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Vietnam and FAO signs a MoU to promote South-South agricultural cooperation

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Vietnam is currently restructuring its agricultural sector towards increasing added value and sustainable development, taking into account emerging factors such as trade liberalization, climate change, smart agriculture and food loss control.

On Feb 6th, Vietnamese Minister Le Minh Hoan met with a high-level delegation from the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) discusses Vietnam's agriculture sector's many challenges, as well as the difficulty of obtaining international financial and technical support. It is crucial that FAO supports regional and global projects, programs, and initiatives in Vietnam, and that FAO provides direct technical assistance.

A partnership agreement on food system transformation was signed by 45 domestic and foreign partners in Vietnam on World Food Day 2024. The agreement affirms a common commitment to sustainable agriculture.

Through South-South cooperation programs and Tripartite cooperation, Vietnam is prepared to share experiences and cooperate with other countries on agricultural and rural development. By establishing South-South cooperation, FAO can mobilize finance for Vietnamese agricultural experts to guide, conduct demonstrations, and share experiences with African countries. The Vietnamese government is ready to establish a South-South Cooperation Center for the Asia-Pacific region.

Le Minh Hoan, Vietnam's Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, called FAO a "key partner" among the United Nations agencies and international organizations involved in agricultural development. Le Minh Hoan proposed that FAO work closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to develop specific cooperation programs and projects to mobilize capital from donors and Climate Finance Funds, as well as contribute to the implementation of Government

programs in rice, crop, aquaculture, livestock breeding, and forestry. Together with Vietnam, he proposes FAO to implement an Action Plan to transform the food system towards transparency, responsibility, and sustainability, encouraging private sector investment and development of ecological, low-emission agriculture.

The FAO has played a crucial role in helping Vietnam to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs), especially SDG1 and SDG2, throughout the development of the agricultural sector. Vietnam's agriculture is actively transforming towards "green", low-emission and sustainable. The project "Sustainable development of 1 million hectares of high-quality rice, emission reduction associated with green growth in the Mekong Delta by 2030", with the goal of forming 1 million hectares of high-quality and low-emission rice specialized areas associated with reorganizing the production system according to the value chain, improving production and business efficiency, income and life of rice growers. Mr. Khuat Dong Ngoc recommended that, after the initial success of green transformation of the rice industry, Vietnam can replicate the model to other industries such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

Khuat Dong Ngoc believes that Vietnam's agricultural sector needs a shift in thinking to create breakthrough changes. A green agricultural economy requires synchronized product development, contributing to Vietnam's improvement on the world agricultural map by gradually building a green agricultural economy. In Khuat Dong Ngoc's view, a prosperous agriculture begins with local products like OCOP, increases its value, and then develops "green cities" in the countryside. To improve rural social security, these three milestones are crucial.

Furthermore, Vietnam is expecting FAO to share international experiences and promote the use of digital technology and science and technology throughout the agricultural value chain; support capacity building in ecological agriculture, agricultural tourism, disease management, resource management, and transboundary water management; and support the construction of the Vietnamese Food Innovation Center.