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Viet Nam urged to establish green finance criteria to accelerate green growth

At a recent forum on green finance held in Ha Noi, experts emphasized the urgent need for Viet Nam to develop a comprehensive set of green finance criteria to mobilize capital and support its green growth agenda. Associate Professor Dr. Bui Huu Toan, Chairman of the Banking Academy of Vietnam, highlighted the country's ambitious goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050, which requires an estimated US\$360 billion in funding. The banking sector plays a vital role in channeling funds, but current mechanisms and definitions of green projects remain unclear.

Nguyen Tuan Quang from the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment stressed that clean energy adoption is essential for Viet Nam's global competitiveness. However, transitioning from fossil fuels to green energy demands significant capital, advanced technology, and a legal framework to support businesses in accessing green finance.

To address these challenges, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has submitted a proposal for a green finance criteria set, covering seven key areas. This would allow banks and investors to assess projects and businesses more effectively.

To Tran Hoa of the State Securities Commission pointed out that while Viet Nam has begun issuing green bonds, the volume remains modest, and there is still no domestic green credit standard. A stronger legal foundation and clearer guidelines are essential to unlock international green capital.

Experts agree that coordinated efforts, regulatory reform, and global cooperation are crucial for Viet Nam to access green finance and meet its climate commitments. VNS



Vietnam's maritime and inland waterway transport continue strong momentum in early 2025

Vietnam's maritime and inland waterway sectors have maintained solid growth during the first four months of 2025, reflecting a strong rebound in trade and logistics activity. According to the Vietnam Maritime and Waterway Administration (VIMAWA), total cargo throughput at seaports reached 370.5 million tonnes—an 11% increase year-on-year.

Container cargo continues to be the main growth driver, hitting 10.52 million TEUs, also up 11%. Imports and exports both surged by 14%, reaching 3.29 million and 3.4 million TEUs, respectively. Domestic container volume rose 6% to 3.82 million TEUs, indicating growing internal trade flows.

By cargo structure, exports accounted for 71 million tonnes (up 3%), imports 95.3 million tonnes (up 9%), and domestic cargo 202.9 million tonnes (up 14%). Transit cargo stood at 1.44 million tonnes.

Key logistics hubs such as Ho Chi Minh City, Vung Tau, and Hai Phong posted steady gains. Several provinces showed double-digit growth—Quang Ngai (33.6%), Can Tho (25%), and Dong Nai (19%). However, some areas like Da Nang (-5.9%) and Hue recorded declines, suggesting regional disparities in trade recovery.

Inland waterways also played a vital role. Northern ports handled nearly 32 million tonnes (up 33%), while the southern region posted a 10% rise in volume and a 46% spike in containers. In contrast, central ports struggled with an 8% drop in cargo and a sharp 78% fall in container volume.

VIMAWA forecasts cargo through ports to hit 464 million tonnes by end-May—up 13% year-on-year—with domestic cargo expected to jump 21% to 254 million tonnes. Container throughput is projected to reach 13.23 million TEUs, also up 13%. VNS

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Vietnam eyes fairer tax policy for cross-border E-commerce

Vietnam is reviewing its tax policy for cross-border e-commerce as the sector grows rapidly. The Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) has proposed removing the current import tax exemption for low-value orders – a move aimed at leveling the playing field for domestic businesses.

Currently, imported goods valued at under VND 1 million (about US\$40) are exempt from import duties. This policy was designed to minimize administrative costs, but it no longer reflects market dynamics. In 2023, over 324 million imported items were sold on Shopee Vietnam, with an average product value of just USD 1.5 – meaning most of these goods paid no import tax.

Meanwhile, Vietnamese manufacturers must pay taxes on raw materials, creating an imbalance. VCCI argues this gives foreign goods an unfair advantage and stifles local production.

To improve fairness while maintaining efficiency, VCCI recommends simplifying tax procedures. One suggestion is grouping products into broad “goods baskets” – such as clothing, electronics, or household items – each assigned a fixed tax rate. This model, successfully used in countries like Canada, would reduce reliance on complex HS code classifications and speed up customs clearance.

A revised tax policy would align Vietnam’s e-commerce regulations with global best practices, ensuring fair competition and sustainable market growth.

For investors and cross-border sellers, upcoming regulatory changes signal the need to reassess pricing strategies, compliance processes, and local partnerships in one of Southeast Asia’s fastest-growing digital economies. VNS/VNA



US based- Excelerate energy eyes Vietnam as ASEAN's future LNG hub

U.S.-based Excelerate Energy has proposed forming a joint venture with a Vietnamese partner to accelerate Vietnam's transformation into a regional liquefied natural gas (LNG) distribution center, strengthening its role in ASEAN's energy supply chain.

The proposal was discussed during a meeting between Vietnam's Minister of Industry and Trade Nguyen Hong Dien and Excelerate leaders on May 20 in the U.S. The company, which specializes in integrated LNG solutions—including floating storage and regasification units (FSRUs), infrastructure development, and LNG supply—has expressed strong interest in Vietnam's energy transition agenda.

Excelerate's initiative builds on its cooperation agreement with PV GAS signed in March 2025, which aligns with Vietnam's strategy to diversify U.S. energy imports and balance bilateral trade. Minister Dien welcomed the partnership and emphasized the importance of LNG in Power Development Plan VIII, which prioritizes domestic electricity generation and scaled LNG importation.

With a long coastline ideal for specialized LNG terminals, Vietnam is uniquely positioned to serve as an energy gateway for Southeast Asia. Excelerate proposed three pillars for collaboration: investing in LNG infrastructure, ensuring stable LNG supply, and establishing joint ventures with local partners.

To support this goal, Vietnam is considering lowering LNG import tariffs and offering additional investment incentives, although the absence of a U.S.-Vietnam free trade agreement still limits competitiveness.

Excelerate Vice President Peter Haas affirmed the firm's readiness to expand in Vietnam and help develop LNG power and distribution projects. The company opened a representative office in Vietnam in 2021 to support its long-term commitment to the market. VIR



Japanese retailers expand strongly in Vietnam's booming consumer market

Vietnam's fast-growing consumer market is becoming a magnet for major Japanese retailers such as AEON, Uniqlo, Takashimaya, and Muji, driven by rising incomes, a young population, and rapid urbanization.

AEON is leading the expansion wave, with multiple large-scale projects underway. The group is planning a new shopping mall in Bac Giang covering nearly 7.7 hectares with an investment of over USD 156 million. It is also progressing with malls in Can Tho (8.6 hectares, around USD 216 million) and Hai Duong (3.5 hectares, USD 46.8 million). Recent openings in Hue and Hanoi bring AEON's total number of malls in Vietnam to nine. Beyond retail, AEON Entertainment is entering Vietnam's cinema industry, planning 21 locations by 2030—its first venture outside Japan—with the first large complex covering 5,000 square meters. The company expects to break even within three years.

Luxury retailer Takashimaya is intensifying its focus on Vietnam, aiming for the market to contribute 5–10% of its total profits. It plans to optimize existing real estate and expand to Hanoi by 2027, while also branching into education through local partnerships.

Fashion brand Uniqlo has rapidly scaled its presence since 2019, now with 29 stores nationwide. Muji, another popular Japanese brand, currently operates 16 outlets and continues to grow, with new stores opening in major malls.

According to experts from Avison Young, Vietnam's demographic trends and economic momentum make it one of Southeast Asia's most attractive retail markets. Japanese firms are positioning themselves early to capture long-term growth as domestic consumption accelerates. VOV



Livzon secures controlling stake in Imexpharm in landmark Vietnam pharma deal

On May 22, Livzon Pharmaceutical Group, through its Singapore-based subsidiary Lian SGP Holding Pte. Ltd., announced the acquisition of a 64.81% stake in Imexpharm Corporation, marking one of the most significant M&A transactions in Vietnam's pharmaceutical industry in recent years.

The shares were acquired from SK Investment Vina III Pte. Ltd. (a unit of South Korea's SK Group), Sunrise Kim Investment JSC, and KBA Investment JSC. The deal was structured based on arm's length negotiations and valued according to Imexpharm's 30-day average market capitalisation, which stood at approximately \$269 million as of May 21 on the Ho Chi Minh Stock Exchange. This translates to a per-share purchase price of VND57,300 (\$2.21).

Following the transaction, Livzon becomes the controlling shareholder of Imexpharm, which will now operate as a subsidiary and be consolidated into the financial accounts of the Chinese pharmaceutical group.

This strategic move underscores Livzon's commitment to international expansion and strengthens its presence in Southeast Asia. The acquisition of Imexpharm—an established Vietnamese pharmaceutical manufacturer—provides Livzon with a robust local platform to accelerate its globalisation strategy and enhance long-term growth prospects in emerging markets. VIR

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