News

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JICA and Honda Vietnam Work Together for Reforestation

The site of the pilot project in Hoa Binh province. The bare mountain was previously covered with trees.

On February 21, JICA, the Department of Forestry under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam, and Honda Vietnam Co., Ltd (Honda Vietnam) announced that Honda Vietnam will provide financial support to the implementation of a small-scale Afforestation/Reforestation Clean Development Mechanism (AR-CDM) project in Cao Phong District, Hoa Binh Province. This is the first case of cooperation among JICA, Honda Vietnam, and the Vietnamese government, in which Honda Vietnam provides funds for the implementation of the project. In general, securing funds is a major obstacle for implementation of AR-CDM projects as well as regular reforestation projects. The financial support from Honda Vietnam paved a way for contribution to forestry projects by the private sector.

The pilot small-scale AR-CDM project is under formulation by JICA experts and forestry specialists at Vietnam Forestry University (VFU) and the Research Center for Forest Ecology and Environment under the technical assistance of JICA. JICA has been assisting the capacity development of Vietnamese counterparts for AR-CDM development in order to promote it nationwide for environmental protection, watershed restoration, and poverty reduction in mountainous areas, as well as for contributions by Viet Nam to the Kyoto Protocol.

The total area of forest to be established by the project is about 309 hectares. The project primarily aims at the restoration of forests in unproductive bare and bush lands, where forests were cut down for crop production before 1980. It is expected that about 320 farm households will engage in reforestation activities and enjoy benefits from them, including from the sales of carbon credit.

The project will be implemented from 2009 by local communities under the management of the Forest Development Fund, a new social fund which is planned to be set up by Cao Phong District People's Committee and VFU. Honda Vietnam will provide a total of 3.5 billion VDN to the fund for the implementation of the project from 2008 to 2011. In 2008, the fund will prepare for project implementation, including organizing project participants, signing contracts with them, and formulating detailed work plans. On the other hand, Honda Vietnam, Cao Phong District and VFU plan to organize the memorial planting of about 5 hectares within Cao Phong District in April 2008 to increase public awareness on the importance of reforestation and forest protection. About 500 Honda Vietnam associates, 150 VFU students and local people will participate in the tree planting.

A key feature of the project is that it was formulated for registration by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as a small-scale AR-CDM project under the Kyoto Protocol. It is estimated that the project will absorb about 41,000 tons of carbon dioxide in the project period of 16 years. For registration, the validation of the AR-CDM project by a third party is scheduled in the third quarter of 2008 under the assistance of JICA. If successfully validated the project could be the first AR-CDM project registered by the UNFCCC in Viet Nam and might be the second one in the world following the project in China that was registered in 2006.

The government of Viet Nam promulgated the Viet Nam Forestry Development Strategy 2006-2020 a year ago. The small-scale AR-CDM project is relevant to two of the five key programs under the strategy, namely, (1) sustainable forest management and development and (2) forest protection, biodiversity conservation, and delivery of environmental services of forest.

JICA has been active in building the capacity of developing countries in achieving sustainable development and mitigation of global climate change. JICA is providing similar assistance to Chile and Argentina.