamese Ministry of Science and Technology—all of the funded projects have shown a very intense activity in terms of scientific results achieved, efficacy of the bilateral collaborations and potential impact. It is also evident how the bilateral scientific activities between the two countries have indeed acquired a great visibility, increasing the creation of international networks, and, ultimately, eased the access to funds.

In this scenario, there are more than 100 signed and operative Memorandum of Understanding between Italian and Vietnamese scientific and higher education institutions, while the dissemination activity on the research topics ranges from local events to international conferences.

This book, comprising the most important scientific projects and results of the bilateral cooperation in the last three years, has been structured in three main sections: Environment, Climate Change and Land Management in Vietnam; Energy for Vietnam; and Cities and utilities in Vietnam.

In the first part, Environment, Climate Change and Land Management in Vietnam, a few chapters concentrate on water systems in Vietnam, including rivers and sea-coasts. An efficient flood forecasting model shows the weakness of the delicate ecosystem of the rivers in China, Laos and Vietnam. The model allows flood control downstream, to prevent catastrophes in the heavily populated Northern Delta of the Red River and close to the Ca river, the Vinh area, both experiencing rapid development and increasing urbanization.

The worldwide famous Ha Long Bay is also a weak marine ecosystem, severely jeopardized by intensified tourism and climate change effects. The bilateral research puts into evidence the unique richness of this area witnessed by sedimentological and microfossil content of sediment samples.

Other studies in the area of agri-food explore new ways to fight against rice pathogens. Italy is indeed the largest Japonica rice producer in Europe, and Vietnamese rice belongs to the same variety. Both countries are under biotic and abiotic stresses related to drought, climate changes and pests.

Finally, the land and environment management with a Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) created within a framework of bilateral scientific cooperation is presented. The chapter describes the GNSS technology that easily allows precise determination of position, velocity and time (PVT) enabling hundreds of different applications in almost any field of modern life, from transportation to logistics, from surveying to disaster management, from natural resources monitoring to services for citizens.

Second part, Energy for Vietnam, is focused on energy and water. The steep growth of the country is a great challenge for the Vietnamese government that has to face the reinforcement of the electrical infrastructures. An overview about the measures the Vietnamese government is planning to take in the medium-short term is provided together with their impact on the Vietnamese power system. In this scenario, high-voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission is considered to reinforce the connections with China and other neighbouring countries.

New architectures for renewable energy installation, such as microgrids, are also considered. These being analyzed both as urban energy districts and as islanded systems.

In the same part, the reader is given a brief overview of the conventional biological wastewater treatment (WWT) plants and processing steps, with a specific focus on their solid residues such as sewage sludge. The latter could be valorized by anaerobic digestion (AD), converting it into valuable commercial products such as biogas and fertilizers, applying hence the important concept at the base of circular economy.

Finally, third part, Cities and Utilities in Vietnam, is focused on cities. Urbanization is also a consequence of the steep economic growth of the country, and a study on the urban morphology of the Vietnamese metropolis, with special attention to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, is provided. The same technology proposed for environment and land management is in this section considered for road applications, enabling consistent improvements in traffic management and monitoring. According to the proposal, in Vietnam, public transport vehicles and lorries should be equipped with black boxes to enable traffic management and control. Other contributions focus on the telecommunication infrastructures. In countries like Vietnam, where wired communication systems are not sufficient for satisfying the continuously increase of user demand, the development of a highly efficient wireless communication network is mandatory. A good solution to this problem is represented by the 5th-generation mobile network or simply 5G in which the design of antennas is a strategic element.

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