

## Kicking off the improvement project of navigational channel to the Bassac river

By TTO, 27 Dec 2009

TTO - On early December 27th 2009, the Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung has officially launched the construction commencement of improvement project of navigational channel to the Bassac river in Duyen Hai district, Tra Vinh province.

At the ground-breaking ceremony, Nguyen Tan Dung Prime Minister highlights the improvement project of navigational channel to the Bassac river via Quan Chanh Bo channel is a national focal project aiming the construction of navigational channel which can allow 20.000 ton vessels to navigate at the port on the Bassac river. Also, the project will, as said by the Prime Minister, play a significantly important role in the socio-economic development of not only the Mekong Delta but the whole country as well.

According to Mr. Nguyen Thai Binh, Tra Vinh Province Committee Secretary, Quan Chanh Bo channel project is opening a sharply bright opportunity to draw the foreign investment and promote the socio-economic growth of the Delta.



*Model of breakwaters at the estuary – Photo: Phuong Nguyen*

Upon the completion, vessels of 20.000 tons will find it easy to transport cargos at the ports belonging to port complex No 6. As a result, a new chance for development will be open to the Mekong Delta; cargos will be directly exported to foreign countries without any transit at the ports outside the area, decreasing the transportation pressure by road and fostering cargo competitiveness and profits for enterprises and local people.



*Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung launching the construction commencement –  
Photo: Phuong Nguyen*

As said by the Ministry of Transport, the project is inclusive of main work items: one-way channel of 40 km long, turning basin, breakwater, bank protection dike, ferry, 500 ton barge berth, jetty, embankment, navigation AIDS and marine information equipment, etc.

The navigational channel comprises a river channel of 6 km long, Quan Chanh Bo channel section of 19 km long, Bypass canal section of 9 km long and sea channel section of 6 km long. The whole project is implemented in Duyen Hai and Tra Cu districts, Tra Vinh province.

In order to ensure the stability during the operation, 30-km-long bank protection dike is to be constructed upon the project. Also, two breakwaters are to be constructed with a length of over 25 km each. The shaping of these two breakwaters will help shelter from wave and contribute preventing from mud/silt at the channel.

According to Mr Pham Anh Tuan, the Project Manager of Portcoast Consultant Corporation (Portcoast), the project is prepared with an area of nearly 1.500 hectares in Duyen Hai and Tra Cu districts. The whole dredging volume for shaping a new channel and improving the existing channels reaches about 28 million m<sup>3</sup>. The total investment capital wins more than VND 5 trillion. The project is scheduled to come into operation by end 2011, satisfying the throughput capacity of around 22 million tons/year and serving cargo export/import for the Mekong Delta.

As to implement the project, an area of more than 1.000 hectares of nearly 1.400 households has been withdrawn. The Project Management Board has applied the policy on the compensation, land assistance, labor "fruit" and thorough support for settlement. Presently, more than 90 % of households have received the compensation with a total of nearly VND 382 billion and 966 households have been taken into consideration for the settlement.

According to the Ministry of Transport, the project is capitalized from the Government bond in purpose of unblocking cargos of the Mekong Delta, of which 70-80% are shouldered on Ho Chi Minh city port complex only. This has "swallowed" \$180/container and \$7-10/ton of transportation cost. As thus, the shaping of

Quan Chanh Bo channel to the Bassac river will create favorable conditions in transporting cargos of the Mekong Delta and foster agricultural-aquatic product and seafood competitiveness for the whole area.

**The dredging of Quan Chanh Bo channel** and smoothing of navigational channel for large vessels to navigate at 13 ports on the Bassac river will significantly promote the Delta's socio-economy growth. Concretely:

- Economizing the cost and price thanks to the direct export/import and fostering Vietnam's agricultural-aquatic product and seafood competitiveness in the world market;
- Creating favorable conditions in developing and putting up the income and employment in maritime, transportation, commercial fields and relevant services;
- Increasing customs duties, tolls and a series of taxes and levies for local budget;
- Taking advantage of and enhancing resource values in land and labor to be put into use as to be in service of the need of socio-economic development of the whole area.

Presently, the arising cost and time as a result of the use of ports in Ho Chi Minh city as to import/export cargos for the Delta are quite high. The tendency and pressure are increasing due to the fact that the rate of direct export/import at the ports at the Mekong Delta accounts for about 32% of cargo throughput. Each vessel navigating at the port can handle an average of nearly 3.800 tons while each vessel navigating at port complex No 5 can shoulder 9.000 tons on average.

As thus, if Dinh An channel or Quan Chanh Bo channel is able to accommodate vessels of up-to 10.000 tons each day, Can Tho port and ports on the channel are capable of initially competing with the ports in Ho Chi Minh city area.

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(Translated by Portcoast)