Deepen environmental cooperation, co-construct green transformation

——Speech at the China- Vietnam transboundary biodiversity conservation consultation workshop and MOU signing ceremony

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Honorable Mr. Bui Cash Tuyen, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment
Mr. Sanath Ranawana, Senior Natural Resources Management Specialist, ADB
Mr. Dam Van Eng, Deputy Chairman of the People's Committee, Cao Bang province;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning!

I am very glad to visit beautiful Cao Bang Province and participate in this signing ceremony for the Memorandum of Understanding on transboundary biodiversity conservation between the Cao Bang Department of Natural Resources and Environment and the Guangxi Enviroment Protection Department. On behalf of the Director of Guangxi EPB Mr. Tang Qinrui and Guangxi Delegation, I want to thank the conference organizers for the excellent arrangements.

Guangxi Province has a total 236.7 thousand square kilometers with a total 54 million people in 2014. GDP per capital is about $US5000 and its trading volume with ASEAN countries is about $US20 billion. As the only province bordering ASEAN, we pay high attention to the cooperation with ASEAN countries, especially with Vietnam. Guangxi and Vietnam are closely interconnected, although we are in the different development stages and face some different challenges, we share many common interests and concerns. Strengthening environmental cooperation has its both representative and demonstrative significance; it not only falls into the development needs of both parties, but also helps in promoting regional sustainable development. In recent years, Guangxi and Vietnam have made fruitful achievements in transboundary environmental cooperation. With great support of ADB, Guangxi has implemented the GMS Core Environment Program's Biodiversity Corridor Initiative and started China-Vietnam transborder cooperation since 2006. The project phase I completed and Phase II is ongoing. Jinxi in Guangxi and Cao Bang in Vietnam were selected as pilot sites for biodiversity corridor conservation. We achieved positive results in establishing Banliang national nature reserve for gibbons, corridor land use planning, corridor design, updating biodiversity data, and improving local livelihoods through combined means of poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation. With a joint effort of ADB's Environment Operations Center and FECO, an exchange workshop was successfully held in September 2014 in Guangxi. We reached a basic consensus with Vietnam partners on transboundary biodiversity conservation and management, and joint action for project implementation during the meeting. The MOU signing ceremony and consultation workshop not only provide an important platform and support for dialogue and cooperation in transboundary biodiversity conservation between Guangxi and Vietnam, but also has

significant meaning for demonstrating good examples for transboundary biodiversity conservation in the GMS.

Guangxi Province is willing to contribute to further promotion of sustainable development of China and Vietnam. Here I make the following suggestions:

1. Giving full play to the geographical advantages, Guangxi will boost the cooperation between two countries via cooperation at provincial level.

Firstly, we shall build up consensus and enhance communication and coordination, to ensure both parties fully play their roles and complement each other's strengths in developing the community of interests which is leading to mutual benefit and development. Secondly, we shall promote cooperation and inclusiveness, envisage the differences between different development stages, respect and care for each other, solve problem with equal dialogue and friendly consultation, seek commonality while reserving differences, deepen cooperation, and work together to promote the sustainable development in the region and for all over the world.

2. Establish multi-level and broad cooperation based on the MOU.

The signing of MOU distinguished the importance of biodiversity conservation in bilateral relations. It provides the platform for dialogue and cooperation on transboundary biodiversity conservation between Guangxi and Vietnam, and sets a good example for transboundary biodiversity conservation in the GMS region. In the future we should expand the cooperation in different areas, strengthen exchange, share experience, establish periodic exchange and visiting mechanisms, implement cooperation projects, enhance bilateral cooperation in environmental field, and promote green transformation.

3. Co-construct Silk Road, build regional environmental cooperative community.

This March, China published "Vision and Actions for Promoting the Joint Development of the co-Silk Road Economic Belt and Maritime Silk Route in the 21st Century" in which regional environment cooperation and greening the silk road were emphasized. I wish that both parties can share the green development opportunities and face the challenges together through mutual tolerance and benefit. Let us make a positive contribution to the region and international green development and maintain ecologic safety.

4. Create a new regional environmental cooperation model based on China-ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Forum.

China-ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Forum has been successfully held for 4 consecutive years since 2011. During that time, the Forum has become the major high-level dialogue platform in environment field for China and ASEAN countries, an important channel to explore the cooperation in environment and development, and an important bridge to engage stakeholders in regional environment cooperation. The Forum in 2015 will further develop policy dialogue between China and ASEAN countries and provide a platform for environmental technology and industry exchange. We are looking forward to active participation of Vietnamese government and enterprisers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we are gathering here to renew friendship, and to promote the cooperation and development. Wish the workshop and MOU signing ceremony a great success.

Thank you!