

Welcome Remarks by Director General Nguyen Do Anh Tuan
ICD, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment
At the 2025 annual meeting of the
Agroecology Transformative Partnership Platform (AE-TPP)
Pullman, 40 Cat Linh, Ha Noi
On 31 March 2025

Excellencies

- *Mr. Chan Saruth, Undersecretary of state of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia;*
- *Madam. Banzuela MA Estrella, Secretary General, Asian Farmer Association for Sustainable Rural Development;*
- *Mr. Sinclair Fergus Lloyd, Leader, Systems Science, ICRAF cum Agroecology TPP Convenor,*

Distinguished guests, colleagues, and friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment of Viet Nam, I warmly welcome you at the 2025 annual meeting of the Agroecology Transformative Partnership Platform in Ha Noi.

As you know, Food is a basic human right like air and water. Globally, around 733 million people go hungry mainly because of conflicts, weather shocks, inequalities, and economic downturns. Over 2.8 billion people cannot afford a healthy diet. Malnutrition in its various forms exists in all countries and socio-economic classes.

In South East Asia in 2022, the proportion of the population unable to afford a healthy diet was 36.3 percent. This region is also one of the world's most vulnerable regions to climate change, due to its long coastlines, high concentration of population and heavy reliance on agriculture, fisheries, forestry and other natural resources. NDCs from all ASEAN Member States identify food security and increasing the resilience of the agricultural sector to be an adaptation priority. Resilience is a core element of agroecology.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Agroecology offers a pathway to address the above-mentioned issues, to increase the agro-biodiversity, to build sustainable healthy agricultural ecosystems, to secure livelihoods and, most importantly, to contribute to a transparent, responsible and sustainable food system transition.

Agroecology has been recognized in many ASEAN strategic documents on food and agriculture systems, socio-economic, cultural and rural development. The "Policy Guidelines on agroecology transitions in ASEAN" had been notified during the ASEAN AMAF meeting in October 2024 and released at ASEAN meeting in Vientiane two weeks ago (on March 17-18, 2025). This is the practical guidance on transitions that supports key policy actors at national level and helps advance agroecology transition in the ASEAN region. This consists of guidelines for: Planning for agroecology transitions; Working with farmers; Promoting transitions across agri-food value chains; Capacity building and knowledge sharing; Multi-stakeholder engagement; Developing a research agenda for agroecology transitions; Financing agroecology transitions.

Adoption of agroecology principles and practices will be highly beneficial to maintain healthy, productive food systems under climate change.

Excellencies, Distinguished Participants,

Viet Nam's agriculture plays a particularly important role in ensuring food security, social stability and livelihoods for more than 60% of the population in rural areas, contributing 12% of the country's GDP (in 2023), creating jobs for nearly 30% of labor force and also making an important contribution to poverty reduction.

At present, our agriculture is facing several big challenges, from internal problems to objective factors: small-size farming households accounting for the majority, resource depletion, climate change, market fluctuation and changes in consumption trends in the world. According to the 2024 annual assessment report of Yale University (USA) on the Environmental Performance Index, Vietnam is rated at an average level in terms of environmental health but ranks very low in terms of ecosystem vitality compared to countries in the same region.

In this context, ecological agriculture is considered as very important solutions, bringing many opportunities for us: ecological/organic/circular agriculture are models that ensure a balance between productivity and environmental protection; Opportunities to apply high technology such as IOT, artificial intelligence and automation to improve efficiency, optimize resources and minimize negative impacts; Opportunities to focus on safe products with clear origins that not only improves competitiveness but also expands to the international markets.

The Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy for the period 2021 - 2030, with a vision to 2050, and the National Action Plan on Food Systems Transformation in Vietnam towards Transparency, Responsibility, and Sustainability by 2030 promulgated by the Government have proved the determination of the Government in developing a sustainable and responsible agriculture for both nature and humans, aimed to promote sustainable food production and supply with agroecological transition approach to achieve

nutrition outcome with sustainable healthy diets, reducing food lost and food waste in value chain and to review food environment policies while protecting our environment and promoting inclusive, low-emission development.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The 2025 Annual Meeting convened by ICRAF, the Transformative Partnership Platform on Agroecology, the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development and the Agroecology and Safe Food System Transitions, brings together policy makers, researchers, experts from over the world. We are here not only to learn from each other, to share knowledge and success stories - but also to build a collective understanding of how to promote the transition to agroecology and to scale up the good practices. Achieving this will require science and research, strong evident-based techniques, capacity building, experiences and knowledge sharing, innovative finance mechanisms and involvement of private sector to support this transformation.

On this occasion, I would like to thank the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) in Viet Nam, the Transformative Partnership Platform on Agroecology (Agroecology TPP), the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA) and the Agroecology and Safe Food System Transitions (ASSET) has organized this important event in Ha Noi, Viet Nam.

I would also like to thank the international community and donors, research institutions, non-governmental organizations, businesses and all of you here for the valuable supports to the development of agriculture and rural areas in Viet Nam over the past years and we look forward to your continued collaboration and support in the future to implement our National Action Plan for Food System Transformation.

Besides, Viet Nam is also willing to share our experiences and cooperate with other countries in agricultural and rural development, especially through the South-South cooperation programme and tripartite cooperation in agriculture.

Let this be a week not only for learning - but also for deeper collaboration and shared action.

I wish you a productive conference, good health and have a pleasant time in Ha Noi.

Thank you for your kind attention!