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Strengthening the FDI Attraction to Bac Ninh Province of Vietnam in New Context, Vietnam

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Abstract:

Bac Ninh is a province in the Red River Delta with many potentials for socio-economic development. Currently, Bac Ninh is one of the provinces with the highest and fastest economic growth rate in the North of Vietnam. In the planning, Bac Ninh province is located in the metropolitan area of the Capital and the gateway to the northeast of Ha Noi capital. In addition, Bac Ninh is located on two economic corridors of Con Minh - Lao Cai - Hanoi - Hai Phong - Quang Ninh and Nam Dinh - Lang Son - Hanoi - Hai Phong - Quang Ninh. The province is on the traffic system connecting with provinces in the region such as National Highway 1A, National Highway No.18, National Highway No. 38, the axis of railway running through Bac Ninh to Lang Son and China; Waterway network of Cau river, Duong river and Thai Binh river connecting Bac Ninh with the system of river ports and seaports of the region. These are very favorable factors for socio-economic development and exchanges of Bac Ninh with other localities. With these advantages, Bac Ninh has great potential to attract investment capital, especially FDI for the socio-economic development. However, in the new context, with many opportunities but also many challenges, especially in the industrial period 4.0 and current economic integration, Bac Ninh needs to maintain effectively existing FDI, on the other hand, the province must have more breakthroughs in attracting FDI capital in accordance with the new context.

Keywords: FDI, FDI attraction, Bac Ninh, Vietnam, new context

1. Introduction

Bac Ninh is one of the provinces and cities attracting the most FDI in the country. Particularly in 2018, the province has issued new investment registration for 92 projects with a total registered investment capital of 156.85 million USD, granted investment registration adjustment for 80 investment projects with total registered investment capital increasing \$ 3,342.15 million.

At the time of the provincial re-establishment in 1997, Bac Ninh province had only 4 FDI projects with a total registered investment capital of US \$ 177.58 million, but so far, accumulated to the end of 2018, the province has valid 581 FDI projects with the total registered capital after the adjustment is over 10, 86 billion USD [2].

The number of FDI projects increased gradually over the years, especially the strongest increase in the period of 2010-2018 with more than 500 FDI projects, total FDI of over USD 9.3 billion. Most of the projects attracted in this period are in the electronics, telecommunications and industrial sectors, which support these industries, accounting for about 80% of the total FDI.Most projects use new generation machines and equipment, advanced production technology, produce clean products, do not generate any environmental impacts. Investment capital for machinery, equipment and production technology (including technology transfer) of FDI projects in this period reached 2,772.3 million USD, accounting for 60.02% of the total registered FDI capital [2]. This is a key factor to promote technology value in the value of products, minimize the factors affecting the environment, improve the competitiveness of products, production value and prices and export value, is an important basis to create a key industry of the province and attract FDI inflows. This is evidenced by Samsung's continuous registration to expand the project in Yen Phong, starting projects SEV1, SEV2, SEV3, Samsung Display. In fact, the projects of Samsung Group investing in Yen Phong have a great pervasiveness, strongly impacting the wave of foreign investment in Bac Ninh, especially the investment capital from Korea accounted for more than 72 % of total foreign investment capital in the whole province [1]. However, attracting FDI into Bac Ninh province in the new context will face many difficulties and challenges. On the basis of analyzing the situation, assessing the context and forecasting the context of attracting FDI into Bac Ninh province, this study will propose some solutions to enhance the attraction of FDI to contribute to the rapid development and sustainable socio-economic of Bac Ninh province in the coming time.

2. Research Methods

Methods of collecting secondary data: Reports and documents of the Ministry of Planning and Investment; Statistical yearbooks of Bac Ninh province from 2015 to 2018; Report on socio-economic development of Bac Ninh province, forecasts on the trend of attracting FDI in Vietnam and Bac Ninh province in the new context.

Methods of data synthesis and analysis: Descriptive statistical methods; comparative analysis; professional solution; correlation method. Evaluating the relationship between quantity and value aspect; assessing the causes and factors affecting FDI attraction in Bac Ninh province and the whole country.

Data processing method: Using Excel 2010 software and some information technology application software in data processing.

3. Research Results and Discussion

3.1. Current Status of FDI Attraction in Bac Ninh Province

Foreign direct investment (FDI - Foreign Direct Investment) is a type of international capital transfer among countries, in which the owner of capital is also the person directly managing and operating the activities of investment capital use [7].

FDI attraction is an activity aimed at exploiting and mobilizing direct investment capital from foreign governments, organizations and individuals into the country to meet the investment needs of the socio-economic development of countries receiving investment (WTO, 2010).

In a narrow sense, FDI attraction includes a combination of mechanisms and policies of the local State as well as localities receiving investment in order to create conditions for foreign investors to directly invest in the domestic market in many different forms, contributing to the socio-economic development of the locality and the country.

In a broad sense, attracting FDI is the overall elements, conditions and policies of the host country (Technical - social infrastructure, existing environmental resources, mechanisms and policies, ...) affecting the investment environment in the invested areas, thereby promoting foreign investors investing the capital in different forms of FDI, in line with the common interests of both investors and recipients [7].

In 5 years (2014-2018), Bac Ninh province has continuously promoted and attracted investment, creating an attractive and safe investment environment for domestic and foreign investors, especially created many impressions for FDI investors. As a result, Bac Ninh becomes a locality in the top of the country in FDI attraction. In 2014, FDI attraction reached USD 1.58 billion, in 2015 reached USD 3.7 billion, ranking first in the country; in 2017 reached 3.64 billion USD, ranking the second in the country; 2018 reached 1.146 billion USD. In the period 2014-2018, Bac Ninh attracted 839 FDI projects, with a total capital of 11 billion USD.

In 2018, Bac Ninh province granted new investment registration for 92 FDI projects with a total registered investment capital of USD 156.85 million. Accumulated until the end of 2018, Bac Ninh province has granted investment registration for 581 valid FDI projects with a total adjusted investment capital of 10.86 billion USD [2].

Firstly, attracting FDI by economic sectors of Bac Ninh province: FDI in Bac Ninh province has invested in 15 out of 21 sectors in the national economic classification system.

Industries	Accumulated until 2015			Accu	2016			Accumulated until 2017			Accumulated until 2018		
	Number of FDI projects	Total FDI capital (million USD)	Proportion (%)	Number of FDI projects	Total FDI capital (million USD)	Proportion (%)	Number of FDI projects	Total FDI capital (million USD)	Proportion (%)	Number of FDI projects	Total FDI capital (million USD)	Proportion (%)	
Manufacturing and processing industry	568	9,920	91	881	11,470	92.5	1,066	14,960	93.5	1,219	16,130	93.8	
Real estate business	8	500	4.6	43	560	4.5	49	690	4.32	51	680	3.95	
Others (construction, service)	5	480	4.4	29	370	3	25	350	2.18	29	390	2.25	
Total	581	10,900	100	952	12.4	100	1,140	16	100	1,299	17,200	100	

Table 1: Data on FDI Attraction by Sector in Bac Ninh Province (2015-2018)

Source: Bac Ninh Department of Planning and Investment

In the period 2014-2018; Accumulated by 2015, FDI capital was concentrated in processing and manufacturing industries with 568 projects, total investment capital of 9.885 billion USD (accounting for 91% of total registered FDI capital of Bac Ninh province); by 2016, the processing and manufacturing industry accounted for 92.5% of the province's total FDI; by 2017, it will account for 93.5% and by 2018 increasing to 93.8%.

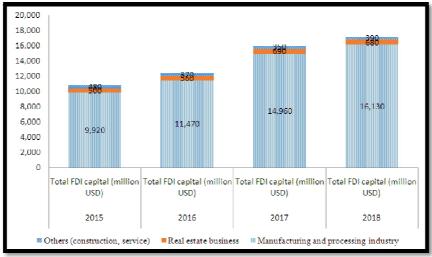


Figure 1: Attracted FDI Structure by Sector in Bac Ninh Province (2015-2018) Source: Authors' Calculations According to the Reports of Bac Ninh Department of Planning and Investment

The second and third sectors attracting FDI the most are real estate and other fields. Accumulated up to 2015, there are 8 real estate projects with a registered capital of US \$ 99.7 million (accounting for 4.6% of total registered FDI capital of Bac Ninh province), 4.5% in 2016, 4.32% in 2017 and 3.95% in 2018. In other areas, the investment capital has fluctuated unstably, in particular, in 2016, the scale decreased but the number of projects increased compared to 2015, both in scale and number of projects decreased compared to 2016, by 2018, this item tends to increase slightly in scale and proportion, reaching 0.39 billion USD and accounting for 2.25% (see Table 1 and Figure 1).

Secondly, attracting FDI into industrial zones (IZs) and outside IZs in Bac Ninh province: FDI projects in Bac Ninh province are mainly focused and increasing in industrial zones with over 90% of FDI capital and above 70% of projects in the province (see table 2).

Location	Accumulated until 2015			Accumulated until 2016			Accumulated until 2017			Accumulated until 2018		
	Number of FDI projects	Total FDI capital (billion USD)	Proportion (%)	Number of FDI projects	Total FDI capital (billion USD)	Proportion (%)	Number of FDI projects	Total FDI capital (billion USD)	Proportion (%)	Number of FDI project	Total FDI capital (billion USD)	Proportion (%)
Inside the industrialzone	581	10.90	93.97	952	12.4	93.3	1,140	16	93.8 4	1,300	17.2	93.22
Outside the industrial zone	216	0.70	6.03	232	0.89	6.70	309	1.05	6.16	316	1.25	6.78
Total	797	11.6	100	1,184	13.29	100	1,449	17.05	100	1,616	18.45	100

Table 2: Structure of FDI Attraction by Location in Bac Ninh Province (2015-2018) Source: Bac Ninh Department of Planning and Investment

The number of investment projects outside IZs has low registration numbers and small capital scale. This result is due to the fact that industrial zones already have infrastructure, quick procedures, the province also has preferential policies to encourage investment in industrial zones such as land clearance, tax incentives, infrastructure construction ...making the increases of FDI projects into IZs (see Figure 2).

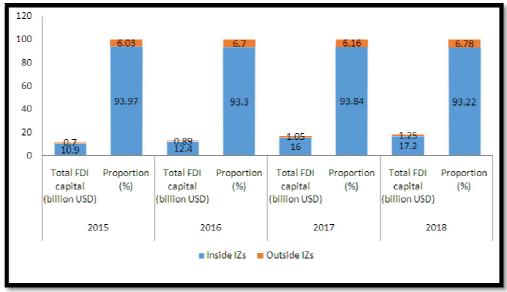


Figure 2: FDI Capital Structure Attracting Industrial Zones In Bac Ninh Province (2015-2018) Source: Authors' Calculations According to the Report of Bac Ninh Department of Planning and Investment

Thirdly, attracting FDI to Bac Ninh province by foreign investment partners: By the end of 2018, there were 15 countries and territories with FDI projects invested in Bac Ninh province. Accumulated to the first quarter of 2019, Korea and Japan are the two countries with the largest number of FDI projects as well as the largest amount of FDI capital invested in Bac Ninh.

	Year 2	2015	Yea	r 2016	Yea	r 2017	Year 2018		
Nation	Number of FDI	Total FDI	Number	Total FDI	Number		Number		
	projects	capital	of FDI	capital	of FDI	capital	of FDI	capital (billion	
	1	(billion USD)	projects	(billion USD)	projects	(billion USD)	projects	USD)	
Singapore	72	1.05	85	1.08	88	1.23	105	1.32	
Taiwan	70	0.96	74	0.97	91	1.09	102	1.17	
South Korea	167	6.06	201	7.01	260	8.6	381	9.12	
Japan	106	1.55	121	1.89	201	2.8	320	2.99	
Southeast Asia	69	0.92	76	0.93	102	1.11	106	1.25	
Other	97	0.36	395	0.52	398	1.17	286	1.35	
Total	581	10.9	952	12.4	1,140	16.0	1,300	17.2	

Table 3: Data on FDI Attraction in Bac Ninh Province by Investment Partners (2015-2018)
Source: Bac Ninh Department of Planning And Investment

In 2015, Korean investors has a total of 167 active projects accounting for the largest proportion (29% of projects) with a total capital accounting for nearly 50% of the total FDI capital into the province. In 2016, South Korea had 201 projects with an investment of US \$ 7.01 billion; in 2017 there were 260 projects with accumulated capital of USD 8.6 billion; in 2018 there were 381 projects with accumulated capital of 9.12 billion USD. As for Japanese investors, in 2015, they had 106 projects with 1.55 billion USD, accounting for 14.2% of the total FDI capital of the province; 121 projects with 1.89 billion USD in 2016; 201 projects with a total capital of 2.8 billion USD in 2017; 320 projects with 2.99 billion USD in 2018. The rest are investors from other countries and territories such as Taiwan, Finland and Thailand, etc.

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Figure 3: Structure of FDI in Bac Ninh Province By Foreign Partners (2015-2018)
Source: Authors' Calculations According to the Report of Bac Ninh Department of Planning and Investment

Large FDI projects in Bac Ninh province mainly were invested in high-tech electronics, electronics and telecommunications sectors of multinational corporations (MNCs) such as Canon (Japan), Samsung (South Korea), Foxconn (Taiwan), ABB (Sweden) ... create vivid images of Bac Ninh industrial zones. At the same time, this is the basis for Bac Ninh province to establish a key industry which focus on electronic industry, precision engineering, new materials and high-tech processing.

The completion of the provincial development plan until 2018 and the orientation to 2020 contributed to the distribution and adjustment of the socio-economic space of the province, most clearly shown to promote the development of the infrastructure system such as: electricity, water, transportation, etc. create evenly development, mutual support between the northern and southern areas of Duong River.

Up to now, Bac Ninh province has approved 15 infrastructure construction investors (including 10 domestic investors; 5 FDI enterprises), of which 10 are licensed infrastructure investment projects with a total capital of hundreds of millions of USD. In particular, the province has attracted a number of large infrastructure investment projects such as: VSIP Bac Ninh (Singapore), IGS Group (Korea), Foxcon Honghai, NICE (Taiwan)etc.,have good capacity in access and negotiation with big investors. Particularly, industrial zone and urban VSIP in Bac Ninh province have established infrastructure business model in industrial infrastructure (Mapletree Singapore).

Fourthly, some typical FDI projects in Bac Ninh province can be mentioned as follows: The largest FDI project in Bac Ninh province is the project of Samsung Electronics Vietnam Co., Ltd. licensed on March 25, 2008 of investor Samsung Electronics Asia Holding Pte. Ltd, Singapore. The total investment of the project is 2.5 billion USD. This project producing electronic products of high technology, providing manufacturing services, assembly of electronic products.

The second position belongs to licensed project of Samsung Display Co., Ltd in Bac Ninh on June 21, 2007 by investor Sam Sung Display Co., Ltd (Korea). Total investment capital of the project reaches 1 billion USD. These projects focus on the areas of manufacturing, marketing or selling all kinds of Smartphone screens etc.

3.2. Overall assessment of FDI attraction in Bac Ninh province

Firstly, the biggest success of Bac Ninh province in attracting FDI is through preferential mechanisms and policies of the State and the Province, contributing to the creation of a business environment, open and convenient investment, making the FDI investors choose Bac Ninh as an investment location. The most obvious manifestation of this success is reflected in the reform of administrative procedures, organizational reform of administrative apparatus, modernization of public administration and improvement of provincial competitiveness index (PCI).

Secondly, FDI attraction policies were issued promptly, quickly, in accordance with the objectives, directions and socio-economic development tasks of Bac Ninh province in each period, with flexible application according to State regulations and laws.

Thirdly, the application of policies into practice is implemented promptly and effectively. Besides the issuance of preferential policies, Bac Ninh province has reorganized the organizational structure and functions; The task of the agencies has been reviewed and specifically regulated, more clearly, more fully. Through it, step by step eliminating the situation of overlapping or missing functions; creating synchronization between functions, tasks and organizational structure of provincial state management agencies. Therefore, administrative procedures for FDI have been simplified, PCI index of Bac Ninh province in many years has always been in the top 10 provinces with the best ranking index.

Fourthly, Bac Ninh province has formed an online information channel to support the exchange of information between provincial state management agencies and FDI enterprises. This is a new activity in the state management policy at the provincial level, promptly settling recommendations and inquiries of FDI enterprises on related issues in the process of operation. Through the provincial electronic portal and component electronic portals, FDI enterprises can actively send questions to managers, the management agencies are responsible for coordinating and responding to the petitions of FDI enterprises in the shortest time, strengthening the support of FDI enterprises.

Fifthly, by the attractive FDI attraction policies, Bac Ninh province has achieved many great achievements in the socioeconomic development process, which has changed Bac Ninh from a pure agricultural province to a province with a value of large industrial production in the key economic region of the North, with the top industrial growth rate of the Red River Delta region, in the top 10 provinces and cities with greatest investment attractiveness (especially FDI) of Vietnam, is the key province on State budget revenue.

Sixthly, some preferential policies to attract FDI are insufficient and weak; planning policies are inadequate, need to be amended and supplemented, some key sectors and areas have not had development plans such as supporting industries, high-tech industries, etc.

Seventhly, the preferential policies to attract FDI of the province are not strong enough, there are no breakthrough points. The form of FDI mobilization is still single, passive, and its efficiency is not high, mainly investment promotion programs are organized by the Ministry of Planning and Investment. Although the locality has actively promoted FDI attraction, countries that have been mobilized are not yet diversified but mainly in the past years only focused on Japan and South Korea.

Eighthly, although the planning of socio-economic development of the province has been raised each year, the period but not enough detailed information on FDI projects to provide to investors. Information on FDI projects only includes project names, total investment capital, geographical areas, but without specific scale and specifications. Ninthly, FDI attraction policies must towards to the improvement of the quality and effectiveness on the basis of ensuring national and provincial interests, restructuring the economy in the direction of "developing in width" to "deep development", moving from quantity to quality of each FDI project. Local preferential FDI policies need to be selected and cannot be favored for all projects equally; Every investor has the same incentives such as land, tax, etc. The FDI attraction policies of Bac Ninh province is not attractive enough for potential investors in high-tech and environmentally friendly sectors; At the same time, it has not created technical barriers to low-tech FDI projects causing environmental pollution. Tenthly, in addition to the policies to support and attract FDI, Bac Ninh province is too focused on attracting new FDI projects, but has not given adequate attention to the management, supervision and support of FDI enterprises after granting investment licenses (just stopped at the licensing stage, have not focused on the post-licensing stage), leading to the effect of some FDI projects is not high; Supporting and resolve in difficulties for FDI enterprises after licensing is still difficult, the consultancy and support agencies, for foreign investors have been not professional enough.

Eleventhly, Bac Ninh's FDI environment improvement policies were available, but not strong enough to affect the results of FDI attraction as well as the socio-economic development of the province; there is an imbalance in FDI capital structure by location (mainly concentrated in the North of Duong River); It has happened that FDI enterprises discharge waste into the environment without treating waste; FDI sector paid to the budget not commensurate with the scale of investment capital as well as land use; some FDI projects have low investment efficiency and have not created high added value, etc. According to the evaluation of VCCI, PCI of Bac Ninh have been outstanding increase in the past years, but the quality of each component index is still inadequate, with a lower index than other localities, compared to the year 2010 PCI has downward indexes. PCI of the province in the previous year's always maintained in the top 10 of the whole country. However, by 2015, PCI of Bac Ninh decreased to 13/63, in 2018 ranked 15/63.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1. Conclusions

Attracting FDI contributes an important part to boost the socio-economic development of Vietnam in general and of Bac Ninh province in particular, especially in the new context with 4.0 industrial revolution and when Vietnam has been out of the low average income countries group, along with trade agreements and new generation investment. Bac Ninh province needs to have new awareness and synchronous implementation of solutions to effectively attract FDI for sustainable economic development in Bac Ninh province, meeting the requirements of international economic integration trend. The province needs to implement some basic solutions to attract FDI associated with new constraints and conditions, contributing to Bac Ninh province to overcome the consequences and negative impacts of FDI.

4.2. Solutions to Increase FDI Attraction in Bac Ninh Province In The New Context

Firstly, continue planning and implementing the synchronous infrastructure development; planning industrial zones, industrial clusters, increasing the occupancy rate and raising the efficiency of attracting FDI on 1 hectare of area; review and propose the change of land use purpose, adjust the location, reduce the area of land for construction of concentrated industrial zones and industrial clusters; Focusing on compensation and site clearance for industrial zones: Thuan Thanh II, III, Yen Phong II and Gia Binh to create conditions to attract FDI projects into these IZs. Continue to attract investment resources through socialization, through Build - transfer investment (BT); calling on investors to invest and complete the provincial transport system, connecting with the national highways, connecting the northern and southern areas of the Duong River according to the approved planning and concentrating developing traffic system in the south of Duong River. To develop the electricity supply system in service of production activities and continuous business of enterprises suitable to the actual situation and with exchanges with particular production enterprises. Planning and investing in the construction of water supply systems in concentrated industrial zones, residential areas, areas with high density of investment enterprises ... continue planning and investing in construction of wastewater treatment systems. Planning and investing in construction of other infrastructure works such as housing for workers, social security systems (health, education), communication, etc. Coordinating with sectors and localities to resolve the housing situation of workers, set out the measures, proposing solutions to gradually improve the living conditions of physical and mental for workers in FDI enterprises

Secondly, developing human resources; continue to implement the project of high-quality human resources. Focusing on professional and technical training combined with quality and human training (ethics, industrial style,

discipline awareness, ...). Encouraging FDI enterprises to invest in education and training. Encouraging association and coordination between enterprises and universities, colleges, intermediate and vocational schools to recruit workers in accordance with demand. Taking care of workers' life, creating an effective working environment, reasonable methods to encourage employees to work for FDI enterprises in long term. Complete and build synchronously infrastructure of industrial zones associated with social welfare projects; houses for workers, schools, parks, markets, kindergartens, sports and cultural centers, health care facilities for workers, to ensure industrial zones to develop sustainably, contributing to improve the FDI environment and to support solving difficulties for workers in FDI enterprises.

Thirdly, strengthening investment promotion; Considering FDI promotion is a task that every sector, every state agency needs to be deeply aware of and implement effectively and reasonably. Implementing the promotion of FDI with the right focus, sticking to the actual needs of the province. Focusing on the preparation of premises and other technical infrastructure for the ongoing FDI projects as well as solving problems and difficulties, creating favorable conditions for the operation of invested FDI projects into the province etc. Integrating the provincial FDI promotion program with the national investment promotion program. Integrating the provincial FDI promotion program with the national investment promotion program. Actively promote investment with many different forms, with a focus on direct contact and contact with partners, large enterprises and corporations in the world to introduce the conditions and investment environment of the province. Combining FDI promotion with trade and tourism promotion in countries with commercial potential such as China, Japan, Korea, European countries, North America, ASEAN; countries with potential in tourism such as Japan, Korea, China, ASEAN, North America, Russia; cooperating with ministries, government, neighboring provinces such as Bac Giang, Hung Yen, Vinh Phuc, Hai Duong, Hai Phong, professional consulting agencies on FDI promotion to organize activities of investment promotion conference, advertise the image of the province. Publicity, transparency of FDI information, promotion of local images and marketing on the provincial websites.

Fourthly, continue to strengthen the state management of FDI, timely detect difficulties and problems of FDI enterprises to support and ensure the production and business activities of FDI enterprises stable development; promoting administrative procedure reform to improve public administration efficiency, creating the most favorable conditions for foreign investors and FDI enterprises. Improving the quality of verifying, appraising and adjusting FDI certificates must ensure the requirements: The appropriateness of the investment field for the local planning system, regional planning and regulation industry development plan of Bac Ninh province ..; The system of technical standards of FDI projects must be equal to or higher than the Vietnamese technical standards system, the technology used in FDI projects must be advanced and environmentally friendly technologies and source technologies. Continue to reform administrative procedures, implement well the "one-door" mechanism, "one-stop shop" to reduce time costs for FDI enterprises, create a transparent and transparent investment environment. Special investment incentives and incentives; to build a flexible coordination mechanism between provincial-level agencies, investors and local administrations in the course of project implementation, to support post-investment FDI enterprises when operating stably. Regularly check the activities of FDI enterprises to solve difficulties and problems while preventing FDI enterprises from illegally operating, resolutely withdrawing investment licenses and investment certificates for with projects, FDI enterprises do not implement, slow to implement projects, operate inefficiently, violate investment certificates and state regulations.

Fifthly, attracting FDI is closely associated with environmental protection; reviewing, amending and supplementing legal institutions and strictly applying the system of compulsory requirements on technology, technology transfer, compulsory regulations on quality of FDI projects areas and investment areas. Resolutely refusing to grant investment licenses to FDI projects that cause environmental pollution or projects without proper discharge systems. Innovating and improving the quality of appraisal of reports and activities after appraisal, strengthening monitoring of implementation of FDI enterprises right from the construction in environmental protection activities. Strengthen inspection, inspection and urging infrastructure investors and satellite enterprises of FDI enterprises to strictly implement regulations on environmental protection.

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