

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Green Nordic Solutions for Circular Economy and Waste Management: Experiences and Policy Implications for Vietnam**

*Ho Chi Minh City 22 March 2023:* In honor of Nordic Day 2023, and in collaboration with the Fulbright University Vietnam, the Nordic Embassies in Vietnam (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden), are coming together to share their experiences on green solutions for circular economy and waste management and policy implications for Vietnam at a seminar in Ho Chi Minh. The event aims to provide insight into Nordic policies, initiatives, and innovation in green transition, which can be relevant and applicable to Vietnam in eliminating waste and pollution, circulating products, and regenerating nature.

Organised for the fifth time, the event is attended by representatives from the Vietnamese central and local government agencies, chambers of commerce, business leaders and startups, civil society actors, researchers, innovators, and young people.

The Nordic region is known for its commitment to the environment and circularity, and this seminar highlights how the region is leading the way in green innovation. The seminar also provides opportunities for key Vietnamese actors and stakeholders to learn from the Nordic model, driving growth and contributing to Agenda 2030, the Paris Agreement and a full and green recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the Ambassador of Denmark to Viet Nam, Mr Nicolai Prytz, *"Having a long tradition of working together to find solutions to common challenges, the Nordic countries are proud to share our experiences and knowledge with Vietnam. We believe that sharing experiences and best practices with our partners are essential to promote sustainable development."*

Ambassador of Norway to Vietnam Ms Hilde Solbakken highlighted the role of the private sector in promoting green innovation. She said, *"In the Nordic region, we have seen how private sector-driven innovation can lead to significant improvements in waste management and reduction of plastic pollution. We believe that when governments create the right incentives and regulations, we can unleash the potential of the private sector to drive green transition."*

Mr. Nguyen Xuan Thanh, Senior Faculty (Fulbright School of Public Policy and Management), expressed excitement about the seminar, stating that *"The Nordic region takes a leading role in moving to a more sustainable circular economy. We hope that by sharing the Nordic solutions for green economy and waste management, we can inspire*

*Vietnamese businesses, government agencies and local communities to take action towards a more sustainable future."*

The Nordic region has implemented several policies and initiatives to promote sustainable development. Denmark has implemented a green transition strategy, which focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 70 per cent in 2030 compared to 1990 levels and towards net zero by 2050 as the latest. Finland was the first country in the world to activate a National Roadmap to a Circular Economy (2016–2025), which aims to reduce waste generation and promote the reuse of materials. Norway now launches the Green Industrial Initiative to accelerate the transition, create jobs, increase exports, and cut greenhouse gas emissions. Meanwhile, Sweden has set ambitious goals for sustainability, including going fossil-free and 100 per cent renewable energy by 2045.

Vietnam has high climate ambitions. Through the commitment made by Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh to reach net-zero target by 2050 at the COP26 Climate Summit in Glasgow in November 2021, which has been reaffirmed in the country's updated Nationally Determined Commitments (NDCs) at COP27 2022, and following the agreement with the G7++ on a Just Energy Transition Partnership in December 2022, Vietnam is in a position to take important steps forward for a green transition. In addition, the Vietnam Green Growth Strategy till 2030 with vision to 2045 aims to achieve a green and sustainable economy by promoting green technologies, improving energy efficiency, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The strategy also focuses on waste management and reducing plastic pollution. With modern technologies and innovations, Vietnam can become a regional leader in sustainable development.

Representatives from several Nordic institutions and companies, including Re:source (Sweden), Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra, Valmet (Finland), SINTEF, TOMRA (Norway) and Gehl Architects (Denmark)...etc join the seminar to discuss their circular business models and commitments which increase recycling, reduce waste and carbon emissions in their operation. They also emphasise efforts to enhance skills, financing, technology adoption and a conducive regulatory environment which will be key in making the most of the green transition and unlocking the full potential of Vietnam's future.

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For free pictures on Nordic Cooperation on circular economy and waste management, please click <https://www.norden.org/en/images>

## **BACKGROUND FOR EDITORS**

### **The Nordic countries**

The Nordic countries consist of Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland as well as The Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland, and constitutes one of the oldest and most diverse forms of regional political collaboration. It is not by chance that a region with only 27 million people, which would not even make it into the top 50 of countries ranked by population, is one of the most integrated regions with shared values and common development goals.

As a result, the Nordic countries generally score highly on international rankings and indexes, such as *Innovation, Happiness, Human Development, Citizens' Welfare, Governance, Transparency, Equality, Social Progress Index, Inclusive Development Index, Sustainability Index* and more.

All four Nordic countries with Embassies in Hanoi were among the first European countries that established diplomatic ties with Vietnam (Sweden: 1969, Denmark and Norway: 1971, Finland: 1973). Over the years, the Nordic countries have remained Vietnam's trusted friends and partners even during hard times and continue going alongside with Vietnam in its effort to strengthen economic growth and promote equality, environmental protection, and inclusiveness as the foundations for the prosperity and sustainable development.

### **The SDG Index**

The UN's SDGs can ideally provide a metric or benchmark for embedding sustainability into local agendas and bringing today's environmental issues truly into the mainstream of awareness and local actions. The SDG Index is a composite measure of progress across all Sustainable Development Goals, ranking 165 UN Member States based on their performance across the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

To date, Finland tops the Index, with Denmark and Sweden in second and third place respectively. Norway ranks at number 4, indicating that the Nordics are currently on the best path to achieve the goals, though strong efforts are still needed to reach all the Goals by 2030 <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/rankings>

Vietnam currently ranks at number 55 <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/vietnam>

