
PLAN OF PERSONAL COMMITMENT AND ACTION

In the short term, I would like to develop a part of my dissertation research into a video documentary for the Vietnamese public on environmentalism in Vietnam. The documentary would be based primarily on the stories I will garner from Vietnam's original environmental advocates and activists, who are all now mostly in their 70s and 80s and whose individual narratives of dedication to the environmental cause have yet to be captured in a durable form. In a country where environmental policy tends to be dominated by international actors, this documentary would be extremely important to build a broader awareness among the Vietnamese public about their own histories of environmentalism and urge them to continue with and build an environmental movement that make sense to them culturally, historically and geographically. The documentary would also generate a useful case study of how the forces of the global environmental movement take shape in a particular national context, particularly in a post-colonial and poor but rapidly developing country like Vietnam. My hope would be to develop this video documentary in collaboration with my colleagues at Centre for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies in the Vietnam National University, who sponsor my current research and who have also been engaged in environmental advocacy and research in Vietnam for decades.

In the medium and long term, I would like to help build and support culturally and historically grounded environmental movements in Vietnam and Southeast Asia, as well as build a career in academic and policy research to support international organizations in developing socially progressive environmental policies and programs. In Vietnam, I could begin with activities, such as building networks among national and international civil society organizations working on the environment, organize a regular forum for public discussion and political organizing around state policies that affect the environment, and becoming more involved in university training and curriculum development for socially progressive environmental policy through my contacts at the Vietnam National University and the Institute for Environment and Sustainable Development at the Vietnamese Association for Social Sciences. Gradually, I would hope to connect and expand these networks with regional and international networks of environmental leaders and communities, as are being developed by the Global Environmental Governance Forum and Project.
