

Overview of Marine Plastic Debris in Vietnam in Relation to International Context

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SUMMARY

Among the approximately 2.5 billion tonnes of solid waste produced globally in 2010, about 275 million tonnes was mismanaged plastic waste generated from coastal countries, and it is estimated that between 4.8 million tonnes to 12.7 million tonnes of this plastic waste entered the oceans. Inadequate management of plastic waste has led to increased contamination of freshwater, estuarine and marine environments.

Current management plans for solid waste include: open dumps or tips into landfill, incineration, waste to energy and recycling. However, not all plastics are recyclable or recycled which can be the result of insufficient waste streams.

Vietnam with a coastline of more than 3260km runs along the length of the country, with dozens of estuaries flowing into the sea. Plastic waste is really a very serious problem in Vietnam. In the beaches where garbage is regularly collected, plastic still floats a lot in the sea. In some beach areas like mangrove forests, mudflats.... where garbage is not collected, plastic debris forms a thick layer on bottom mud, covering roots and branches, causing great harm to the ecosystem.

However, Vietnam considers strong development of the marine economy must be accompanied with marine environmental protection, do not trade the environment for hot and unsustainable growth. So far, Vietnam has issued and implemented many strategies, policies and regulations on environmental protection to limit marine plastic debris. Therefore, it has achieved many encouraging results, but there are still many difficulties ahead.

In order to reduce the quantity of plastic entering the ocean, existing management instruments need to be made more effective and all aspects of waste treatment and disposal need to be improved.

Vietnam needs further cooperation, support and funding from other countries and international organizations

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