MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT Department of Legal Affairs

# INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

### MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS



INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHING HOUSE

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Department of Legal Affairs

## **International Environmental Law**

- Multilateral Environmental Agreements -

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**References:** This handbook draws from existing publications of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), namely the Judicial Handbook on Environmental Law of 2005, the Manual on Compliance with and Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements of 2006, the Multilateral Environmental Agreement Negotiator's Handbook of 2007, and the Primer for Auditors of Multilateral Environmental Agreements of 2010. Other important publications that have been used for the handbook include the books International Environmental Law of Pierre-Marie Dupuy and Jorge E. Vinuales (2016, Cambridge University Press) and The Practitioner's Guide to International Law of the International Law Committee (2014, 2nd edition, NSW Young Lawyers).

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#### Foreword

Vietnam's measures to prevent environmental deterioration and to respond to climate change are increasingly driven by commitments under multilateral environmental agreements on the one hand and domestic needs on the other hand. This requires government officials to not only understand how to implement existing international commitments, but also how to contribute to the negotiation of new international commitments. As a prerequisite, a sound understanding of the development, features, functioning and implementation of multilateral environmental agreements is necessary. The purpose of this handbook is to give a general introduction to international environmental law as well as the most important and well-known multilateral environmental agreements that Vietnam is a Party to.

To aid in a basic understanding of international commitments, this handbook has been divided into two parts. In *Part I*, information about the development, entry into force, functioning and implementation of multilateral environmental agreements is provided that gives the context for understanding the individual conventions, protocols and agreements. Building on this information, *Part II* provides a concise summary of nineteen different multilateral environmental agreements by addressing two questions: *What is the agreement about?* and *What does Vietnam have to comply with?* The nineteen multilateral environmental agreements are divided into the following eight areas:

- Area 1: Biodiversity conservation and sustainable use
- Area 2: Land management
- Area 3: Management of international watercourses
- Area 4: Marine environment protection
- Area 5: Ozone layer protection
- Area 6: Climate change response
- Area 7: Waste management
- Area 8: Chemical management

The intended audience for this handbook are the officials working for the various ministries of the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, especially the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE). However, the handbook also seeks to reach stakeholders from all backgrounds that seek to understand the commitments under multilateral environmental agreements for developing countries like Vietnam. It has been produced in both Vietnamese and English, and will also be available on the MONRE website.

Writing this handbook was a collaborative effort of many people. The idea first came from our Deputy Minister Nguyen Thi Phuong Hoa who I want to thank for the initiative. Then I would like to thank the team of our Department of Legal Affairs, especially Deputy Director General Mr Phan Tuan Hung, Dr Heidi Stockhaus – placed by the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM), a joint operation of GIZ and the German Federal Employment Agency – and Ms Clare Cory – supported by Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program, an Australian Government initiative.

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Finally my thanks are extended to everyone who participated in the publication of this handbook. I am especially grateful for the publication assistance by UNDP under the project: *Enhancing Capacity for Implementing Rio Conventions*.

I hope this handbook will improve the understanding of multilateral environmental agreements in Vietnam and will therefore provide the basis for our efforts to prevent environmental deterioration and respond to climate change in an interconnected world.

signed by

Minister Tran Hong Ha Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

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