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### Promoting Green Practices - Criteria to Evaluate the Provincial Green Index in Vietnam

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#### Abstract

Promoting green practices is one of four components of the provincial green index in Vietnam. Promoting green practices measures the extent to which environmental goals are integrated into the broader state management responsibilities of provincial governments, specifically, does the government integrate environmental protection goals into general development policies, into public procurement activities, and into activities of guiding and disseminating legal regulations, practices to support businesses in

"greening" their operating processes, production business models and corporate behavior. This article aims to evaluate the provincial green index of provinces and cities in 2022 through the component index "Promoting green practices", thereby examining the causes leading to different results between provinces, and learn about policies for provinces to achieve sustainable development goals through improving the PGI index in general and the component index "Promoting green practices" in particular.

**Keywords:** PGI, Provincial Green Index, Green Promotion and Practice

#### 1. Introduction

Not only does it evaluate the efforts of the provincial government in encouraging the development of sustainable production and business activities towards green investment and high-quality innovation, but the Provincial Green Index (PGI) also promotes the enterprises aim to protect the environment for sustainable development. The PGI index gathers business sentiment and conveys the "voice" of the entire business community about the quality of environmental management to governments at all levels. A locality is considered to have good environmental governance quality when it makes efforts to prevent and minimize environmental pollution and negative impacts of climate change; enforce regulations and take reasonable measures to ensure compliance with environmental laws without creating excessive burdens for businesses; fully guide and disseminate green practices and focus on green procurement; and finally, encourage the "greening" of production and business models through specific policies and support programs. The province's "Promoting Green Practices" component was built to provide input information for policy making at both central and local levels to minimize the negative impacts of climate change and environmental pollution for production and business activities and corporate sustainability.

Therefore, the goal of this article is to evaluate the provincial green index of provinces and cities in 2022 through the component index "Promoting green practices", thereby examining the causes leading to different results between provinces, and learn about policies for provinces to achieve sustainable development goals through improving the PGI index in general and the component index "Promoting green practices" in particular.

#### 2. Theoretical basis

The Provincial Green Index is a set of indicators that evaluate and rank the quality of local environmental governance from the perspective of business practices such as the level of application of environmentally friendly technology by businesses, and the level of governance and environmental behavior of businesses, the level of concern and willingness to invest in environmental issues of local governments and many other important environmental issues. The Provincial Green Index includes 4 component indices made up of 44 indicators measuring the quality of environmental governance in provinces and cities in the direction of linking environmental protection with economic development.

Promoting green practices is one of the four components of the PGI index. Promoting green practices measures the extent to which environmental goals are integrated into the broader state management responsibilities of provincial governments,

specifically, does the government integrate environmental protection goals into general development policies and public procurement activities, and in guiding and disseminating legal regulations and practices to support businesses in "greening" their operating processes, production business models and corporate behavior. The third component index includes the following indicators: State agencies in the province are willing to pay higher prices when purchasing goods and services from "green" businesses (% of businesses); Enterprises are guided on environmental laws (%); Enterprises are guided on conservation and efficient use of energy (%); Enterprises are guided on the use of renewable energy (%); Enterprises receive guidance on renewable energy production (%); Enterprises are guided on minimizing plastic use (%); Enterprises are guided on investing in effective solid waste management (%); Enterprises are instructed to limit water pollution (%); Enterprises are instructed on economical use of water (%); businesses receive instructions on minimizing air pollution (%); Enterprises receive instructions on reforestation (%); Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment data: Percentage of budget expenditure for public activities of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (%); Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment data: Number of civil servants and officials performing tasks of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment per 1 million people.

The component index "Promoting green practices" measures the degree to which environmental goals are integrated into the broader state management responsibilities of the provincial government. This role of the provincial government, if promoted, will contribute to promoting and even leading leading businesses to pursue strategies to become role models in environmental protection. This role may include guiding businesses in making operating decisions that can position them to become leaders in energy savings or the use of sustainable, renewable energy. The component index "Promoting green practices" of the PGI index measures the leadership role of the provincial government in two aspects: (1) green procurement and (2) guide and disseminate environmental legal regulations related to business operations. This component index has three edge dimensions. The first two dimensions use PCI enterprise survey data collected from questions about bidding procedures and questions evaluating the guidance on environmental laws for businesses. The third dimension uses PEPI hard data "rate of budget spending on environmental protection activities" and "number of civil servants and officials performing environmental protection tasks per 1 million people".

Dimension 1 evaluates "green" procurement and bidding activities of state agencies in provinces and cities through data from two questions in the PCI 2022 survey. The first question determines the level of agreement of businesses with the statement "state agencies in the province prioritize purchasing goods or services from businesses with green/environmentally friendly practices and perspectives". The second question determines the level of agreement of businesses with the statement "state agencies in the province are willing to accept higher prices when purchasing goods or services from businesses with green/green practices and perspectives environmentally friendly". Dimension 2 uses the proportion of businesses that have been guided by local authorities and disseminated content related to

environmental regulations and environmental protection measures. Specifically, businesses' assessments of the provincial government's guidance on the following contents were used by the research team in this aspect, these are: Environmental regulations; conserve and use energy economically and effectively; use renewable energy; renewable energy production; minimize plastic use; invest in effective solid waste management; limit water pollution; Use water economically; reduce air pollution; and reforestation.

### 3. Green practice promotion index in Vietnam in 2022

Survey results of the "Promoting green practices" index in Vietnam with an average national score of 4.11, the lowest score is 2.98 (Ben Tre), and the highest score is 5.35 (Hai Phong). The five provinces with the highest scores in the country include: Hai Phong (5.35 points), Hai Duong (5.15 points), Bac Kan (5.09 points), Ha Giang (5.00 points), and Kon Tum (4.87 points). The five provinces and cities with the lowest green practice promotion index scores include: Tuyen Quang (3.35 points), Ca Mau (3.27 points), Tien Giang (3.19 points), Soc Trang (3.12 points), and Ben Tre (2.98 points). Hai Phong's leading ranking in component index 3 is the result of local efforts in environmental protection in recent times. In the general situation, economic development achievements come with environmental consequences (air pollution, water pollution, waste discharge), with a coastal geographical location and in the Red River Delta, Hai Phong be aware of the vulnerabilities caused by natural disasters, especially seasonal floods. Hai Phong has carried out many activities to support businesses in converting production models, such as committing to support 120 foundry businesses in converting from using coal furnaces to using cleaner energy, restructuring the production model in an environmentally friendly direction. In addition, business support and consulting services on energy audit and energy saving provided by the city have initially had positive results. Each year the city saves 50.3 kWh of electricity, equivalent to more than 3 million USD (64 billion VND) and reduces carbon emissions by 42,000 tons thanks to the program to support businesses in conducting energy audits developed by the city.

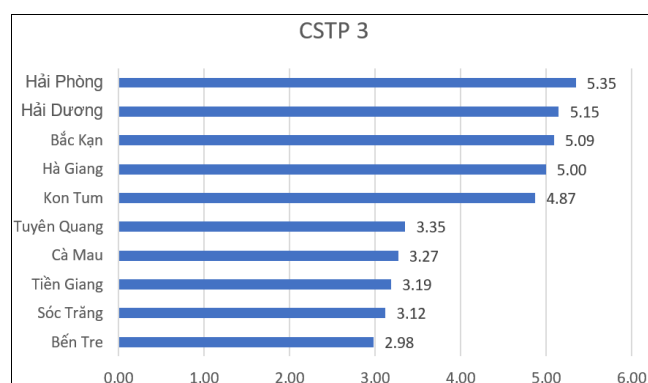


Fig 1: Scores of 10 provinces with the lowest and highest "Promoting green practices" Index

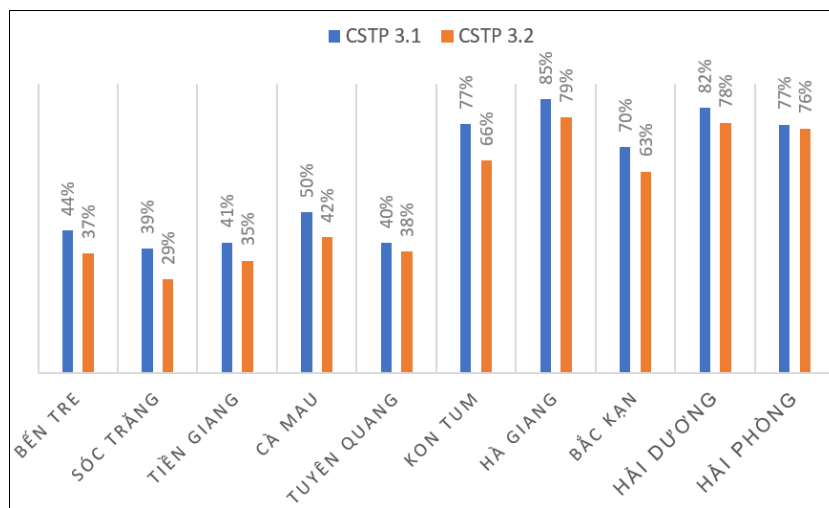
The component index "Promoting green practices" is measured through 3 dimensions. Table 1 shows the highest, lowest, and median scores of the three dimensions of the component index "Promoting green practices". For the first dimension, "Prioritize purchasing green goods and services",

the national average score is 2.02, of which Bac Lieu is the province with the highest score with 2.60 points, Quang Tri the lowest with 1.19 points. As for the second dimension, "Instruction, dissemination of laws and protective behavior. environment", the national average score is 0.89 points, of which Bac Lieu is the province with the highest score with

2.60 points, Quang Tri the lowest with 1.19 points. For the third dimension, "Hard data indicators", the national average score is 1.39 points, of which Da Nang is the province with the highest score with 2.41 points, Bac Lieu the lowest with 0.68 points.

**Table 1:** Scores of indicators Component index 3 "Promoting green practices"

Assessment criteria	Lowest score	Highest score	Median score			
Promote green practices	2.98	Bến Tre	5.35	Hải Phòng	4.09	Ho Chi Minh City
Edge dimension 3.1. Prioritize purchasing green goods and services	1.19	Quảng Tri	2.60	Bạc Liêu	2.02	Hung Yên
Side dimension 3.2. Guide and disseminate laws and protective behavior. environment	0.46	Gia Lai	0.68	Vĩnh Long	0.89	Lai Châu
Side dimension 3.3. Hard data targets	0.68	Bạc Liêu	2.41	Đà Nẵng	1.39	Vĩnh Phúc



**Fig 2:** Dimension 1 ratio of the index "Promoting green practices"

Dimension 1 evaluates "green" procurement and bidding activities of state agencies in provinces and cities. The first question determines the level of agreement of businesses with the statement "state agencies in the province prioritize purchasing goods or services from businesses with green/environmentally friendly practices and perspectives". The second question determines the level of agreement of businesses with the statement "state agencies in the province are willing to accept higher prices when purchasing goods or services from businesses with green/green practices and perspectives". For the 5 provinces with the highest "promoting green practices" index, the scores for dimension 1 are all high, Ha Giang has the highest score in dimension 1 with scores for the two questions respectively 85% and 79%. Next is Hai Duong with scores of 82% and 78% respectively. For Soc Trang, this is the province with low scores for dimension 1 with scores for the two questions being 39% and 29% respectively.

Dimension 2 uses the proportion of businesses that have been guided by local authorities and disseminated content related to environmental regulations and environmental protection measures. Regarding guidance on environmental laws, the proportion of businesses saying they have received guidance from local authorities is relatively high (43.2%). Only 5.1% of businesses said they had been informed by local authorities about investing in solid waste management; on renewable energy production is 5.4%, reforestation is 6% and renewable energy use is 8.6%. The work of guiding businesses on a number of contents related to green practices has a slightly higher percentage of businesses choosing, that is, minimizing the use of plastic (10.4%), conservation and use of energy. saving, efficiency (12.5%) and reducing air pollution (13.4%). It can be seen that most provinces and cities seem to focus most on guiding businesses on economical water use (17.2%) and limiting water pollution (16.5%).

**Table 2:** Scores of dimension 2 indicators of the index "Promoting green practices"

	CSTP 3.3	CSTP 3.4	CSTP 3.5	CSTP 3.6	CSTP 3.7	CSTP 3.8	CSTP 3.9	CSTP 3.10	CSTP 3.11	CSTP 3.12
Bến Tre	17%	6%	7%	4%	9%	6%	9%	12%	8%	3%
Sóc Trăng	24%	14%	11%	4%	15%	8%	15%	23%	18%	8%
Tiền Giang	33%	16%	10%	7%	16%	8%	23%	18%	13%	8%
Cà Mau	31%	13%	13%	9%	17%	6%	19%	21%	17%	6%
Tuyên Quang	20%	8%	5%	4%	12%	4%	11%	10%	8%	9%
Kon Tum	37%	17%	15%	15%	15%	5%	24%	21%	23%	18%
Hà Giang	60%	16%	14%	10%	8%	9%	21%	20%	14%	11%
Bắc Kạn	34%	18%	10%	8%	13%	7%	21%	23%	18%	19%
Hải Dương	75%	12%	10%	6%	9%	7%	15%	16%	12%	4%
Hải Phòng	30%	14%	10%	5%	11%	6%	31%	29%	27%	5%

The third dimension evaluates the level of financial and human investment of the provincial government in local environmental protection activities. The first indicator uses data "rate of budget spending on environmental protection activities". Of the 5 provinces and cities with the highest "Promoting green practices" index in the country, the percentage of budget spending for environmental protection activities in Hai Phong is 4%, Hai Duong is 3%, and Kon Tum is 2%., Ha Giang is 1%, while Bac Kan is 0%. For the 5 provinces and cities with the lowest "Promoting green practices" index in the country, the percentage of budget spending on environmental protection activities is all 1%.

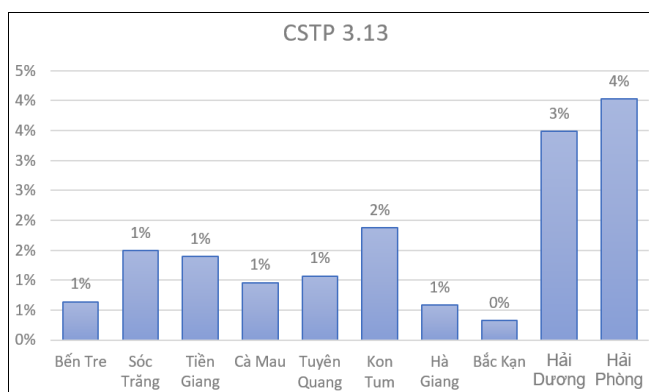


Fig 3: CSTP ratio 3.13 of the index "Promoting green practices"

In the second hard data indicator "number of civil servants and officials performing environmental protection tasks per 1 million people", the scores of localities across the country are quite similar. In Binh Duong, the number of officials performing environmental protection tasks is 44.43 people per million people, while this number in Bac Kan is 380.39 officials. Vinh Phuc is the median province in this indicator with 151.53 officials per 1 million people.

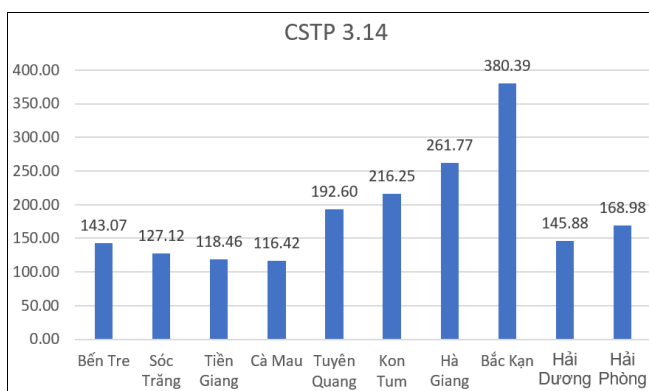


Fig 4: CSTP ratio 3.14 of the index "Promoting green practices"

The Green Practice Promotion Index is one of the components of the provincial green index in Vietnam, divided into 3 dimensions with proportions of 30%, 30%, and 40% respectively. With a score of 5.35, Hai Phong is the leading province in the green practice promotion index, followed by Hai Duong and Bac Kan..

**4. Conclusion**

The results of the provincial green index survey in Vietnam in 2022 aim to promote the Green Index to become a tool to help provincial and city governments get timely information about local environmental quality and orientation in

licensing and screening investment projects. This toolkit will provide the Government and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment with useful information about the current environmental situation at the enterprise level. Vietnam is currently in the early stages of its green transition. At the COP26 Climate Change Summit in the UK at the end of 2021, Vietnam strongly committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. With initial results, PGI is expected to be an important tool to evaluate the effectiveness of public agencies on environmental protection issues; Encourage and encourage provinces and cities to pay more attention to economic development associated with environmental protection. Providing timely information to support provincial and city governments in making policies related to investment and the environment, selecting environmentally friendly investment projects; promote the building of an environmentally friendly business ecosystem; orient investors to be conscious of environmental protection. Through the green practice promotion index, it contributes to promoting and leading leading businesses to pursue strategies to become role models in environmental protection. This role includes guiding businesses to make operating decisions that can position them to become leaders in energy efficiency or the use of sustainable, renewable energy.

With the 2022 survey results, it has been shown that many provinces and cities have been paying attention to the green practice promotion index. This shows that the provincial governments are aware of their state management responsibilities in developing books and guidelines for disseminating legal regulations... to support businesses in greening their operating processes.

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