



Information Notes

The 5th UN-REDD Regional Lessons Learned Workshop on Forest Monitoring Systems and Reference Levels for REDD+, 20-22 October 2014, Hanoi, Viet Nam.

Venue and Accommodation

The workshop will be held at [Sheraton Hanoi Hotel](#). Accommodation for all participants has been arranged at the workshop venue – Sheraton Hanoi Hotel, according to the participants' flight schedule. Daily Buffet Breakfast and complimentary high speed broadband or WIFI internet in room are provided. Sheraton Hotel is located in the city center of Hanoi, inside the diplomatic and financial district and close to main tourist attractions, entertainment and shopping areas: Most ministries and embassies are located within 0.5 km distance.

Hotel Contact Person: Ms. Vu Van Khanh
Phone: +84 (4) 3719 9000 Ext: 7303
Email: khanh.vu@sheraton.com
Address: K5 Nghi Tam, 11 Xuan Dieu Road, Tay Ho District, Hanoi

Transportation from/to airport

We are arranging group airport pickups and drop-offs in Hanoi based on flight arrival and departure times that we have been informed about. After your arrival, please look for the sign that displays the FAO logo, the workshop title, and the name of the hotel and wait there.

The total distance from Hanoi Airport to the city centre is 45km which will take roughly 40 minutes one way. Sometimes it takes longer than that due to the traffic jam at rush hours. Please plan more time for departure from Hanoi if you have flight at rush hours (morning: 7h00 – 8h30; Afternoon: 17h00 – 19h30)

There are taxis available at the airport but sponsored participants are highly recommended to use the transfer which will be arranged by Host Country and because we are providing transport we are not able to reimburse taxi fares.

Visa obtain procedure (upon arrival)

Participants are responsible for their own passport and to check Visa requirements. Please refer to the list of exemption of entry visa to Viet Nam attached with this information note. If your country is not in the list of exempt countries, then you need to obtain visa upon arrival, a visa upon arrival authorization letter has been prepared for you by the organizer and you will receive it shortly. **You need to print out the letter and bring it to the immigration department at the airport with two photos and to ask for a visa sticker and stamp.** **[IMPORTANT: Participants requiring a Visa have to pay a US\$25 Visa FEE and this should be in US\$ dollars, other currencies are often not accepted (no Vietnamese Dong).**

Allowances:

Standard expenses for participants funded by the organizers will be covered including round trip air ticket, accommodation (4 nights), meals, en route terminals and incidentals according to FAO regulations. For the participants who do not request to collect the DSA at FAO country offices, the DSA will be available to collect at the meeting venue. Please bring your passport or identification document to collect per diem. We will provide partial per diem for all workshop days, and your arrival or departure day, depending on your itinerary. Please note that since breakfast, lunch/refreshments and one dinner are provided during the meeting, the per diem will be reduced accordingly. **Participants are responsible for any other purchases from the hotel (laundry, telephone, bar drinks, minibar etc).**

Cimate in Hanoi

October is the autumn time in Hanoi and the weather is pretty cool with temperature ranging from 25 to 32 degree Celsius with some possible sudden rains. You are suggested to bring umbrella, warm clothes and shoes.

Vietnam Currency

The official Vietnamese Currency is Vietnam Dong (VND). The approximate exchange rate of Vietnam Dong to US Dollars is about VND 21,000-22.000 to US\$1. Thanks to its low value compared to other major currency, travelling to Vietnam is quite affordable. It might take some time to orient yourself with the large number of 0s that you might never have seen before.

Credit cards and debit cards are not yet popular in Vietnam and do not expect those cards to be accepted in grocery stores and pharmacies. That leaves cash as the main exchange medium on a daily basis. There is no coin in operation nor any vending machines operated with coins.

Electricity supply and plugs

In Vietnam the standard voltage is 220 V. The standard frequency is 50 Hz. Please bring a suitable adapter depending on the voltage, frequency and power plugs in the country you live in. In Vietnam the power sockets used are of types below:

**Please bring your own laptop if you have one**

We encourage participants to bring laptops to do the Evaluation forms and some questions online and also reduce paper usage. If you don't have a laptop we can arrange to share.

Workshop language:

The workshop will be held in English.

In an emergency, you can contact:

Flights: alma.saldana@undp.org , Tel: 00 (+52) (33) 3777 7000 ext. 8053

Organization: FAO Vietnam Office, FAO-VN@fao.org, Tel: +84-4-39424208

Hotel Contact Person: Ms. Vu Van Khanh, Phone:+84 (4) 3719 9000 Ext: 7303

Email: khanh.vu@sheraton.com

THE FACTS ABOUT VIETNAM

CAPITAL	Hanoi	
AREA	329,566sq km	
POPULATION	87.62 million	
LANGUAGE	Vietnamese, English, French	
CURRENCY	Dong ~ 21.000VND/USD	
TIME	GMT +7	
TELEPHONE CODES	00 84	
ELECTRICITY	220V	

Public holidays: New Year's Day (1 Jan); Vietnamese New Year (Jan, three days, though increasingly offices tend to close down for a full week); Founding of the Vietnamese Communist Party (Feb 3); Liberation of Saigon, 1975 (April 30); International Labour Day (May 1); Birthday of Ho Chi Minh (May 19); Birthday of Buddha (eighth day of the fourth moon in June); National Day (2 Sept); Christmas (Dec 25).

Good buys: The specialities to pick up here are embroideries, threadwork, silk, sandalwood and stone carvings.

Local dishes: The staple of Vietnamese meals is rice, with noodles a popular alternative at breakfast or as a snack. Typically rice will be accompanied by a fish or meat dish, a vegetable dish or soup, followed by a green tea digestive. Seafood and fish are favoured throughout the country, either fresh or dried. The most commonly used flavourings are shallots, coriander and lemon grass, though ginger, saffron, mint, anise and a basil-type herb also feature strongly, and coconut milk gives some southern dishes a distinctive richness. The most famous Vietnamese dish has to be spring rolls, variously known as cha gio, cha nem, nem ran or just plain nem. Another dish you'll find throughout Vietnam is pho, a noodle soup eaten at any time of day but primarily at breakfast.

Good reading: Vietnam: A History by Stanley Kurnow is a readable account of Vietnam's history. Dispatches by Michael Herr takes a look at the Vietnam War through the eyes of an American correspondent. Vietnamerica by Thomas Bass brings the Vietnam War home to America in a more poignant and personal form, following the fortunes of the children fathered by American soldiers in Vietnam. The Quiet America by Graham Greene is set during the last days

of French rule and is probably the most famous Western work of fiction on Vietnam. The Lover by Marguerite Duras provides a French perspective on colonial life in Vietnam.

DISCOVER HANOI'S DIFFERENT AREAS AROUND HO CHI MINH'S MAUSOLEUM

Most of Hanoi's cultural and historical monuments are found in the district immediately west of the Old Quarter, where the Ly Kings established their Imperial City in the eleventh century. The venerable Temple of Literature - Hanoi's most revered temple complex - and the picturesque One Pillar Pagoda, which is often used as a symbol of Hanoi, are all that remains of The Ly dynasty kings' palaces of the 11th-century.

CITY CENTRE

Hanoi city centre is a compact area bordered by the Red River in the east and by the rail line to the north and west. Its present-day central hub and most obvious point of reference is Hoan Kiem Lake, which lies between the cramped yet attractive Old Quarter in the north and the tree-lined boulevards of the French Quarter, arranged in a rough grid system, to the south. West of this central district are some of Hanoi's most impressive monuments which occupy the open spaces of the former Imperial City, grouped around Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum on Ba Dinh Square and extending south to the ancient walled gardens of the Temple of Literature.

HOAN KIEM LAKE

A good way to get bearings in Hanoi is to make a quick circuit of Hoan Kiem Lake, a pleasant 30-minute walk, which is stunning in June and July when the flame trees flower.

THE FRENCH QUARTER

After the hectic streets of the Old Quarter (see below), the grand boulevards and wide pavements of Hanoi's French Quarter to the south and east of Hoan Kiem Lake are welcome diversions. It is the architecture here that is the highlight. In the process of building their capital, the French destroyed many of the ancient Vietnamese monuments and replaced them with elegant, Parisian-style buildings such as the stately Opera House, complete with grey-slate tiles imported from France. It was regarded as the jewel in the crown of French Hanoi until 1945 when the Viet Minh proclaimed the August Revolution from its balcony. Trang Tien, the main artery of the French Quarter, is still a busy shopping street where you'll find bookshops and art galleries as well as cafés and hotels.

THE OLD QUARTER

Hanoi is the only city in Vietnam to retain its ancient merchants' quarter, a congested square kilometer which was closed behind massive ramparts and heavy wooden gates until well into the 19th century. There are few individual sights in the area; the best approach is to explore the back lanes, taking in the colourful stalls and street vendors

THE OPERA HOUSE

1 Trang Tien Street, Hanoi (00 84 4 9330 113; www.cinet.gov.vn). Built by the French in 1901-1911, the Hanoi Opera House is a beautiful architectural monument, inspired by Palais Garnier - the less famous of Paris' opera houses.

THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE

Hung Vuong Street and Hoang Van Thu Street, Hanoi. The Presidential Palace was built in 1901 as the humble abode of the Governor-General of Indochina, all sweeping stairways, louvered shutters and ornate wrought-iron gates of the belle époque and these days is used to receive visiting heads of state.

THE TEMPLE OF LITERATURE

Dong Da District, Hanoi. Founded in 1070 as a Confucian temple, the Temple of Literature soon became the country's first university, too. Set a day off to discover its extraordinary beauty and many courtyards.

MUSEUMS

HO CHI MINH MUSEUM

7 Le Loi, Hanoi. Ho Chi Minh's museum was built with Soviet aid and inaugurated on 19 May 1990, the hundredth anniversary of Ho's birth. The Museum celebrates his life and the central role he played in the nation's history. Open Tue-Sun, 1.30pm-4pm.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF VIETNAMESE HISTORY

1 Trang Tien Street, Hanoi (00 84 4 825 3518). Located in a former French consulate, the National Museum of Vietnamese History has a good collection of historical artefacts, as well as explanations of the often violent Vietnamese history. Ask your hotel concierge to recommend a good English-speaking guide to take you through.

Vietnam Museum of Ethnology

The Vietnam Museum of Ethnology is a valuable centre for the exhibition and the preservation of cultural heritages of the 54 ethnic groups in Vietnam. The Museum is located in a large open area on Nguyen Van Huyen Street, Cau Giay District, about 8 km from the city centre. Open Tue-Sun, 8.30am – 17.30 pm

Emergency Contacts

In case you need some more information or assistance, please contact:
Ms. Nguyen Thi Thu Thuy (Thuy, FAO), contact number: +84 977276686
Ms. Nghiem Phuong Thuy (Thuy, DOSTIC), contact number: +84 912062504

Welcome to Vietnam, and enjoy Hanoi!