



# Current status of waste and plastic scrap management in Vietnam



**Vietnam Environment Administration (VEA)  
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE)**

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## I. Legal framework

**Some related terminology of waste and scrap management**

- ❖ **Vietnam differentiates between wastes and scraps**
  - **Waste is a substance in solid, liquid, gaseous or other forms that is discharged from production, business, service, daily life or other activities.**
  - **Scrap is a material that is recovered, classified and selected from materials and products discarded in the process of production, business, service or consumption to use as materials for another production.**
  - **Hazardous waste (HW) is waste contained toxic, radioactive, infectious, flammable, explosive, corrosive, toxic or other hazardous properties.**

# 1. The Law on Environmental Protection 2020

- ❖ **Clause 6 Article 6: It is strictly forbidden to import, temporarily import, re-export or transit waste from abroad in any form.**
- ❖ **Article 70: Organizations and individuals do not import:**
  - **Used machinery, equipment and vehicles for demolition (except used ships)**
  - **Machinery, equipment, vehicles, goods, materials and scraps contaminated with radiation, disease-causing microbes and other toxins have not been cleaned or cannot be cleaned.**

**The import and demolition of used ships have to meet environmental technical regulation.**

# 1. The Law on Environmental Protection 2020

- ❖ **Article 71: Environmental protection in importing scrap from abroad**
  - 1. Scrap imported from abroad into Vietnam have to satisfy environmental technical regulations and be on the list of imported scrap promulgated by the Prime Minister.**
  - 2. Organizations and individuals may only import scrap from abroad as materials for their production facilities and have to satisfy the following requirements for environmental protection:**
    - a) Production facilities with technology and equipment for recycling and reuse, warehouses and yards meet to scrap collection and environmental protection; have a plan to deal with accompanying impurities;**
    - b) Having an environmental permit;**
    - c) Paying a deposit of environmental protection before the time that the scrap is unloaded at the port in the case of import through a border gate, or before the time of scrap import into Vietnam for the other cases;**
    - d) There is a written commitment on the re-export or treatment of scrap if the imported scrap does not meet the requirements for environmental protection.**

# 1. The Law on Environmental Protection 2020

- ❖ The Law sets a new management regime for solid wastes in order to gradually form a circular economy, including application of extended producer responsibility (EPR) policy approach to the recovery and recycling of products and packaging (Article 54); payment for service charges for collection, transportation and treatment of domestic solid wastes based on the volume of sorted wastes (Article 79); and self-recycling, treatment, co-treatment of, or recovery of energy from, normal industrial solid wastes (Article 82).
- ❖ The article 54 on responsibility of producers and importers to recycle products and packaging serve as critical grounds for full application of EPR policy approach under which entities that produce and import recyclable products and packaging must recycle such products and packaging according to compulsory ratios and specifications. These entities may organize by themselves the recycling or make financial contributions to the Vietnam Environment Protection Fund to support the recycling.

## **2. Decree No. 69/2018/ND-CP on guidelines for the Law on Foreign Trade Management**

- The list of used goods are banned from export and import (Annex I): electronics, refrigeration, household electrical goods, information technology products, ...**
- The list of used goods are banned from trading in temporary import for re-export and border-gate transfer (Annex VI); electric battery/lead-acid batteries,...**
- The trading list of used goods in temporary import for re-export (Annex IX); electric fans, air conditioners, refrigerators, freezers/refrigeration units, dishwashers, washing machines, personal computers, vacuum cleaners, phones, speakers, cameras... Trading companies have to pay a deposit of 7 billion VN dong to implement the temporary import for re-export.**

### **3. Decree No.38/2015/ND-CP of the Government on the management of wastes and scraps**

#### **Core principles for waste management:**

- Prevent and minimize waste generation at sources**
- Encourage the socialization of collection, transportation, reuse, recycling, waste treatment and energy recovery from waste**
- Encourage the application of waste treatment technologies in an environmentally friendly manner**
- Organizations and individuals that generate waste have to pay charges and service charges for activities of collecting, transporting and disposing of waste**



## **4. Circular No. 36/2015/TT-BTNMT on HW management**

- ❖ **The definition and classification of HW shall comply with the regulations of Annex 1 (the HW list included e-waste) of this Circular and National Technical regulation QCVN 07:2009/BTNMT on HW thresholds.**
- ❖ **The permit conditions and guiding procedure for the registered book of HW generator and the permit of HW treatment (included activities of HW transportation and disposal).**
- ❖ **Guiding the use of HW manifest**
- ❖ **Technical requirements for HW management:**
  - Dedicated packaging;**
  - HW storage equipments/storage area;**
  - Means of HW transport;**
  - HW treatment facilities.**

#### **4. Circular No.36/2015/TT-BTNMT (cont.)**

- ❖ **Registration of exporting hazardous waste: Article 22 and Appendix 8A of Circular No 36 and The Basel Convention.**
- ❖ **The export registration can be done for every single trip or many trips per year. Hazardous waste generator/exporter coordinates with relevant parties applying the registration to VEA.**

#### **5. Circular No. 11/2018/TT-BTTTT on detailed list of used information technology products prohibited from import with their HS codes**

- **This is an important legal basis to prevent the importing of UEEE.**
- **List of used information technology appliances banned from import (Appendix): used printers, computers, mobiphones, LCD/CRT screens...**

## **6. Decision No.18/2019/QĐ-TTg of The Prime Minister on import of used machinery, equipment and technological lines**

- ❖ Device age should not exceed 10 years. For machinery and equipment in some specific fields, the age of the equipment is specified in Appendix I of this Decision (up to 10 or 20 years).**
- ❖ Manufacturing according to the following standards:**
  - In accordance with regulations of national technical regulations (QCVN) on safety, energy saving and environmental protection;**
  - In the absence of QCVN related to imported machinery and equipment, imported machinery and equipment must be manufactured in accordance with the technical specifications of Vietnam's national standards (TCVN) or standards. national standard of one of G7 countries, Korea on safety, energy saving and environmental protection.**

## 7. Decision No. 28/2020/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister promulgates the list of import scrap for using as production materials

- The list includes only 23 scraps (a decrease of 13 scraps in comparison to expired Decision No. 73/2014/QĐ-TTg),
- Some types of plastic scraps can be imported

Types of plastic scrap	HS code		
Polime Etylen (PE)	3915	10	10
Polime Etylen (PE)	3015	10	90
Polime styren (PS)	3915	20	90
Polime Vinyl Clorua (PVC)	3915	20	20
Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET); Polypropylen (PP); Polycarbonat (PC); Polyamit (PA); Acrylonitrin Butadien Styren (ABS); High Impact Polystyrene (HIPS); Poly Oxy Methylene (POM); Poly Methyl Methacrylate (PMMA); Expanded Polystyrene (EPS); Thermoplastic Polyurethanes (TPU); Ethylene Vinyl Acetate (EVA); Silicon resin is removed from the manufacturing process and has not been used	3915	90	00

## **8. Decree No. 40/2019/ND-CP of the Government on amendments to Decrees on guidelines for the Law on Environment Protection**

**Clause 28-37, Article 3: Amending and supplementing a number of articles of Decree No. 38/2015/ND-CP related to imported scrap**

- Only import scrap for use as production materials for their establishments according to the designed capacity for production. Do not import scrap only for preliminary processing and resale. From January 1, 2025, the establishment using imported scrap as production materials may only import scrap equal to 80% of its design capacity; the remaining scrap must be purchased domestically for use as production materials.**
- Paper scrap is only allowed to be imported as materials for the production of products and goods (excluding commercial recycled pulp).**

## **8. Decree No. 40/2019/ND-CP (cont.)**

**- Plastic scrap may only be imported as materials for the production of products and goods (excluding commercially recycled plastic resins), except for the cases in which the project has been approved with the investment policy, investment certificates and operating production facilities are allowed to import scrap plastic for the production of commercially recycled plastic resins until the end of December 31, 2024.**

## **9. Circular No. 25/2019/TT-BTNMT of the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment promulgates the implementation of a number of articles of the Government's Decree No. 40/2019/ND-CP**

**Article 13-17 focus on inspecting and certifying the eligibility for environmental protection in the import of scrap for using as production materials.**

**10. Directive No.27/2018/CT-TTg dated September 17, 2018 of the Prime Minister on a number of urgent solutions for enhancement of management of scrap import and use of imported scrap for production purpose**

**According to the directive, there is no permission for entrusted units of scrap importing and the certificate of scrap import is only permitted for importing units for direct use as raw production materials when the demand and capacity of scrap utilization are proved.**

**For scrap shipments that do not meet the import regulations, they must be re-exported or disposed.**

**11. Decision No. 35/2019/QĐ-TTg dated December 19, 2019 of the Prime Minister for the Regulation on interdisciplinary coordination in the management of scrap import activities.**

**It provides for the principles, purposes, contents, modes and responsibilities of coordination among the Ministries: Finance, Natural Resources and Environment, Transport, Public Security, Defense, Industry and Trade, Foreign Affairs, Science and Technology and People's Committees of provinces and central cities in state management for the import of scrap from abroad into Vietnam.**



## **12. The related National regulations/standards**

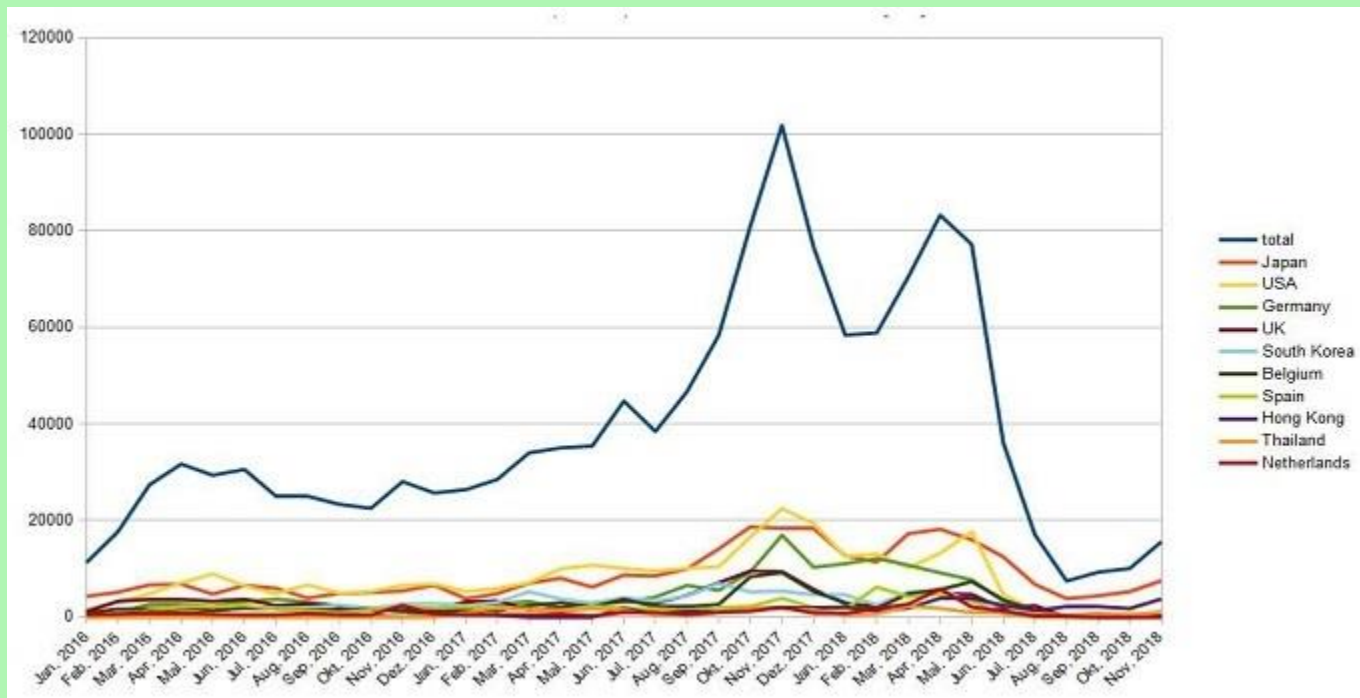
- ❖ National Standard on the classification of normal solid waste TCVN 6705:2009**
- ❖ National Standard on HW classification TCVN 6706:2009**
- ❖ National Standard on HW warning signs TCVN 6707:2009**
- ❖ National Technical regulation on wastewater of the solid waste landfill site QCVN 09:2009/BTNMT**
- ❖ National Technical Regulation on HW thresholds QCVN 07:2009/BTNMT**
- ❖ National Technical Regulation on environment for imported steel scraps QCVN 31:2018/BTNMT**
- ❖ National Technical Regulation on environment for imported plastic scraps QCVN 32:2018/BTNMT**
- ❖ National Technical Regulation on environment for imported paper scraps QCVN 33:2018/BTNMT**
- ❖ National technical regulation on environment for imported glass scraps for production QCVN 65:2018/BTNMT**

## **12. The related National regulations/standards**

- ❖ National technical regulation on environment for imported non-ferrous metal scraps for production QCVN 66:2018/BTNMT**
- ❖ National technical regulation on environment for imported slag from iron or steel industry for production QCVN 67:2018/BTNMT**
- ❖ National Technical Regulation on co-processing of HW in cement kiln QCVN 41:2011/BTNMT**
- ❖ National Technical Regulation on solid healthcare waste incinerator QCVN 02:2012/BTNMT**
- ❖ National Technical Regulation on solid industrial waste incinerator QCVN 30:2012/BTNMT**
- ❖ National Technical Regulation on household waste incinerator QCVN 61-MT:2016/BTNMT**
- ❖ National Technical Regulation on infectious healthcare waste autoclave QCVN 55:2013/BTNMT**
- ❖ National Technical Regulation on waste oil recycling QCVN 56:2013/BTNMT**

## II. Plastic scrap import

Since China banned the import of plastic scrap in 2018, the amount of plastic scrap imports into Vietnam has increased significantly. From January to November 2018, Vietnam imported a total of 443,600 tons of plastic scrap (ranked 3rd in the world in terms of import volume).



*Imports of plastic scraps coming into Vietnam (in tons), showing the top 10 export partners. (Source: Greenpeace/GAIA)*

## II. Plastic scrap import and control activities

From the beginning of 2021 until now, the Basel Convention implementation authority of Vietnam has approved the import of plastic scrap (code B3011) from Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Germany, and Sri Lanka. However, for plastic waste code Y48, no notification has been received from the exporting country.



## **II. Iron and steel scrap import**

**According to statistics of the Ministry of Finance, the amount of iron and steel scrap imported into Vietnam increased from 2020, reaching 6.3 million tons, up 11.4% over the same period in 2019.**

**From the beginning of the year to August 15, 2021, the whole country imported more than 4.3 million tons of iron and steel scrap, up 23.2% in volume over the same period in 2020.**

**Imported iron and steel scrap originates from two main markets, Japan and the United States (accounting for 70%), followed by Australia and Hong Kong (China).**

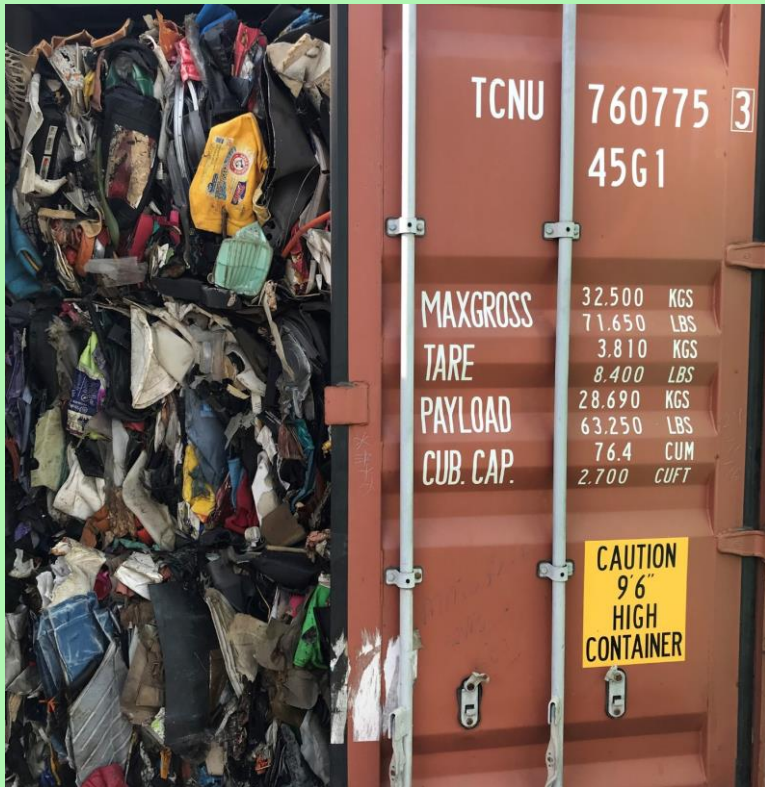
**Currently, iron and steel scrap is allowed to be imported into Vietnam for recycling**

## **II. Scrap import and control activities**

- The General Department of Vietnam Customs reports that in 2020 and 2021, the amount of imported scrap decreases in comparison with the previous years. One of the reasons is the Prime Minister directed many measures to tighten the control of scrap from the exporting country and the time of ship docking. From June 2018 to now, most of the containers left in stock at the ports contained scrap were not eligible for import or were on the banned list. Up to the beginning of November 2020, the number of scrap containers remaining for more than 90 days at seaports is about 3,300 containers. Compared to 2018 (more than ten thousand backlogged containers of scrap), the above quantity has decreased significantly.**
- Based on the report of the Vietnam Maritime Administration, by the end of September 2020, Vietnam still has a backlog of 2,754 containers (mainly imported scrap) concentrated in seaports of Hai Phong and Ho Chi Minh City.**

## II. Plastic scrap import and control activities

Hai Phong Customs checked a container of imported plastic scrap.



## II. Plastic scrap import and control activities

**A shipment of plastic waste was seized by the Customs at the Hai Phong Port.**





### **III. Challenges and difficulties**

- **In 2017, Vietnam officially joined the list of 127 countries that passed the UN Environment Council Resolution of the United Nations Environment Program on plastic waste and marine microplastics.**
- **The Prime Minister has issued Directive 33/CT-TTg dated 20 August, 2020 on strengthening the management, reuse, recycling, treatment and reduction of plastic waste. He instructed ministries, branches and localities to issue directives and plans to reduce and recycle plastic waste no later than October 30; as well as to minimise the use of disposable plastic products, and prioritise the selection of recycled and environmentally friendly products.**
- **The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment was assigned to complete the solid waste management institution in the direction of considering waste and plastic waste as natural resources; promoting the development of circular economic models; as well as researching and setting up technical environmental barriers against products and goods containing micro-plastic particles and plastic bags.**

### **III. Challenges and difficulties**

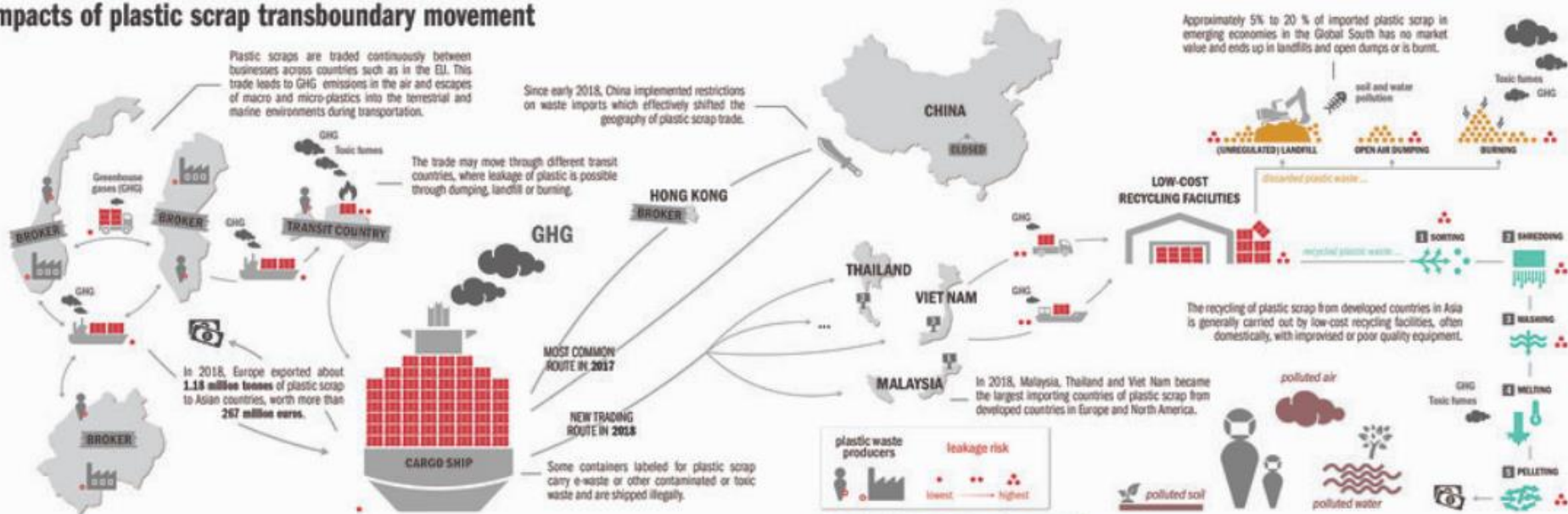
- **Based on the regulation, for ineligible import scrap, the customs authority requires shipping lines to re-export all shipments out of the territory of Vietnam. The General Department of Vietnam Customs found that the re-export of scrap is almost not re-exported to the original exporting country and is expected to be re-exported to a third country. The re-export to a third country is likely to be refused, the shipment may be returned to Vietnam due to different regulations on scrap import.**
- **Currently, Vietnam is finalizing the draft Decree and Circular guiding the implementation of the Law on Environmental Protection 2020, which imposes strict control measures on imported scrap and establishes environmental regulations on imported scraps.**
- **As the other countries in the world, Viet Nam is witnessing a shift from a traditional linear economy to a circular economy where waste - instead of being thrown away, wasted and polluted - will be "revived" in the form of different resources and once again involved in the production. Accordingly, building a circular economy will help to reduce the risk of scarcity of resources in the future.**

# Thank you for your attention!

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## Impacts of plastic scrap transboundary movement



Sources: Bing et al. (2015); Brooks et al. (2018); Ecostat; Gejer et al. (2017); Japan e-Stat; Michida (2011); Statistics Canada; Swiss Statistical Office; US Census Bureau; Verma et al. (2016).

By Lind Westerveld & Patricia Villanueva-Gómez, GRD-Arendal (2019).

\* This graphic considers impacts of plastic waste trade only. Plastic pollution itself has many more well documented effects on both land and marine environments and wildlife among others.