

Ports wait for ships, not ships wait for ports

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Investment in the seaports of Vietnam should shift from width to depth, and associate forecasts by transport routes and strategic goods to structure fleets. Investment point of view should be consistently determined that ports wait for ships, not ships wait for ports...



Need to socialize better and call for the economic sector to invest in the seaport system

Marine forecasting is still weak

According to the Vietnam Maritime Administration, the planning adjustment based on Maritime of the 3 plans approved by the Prime Minister includes: Shipping Planning by 2020; Vietnamese seaport Development Planning by 2020 and Vietnamese Shipbuilding industry Development Planning. For shipping, the transport structure of Vietnam is inappropriate and the freight fleet is still weak. For domestic transportation which was previously planned and accounted for 100% now has the market share of only 75% - 80%. Import and export transportation planning must be from 27% - 30%, but has only accounted for less than 10%. Therefore, the Vietnam Maritime Administration proposed to review and adjust shipping, especially import and export of goods in the future is very important.

For the fleets, for the past years have not had much change in quality and haven't met the provisions of international conventions on maritime and so is still retained abroad. In addition, the surplus of small and independent vessels still exists. Therefore, adjusting shipping transportation and detailed fleet structure by increasing the proportion of container fleets and specialized vessels should be thoroughly researched.

For port planning, also according to the Vietnam Maritime Administration, in the coming years, need to have comprehensive study and to modernize; integrate quickly, as well as rationally develop ports and ensure consistency throughout the system. Along with that, developing seaports must associate with environmental protection and national security, mobilization of resources, enhancement of socialization to synchronize investment in ports and connecting infrastructures. The target by 2015, seaports of Vietnam will have throughput from 500 – 600 million tons of cargo/year. By 2020 the amount of cargo through the ports will increase from 900 – 1,100 million tons/year and by 2030 the figure will be from 1,600 – 2,100 million tons/year.

Relating to the above issues, according to Mr. Khuat Viet Hung, Deputy Director of Transport (MOT), the forecast in the field of Maritime is still weak in the past years, especially in shipping. The Maritime Planning Authorities must clearly direct transport routes to focus on development priorities in the future. In addition, must also determine the correct port development trend of the world; the relationship between the ports of Vietnam and the region's port, only then will we be able to identify the strategic objectives of Vietnam's Maritime in the future.

Former Deputy Minister of Transport Mr. Tran Doan Tho, also said that, due to the impact of global economic downturn, forecasting is very difficult, many developed countries also have inaccurate Maritime forecast. Therefore, in the coming years, Vietnam should not only focus on the general forecast but also increase forecast along transport route and strategic goods, as well as associate with restructuring fleets.

Shift investment from width to depth

At the meeting to review the implementation of the Vietnam Maritime Development Plan in the framework of adjusting the Transport Development Strategy by 2020, with the vision of 2030 on 27/11, the Minister of Transport Mr. Dinh La Thang posed many strategic questions and enquired that the Vietnam Maritime Administration and the authorities of the Ministry of Transport have analysis, evaluation and accurate answers related to this important field. Including the Maritime Planning in the past years; what has been done, what hasn't been done, how to adjust them and why? The Maritime forecasts are based on where and what's the actual result of the implementation? Clarify if seaport planning in the past years were rampant, fragmented and wasteful?

On the basis of the opinions of the agency, the functional unit of the Ministry of Transport, the Minister also enquired that the Vietnam Maritime Administration clearly indentify the contents, objects that need to be adjusted in the planning, and clearly state where the port, harbor and wharfs are to avoid misunderstanding in the development of seaports in Vietnam. "Investment point of view for the coming years is to improve the quality of service, ports wait for ships, not ships wait for ports, shift port investment from width to depth, associate forecasts by transport routes and goods to restructure the fleet, combine sea and river transport as well as re-adjust the relocation of the port group of Ho Chi Minh City; must specify that investment in port must be connected with the routes to the port. In the coming years, must promote capitalization, socialization and encourage the prioritization of all economic sectors to invest in ports to create synchronous and efficient operation." – The Minister Mr. Dinh La Thang emphasized.

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(Translated by Portcoast)