

# GEF-8 REQUEST FOR CEO ENDORSEMENT/APPROVAL

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## General Project Information

### Project Title

Enhancing biodiversity conservation and reducing climate vulnerability in Central Vietnam for sustainable development utilizing a landscape approach

Region	GEF Project ID
Asia	11395
Country(ies)	Type of Project
Viet Nam	FSP
GEF Agency(ies):	GEF Agency Project ID
WWF-US	G0046
Project Executing Entity(s)	Project Executing Type
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)	Government
GEF Focal Area (s)	Submission Date
Multi Focal Area	4/15/2025
Type of Trust Fund	Project Duration (Months)
GET	60
GEF Project Grant: (a)	GEF Project Non-Grant: (b)
9,000,000.00	0.00
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant (d)
810,000.00	0.00
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d)	Total Co-financing
9,810,000.00	106,533,723.00
PPG Amount: (e)	PPG Agency Fee(s): (f)
200,000.00	18,000.00
Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f)	
10,028,000.00	

### Project Tags

CBIT: No NGI: No SGP: No Innovation: No

### Project Sector (CCM Only)

AFOLU

## Taxonomy

Influencing models, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Demonstrate innovative approaches, Deploy innovative financial instruments, Stakeholders, Indigenous Peoples, Private Sector, SMEs, Local Communities, Civil Society, Community Based Organization, Non-Governmental Organization, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Learning, Adaptive management, Theory of change, Innovation, Capacity Development, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Women groups, Beneficiaries, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Gender-sensitive indicators, Gender results areas, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Participation and leadership, Access and control over natural resources, Access to benefits and services, Awareness Raising, Focal Areas, Biodiversity, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Coastal and Marine Protected Areas, Community Based Natural Resource Mngt, Mainstreaming, Forestry - Including HCVF and REDD+, Tourism, Species, Illegal Wildlife Trade, Threatened Species, Wildlife for Sustainable Development, Biomes, Mangroves, Sea Grasses, Tropical Dry Forests, Tropical Rain Forests, Financial and Accounting, Payment for Ecosystem Services

## Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation	Climate Change Adaptation	Biodiversity	Land Degradation
Significant Objective 1	No Contribution 0	Principal Objective 2	No Contribution 0

## Project Summary

Provide a brief summary description of the project, including: (i) what is the problem and issues to be addressed? (ii) what are the project objectives, and if the project is intended to be transformative, how will this be achieved? (iii), how will this be achieved (approach to deliver on objectives), and (iv) what are the GEBs and/or adaptation benefits, and other key expected results. The purpose of the summary is to provide a short, coherent summary for readers. (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

Vietnam's Central Annamites landscape is among the world's most biodiverse regions but faces deforestation, habitat fragmentation, illegal wildlife trade, and climate change threats. In collaboration with WWF's Nature-based Solutions Origination Platform (NbS-OP), this project aims to enhance biodiversity conservation and climate resilience through an integrated landscape-scale approach, strengthening policies, promoting sustainable land management and building ecological and community resilience. It fosters a multi-sectoral paradigm shift, aligning with Vietnam's NBSAP and Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework to ensure long-term sustainability.

This overarching objective will be brought to fruition via the following four components: (1) **Strengthening multi-level coordination, policies, and financing** to mainstream biodiversity across sectors and landscapes. This includes integrating OECMs, biodiversity-sensitive land-use planning, and innovative financing mechanisms; (2) **Landscape-level interventions** across Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue<sup>[1]</sup>, Quang Nam, and Da Nang, enhancing protected area management, exploring the feasibility of biodiversity corridors within Vietnam law, and ecosystem restoration while integrating conservation with spatial planning for long-term resilience; (3) **Enhanced climate resilience and justifying corridor connectivity** in and around high conservation value forested landscapes and wetlands. (4) **Knowledge management and capacity building** to boost awareness, strengthen institutional capacity, and enhance the application of integrated spatial planning and ecosystem-based adaptation. Together, these efforts create a scalable, transformative model for landscape conservation and climate resilience in Vietnam's Central Annamites region.

The project is expected to create and improve management across 301,147 hectares of protected areas and potential biodiversity corridors, restore 10,260 hectares of degraded ecosystems, and improved habitat conditions for endangered populations of Saola, Large-antlered Muntjac, and Annamite Striped Rabbit across at least 273,928 hectares of landscapes outside of the protected area estate through improved management practices. It will also mitigate at least 3.9 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e over 20 years and directly benefit over 3,000 people, particularly indigenous communities, through sustainable livelihoods and climate adaptation. This scalable model for biodiversity conservation and resilience will safeguard Vietnam's globally significant ecosystems and lead to lasting socio-economic benefits.

[1] At its recent 8th session, the 15th N.A. passed Resolution No.175/2024/QH15 regarding the establishment of the centrally-governed Hue city. As such, on January 1, 2025, Thua Thien Hue province was officially upgraded to become a centrally-governed municipality, now known as Hue City.

## Project Description Overview

### Project Objective

Establish a sustainable, replicable and collaborative landscape-scale conservation model to promote biodiversity conservation and reducing climate vulnerability in Central Vietnam for sustainable development.

### Project Components

#### Component 1. Enabling environment for biodiversity conservation via collaborative and adaptive landscape conservation/management approach

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
1,604,010.00	18,986,796.00

Outcome:

1.1 Strengthened legal, policy and financial framework enabling a replicable landscape conservation model in Central Vietnam for improved ecosystem functions, climate resilience and biodiversity outcomes.

Output:

1.1.1 A collaborative **and gender inclusive** landscape conservation working group established under the national Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES) partnership platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services to advance multi-level planning and coordination in high-value landscapes in Central Vietnam.

1.1.2 Harmonized policies, guidelines and a singular governance framework, **inclusive of gender considerations**, to enable coordination, information sharing and decision-making at the provincial level.

1.1.3 Innovative **and gender appropriate** financial mechanisms and tools established to incentivize investment in effective landscape management and biodiversity conservation, with transparent performance criteria for triple benefits.

1.1.4 Guidelines, regulations and other instruments, **inclusive of gender considerations**, developed and applied to integrated biodiversity and natural resources management and planning (including wetlands, production forests and logging, forest concessions; forest plantation design and management) and rules for identification, planning and management of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures or OECMs), with capacity training for forest enterprises and community forest user groups, also mainstreamed into master, provincial and sectoral plans.

#### Component 2. Sustainable landscape management, biodiversity conservation and application of innovative tools in key globally-important wildlife habitats

Component Type	Trust Fund
Investment	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
4,611,529.00	54,587,039.00

Outcome:

2.1 Deliver a validated, holistic, fully-funded, landscape-wide strategy for improved management and monitoring of biodiversity and carbon benefits

2.2 Increased management effectiveness across 731,446 ha of PAs in Central Vietnam

2.3 Connectivity between key protected areas and/or special use forests, covering at least 50,000 ha, targeted for improvement through the creation of ecological corridors/Biosphere Reserves/OECM

2.4 Improved integrated landscape and land-use planning and restoration measures at identified OECM sites to support high-value biodiversity and threatened species, leveraging gender-responsive community-based co-management measures to improve ecological and community benefits

Output:

2.1.1 A comprehensive **and gender responsive** 5- and 10-year multi-level landscape financing strategy covering priority measures for the Central Vietnam Landscape

2.1.2 A financing plan for the different landscape components with built-in incentives and crowdsourcing model

2.1.3 Operationalized financial partnerships to mobilize support for landscape and biodiversity management and conservation strategies

2.1.4 A complimentary fund for community-**based and woman-centric** pilot initiative(s) under a newly established finance mechanism in Central Vietnam

2.2.1 Capacity in management effectiveness, governance, and law enforcement of proposed management boards of PAs, BCAs, OECM sites, and Wetland Nature Reserves improved to reduce threats to flagship species and wildlife through technical assistance **and gender equality**.

2.2.2 Development and implement of PWES guidance in TG-CH Wetland Nature Reserve to unlock financial potential of wetland conservation

2.3.1 Feasibility studies for enhancing contiguity and establishing connectivity between inter-provincial and trans-boundary landscapes, based on integrated landscape management principles approaches and innovative planning tools.

2.3.2 Improvement of effectiveness of corridor management plans.

2.4.1 OECM principals applied for site identification and selection, community and women's engagement, and other creative approaches for pilot program establishment and development of an effective OECM management mechanism in Central Vietnam.

2.4.2 Innovations tested and proliferated for wildlife conservation, landscape management and human wildlife conflict.

2.4.3 Sustainable livelihood developed for local forest, mangrove and wetland dependent communities, inclusive of gender considerations.

### Component 3. Enhanced climate resilience and corridor connectivity

Component Type	Trust Fund
Investment	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
1,503,759.00	17,800,116.00

Outcome:

3.1 Enhanced climate resilience and corridor connectivity in and around high conservation value forested landscapes and wetlands

Output:

3.1.1 Assessment of climate vulnerability for Central Vietnam to identify areas significantly impacted by climate change, degraded forests, mangroves and wetlands to underpin restoration efforts

3.1.2 Study on feasibility of biodiversity credit for policy support

3.1.3 Site selection and restoration of degraded forests, mangroves and important wetlands leveraging nature-based solutions, increasing carbon sequestration, realizing carbon benefits, and improving connectivity to benefit long-term population viability of keystone, and threatened species

3.1.4 Best practice approaches to forest, mangrove and wetland restoration and reforestation / sustainable harvesting documented, and capacities enhanced through training and locally-relevant guidelines

### 3.1.5 On-the-ground application of nationally-tailored methodology for measuring carbon stocks applied, demonstrated and validated for the target areas in Central Vietnam

## Component 4. Awareness raising and knowledge management to improve landscape management

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
601,504.00	7,120,051.00

Outcome:

4.1. Communication and knowledge management strategies developed and implemented to share and publicize project's results and advancements

Output:

4.1.1 Mechanism for impact management and dissemination of both a public-private financing model for climate, nature and people benefits, [including women](#), and OECM model in Central Vietnam

4.1.2 A [gender responsive](#) communication strategy developed and under implementation to share and publicize project's results and advancements

4.1.3 Replication strategy developed for the Plain of Reeds important wetland and, at larger scale, for the Mekong Delta Landscape, [inclusive of gender considerations](#).

4.1.4 A [gender responsive](#) knowledge management plan developed and implemented, including South-South cooperation activities

## M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
250,627.00	2,966,692.00

Outcome:

Project implemented according to Results-Based Management principles

Output:

ME1 Project M&E system designed and operational

ME2 Project evaluations completed on time to support project delivery and knowledge sharing

ME3 Monitoring Reports submitted on time to the Implementing Agency and GEFSEC

[ME4 Monitoring of Gender Action Plan](#)

## Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
Component 1. Enabling environment for biodiversity conservation via collaborative and adaptive landscape conservation/management approach	1,604,010.00	18,986,796.00
Component 2. Sustainable landscape management, biodiversity conservation and application of innovative tools in key globally-important wildlife habitats	4,611,529.00	54,587,039.00
Component 3. Enhanced climate resilience and corridor connectivity	1,503,759.00	17,800,116.00
Component 4. Awareness raising and knowledge management to improve landscape management	601,504.00	7,120,051.00
M&E	250,627.00	2,966,692.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8,571,429.00</b>	<b>101,460,694.00</b>
Project Management Cost	428,571.00	5,073,029.00
<b>Total Project Cost (\$)</b>	<b>9,000,000.00</b>	<b>106,533,723.00</b>

Please provide Justification

## PROJECT OUTLINE

### A. PROJECT RATIONALE

Describe the current situation: the global environmental problems and/or climate vulnerabilities that the project will address, the key elements of the system, and underlying drivers of environmental change in the project context, such as population growth, economic development, climate change, sociocultural and political factors, including conflicts, or technological changes. Describe the objective of the project, and the justification for it. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

#### **Biodiversity Significance:**

Vietnam ranks 16th globally in biodiversity, containing nearly 10% of the world's animal species and 40% of its plant species as endemic. Its forests and wetlands span 14.7 million ha and 12 million ha, respectively, serving as critical biodiversity reservoirs and natural carbon sinks. The Central Vietnam Landscape (CVL) is a natural transboundary biodiversity corridor, covering Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue (recently renamed Hue City from 1 January 2025 following Resolution No.175/2024/QH15), Quang Nam, and Da Nang. This region is home to iconic species, including the Saola (*Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*), Large-antlered Muntjac (*Muntiacus vuquangensis*), and Annamite Striped Rabbit (*Nesolagus timminsi*), among others. This high level of diversity is significant for a relatively small country of 33.12 million hectares (ha)<sup>[1]<sup>2</sup>, [2]<sup>3</sup></sup>. Forest

covers 42% of Vietnam’s land area with a total of 14.7 million ha, while the country has a diverse array of wetlands totaling 12 million ha or one third of the natural area<sup>[3]</sup><sup>4</sup>.

The Central Vietnam Landscape is home to 134 mammal species, more than 500 bird species and 902 species of endemic plants<sup>[4]</sup><sup>5</sup>,<sup>[5]</sup><sup>6</sup>. The population of Central Vietnam is approximately 18.5 million people, also comprising of 12 ethnic minority groups making up 10-12% of the population<sup>[6]</sup><sup>7</sup> (see **Annex I: Current State of Biodiversity in the Target Landscape, Section 2** for more information).

The CVL also comprises Tam Giang- Cau Hai (TG-CH), the largest brackish lagoon in Southeast Asia and an important wetland nature reserve in Thua Thien Hue province (renamed Hue City from 1 January 2025). TG-CH not only has an exceptionally high value of natural resources and biodiversity but also provides significant ecological functions. The TG-CH lagoon system has a total area of about 22,000 ha located along 68 km of coastline. The TG-CH wetland area has been officially established as the Wetland Nature Reserve Area under the Decision No.495/DQ-UBND of Thua Thien Hue Provincial People’s Committee in 2020. Recent surveys identified total 1,296 species with 41 rare species in this area, included 295 phytoplankton species, 50 vascular plant species, 73 species of seaweeds and aquatic plants, 119 zooplankton species, 215 sea bottom fauna species, 361 species of fish and 137 species of birds. Among these species, there are several species included in the IUCN Red List and Viet Nam Red Book such as the Yellow-breasted bunting (*Emberiza aureola*) and the Asian dowitcher (*Limnodromus semipalmatus*), as well as many species of turtle, snakes, seagrass and many high-value emblematic species and untapped cultural value.

*Table 1: ANNAMITE ENDEMIC MAMMALS FOUND IN CENTRAL LANDSCAPE*

Scientific Name	Common name	IUCN Status
<i>Trachypithecus hatinhensis</i>	Hatinh Langur	Endangered
<i>Pygathrix nemaeus</i>	Red-shanked Douc	Critically Endangered
<i>Nomascus siki</i>	Southern White-cheeked Gibbon	Critically Endangered
<i>Pseudoryx nghetinhensis</i>	Saola	Critically Endangered
<i>Muntiacus vuquangensis</i>	Large-antlered Muntjac	Critically Endangered
<i>Muntiacus rooseveltorum</i>	Roosevelt’s Muntjac	Data Deficient
<i>Laonastes aenigmamus</i>	Laotian Rock Rat	Least Concern
<i>Nesolagus timminsi</i>	Annamites Striped Rabbit	Endangered

Source: Adapted from Annex H: Landscape Profile and Land Use Aspects.

Despite best efforts, Vietnam has been coping with increasing levels of fragmentation and disconnected islands of biodiversity from high rates of deforestation and biodiversity decline and high levels of illegal wildlife trade are giving rise to empty forests. From 2001 to 2021, Vietnam lost 3.26 million ha of forest cover, equivalent to a 20% decrease since 2000, and 2.25Gt of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions. Many wetlands are shrinking, being converted and degraded at an alarming rate, due to multiple pressures and climate change. The unsustainable harvesting of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) is a critical issue in this equation, affecting plant resources in protected areas such as Hue and Quang Nam Saola, Phong Dien Nature Reserve, and Song Thanh National Park. For more information, please see **Annex H: Landscape Profile and Land Use Aspects** and **Annex I: Current State of Biodiversity in the Target Landscape**.

**Central Vietnam as a Priority for Conservation:**

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Intact habitat is recognized as essential for the functioning of large ecological systems, for the provisioning of ecosystem goods and services, cycling of water and carbon, and human health, as well as harbouring an immense wealth of biodiversity<sup>[7]<sup>8</sup></sup>. It serves as a natural carbon sink, reducing climate vulnerability and ensuring ecosystem resilience. Together, the region's 21 Special Use Forests (424,992 ha), seven Protection Forests (231,281 ha) PAs, buffer areas and other critical landscapes in the Annamite region provide critical ecosystem services, supporting climate adaptation, flood mitigation, and food security<sup>[8]<sup>9</sup></sup>. The CVL transects Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue (renamed Hue City from 1 January 2025) and Quang Nam provinces, and the centrally-administered municipality of Da Nang. This geographic scope in prioritized provinces in the “*National Program on Conservation of Endangered and Rare Wildlife species prioritized for protection until 2030, with a vision to 2050*”. Central Vietnam holds significant ecological and global environmental importance, making it an ideal candidate for a landscape management project whose scope is to consolidate different models for Vietnam and the region<sup>[9]<sup>10</sup></sup>.

This landscape area is the area with the highest forest cover (in 2023) in Vietnam (55.68%) and much higher than the national forest cover rate (42.02%). Four provinces in the landscape area currently have the highest forest cover, higher than the average coverage rate of the North Central and Central Coast regions (54.23%), belonging to the group of 10 provinces with the highest forest cover in Vietnam, namely Quang Binh (68.70%), Quang Nam (58.88%), Nghe An (58.33%) and Thua Thien Hue (57.16%). Therefore, maintaining and increasing forest cover wherever possible - in particular in this landscape area - has an important contribution value to the implementation of Vietnam's national forest cover targets by 2030.

Table 2: rate of Forest cover in the central Vietnam landscape by province

Province	Total natural area (ha)	Total forested area (ha)	Natural forests (ha)	Plantation forests		Classification by Intended Use				Forest cover rate (%)
				The area of planted forests has become forests	The area of planted forests has not yet become forests	Total (ha)	Speciality	Protection	Production	
Nghe An	1,648,997.20	961,466.38	789,952.32	171,514.06	56,954.69	1,018,414.28	167,734.77	302,587.99	548,091.52	58.31
Ha Tinh	596,989.90	293,266.66	200,139.65	93,127.01	20,551.00	313,817.66	66,397.05	102,724.01	144,696.60	49.12
Quang Binh	799,931.47	549,605.87	469,912.54	79,693.33	40,265.15	589,871.02	138,651.67	145,754.16	305,465.19	68.71
Quang Tri	472,879.00	223,224.63	126,718.52	96,506.11	24,793.06	248,017.69	57,391.41	64,950.70	125,675.58	47.21
Thua Thien Hue	494,710.95	282,787.19	205,587.40	77,199.79	23,645.46	306,432.65	93,985.69	76,007.88	136,439.08	57.16
Danang	129,248.00	57,869.01	43,061.88	14,807.13	4,861.87	62,730.88	33,212.32	11,399.69	18,118.87	44.77
Quang Nam	1,057,486.33	622,671.48	462,320.53	160,350.95	58,487.13	681,158.61	129,238.17	283,739.72	268,180.72	58.88
<b>Total (ha)</b>	<b>5,200,242.85</b>	<b>2,990,891.22</b>	<b>2,297,692.84</b>	<b>693,198.38</b>	<b>229,558.36</b>	<b>3,220,442.79</b>	<b>686,611.08</b>	<b>987,164.15</b>	<b>1,546,667.56</b>	<b>54.88</b>

Source: Adapted from Annex I: Current State of Biodiversity in the Target Landscape.

The region encompasses a range of ecosystems, from coastal and marine environments to lowland and montane forests, as well as sub-landscapes such as the CAL. Each of these ecosystems supports different species and ecological processes, and their management and conservation are crucial for maintaining the wider region's ecological balance. The diverse benefits that local stakeholders derive from the natural environment/ecosystem of Central Landscape are ecosystem services. These services include 1) the supply of food, water and timber (i.e. provisioning services); 2) the regulation of air quality, climate and flood risk (i.e. regulating services); 3) opportunities for recreation, tourism and education (i.e. cultural services); and 4) essential underlying

functions such as soil formation and nutrient cycling (i.e. supporting services). Summary of these services are illustrated in the table below.

*Table 3: SUMMARY OF ECOSYSTEM FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES IN the CENTRAL LANDSCAPE*

No.	Ecosystem	Functions/and ecosystem services	Potential Payment for ecosystem services
1	<b>High mountain forests' ecosystem</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watershed protection</li> <li>• Soil erosion protection</li> <li>• Fresh water</li> <li>• Fuelwood</li> <li>• Flood regulation</li> <li>• Carbon sequestration</li> <li>• Climate regulation</li> <li>• Medicine</li> <li>• Recreation/ecotourism</li> <li>• Aesthetic values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payment for forest environment service (PFES)/and REDD+</li> <li>• Biodiversity conservation</li> <li>• Cave adventure tourism (Phong Nha-Ke Bang NP)</li> <li>• Eco-tourism/Nature-based tourism in PA system</li> <li>• Watershed management</li> </ul>
2	<b>Hilly ecosystem of midland areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timber</li> <li>• Fresh water</li> <li>• Fuelwood</li> <li>• Flood regulation</li> <li>• Carbon sequestration</li> <li>• Local Climate regulation</li> <li>• Medicine</li> <li>• Recreation</li> <li>• Aesthetic values</li> <li>• Wind /solar energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payment for forest environment service (PFES)/and REDD+/Carbon sequestration</li> <li>• Biodiversity conservation</li> <li>• Eco-tourism/Nature-based tourism</li> <li>• Watershed management</li> <li>• Water management and supply of big lakes</li> </ul>
3	<b>Agricultural ecosystem of narrow plains</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nutrient cycling</li> <li>• Food</li> <li>• Fiber</li> <li>• Fresh water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organic agriculture</li> <li>• Agro-Eco-tourism/Cultural heritage eco-tourism (Hue Monuments in Thua Thien Hue province, My Son Sanctuary, and the Hoi An Ancient Town)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medicine</li> <li>• Pest regulation</li> <li>• Cultural heritage</li> </ul>	
4	<b>Coastal and marine ecosystem</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flood regulation</li> <li>• Soil formation</li> <li>• Food</li> <li>• Climate regulation</li> <li>• Waste processing</li> <li>• Storm and wave protection</li> <li>• Recreation and ecotourism</li> <li>• Aesthetic values</li> <li>• Wind energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payment for wetland ecosystem service (PWES) (i.e. TG-CH)</li> <li>• Payment for marine ecosystem service (PMES) (i.e. Con Co, CLC MPA)</li> <li>• Aquaculture production</li> <li>• Tourism of beaches (i.e. Cua Lo, Thien Cam, Nhat Le, Cua Viet, Cua Tung), Thuan An, Lang Co</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Annex H: Landscape Profile and Land Use Aspects.

#### The Landscape Approach and the NbS Origination Platform in the Context of Central Vietnam:

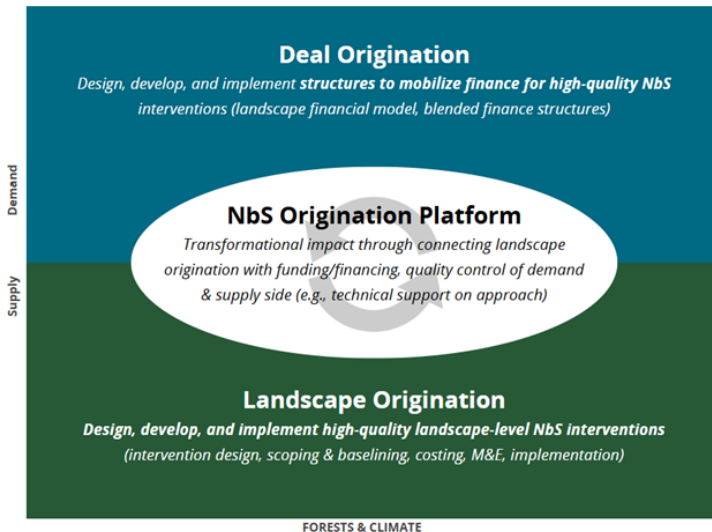
The landscape approach is increasingly recognized as a strategic and necessary response to global biodiversity loss and climate change, offering a holistic means of balancing conservation, economic development, and social inclusion within multifunctional landscapes. This approach moves beyond the traditional conservation project approach by integrating ecological, social, and economic considerations across broad landscapes, recognizing that conservation success depends on factors such as local governance, sustainable resource management, and financial viability. Landscape scale conservation in the 21st century requires expanding beyond the traditional protected area model to include other conservation approaches like Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) and biodiversity-sensitive production landscapes, ensuring connectivity and climate that generate durable impacts for climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development [10]<sup>11</sup>. In this context, the Vietnam project is adopting a landscape-scale conservation strategy that aligns with national priorities and global best practices by integrating and leveraging conservation tools such as protected areas, OECMs, biodiversity corridors and improved forest management, while strengthening governance, financial mechanisms, and private sector participation.

The project will also foster Integrated Landscape Management (ILM) principles to ensure a cross-sectoral, participatory approach that coordinates conservation, agricultural production, and socio-economic development within a defined landscape to achieve multiple, long-term sustainability goals. In the context of this project, ILM serves as a strategic framework to reconcile competing land uses—such as forestry, agriculture, infrastructure, and conservation—across the Central Vietnam Landscape, which spans ecologically sensitive areas and diverse ethnic communities. By promoting collaborative governance, spatial planning, and inclusive decision-making, ILM addresses the root causes of biodiversity loss, enhances ecological connectivity, and supports

climate resilience. This approach is particularly critical in Central Vietnam, where fragmented land-use planning has historically undermined ecosystem integrity and the viability of endangered species [11]<sup>12</sup>, [12]<sup>13</sup>.

WWF's Nature-Based Solutions Origination Platform (NbS-OP) is an innovative vehicle to drive impact at scale for people, climate, and nature across selected tropical forest landscapes. The NbS-OP aims to create a new model of scaling up, aligning, and mobilizing public and private investments in high-quality NbS under an integrated landscape finance approach. Supporting a variety of conservation approaches—including protection, improved management, and restoration—the NbS-OP aims to generate a supply of high-quality landscape investments (i.e. NbS that support landscape and jurisdictional strategies) and link it with diverse funding sources. The platform aims to showcase high-quality interventions that address key drivers and threats effectively, incorporate transparent and equitable governance and benefit-sharing mechanisms, and generate durable impacts for climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development, ultimately shifting the global market for transparent, high-quality NbS [13]<sup>14</sup>, [14]<sup>15</sup>, [15]<sup>16</sup>.

**Figure 1: Depiction of the NBS-OP**



**Source:** <https://www.worldwildlife.org/projects/nature-based-solutions-origination-platform>

In Vietnam’s Central Annamites, this integrated approach is particularly relevant given the region’s high biodiversity value, rapid economic development, and vulnerability to climate change. The project will use the NbS Origination Platform to enhance ecosystem resilience through targeted restoration of degraded forests, mangroves, and wetlands, while also fostering nature-positive economic activities such as sustainable forestry, biodiversity-friendly agriculture, and ecotourism [16]<sup>17</sup>. The GEF-8 project reflects this principle by embedding community-driven conservation strategies, ensuring that local knowledge, gender equity, and inclusive governance structures are central to landscape management. By integrating conservation efforts with national and provincial master plans, aligning with the revised NBSAP, and leveraging emerging financial mechanisms, the

project seeks to create a scalable model for biodiversity conservation and climate resilience. This landscape-scale, finance-driven approach represents a fundamental shift toward long-term sustainability, offering a replicable framework and model for other high-biodiversity landscapes across Vietnam and beyond.

### **Climate Considerations and Vulnerability:**

The Central Vietnam Landscape is among the most climate-vulnerable regions in the country, facing increasingly severe floods, droughts, and salinity intrusion. Flooding remains the most frequent and destructive disaster, with disproportionate impacts on agriculture- and aquaculture-dependent communities. The impacts of climate change have already led to prolonged and intensified storm patterns, shifting precipitation trends, and temperature increases that exacerbate economic and environmental vulnerabilities. According to climate models, the North Central region is expected to experience rising temperatures and increased rainfall from 2016 to 2030, which, combined with ongoing land degradation and habitat fragmentation, will significantly reduce ecosystem resilience [\[17\]<sup>18</sup>](#), [\[18\]<sup>19</sup>](#).

The economic consequences of these changes are particularly stark in rural communities. A study examining household livelihood strategies in Nghe An, Ha Tinh, and Quang Binh found that while all surveyed households experience regular flooding, poor households are disproportionately affected, suffering long-term economic setbacks. Inadequate disaster relief and compensation force some households to diversify into off-farm work, while others—especially those with fewer skills and financial resources—remain trapped in a cycle of economic vulnerability. Without targeted interventions, this economic divide will continue to widen, further marginalizing climate-affected communities and increasing rural-to-urban migration pressures. [\[19\]<sup>20</sup>](#), [\[20\]<sup>21</sup>](#)

Without sustained investment in NbS and other mitigation strategies, as well as resilient livelihood strategies, climate change will not only slow economic growth but will also intensify natural resource degradation and deepen rural poverty. Coastal and upland ethnic minority communities—whose livelihoods depend most on natural resources—face the highest risks, with potentially devastating consequences for poverty alleviation efforts. In the absence of proactive measures, climate-driven displacement and increased labor migration will exacerbate social instability, reversing recent gains in rural development. For more information on the CVL’s vulnerability to climate change please see **Annex P: Climate Impact Assessment**.

### **Key Drivers:**

Vietnam’s economic transformation since the Doi Moi reforms has been remarkable, lifting millions out of poverty and positioning the country as one of the world’s fastest-growing economies. However, this rapid development has intensified environmental pressures, particularly on biodiversity, forests, and wetlands. Despite previous conservation efforts, interventions remain fragmented.

The 2004–2020 biodiversity action plan for the Central Annamites lacked a landscape-scale approach, focusing primarily on protected area management in isolation and sector-specific interventions, which limited its effectiveness in addressing broader ecological connectivity and socio-economic drivers of biodiversity loss. Without integrated planning across administrative boundaries and land uses, the plan fell short in tackling deforestation, habitat fragmentation, and pressures from agriculture and infrastructure development that operate at a landscape level. As noted in the project’s landscape profile (see **Annex H for more information**), the absence of a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach hindered efforts to maintain ecological integrity across the broader Central Vietnam Landscape. Effective conservation requires integrated landscape planning, incorporating a range of opportunities including buffer zones, ecological corridors, and OECMs to ensure the long-term resilience of Vietnam’s globally significant ecosystems. The CVL itself faces severe ecological pressures due to deforestation, habitat fragmentation, climate change,

and unsustainable resource use. These threats are driven by a mix of economic, policy, and social factors that require systematic intervention. More specifically:

### 1. Land Use Change for Economic Development

Over the past two decades, rapid agricultural expansion, urbanization, and infrastructure development have severely fragmented and degraded Vietnam's natural habitats. Between 2001 and 2021, the country lost 3.26 million hectares of forest cover, including 10,544 km<sup>2</sup> converted to cash crops and commercial plantations, often in high-biodiversity areas. Conflicting land-use priorities and weak spatial planning have driven habitat loss, ecological isolation, and sharp declines in biodiversity—especially in landscapes critical for endemic and endangered species.

### 2. Climate Change Impacts

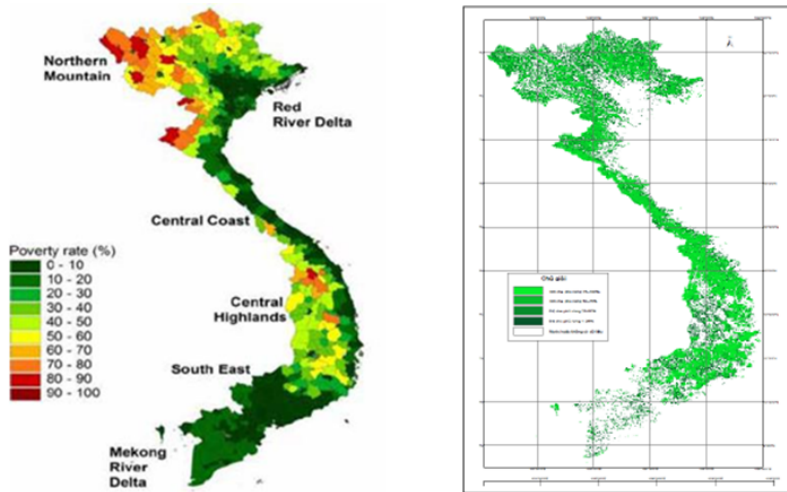
Climate change is increasing temperatures, altering precipitation patterns, and intensifying extreme weather events, further degrading ecosystems. Between 2016 and 2030, rainfall is projected to increase in the North Central region, while prolonged droughts and salinity intrusion threaten wetland and coastal areas. Rising sea levels and unpredictable storm patterns, especially in Quang Binh and Thua Thien Hue (renamed Hue City from 1 January 2025), are exacerbating flooding, coastal erosion, and loss of critical wetland habitats.

### 3. Unsustainable Resource Use and Overexploitation

Overharvesting of forest products, wildlife, and fisheries—driven by population growth and economic demand—has depleted species populations. Illegal wildlife trade and hunting are accelerating biodiversity loss, with the Central Annamites' forests increasingly becoming 'empty forests' devoid of wildlife. Overexploitation is also a primary threat to NTFPs, including high-value medicinal plants, which face unsustainable extraction rates. NTFPs are critical for an estimated 24 million people living in and around forest areas and are particularly important for the 8.5 million ethnic minority people living in the uplands alone<sup>[21]<sup>22</sup>,<sup>[22]<sup>23</sup></sup>.</sup>

Additionally, in the Central Annamite region of Vietnam, encompassing provinces such as Thừa Thiên-Huế, Quảng Nam, and Quảng Trị, human-wildlife conflict poses a significant challenge to conservation efforts. Habitat loss and fragmentation have led to increased encounters between humans and wildlife, notably with species like the Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*). For instance, between 2016 and 2020, wild elephants were reported to have damaged over 100 hectares of crops and several hundred cashew and rubber trees in Vietnam. Additionally, the pervasive use of wire snares for hunting has decimated ground-dwelling wildlife populations, contributing to the decline of endemic species such as the saola (*Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*) and Annamite striped rabbit (*Nesolagus timminsi*). Addressing HWC in this region requires integrated strategies that balance human livelihoods with the conservation of Vietnam's unique biodiversity<sup>[23]<sup>24</sup></sup>.

Figure 2: Incidence of Forests and Poverty across Vietnam



Source: The poverty map (left panel) was taken from World Bank Vietnam Country Forest Note (2019) while the forest

cover map (right panel) was taken from [https://opendata.vn/sites/default/files/e030100\\_do\\_phu\\_rung\\_2000\\_130116.pdf](https://opendata.vn/sites/default/files/e030100_do_phu_rung_2000_130116.pdf).

NTFPs contribute significantly to food and nutrition, fuelwood, fodder, medicines, construction materials as well as to the household economy (through the sale of high-value products). Ethnic minorities tend to specialize in an array of NTFPs that are specific to the ecoregions they inhabit. While NTFPs represent an important safety net through direct consumption and sales, in most cases they may not be adequate for helping people rise out of poverty. The poorest groups, in particular ethnic minority groups, are the most dependent on forest resources for their income and livelihood. Forest resources often help such groups avoid sinking deeper into poverty<sup>[24]<sup>25</sup></sup>. Furthermore, women are frequently disadvantaged, for a range of interrelated cultural, socio-economic and institutional reasons, in their access to and control over forest resources and in the availability of economic opportunities<sup>[25]<sup>26</sup>[26]<sup>27</sup></sup>. Rural women’s concerns continue to not be addressed adequately in areas that greatly impact their livelihoods: land, agriculture and forestry<sup>[27]<sup>28</sup>[28]<sup>29</sup></sup>. Wetlands are also under threat, shrinking due to over-extraction, pollution, and climate change. Given the drivers of biodiversity and landscape degradation, the Central Vietnam Landscape faces a number of barriers to optimal landscape planning and connectivity, including:

**Barrier 1: Poor institutional coordination between multiple agencies for wildlife and forest conservation and land use.**

Vietnam’s landscape conservation efforts face critical barriers due to fragmented institutional mandates, weak enforcement, and limited integration of biodiversity objectives into national and provincial land-use planning. Overlapping responsibilities between former MONRE, MARD (in the current government reorganization, MONRE has since merged with MARD into a single entity, the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MOAE)<sup>[29]<sup>30</sup></sup>, and provincial authorities create enforcement gaps, inconsistencies in conservation governance, and inefficiencies in protected area and ecological corridor management. While Vietnam’s Forestry Law establishes a legal foundation for conservation, it lacks clear guidance on collaborative landscape management, resulting in weak multi-sectoral coordination, limited community participation, and inadequate financial incentives for biodiversity stewardship.

Moreover, cross-sectoral integration of environmental laws remains insufficient, with most policies focusing on pollution control rather than landscape-level biodiversity conservation, leaving loopholes that undermine habitat protection and enforcement of anti-wildlife trafficking regulations. The establishment of a National Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES) platform marks a step forward in promoting multi-agency coordination, but its effectiveness depends on stronger institutional alignment, regulatory clarity, and enforcement mechanisms. Without a shift toward integrated governance frameworks that align conservation policies across national and provincial levels, Vietnam's biodiversity conservation efforts will remain fragmented and ineffective in addressing habitat degradation and species decline beyond protected area borders. For more information see **Annex K: Policy Baseline Analysis** for more information.

**Barrier 2: Complicated and incomplete policy and legal framework to holistically address landscape needs collaboratively with state and non-state entities in an integrated manner, in tandem with protected area and biodiversity conservation.** While Vietnam has laws and regulations related to biodiversity conservation and protected areas, there is no comprehensive legal framework that specifically addresses landscape conservation, OECMs establishment, and management of biodiversity corridors. Currently, Vietnam has perhaps the most complicated legal system globally<sup>[30]<sup>31</sup>,<sup>[31]<sup>32</sup>,<sup>[32]<sup>33</sup></sup>. Many recent biodiversity corridor construction projects have paid more attention to the structure of the corridor with little or no attention to its functions and testing them also faces certain challenges. With respect to OECMs, overarching objectives fall under the scope of many laws and sub-law documents that have not yet been unified. This can lead to overlapping, difficult to delineate and complicated when implementing OECM in Vietnam. To implement these effectively the role and contribution of the private sector needs to be articulated. However, at present, Vietnam still lacks specific legal regulations, mechanisms and policies to encourage the participation of the private sector in natural resource management and biodiversity conservation in a holistic manner at scale. The absence of a coordinated biodiversity conservation strategy limits the effectiveness of conservation efforts. While Vietnam has national and provincial spatial plans, they do not fully incorporate OECMs or consider climate adaptation needs. This lack of integration leads to fragmented interventions, reducing ecological connectivity. Additionally, subsidies and incentive structures at the national and provincial levels—particularly in the forestry and energy sectors—remain poorly aligned with biodiversity and climate goals, and may inadvertently contribute to land degradation, further compounding the need for integrated policy reform. For more information see **Annex K: Policy Baseline Analysis** for more information.</sup></sup>

**Barrier 3: Poor framework for engaging key stakeholders, funding and incentivizing investment and ownership in PAs and landscapes.** Funding for landscape conservation efforts in Central Area is often limited, which can make it difficult to implement large-scale initiatives such as ecological corridors. One of the main challenges is the limited availability of funding from government sources, which may be insufficient to cover the high costs of managing and protecting these areas. Vietnam is also well below the Southeast Asia regional spending average on PAs and inadequate to manage its PA network. According to a study conducted by the Vietnam Environment Administration in 2017 - surveying 102 protected areas across the country, including national parks, nature reserves, and special-use forests - the average budget for managing a protected area in Vietnam was around VND 1.5 billion (equivalent to approximately USD 65,000<sup>[33]<sup>34</sup></sup>) per year. This budget was used to cover various expenses, including personnel salaries, equipment and infrastructure maintenance, conservation activities, and community development programs. This did not include the costs associated with maintaining connectivity and addressing the conservation needs within the wider adjacent landscape. Furthermore, even the top-end of the budget is also well below the Southeast Asia regional spending average on PAs and inadequate to manage its PA network, let alone wider landscape needs<sup>[34]<sup>35</sup></sup>. Despite efforts to promote PES and conservation finance, biodiversity protection remains underfunded. Conservation efforts rely primarily on public-sector investment, while private-sector participation remains limited. Existing funding mechanisms lack long-term financial sustainability, and there is no systematic monitoring framework to assess whether funds contribute effectively to biodiversity outcomes. Watershed protection forest owners also receive limited funding from the central and local governments for protection and management activities. Forest owners in some watersheds receive a non-performance based, and relatively modest payment for forest environment/ecosystem services (PFES). This compensation mechanism is managed by national and provincial Forest

Development and Protection Funds (i.e., 14-22 USD/ha/year) for their participation in forest protection and management. Additionally, there is a lack of private sector investment due to the perceived low profitability and high risks associated with investing in protected areas. Another challenge is the lack of effective mechanisms to generate revenue from ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, and water regulation, which can help finance protected areas. The private sector has also not fully integrated whole-landscape or conservation policies into business operation principles due to lack of specific guidelines for integration. As such, there are insufficient mechanisms and incentives to seize the growing demand from private (e.g., companies with net zero targets) and public entities to invest in high-quality nature-based interventions, unlock greater financial flows by increasing supply of quality nature-based interventions and to align ambition from state- and nonstate actors to support systems change. For more information see **Annex M: Landscape's Funding Baseline Situational Analysis and Future Investment Opportunities in Integrated Landscape Management**.

**Barrier 4: Limited awareness, data and capacity among government and private sector entities to ensure the successful implementation and proliferation of whole-landscape models to conservation.** Finally, there is a general lack of public awareness and understanding of the importance of landscape planning and connectivity for biodiversity conservation in the Central Vietnam Landscape. This can make it difficult to build public support for conservation initiatives and may result in limited political will to implement landscape planning measures. Government agencies have limited understanding of the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services and the importance of their preservation for maintaining healthy functioning ecosystems. Many local communities lack awareness of biodiversity values, leading to overexploitation of natural resources. Weak community engagement and limited conservation capacity at the provincial and district levels reduce the effectiveness of ecosystem protection efforts. Without targeted education and outreach, conservation efforts will continue to face low participation and compliance challenges. Essential ecosystem services provided by protected areas are underappreciated by multiple stakeholder groups and therefore, undervalued and not considered in provincial development planning. The forests in Central Vietnam Landscape spanning the six targeted provinces, especially those in wetlands and peatland habits, have tremendous carbon value and their integrity is linked to Government of Vietnam's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in September 2020 and its voluntary pledge to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 27% by 2030. However, such values are often not taken into account during development planning, when the immediate benefits of land conversion for infrastructure and production uses trumps such longer term socio-economic benefits to the nation.

As these barriers illustrate there is a need to engineer a new paradigm from investing in landscape and wetland management through the two distinct strategic entry points of protected area management and biodiversity mainstreaming, to one that prioritizes an area-based investment strategy and strategies to respond to the drivers of biodiversity loss within large landscape and seascape mosaics. There is also an urgent need to move away from project-based and short-term funding models, to one that is landscape-needs driven, with a longer-term horizon to patch in public and private funding. Without intervention, Vietnam's biodiversity and ecosystems will continue to degrade due to deforestation, habitat fragmentation, unsustainable resource extraction, and climate change impacts. At the policy level, overlapping mandates, weak cross-sectoral coordination, and underdeveloped financial mechanisms hinder conservation effectiveness. The absence of integrated land-use planning leads to conflicting priorities between economic development and biodiversity protection, further accelerating environmental degradation. Illegal wildlife trade, unsustainable hunting, and agricultural expansion continue to threaten endangered species, while weak enforcement mechanisms fail to curb these pressures.

To transform this baseline, the project will establish a more strategic, area-based conservation model that prioritizes landscape-level investments and directly addresses biodiversity loss drivers using a range of tools for which clear guidelines, regulations and policies are enacted. The project will enhance protected area management, biodiversity corridors, and ecological connectivity across a minimum of 273,928 ha (and potentially up to 456,547 ha) outside the current PA estate, ensuring improved resilience to climate change and stronger species protection. By embedding biodiversity-sensitive land-use planning into national and provincial policies, conservation goals will become integrated into broader development frameworks, fostering long-term ecological stability. Community-based conservation will play a central role in the project by promoting sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity-friendly agriculture, ecotourism, and NTFP management, ensuring that conservation efforts benefit local communities. Capacity building and awareness programs will integrate traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) into national biodiversity policies, strengthening local engagement and fostering a culture of conservation. By implementing this integrated, multi-stakeholder approach, the project will create a scalable model for biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable development, ensuring long-term ecological and socio-economic benefits for Vietnam's most critical landscapes.

This will be possible through the following enablers: (i) embedding conservation in national land-use planning, ensuring biodiversity priorities influence development decisions; (ii) expanding sustainable financing mechanisms, including PES, biodiversity credits, and landscape-scale investment models, mobilizing private and public funds; (iii) strengthening protected areas and a framework for biodiversity corridors, improving ecosystem connectivity and climate resilience; (iv) enhancing community-led conservation, promoting NTFP-based livelihoods, ecotourism, and biodiversity-friendly agriculture to align local economic interests with conservation goals; and (v) Building institutional capacity, fostering better enforcement, monitoring, and adaptive conservation planning.

### **Future Scenarios and Strategic Considerations for Conservation in Vietnam:**

Given that this project seeks to address challenges in policy development, governance, and financial innovation, two key axes of uncertainty emerge: economic conditions and government commitment to conservation policies and governance reforms. These factors, further complicated by climate change uncertainties, shape potential future scenarios for biodiversity conservation in Vietnam. The following narratives outline different possible trajectories:

#### **Narrative 1: Slower Policy Reform and Slower Financial Innovation**

With limited policy progress and inadequate financial resources, pressure on forests and natural ecosystems will intensify. This scenario would reduce opportunities to establish OECMs, community-managed conservation areas, and private conservation efforts, hindering progress towards the KMGBF 30x30 target. Weak financial mechanisms would constrain adaptive management, limiting the ability to address climate change risks, while increasing deforestation, habitat degradation, and biodiversity loss.

#### **Narrative 2: Faster Policy Reform and Slower Financial Innovation**

While policy and governance frameworks for OECMs and conservation areas improve, the lack of financial mechanisms would undermine management effectiveness. This mismatch could lead to formal recognition of new conservation areas without the necessary resources to sustain them, resulting in inefficiencies in implementation. Additionally, without climate adaptation financing, the long-term resilience of conservation areas would remain uncertain, limiting the impact of policy advances.

#### **Narrative 3: Faster Policy Reform and Faster Financial Innovation**

A synergistic approach, combining accelerated policy reform with robust financial mechanisms, offers the most effective and sustainable pathway. This scenario envisions well-financed conservation initiatives, leveraging public-private partnerships, PES schemes, biodiversity credits, and carbon finance models to drive long-term ecological and economic benefits. Strengthened governance and institutional frameworks, coupled with financial incentives, would empower local communities and private stakeholders, fostering greater ownership of conservation initiatives and enhancing climate resilience.

Regardless of the scenario, pressures on forests and ecosystems will persist, demanding proactive policy reforms, enhanced governance, and sustainable financial models to strengthen Vietnam's conservation network. While Narrative 1 is unsustainable, Narrative 2, despite policy progress, remains constrained by funding gaps, limiting its long-term viability. Narrative 3 offers the strongest framework, ensuring the KMGBF 30x30 target is met through an integrated approach that balances policy, finance, and governance. A robust policy foundation, backed by sustainable financial flows, will be crucial in securing ecological integrity, biodiversity connectivity, and long-term environmental benefits for Vietnam's most critical landscapes.

### **Government Commitments and Investments in Biodiversity Conservation at Landscape-Scale:**

The proposed project aligns with and builds upon a strong foundation of existing investments in biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable land-use management in Vietnam. Previous and ongoing GEF-funded initiatives have contributed significantly to protected area management, biodiversity mainstreaming, and climate adaptation, providing a baseline upon which this project will further expand. The GEF-5 Greater Mekong Subregion Biodiversity Conservation Corridor Project, implemented by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), laid the groundwork for biodiversity corridor models in Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue, and Quang Nam, which this project will refine and scale up. Additionally, the GEF-6 project on mainstreaming natural resource management into socio-economic planning established key policy frameworks that the project will further integrate into national and provincial governance structures. Finally, the GEF-7 Nature-Based Tourism project—also operating in Quang Binh will be the first to advance legislation and guidance on PFES and PWES, along with innovative financial mechanisms such as community revolving funds and threat reduction through SMART patrols.

Complementary to these GEF-funded efforts, USAID's Sustainable Forest Management and Conservation in Vietnam (VFBC) initiative, invested nearly \$28 million to reduce emissions from deforestation and enhance the quality of forests in high-conservation-value landscapes, including Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue (renamed Hue City from 1 January 2025), and Quang Nam. This project will learn from VFBC to integrate forest conservation and biodiversity-friendly economic activities, leveraging ongoing investments in sustainable forest management. The North Central Region Emission Reduction Program (ERP), co-financed by the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) with a \$51.5 million investment, is a key initiative addressing forest governance, carbon sequestration, and sustainable livelihoods in the project landscape. This project will complement ERP by introducing biodiversity-specific interventions, ensuring that climate finance mechanisms also enhance species protection and ecological connectivity.

Vietnam has made significant commitments to global Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and Conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). These commitments emphasize Vietnam's efforts to align its biodiversity conservation policies with global environmental goals. At the national level, Vietnam has invested in landscape conservation through its national biodiversity strategy and action plan, Payment for Forest Environmental Services (PFES) programs, and the expansion of protected areas and OECMs. These efforts reflect Vietnam's integrated approach to biodiversity conservation, focusing on ecological integrity, climate resilience, and sustainable development. Additionally, Vietnam has launched initiatives to enhance landscape connectivity, such as the identification of areas for future establishment of ecological corridors to link fragmented habitats and ensure species migration. The government is also promoting sustainable forest management and community-based conservation programs that empower local communities to engage in biodiversity protection. The recognition and expansion of OECMs, including community-managed forests and wetlands, further contribute to Vietnam's conservation efforts by integrating traditional knowledge and sustainable land-use practices into formal biodiversity protection frameworks. Beyond GEF and international donor funding, Vietnam's NBSAP provides a critical policy framework for conservation investments, including the expansion of OECMs and PES mechanisms. The project will leverage Vietnam's PES system, which has generated significant funding for forest protection, engaging 450,000 rural households in conservation-based income generation. For more information on parallel project with which the GEF-8 project will dovetail, please see **Annex I: Current State of Biodiversity in the Target Landscape**. By integrating lessons learned from these ongoing initiatives, the project will refine landscape-scale conservation models, improve policy coherence, and strengthen multi-sectoral governance mechanisms. This approach aligns with Vietnam's commitment to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) 30x30 target, ensuring that at least 30% of degraded ecosystems are effectively restored by 2030.

### **Critical Stakeholders to Delivery:**

The successful implementation of this project hinges on the coordinated engagement of multiple stakeholders, including national and sub-national government entities, private sector actors, local communities, civil society organizations, and academic institutions. These groups play distinct yet interdependent roles in advancing conservation, sustainable land-use management, and climate resilience, ensuring that biodiversity and ecosystem services are effectively protected and restored in Central Vietnam. This project engages a diverse and influential set of stakeholders critical to biodiversity conservation and forest management in Central Vietnam. These include national and sub-national government bodies, state-owned forest enterprises, civil society organizations (CSOs and CBOs), ethnic minority communities, international NGOs, private sector actors, academic and research institutions, and development partners. For implementation and coordination purposes, these stakeholders are categorized into six primary groups: national government entities, sub-national government administrations, NGOs and

community-based organizations (including cooperatives), the private sector, and academia/universities—each playing a distinct role in shaping policy, mobilizing resources, and driving local action.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (formerly MONRE and MARD), through its Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency (NBCA), serves as the lead executing agency, responsible for policy integration, regulatory oversight, and national-level coordination with the Department of Forestry (DOF) and Forest Protection Department (FPD), contribute to sustainable land-use policies, forest governance, and enforcement against illegal logging and wildlife trade. Other national government agencies include: (i) Institute of Strategy and Policy for Agriculture and Environment' (ISPAE) under MAE; (ii) Department of Forestry (DOF) and Forest Protection under Ministry of Agriculture and Environment; (iii) Department of Fisheries and Fisheries Inspection under Ministry of Agriculture and Environment; (iv) Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI). MPI is now merged with Ministry of Finance (MOF) in a new ministry namely Ministry of Finance (MOF); (v) Ministry of Finance (MOF) is now merged with Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) in one ministry namely Ministry of Finance (MOF); and (vi) Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (MOCST).

At the provincial level, Provincial People's Committees (PPCs), in collaboration with their Department of Agriculture and Environment (DOAE), facilitate on-the-ground implementation, ensuring that conservation measures align with local development goals. Key sub-national entities will include: (i) Department of Agriculture and Environment, which has been merged from Department of Natural Resource and Environment (DONRE) and Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD); (ii) Department of Finance, which has been merged from Department of Planning and Investment (DPI) and Department of Finance (DOF); (iii) Protected areas/PAs (including Natural Nature Reserves and National Parks), Biosphere Reserves; (iv) Provincial Environmental Police Force; and (vi) District and Commune People's Committees.

Local communities, including ethnic minorities living in and around protected areas, play a vital role in conservation by managing community forests, participating in co-management of protected areas, and adopting sustainable land-use practices. Their active involvement in ecotourism, NTFP harvesting, and agroforestry will be supported through targeted livelihood programs. The project also recognizes the need to TEK, ensuring that conservation practices are culturally relevant and sustainable over the long term. See **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan**, Section 3.5 and **Annex F: Environmental and Social Safeguards Documents** (including the supporting Ethnic Minority Planning Framework) for more information.

Engaging private landowners will also be central to establishing OECMs on such a wide geographic scale and realizing ambitious 30x30 targets. The private sector, particularly companies engaged in forestry, agriculture, and tourism, will be essential in mobilizing financial resources and promoting biodiversity-friendly business practices. Partnerships with wood processing enterprises, FSC-certified timber producers, ecotourism operators, and agroforestry businesses will be pursued to scale up sustainable supply chains. Companies such as IKEA, Vietnam Rubber Group, and Vietnam Rubber Association, along with local bamboo, rattan, and forest product enterprises, are already active in the landscape and present opportunities for investment in sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation. Furthermore, the project will introduce innovative financial mechanisms such as PES, PFES and PWES, biodiversity credits, and other innovative landscape finance models, encouraging private sector contributions to conservation while aligning with global sustainability standards. See **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan**, Table 3 for more information.

In Vietnam central region, there are big universities and research institutes related to biodiversity and forestry, such as: (i) Vinh University in Nghe An Province; (ii) Hue university in Thua Thien Hue (TTH) province; (iii) Agro-forestry University in TTH province; (iv) Da Nang university in Da Nang City; (v) Quang Nam University in Quang Nam province; and (vi) Sub-FIPI in Nghe An and Sub-FIPI in Hue city of TTH province. These institutions will play a key role in advancing biodiversity assessments, ecosystem monitoring, and the development of adaptive conservation strategies.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) and international NGOs such as WWF, Fauna & Flora International (FFI), and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) will support conservation advocacy, policy development, and capacity-building efforts. CSOs and community-based organizations (CBOs), including Farmers' Unions, Fisheries Associations, and Women's Unions, will act as local implementation partners, ensuring that conservation activities are community-driven and socially inclusive. See **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan**, Tables 1 and 2 for more information.

By leveraging these diverse stakeholders, the project will foster a multi-sectoral governance framework that integrates conservation into national and local development planning, secures sustainable financing for long-term biodiversity protection, and ensures community benefits from conservation investments. For more information and details on the above please see

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- [5] <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/44c93664b88742be943c534e8d031728>
- [6] According to the [2019 Population and Housing Census](#) conducted by Vietnam's General Statistics Office, the Central Vietnam region—encompassing provinces such as Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue, Quang Nam, and Da Nang—had a combined population of approximately 18.5 million people. This region is home to several ethnic minority groups, including the Tay, Thai, Muong, Hmong, Khmer, and Nung, among others. Collectively, these groups constitute about 10-12% of the region's population. Notably, the Tay ethnic group is the largest among the minorities, with a population of 1.85 million nationwide.
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- [34] Based on the benchmark from Southeast Asia which the average of 196 staff and a budget of USD 1,000 per km<sup>2</sup>.

## B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section asks for a theory of change as part of a joined-up description of the project as a whole. The project description is expected to cover the key elements of good project design in an integrated way. It is also expected to meet the GEF's policy requirements on gender, stakeholders, private sector, and knowledge management and learning (see section D). This section should be a narrative that reads like a joined-up story and not independent elements that answer the guiding questions contained in the guidance document. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

### Theory of Change

The proposed GEF-8 project in the CVL aims to enhance biodiversity conservation and mitigate climate vulnerability through a comprehensive landscape approach. ***The project Theory of Change (ToC) is that if an enabling framework and multi-sectoral partnerships can be established to integrate wildlife and forest conservation with economic activities, and if these partnerships establish a financial framework to mobilize investment to restore and connect critical habitats, improve management of conservation areas, and utilize nature-based solutions for climate resilience across diverse landscapes, then threats in the landscape will be reduced and the project will deliver multiple benefits of forest conservation, connectivity, carbon sequestration, wildlife protection, climate resilience and community benefits.*** The project also emphasizes, utilizing, and strengthening knowledge management for sustainable environmental stewardship. Taken together, the project aims to address the institutional issues facing biodiversity management in Vietnam by focusing on six provinces and one centrally-administered municipality within the Central Vietnam Landscape. **Component 1** will establish the enabling framework and policies to enable key stakeholders at the national and provincial level to engage in cross-sectoral mainstreaming within multiple use landscapes with the necessary governance, supportive policies, guidelines and financial mechanism – and reinforced through institutional and professional capacities – in place to be tested and scaled. It will develop multi-sectoral partnerships in government and bring together the private sector and holders of privately-owned concession licenses. **Component 2** will work on the validation of a landscape-level model that will take a holistic approach to landscape management, aiming to reconcile the competing needs of wildlife conservation and economic activities across

landscapes through supportive and fully tested policies and guidelines, with special attention to feasibility studies for definition of ecological corridors, OECMs and co-management opportunities and intersectoral coordination. Most importantly, it will test a financial mechanism and tap into the investment community's desire to support high-quality and high-impact interventions, as well as match their needs with specific landscape priorities defined through a co-created, fully costed landscape management and business plan for Central Vietnam. **Component 3** will enhance climate resilience via restoration of degraded forests, mangroves and important wetlands using nature-based solutions. The project will develop clear parameters and metrics for measuring carbon benefits utilizing the best available scientific information. Preliminary assessment indicates that there will be a minimum of 4.01 tonnes of carbon equivalent sequestered that would be documented and contributed to Vietnam's NDC. Finally, **Component 4** will strengthen knowledge management to help Vietnam aggregate lessons learned, best practices and practical experience.

**The Project Objective is: establish a sustainable, replicable and collaborative landscape-scale conservation model to biodiversity conservation and reducing climate vulnerability in Central Vietnam for sustainable development.** Despite landscape conservation being mandated under the Forest Protection Law and a previous landscape plan for Central Vietnam, its implementation has been hindered by fragmented efforts and lack of collaboration by non-state actors. This project marks a transformational shift from isolated, project-based conservation to a cohesive, landscape-level strategy, aligning efforts under a unified vision with clear conservation priorities and diversified long-term funding. The ILM approach recognizes that while PAs form the foundation of conservation, their effectiveness diminishes if they remain isolated and disconnected from the broader landscape. Ensuring functional buffer zones and ecological corridors—linking PAs and OECMs—is essential for sustainable forest and land management, climate adaptation and mitigation, and the conservation of globally threatened species.

To overcome the barriers articulated in “Section A: Project Rationale” the project is purpose-built to hasten comprehensive effective collaborative action to:

- i. Restore and protect biodiversity corridors connecting PAs and key conservation wetlands at critical sites in Central Vietnam by improving the legal framework and establishing guidelines at the landscape level;
- ii. Engage interests from different sectors to enhance the protection, management and sustainable financing of both PAs and conservation corridors in Central Vietnam;
- iii. Improve livelihoods for local forest-dependent communities through engagement in sustainable forest management and the wise use of NFTP to minimize the likelihood of encroachment and the unsustainable exploitation of forest resources.

The Project Components (as the GEF Project Alternative) aim to remove the barriers to achieving the project's targeted conservation impacts (see Outcomes in the TOC in [Figure 1](#)), namely: to maintain ecosystem services and resilience, improve connected habitats for key wildlife species to facilitate their movement, conserve key globally-threatened wildlife populations, while co-benefiting a diversity of other biodiversity, and support resilient community livelihoods for forest dependent communities consistent with sustainable forest and land management; all while delivering significant carbon benefits. It is important to note that while nature-based solutions predominantly resonate to the GEF in the context of Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation, this is very much also a biodiversity-oriented project, with the lion's share of funding earmarked from the biodiversity focal area, and therefore, nature-based solutions are expected to be leveraged to deliver biodiversity benefits noted above. There are two main preconditions to the GEF Alternative:

- i. Central level government of Vietnam is able to create supporting conditions through enhanced policies and comprehensive legal and financial framework allowing for the multi-level stakeholder collaboration across sectors on conservation measures at the landscape level to take root. The project's theory of change addresses multi-level policy misalignments by targeting coordinated reforms at the national and subnational levels, while evaluating and mitigating adverse subsidy regimes that counteract conservation goals—thus enabling an enabling environment for landscape-scale sustainability;
- ii. More robust landscape models are tested and developed together with community-level commitment towards managing wildlife and their threatened habitats.

Key assumptions underpinning the Theory of Change include the following:

- It is assumed there will be continuity of political commitment for ecological arguments over economic ones;
- It is assumed that there is an inverse relationship between greater coherence of policies and legal framework governing OECMs and corridors, and increasing fragmentation of landscapes in Central Vietnam;
- It is assumed that fully funded strategies will lead to landscape management goals being met;
- It is assumed there will be strong multi-sectoral and inter-agency partnerships and collaboration;
- It is assumed that ministries and provincial departments are willing to apply guidelines to development and sectoral planning;
- It is assumed that co-management arrangements are agreed to with local communities and that they will be direct beneficiaries of enhanced wildlife conservation across landscapes;
- It is assumed that policies and wildlife impact guidelines are enforced and illegal activities curtailed.

There are three desired end states (represented as Outcomes) envisioned as part of the project as follows:

- **O1:** Strengthened legal, policy and financial framework enabling the establishment of a replicable landscape conservation model in Central Vietnam, for improved ecosystem functions, climate resilience and biodiversity outcomes;
- **O2:** Increased management effectiveness for biodiversity across 238,079 ha within PAs and 273,928 ha of landscape outside the PA estate under improved management practices (of which 2,712 contributing to carbon storage), as well as improved community forest management (OECMs, SUFs and PFs);
- **O3:** Enhanced climate resilience and corridor connectivity in and around high conservation value forested landscapes and wetlands;
- **O4:** Communication and knowledge management strategies developed and implemented to share and publicize project's results and advancements, including scientific awareness.

The Theory of Change is underpinned by the following impact pathways:

- **Operate at a Landscape Scale:** All interventions and activities ought to be framed and should occur through a multisectoral lens within a wider landscape, proactively engaging development sectors, private sector, academia and communities along the way. Effective management, therefore, needs to go beyond the scope of PAs and be managed holistically. The project will establish coordination mechanisms and facilitate enabling environments for policies and financing at the national and provincial levels for biodiversity conservation and natural resource management and restoration. This will contribute to Intermediate Outcome 1.1 by integrating effective biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management into national and sub-national planning, ensuring coherent implementation across sectors. Additionally, Intermediate Outcome 2.1 will be addressed by mobilizing biodiversity financing through cross-sectoral cooperation, enabling long-term financial sustainability for biodiversity conservation efforts. This will be achieved through the operationalization of a permanent biodiversity committee and coordination groups and formulation regulations and technical guidance/guidelines/plans related to biodiversity and natural resource conservation, management/ restoration, and financing (outlined in the project's Component 1). These interventions aim to tackle barriers related to silo-thinking, lack of standards and policy, and lack of incentive and financing for effective biodiversity conservation and restoration.

- **Foster Integrated Spatial Planning, Landscape Management and Biodiversity Monitoring:** These efforts will drive Intermediate Outcome 2.1, which focuses on implementing integrated spatial planning, landscape management, and monitoring systems across large landscapes to strengthen ecological connectivity, reduce habitat loss, and enhance long-term ecosystem resilience. To support this, Intermediate Outcomes 2.1-2.4 will collectively be realized through the activation of sustainable biodiversity financing mechanisms and policies that enable Indigenous people and local communities to engage in biodiversity-friendly livelihoods, creating long-term incentives for local participation while aligning economic development with environmental sustainability. This will involve the formulation and implementation of biodiversity-related management plans for the target geographies, incorporating the identification of potential OECMs and wildlife corridors for future establishment through application of integrated landscape approaches. Additionally, a tool will be developed and financial solutions and alternative livelihoods at the site-level will be initiated to mobilize resources for biodiversity.
  - **Strengthen institutional capacity at national, provincial, and local levels:** Activities articulated in the project emphasize a multi-pronged approach to help policy and decision makers internalize mainstreaming of wildlife across sectors at the national level, as well as capacity-building at a provincial level to connect national-level supportive policy measures with local-level environmental decision-making. Coupled with this, the project will facilitate knowledge management and capacity strengthening efforts to enhance public awareness of the significance of biodiversity conservation and natural resource management. This aligns with Outcome 4.1, which focuses on strengthening knowledge management, public awareness, and capacity to boost the use of best practices in biodiversity conservation and natural resource management, fostering cross-sectoral learning and equipping stakeholders to participate effectively in decision-making.
  - **Adopt a community-driven approach:** To ensure sustainability post-project, all interventions and activities should be determined by the needs and priorities identified by communities themselves using a shared-learning process and cross-pollination of knowledge and approaches. Local communities will engage in decision-making process relevant to landscape planning and nature resources management, play critical role in co-management, and benefit from sustainable livelihood support and benefit-sharing mechanisms.
  - **Consider the diversity of gendered experiences and perspectives:** Women and men both experience and contribute differently to environmental change. Women are typically more marginalized and hence more vulnerable than men, and as a result, are usually disproportionately impacted by the negative consequences of environmental change.
  - **A consolidated whole landscape and costed financing strategy is a driver of collective landscape priorities being met:** With respect to landscape financing, the logic is as follows: (i) **if** a national / sub-national framework with supporting guidelines for financing landscapes is established under Component 1; and (ii) **if** the project can convene the various stakeholders to develop a shared vision and strategy for the whole Central Vietnam landscape and identify its needs and priorities for different time horizons; and (iii) **if** the project can identify and cost out the core management needs, and (iv) **if** the project can develop a financing / business plan for the different landscape components and bring in/incentivize/crowdsource that financing, and (v) **if** the project can test this approach through a proof of concept in the demonstration landscape in Central Vietnam to then refine the national / sub-national framework and guidelines in Component 1 by injecting lessons learned; (vi) **then** it is assumed that it can deliver holistic landscape-wide improved management for biodiversity and carbon benefits.

In the **long term**, by pursuing those pathways, the project aims to foster systemic change and promote replication by engaging with not only the governmental actors but also private sector, CSOs and Indigenous people and local communities. This approach will thereby maximize the effectiveness and scale of the transformative impact envisaged through the GEF investment. Additionally, the project's multi-pronged approach aims to foster **behavioral change** by engaging all relevant stakeholders, individuals, and communities to encourage their support for biodiversity and resource management. This will be done through various educational and awareness campaigns, lessons documentation from pilot implementation, participatory decision-making processes, and collaborative partnerships, and by tapping into social and cultural values/traditions to promote biodiversity conservation.

**'Business as Usual' Scenario:**

In the absence of the project, weak biodiversity conservation and natural resource management would persist due to sub-optimal governance. Ineffective inter-sectoral coordination would undermine cohesive conservation efforts. Additionally, the lack of established policy frameworks and guidance for biodiversity mainstreaming, as well as nature management/restoration and financing, would continue to hamper the development of effective conservation strategies. This would result in continued uncoordinated spatial planning and fragmented conservation efforts. Failure to apply biodiversity mainstreaming and integrated management-restoration approaches, coupled with the oversight of climate risks, would also lead to suboptimal outcomes of conservation investments and efforts. Moreover, the limited stakeholder participation would prevent the integration of traditional and indigenous knowledge into landscape planning and management, along with sustainable livelihood practices, which further contributes to scattered efforts. Lastly, the lack of public awareness and the value of biodiversity conservation, coupled with insufficient capacity of relevant stakeholders would result in inadequate implementation of effective conservation measures.

As a result, the country will continue to experience exacerbated habitat loss and nature degradation. In this situation, unsustainable land uses in pursuit of urbanization, industrial expansion, infrastructure, and agriculture development, would further fragment the currently protected and productive habitats, increasing the risk of species extinction. This loss of biodiversity would disrupt ecosystem functioning, compromising vital ecosystem services like clean water and climate regulation, impacting community well-being and socio-economic development. Furthermore, reduced biodiversity would diminish ecosystem resilience to climate change, heightening vulnerability to extreme weather events and shifting climatic patterns. Indigenous and local communities reliant on natural resources would be disproportionately affected and would become more vulnerable due to persistent environmental degradation.

#### ***'Project-based' reality:***

Under the project intervention scenario, the project will facilitate acceptable transformative change in the strengthening of biodiversity and resource governance, particularly in the target areas. It will enhance inter-sectoral coordination and facilitate the adoption of policy frameworks and guidance for biodiversity mainstreaming, nature management/restoration, and financing. These initiatives will create enabling conditions for implementing coherent and effective conservation strategies, with the potential for replication in other provinces of Vietnam. By improving coordination and establishing cohesive policies and guidelines, the project will promote more integrated spatial planning and conservation efforts. Additionally, increased stakeholder participation will facilitate the integration of traditional and indigenous knowledge into landscape planning and management, fostering more effective conservation practices.

The GEF alternative will build on previous and ongoing investments, both GEF and non-GEF funded, by integrating lessons learned from past projects into the design of the currently proposed project. For example, the project will draw on the experiences from previous and ongoing initiatives in Vietnam that focused on biodiversity conservation, land degradation, and integrated landscape/habitat/ecosystem management-restoration. This includes best practices in engaging local communities and scaling up biodiversity mainstreaming and integrated management-restoration approaches. Moreover, it will leverage ongoing non-GEF projects to strengthen cross-sectoral policy coherence and the institutional capacity required for long-term sustainability. Please refer to "planned cooperation with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives" table in **Annex I: Current State of Biodiversity in the Target Landscape** pp. 47-55. These efforts will ensure that the current project not only benefits from the foundation laid by previous investments but also adapts to the evolving landscape of biodiversity governance in the country.

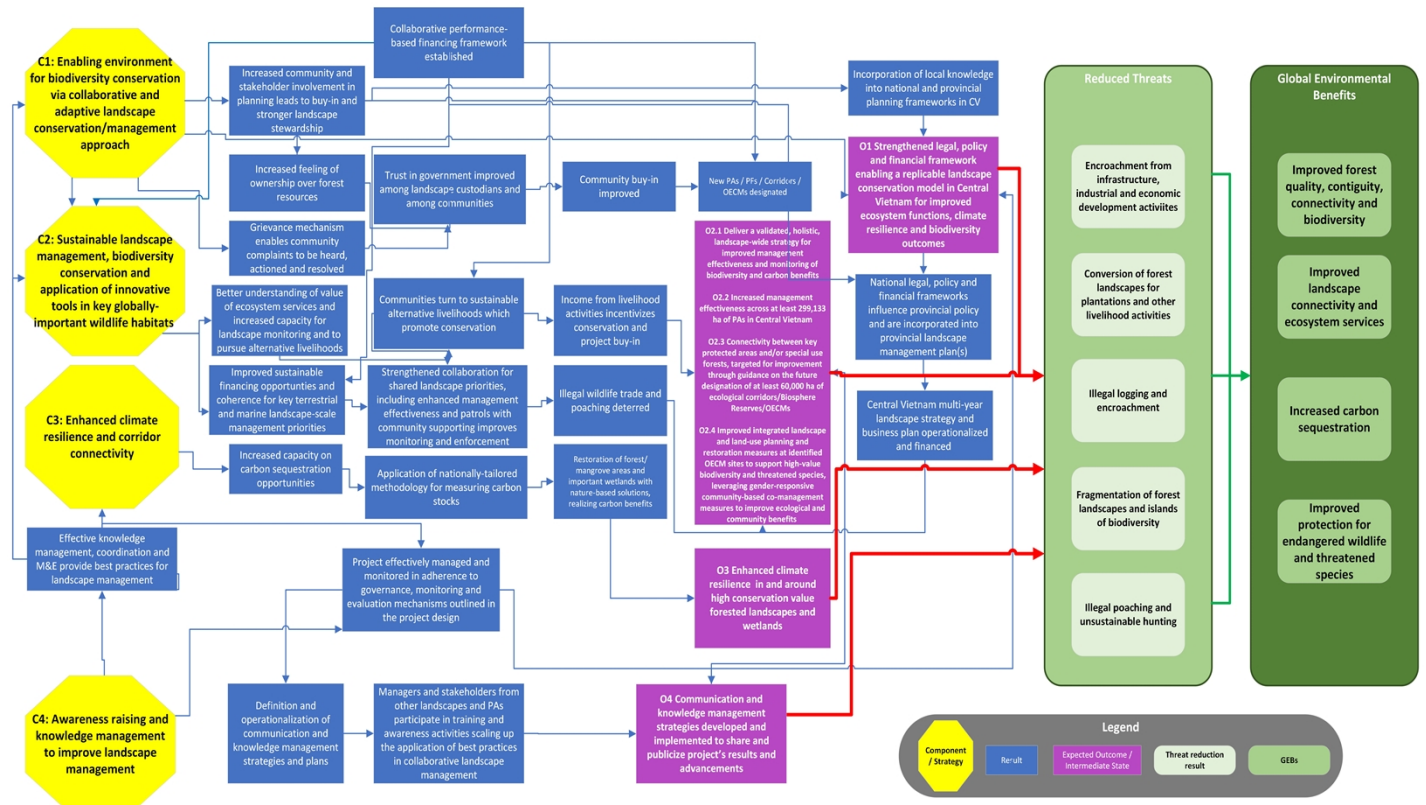
These approaches and efforts will contribute to a multiplier effect with systemic improvements by mitigating unsustainable land uses and preventing further fragmentation of protected habitats. By reducing the risk of species extinction and biodiversity loss, the project will help maintain, if not enhance, ecosystem functioning and preserve vital ecosystem services such as clean water and climate regulation in the target areas and potentially in other provinces of Vietnam. Furthermore, the project's strategies for enhancing the management of protected areas and productive ecosystems will help reduce the vulnerability of indigenous and local communities reliant on natural resources, both socio-economically and in terms of resilience against climate hazards.

#### ***'Ideal World' Scenario:***

In an 'Ideal World' scenario, a dynamic and comprehensive transition towards fully integrated planning and governance of biodiversity and natural resources would be achieved. This transformative change would effectively confront and mitigate the multitude of threats facing Vietnam's biodiversity, particularly those exacerbated by unsustainable land use practices, the impacts of climate change, and the overexploitation of biodiversity and natural resources. The enabling conditions (e.g., enhanced coordination and the formulation of policies and guidelines) created by the project within its target areas, would set the stage for

broader systemic changes across Vietnam. These changes would extend to the establishment of other supportive policies, regulatory, financial, and institutional frameworks that seamlessly integrate conservation objectives into local government planning and development processes. This integration would ensure that biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource management are not only prioritized but also ingrained into the country’s long-term development agenda. Furthermore, this comprehensive shift towards integrated planning and governance would catalyze economic pathways prioritizing sustainability, balancing economic growth with environmental conservation. As a result, Vietnam’s rich biodiversity and natural resources would be well-preserved and nurtured for the long term.

Figure 1: Theory of Change



**Project Area:**

The project will be implemented at the national level while focusing on key target landscapes in six provinces—Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue (renamed Hue City from 1 January 2025), and Quang Nam—as well as Da Nang City. These areas have been selected based on their global biodiversity significance, urgent conservation needs, and high potential for integrating sustainable land management and climate resilience strategies. During the PPG phase, a detailed situational analysis was conducted through provincial consultations (see **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan**) to assess biodiversity loss drivers, conservation opportunities, and landscape-level restoration strategies specific to each province. Collectively, the target provinces represent one of Vietnam’s most critical ecological corridors, spanning both terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems.

It is imperative to note that during implementation, the exact locations for interventions will be determined during the inception and planning phase during the first months of implementation, but expected to cover a substantial portion (at least 60%) of the 501,911 ha within the PA estate and 456,547 hectares outside the PA estate, as well as target a portion of the 17,100 ha available for restoration. The targeted project area includes:

- Nghe An Province, covering 16,490 km<sup>2</sup>, is home to Pu Mat National Park, a core biodiversity area within the Western Nghe An Biosphere Reserve. This province is a stronghold for critically endangered species, including the Saola, Large-antlered Muntjac, and Annamite Striped Rabbit, but faces intense pressure from deforestation, poaching, and land-use change. The project is expected to strengthen protected area management and expand forest landscape restoration initiatives to reconnect fragmented habitats.

- Ha Tinh Province, spanning 6,026 km<sup>2</sup>, contains several critical biodiversity corridors, linking Pu Mat National Park with Ke Go Nature Reserve and Vu Quang National Park. These landscapes are essential for large mammal migrations but remain highly vulnerable to illegal hunting and habitat degradation. The project will consider focusing on community-based conservation programs, empowering local stakeholders to manage and protect buffer zones and ecological corridors.
- Quang Binh Province, with 8,066 km<sup>2</sup> of diverse terrain, includes Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its limestone karst ecosystems and extensive cave systems. While its national parks provide strong conservation frameworks, forest degradation remains a key concern due to unsustainable timber extraction and shifting agriculture. The project is anticipated to enhance sustainable forest management strategies, reinforcing protection mechanisms through nature-based tourism and conservation finance mechanisms such as PES, including PFES and PWES mechanisms as well.
- Quang Tri Province, covering 4,745 km<sup>2</sup>, contains Huong Hoa Nature Reserve and Bac Huong Hoa Protected Area, essential for the survival of highly endangered primates and bird species. This province has suffered significant forest loss due to agricultural expansion and past wartime impacts. Here, the project is expected to invest in forest landscape restoration and agroforestry models, promoting biodiversity-friendly land-use practices that balance conservation with economic development.
- Thua Thien Hue Province (renamed Hue City from 1 January 2025), spanning 5,033 km<sup>2</sup>, is home to Bach Ma National Park and the Tam Giang-Cau Hai Wetland Nature Reserve, Southeast Asia's largest brackish lagoon system. The wetland and coastal ecosystems in this province are crucial for migratory bird populations and fisheries, yet face increasing threats from pollution, overfishing, and climate-induced salinity intrusion. The project expects to implement adaptive management strategies, combining coastal ecosystem restoration, sustainable fisheries management, and community-driven conservation programs.
- Quang Nam Province, covering 10,438 km<sup>2</sup>, includes Song Thanh National Park, a priority site for the conservation of endemic and endangered species in the Central Annamites. This province experiences severe fragmentation, with roads and hydropower projects disrupting wildlife corridors. The project is expected to explore possibilities for enhanced protected area connectivity, ensuring that ecological corridors remain functional for species movement while supporting biodiversity-friendly development initiatives.
- Da Nang, a centrally governed city covering 1,285 km<sup>2</sup>, plays a strategic role in regional conservation planning and sustainable development. Despite its urban setting, Da Nang contains Son Tra Nature Reserve, a critical habitat for the Red-shanked Douc Langur, one of the world's most endangered primates. The project will integrate urban biodiversity conservation strategies, demonstrating how nature-based solutions can be implemented in growing metropolitan areas.

During the PPG a consultative process was undertaken with government stakeholders at national and provincial level to identify **new priority initiatives for consideration** for GEF investment under this project in order to meet its core objective that are **distinct and do not overlap with other initiatives**. Please see **Annex E: Project Map and Coordinates** and **Annex I: Current State of Biodiversity in the Target Landscape**, for additional information and detail. The selection of target sites within the project area is strategically focused on zones that maximize ecological impact and carbon storage potential. Within each province, approximately 1% of the total area of terrestrial protected areas (PAs) will be selected based on their high exposure to external land-use pressures—such as agriculture, infrastructure development, and logging—which threaten ecosystem integrity. These edge zones are critical interfaces where targeted interventions can significantly enhance carbon sequestration, improve buffer zone management, and strengthen the resilience of core PA ecosystems. Similarly, in landscapes outside but adjacent to PAs, selected sites will serve as green corridors, linking fragmented habitats and facilitating species movement while also contributing to landscape-scale carbon

storage. These connectivity zones are essential for maintaining ecological continuity, managing human-wildlife conflict, and supporting the long-term viability of biodiversity in Central Vietnam.

Table 1: Priority locations identified during the PPG phase

Provinces	Potential locations / planning
Nghệ An	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ky Son Protection Forests: to support its effective implementation of the sustainable forest management plan in the period 2026-2030, focusing on improved practices of 62,731 ha natural forest landscape and restoration of 4,000 ha degraded/poor secondary forests and improved practices of 627.3 ha for contributing to carbon storage, particularly in six communes (Tay Son, Muong Ai, Nam Can, Na Ngoi, Nam Can and Muong Long) where to cover high conservation values of Puxailaileng mountain and connect to Pu Mat National Park via its buffer-zone forested landscapes in Tam Hop and Luu Kien communes of Tuong Duong district.</li> <li>➤ Pu Mat National Park: to support its improved management and conservation (94,415.6 ha), particularly in those natural forest areas adjacent to the buffer zone communes in Tuong Duong district, of which 944.2 ha under improved management for contributing to carbon storage</li> <li>➤ Proposed Puxailaileng protected area: to provide the province with necessary technical assistance to facilitate and process the creation of a new nature reserve (49,518 ha) situating within Ky Son and Tuong Duong districts under implementation of the national and provincial biodiversity conservation planning to 2030, contributing to make an expansion for the Western Nghe An Biosphere Reserve.</li> </ul>
Hà Tĩnh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Vu Quang National Park: to support its improved management and conservation (57,029.8 ha) through strengthening implementation of its sustainable forest management in the period 2026-2030 and facilitate effective restoration of 2,000 ha, focusing degraded/poor secondary forests in communes like Hoa Hai in order to expand habitats for large mammal species like elephants and connect it to the proposed biodiversity corridor connecting Vu Quang and Giang Man mountain, added another area of 570.3 ha under improved management for contributing to carbon storage</li> <li>➤ Huong Khe Protection Forests: to support the management board to conduct improved management of 27,290.4 ha natural forest landscapes with a demonstration of 271.9 ha under improved practices for contributing to carbon storage, enhancing conservation values for the proposed biodiversity corridor connecting Vu Quang and Giang Man Mountain;</li> <li>➤ Proposed Giang Man protected area: to provide the province with necessary technical assistance to facilitate and process the creation of a new nature reserve (20,000 ha) situating within Huong Khe district under implementation of the national and provincial biodiversity conservation planning to 2030.</li> </ul>
Quảng Bình	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Tuyen Hoa Protection Forests: to support its improved management and conservation (29,024.9 ha) through strengthening implementation of its sustainable forest management in the period 2026-2030 and facilitate effective restoration of 3,000 ha, focusing degraded/poor secondary forests in five communes (Huong Hoa, Kim Hoa, Lam Hoa, Thanh Hoa and Thuan Hoa), added another area of 290.2 ha under improved management for contributing to carbon storage</li> <li>➤ Thach Hoa Community-based Conservation Area: to support local communities to restore 600 ha of land and ecosystems in Thach Hoa, Dong Hoa, Thuan Hoa and Son Hoa communes where local villagers, authorities and non-state partners have been working to conserve an endangered primate species and their habitats</li> <li>➤ Proposed Khe Net protected area: to provide the province with necessary technical assistance to facilitate and process the creation of a new nature reserve (26,800 ha) situating in five communes of Tuyen Hoa district (Thanh Hoa, Huong Hoa, Kim Hoa, Thuan Hoa, Dong Hoa and Thach Hoa) under implementation of the national and provincial biodiversity conservation planning to 2030.</li> </ul>
Quảng Trị	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Dakrong – Bac Huong Hoa Biodiversity Corridor: to support stakeholder engagement and capacity to prepare and implement effective management regulation and plan, with improved practices, over the corridor area of 97,566.5 ha located within 12 communes of Huong Hoa and Dakrong districts, under implementation of national and provincial biodiversity conservation planning, added by a landscape demonstration of 975.7 ha under improved practices for contributing to carbon storage</li> <li>➤ Huong Hoa – Dakrong Protection Forests: to support the management board to facilitate effective restoration of 2000 ha, strengthening landscape connectivity within the Dakrong – Bac Huong Hoa Biodiversity Corridor particularly in those areas adjacent to special use forests of Bac Huong Hoa Nature Reserve;</li> <li>➤ Bac Huong Hoa Nature Reserve and Dakrong Nature Reserve: to support their improved management and conservation (23,456.7 ha and 37,660.0 ha respectively) through strengthening their incorporation implementation of a sustainable forest management plan in the period 2026-2030 as these two are integrated under one institution (known as Quang Tri</li> </ul>

	Special Use Forest Management Board), added demonstration of 234.6 ha in Bac Huong Hoa and 376.6 ha in Dakrong under improved landscape practices for contributing to carbon storage.
TT-Huế	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sao La – Phong Dien Biodiversity Corridor: to support stakeholder engagement and capacity to prepare and implement effective management regulation and plan, with improved practices, over the corridor area of 77,640.8 ha located within 10 communes of A Luoi and Nam Dong districts, under implementation of national and provincial biodiversity conservation planning, added by a landscape demonstration of 776.4 ha under improved practices for contributing to carbon storage</li> <li>➤ A Luoi Protection Forests: to support the management board to facilitate effective restoration of 2000 ha, strengthening landscape connectivity within the Sao La – Phong Dien Biodiversity Corridor particularly in those areas adjacent to Sao La and Phong Dien nature reserves;</li> <li>➤ Phong Dien Nature Reserve and Sao La Nature Reserve: to support their improved management and conservation (40,814.3 ha and 19,375.6 ha respectively) through strengthening their implementation of sustainable forest management plans in the period 2026-2030, added demonstrations of 408.1 ha in Phong Dien and 193.8 ha in Sao La under improved landscape practices for contributing to carbon storage</li> <li>➤ Tam Giang – Cau Hai Wetland Nature Reserve (4,072.2 ha): to technically support the province with the development of a project proposal on payment of wetland ecosystem services as an innovative intervention for improved management, added by a demonstration of 40.7 ha under improved management for contributing to carbon storage in relevant mangrove forests.</li> </ul>
Quảng Nam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sao La – Song Thanh – Elephant protected areas’ Biodiversity Corridor: to support stakeholder engagement and capacity to prepare and implement effective management regulation and plan, with improved practices, over the corridor area of 122,938.3 ha located within 12 communes of Tay Giang and Nam Giang districts, under implementation of national and provincial biodiversity conservation planning to 2030, added by a landscape demonstration of 1,229.4 ha under improved practices for contributing to carbon storage</li> <li>➤ Dong Giang Protection Forests (34,834.5 ha): to support the management board to strengthen improved practices under implementation of its sustainable forest management in the period 2026-2030, plus landscape restoration of 2,000 ha in those communes connecting to the biodiversity corridor and Ba Na-Nui Chua special use forest range in Quang Nam and Da Nang; added by a demonstration of 348.3 ha under improved practices for contributing to carbon storage</li> <li>➤ Sao La Species and Habitat Reserve and Song Thanh National Park: to support their improved management and conservation (15,400.4 ha and 76,593 ha respectively) through strengthening their implementation of sustainable forest management plans in the period 2026-2030, added demonstrations of 154 ha in Sao La and 765.9 ha in Song Thanh under improved landscape practices for contributing to carbon storage</li> <li>➤ Elephant Species and Habitat Reserve: to support an effective restoration of 1,500 ha in Phuoc Ninh and Que Lam in order to expand natural landscape for the existing elephant population</li> <li>➤ Lim Xanh Species Conservation Area: to support the province with the creation of a new species conservation area within Tay Giang protection forest under implementation of the provincial biodiversity conservation planning for 2030.</li> </ul>

Source: Annex I: Current State of Biodiversity in the Target Landscape

### **Project Description:**

To achieve this objective, the project will deploy four connected strategies (Project Components) with interventions / outputs described in the paragraphs below.

### **Component 1: Enabling environment for biodiversity conservation via collaborative and adaptive landscape conservation/management approach**

Taken together, this will entail strengthening the institutional and policy framework, as well as financing mechanisms to synchronize landscape priorities with biodiversity conservation within the broader landscape and put in place an enhanced policy and regulatory framework, with supporting guidelines, to enable a replicable landscape conservation model for Central Vietnam.

As a whole, the component will help establish and consolidate a governance system that enables a strengthened legal, policy and financial framework for a end-to-end landscape conservation model in Central Vietnam (**Outcome 1.1**), while making linkages at national, provincial and local scales where appropriate. The project will establish a gender inclusive working group under the national BES platform (**Output 1.1.1**) to explore core landscape concepts through stakeholder consultations and dialogues, share information and review critical regulations, policies and guidelines pertaining to landscape connectivity, corridors and OECMs. A similar unified mechanism, inclusive of gender considerations, will be established at the provincial level (**Output 1.1.2**) to enable coordination, information sharing and decision-making and linkages to national governance established through Outputs 1.1.1. These gender appropriate governance mechanisms are expected to adopt a comprehensive performance-based financial mechanism and strategies to incentivize investment via governance structures established under 1.1.1 and 1.1.2 (**Output 1.1.3**), together with gender responsive guidelines, regulations and other instruments to improve landscape contiguity, prioritizing species needs, that will be informed by international experiences and best practice. Where relevant, recommendations will be made to revise the Law of Biodiversity, while promoting gender equality (**Output 1.1.4**) to address gaps related to operationalizing greater cohesiveness of landscape management priorities. Based on experiences in applying the regulations, policies and guidelines developed under Component 1 through pilot initiatives to be determined within the target landscape, the multisectoral governance system will ultimately refine and finalize these through an ongoing feedback loop by leveraging through permanent flows of dialogue and negotiations at the national and provincial level to advance in tailoring appropriate connectivity mechanisms based on the landscape context and priority needs for protection. The central idea is to unify different initiatives, and avoiding overlapping activities and piecemeal priorities. To support clarity, Component 1 addresses governance and policy alignment across three scales: national legal and policy frameworks (e.g., **Outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.4**), subnational and provincial planning processes (e.g., **Outputs 1.1.2, 1.1.4**), and financial mechanisms that underpin landscape-level conservation (**Output 1.1.3**).

***Output 1.1.1: A collaborative and gender inclusive landscape conservation working group established under the national Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES) partnership platform on biodiversity and ecosystem, with capacity for stakeholder engagement and coordination.*** The project will establish a collaborative and gender-inclusive landscape conservation working group under Vietnam's national BES partnership platform to strengthen multi-level planning and coordination in high-value landscapes of Central Vietnam. This working group will enhance cross-sectoral engagement, policy integration, and participatory decision-making to support biodiversity conservation and ecosystem resilience. The landscape working group under the BES platform will operate similarly and in concert with the nature-based tourism working group mechanism and governance established under the UNDP-GEF full-sized project "*Promote Wildlife Conservation and Responsible Nature Based Tourism for Sustainable Development in Vietnam*" (GEF ID: 10787). Similar this working group, this governance body will be the principle stakeholder/decision making group, providing oversight, guidance, and inputs into specific outputs, for example national-level policies. This output will also include stakeholder consultations and dialogue mechanisms to inform national landscape planning and coordination, distinct from policy and regulatory alignment activities.

Indicative Activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Identify and establish a landscape conservation working group with the participation of relevant stakeholders; (ii) Facilitate gender-responsive multi-stakeholder dialogues, ensuring the participation of government agencies, local communities, civil society organizations, and the private sector, as well as the integration of national and provincial development strategies to enhance inclusivity in landscape conservation planning; (iii) Strengthening the capacity of NBCA in policy advocacy through training and experience sharing; and (iv) Establishing and implementing bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms (e.g., through MoUs).

Operation at national level, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by MOAE together with other national-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The implementation of Output 1.1.1 will involve two national consultants, who will support the establishment of a governance framework, facilitate stakeholder engagement, and ensure policy alignment with national and global biodiversity targets. A participatory process will include multi-stakeholder dialogues with government agencies, CSOs, local communities, and the private sector to co-develop objectives, operational mechanisms, and gender-responsive strategies. Regular consultations, capacity-building workshops, and technical support will ensure broad ownership and effective coordination within the BES partnership platform. A monitoring and evaluation framework will be overseen by the Project Management Unit to track progress on strengthening multi-level planning and policy integration.

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**Output 1.1.2: Harmonizing policies across provincial levels, sectors, and stakeholders to promote effective landscape management with gender considerations.** This output will conduct the underlying analysis and provide recommendations for potential adjustments to the legal framework to promote effective landscape management, including harmonized policies and governance framework that integrate biodiversity conservation, sustainable land-use planning, and climate adaptation at the provincial level in Central Vietnam. This framework will ensure policy coherence, streamlined decision-making, and enhanced coordination among provincial agencies, while embedding gender considerations to promote inclusive governance. By strengthening information-sharing mechanisms and institutional linkages, the project will enable more effective biodiversity management and cross-sectoral collaboration.

Key enablers for this framework include the PPCs, which play a crucial role in environmental management and biodiversity conservation by integrating national policies into provincial planning. Provincial Department of Agriculture and Environment (DOAE)<sup>[1]<sup>36</sup></sup> will be instrumental in ensuring alignment with national conservation strategies, climate change adaptation, and sustainable land-use policies. Additionally, state-owned forest enterprises, civil society organizations, and local communities will be engaged to ensure the policy framework is responsive to grassroots needs and practical implementation challenges. Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) A gap analysis and recommendations to align existing provincial policies and guidelines with national biodiversity strategies and global conservation targets; (ii) Establish a gender-responsive coordination mechanism to facilitate multi-sectoral collaboration among provincial authorities, civil society organizations, and the private sector, while ensuring active participation from women, local communities, ethnic minorities and vulnerable groups; (iii) Develop standardized guidelines for biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource-use (both terrestrial and wetlands, excluding marine environments) to be implemented across the target provinces; and (iv) Building on the foundations from other projects, existing tools and government IT architecture, develop a digital landscape-scale biodiversity and climate resilience information-sharing platform, supporting data-driven policy adjustments, decision making and real-time monitoring. A consultative process will be established to develop a requirements document to determine the scope and scale of the platform at the outset of the project.

Operating at provincial scale, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by DOAE together with other provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The project will engage one international and one national consultants, to conduct analysis and recommendations underpinning the eventual development of harmonized policies and governance framework that integrates biodiversity conservation, sustainable land-use planning, and climate adaptation at the provincial level in Central Vietnam. A comprehensive gap analysis and review and alignment of existing policies with national and global conservation targets will inform the development of standardized guidelines and a coordinated decision-making structure that strengthens multi-sectoral collaboration among provincial agencies, CSOs, and the private sector. A gender-responsive governance model will be embedded to ensure inclusive participation from women, indigenous groups, and marginalized communities. A public tender will be leveraged for Activity 1.1.2.4 once requirements are elicited by a national Business Analyst consultant based on the guidelines developed.

**Output 1.1.3: New gender-responsive financial mechanisms and tools are developed to incentivize investment in landscape management and biodiversity conservation.** The project will assess potential innovative, gender-responsive financial mechanisms to drive investment in biodiversity conservation and sustainable landscape management in Central Vietnam. These potential mechanisms will bridge the existing funding gap, which has historically relied heavily on government budgets (77%) and international donors (19%), with only 4% from private sector contributions. By assessing and potentially introducing new financial instruments, including blended finance models--including tools such as biodiversity offsets and PES--the project will mobilize private sector engagement while ensuring transparent performance criteria that maximize climate, biodiversity, and socio-economic benefits. These strategies will align with national policies under the NBSAP and global frameworks like the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Target 19, which seeks to scale biodiversity-related investments. For more information please see **Annex**

## **M: Landscape's Funding Baseline Situational Analysis and Future Investment Opportunities in Integrated Landscape Management.**

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Assess and conduct feasibility for multi-level financial tools that integrate blended finance, biodiversity credits, and impact investment models to attract private sector and philanthropic contributions; (ii) Develop project proposals to expand and optimize the PFES, PMES and PWES model(s), ensuring that revenues benefit local communities, particularly ethnic minorities, and women-led enterprises; (iii) Review, adapt, operationalize and document experiences with financial mechanisms as appropriate (such as biodiversity offsets and green bonds among others) as mechanisms for funding landscape conservation, leveraging government climate commitments and compliance against national environmental regulations; and (iv) Develop, pilot and refine a results-based budgeting for biodiversity, ensuring efficient allocation, transparency, and measurable conservation outcomes.

Operating at national scale, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by MOAE together with other national-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The project will likely engage one international and three national consultants to scope, assess the feasibility, and design innovative, gender-responsive financial mechanisms that mobilize private sector, philanthropic, and blended finance for biodiversity conservation and sustainable landscape management in Central Vietnam. By exploring the expansion and optimization of existing schemes such as Payments for Environmental Services (PFES, PMES, PWES) and introducing biodiversity credits, offsets, and green bonds, the project will help towards a diversification of funding sources and will help ensure revenues benefit local communities, particularly women and ethnic minorities.

***Output 1.1.4: Guidelines, regulations, and other tools applying the landscape approach to biodiversity conservation, including gender considerations, are proposed for inclusion in the Biodiversity Law.*** The project explore and recommend guidelines, regulations, and governance instruments to support integrated biodiversity and natural resource management, including wetlands, production forests, logging practices, and forest concessions. These frameworks will guide the identification, planning, and management of OECMs while embedding gender-sensitive approaches and ensuring alignment with Vietnam's evolving conservation policies. By integrating these regulations into national, provincial, and sectoral planning processes, the project will strengthen institutional capacity, enhance biodiversity conservation effectiveness, and promote sustainable forest management practices. It will also establish a training framework for forest enterprises and community forest user groups to ensure effective implementation and knowledge transfer. Furthermore, the project will support recommendations to the revision of Vietnam's Law on Biodiversity (2008) to align legal frameworks with contemporary conservation needs, particularly landscape management, OECM recognition, and wildlife protection. Current regulatory gaps hinder effective biodiversity governance, creating conflicts between forest management, conservation planning, and economic development priorities.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Assess and recommend revisions to national and provincial guidelines for biodiversity and natural resource management, including OECM identification, restoration, and governance; (ii) Strengthen institutional mechanisms for biodiversity and land-use governance, ensuring multi-sectoral coordination among MONRE, MARD, and provincial authorities leveraging appropriate mechanisms established through Outputs 1.1.1 and 1.1.2; (iii) Mainstream biodiversity conservation and ecosystem-based management strategies into provincial land-use and development plans, ensuring alignment with Vietnam's National Biodiversity Strategy; (iv) Explore gender-responsive training programs for forest enterprises and community-based user groups to enhance sustainable biodiversity and wetland management. Through facilitated workshops, technical support, and capacity-building efforts, provincial actors, including PPCs, DOAE, and local stakeholders, will be equipped to implement the framework effectively, fostering long-term policy coherence and institutional coordination; (v) Conduct a legal gap analysis to identify inconsistencies and ambiguities in biodiversity governance, focusing on OECM implementation, conservation financing, and wildlife protection; and (vi) Facilitate multi-stakeholder consultations, ensuring broad participation from government agencies, forest enterprises, indigenous communities, and private sector actors to identify implications to refine the legal amendments.

Operating at national and provincial scale, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by both MOAE and DOAE, together with other national- and provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

For this Output, the project will likely engage one international and one national consultant to make recommendations to develop and implement harmonized guidelines, regulations, and governance instruments for integrated biodiversity and natural resource management, ensuring alignment with Vietnam's National Biodiversity Strategy and OECM frameworks. By mainstreaming these guidelines into national, provincial, and sectoral plans, the project will strengthen institutional mechanisms for biodiversity and land-use governance while promoting sustainable forest and wetland management. A gender-responsive training program will equip forest enterprises and community user groups with the necessary skills for effective implementation, while pilot payment mechanisms for ecosystem services will enhance financial sustainability and encourage private-sector engagement in conservation efforts. Through multi-sectoral coordination and capacity-building workshops, key agencies such as MOAE, DOAE will be supported in integrating these strategies into long-term land-use planning, using the digital landscape-scale biodiversity and climate resilience information-sharing platform anticipated under Output 1.1.2.

## **Component 2: Sustainable landscape management, biodiversity conservation and application of innovative tools in key globally-important wildlife habitats.**

Component 2 applies an integrated landscape approach that bridges national, provincial, and community scales, ensuring that interventions—from policy development to corridor management and community livelihoods—are spatially targeted and operationalized through a unified Landscape Management Plan that will be tailored for each province during implementation. As a whole, this Component will work on the practical validation of a landscape-level model that will take a holistic approach to landscape management, aiming to reconcile the competing needs of wildlife conservation and economic activities across landscapes through experiential learning and ground-truthing. Above mentioned threads to the conservation will be addressed, especially with the local community engagement. Most importantly, it will test a financial mechanism and tap into the investment community's desire to support high-quality and high-impact interventions, as well as match their needs with specific landscape priorities defined through a co-created, fully costed landscape management and business plan for Central Vietnam. In doing so, it will deliver a validated holistic landscape-wide strategy for improved management and monitoring of biodiversity and carbon benefits (**Outcome 2.1**) leading to increased management effectiveness for biodiversity conservation within the CVL (**Outcome 2.2**), enable future designation and connectivity of at least at least 60,000 ha through a range of measures (**Outcome 2.3**) and the adoption of improved integrated conservation and land-use planning measures at identified OECM sites for ecological and community benefits (**Outcome 2.4**).

A key emphasis will be to deliver a validated, holistic, budgeted, landscape-wide strategy for improved management and monitoring of biodiversity and carbon benefits, together with a comprehensive gender responsive 5- and 10-year multi-level landscape financing strategy covering priority measures (**Output 2.1.1**) and supported by a financing plan for the different landscape components with built-in incentives and a crowdsourcing model (**Output 2.1.2**) to operationalize financial partnerships and mobilize support for landscape and biodiversity management and conservation strategies (**Output 2.1.3**). A complimentary fund for community-based and woman-centric pilot initiative(s) adapted from the UNDP-GEF Nature-Based Tourism project (**Output 2.1.4**) under a recently established finance mechanism in Central Vietnam will help nurture ownership and accelerate community co-management across the landscape. The integrated set of regulations, policies and guidelines will support decision making to generate aggregated management priorities to serve as roadmap for the conservation and restoration actions to be worked out by the project in demonstrative areas and replicated in other areas once tested through Component 4. Overall management effectiveness, governance and enforcement/monitoring capabilities of PAs, BCAs, OECM sites and Wetland Nature Reserves will be improved through technical assistance and gender equality (**Output 2.2.1**) Decree 99/2010/ND-CP and Decree 147/2016-ND-CP, now replaced by the Decree 156/2018/ND-CP and Decree 83/2020/ND-CP, were the first legal framework for PFES applied in forestry sector in Vietnam. The Payment for Wetland Ecosystem Services (PWES) has been acknowledged in the Article 138 of the Vietnam's

Environmental Protection Law in 2020. The project will support the implementation of payments for marine and wetland ecosystem services. Then doing the review and evaluate to make recommendations and improve the policy in the future. In particular, the project will develop and implement PWES guidance in TG-CH Wetland Nature Reserve to unlock financial potential of wetland conservation (**Output 2.1.5**). Emphasis will be given to the application of national criteria to establish corridor connected landscapes and include feasibility studies to study opportunities for enhanced contiguity (**Output 2.3.1**) based on integrated landscape management principles approaches and innovative planning tools and Decision 523/QĐ-TTg and will result in the development and implementation of corridor management plans (**Output 2.3.2**) within the landscape. Similarly, prospective OECM sites will be identified and selected through application of guiding principles (**Outputs 2.4.1**) for which community and women's engagement innovations for wildlife conservation, landscape management and human wildlife conflict will be tested (**Output 2.4.2**) to build an effective OECM management mechanism, including data innovations to pull together disparate landscape data managed by different custodians made possible through data sharing agreements, with special attention to livelihood development and gender for forest and wetland dependent communities (**Output 2.4.3**). The PPG phase undertook studies to document and categorize different nature-based solutions and their relevance to biodiversity enhancements in globally relevant landscapes in Central Vietnam.

***Output 2.1.1: A comprehensive sustainable landscape management strategy and financial plan is developed for the Central Vietnam region.*** The project will develop a consensus-based, multi-stakeholder Landscape Management Plan to guide integrated conservation and sustainable development across Central Vietnam. This plan will combine top-down policy analysis with bottom-up local consultations to identify clear objectives and priority actions tailored to different sub-landscapes, while assessing institutional arrangements, implementation capacity, and policy support tools within a nationally coherent model. Embedded in the plan will be a financial needs assessment and a unified Resource Mobilization Strategy, providing practical guidelines for provincial-level implementation and coordination—potentially through province-led forums established under Output 1.1.2 and Output 2.1.3. The plan will also deliver actionable policy recommendations, technical assistance, and capacity-building support to ensure that local actors, including women and ethnic minority communities, can effectively contribute to and benefit from landscape-level interventions. To enable long-term sustainability, the project will establish a partnership platform to mobilize resources, foster collaboration across sectors, and ensure alignment with Vietnam's national biodiversity and climate priorities.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Conduct a financial needs assessment to evaluate biodiversity and landscape financing gaps, integrating findings into the multi-level investment strategy; (ii) Develop a multi-tiered landscape investment strategy that aligns with Vietnam's NBSAP, national climate finance policies, and international biodiversity financing commitments, ensuring integration of public, private, and blended finance mechanisms; (iii) Establish a landscape-scale biodiversity finance platform, bringing together government, financial institutions, private sector investors, and local communities to co-develop public-private partnerships (PPPs) and sustainable investment pipelines for conservation and climate adaptation. This activity will also engage private sector actors and financial institutions to facilitate public-private partnerships (PPPs) for sustainable landscape management investments; (iv) Using existing legal mechanisms and financial framework, conduct feasibility assessment and establish a multi-stakeholder landscape-level conservation investment fund leveraging WWF's NbS-OP to finance landscape priorities; (v) Establish a performance-based financing model, ensuring transparent and accountable fund allocation linked to conservation outcomes, ecosystem restoration, and climate adaptation benefits.

Operating at national and provincial scale, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by both MOAE and DOAE, together with other national- and provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The project will likely engage an international and national finance expert, as well as a legal finance expert to develop a comprehensive landscape financing strategy, integrating public, private, and blended finance mechanisms to address existing funding gaps and mobilize sustainable investments. A multi-stakeholder conservation investment fund will be established via the help of a national legal consultant, leveraging WWF's NbS-OP, while a results-based budgeting framework will ensure transparency, accountability, and measurable conservation outcomes. By fostering PPPs and launching innovative financing instruments, the project will aim to drive long-term financial sustainability for conservation efforts. The strategy will align with Vietnam's NBSAP and

climate finance priorities, ensuring equitable access to funding for women, ethnic minorities, and local communities, while optimizing cross-sectoral financial flows to sustain biodiversity and ecosystem resilience in Central Vietnam.

***Output 2.1.2: A financial plan for implementing the Sustainable Landscape Management Strategy/Plan.*** The project will develop a financing plan tailored to the different landscape components, towards long-term financial sustainability and investment alignment for biodiversity conservation and landscape management. This plan will incorporate built-in incentives and a crowdsourcing model to mobilize diverse funding streams, including public, private, and community-led investments. Given the current funding limitations for protected areas and conservation landscapes in Central Vietnam, the financing plan will address gaps in sustainable revenue generation, ecosystem service valuation, and private sector engagement. By integrating performance-based funding and innovative financing mechanisms, the plan will enhance landscape connectivity, conservation effectiveness, and resilience to climate change.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Scope, Assess feasibility and develop tailored financing models for protected areas, OECMs, biodiversity corridors, and ecosystem restoration initiatives, ensuring alignment with national priorities and global biodiversity commitments; (ii) Based on Output 1.1.3, operationalize PES and other innovative tools as appropriate, to attract private sector investment; (iii) national and provincial studies to explore Integrate national mechanisms and financial levers to enable financial incentives for conservation-compatible local livelihoods, ensuring that local communities, particularly among women and ethnic minorities, benefit from biodiversity conservation efforts.

This Output will operate at national and provincial scale. It is anticipated that this Output will be led by MOAE together with other national-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

With respect to the delivery approach, this Output will leverage the same consultants identified in Output 1.1.3.

***Output 2.1.3: A thematic partnership forum to mobilize financial resources for the sustainable landscape management strategy for the central provinces of Vietnam.*** The project will operationalize financial partnerships to mobilize sustained funding for landscape and biodiversity management in Central Vietnam. This will operate as a sub working group under governance established under Output 1.1.2. Given the financial gaps in conservation, which remain significantly below regional averages for PA and biodiversity corridor management, this initiative will align with PPPs, international donor support, and innovative finance models. By leveraging blended finance mechanisms and incentivizing corporate engagement in conservation efforts, the project will support enhancement of long-term investment sustainability. This aligns with Vietnam's NBSAP and emerging international biodiversity finance frameworks.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Assess feasibility and develop performance-based financial agreements with provincial governments and PA administration units to ensure results-driven investments in biodiversity protection and restoration; (ii) Facilitate co-financing arrangements with multilateral organizations, climate adaptation funds, and conservation trust funds, ensuring a diversified financial portfolio for sustained conservation efforts; (iii) Technical assistance to provincial and local financial institutions in designing green finance products, such as microloans for biodiversity-friendly enterprises, community forest stewardship programs, and ecotourism investments; and (iv) Integrate landscape financing models into provincial and national economic planning, ensuring a cohesive framework that links conservation finance with broader development objectives.

This Output will operate at sub-national and local level in each of the provinces. It is anticipated that this Output will be led by both MOAE and DOAE, together with other national- and provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The project will likely engage one international and one national finance specialists to operationalize financial partnerships that mobilize sustained investment for biodiversity and landscape management in Central Vietnam, directly complementing the multi-level landscape financing strategy (Output 2.1.1). By leveraging blended finance mechanisms and attempting to secure co-financing arrangements with multilateral donors, climate adaptation funds, and conservation trust funds, the project will enhance long-term financial sustainability for protected areas and biodiversity corridors. Performance-based financial agreements with provincial governments and PA administrations will ensure that funding is tied to measurable conservation outcomes, supported by innovative financial products such as biodiversity-friendly microloans, ecotourism investments, and community forest stewardship programs as appropriate. Additionally, the integration of landscape financing models into national and provincial economic planning will create a cohesive framework that aligns conservation funding with broader socioeconomic development and climate resilience objectives. By solidifying financial partnerships and integrating sustainable investment models, the project will help to ensure that conservation financing transcends short-term funding cycles, scales effective landscape management solutions, and delivers measurable environmental and socio-economic benefits.

***Output 2.1.4: A complimentary revolving fund for community-based and woman-centric pilot initiative(s) under a recently established finance mechanism in Central Vietnam.*** The complimentary revolving fund for community-based and women-centric pilot initiatives under the recently established finance mechanism in Central Vietnam, leveraging the mechanism established in Quang Binh and Ninh Thuan provinces through the UNDP-GEF Nature-Based Tourism project, will provide targeted support to grassroots conservation efforts, ensuring gender-responsive financing and local empowerment. By integrating sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience, this initiative will mobilize community-driven solutions while filling critical funding gaps that hinder long-term environmental stewardship. The fund will be closely aligned with existing national and international financing strategies and will complement broader landscape financing mechanisms to ensure inclusive and sustainable investments.

Indicative Activities will include the following: (i) Assess the potential and feasibility of a gender-responsive financing mechanism to support community-led conservation initiatives, ensuring that women and minority groups engaged in biodiversity-friendly livelihoods have access to financial resources and development opportunities, if feasible; (ii) If deemed feasible, pilot and scale nature-based micro-enterprises for women-led cooperatives and indigenous communities, integrating ecotourism, non-timber forest product (NTFP) value chains, and sustainable agriculture practices; and (iii) Facilitate financial literacy and capacity-building programs for women and local conservation groups, enabling them to access funding, manage enterprises, and participate in decision-making on landscape management.

This Output will operate at provincial and local level but draw from national level legislation, guidelines and levers under Component 1 and studies under Output 2.1.2. It is anticipated that this Output will be led by DOAE, together with other provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

No new consultants are required for this Output and will leverage those identified in Output 1.1.3. By linking financial inclusion with biodiversity conservation, this initiative will empower local actors, enhance economic resilience, and reinforce the sustainability of protected and conserved areas in Central Vietnam.

***Output 2.1.5: A proposal for wetland ecosystem service payments in TG-CH is developed and implemented.*** The implementation of the PWES mechanism in the TG-CH Wetland Nature Reserve will operationalize Vietnam's existing legal framework on ecosystem service payments, directly contributing to the financial sustainability of wetland conservation. Rather than piloting new policy development, the project will focus on applying established regulations to structure compensation mechanisms that generate tangible benefits for both biodiversity and local communities. Drawing on lessons from forestry and marine PES models—as well as insights from the GEF-7 Nature-Based Tourism project—the initiative will strengthen implementation through multi-sector engagement, transparent revenue collection, and equitable benefit-sharing. Aligned with findings from the biodiversity finance

landscape assessment, this activity will serve as a model for scaling PWES within national conservation financing strategies, while reinforcing the long-term ecological and economic resilience of the TG-CH wetland system. The design and operationalization of the Payment for Wetland Ecosystem Services (PWES) mechanism in Da Nang will be guided by the national PES framework and emerging guidance from the Nature-Based Tourism project, particularly leveraging its legal and institutional groundwork on community revolving funds and benefit-sharing arrangements. For this Output the project will leverage due diligence articulated in Annex M: Landscape Funding Baseline Situational Analysis.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Conduct a feasibility study to assess ecosystem service valuation, potential revenue streams, and willingness-to-pay mechanisms from beneficiaries such as aquaculture, tourism, and water supply companies; (ii) Design and implement capacity-building programs for local authorities, protected area managers, and community-based organizations to manage and monitor PWES effectively; (iii) Pilot PWES schemes with key user groups in the TG-CH Wetland Nature Reserve, assessing impacts on conservation, local livelihoods, and economic sustainability; and (iv) Develop legal and policy recommendations to integrate PWES into national biodiversity finance strategies and provincial development plans, ensuring compliance with Vietnam's Law on Biodiversity and PES regulations. Any applicable revisions to the Law on Biodiversity will be considered for inclusion in Output 1.1.4.

Operating at national, provincial and local scales, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by both MOAE and DOAE, together with other national- and provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

A single national PWES expert will lead the development and implementation of PWES guidance in the TG-CH Wetland Nature Reserve, leveraging findings from the biodiversity finance landscape report (Output 2.1.1) and aligning with broader conservation financing strategies. Their scope will include conducting a feasibility study to assess ecosystem service valuation and revenue streams, refining legal and policy frameworks to integrate PWES into national biodiversity finance strategies, and establishing a governance structure to oversee revenue collection and fund distribution. Under the supervision of the Project Management Unit, the consultant will pilot PWES mechanisms with key stakeholders, ensuring equitable benefit-sharing, and deliver capacity-building programs to enhance the ability of local authorities, PA managers, and community groups to implement and monitor the scheme effectively. This approach helps towards ensuring financial sustainability for wetland conservation, linking PES best practices from forestry and marine sectors with Vietnam's evolving biodiversity finance policies.

***Output 2.2.1: Capacity in management effectiveness, governance, and law enforcement of proposed PA management boards, BCAs, OECM sites, and Wetland Nature Reserves collectively improved to reduce threats to flagship species and wildlife through technical assistance and gender equality.*** Operating at the provincial level and targeting all provinces and municipality of Da Nang, the project will strengthen the provincial institutional capacity, governance mechanisms, and law enforcement efforts across PAs, BCAs, OECMs, and wetland nature reserves in Central Vietnam. This will be achieved through targeted technical assistance across the target project area. A strong emphasis will be placed on gender-responsive governance, equipping both men and women conservation leaders with tools and training to enhance protection of flagship species and reduce biodiversity threats. This work will align with broader landscape conservation strategies and be embedded in national and provincial planning frameworks.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Develop and institutionalize a standardized training program for management boards of PAs, BCAs, OECMs, and wetland reserves, focusing on biodiversity conservation, enforcement protocols, and gender-responsive governance; (ii) Enhance inter-agency collaboration and coordination mechanisms between law enforcement agencies, biodiversity management units, and local communities to improve intelligence-sharing, surveillance, and rapid response to illegal activities; (iii) Integrate SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) patrolling systems and wildlife crime monitoring into PA and BCA enforcement strategies, incorporating community-led monitoring programs where feasible; (iv) Provide technical support to strengthen OECM management, ensuring governance structures are equipped to fulfill conservation mandates and align with national biodiversity strategies; (v) Expand gender-responsive law enforcement training to include wildlife rangers, forest protection officers, and conservation stakeholders, improving capacity for adaptive governance and inclusive decision-making; (vi) procure priority equipment to enable SMART patrols and improve METT scores in each province.

By strengthening provincial governance and enforcement capacity, this output will bolster the long-term resilience of Vietnam's critical landscapes, ensuring that biodiversity conservation efforts effectively mitigate threats, enhance species protection, and improve law enforcement effectiveness. It is anticipated that this Output will be led by DOAE, together with other provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The project will engage up to one international and four national specialists to strengthen the management effectiveness, governance, and law enforcement of PAs, BCAs, OECMs, and wetland reserves, aligning with the harmonized policy and governance framework (Output 1.1.2) and the landscape financing strategy (Output 2.1.1). A standardized training program will be developed and institutionalized for management boards, integrating biodiversity conservation protocols, enforcement mechanisms, and gender-responsive governance approaches. Inter-agency collaboration will be enhanced by linking law enforcement agencies, forest management units, and local communities, supported by the integration of SMART patrolling systems and technologies / equipment for wildlife crime monitoring. Additionally, technical assistance will be provided to establish governance structures for new and existing OECM sites, ensuring strong institutional capacity, financial sustainability, and alignment with Vietnam's national biodiversity strategies.

***Output 2.3.1: Feasibility studies for enhancing contiguity and establishing transboundary connectivity between landscapes (such as Lao PDR as appropriate), based on integrated landscape management principles approaches and innovative planning tools.***

The feasibility studies for enhancing landscape connectivity across inter-provincial and transboundary landscapes will be grounded in integrated landscape management principles and innovative planning tools. These studies will assess ecological, social, and economic factors that influence connectivity, focusing on improving habitat linkages between key protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures OECMs. Building on Vietnam's NBSAP, the project will identify priority corridors, assess their feasibility for restoration, and develop strategies for their formal recognition and integration into national and provincial planning. By leveraging stakeholder consultations and incorporating lessons from existing biodiversity corridors, the project aims to strengthen governance mechanisms and financial sustainability for connectivity interventions.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Conduct ecological and socio-economic assessments of potential biodiversity corridors to determine feasibility and alignment with national and provincial transboundary conservation goals (ii) Map and assess existing and potential corridors, integrating data from remote sensing, GIS modeling, and local knowledge from protected area managers and communities (iii) Develop context-specific policy and governance recommendations to support the formal recognition and coordinated management of inter-provincial and transboundary ecological connectivity zones, in alignment with Vietnam's existing legal and planning frameworks. This activity will assess the feasibility of recognizing such zones under current environmental laws, biodiversity strategies, and land-use planning regulations, while identifying gaps or opportunities for institutional coordination and cross-jurisdictional collaboration. Recommendations will build on national priorities (e.g., NBSAP) and international best practices, ensuring that proposed governance models are legally grounded, practically implementable, and responsive to local ecological and administrative realities; (iv) Pilot interventions in priority corridors, including habitat restoration, sustainable land-use practices, and co-management approaches with local communities; and (v) Establish a series of dialogues under the proposed BES working group, for cross-sector coordination, linking conservation authorities, provincial governments, and private sector actors to enhance connectivity planning.

This Output will operate at national and provincial scale. It is anticipated that this Output will be led by both MOAE and DOAE, together with other national- and provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

This Output will likely enlist the engagement of two national consultants to execute the feasibility studies for inter-provincial and transboundary landscape connectivity, ensuring alignment with integrated landscape management principles and national

biodiversity strategies (Output 1.1.2). For example, one consultant, specializing in ecological and spatial planning, may lead biodiversity corridor mapping, utilizing remote sensing, GIS modeling, and local ecological knowledge to assess connectivity feasibility. A second consultant, focusing on policy and governance, may develop recommendations for the formal recognition and management of connectivity zones, integrating findings into provincial and national planning frameworks. Together, they will pilot interventions in priority corridors, engaging protected area managers, local communities, and cross-sector stakeholders through a multi-stakeholder dialogue platform under the BES (Output 1.1.1), ensuring long-term governance and financial sustainability for landscape connectivity efforts.

***Output 2.3.2: High-potential Provincial biodiversity corridors are identified for future establishment and their management effectiveness is improved.*** Based on Output 2.3.1, the project will enhance the effectiveness of corridor management plans by strengthening governance, ecological monitoring, and community engagement to ensure that biodiversity corridors function as intended for species migration and habitat connectivity. Given the increasing pressure on these corridors from deforestation, land-use change, and human-wildlife conflict, the project will support the development of adaptive management strategies that incorporate data-driven planning, participatory conservation models, and financial sustainability mechanisms. Building on existing frameworks such as the NBSAP and lessons learned from past conservation projects, the project will facilitate cross-sectoral coordination among provincial authorities, and protected area managers, to ensure that biodiversity corridors effectively support key species, including Saola, White-cheeked Gibbon, and Annamite Striped Rabbit, amongst others.

Operating at provincial level, indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Conduct a detailed assessment of corridor functionality, identifying key gaps in ecological connectivity and governance structures; (ii) Develop and implement monitoring frameworks for target species and habitat conditions to inform adaptive management decisions; and (iii) Strengthen cross-provincial cooperation mechanisms for joint corridor management, including standardized regulations and enforcement strategies.

It is anticipated that this Output will be led by both MOAE and DOAE, together with other national- and provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The project will likely leverage the two national consultants from Output 2.3.1 to enhance the effectiveness of biodiversity corridor management plans, ensuring they function as intended for species migration and habitat connectivity. The ecological and spatial planning consultant will assess corridor functionality, develop monitoring frameworks for key species and habitat conditions, and support data-driven adaptive management strategies. Meanwhile, the policy and governance consultant will strengthen cross-provincial cooperation, formalizing joint corridor management regulations and enforcement strategies, while also integrating financial sustainability models such as PES (aligned with Output 2.1.5).

***Output 2.4.1: Community and women's engagement, and other creative approaches for pilot program establishment and development of an effective OECM management in Central Vietnam.*** The project will facilitate the reporting of OECMs in Central Vietnam by integrating community-led conservation models and innovative governance structures. By ensuring gender-inclusive engagement and applying best practices in conservation planning, the project will strengthen ecological connectivity and enhance biodiversity conservation across key landscapes. The initiative will leverage Vietnam's legal framework and ongoing conservation policies to establish a replicable model for future OECM recognition.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) support an OECM recognition process, ensuring sites recognized as OECMs are integrated into the landscape-level planning; (ii) Identify and pilot community-managed OECM models, integrating co-management frameworks with local authorities; and (iii) training programs for local communities and women's groups to manage OECM sites effectively.

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Operating at local level, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by DOAE, together with other provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

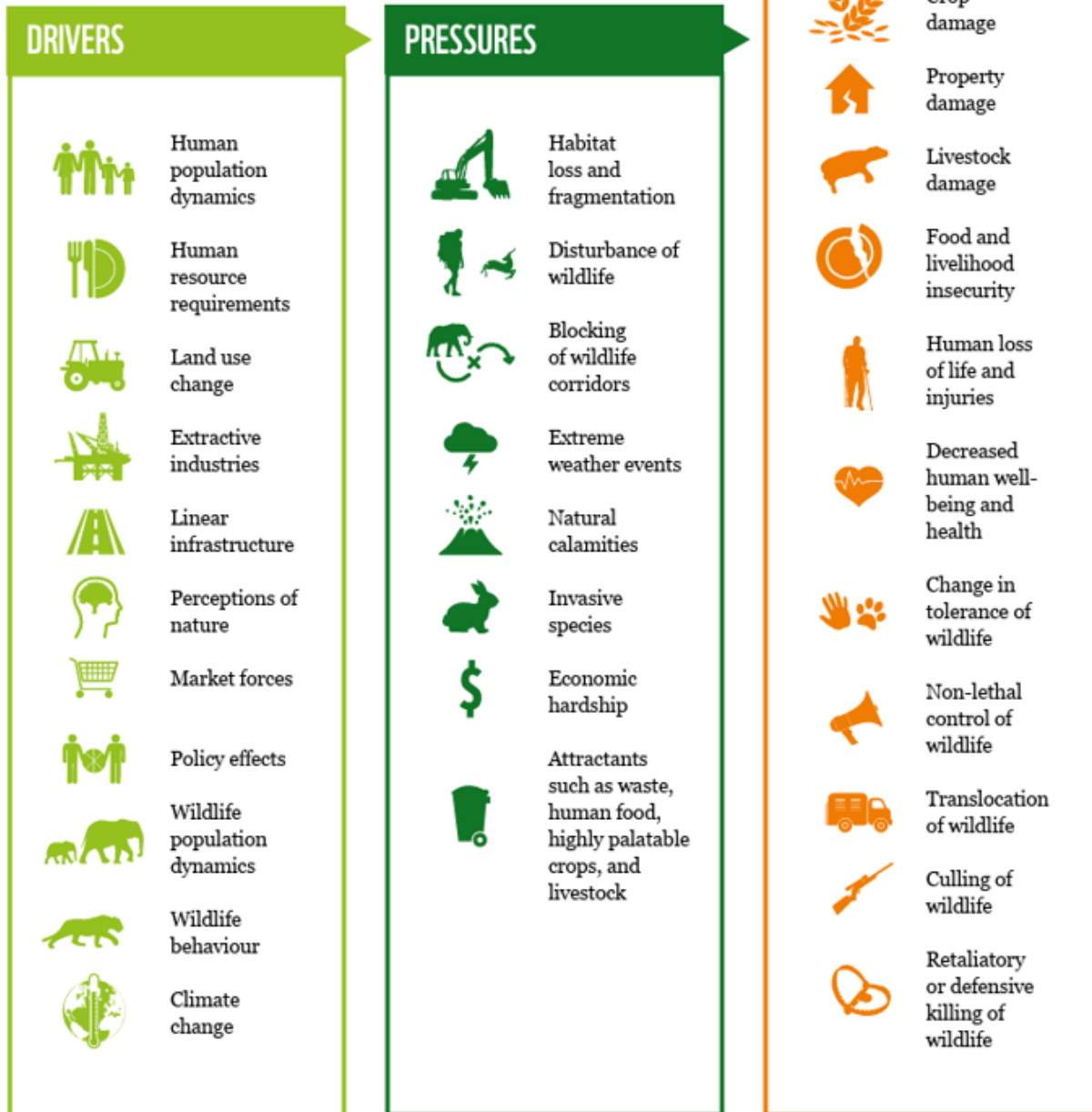
The project will likely engage two national consultants to facilitate reporting of OECMs in Central Vietnam, ensuring community-led conservation models and innovative governance structures. An ecological and spatial planning consultant will conduct site assessments, based on biodiversity significance, ecological connectivity, and governance feasibility, while ensuring integration into provincial land-use and conservation planning (Output 1.1.2). The community and gender specialist will develop co-management frameworks, pilot community-managed OECM models, and lead training programs for local communities and women's groups, ensuring that OECMs are socially inclusive and financially sustainable (Output 2.1.3). These efforts will align with national conservation policies and Vietnam's evolving legal framework (Output 1.1.4), creating a replicable model for OECM designation and long-term biodiversity protection.

***Output 2.4.2: Innovations tested and proliferated for wildlife conservation, landscape management, and human-wildlife conflict.***

The project will support the piloting and scaling of innovative conservation technologies and landscape management approaches to manage human-wildlife conflict and enhance species protection. By integrating real-time monitoring, ecological restoration techniques, and adaptive management practices, the project will contribute to the sustainable coexistence of communities and wildlife. Lessons learned will be documented for replication in similar high-biodiversity regions across Vietnam.

Figure 2: HWC at a glance

## A SELECTION OF KEY DRIVERS AND PRESSURES THAT LEAD TO HWC



Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Pilot smart patrol and real-time wildlife monitoring systems in key conservation areas; (ii) Develop and implement community-based behavioural change (risk reduction), response and mitigation mechanisms for human-wildlife conflict management; (iii) Promote ecological restoration approaches, including assisted natural regeneration and habitat corridors; (iv) Scale up conservation-friendly agricultural practices that minimize human-wildlife conflicts; (v) Develop and implement a pilot in-situ conservation model for endangered, rare, and precious wildlife species prioritized for protection in protected areas and OECM sites; (vi) Develop and implement a pilot model for the rewild and population recovery of some endangered, rare, and precious species prioritized for protection; and (vii) Develop and implement conservation and population recovery action plans for endangered, rare, and precious wildlife species at high risk of extinction in central Vietnam.

Operating at provincial and local scales, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by DOAE, together with other provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The consultants from Output 2.2.1, specializing in management effectiveness, governance, and law enforcement, will oversee the piloting and scaling of innovative conservation technologies and human-wildlife conflict management strategies to enhance species protection and landscape resilience. The biodiversity governance consultant will lead the development of community-based response mechanisms, integrating these into protected area management and OECM governance structures (Output 2.4.1), while the law enforcement and conservation monitoring consultant will oversee smart patrol deployment, real-time wildlife monitoring, and ecological restoration techniques to strengthen habitat connectivity (Output 2.3.2). These innovations will be aligned with conservation-friendly agricultural practices and sustainable land-use planning (Output 1.1.4), ensuring long-term coexistence between communities and wildlife, with lessons documented for replication across Vietnam's high-biodiversity regions.

***Output 2.4.3: Sustainable livelihoods supported for local forest, mangrove and wetland dependent communities, inclusive of gender considerations.*** The project will enhance economic opportunities for forest, wetland, and mangrove-dependent communities through sustainable livelihood models that align with conservation goals. By integrating biodiversity-friendly practices into value chains and strengthening women's participation, the project will provide viable economic options that are not environmentally damaging.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Develop sustainable, biodiversity-friendly value chains for NTFPs, eco-tourism, and fisheries (ii) Support women-led enterprises focused on forest and wetland-based sustainable livelihoods; and (iii) Implement pilot programs for climate-resilient agroforestry and sustainable aquaculture in target provinces based on outcomes of key studies; and (iv) .Support for community-led conservation pilot initiatives in newly identified potential corridor areas based on provincial management planning, integrating sustainable livelihood options to reduce dependency on forest exploitation.

Operating at local level, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by DOAE, together with other provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see **Table 4 in Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The consultants from Output 2.1.3, specializing in financial partnerships and conservation finance, will oversee the development of sustainable livelihoods for forest, mangrove, and wetland-dependent communities, ensuring integration with landscape financing mechanisms (Output 2.1.1). The biodiversity finance consultant will lead the design of PES and other financial models, ensuring long-term funding for biodiversity-friendly value chains, such as NTFPs, eco-tourism, and sustainable fisheries, while the private sector engagement specialist will facilitate market linkages and investment in women-led enterprises. These efforts will complement community-based conservation initiatives (Output 2.4.1) and ecological restoration efforts (Output 2.3.2), such that livelihood models are both financially viable and environmentally sustainable, reducing dependence on activities that contribute to habitat degradation.

### **Component 3: Enhanced climate resilience.**

This component aims to restore degraded forests, mangroves, and wetlands, enhancing climate resilience and carbon sequestration through NbS. The project will establish clear parameters and metrics for measuring carbon benefits, contributing to NDCs with a minimum of 4.01 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e mitigated/sequestered over 20 years (**Outcome 3.1**). Restoration priorities will align with the highest climate change mitigation potential, while biodiversity offset mechanisms will be explored as alternative financing sources for long-term conservation investments. Component 3 is designed to complement and build upon the landscape management planning and governance interventions of Component 2 by focusing on the technical demonstration of restoration interventions and the application of nationally-tailored methodologies for measuring climate benefits. While Component 2 validates landscape-scale management models—including the feasibility of corridors and OECMs and site level interventions such as SMART patrols and introduction of technology—Component 3 concentrates on the implementation of site-level restoration and carbon measurement, aligned with national frameworks. This delineation ensures that strategic planning and governance (Component 2) are supported by quantifiable, field-based demonstration (Component 3), enabling a holistic and evidence-informed landscape management approach.

Climate vulnerability assessments (**Output 3.1.1**) aim to identify areas that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, and to develop strategies for restoring, managing and protecting these ecosystems in the face of these impacts, recognizing that improved practices from a land degradation perspective and from a climate change mitigation perspective are not always equivalent and therefore, selection will be prioritized on the basis of those identified practices that yield the greatest climate change mitigation potential. Areas selected for restoration based on their carbon sequestration potential and long-term benefits (**Output 3.1.3**) was assessed during the PPG. This Output will be designed as a follow-up to Outputs 2.1.2 to 2.1.4 to help realize the long-term vision and planning needs of the Central Vietnam Landscape or complimentary funding and benefit-sharing mechanisms in support of site-based initiatives of landscape restoration and carbon sequestration in and around high-conservation value forest landscapes and/or wetlands to benefit long-term population viability of keystone, and threatened species. The project will implement best practice silvicultural approaches, inclusive of gender considerations (**Output 3.1.4**) within the CVL (see assumptions underpinning values for Core Indicator 4), to reduce fragmentation in land preparation, soil analysis, selection of appropriate indigenous species, planting and management (including avoiding damage) to build resilience and support biodiversity, enhancing connectivity via forest restoration, management of pests, diseases and fire control, and effective management of age structures and tree densities. The project will also implement best practices in wetland management at key areas in the TG-CH lagoon system and in riparian transitional zones. Each aspect will be supported by capacity building of local communities, ministries, and provincial departments, with the development of local language guidelines and training modules. Finally, the project will implement and demonstrate the nationally-tailored methodology (**Output 3.1.5**) for measuring carbon stocks under the Emission Reduction Payments Agreement (ERPA); this will be validated at the start or after the finalization of methodology, mid-term and end of project for each target province and centrally-managed municipality. The project will develop guidance on the implementation a mechanism for biodiversity offsets (**Output 3.1.2**) as an additional financing source for biodiversity conservation. This Output may lead to guidelines and a draft policy framework by the end of the project lifecycle, but unlikely to be tested for replication under Component 2.

Component 3 will follow a step-wise approach to ensure evidence-based restoration and robust carbon stock quantification aligned with national frameworks and global good practice. First, a detailed climate vulnerability assessment (Output 3.1.1) will be conducted to identify the most degraded and climate-sensitive forest, mangrove, and wetland ecosystems across the Central Annamites and TG-CH landscapes. This assessment will integrate remote sensing, GIS, and participatory ground-truthing techniques to spatially prioritize intervention areas with the highest potential for climate mitigation, biodiversity co-benefits, and resilience enhancement.

Second, a targeted feasibility study on biodiversity credits (Output 3.1.2) will explore potential policy directions and investment opportunities, although no transactions or credit generation will occur under this project. This activity will complement carbon-related efforts by clarifying the enabling conditions and challenges associated with nature-based finance instruments in Vietnam's evolving environmental policy space.

Third, using the vulnerability assessment as a foundation, the project will implement site-specific restoration interventions (Output 3.1.3) across degraded forests, mangroves, and wetlands. These activities will be selected based on preliminary typologies identified during the PPG and validated during inception. Restoration will include assisted natural regeneration, enrichment planting with native species, and community-based management practices aimed at delivering both ecological and carbon outcomes.

Fourth, the project will document and promote best practice restoration approaches (Output 3.1.4), integrating gender-responsive training and demonstration sites to build local and institutional capacity in sustainable restoration and harvesting techniques.

Finally, the project will apply and validate a nationally tailored methodology for carbon stock measurement (Output 3.1.5) across intervention sites. The methodology—aligned with Vietnam’s ERPA—will be field-tested through baseline, midline, and endline assessments of carbon sequestration. Findings will inform national MRV (Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification) systems, bolster policy planning, and lay the technical groundwork for future engagement with PES and carbon markets.

This comprehensive, iterative process ensures that restoration is both scientifically grounded and technically robust, advancing national climate targets while contributing measurable global environmental benefits.

By integrating scientific assessments and nature-based restoration, the project will advance Vietnam’s long-term biodiversity and climate resilience goals. This approach ensures cross-output synergies, where:

- Outputs 3.1.1 and 3.1.3 guide site selection for maximum climate impact.
- Output 3.1.2 explores biodiversity credit mechanisms to supplement long-term conservation financing.
- Outputs 3.1.4 and 3.1.5 provide the technical foundation for best-practice restoration and carbon monitoring.

The project will support the on-the-ground application of nationally tailored methodologies for carbon stock measurement, consistent with the technical guidance developed under Vietnam’s ERPA with the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF). These methodologies, already endorsed at the national level, provide the foundation for accurate and transparent Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) of carbon sequestration.

It is important to note that the project will not engage in the development, piloting, or implementation of carbon crediting schemes, nor will it facilitate payments for carbon reductions. Instead, the focus is on capacity building, data generation, and methodological validation to ensure that restoration and forest management activities in Central Vietnam are aligned with national MRV standards and future-ready for potential carbon accounting systems. This alignment will enhance the credibility of restoration efforts and support evidence-based contributions to Vietnam’s NDCs, without entering market mechanisms.

***Output 3.1.1: Assessment of climate vulnerability for Central Vietnam to identify areas significantly impacted by climate change, degraded forests, mangroves and wetlands to underpin restoration efforts.*** This assessment will identify climate-vulnerable ecosystems in Central Vietnam, focusing on degraded forests, mangroves, and wetlands to prioritize restoration strategies with the highest climate mitigation potential. The project will integrate land degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate resilience factors to ensure optimal site selection for interventions. This assessment will serve to refine restoration strategies and inform climate-adaptive measures under Output 3.1.3. Site selection, however, is based primarily on the comprehensive landscape profiles developed under Annex H, which reflect national and provincial conservation priorities, current land use dynamics, and biodiversity values. It will also inform the development of adaptive restoration strategies that enhance ecosystem services and improve the long-term resilience of local communities to climate risks, while contributing to national targets under Vietnam’s NDC and biodiversity commitments.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited the following: (i) Conduct a spatial analysis of climate-vulnerable ecosystems using remote sensing, GIS, and community-based assessments to determine the most at-risk areas and those most suitable for restoration; (ii) Identify priority restoration areas based on carbon sequestration potential, aligning with Vietnam’s climate mitigation commitments; (iii) Develop an adaptive management framework for integrating climate resilience into landscape

restoration efforts, ensuring that interventions respond to future climate uncertainties; (iv) Compile and analyze historical climate data and future climate projections to identify long-term vulnerability trends across forest, mangrove, and wetland systems; (v) Assess socio-economic vulnerability and exposure of local communities in climate-sensitive areas to inform socially inclusive restoration planning; and (vi) Facilitate stakeholder consultations and validation workshops to ensure local knowledge and priorities are incorporated into vulnerability mapping and restoration planning.

Operating at national level, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by MOAE together with other national-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The project will likely engage two national consultants to conduct a climate vulnerability assessment for Central Vietnam, providing the foundation for site selection (Output 3.1.3) and carbon measurement validation (Output 3.1.5). The climate resilience and spatial analysis consultant will lead GIS-based mapping and remote sensing analysis, identifying climate-vulnerable ecosystems, degraded forests, mangroves, and wetlands to prioritize restoration interventions. The ecosystem restoration and policy consultant will analyze carbon sequestration potential and develop an adaptive management framework, ensuring that restoration efforts align with Vietnam's climate mitigation commitments and integrate into broader landscape conservation and financing strategies (Output 2.1.1). Their findings will be integrated into the information platform under Output 1.1.2 to ensure data-driven decision-making for climate-resilient restoration efforts across the region.

***Output 3.1.2: Study on feasibility of biodiversity credit for policy support.*** This study will explore biodiversity credit mechanisms as an additional financing source for conservation, assessing feasibility for policy integration and private-sector engagement. Given the growing interest in carbon and biodiversity markets, the project will analyze regulatory frameworks, market demand, and benefit-sharing models to inform national policies and future replication. The study will be grounded in Vietnam's existing legal and strategic frameworks, including the Law on Environmental Protection (2020) and the National Biodiversity Strategy to 2030, which provide the enabling conditions for piloting biodiversity credit systems in alignment with emerging global standards such as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Conduct a policy and market assessment to determine the viability of biodiversity credits in Vietnam's conservation finance landscape; (ii) Develop recommendations for integrating biodiversity credits into Vietnam's biodiversity finance mechanisms, ensuring alignment with PES and carbon market strategies; (iii) Engage private sector actors and financial institutions to explore potential investment models and risk mitigation strategies for biodiversity credit implementation.

Operating at national level, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by MOAE together with other national-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

A single national consultant specializing in conservation finance will conduct the feasibility study on biodiversity credits, ensuring alignment with Vietnam's existing PES mechanisms (Output 2.1.5) and conservation financing strategies (Output 2.1.1). Their scope will include assessing regulatory frameworks, market demand, and potential benefit-sharing models, while also engaging private sector actors and financial institutions to explore investment opportunities and risk mitigation strategies. The consultant will develop policy recommendations for integrating biodiversity credits into Vietnam's national biodiversity finance mechanisms, ensuring complementarity with carbon market strategies (Output 3.1.5) and long-term sustainable funding for conservation initiatives.

***Output 3.1.3: Site selection and restoration of degraded forests, mangroves and important wetlands leveraging nature-based solutions, increasing carbon sequestration and realizing carbon benefits to benefit long-term population viability of keystone, and threatened species.*** The project will implement site-based restoration efforts for degraded forests, mangroves, and wetlands,

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emphasizing carbon sequestration, biodiversity connectivity, and keystone species conservation. Target areas will be selected based on climate vulnerability assessments (Output 3.1.1). The table below outlines the carbon potential of indicative NbS in the target project area.

Table 2: carbon potential of indicative nBS in the project Area

Provinces	Proposed locations	Land and ecosystems under restoration (ha)	Anticipated tones of CO2 equivalent mitigated (restoration)	Communes under forest restoration	Detailed description of restoration practices
NGHE AN	Ky Son Protection Forests	4,000.0	1,551,963	Tay Son, Muong Ai, Nam Can, Na Ngoi, Nam Can, Muong Long	1. Assisted natural regeneration (enhancing natural regeneration by planting native species in degraded areas); 2. Reforestation and afforestation (planting native species in deforested and degraded areas); establishment of mixed species forests to enhance biodiversity; 3. Natural regeneration (protecting degraded areas from human disturbances such as grazing and logging to allow forest to recover naturally,...); 4. Others
	Vu Quang National Park	2,000.0	775,981	Vu Quang National Park	1. Assisted natural regeneration (enhancing natural regeneration by planting native species in degraded areas); 2. Reforestation and afforestation (planting native species in deforested and degraded areas); establishment of mixed species forests to enhance biodiversity; 3. Natural regeneration (protecting degraded areas from human disturbances such as grazing and logging to allow forest to recover naturally,...); 4. Others
QUANG BINH	Tuyen Hoa Protection Forests	3,000.0	1,163,972	Huong Hoa, Kim Hoa, Lam Hoa, Thanh Hoa, Thuan Hoa	1. Assisted natural regeneration (enhancing natural regeneration by planting native species in degraded areas); 2. Reforestation and afforestation (planting native species in deforested and degraded areas); establishment of mixed species forests to enhance biodiversity; 3. Natural regeneration (protecting degraded areas from human disturbances such as grazing and logging to allow forest to recover naturally,...); 4. Others
	Thach Hoa Community-based Conservation Area	600.0	232,794	Thach Hoa, Dong Hoa, Thuan Hoa, Son Hoa	1. Assisted natural regeneration (enhancing natural regeneration by planting native species in degraded areas); 2. Reforestation and afforestation (planting native species in deforested and degraded areas); establishment of mixed species forests to enhance biodiversity; 3. Natural regeneration (protecting degraded areas from human disturbances such as grazing and logging to allow forest to recover naturally,...); 4. Others
QUANG TRI	Huong Hoa - Dakrong Protection Forests	2,000.0	775,981	Mo O, Ta Long, Tan Hop, Tan Lien, Tan Thanh, Khe Sanh, Dakrong Klang, Huong Son, Dakrong, Huc, Huong Hiep, Huong Linh, Huong Phung, Huong Tan	1. Assisted natural regeneration (enhancing natural regeneration by planting native species in degraded areas); 2. Reforestation and afforestation (planting native species in deforested and degraded areas); establishment of mixed species forests to enhance biodiversity; 3. Natural regeneration (protecting degraded areas from human disturbances such as grazing and logging to allow forest to recover naturally,...); 4. Others
THUA THIEN HUE	A Luoi protection forest	2,000.0	775,981	A Roang, Hong Ha, Huong Nguyen, Huong Phong	1. Assisted natural regeneration (enhancing natural regeneration by planting native species in degraded areas); 2. Reforestation and afforestation (planting native species in deforested and degraded areas); establishment of mixed species forests to enhance biodiversity; 3. Natural regeneration (protecting degraded areas from human disturbances such as grazing and logging to allow forest to recover naturally,...); 4. Others
QUANG NAM	Dong Giang protection forests	2,000.0	775,981	Prao, A Rooi, A Ting, Ba, Jo Ngay, Ka Dang, Ma Cooih, Song Kon, Ta Lu, Tu, Za Hung	1. Assisted natural regeneration (enhancing natural regeneration by planting native species in degraded areas); 2. Reforestation and afforestation (planting native species in deforested and degraded areas); establishment of mixed species forests to enhance biodiversity; 3. Natural regeneration (protecting degraded areas from human disturbances such as grazing and logging to allow forest to recover naturally,...); 4. Others
	Elephant Species and Habitat Reserve	1,500.0	581,986	Phuoc Ninh, Que Lam	1. Assisted natural regeneration (enhancing natural regeneration by planting native species in degraded areas); 2. Reforestation and afforestation (planting native species in deforested and degraded areas); establishment of mixed species forests to enhance biodiversity; 3. Natural regeneration (protecting degraded areas from human disturbances such as grazing and logging to allow forest to recover naturally,...); 4. Others
Sub-total:		17,100.0	6,634,639		Project will commit to a minimum of 60% of the sub-totals towards the GEF-8 Core Indicators

Source: Annex P: Climate Impact Assessment

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) inclusive consultations with communities, and following ESMF, ensure restoration has the buy-in of those consulted; (ii) Conduct baseline ecological assessments, including biodiversity inventories

and soil and water quality analysis, to inform restoration design and track post-restoration impacts; (iii) Develop site-specific restoration plans for degraded forests, mangroves, and wetlands, integrating indigenous species selection, reforestation techniques, and pest/disease management; (iv) Establish community-based co-management mechanisms for restored areas, ensuring sustainability and benefit-sharing, particularly for women and marginalized groups; (v) Implement riparian and coastal wetland restoration in the TG-CH lagoon system, improving connectivity and ecosystem resilience; (vi) Monitor carbon sequestration benefits, ensuring alignment with Vietnam's NDCs and emission reduction targets; and (vii) Provide training and technical support to local stakeholders on restoration techniques, monitoring, and adaptive management to ensure long-term capacity and ownership.

Operating at national, provincial and local levels, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by both MOAE and DOAE, together with other national- and provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

A single national consultant specializing in ecosystem restoration will oversee the site selection and restoration of degraded forests, mangroves, and wetlands, ensuring alignment with climate vulnerability findings (Output 3.1.1) and carbon measurement methodologies (Output 3.1.5). Their scope will include developing site-specific restoration plans, incorporating indigenous species selection, reforestation techniques, and pest/disease management, while ensuring that restoration sites enhance biodiversity connectivity and ecosystem resilience. The consultant will also monitor carbon sequestration benefits, ensuring alignment with Vietnam's NDCs and emission reduction targets, and will coordinate with conservation finance experts (Output 3.1.2) to explore potential biodiversity credit opportunities for restoration sites.

***Output 3.1.4: Best practice approaches to forest, mangrove and wetland restoration and reforestation / sustainable harvesting documented, and capacities enhanced through training and locally-relevant and gender responsive guidelines.*** The project will develop gender-inclusive, locally relevant guidelines and training modules to support sustainable reforestation, wetland restoration, and sustainable harvesting practices. By embedding silvicultural best practices, the initiative will improve landscape resilience, reduce degradation risks, and enhance the potential of future designated biodiversity corridors within the Central Vietnam Landscape.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Develop and disseminate best-practice guidelines for forest, mangrove, and wetland restoration, tailored to the ecological and socio-economic conditions of target sites; (ii) Conduct training programs for local communities, government agencies, and private-sector stakeholders, ensuring inclusive participation in restoration planning and implementation; and (iii) Establish demonstration sites for sustainable reforestation and wetland management, showcasing innovative restoration techniques that optimize biodiversity and carbon benefits.

Operating at provincial and local scale, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by DOAE, together with other provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The project may engage two national consultants to develop best-practice approaches for forest, mangrove, and wetland restoration, ensuring integration with site selection (Output 3.1.3) and carbon measurement frameworks (Output 3.1.5). The ecosystem restoration consultant will lead the development of best-practice guidelines, incorporating silvicultural techniques, ecosystem-based adaptation, and sustainable harvesting methods, while ensuring alignment with Vietnam's biodiversity and climate policies. The training and capacity-building consultant will design and implement gender-responsive training programs, equipping local communities, government agencies, and private-sector stakeholders with skills in restoration planning, sustainable resource management, and climate resilience-building. These efforts will be reinforced through demonstration sites, providing hands-on learning opportunities and scalable models for biodiversity-friendly land management.

***Output 3.1.5: On-the-ground application of nationally-tailored methodology for measuring carbon stocks applied, demonstrated and validated for the target areas in Central Vietnam.*** The project will apply a nationally-tailored methodology for measuring carbon stocks, aligning with the Emission Reduction Payments Agreement (ERPA) to validate carbon sequestration outcomes. This methodology will be tested, refined, and validated at different stages of implementation, ensuring that carbon accounting meets global standards and supports climate finance mobilization. Results from this activity will also inform the design of biodiversity credit systems (Output 3.1.2) and strengthen monitoring components of restoration interventions (Output 3.1.3), for consistency and transparency in emissions reporting and benefit-sharing. This Output will take as its starting point the 17,100 ha earmarked for restoration activities (with a minimum commitment of 10,260 ha towards the GEF-8 Core Indicator) and validate the extent to which the restoration practices are fit-for-purpose.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Apply Vietnam's tailored carbon measurement methodology across forests, mangroves, and wetlands, ensuring accurate quantification of sequestration benefits (ii) Conduct baseline, mid-term, and end-of-project assessments to validate carbon stock changes in the target provinces; (iii) Integrate carbon measurement findings into Vietnam's NDCs and link with emerging carbon markets and PES schemes, as well as other relevant innovative financial tools as appropriate; and (iv) assess extent to which restoration practices are fit-for-purpose towards their carbon sequestration potential and document findings.

Operating at provincial level, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by DOAE, together with other provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

A single national consultant specializing in carbon measurement and climate finance will oversee the on-the-ground application, demonstration, and validation of Vietnam's nationally-tailored carbon stock measurement methodology, ensuring alignment with restoration efforts (Output 3.1.3) and best-practice guidelines (Output 3.1.4). Their scope will include conducting baseline, mid-term, and final assessments to quantify carbon sequestration benefits across forests, mangroves, and wetlands, ensuring compliance with the ERPA. The consultant will also integrate validated carbon stock data into Vietnam's NDCs, supporting linkages with emerging carbon markets and PES schemes (Output 3.1.2) to enhance long-term climate finance opportunities for conservation.

#### **Component 4: Awareness raising and knowledge management to improve landscape management.**

This Component will focus on consolidating and disseminating project and scientific results from the other components as part of the knowledge management (KM) and supported by a national- and provincial-level knowledge management platform, anchored through governance mechanisms established under Component 1, so that similar approaches can be implemented elsewhere, resulting communication and knowledge management strategies developed and implemented to share and publicize project's results and advancements (**Outcome 4.1**). Data and information collated through the experience of implementing collaborative landscape management will be aggregated (**Output 4.1.1**) to form the basis of a replicable and gender inclusive model for application in other parts of Vietnam and within a transboundary context (i.e., Truong Son range traversing Vietnam and Lao PDR). A gender responsive communication strategy (**Output 4.1.2**), replication strategy, inclusive of gender considerations, to be developed in at least one other region of Vietnam: the Plain of Reefs, and, at the larger scale, in the Mekong Delta Landscape (**Output 4.1.3**) and a gender responsive knowledge management plan prioritizing strengthening of existing KM platforms (**Output 4.1.4**) will be the primary vehicles through which data and information will be transformed into knowledge and improved capacities to build a viable and multi-faceted landscape conservation model.

The proposed project strategically aligns with recent investments and several ongoing initiatives (see subsequent section on coordination and cooperation with ongoing initiatives and projects) in Central Vietnam, leveraging existing frameworks and opportunities for collaborations to enhance impact. Key among these are previous GEF projects in Vietnam, which have established

models for biodiversity conservation and natural resource management, with a particular emphasis on integrating these objectives into socio-economic development. The project will draw on these experiences, particularly in strengthening legal and regulatory frameworks for wildlife protection and exploring sustainable tourism as a means of promoting biodiversity. It is anticipated that ongoing and/or newly-approved GEF-7 projects with overlapping timelines will coordinate through annual work planning and yearly adaptive management meetings to ensure approaches are aligned. The proposed project will also build on a number of WWF and MOAE projects, and will focus on gleaned best practices in consolidating a landscape model, expanding protected area management, leveraging where possible community engagement approaches and successes and, advancing the development sustainable financing mechanisms. The landscape approach will be informed by the successes and lessons learned from these existing projects, ensuring a comprehensive and cohesive strategy that aligns with regional priorities and leverages existing expertise and find ways to best make use of scarce human and financial resources.

***Output 4.1.1: Establishment of a mechanism to manage, track, and disseminate the impact of public-private financing models and the OECM approach in Central Vietnam.*** To ensure long-term financial sustainability and effective conservation outcomes, the project will establish a structured mechanism for monitoring, managing, and communicating the impacts of financing models that integrate public and private investments in support of biodiversity, climate resilience, and community well-being—including targeted benefits for women. This mechanism will also document and share lessons from the application of the OECM model in Central Vietnam. It will support stakeholder coordination, align funding flows with national conservation priorities, and incorporate insights from existing PES schemes to strengthen the investment framework. The mechanism will serve as a central platform for knowledge sharing, performance tracking, and replication of successful financing and conservation models.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Establish a multi-stakeholder financing governance body to oversee investment alignment with biodiversity and climate goals; (ii) Organize forums for discussion and exchange on landscape management and resource mobilization; and (iii) Develop a financial reporting and transparency framework for tracking investment outcomes in landscape management.

Operating at national and provincial level, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by both MOAE and DOAE, together with other national- and provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The biodiversity finance consultant from Output 2.1.3 will oversee the establishment of a mechanism for impact management and dissemination of public-private financing models, ensuring alignment with landscape financing strategies (Output 2.1.1) and PES mechanisms (Output 2.1.5). Their scope will include coordinating a multi-stakeholder financing governance body to align biodiversity and climate investments with OECM expansion efforts (Output 2.4.1) and developing a financial reporting and transparency framework to track conservation and community benefits. By incorporating lessons from existing PES schemes, the consultant will enhance investment structures that support sustainable conservation finance, ensuring long-term viability and scalability of financing mechanisms in Central Vietnam.

***Output 4.1.2: A gender-responsive communication strategy developed and under implementation to share and publicize project results and advancements.*** A robust, gender-inclusive communication strategy will be developed to ensure that project results, innovations, and best practices are effectively shared with policymakers, the private sector, local communities, and the general public. This strategy will emphasize engagement with women and marginalized groups to promote equitable participation and knowledge-sharing. It will leverage digital and traditional communication channels to reach diverse audiences and encourage replication of successful interventions.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Develop designated project website, targeted communication materials, including policy briefs, multimedia content, and community-level information sessions; (ii) Organize gender-inclusive knowledge-sharing events, such as workshops and regional dialogues, to disseminate project outcomes; and (iii) Implement social media campaigns and community outreach initiatives to enhance public awareness of biodiversity conservation and climate resilience.

Operating at national and provincial level, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by both MOAE and DOAE, together with other national- and provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

A national communications and gender specialist will lead the development and implementation of a gender-responsive communication strategy, ensuring that project results, innovations, and best practices are effectively shared with policymakers, the private sector, local communities, and the general public. Their scope will include developing targeted communication materials, such as policy briefs, multimedia content, and community engagement tools, while ensuring alignment with the impact management and dissemination mechanism (Output 4.1.1). The consultant will also organize gender-inclusive knowledge-sharing events and implement digital and community-based outreach initiatives, ensuring that women and marginalized groups are equitably engaged in conservation dialogue and that successful interventions are widely replicated.

***Output 4.1.3: A proposal for scaling up the landscape approach model developed for the key wetland area of Dong Thap Muoi and other larger-scale areas within the Mekong Delta Landscape, inclusive gender considerations.*** The project will develop a structured replication strategy to scale successful conservation and sustainable landscape management approaches from Central Vietnam to the Plain of Reeds and the broader Mekong Delta. This will include policy recommendations, capacity-building programs, and financial models to support replication efforts. Special attention will be given to integrating gender-responsive community-based conservation measures.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Conduct feasibility studies to assess the applicability of Central Vietnam conservation models in the Mekong Delta; and (ii) Develop a roadmap for policy and institutional integration to enable replication at different administrative levels.

Operating at national and provincial level, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by DOAE, together with other provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The ecosystem restoration and policy consultant from Output 3.1.3 will oversee the development of a replication strategy to scale successful conservation and landscape management approaches from Central Vietnam to the Plain of Reeds and the broader Mekong Delta. Their scope will include conducting feasibility studies to assess the applicability of Central Vietnam's wetland and forest restoration models, aligning with best-practice guidelines (Output 3.1.4) and financial mechanisms (Output 2.1.3). They will also develop a roadmap for policy and institutional integration, ensuring gender-responsive, community-based conservation measures, and facilitate pilot initiatives in the Plain of Reeds, leveraging insights from PES and biodiversity finance strategies (Output 2.1.5) to support long-term sustainability.

**Output 4.1.4: A gender-responsive knowledge management plan developed and implemented, including South-South cooperation activities.** A knowledge management plan will be established to document and disseminate lessons learned from the project, ensuring that insights contribute to broader biodiversity conservation efforts in Vietnam and beyond. The plan will incorporate gender-sensitive approaches to ensure that women and marginalized communities are actively engaged in knowledge-sharing and capacity-building. South-South cooperation initiatives will be facilitated to exchange experiences and best practices with other countries facing similar challenges.

Indicative activities will include, but not be limited to the following: (i) Develop a centralized knowledge plan to house research, case studies, and policy recommendations; (ii) Organize exchange programs and study tours with conservation practitioners from other countries in the region; and (iii) Integrate knowledge-sharing activities into existing biodiversity and climate resilience networks to facilitate cross-learning.

Operating at national and provincial level, it is anticipated that this Output will be led by both MOAE and DOAE, together with other national- and provincial-level stakeholders to be consulted and agreed upon during the project's inception and planning phase. Please see Table 4 in **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** for more information.

The national communications and gender specialist from Output 4.1.2 will oversee the development and implementation of a gender-responsive knowledge management plan, ensuring that lessons learned from the project contribute to broader biodiversity conservation and climate resilience efforts in Vietnam and beyond. Their scope will include establishing a centralized digital knowledge platform to house research, case studies, and policy recommendations, while facilitating South-South cooperation initiatives, such as exchange programs and study tours with conservation practitioners from other countries. This plan will integrate knowledge-sharing activities with public-private financing mechanisms (Output 4.1.1) and gender-inclusive communication strategies (Output 4.1.2), ensuring inclusive participation of women and marginalized communities in cross-learning and capacity-building efforts.

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[1] Department of Agriculture and Environment (DOAE) is newly merged of Department of Natural Resource and Environment (DONRE) with Department of Agriculture and Rural Developments (DARDs) according to Resolution 176/2025/QH15 on the organizational structure of the Government. The XV National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, at 9th Extraordinary Session, passed on February 18, 2025

## Institutional Arrangement and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

Please describe the Institutional Arrangements for the execution of this project, including financial management and procurement. If possible, please summarize the flow of funds (diagram), accountabilities for project management and financial reporting (organogram), including audit, and staffing plans. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

### **Roles and responsibilities of the project's governance mechanism:**

**Executing Agency:** The Executing Agency (EA) for this project is the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency (NBCA) of Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MOAE)[1]<sup>37</sup>.

The EA is responsible and accountable for the effective use of project resources and the delivery of outputs, as set forth in this document.

The EA is responsible for executing this project. Specific tasks include:

- Project planning, coordination, activity implementation and management, monitoring against the annual work plan and budget and the Results Framework, evaluation and reporting. This includes providing all required information and data necessary for timely, comprehensive and evidence-based project reporting, including results and financial data, as necessary. The EA will strive to ensure project-level M&E is undertaken by national and provincial partners and is aligned with national systems so that the data used and generated by the project supports national systems;
- Overseeing the management of project risks as included in this project document and new risks that may emerge during project implementation;
- Procurement of goods and services, including human resources;

- Financial management, including overseeing financial expenditures against project budgets;
- Development of annual work plan and budget (AWPB), including implementation targets, and monitoring implementation progress; Approving and signing the multi-year workplan;
- Approving and signing the combined delivery report at the end of the year;
- Signing the financial report or the funding authorization and certificate of expenditures;
- Ensuring that the required assessment (ESIA or targeted assessment) and assessment report and the required management plan(s) (an ESMP and/or stand-alone management plan, as above) are developed, disclosed for public consultation and approved, and management measures are adopted and integrated during project implementation;
- Reporting, fairly and accurately, on project progress against agreed annual work plans in accordance with the reporting schedule and required formats;
- Maintaining documentation and evidence that describes the proper and prudent use of project resources in conformity to the signed Project Document and in accordance with applicable regulations and procedures;
- Ensuring all requirements of WWF US's safeguard policies are complied with (e.g. mitigation of identified adverse social and environmental impacts).

**Responsible Parties:** Consistent with Decree 114/2021/ND-CP<sup>[2]<sup>38</sup></sup> on management and use of Official Development Assistance and concessional loans of foreign donors, the Responsible Parties are Provincial Departments of Agriculture and Environment of Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue (renamed Hue City from 1 January 2025), Quang Nam, and Da Nang City to be responsible for implementation of the project activities. Protected Area Management Boards within the targeted landscapes in the six provinces and Da Nang City will be responsible for nature-based solution and implementation of protected areas management and enforcement actions critical to the project's success. The responsible parties therefore, will work together with the EA to jointly co-implement activities for which they are responsible under the project.

**Project stakeholders and target groups:** Reference is made to **Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan** (Section 3) to the CEO Endorsement Request, providing list of stakeholders, and indicating their main roles and responsibilities, as well as sections detailing stakeholder engagement in Appendix 1 of Annex J.

*Table 1: Detailed Scope of Stakeholder Roles and responsibilities*

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name	Interest/Involvement in the Project	Project Effect on Stakeholder / Stakeholder Influence on the Project
Government of Vietnam at national level	Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MOAE) and its constituent authorities	The wide-ranging state management functions of MOAE include the management of air, land and water resources under the amended Law of Environmental Protection (2020), as well as biodiversity under Viet Nam's Law of Biodiversity (2008). MOAE's mandate also includes coordination with ministries, ministerial committees and government agencies in providing guidance for implementation of resource use, environmental protection and biodiversity conservation in the	MOAE is the designated National Executing Agency (NBCA) for the project. MOEA will assume all duties assigned to the NBCA, will chair the Project Steering Committee, and assume a leading role in engaging national and local level stakeholders in implementing project activities. MOAE will lead Annual Review meetings on project planning and reporting, and will appraise and approve all project related

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name	Interest/Involvement in the Project	Project Effect on Stakeholder / Stakeholder Influence on the Project
		<p>sector areas managed by these ministries and agencies. Under Decree No. 65, former MONRE (now MOAE) has been given responsibility for working with PPCs to establish national-level PAs in wetlands, limestone mountains, and mixed ecosystems that occupy at least two provinces and that are not already within a Special Use Forests (SUFs) or in the sea, and to manage such PAs.</p> <p>Under MOAE, the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency (NBCA) has the mandate for state management of biodiversity, in accordance with biodiversity conservation provisions of the Biodiversity Law in cooperation with other ministries.</p> <p>Institutionally BCA is the agency authorized for the preparation of NBSAP, biodiversity master planning, and national reporting on biodiversity.</p> <p>MOAE is, among others, the national focal point for various multilateral environmental agreements, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UNFCCC, the Ramsar Convention, and the UNCCD.</p>	<p>documents, including Annual Work Plans and Quarterly Work Plans.</p> <p>NBCA will assume the responsibility for overall project implementation under delegated responsibility by MOAE. NBCA is also responsible for coordinating relevant stakeholders within NBCA in support of the overall implementation of the project. NBCA has past experience of managing UN Projects, including GEF funded-projects. NBCA will participate in Annual Review meetings, planning and reporting.</p> <p>NBCA will be responsible for day-to-day coordination and management of project activities at the national level and coordination of project activities at the provincial level, financial management and reporting.</p>
	Former Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), now is Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MOAE)	Former MARD, now is MOAE has the responsibility for exercising the State management over forest protection and development as well as fisheries management nationwide, through its Forest Protection Department (PFD), special used forest and protection forest department, and Department for Capture Fisheries and Resource Protection (DCFRP). Prior to the 2008 Biodiversity Law, MOAE has been responsible for developing the national PA system within forests (Special Use Forests – SUFs), marine and inland water ecosystems (Marine Protected Areas and Inland Water Conservation Areas, respectively).	MOAE will collaborate and support in project activities to identify gaps, priority issues and solutions for sustainable forest management, ecotourism, and biodiversity conservation of NPs, NRs including strengthening protected area (PA) management, identification of HCV set-aside forest in buffer zones and marine conservation areas, forest restoration in national parks, NRs, etc.

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name	Interest/Involvement in the Project	Project Effect on Stakeholder / Stakeholder Influence on the Project
		<p>Additionally, MOAE is responsible for enforcing wildlife protection regulations, as such playing an important role in preventing overexploitation of a range of species. MARD is also the focal point of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). MOAE continues to be responsible for national-level PAs that are within terrestrial SUFs and for marine PAs lying within at least 2 provinces of Quang Tri Con Co MPA, and Quang Nam Cu Lao Cham MPA.</p>	
	<p>Former Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), Now is Ministry of Finance (MOF)</p>	<p>MOF performs State management functions in the field of planning and investment, including the provision of general advices on strategies and plans on national socio- economic development, on mechanism and policies for general economic management and some specific fields, on domestic and foreign investment, etc.</p>	<p>Project effect on the SH includes:</p> <p>MOF will be a beneficiary of the project results, specifically capacity building, training and policy advice on how to integrate natural resources use into national and provincial planning procedures, strategies, and plans.</p>
	<p>Ministry of Finance/MOF</p>	<p>MoF is one of the Executing Partners of the Project.</p> <p>It ensures accountability, continuous productivity of government services, and economic growth by promoting policies for, and sound management of, expenditures, revenues, financing, and human resources.</p> <p>As one of the Executing Agency members at national level, the MoF will coordinate and overview all the project activities.</p> <p>The MoF will be also be a key-player in the activities of design, test and implementation of fiscal incentives and disincentive and financial support to private operators and public-private partnerships.</p>	<p>Project effect on the SH includes:</p> <p>Promotion of financial policy reform regarding agriculture/and fisheries systems (fiscal incentives and disincentives).</p> <p>Increased resource mobilization for sustainable fisheries management.</p> <p>Support in establishment and capitalization of the Community Rotation Fund with impact on resource mobilization for fisheries management.</p>

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name	Interest/Involvement in the Project	Project Effect on Stakeholder / Stakeholder Influence on the Project
		<p>The MOF will also support the establishment and capitalization of the Community Rotation Fund. It will also support the project management unit in sound financial management and reporting.</p>	
<p><b>Government of Vietnam at local level</b></p>	<p>Provincial People's Committees in project sites</p>	<p>PPCs are headed by a Chairman and supported by Vice-Chairmen for each major sector including a Vice Chairman for Natural Resources &amp; Environment. Under Viet Nam's decentralization policies, PPCs play a major role in provincial development and sector planning and implementation, including on environmental management and biodiversity conservation. PPCs also have an important role in ensuring that biodiversity is integrated into sectoral plans and programs at the local level. Specifically, they are responsible for coordinating the biodiversity conservation activities of various line departments at the provincial (and city) level. PPCs currently have management responsibility for those PAs – SUFs, Integrated Water Management and MPAs - that lie entirely within their provincial territory.</p>	<p>The PPCs in pilot NPs and their subsidiary agencies at the provincial level will participate in project implementation, providing information, support and co-financial contributions. The PPCs will coordinate and oversee implementation, management and monitoring of project activities in the respective NPs, including: (i) review work plans and approve budgets of the respective NPs; and (ii) preside over inter-agency coordination meetings including district authorities as well as sectoral stakeholders.</p>
	<p>Provincial specialized departments</p>	<p>At the provincial level, national line ministries usually have specialized departments that mirror their parent ministries in administrative structure and function. These departments receive technical instructions from their national line ministries, but are accountable to the PPCs.</p> <p>Department of Agriculture and Environment is the provincial representative of MOAE and the thus responsible for managing natural resources and environment at the provincial level. Responsibilities also include land administration, pollution monitoring. Department of Agriculture and Environment plays an increasing role in supporting biodiversity management and as such in assisting PPCs in managing BRs.</p>	<p>Department of Agriculture and Environment is the primary technical government partner of this project at the pilot NP level, with key partner support being provided by DOCST.</p> <p>Department of Agriculture and Environment, DOCST will participate in the NP MB, and as such in development of an integrated vision, mapping of natural resources and detailed planning of project activities, including HCV set-aside areas, forest restoration areas, EIA, guiding sustainable livelihood activities, including tourism.</p> <p>DOCST will support tourism related initiatives, including certification, private-partnerships, and models for sustainable tourism practices.</p>

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name	Interest/Involvement in the Project	Project Effect on Stakeholder / Stakeholder Influence on the Project
		<p>Former Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), now is provincial Department of Agriculture and Environment is the provincial representative of MOAE, assigned responsibilities for agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture. provincial Department of Agriculture and Environment also has considerable experience of managing PAs, MPAs and IWM across Vietnam.</p> <p>Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism (DOCST) is the provincial representative of MOCST, assigned to implement its mandate at the province level, including on provincial level tourism development, and certifying tourism certification within provincial tourism activities.</p> <p>Former Department of Planning (DPI)- Now is Department of Finance (DOF) is the provincial representative of MOF, assigned for executing the mandate of MOF, which includes socio-economic planning.</p>	<p>DOF will be beneficiary of project results, specifically related to integrated vision on land and natural resources use, sectoral responsibilities to mainstream biodiversity into strategies and planning in line with the BR concept.</p>
	<p>Management Boards of National Parks (NPs)/Nature reserves (NRs)/Protection Forests (PFs)</p>	<p>MBs of National Parks/Nature reserves/Protection Forests are designated authorities responsible for the management of national park, including Special-Use Forests, and protection forests under forest protection and development regulations, Marine protected areas under fisheries regulations, and nature reserves under provincial regulations.</p>	<p>Within the of National Parks/Nature reserves/Protection Forest, MBs will be directly involved with the planning, implementation and monitoring of project activities in their respective NPs, NRs, PFs through providing information, identifying priority issues at each site, and participating in priority interventions on nature-based tourism in the national park and buffer zone area, including through targeted livelihood activities as relevant. MBs will also support strengthening conservation activities in identified HCV landscapes in buffer zones.</p>
	<p>District and Commune People's Committees (DPCs/CPCs)</p>	<p>District and Commune PCs play a key role in supporting local socio-economic development. Being the closest state organization to local communities, they play an important role in overseeing and supporting development activities in their districts and communes. Thus, DPCs and CPCs have a key role to play in terms of ensuring environmental</p>	<p>DPCs and CPCs will be key project partners at the two national park site level, particularly in relation to implementing activities targeting at reducing threats to biodiversity arising from current economic development and livelihood practices, and tourism. CPCs particularly will participate in the commune conservation planning</p>

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name	Interest/Involvement in the Project	Project Effect on Stakeholder / Stakeholder Influence on the Project
		sustainability and avoiding overexploitation, particularly in relation to activities such as agriculture (including rice and other forms of agricultural production), fishing, aquaculture, as well as tourism activities.	process and implementation of activities targeted at improving conservation outcomes as well as improved sustainable forest management, and livelihood in selected communes and households.
<b>Communities and Indigenous People</b>	Ethnic minority groups	Ethnic minorities include indigenous groups living for many generations in and around NPs and NRs, as well as protection forests, each having a different history, traditions, and diverse material lives. Mainly they rely on natural resources, especially forests, for their livelihoods, and as such are one group linked to the degradation of natural resources and biodiversity. They are also managing community forestry/traditional forest management. In many areas, poverty rates are significant.	<p>Ethnic minorities will directly participate in NPs and NRs decision making processes, development of village/community forest management, ecotourism and conservation plans, implementation of community forest, ecotourism and livelihood and in benefit sharing in forest management and protection. Specific investment for households of ethnic minorities will be instituted through the OCOP (one commune on product) process to ensure strengthening their current livelihood and sustainable resources use practices.</p> <p><b>Community Consultation in Biodiversity Planning Processes:</b></p> <p>Consultation is an essential component of biodiversity planning, ensuring inclusiveness, transparency, and the alignment of plans with community needs. According to Vietnam’s Law on Biodiversity (2008) and guiding Circulars, local communities must be involved in both the development and implementation of biodiversity conservation planning. This is achieved through two main mechanisms: (1) indirect participation via local representatives—such as village heads or members of socio-political organizations (e.g., Women’s Union, Youth Union, Farmers’ Association)—and (2) direct consultation through community meetings.</p> <p>Village heads often serve as critical intermediaries between communities and local authorities, reflecting community concerns. However, they</p>

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name	Interest/Involvement in the Project	Project Effect on Stakeholder / Stakeholder Influence on the Project
			<p>typically voice the majority's needs, which may overlook gender-specific or minority concerns unless widely shared. Socio-political organizations provide additional representation but similarly tend to reflect collective rather than individual or gender-specific issues, with the Women's Union being a notable exception.</p> <p>At the institutional level, consultation with government agencies—especially departments of environment, forestry, and agriculture—is carried out through stakeholder meetings and written input. While this structure enables multi-level governance and coordination, gender-sensitive and inclusive practices remain limited and require strengthening to ensure</p>
<p><b>Community Based Organizations</b></p>	<p>Civil society organization (CSO), community-based organizations (CBOs), e.g. Farmers Unions, Fisheries Associations, Women's Unions, Youth Unions</p>	<p>Civil society/ community-based organizations are custodians, primary users and managers of the landscape resources and key target groups for all components of the project. They are engaged in fisheries and eco-tourism activities, NTFP collection, agricultural and pastoral activities, etc. within the NPs.</p> <p>Specifically, they will engage in (i) preparation of commune ecotourism plans, including mapping of commune resources, identifying threats and responses to threats, identifying conservation, ecotourism and livelihood activities, (ii) the implementation of commune ecotourism and conservation plans, including though relevant community groups and micro-revolving funds, (iii) training programs aimed at improving resource use, ecotourism and livelihood development, etc.</p>	<p>Local communities, including CBOs, will participate in the implementation of project activities and be direct beneficiaries of project investments in the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem functioning and in sustainable forest management in NPs/NRs and PFs. Appropriate ecotourism and natural resources regulations in different zones of the NPs/NRs and PFs will be formulated with their participation and agreement, to ensure both continuation of income from traditional or suitable alternative livelihood via sustainable forest management and ecotourism activities in combination with strengthened consideration for biodiversity conservation.</p> <p><b>Role of Civil Society in Governance and Decision-Making:</b></p> <p>Civil society plays a crucial role in advancing inclusive governance and participatory decision-making within the project. Local NGOs, community-based organizations, and ethnic minority groups contribute actively to planning and implementing</p>

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name	Interest/Involvement in the Project	Project Effect on Stakeholder / Stakeholder Influence on the Project
			<p>biodiversity conservation by ensuring local voices are heard. They support transparency and accountability, particularly in land use planning, biodiversity monitoring, and natural resource co-management. Acting as intermediaries, CSOs bridge government and community efforts, promote traditional knowledge, and foster grassroots capacity building. Their involvement in technical working groups and other governance structures institutionalizes multi-stakeholder collaboration. By advocating for environmental justice and climate resilience, civil society ensures conservation goals align with community priorities, promoting more equitable, sustainable outcomes across the Central Annamites Landscape.</p> <p><b>Role of the Women’s Union (WU) in Decision-Making and Project Implementation:</b></p> <p>The Women’s Union (WU) plays a pivotal role in promoting gender equality in biodiversity conservation and landscape management. As a key local actor, the WU actively supports training and awareness-raising activities, helping to organize and deliver learning events on gender and conservation for both community members and government staff. Through these efforts, the WU enhances understanding of gender-specific roles and promotes inclusive participation in planning and implementation processes. It contributes to the development of gender mainstreaming guidelines and advocates for the integration of gender-responsive goals, principles, and solutions into provincial landscape and biodiversity plans. The WU also mobilizes women’s participation in livelihood models and facilitates access to financial services. With support from gender specialists, the WU ensures that gender-</p>

Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name	Interest/Involvement in the Project	Project Effect on Stakeholder / Stakeholder Influence on the Project
			disaggregated data is collected and used to inform decision-making
<b>NGOs</b>	Vietnam and International NGOs (iNGOs)	<p>National/provincial based NGOs/CSOs (Pan Nature, Green Viet, SVW, VietNature, etc.), and iNGOs (FFI, WCS, Traffic, SNV, etc.) play an important role in a variety of sectors like biodiversity conservation; sustainable natural resources use, minimizing impacts from development, pollution abatement, improving rural livelihoods, as well as otherwise addressing the needs of local communities, including on themes like policy and legislation, research, education and awareness raising. Relevant local, national and international NGOs active in the project-relevant fields of protected area management, sustainable forest management, livelihood support with links to the project's thematic and/or spatial focuses.</p> <p>They will also get involved in capacity building programs such as SMART training and monitoring, biodiversity and forest law enforcement trainings.</p>	<p>Project collaborating partner, project technical support, project capacity building beneficiary, member of the provincial project working group.</p> <p>Potential executing partner and advisor to the provincial project working group. Provide technical support in policy and planning related to SEA, biodiversity conservation and threat reduction aspects of human and wildlife conflict, wildlife tourism development. Appropriate partner organizations will be identified during PPG. The project will build on and collaborate with relevant initiatives conducted by local and international NGOs in relevant conservation, monitoring, livelihood development, community-based natural resources management, benefit sharing and other related activities.</p>
<b>Private Sector</b>	Private Sector on forest and tourism	<p>There are many private forest and tourism companies operating in and cooperating with national parks, nature reserves, protection forests, and community forest management cooperative or small holder households.</p> <p>They are a collaborating partner, expecting involvement in the development of tourism products, forest certification and testing of sustainable financing mechanism and long-term partnership development.</p>	<p>The project will engage private sector as much as possible. The investors will be involved in the development and implementation of project at site level. The private sector will collaborate in implementation of and support to responsible tourism initiatives, specifically certification and models for sustainable tourism products and services.</p> <p>The private sector will also be project technical support, project capacity building beneficiary, member of provincial project working group.</p> <p>Advice to provincial project working group on biodiversity conservation, public awareness raising project sites.</p>

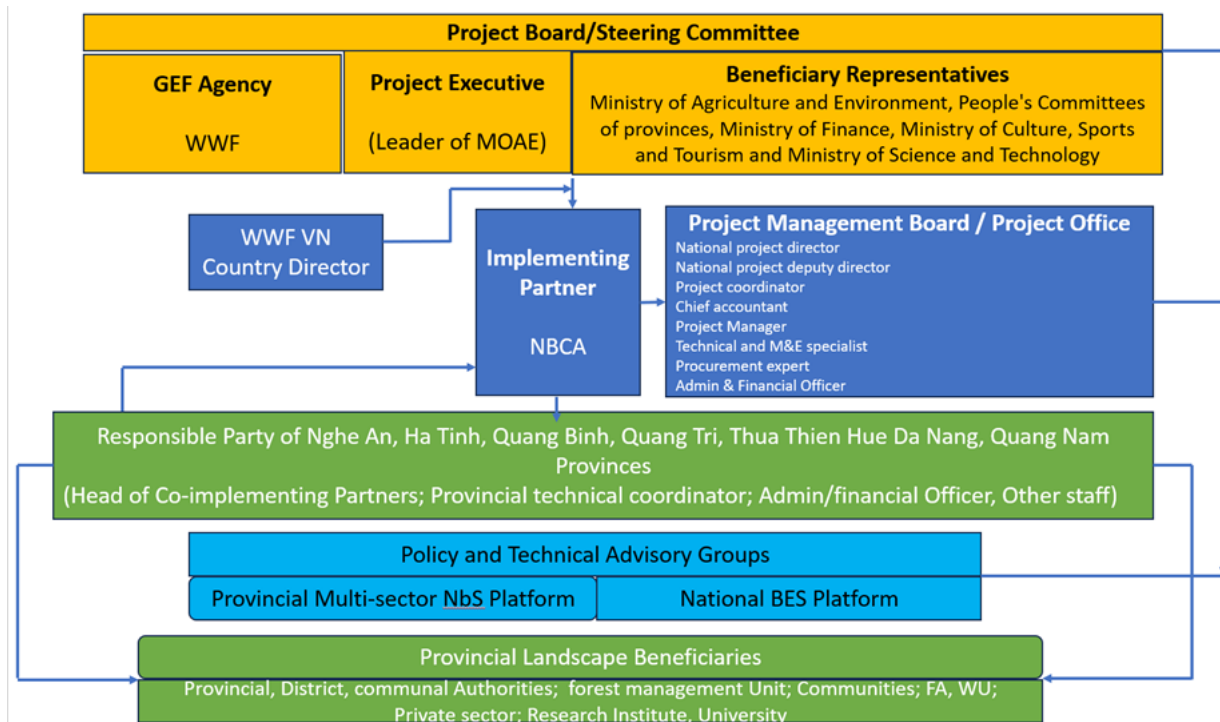
Stakeholder Type	Stakeholder Name	Interest/Involvement in the Project	Project Effect on Stakeholder / Stakeholder Influence on the Project
			Public outreach and education campaign on mainstreaming biodiversity into relevant sector (forestry, tourism, etc.), and knowledge exchange during the project implementation.
<b>Universities Academic research institutions</b>	Universities Academic research institutions	<p>A number of universities and institutes at national and landscape level have strong environment research units with knowledge and experience relevant to this project. They are functioned to conduct research on developing biodiversity, forest strategies, planning, policies for state management in biodiversity conservation and sustainable forest management provide research and consultancy services.</p> <p>They also provide trainings and human resource for both biodiversity and forestry sectors</p>	<p>Appropriate partner organizations will be identified during project implementation, as relevant and in line with their thematic focus and experience. Some of them will be a co-executing partner and will be firmed up during the inception and planning phase of implementation through competitive tender.</p> <p>Other research institutions will be involved in consultancy activities, including on legal-regulatory framework, field studies on mapping and inventory, biodiversity monitoring for the benefit of formulating informed recommendations to the project and its national and local government partners.</p>

<a href="#">[RS1]</a> <a href="#">[cp2]</a> <a href="#">[cp3]</a> Stakeholder Type	Name	Frequency of Engagement/ Project Years	Engagement During Project Implementation
<b>Government of national, provincial and local level</b> <a href="#">[3]</a> <sup>39</sup>	Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, MOF, etc. and their line-agencies, PMU	Throughout the project implementation cycle	Project validation, project launch and inception, project Steering Committee meetings, consultation meetings, online meetings, face to face meetings, project technical workshops, formal dialogues, information sharing sessions, conferences, project symposia, electronic communications, site visits.
	Provincial People's Committees (PPCs) and their subsidiary agencies, PPMU		
	District and commune people's committees and their subsidiary units		
<b>Communities and Indigenous People</b>	Local communities and vulnerable groups (communities and vulnerable groups surrounding project sites of PAs and NRs, including ethnic minorities	Throughout the project implementation cycle	Project launch and inception, consultation meeting, online meetings, in person meetings, one-on-one meeting, project technical workshops, formal and informal dialogues, information sharing sessions, communications through social media, questionnaire/surveys, public outreach event, site visits, awareness materials.
<b>Community Based Organizations</b>	Refer to table 2 in <b>Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan</b> for a comprehensive list of CBOs	Throughout the project implementation cycle	Project launch and inception, consultation meeting, online meetings, in person meetings, one-on-one meeting, project technical workshops, formal and informal dialogues, information sharing sessions, communications through social media, questionnaire/

[RS1] [cp2] [cp3] Stakeholder Type	Name	Frequency of Engagement/ Project Years	Engagement During Project Implementation
			surveys, public outreach event, site visits, awareness materials.
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-profit organization (international and national NGOs/CSOs), refer to table 1 in <b>Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan</b> for a comprehensive list of potential NGOs	When required at the request of the PMU/and or PPMU	Project launch and inception, consultation meetings, MoU agreements, online and face to face meetings, project technical workshops, formal and informal dialogues, trainings, information sharing sessions, communications, questionnaire surveys, public outreach event
<b>Private Sector</b>	Refer to table 3 in <b>Annex J: Stakeholder Engagement Plan</b> for a comprehensive list of private sector entities	Throughout project implementation cycle	Project launch and inception, provincial project working group meetings, consultation meetings, trainings, face to face and online meetings, project technical workshops, informal dialogues, information sharing sessions, communications, site visits, knowledge exchange trip, questionnaire/ surveys, public outreach event

**WWF US:** WWF US as the GEF Agency is accountable to the GEF for the implementation of this project. This includes overseeing project execution undertaken by the Executing Agency to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with WWF US and GEF policies and procedures. WWF US attends Project Board/Steering Committee meetings as a non-voting member.

Figure 1: Project Organizational Structure



**Acronyms:** MOAE-Ministry of Agriculture and Environment; PPC-Provincial People’s Committee, MOCST-Ministry of Culture, Sport & Tourism; MOF-Ministry of Finance; NBCA-Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency under MOAE.

**Day-to-day Project Management:**

The Project Management Board/Project Management Unit (PMU) provides execution of project activities while maintaining alignment with the Project Board’s/Steering Committee’s strategic guidance and governance requirements. It will be led by the

National Project Manager (PM) recruited by the MoAE, oversees the project's day-to-day execution. The PM is responsible for mobilizing inputs, supervising project staff and consultants, and presenting key deliverables, such as progress reports, annual work plans, and risk registers, to the Project Board/Steering Committee for review and approval.

The PM is supported by an Admin and Finance Officer based in Hanoi, a Project Coordinator, and part-time specialists, including an M&E Specialist, a Gender and Safeguards Specialist, and an International Project Advisor. The PMU also serves as the Secretariat to the Project Board, ensuring effective preparation and participation in all board meetings, where the PM acts as the primary representative.

Figure 2: Funding Flows

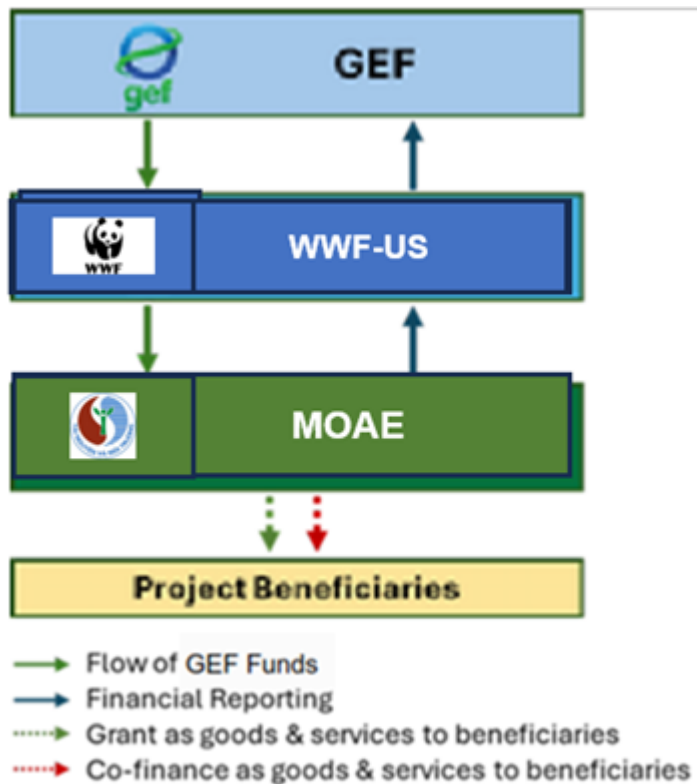
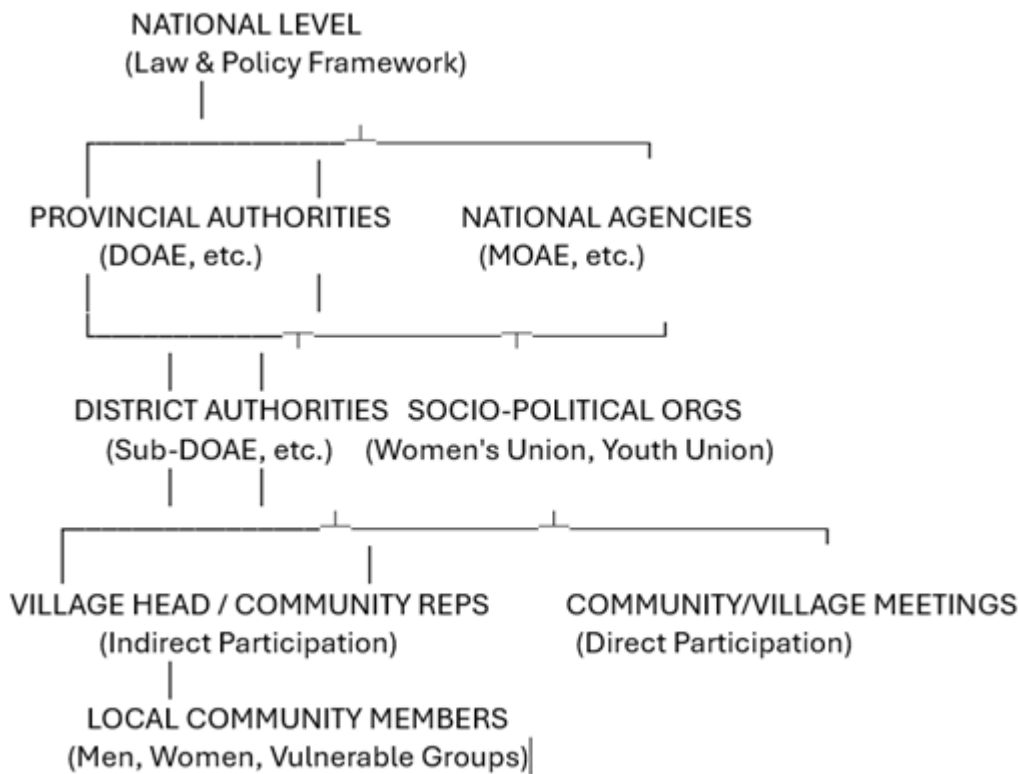


Figure 3: Consultative and Political Governance Diagram



[1] Resolution 176/2025/QH15 on the organizational structure of the Government. The XV National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, at 9th Extraordinary Session, passed on February 18, 2025.

[2] On December 16, 2021, the Government of Vietnam issued [Decree No. 114/2021/ND-CP](#) on management and use of official development assistance and concessional loans of foreign donors.

[3] Resolution 176/2025/QH15 on the organizational structure of the Government. The XV National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, at 9th Extraordinary Session, passed on February 18, 2025.

Will the GEF Agency play an execution role on this project?

If so, please describe that role here and the justification.

The GEF Agency will not play an execution role on this project

Also, please add a short explanation to describe cooperation with ongoing initiatives and projects, including potential for co-location and/or sharing of expertise/staffing (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The project builds upon a strong baseline of prior GEF investment in Vietnam including:

- Under ADB/GEF-5 project “The Greater Mekong Subregion Biodiversity Conservation Corridor, Phase 2”, implemented between June 2015 to December 2020, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) and three provinces in Central Annamites (Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue and Quang Nam) have established and implemented a pilot of three biodiversity corridors. Outputs 1.1 and 1.2 are relevant.
- GEF-6 Mainstreaming Natural Resource Management and Biodiversity Conservation Objectives into Socio-Economic Development Planning and Management of Biosphere Reserve in Vietnam, implemented by MONRE and supported by UNDP,

will provide a scalable model for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and natural resources management objectives into governance, planning and management of socio-economic development.

- GEF-6 Strengthening Partnerships to Protect Endangered Wildlife in Vietnam, implemented by MONRE and supported by the World Bank, focuses on strengthening the legal and regulatory framework, and the related implementation capacity for the protection of threatened wildlife, and is relevant under the project's demand reduction component, includes activities to change behavior of key consumer groups for illegal wildlife products and raise industry awareness of the links between tourism and illegal wildlife trade (e.g. ivory purchase in Vietnam's under-the-radar markets by Chinese tourists).
- GEF-7 Sustainable Forest and Forest Land Management in Vietnam's Ba River basin landscape, implemented by the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (FIPI) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), is relevant as it uses the tourism sector as one of its pilot sectors to promote a comprehensive and integrated approach to mainstream land, resource management, and biodiversity conservation into forest management. The latter is particularly important as the project explores ways to bridge PES to marine and wetland habitats.
- GEF-7, Integrated Sustainable Landscape Management in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam, implemented by MONRE and the Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development (IPSARD), supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization provides a model for the development and use of an integrated monitoring and reporting platform to enable the aggregation of periodic reports, updates, and information from myriad stakeholders and how to harvest related information to enhance decision-making.
- GEF-7 Nature-Based Tourism Project in Quang Binh and Ninh Thuan provinces aims to promote sustainable tourism development and biodiversity conservation in the country. One of the innovative aspects of this project is its focus on integrating biodiversity conservation into tourism master and sectoral planning and development at the destination level. Perhaps most applicable to the GEF-8 Central Vietnam Landscape project will be the development of guidelines for Payment for Marine Ecosystem Services (PMES) that will be piloted in wetland habitats and offer up opportunities for replication and further refinement. The UNDP-GEF Nature-Based Tourism project (GEF ID: 10787) will serve as a key enabling initiative, particularly in establishing the Biodiversity-Ecosystem Services (BES) Platform, developing national PES guidelines in forestry and marine ecosystems that will inform the PWES model in Da Nang, and setting up a national community revolving fund (CRF) to finance local and women-led biodiversity initiatives. As the executing agency for both projects, MOAE will ensure institutional alignment and operational synergies. The design and operational details of the CRF will be finalized once consultants are mobilized under the Nature-Based Tourism project, and this project will adopt those standards and mechanisms once in place.

WWF has several projects in Vietnam that are relevant to landscape conservation, demonstrating WWF's commitment to promoting landscape conservation and sustainable land-use practices in Vietnam:

- **The WWF NbS Origination Platform** is an initiative that aims to facilitate the development of nature-based solutions (NbS) projects to address environmental challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and sustainable development. The platform provides a range of services to support the development of NbS projects, including project identification, design, financing, and monitoring. It also provides access to a network of experts, investors, and other stakeholders to help NbS project developers connect with the resources they need to succeed. It seeks to mainstream the use of nature-based solutions as a key approach to address global environmental challenges and accelerate the transition to a more sustainable future.
- **The Carbon and Biodiversity (CarBi)** works in pursuit of maintaining the biodiversity values of two provinces in the Central Annamites Landscape with key objectives to: (i) expand and improve protected area management; (ii) implement national and international wildlife and timber trade frameworks; (iii) community engagement in natural resource management; and (iv) developing sustainable financing mechanism;
- **The Dutch Fund for Climate and Development (DFCD)** focuses on support to private enterprises as project holders in bankable nature solution projects that are closely linked to resource-dependent communities vulnerable to climate change, such as rattan harvesters, ginseng growers, or smallholder plantation forest growers with FSC certification etc. in the Central Annamite Landscape.
- **Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) program:** This program focuses on restoring degraded forest landscapes and promoting sustainable land-use practices to enhance landscape connectivity and promote biodiversity conservation. The program includes a range of activities, including reforestation, agroforestry, and sustainable forest management.
- **Strengthening Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG):** This project aims to promote sustainable forest management and combat illegal logging and trade in timber and forest products. The project includes activities such as capacity building for forest rangers, strengthening law enforcement mechanisms, and promoting sustainable forest certification.
- **Sustainable Landscapes and Livelihoods (SLL):** This program focuses on promoting sustainable land-use practices and enhancing landscape connectivity to support both biodiversity conservation and local livelihoods. The program includes activities such as agroforestry, sustainable land-use planning, and community-based conservation.

- **Mekong Delta Landscape Conservation:** This project focuses on promoting sustainable land-use practices and enhancing ecosystem resilience in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam. The project includes activities such as reforestation, sustainable aquaculture, and community-based conservation.
- WWF has been actively involved in pioneering efforts to establish carbon financing mechanisms worldwide, including in Vietnam. Through strategic partnerships, policy advocacy, and innovative projects, WWF aims to create effective frameworks that incentivize and enable the financing of carbon reduction initiatives, facilitating the transition to a low-carbon future and promoting sustainable landscape conservation practices.

Other projects and initiatives material to the scope of the GEF-8 project:

- **The USAID Biodiversity Conservation and Wildlife Demand Reduction Program**, which was canceled in early 2025, was implemented by the World Wildlife Fund. It was a program aimed at reducing demand for wildlife products and promoting sustainable biodiversity conservation in Asia, including in Vietnam. The program involved working with local communities, governments, and businesses to promote sustainable production and consumption practices, as well as implementing targeted campaigns to reduce demand for wildlife products and on strengthening legal and policy frameworks related to biodiversity conservation and wildlife trade, and supporting the development and implementation of effective law enforcement strategies to combat illegal wildlife trade.
- In October 2020, Vietnam’s Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development signed a landmark agreement with the **Forest Carbon Partnership Fund (FCPF)** through the World Bank, opening financing of USD 51.5 million for Vietnam’s efforts to reduce carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation between now and 2025. Under the Emission Reduction Payments Agreement (ERPA), Vietnam is expected to reduce CO2 emissions by 10.3 million tons in six North Central provinces, with the project potentially being able to leverage its approach under Component 3.
- The **USAID Vietnam Forests and Deltas Program (2012-2017)** supported Vietnam’s transition to resilient, sustainable development. The program helps put national policies and strategies into practice to respond to environmental change, with a focus on the forestry and agriculture sectors and strengthening livelihoods. Addressing long-term environmental change risks and gender vulnerabilities in both forest and delta landscapes are key program objectives.
- The **USAID/Sustainable Forest Management project aims (2020-2025)** to reduce emissions from deforestation, forest degradation, and poor timber plantation management practices in seven provinces in Vietnam (Lao Cai, Son La, Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Quang Tri, and Quang Nam) with the objectives to improve and expand community forest management, increase conservation –friendly enterprise in forest dependent community, increase functionality of law enforcement system against forest crimes, improve forest management practices and mobilize domestic resources for forest management and protection.

This project will learn from the experiences of the above-mentioned projects in community forest management, collaborative management, community-based anti-poaching groups, etc., to fill in the gaps, explore possibility of maintaining and scaling-up existing modalities to accelerate their impacts as well as ensure their sustainability. The project will also make efforts to coordinate with the Indo Malay IP to share lessons and best practices under GEF8.

## Core Indicators

Indicate expected results in each relevant indicator using methodologies indicated in the GEF-8 Results Measurement Framework Guidelines. There is no need to complete this table for climate adaptation projects financed solely through LDCF and SCCF.

### Indicator 1 Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
731446.29	299499.82	0	0

### Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
70000	59040	0	0

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
Lim Xanh species conservation area (Quang Nam Province)		Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources		1,249.00		
Proposed Giang Man nature reserve (Ha Tinh Province)		Strict Nature Reserve		12,000.00		
Proposed Khe Net nature reserve (Quang Binh Province)		Strict Nature Reserve		16,080.00		
Proposed Puxailaileng nature reserve (Nghe An Province)		Strict Nature Reserve		29,711.00		
TBD			70,000.00			

#### Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
661446.29	240459.82	0	0

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
Ba Na - Nui Chua nature reserve	10346	Strict Nature Reserve		16,956.24					
Bac Huong Hoa NR	555594125	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	23,456.00	14,214.80					
Bach Ma NP	71309	Protected Landscape/Seascape	37,496.00						
Dakrong NR	10384	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	37,666.01	22,822.00					
Dong Chau - Khe Nuoc Trong NR		Strict Nature Reserve	22,128.94						

Elephant SHCA		Habitat/Species Management Area	18,977.00						
Ke Go NR	61931	Habitat/Species Management Area	24,801.00						
Phong Dien NR	303039	Habitat/Species Management Area	40,789.02	24,733.50					
Phong Nha Ke Bang NP	900883	National Park	123,320.78						
Phu Huong NR	10343	Protected Landscape/Seascape	40,186.50						
Pu Hoat NR	303023		34,589.89						
Pu Mat	61595	National Park	93,524.70	57,215.87					
Sao la Quang Nam NR	303100	Habitat/Species Management Area	15,486.00	9,332.60					
Sao la Thua Thien Hue NR	303100	Strict Nature Reserve	15,324.93	11,741.60					
Song Thanh NP	303066	National Park	76,669.68	46,415.40					
Tam Giang-Cau Hai Wetland nature reserve	303051	Strict Nature Reserve		2,467.73					
Vu Quang NP	10375	National Park	57,029.84	34,560.08					

### Indicator 3 Area of land and ecosystems under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
4400	10260	0	0

### Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

### Indicator 3.2 Area of forest and forest land under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
2,200.00	10,260.00		

### Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and woodland under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

### Indicator 3.4 Area of wetlands (including estuaries, mangroves) under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
2,200.00	0.00		

### Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
130532	273928	0	0

### Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
130,532.00	273,928.00		

### Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

### Type/Name of Third Party Certification

### Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

### Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value or other forest loss avoided

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

### Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

### Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

#### Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
<b>Expected metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (direct)</b>	896208	1626379	0	0
<b>Expected metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (indirect)</b>	5377250	2384944	0	0

#### Indicator 6.1 Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
<b>Expected metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (direct)</b>	896,208	1,626,379		
<b>Expected metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (indirect)</b>	5,377,250	2,384,944		
<b>Anticipated start year of accounting</b>		2030		
<b>Duration of accounting</b>		20		

#### Indicator 6.2 Emissions Avoided Outside AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) Sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
<b>Expected metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (direct)</b>				
<b>Expected metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e (indirect)</b>				
<b>Anticipated start year of accounting</b>				
<b>Duration of accounting</b>				

#### Indicator 6.3 Energy Saved (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Total Target Benefit	Energy (MJ) (At PIF)	Energy (MJ) (At CEO Endorsement)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at MTR)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at TE)
<b>Target Energy Saved (MJ)</b>				

#### Indicator 6.4 Increase in Installed Renewable Energy Capacity per Technology (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at TE)
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#### Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
<b>Female</b>	1,350	1,350		
<b>Male</b>	1,650	1,650		
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	0	0

Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

Core Indicator 1: A total of 299,500 ha, representing 60% of the total 499,166 hectares of potential sites available for prospective new terrestrial PAs either created (98,400 ha) or under improved management (396,798 ha), as well as terrestrial PA under improved management that contributes directly to carbon storage (expected to be upwards of an additional 3,968,357 ha adjacent to neighbouring areas, which are expected to contribute to reducing carbon emissions) collectively realized through improved natural resource management including activities that promote enhanced management of natural resources such as conserving biodiversity, maintaining ecosystem services, strengthening sustainable use of natural resources, mitigating climate change, and/or promoting community participation in natural resource management and monitoring at key sites and verified through annual METT scores and SMART data / patrol reports. See Table 8 below for details on sites and justification therein. Contributions toward this indicator are expected to accrue through the implementation of Outputs 1.1.2, 1.1.4, 2.1.1, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.2.1, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.4.1, 2.4.2 and 2.4.3.

Core Indicator 3: Based on consultations during the PPG stage and realistic calculations grounded in WWF Vietnam's experience in both terrestrial and wetland restoration activities, it is assumed 10,260 ha will be restored using a variety of techniques. This number amounts to 60% of the total prospective 17,100 hectares that ought to be restored within the CVL at priority sites. See Table 8 below for details on sites and justification therein. Contributions toward this indicator are expected to accrue through the implementation of Outputs 3.1.3 and 3.1.4.

Core Indicator 4: Based on consultations with executing partners during the formulation of the PPG, it is assumed that a total of 273,928 hectares (60% of the total 456,547 available at priority sites in the target landscape) will be under improved practices within the Central Vietnam Landscape outside existing PAs. Contributions toward this indicator are expected to accrue through the implementation of Outputs 1.1.2, 1.1.4, 2.1.1, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.2.1, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.4.1, 2.4.2 and 2.4.3.

Core Indicator 6: The GHG emissions reductions resulting from the project were estimated using the Ex-Act tool version and a period of 20 years (5 years project and 15 years capitalization phase) resulting in a minimum of -4,011,323,408,857 (to an upwards of -6,685,538,901,476) tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent mitigated/sequestered. See Table 8 Annex, attached in the Roadmap, for details on sites and justification therein, including restoration techniques that will be applied. It is important to note the carbon contribution derived from both the improved management of terrestrial PAs (9,076.6 ha) and the landscapes outside of the PA estate from improved management practices (9,586.3 ha).

For the purposes of targeted restoration and carbon enhancement, the project will prioritize specific sub-areas within the broader terrestrial protected areas in each province. These zones—representing approximately 1% of the total PA area—are those most affected by adjacent land-use pressures and are therefore strategically important for reinforcing ecosystem function and maximizing carbon retention. Likewise, in the production and buffer landscapes located outside of PAs, the project will focus on areas immediately bordering protected zones. These peripheral sites serve as ecological corridors, enhancing habitat connectivity and supporting carbon sequestration while buffering the PAs from encroaching development and land degradation. This targeted approach ensures that restoration efforts are both ecologically meaningful and aligned with broader landscape resilience objectives.

By safeguarding the CVL and with it, the Central Annamites and key forests and wildlife within the Indo-Burma hotspot, the project will generate global environmental benefits in multiple GEF focal areas with emphasis being placed on biodiversity conservation and addressing Climate Change while simultaneously advancing the Government of Vietnam's main landscape objectives within its NBSAP, as well as its commitments to a few major international environmental conventions. The natural resource management practices of communities participating have the potential to impact positively or negatively some of the country's most environmentally fragile and fragmented areas. Vietnam's unique, globally important ecosystems are at risk of serious irreversible degradation and with it, their ecological functions. At the same time, it must be recalled that, although environmental protection is a priority in Vietnam, resources are scarce and meeting whole landscape needs. Therefore,

incremental GEF financing will be necessary to ensure that local development plans integrate into broader landscape ones, and a framework is established to unlock greater financial flows to financing a common landscape conservation vision. GEF support will be provided to strengthen the institutional and legal framework for centralized landscape planning and management. Please review the attached Core Indicator worksheet annex in the Roadmap for more information

## Key Risks

	Rating	Explanation of risk and mitigation measures
<b>CONTEXT</b>		
Climate	Moderate	Drought has been in recent years the major cause of forest and wetland decline in the project region, carrying a substantial increase in degradation and decline of landscape integrity and its ecological functions. Scientific evidence show that the forest canopy and wetland management are effective buffers which is able to reduce the effects of drought and high temperature under the canopy.
Environmental and Social	Moderate	The project region is not characterized by overt socio-environmental conflicts over resources, and the scope of the intervention is prone to soften the existing ones in view of the triple wins and collaborative approach of the CVL, which depends on healthy forests and wetlands to thrive, and on the opportunity to preserve and recover the remains of forest assets through the multiple use landscape management.
Political and Governance	Moderate	Currently, the sustainable management of natural resources is a consensus among political forces in Vietnam, anchored through strong MEA and national commitments in the country's NBSAP. The project will operate in an area with potential risks coming from actual or potential attrition between different governmental bodies and private sector interests. In order to minimize this risk, the project will follow a participatory and consensus building approach during its design. Other political risks, at the time of project execution, might arise which will be triaged and mitigations put in place accordingly.
<b>INNOVATION</b>		
Institutional and Policy	Low	This CEO Endorsement Request has referenced a number of Laws, Decrees and Decisions that require strengthening as a mitigation measure to ensure gaps related to cohesive landscape planning and financing mechanisms to do so are filled. As a mitigation the project will close loopholes and ensure that guidelines are harmonized and supported by instructions on how they ought to be implemented. Capacity building as a cross-cutting priority will further mitigate strategy and policy risks.

Technological	Low	N/A No technological risks are anticipated at this juncture. Risks to be monitored during regular risk identification and triage process by the Project Management Unit.
Financial and Business Model	Low	While there are pressures to modernize through economic development and development projects, the project is purpose-built to include the private sector and other public entities to participate in landscape planning and increase the financial flows towards unified landscape objectives based on ecological goods and service needs. The intervention logic is itself a mitigation to macro-economic pressures.
EXECUTION		
Capacity	Low	The executing partner, MOAE has demonstrated experience related to the scope of the project. If needed, the project will support capacity building of the key stakeholders and provide readiness training.
Fiduciary	Low	The executing partner MOAE has a strong capacity of financial and procurement record with other GEF initiatives having been completed or in flight. A due diligence assessment was undertaken during project development; agreed mitigation measures will be included in the grant agreement, including additional accounting and financial oversight such as an annual audit and quarterly meetings with the executing entity.
Stakeholder	Low	There is a negligible risk that important stakeholders may not buy into the project approach as they were not involved and explicitly given a role during the validation workshop or during the project's initiation and planning phase. Therefore, the stakeholder assessment in Annex J will need to be validated during both the validation workshop and at the outset of the project to build collective ownership.
Other		N/A
Overall Risk Rating	Moderate	The project has an overall risk profile of moderate as many of the risk were rated as such above.

### C. ALIGNMENT WITH GEF-8 PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES AND COUNTRY/REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Explain how the proposed interventions are aligned with GEF- 8 programming strategies and country and regional priorities, including how these country strategies and plans relate to the multilateral environmental agreements.

For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), please identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and explain how.

Confirm if any country policies that might contradict with intended outcomes of the project have been identified, and how the project will address this. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The proposed project is aligned with the GEF-8 Biodiversity and Land Degradation Focal areas as follows:

**Biodiversity Focal Area (BDFA).** The project will follow a landscape approach to improve conservation, sustainable use and restoration of the Central Vietnam Landscape across 6 provinces and 1 centrally-administered municipality (BDFA Objective 1). Specifically, the project will support ecosystem restoration and biodiversity mainstreaming into agriculture, forestry and wetland management sectors (BD1-3) by financing (i) testing and putting in place appropriate measures to improve contiguity of landscapes and ecosystem services and promoting consultative integrated spatial land use planning activities to optimize production without undermining biodiversity; and (ii) will support the development of a stronger policy and regulatory framework that supports measures farmers efforts to sustainably use biodiversity and conserve forests.

It is important to note that while nature-based solutions predominantly resonate to the GEF in the context of Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation, this is very much also a biodiversity-oriented project, with the lion's share of funding earmarked from the biodiversity focal area, and therefore, nature-based solutions are expected to be leveraged to deliver biodiversity benefits noted above.

**Climate Change (CCM).** The project is aligned to the Climate Change focal area, specifically CCM 1.4- as it will support mitigation options in high carbon ecosystems and in the agriculture sector, through the application of nature-based solutions. The interventions supported under the project will generate significant co-benefits, notably in terms of climate adaptation and improved livelihoods for local communities, enhanced biodiversity and reduced degradation of terrestrial forests, mangroves and wetlands. Through Component 3, the project will include the protection and restoration of these ecosystems. In the targeted areas, the nature-based solutions will demonstrate a high potential in terms of reducing carbon loss and providing continued or enhanced natural CO<sub>2</sub> removal.

The project is aligned with the following national and global strategies and plans that link directly to global conventions and related initiatives:

- Vietnam's Biodiversity Master Plan calls for a combination of conservation methods, balancing preservation with sustainable resource use, and complying with biodiversity laws. The plan also aims to ensure safety, mitigate depletion, and mobilize all resources for equitable stakeholder interests.
- Vietnam National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) under UNCBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD: recognizes the need for multi-stakeholder consensus and decision-making, interaction of capacity building in wider efforts to achieve sustainability, promotion of partnerships and collaboration to maximize impacts and create synergies, etc. that can have a positive impact in conservation of species, habitats and ecosystem services in the Central Vietnam Landscape.
- National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA), Draft 2021-2030: The project will contribute directly to four of the priority climate change adaptation areas of activity, namely: securing climate smart agricultural and livestock production practices; mainstreaming of climate change into development and implementation of strategies and plans, and strengthening capacity building to respond to climate risks.
- The project will contribute to **Target(s) 2, 3 and 4 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework** by contributing to the 30% target area of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine ecosystems under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity. This will be achieved through the project's integrated landscape approach and the use of connectivity measures including corridors and OECMs, among other conservation tools to be studied under Component 1. Fewer fragmented forests and islands of biodiversity will have positive conservation impacts on known threatened species, the recovery and conservation of species, in particular threatened species, to significantly reduce extinction risk.

The project also contributes to the post-2015 development agenda, notably with respect to the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- SDG 15 Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss, by supporting targets 15.1 (conservation and sustainable management of forests in Vietnam, including PA networks), 15.2 (sustainable forest management), 15.3 (reducing desertification, restoring degraded land) and 15.5 (reduced degradation of natural habitats).

The project also aligns with and contributes to the following Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets:

Kunming-Montreal GBF Target	Alignment Statement
<p><b>Target 1:</b> Ensure that all areas are under participatory, integrated and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and/or effective management processes addressing land- and sea-use change, to bring the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity, close to zero by 2030, while respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.</p>	<p>The proposed GEF-8 project in Central Vietnam aligns with Target 1 by prioritizing participatory and integrated spatial planning at the whole landscape level, aiming to significantly reduce the loss of high biodiversity areas and ecosystems. It emphasizes the involvement of local communities and Indigenous peoples in management processes, respecting their rights. This approach is designed to maintain ecological integrity and support biodiversity conservation efforts, aligning with the goal of minimizing biodiversity loss by 2030.</p>
<p><b>Target 2:</b> Ensure that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity.</p>	<p>The proposed GEF-8 project is closely aligned with Target 2, as it includes a significant focus on the restoration of degraded ecosystems, including terrestrial and inland water (wetland) areas. By implementing nature-based solutions and prioritizing ecological integrity and connectivity, the project aims to enhance biodiversity, ecosystem functions, and services. This strategy is targeted to cover a substantial portion of the region's ecosystems, contributing to the goal of effectively restoring at least 30% of degraded areas by 2030. The project will restore a total of 10,260 hectares of degraded ecosystems across the Central Vietnam Landscape, including terrestrial forests and coastal wetlands (notably within the Tam Giang-Cau Hai Lagoon system). Restoration strategies will include silvicultural interventions, wetland rehabilitation, and reforestation using native species, directly contributing to GBF Target 2.</p>
<p><b>Target 3:</b> Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.</p>	<p>The proposed GEF-8 landscape project supports Target 3 by focusing on the effective conservation and management of a substantial portion of terrestrial and inland / coastal wetlands. It emphasizes the establishment of ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other conservation measures. These efforts are integrated into broader landscapes and seascapes, with a strong commitment to recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including their traditional territories. This approach ensures that conservation outcomes are harmoniously balanced with sustainable use, where appropriate, within these areas.</p> <p>The project supports improved management of at least 299,500 hectares of PAs and associated areas, while also promoting the identification and sound management of new OECMs in buffer zones and green corridors.</p>
<p><b>Target 4:</b> Ensure urgent management actions to halt human induced extinction of known threatened species and for the recovery and conservation of species, in particular threatened species, to significantly reduce extinction risk, as well as to maintain and restore the genetic diversity within and between populations of native, wild and domesticated species to maintain their adaptive potential, including through in situ and ex situ conservation and sustainable management practices, and effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to minimize human-wildlife conflict for coexistence.</p>	<p>The proposed GEF-8 landscape project aligns with Target 4 by implementing urgent management actions aimed at halting human-induced extinctions of known threatened species. The project's focus on the recovery and conservation of threatened species, particularly through habitat restoration and connectivity, aims to significantly reduce their extinction risk. These include saola (<i>Pseudoryx nghetinhensis</i> - CR), large antlered muntjac (<i>Muntiacus vuquangensis</i> - CR), Truong Son muntjac (<i>Muntiacus truongsonensis</i> - DD), Owston's civet (<i>Chrotogale owstoni</i> - EN), crested argus (<i>Rheinardia ocellata</i> -</p>

	<p>CR), and Annamite striped rabbit (<i>Nesolagus timminsi</i> - EN); as well as other species of high conservation value including gibbons (<i>Nomascus annamensis</i>), red and grey shanked douc langurs (<i>Pygathrix spp</i>), and several species of pheasant (<i>Lophura spp</i>). Additionally, it prioritizes maintaining and restoring the genetic diversity of native species and effectively managing human-wildlife interactions, promoting coexistence and the sustainable management of biodiversity.</p> <p>The project strengthens enforcement, habitat connectivity, and sustainable use practices across priority sites, benefitting endemic and endangered species, especially in the Annamite ecoregion. It also supports the development of corridor management plans and restoration of critical habitats.</p>
<p><b>Target 12:</b> Significantly increase the area and quality, and connectivity of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces in urban and densely populated areas sustainably, by mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and ensure biodiversity-inclusive urban planning, enhancing native biodiversity, ecological connectivity and integrity, and improving human health and well-being and connection to nature, and contributing to inclusive and sustainable urbanization and to the provision of ecosystem functions and services.</p>	<p>The proposed GEF-8 landscape project in Central Vietnam supports Target 12 as its geographic scope transects 6 provinces and an urban center, thereby focusing on the enhancement of green and blue spaces in urban and densely populated areas. By exploring different models of landscape conservation, it implicitly integrates conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into urban planning, thereby increasing the area, quality, and connectivity of these spaces. The project's approach is designed to improve ecological integrity and connectivity, contributing to better human health and well-being, and fostering a stronger connection to nature. This aligns with the goal of inclusive and sustainable urbanization, enhancing native biodiversity and providing vital ecosystem functions and services.</p>
<p><b>Target 19:</b> Substantially and progressively increase the level of financial resources from all sources, in an effective, timely and easily accessible manner, including domestic, international, public and private resources, in accordance with Article 20 of the Convention, to implement national biodiversity strategies and action plans, mobilizing at least \$200 billion per year by 2030, including by:</p> <p>(a) Increasing total biodiversity related international financial resources from developed countries, including official development assistance, and from countries that voluntarily assume obligations of developed country Parties, to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, to at least \$20 billion per year by 2025, and to at least \$30 billion per year by 2030;</p> <p>(b) Significantly increasing domestic resource mobilization, facilitated by the preparation and implementation of national biodiversity finance plans or similar instruments according to national needs, priorities and circumstances;</p> <p>(c) Leveraging private finance, promoting blended finance, implementing strategies for raising new and additional resources, and encouraging the private sector to invest in biodiversity, including through impact funds and other instruments;</p>	<p>The project will support development of a multi-stakeholder, long-term vision for the landscape, and bring in public and private sector funding for improved management across the landscape to deliver this vision and generate triple wins for nature, climate, and people.</p>

<p>(d) Stimulating innovative schemes such as payment for ecosystem services, green bonds, biodiversity offsets and credits, and benefit-sharing mechanisms, with environmental and social safeguards;</p> <p>(e) Optimizing co-benefits and synergies of finance targeting the biodiversity and climate crises;</p> <p>(f) Enhancing the role of collective actions, including by indigenous peoples and local communities, Mother Earth centric actions and non-market-based approaches including community based natural resource management and civil society cooperation and solidarity aimed at the conservation of biodiversity;</p> <p>(g) Enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of resource provision and use.</p>	
<p><b>Target 22:</b> Ensure the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making, and access to justice and information related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, respecting their cultures and their rights over lands, territories, resources, and traditional knowledge, as well as by women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities and ensure the full protection of environmental human rights defenders.</p>	<p>The proposed GEF-8 project in Central Vietnam aligns with Target 22 by ensuring the full, equitable, inclusive, and gender-responsive participation of indigenous peoples, local communities, women, youth, and persons with disabilities in decision-making processes related to biodiversity. It respects their cultural rights, lands, territories, and traditional knowledge, and emphasizes access to justice and information.</p>

## D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

### Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

**We confirm that gender dimensions relevant to the project have been addressed during Project Preparation as per GEF Policy and are clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B).**

Yes

**1) Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive-measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women's empowerment?**

Yes

If the project expects to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment, please indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality:

**Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources;**

Yes

**Improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or**

Yes

**Generating socio-economic benefits or services for women.**

Yes

**2) Does the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?**

Yes

**Stakeholder Engagement**

We confirm that key stakeholders were consulted during Project Preparation as required per GEF policy, their relevant roles to project outcomes has been clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B) and that a Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been developed before CEO endorsement.

Yes

**Select what role civil society will play in the Project**

Consulted only; Yes

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor;

Co-financier;

Member of project steering committee or equivalent decision-making body ;

Executor or co-executor;

Other (Please explain)

**Private Sector**

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

And if so, has its role been described and justified in section B project description?

Yes

**Environmental and Social Safeguards**

We confirm that we have provided information regarding Environmental and Social risks associated with the proposed project or program, including risk screenings/ assessments and, if applicable, management plans or other measures to address identified risks and impacts (this information should be presented in Annex E).

Please provide overall Project/Program Risk Classification

**Overall Project/Program Risk Classification**

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Medium/Moderate	Medium/Moderate		

**E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

## Knowledge management

We confirm that an approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been clearly described during Project Preparation in the Project Description and that these activities have been budgeted and an anticipated timeline for delivery of relevant outputs has been provided.

Yes

## Socio-economic Benefits

We confirm that the project design has considered socio-economic benefits to be delivered by the project and these have been clearly described in the Project Description and will be monitored and reported on during project implementation (at MTR and TER).

Central Vietnam is home to significant biodiversity and 18.5 million people. The project will work within a landscape model that aligns conservation funding with broader socioeconomic development and climate resilience objectives, and is expected to directly benefit over 3,000 people, particularly indigenous communities, by supporting socio-economic benefits through sustainable livelihoods and climate adaptation. This includes the activation of sustainable biodiversity financing mechanisms and policies that enable Indigenous people and local communities to engage in biodiversity-friendly livelihoods, engaging local communities in decision-making processes relevant to landscape planning and nature resources management, playing a critical role in co-management, and benefiting from sustainable livelihood support and benefit-sharing mechanisms.

While the project as a whole supports a landscape approach that is inclusive of socio-economic benefits, the following outputs provide specific support:

- Output 2.1.4– The project will deliver a revolving fund for community-based and woman-centric pilot initiative(s) to support (if feasible, based on assessments) for community-led conservation initiatives, to help ensure that women and minority groups engaged in biodiversity-friendly livelihoods have access to financial resources and development opportunities.
- Output 2.3.2 – The project will support community-led conservation initiatives in corridor areas, integrating sustainable livelihood options to reduce dependency on forest exploitation.
- Output 2.4.3 -The project will enhance economic opportunities for forest, wetland, and mangrove-dependent communities through sustainable livelihood models that align with conservation goals, integrating biodiversity-friendly practices into value chains and strengthening women’s participation. Indicative activities include developing sustainable, biodiversity-friendly value chains for NTFPs, eco-tourism, and fisheries, supporting women-led enterprises focused on forest and wetland-based sustainable livelihoods; and pilot programs for climate-resilient agroforestry and sustainable aquaculture

## ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

### GEF Financing Table

#### Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non- Grant	GEF Project Grant(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total GEF Financing (\$)
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WWF-US	GET	Viet Nam	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	Grant	7,650,000.00	688,500.00	8,338,500.00
WWF-US	GET	Viet Nam	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation: CCM-1-4	Grant	1,350,000.00	121,500.00	1,471,500.00
<b>Total GEF Resources (\$)</b>						<b>9,000,000.00</b>	<b>810,000.00</b>	<b>9,810,000.00</b>

### Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Was a Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount (\$)

200000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

18000

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	PPG(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total PPG Funding(\$)
WWF-US	GET	Viet Nam	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation: BD-1	170,000.00	15,300.00	185,300.00
WWF-US	GET	Viet Nam	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation: CCM-1-4	30,000.00	2,700.00	32,700.00
<b>Total PPG Amount (\$)</b>					<b>200,000.00</b>	<b>18,000.00</b>	<b>218,000.00</b>

Please provide Justification

### Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total(\$)
WWF-US	GET	Viet Nam	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	8,523,800.00
WWF-US	GET	Viet Nam	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation	1,504,200.00
<b>Total GEF Resources</b>					<b>10,028,000.00</b>

## Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Co-financing(\$)
BD-1-1	GET	6,650,000.00	78716585
BD-1-3	GET	1,000,000.00	11837080
CCM-1-4	GET	1,350,000.00	15980058
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>9,000,000.00</b>	<b>106,533,723.00</b>

## Confirmed Co-financing for the project, by name and type

Please include evidence for each co-financing source for this project in the tab of the portal

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
GEF Agency	WWF US	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1080000
Civil Society Organization	WWF Vietnam	Grant	Investment mobilized	23007526
Civil Society Organization	Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) – Vietnam	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1200000
Recipient Country Government	Ha Tinh (local government)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	5352769
Civil Society Organization	IUCN	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2000000
Recipient Country Government	Nghe An (local government)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	13686138
Recipient Country Government	Forestry Project Management Board	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	7788342
Recipient Country Government	Vietnamese Institute of Forest Sciences	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	11263935
Recipient Country Government	Hue city	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	15892760
Recipient Country Government	Quang Nam Province	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	25262253
<b>Total Co-financing</b>				<b>106,533,723.00</b>

Please describe the investment mobilized portion of the co-financing

Investment mobilized contributions are from grant sources implemented by WWF-Viet Nam, and include (i) Partnership between WWF and private sector, and (ii) Development Aid funding and (iii) Philanthropy. The grant-funded projects are being implemented in Central provinces including Quang Nam, Quang Tri, Hue, Da Nang with significant and comprehensive contributions to the GEF-8 Project’s components and activities; this includes contributions through nature-based restoration, establishment of biodiversity corridors, piloting of OECM models, and integration of community roles in conservation, advancing biodiversity conservation and climate resilience goals.

Additional co-financing from NBCA and the provincial governments is forthcoming.

## ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

### GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Type	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
GEF Agency Coordinator	4/14/2025	Rena Stenhouse		renae.stenhouse@wwfus.org
Project Coordinator	4/14/2025	Rachel Kaplan		rachel.kaplan@wwfus.org

### Record of Endorsement of GEF Operational Focal Point (s) on Behalf of the Government(s):

Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) with this template.

Name of GEF OFP	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

## ANNEX C: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Please indicate the page number in the Project Document where the project results and M&E frameworks can be found. Please also paste below the Project Results Framework from the Agency document.

### Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goal (s):

- **Goal 15:** Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
  - targets 15.1 (conservation and sustainable management of forests in Vietnam, including PA networks);
  - 15.2 (sustainable forest management);
  - 15.3 (reducing desertification, restoring degraded land);
  - 15.5 (reduced degradation of natural habitats).

Objective and Outcome Indicators (no more than a total of 20 indicators)	Data Source	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Data Collection Methods	Risks/Assumptions
Project Objective:	<b>Enhancing biodiversity conservation and reducing climate vulnerability in Central Vietnam for sustainable development utilizing a landscape approach.</b>					
<p><b>Mandatory Indicator 1:</b> # direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (individual people, No.)</p> <p>1.1 Female (50%) 1.2 Male (50%)</p> <p><b>GEF Core Indicator 11</b></p>	<p>Across all 6 provinces + municipality of Da Nang:</p> <p>a) # of people declared by participating communities. b) # and names of community members / women groups / ethnic minority groups that are beneficiary recipients of income generating pilots. c) # of people benefitting from ecosystem services from restoration activities using nature-based solutions. d) # of PA management staff, provincial and national government members engaged in trainings.</p>	<p>1.1 0 1.2 0</p>	<p>1.1 500 1.2 500</p>	<p>1.1 1,500 1.2 1,500</p>	<p>a) aggregation of lists of participating farming, IP&amp;LC and ethnic minority b) aggregation of lists from participants of income generating pilots c) compile and record distribution of materials among farmers / IP&amp;LCs / ethnic minority groups for restoration activities.</p>	<p><b>Assumption:</b> Mechanism established to for fund flows to local communities</p> <p><b>Risk:</b> There is a risk of community apathy and disinterest in the project in the absence of a strong business case, value proposition and sustained training in income-generating activities and how Nature-based Solutions will benefit local stakeholders</p>
<p><b>Mandatory Indicator 2:</b> Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness</p>						

<p>(hectares; within the protected area estate)</p> <p><b>GEF Core Indicator 1 (1.2 in Core Indicator Worksheet)</b></p> <p>2.1 Total Hectares Target Project Area (6 provinces + municipality of Da Nang)</p> <p>2.2 Number of management plans in place for PAs within target project landscape</p>	<p>PA Management plans</p>	<p>2.1 0 ha</p> <p>2.2 0</p>	<p>2.1 200,000 ha</p> <p>2.2 4</p>	<p>2.1 240,459.82 ha</p> <p>2.2 13</p>	<p>Validation of information and data from PA management plans</p>	<p><b>Assumption:</b> <i>Project plans are accepted willingly and activities are carried out with due diligence, ensuring the successful completion of the project and therefore sustainable management of landscape conservation, increase in funding of landscape needs and increased institutional capacity for landscape scale measures within the CVL</i></p> <p><b>Assumption:</b> <i>Assumes that by the end of the project there will be at least two new PA management plans per province + 1 for the municipality of Da Nang</i></p> <p><b>Risk:</b> <i>Governments and other stakeholders are not willing to participate in project activities and do not heed to regulations, leading to the continuation of unsustainable forest management, continuation of human-wildlife conflict and lack of funding for conservation and weak capacity to fulfil the</i></p>
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							objectives of the CVL
	<p><b>Mandatory Indicator 3:</b> Area of landscapes under improved management (hectares; <u>excluding protected areas</u>)</p> <p><b>GEF Core Indicator 4</b></p> <p>3.1 Total Hectares Target Project Area (6 provinces + municipality of Da Nang)</p> <p>3.2 Number of landscape management plans in place for OECMs</p>	Landscape Management plans	3.1 0 ha 3.2 0	3.1 50,000 ha 3.2 2	3.1 273,928 ha 3.2 4	Validation of information and data from landscape management plans	<p><b>Assumption:</b> <i>Landscape level plans are accepted willingly and activities are carried out with due diligence, ensuring the successful completion of the project and therefore sustainable management of landscape conservation, increase in funding of landscape needs and increased institutional capacity for landscape scale measures within the CVL</i></p> <p><b>Assumption:</b> <i>Assumes that by the end of the project there will be at least 4 landscape management plans in place</i></p> <p><b>Risk:</b> <i>Governments and other stakeholders are not willing to participate in project activities and do not heed to regulations, leading to the continuation of unsustainable forest management, continuation of human-wildlife conflict and lack</i></p>

							of funding for conservation and weak capacity to fulfil the objectives of the CVL
	<p><b>Mandatory Indicator 4:</b> Total avoided and/or sequestered carbon benefits over twenty-five year period due to improved sustainable management of forests.</p> <p><b>GEF Core Indicator 6</b></p> <p>4.1 Target Project Area (6 provinces + municipality of Da Nang)</p>	Technical report of CO2	4.1 0	4.1 -200,000 metric tons of tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	4.1 - 4,011,323 metric tons of tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	Validation of calculations and updates on forest cover within carbon monitoring reports	<p><b>Assumptions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The GoV and Provincial Governments remain committed to sustainable management of forests and land, as well as set-aside of areas conservation.</li> <li>-Federal and Provincial institutions develop capacity and skills for monitoring and assessing C benefits</li> <li>-The effects of climate change on forests is unlikely to be significant to undermine forest rehabilitation</li> </ul> <p><b>Risks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Reduced revenues from reduced extractive industry and meeting demands of communities might shift government</li> </ul>

							priorities away from sustainable use and conservation
<b>Project component 1</b>	<b>Enabling environment for biodiversity conservation via collaborative and adaptive landscape conservation/management approach</b>						
<b>Outcome 1.1:</b> Strengthened legal, policy and financial framework enabling a replicable landscape conservation model in Central Vietnam for improved ecosystem functions, climate resilience and biodiversity outcomes.	<b>Indicator 5:</b> A gender inclusive landscape conservation working group / coordination mechanism established under the national Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES) partnership platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services and operational at the national level.  5.1 National representation 5.2 Sub-national representation	Terms of Reference and formal government directive	5.1 0 5.2 0	5.1 1 5.2 0	5.1 1 5.2 1	Secure copies of government directives and reports governing the establishment of working group / coordination mechanism	<b>Assumption:</b> Assumption of broad representation of national and sub-national stakeholders  <b>Risk:</b> Institutional rivalries preventing coordination mechanism being effective
	<b>Indicator 6:</b> At least four thematic national and sub-national level technical guideline sets of directions for mainstreaming of landscape-level and biodiversity conservation into land planning, bio-corridor						

	<p>conservation-restoration, OECM and landscape management, covering the range of national PA network.</p> <p>6.1: National level landscape and OECM specific policies and/or guidelines</p> <p>6.2: Provincial level land use and landscape regulations developed and adopted</p>	<p>Government directives and approval documents</p>	<p>6.1 0</p> <p>6.2 0</p>	<p>6.1 2</p> <p>6.2 1</p>	<p>6.1 4</p> <p>6.2 4</p>	<p>Secure copies of officially updated and adopted national and sub-national guidelines, policies and instruments</p> <p>Project reporting and supported publications</p> <p>Government reports</p>	<p><i>other implementing entities have adequate staffing, capacity and counterpart funding for forest management</i></p> <p><i>-Stakeholders are willing to participate in conservation and protection</i></p> <p><i>-Financial mechanisms and incentives are adequate and targeted to correct recipients, and benefits are equitable and fair</i></p> <p><b>Risks:</b></p> <p><i>Longer gestation period to see visible benefits may hamper efforts at selling landscape level principles to policy makers</i></p>
<b>Outputs to achieve Outcome 1</b>	<p><b>Output 1.1.1: A collaborative and gender inclusive landscape conservation working group established under the national Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES) partnership platform on biodiversity and ecosystem, with capacity for stakeholder engagement and coordination.</b></p> <p><b>Output 1.1.2: Harmonizing policies across levels, sectors, and stakeholders to promote effective landscape management with gender considerations.</b></p> <p><b>Output 1.1.3: New gender-responsive financial mechanisms and tools are developed to incentivize investment in landscape management and biodiversity conservation.</b></p> <p><b>Output 1.1.4: Guidelines, regulations, and other tools applying the landscape approach to biodiversity conservation, including gender considerations, are proposed for inclusion in the Biodiversity Law.</b></p>						
<b>Project component 2</b>	<b><i>Sustainable landscape management, biodiversity conservation and application of innovative tools in key globally-important wildlife habitats</i></b>						
<b>Outcome 2.1:</b> Deliver a validated holistic, landscape-wide strategy for improved management and monitoring of biodiversity and carbon benefits.	<b>Indicator 7:</b> Number of landscape level strategy and sub-national provincial roadmap.	National strategy, provincial roadmap and funding allocation		<p>7.1 1</p> <p>7.2 0</p> <p>7.3 20%</p>	<p>7.1 1</p> <p>7.2 7</p> <p>7.3 45%</p>	Evidenced that national strategy and provincial	<b>Assumptions:</b> <i>-National and provincial stakeholders are willing to</i>
7.1 Holistic							

	<p>national landscape-level strategy</p> <p>7.2 Provincial roadmaps based on national landscape strategy</p> <p>7.3 Percentage of total budget of the strategy that is fully funded</p>		<p>7.1 0</p> <p>7.2 0</p> <p>7.3 0%</p>			<p>roadmaps endorsed</p> <p>Traceability of available funding to priorities within national strategy</p>	<p><i>collaborate and align strategies.</i></p> <p><i>-Provincial authorities have the capacity to contribute to the roadmaps.</i></p> <p><i>-Existing policies support the integration of landscape-level strategies.</i></p> <p><i>-Political will exists to adopt and implement strategies and roadmaps.</i></p> <p><i>-Sufficient funding is available for strategy development and implementation.</i></p> <p><i>-Private sector and donor support can be secured for funding needs.</i></p> <p><b>Risks:</b></p> <p><i>-Conflicting priorities among stakeholders may hinder collaboration.</i></p> <p><i>-Lack of provincial authority buy-in could delay roadmap adoption.</i></p> <p><i>-Inadequate or delayed funding may prevent implementation.</i></p> <p><i>-Overdependence on external funding creates vulnerability to economic shifts.</i></p> <p><i>-Political instability or natural disasters</i></p>
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							could disrupt progress.  -Shifts in leadership may deprioritize the strategy and roadmaps.
<b>Outcome 2.2:</b> Increased management effectiveness across a minimum of 301,147 ha of PAs in Central Vietnam	<b>Indicator 8:</b> Increase in METT scores across 6 provinces + municipality of Da Nang and threat reduction (i.e., removal of snares) across all provinces	% improvement of METT scores	8.1: 68 8.2: 80 8.3: 102 8.4: 92 8.5: 81 8.6: 82 8.7: 84 8.8: 78 8.9: 89 8.10: 92 8.11: 87 8.12: 83 8.13: 85 8.14: 80 8.15: 79	8.1: ≥ 10% 8.2: ≥ 10% 8.3: ≥ 10% 8.4: ≥ 10% 8.5: ≥ 10% 8.6: ≥ 10% 8.7: ≥ 10% 8.8: ≥ 10% 8.9: ≥ 10% 8.10: ≥ 10% 8.11: ≥ 10% 8.12: ≥ 10% 8.13: ≥ 10% 8.14: ≥ 10% 8.15: ≥ 10%	8.1: ≥ 15% 8.2: ≥ 15% 8.3: ≥ 15% 8.4: ≥ 15% 8.5: ≥ 15% 8.6: ≥ 15% 8.7: ≥ 15% 8.8: ≥ 15% 8.9: ≥ 15% 8.10: ≥ 15% 8.11: ≥ 15% 8.12: ≥ 15% 8.13: ≥ 15% 8.14: ≥ 15% 8.15: ≥ 15%	Review of METT scores in progress reports and calculation of percentage increase from baseline => MTR => TE  Review of snares removed from landscape following patrols each month from SMART patrol reports	<b>Assumptions:</b>  - Sufficient technical, financial, and human resources are allocated to improve management effectiveness in protected areas (PAs).  - Local and provincial authorities, along with PA managers, are committed to implementing and sustaining management improvements.
	8.1: Pu Mat NP						
	8.2: Vu Quang NP						
	8.3: Phong Nha Ke Bang NP						
	8.4: Dong Chau – KNR						
	NR						
	8.5: Bac Huong Hoa NR						
	8.6: Huong Hoa Dakrong PF						
	8.7: Phong Dien NR						
	8.8: A Luoi PF						
	8.9: Sao La NR (TT-Hue)						
	8.10: Bach Ma NP						
	8.11: Sao La SHCA (Q Nam)						
	8.12: Tay Giang PF						
	8.13: Song Thanh NP						

	8.14: Dong Giang FP						
	8.15: Elephant SHCA						
<p><b>Outcome 2.3:</b> Connectivity between key protected areas and/or special use forests, covering at least 60,000 ha, targeted for future designation and improvement through the creation of ecological corridors/Biosphere Reserves/OECM.</p>	<p><b>Indicator 9:</b> Total hectares of ecological corridors and number of corridors, BRs and OECMs</p> <p>9.1: Total hectares</p> <p>9.2: Designation and/or number of new corridors and/or BRs and/or OECMs identified for establishment</p> <p>9.3 Number of corridors under improved corridor management plans</p>	<p>Government documentation on establishing new corridors, BRs and OECMs</p>	<p>9.1: 0</p> <p>9.2: 0</p> <p>9.3: 0</p>	<p>9.1: 20,000</p> <p>9.2: 2</p> <p>9.3: 1</p>	<p>9.1: 60,000</p> <p>9.2: 5</p> <p>9.3: 2</p>	<p>Secure copies of designated corridors, BRs and OECMs and validate hectares against project level monitoring and existence of corridor management plans</p>	<p><b>Assumptions:</b></p> <p><i>Key stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities, and private sector actors, are willing to collaborate on establishing and maintaining ecological corridors, Biosphere Reserves (BRs), and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs).</i></p> <p><b>Risk:</b></p> <p><i>Competing land use priorities, such as agriculture, infrastructure</i></p>

							development, or urbanization, may limit the availability of land for ecological corridors and disrupt connectivity efforts.
<p><b>Outcome 2.4:</b> Improved integrated landscape and land-use planning and restoration measures at identified OECM sites to support high-value biodiversity and threatened species, leveraging gender-responsive community-based co-management measures to improve ecological and community benefits.</p>	<p><b>Indicator 10:</b> Number of integrated landscape and land-use plans developed and implemented at identified OECM sites, incorporating gender-responsive, community-based co-management measures, and restoration interventions to enhance biodiversity and ecological benefits.</p> <p>10.1: Number of OECM sites with operational landscape-level plans that integrate biodiversity conservation and restoration.</p> <p>10.2: Number of restoration measures identified for high-biodiversity value areas.</p> <p>10.3: Number of community members actively engaged in co-management, disaggregated by gender.</p>	<p>Landscape level plans</p> <p>Species monitoring reports</p> <p>SMART patrols</p>	<p>10.1: 0</p> <p>10.2: 0</p> <p>10.3: 0 (50% men / 50% women)</p> <p>10.4a: species 1 TBD</p> <p>10.4b: species 2 TBD</p> <p>10.4c: species 3 TBD</p>	<p>10.1: TBD</p> <p>10.2: TBD</p> <p>10.3: TBD (50% men / 50% women)</p> <p>10.4a: species 1 TBD</p> <p>10.4b: species 2 TBD</p> <p>10.4c: species 3 TBD</p>	<p>10.1: TBD</p> <p>10.2: TBD</p> <p>10.3: TBD (50% men / 50% women)</p> <p>10.4a: species 1 TBD</p> <p>10.4b: species 2 TBD</p> <p>10.4c: species 3 TBD</p>	<p>Validation of landscape plans, contents of monitoring and SMART patrol reports</p>	<p><b>Assumptions:</b></p> <p>Key stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities, and private sector actors, are willing to collaborate on establishing and maintaining ecological corridors, Biosphere Reserves (BRs), and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs).</p> <p><b>Risk:</b></p> <p>Competing land use priorities, such as agriculture, infrastructure development, or urbanization, may limit the availability of land for</p>

	10.4: Improved conservation status and/or population trend of 3 threatened species targeted by the plans.						<i>ecological corridors and disrupt connectivity efforts.</i>
<b>Outputs to achieve Outcome 2.1 - 2.4</b>	<p><b>Outputs for Outcome 2.1:</b>  Output 2.1.1: A comprehensive sustainable landscape management strategy and financial plan is developed for the Central Vietnam region.  Output 2.1.2: A financial plan for implementing the Sustainable Landscape Management Strategy/Plan.  Output 2.1.3: A partnership forum to mobilize financial resources for the sustainable landscape management strategy for the central provinces of Vietnam.  Output 2.1.4: A complimentary revolving fund for community-based and woman-centric pilot initiative(s) under a recently established finance mechanism in Central Vietnam.  Output 2.1.5: A proposal for wetland ecosystem service payments in TG-CH is developed and implemented.</p> <p><b>Outputs for Outcome 2.2:</b>  Output 2.2.1: Capacity in management effectiveness, governance, and law enforcement of proposed PA management boards, BCAs, OECM sites, and Wetland Nature Reserves collectively improved to reduce threats to flagship species and wildlife through technical assistance and gender equality.</p> <p><b>Outputs for Outcome 2.3:</b>  Output 2.3.1: Feasibility studies for enhancing contiguity and establishing transboundary connectivity between landscapes (such as Lao PDR as appropriate), based on integrated landscape management principles approaches and innovative planning tools.  Output 2.3.2: Provincial biodiversity corridors are established and their management effectiveness is improved.</p> <p><b>Outputs for Outcome 2.4:</b>  Output 2.4.1: Community and women’s engagement, and other creative approaches for pilot program establishment and development of an effective OECM management in Central Vietnam.  Output 2.4.2: Innovations tested and proliferated for wildlife conservation, landscape management, and human-wildlife conflict.  Output 2.4.3: Sustainable livelihoods supported for local forest, mangrove and wetland dependent communities, inclusive of gender considerations.</p>						
<b>Project component 3</b>	<b><i>Enhanced climate resilience and corridor connectivity</i></b>						
<b>Outcome 3.1:</b>  Enhanced climate resilience in and around high conservation value forested landscapes and wetlands	<p><b>Indicator 11:</b> Number of Nature-based Solutions identified and implemented with total carbon fixation of 4.01M t of CO2 equivalent.</p> <p>11.1: Number of NbS solutions identified and implemented with carbon benefits</p>	<p>Technical report identifying NbS and carbon potential for each province in the CVL.</p>	<p>11.1: 0 11.2: 0</p>	<p>11.1: 2 11.2: - 200,000</p>	<p>11.1: 4 11.2: - 4.01 metric tons of tCO2-e</p>	<p>Validation of calculations and updates on forest cover within carbon monitoring reports</p>	<p><b>Assumptions:</b>  <i>-The GoV and Provincial Governments remain committed to sustainable management of forests and land, as well as set-aside of areas conservation.</i></p>

<p>11.2: Carbon fixation</p>						<p><i>-Federal and Provincial institutions develop capacity and skills for monitoring and assessing C benefits</i></p> <p><i>-The effects of climate change on forests is unlikely to be significant to undermine forest rehabilitation</i></p> <p><b>Risks:</b></p> <p><i>-Reduced revenues from reduced extractive industry and meeting demands of communities might shift government priorities away from sustainable use and conservation</i></p>
<p><b>Indicator 12:</b> Identification of potential OECM sites to reduce climate vulnerability and establishment of at least other OECMs candidates for ecological resilience using nationally-tailored methodology.</p> <p>12.1: new OECMs identified / recognized to reduce climate vulnerability</p>	<p>Application of nationally-tailored methodology for measuring carbon stocks and ecological resilience</p>	<p>12.1: 0</p>	<p>12.1: 2</p>	<p>12.1: 5</p>	<p>Results of national tool / methodology</p>	

	<p><b>Indicator 13:</b> Number of gender responsive community enterprises engaged and/or Private Sector investment mobilized.</p> <p>12.1: Nghệ An</p> <p>12.2: Hà Tĩnh</p> <p>12.3: Quảng Bình</p> <p>12.4: Quảng Trị</p> <p>12.5: TT-Huế</p> <p>12.6: Quảng Nam</p> <p>12.7: Đà Nẵng</p>	<p>Business plans</p>	<p>8.1: Nghệ An = 0</p> <p>8.2: Hà Tĩnh = 0</p> <p>8.3: Quảng Bình = 0</p> <p>8.4: Quảng Trị = 0</p> <p>8.5: TT-Huế = 0</p> <p>8.6: Quảng Nam = 0</p> <p>8.7: Đà Nẵng = 0</p>	<p>8.1: Nghệ An = 1</p> <p>8.2: Hà Tĩnh = 1</p> <p>8.3: Quảng Bình = 1</p> <p>8.4: Quảng Trị = 1</p> <p>8.5: TT-Huế = 1</p> <p>8.6: Quảng Nam = 1</p> <p>8.7: Đà Nẵng = 1</p>	<p>8.1: Nghệ An = 2</p> <p>8.2: Hà Tĩnh = 2</p> <p>8.3: Quảng Bình = 2</p> <p>8.4: Quảng Trị = 2</p> <p>8.5: TT-Huế = 2</p> <p>8.6: Quảng Nam = 2</p> <p>8.7: Đà Nẵng = 2</p>		
	<p><b>Indicator 14:</b> National, and provincial capacities trained and with active capacity for landscape level and nature-based solution approaches.</p> <p>14.1: National government</p> <p>14.2: Provincial government</p>	<p>Training lists</p> <p>Scorecard results</p>	<p>14.1: 0</p> <p>14.2: 0</p>	<p>14.1: TBD</p> <p>14.2: TBD</p>	<p>14.1: TBD</p> <p>14.2: TBD</p>		
<p><b>Outputs to achieve Outcome 3.1</b></p>	<p><b>Outcome 3.1.1:</b> Assessment of climate vulnerability for Central Vietnam to identify areas significantly impacted by climate change, degraded forests, mangroves and wetlands to underpin restoration efforts</p> <p><b>Outcome 3.1.2:</b> Study on feasibility of biodiversity credit for policy support</p> <p><b>Outcome 3.1.3:</b> Site selection and restoration of degraded forests, mangroves and important wetlands leveraging nature-based solutions, increasing carbon sequestration and realizing carbon benefits to benefit long-term population viability of keystone, and threatened species</p> <p><b>Outcome 3.1.4:</b> Best practice approaches to forest, mangrove and wetland restoration and reforestation / sustainable harvesting documented, and capacities enhanced through training and locally-relevant and gender responsive guidelines</p> <p><b>Outcome 3.1.5:</b> On-the-ground application of nationally-tailored methodology for measuring carbon stocks applied, demonstrated and validated for the target areas in Central Vietnam</p>						

Project component 4	Awareness raising and knowledge management to improve landscape management						
<p><b>Outcome 4.1:</b> Communication and knowledge management strategies developed and implemented to share and publicize project's results and advancements</p>	<p><b>Indicator 15:</b> Gender-responsive Communication, Education, and Public Awareness (CEPA) plan</p> <p>9.1 CEPA</p> <p>9.2 Change in knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) of target groups</p>	<p>ABS Capacity Scorecard; Interviews/workshops during inception phase</p>	<p>9.1 0</p> <p>9.2 0</p>	<p>9.1 One CEPA developed and tested</p> <p>9.2 KAP carried out and initial survey results</p>	<p>9.1 One CEPA fully developed</p> <p>9.2 Final KAP survey results assessed showing researchers, sub-national government agencies, IP&amp;LCs and/or ethnic minorities, local governments and relevant industry players targeted by the CEPA are aware of the landscape level approaches and biodiversity benefits.</p>	<p>Evaluation forms completed and interviews conducted of participants at the beginning and end of awareness campaign to check whether objectives were achieved; Results summarized in project reports</p>	<p><b>Assumption:</b> <i>target audiences for training and awareness raising and other capacity building activities are committed to participate in project activities</i></p>
<p><b>Outputs to achieve Outcome 4.1</b></p>	<p><b>Output 4.1.1:</b> Establishment of a mechanism to manage, track, and disseminate the impact of public-private financing models and the OECM approach in Central Vietnam.</p> <p><b>Output 4.1.2:</b> A gender responsive communication strategy developed and under implementation to share and publicize project's results and advancements</p> <p><b>Output 4.1.3:</b> A proposal for scaling up the landscape approach model developed for the key wetland area of Dong Thap Muoi and other larger-scale areas within the Mekong Delta Landscape, inclusive gender considerations.</p> <p><b>Output 4.1.4:</b> A gender responsive knowledge management plan developed and implemented, including South-South cooperation activities</p>						
Project component	Monitoring & Evaluation						
<p><b>Outcome 4:</b> Project-level monitoring and evaluation.</p>	<p><b>Indicator 16:</b> Effective project-level monitoring and evaluation, in compliance with WWF and mandatory GEF-specific monitoring</p>	<p>Annual PIRs</p> <p>Operational gender and safeguards architecture</p> <p>Midterm and Terminal Evaluation Report with</p>	<p>0 annual PIRs</p> <p>0 operationalized gender and safeguards architecture</p>	<p><del>1-2</del> PIR</p> <p>1 Midterm Evaluation</p> <p>GRM Established</p> <p>1 review of Environmental and Social</p>	<p><del>2-5</del> annual PIRs</p> <p>1 Terminal Evaluation</p> <p>2 SESP reviews and updates (year 1&amp;2)</p>	<p>Document Review</p>	<p><b>Assumptions:</b> <i>Project management unit is fully operational and has capacity for effective monitoring.</i></p>

	and evaluation requirements.	supporting WWF Country Office management response	0 Midterm Evaluation 0 Terminal Evaluation	Safeguards (year 1) 1 gender action plan <a href="#">implemented</a>		<i>Risks: Delays in project implementation reduce the level of impact, particularly in early stages of implementation.</i>
<b>Outputs to achieve M&amp;E Outcome</b>	<p><b>MEL1:</b> Project M&amp;E system designed and operational</p> <p><b>MEL2:</b> Project evaluations completed on time to support project delivery and knowledge sharing</p> <p><b>MEL3:</b> Effective M&amp;E contributes to efficient decision making and adaptive project management</p> <p><b>MEL4:</b> Monitoring of Gender and Safeguards Action Plan</p>					

#### ANNEX D: STATUS OF UTILIZATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)

Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

Project Preparation Activities Implemented	GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)		
	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
Guiding overall project development process, including organize and prepare stakeholder workshops, technical inputs and design, oversee national consultants (lead consultant)	62,000.00		62,000.00
Technical consultants and agreements to undertake: Biodiversity and Protected Area Assessments, Financial and Economic assessments, Gender Analysis and Action Plan, Social and Environmental Safeguard documentation, GIS, Climate Assessments, Translations, Workshop facilitation, partnership engagement	112,697.00	15,795.00	9,690,277.00
Travel for stakeholder consultation	9,522.00	4,721.00	4,801.00
Meetings and Workshops	15,781.00	2,881.00	12,900.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>200,000.00</b>	<b>23,397.00</b>	<b>9,769,978.00</b>

#### ANNEX E: PROJECT MAP AND COORDINATES

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
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Ba Na - Nui Chua	16.0853353	107.9523864	
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Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Khe Net	18.1663995	105.8432206	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Vu Quang	18.3002973	105.4253963	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Giang Man	18.0545189	105.7840664	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Huong Khe	18.1781022	105.5595470	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Pu Mat	18.9826588	104.6177414	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Puxailaileng	19.3296663	104.0886589	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Tuong Duong	19.5325072	104.5779861	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Ky Son	19.5553175	104.2926290	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Thach Hoa	17.8777551	106.1324163	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Phong Nha Ke Bang	17.5759902	106.0745655	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Khe Net	18.0337090	105.9298428	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Tuyen Hoa	17.9701667	105.7276085	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Minh Hoa	17.8413854	105.7174759	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Quang Ninh	17.2542921	106.5003831	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Lim Xanh	15.7963934	107.3334218	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Saola-Song Thanh-Elephant	15.6023071	107.7900954	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
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Quang Nam Saola	15.9831518	107.6659091	
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Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Tay Giang	15.8798857	107.5525678	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Dong Giang	15.9054181	107.7556269	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Elephant	15.6531451	107.9035819	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Song Thanh	15.4957028	107.6470339	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Dakrong - Bac Huong Hoa	16.7325742	106.7882347	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Bac Huong Hoa	16.8856145	106.6383830	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Dakrong	16.6095792	106.9938007	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Dakrong - Bac Huong Hoa	16.6575348	106.7779931	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Sao La-Phong Dien	16.3018530	107.2817689	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Phong Dien	16.4415149	107.2075908	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Saola	16.1198123	107.4836077	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Tam Giang- Cau Hai	16.5642103	107.6079685	

Location Description:

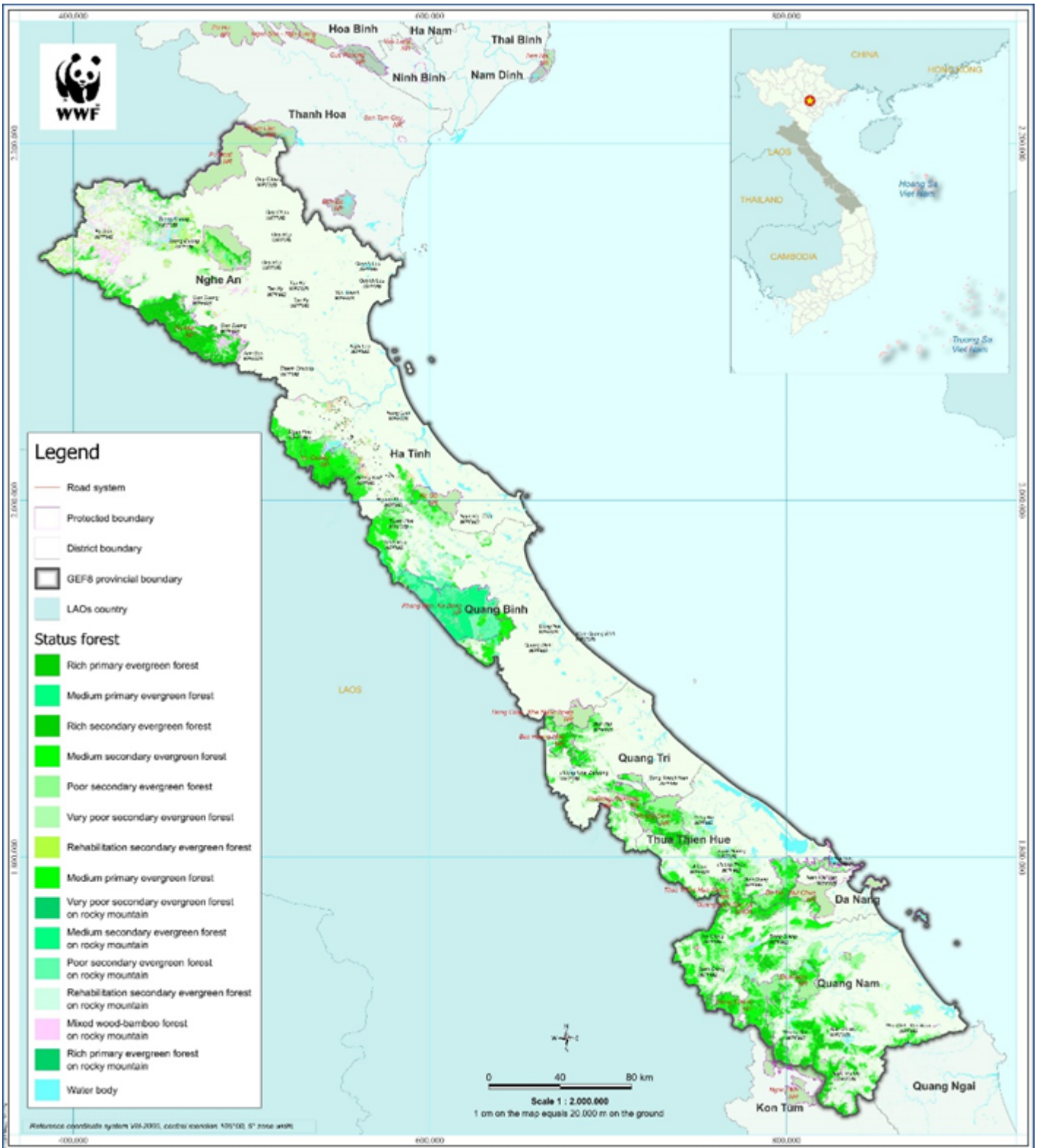
Activity Description:

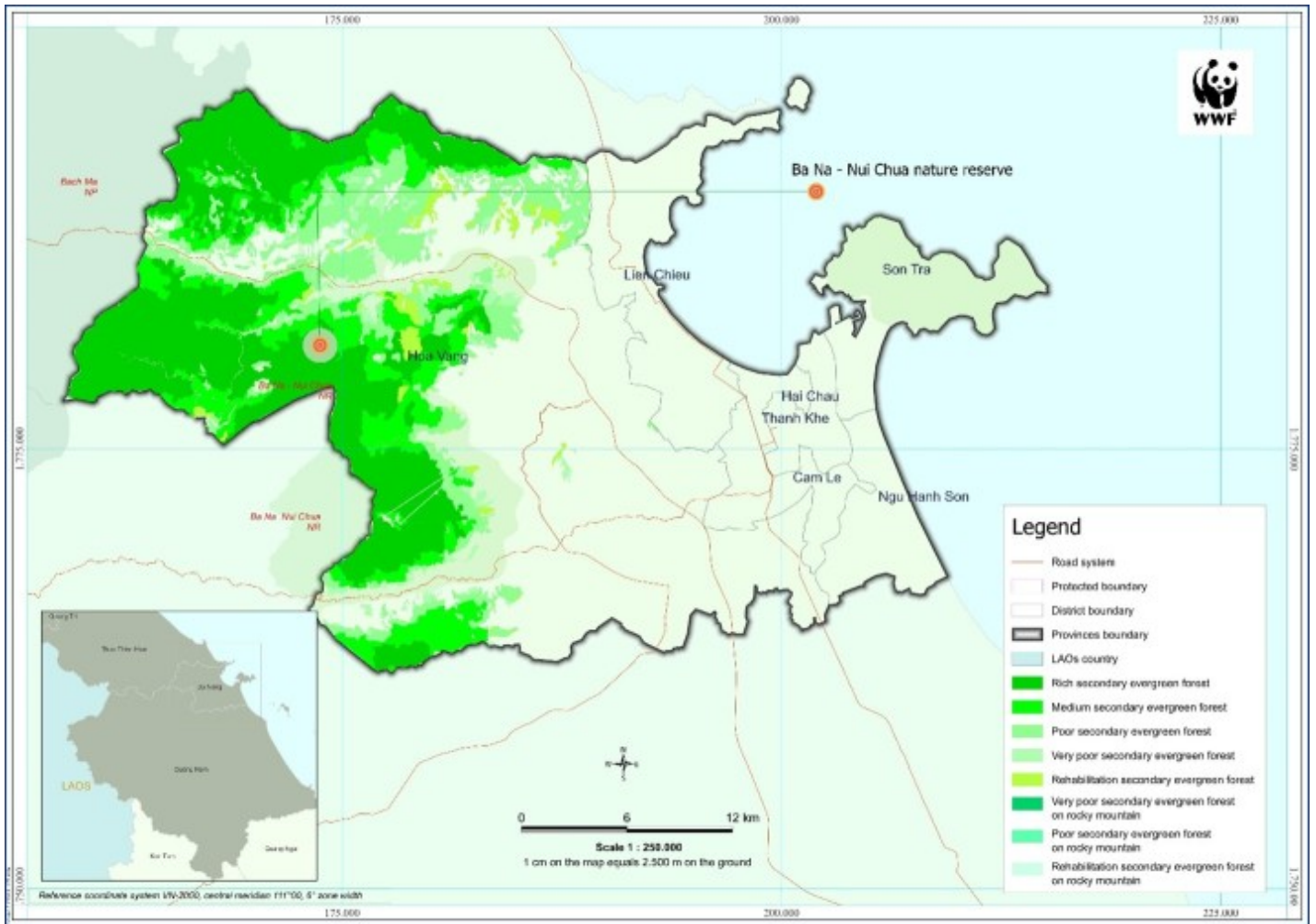
Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
A Luoi	16.2069758	107.3409851	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

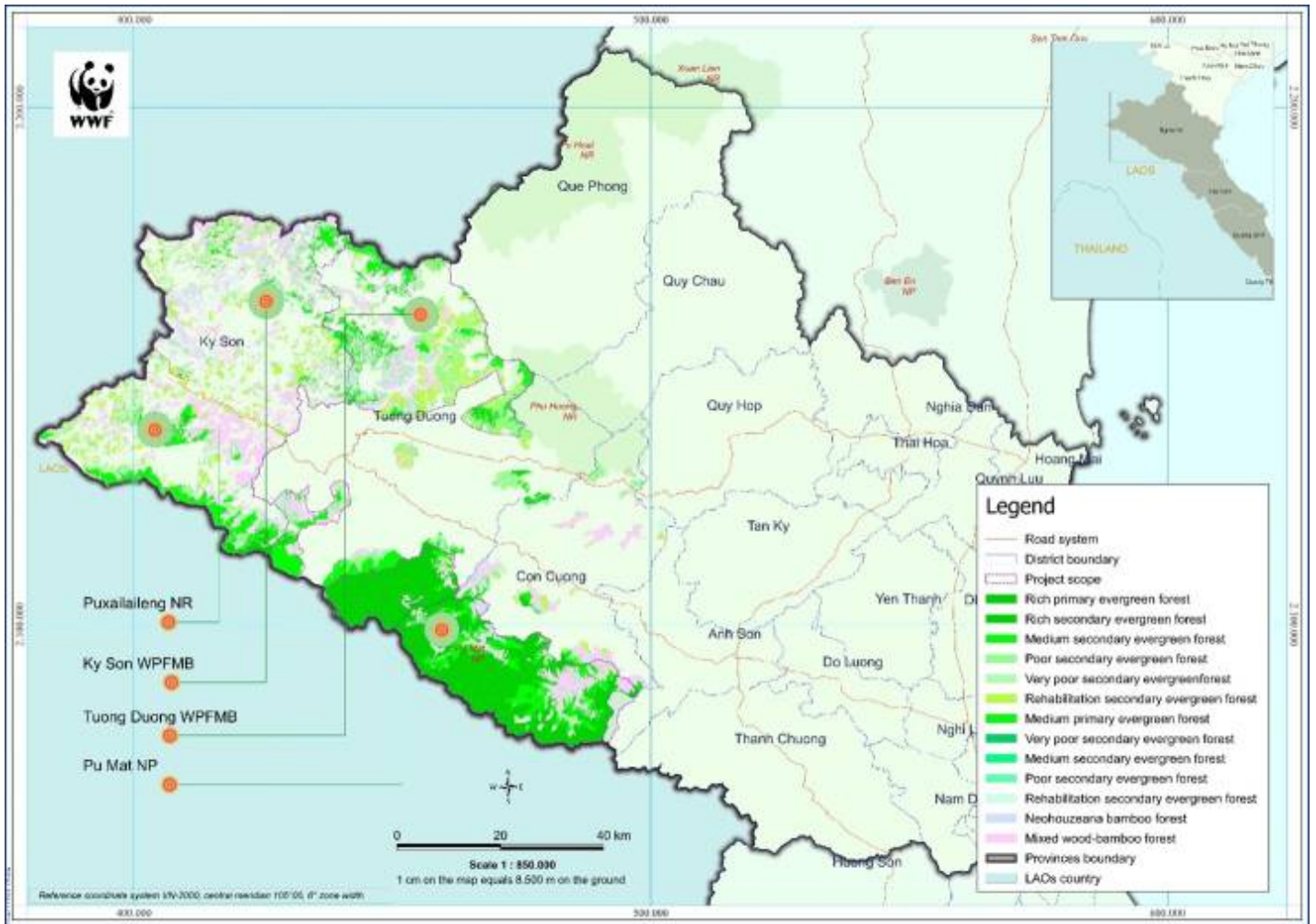
**Please provide any further geo-referenced information and map where project interventions are taking place as appropriate.**



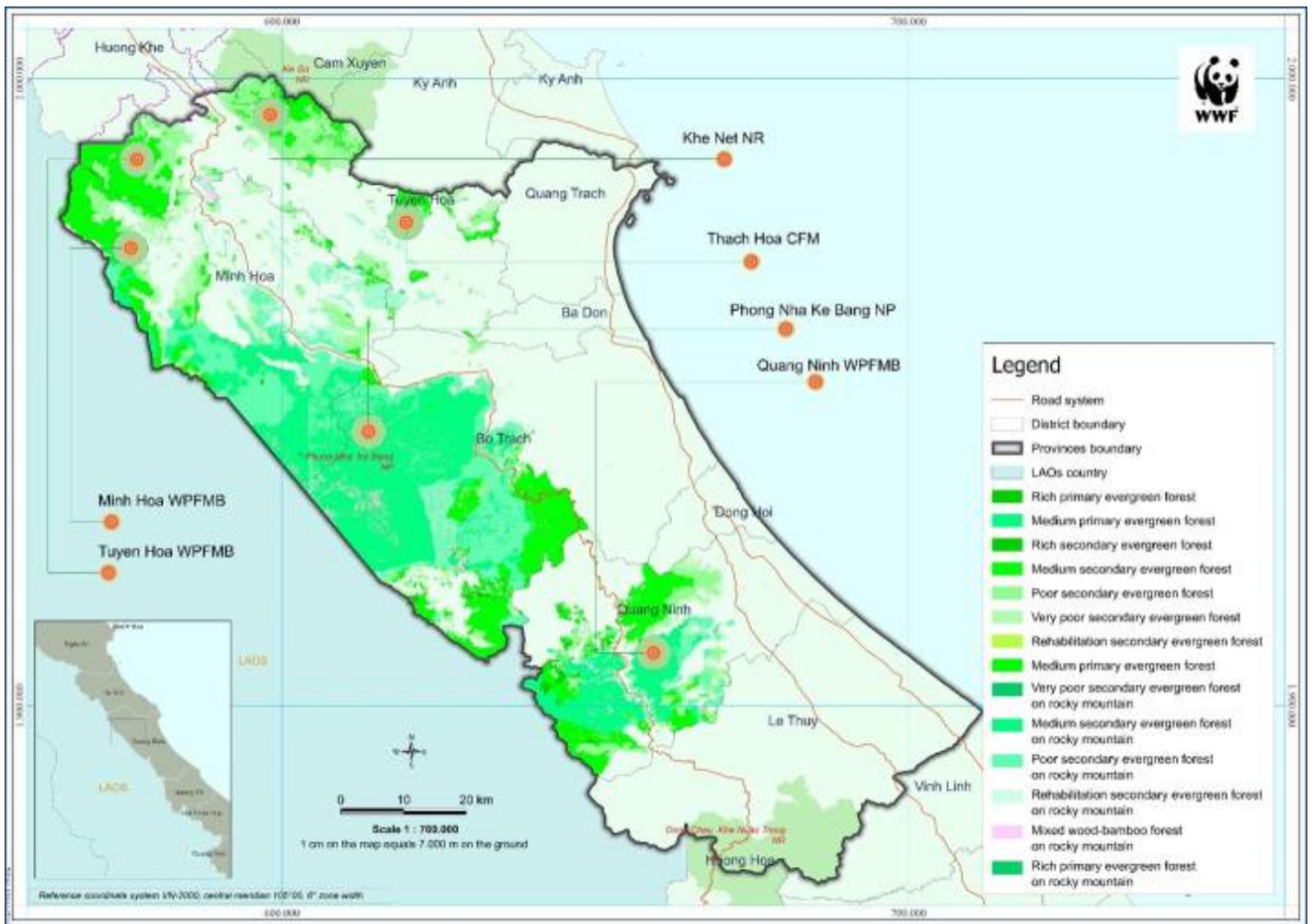


Da Nang City





Nghe An Province



Quang Binh province

## ANNEX F: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING

Attach agency safeguard datasheet/assessment report(s), including ratings of risk types and overall project/program risk classification as well as any management plans or measures to address identified risks and impacts (as applicable).

Title

Annex\_Gender Action Plan\_11395

Annex\_EX-ACT tool

Annex\_Stakeholder Engagement Plan\_11395

Annex\_ESMF\_11395

## ANNEX G: BUDGET TABLE

Please upload the budget table here.

Detailed Description	TOTAL COMP. 1	TOTAL COMP. 2	TOTAL COMPO. 3	TOTAL COMP. 4	M&E	PMC	TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	Responsible Entity
Procure priority equipment to enable SMART patrols and improve METT scores in each province.		241,500					241,500	MoAE
Smart patrol app		75,000					75,000	MoAE
<b>Total Goods</b>		<b>316,500</b>					<b>316,500</b>	
Revolving fund for community-based and woman-centric pilot initiative(s) under a recently established finance mechanism in Central Vietnam		700,000					700,000	MoAE
Pilot interventions in priority corridors, including habitat restoration, sustainable land-use practices, and co-management approaches with local communities		280,000					280,000	MoAE
Pilot community-managed OECM models, integrating co-management frameworks with local authorities		350,000					350,000	MoAE
Pilot programs for climate-resilient agroforestry and sustainable aquaculture in target provinces		100,000					100,000	
<b>Total Sub-grants</b>		<b>1,430,000</b>					<b>1,430,000</b>	
Midterm evaluation					31,627		31,627	MoAE
Final evaluation					30,000		30,000	MoAE
Implement riparian and coastal wetland restoration in the TG-CH lagoon system, improving connectivity and ecosystem resilience			946,200				946,200	MoAE
Implement monitoring frameworks for target species and habitat conditions to inform adaptive management decisions		212,340					212,340	MoAE
<b>Total Contractual Services - Company</b>		<b>212,340</b>	<b>946,200</b>		<b>61,627</b>		<b>1,220,167</b>	
IC 1 to support policies, guidelines and governance framework under Output 1.1.2	32,500						32,500	MoAE
IC 2 to support scoping of innovative and gender appropriate financial mechanisms and tools under Output 1.1.3	\$48,750						48,750	MoAE
IC 3 to support development of Guidelines, regulations and other instruments under Output 1.1.4	29,250						29,250	MoAE
IC 4 to support development of a comprehensive and gender responsive 5- and 10-year multi-level landscape financing strategy under Output 2.1.1		39,000					39,000	MoAE
IC 5 to support operationalized financial partnerships under Output 2.1.3		29,250					29,250	MoAE
<b>Total International Consultants</b>	<b>110,500</b>	<b>68,250</b>					<b>178,750</b>	
Services and consultancies to support collaborative and gender inclusive landscape conservation working group	96,444						96,444	MoAE

Services and consultancies to support harmonizing policies across levels, sectors, and stakeholders to promote effective landscape management with gender considerations	90,187						90,187	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support development of new gender-responsive financial mechanisms and tools	192,492						192,492	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support development of guidelines, regulations, and other tools applying the landscape approach to biodiversity conservation, including gender considerations	137,784						137,784	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support comprehensive sustainable landscape management strategy and financial plan is developed for the Central Vietnam region		122,870					122,870	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support development of financial plan for implementing the Sustainable Landscape Management Strategy/Plan		96,920					96,920	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support development of partnership forum to mobilize financial resources for the sustainable landscape		97,786					97,786	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support complimentary revolving fund for community-based and woman-centric pilot initiative(s)		53,048					53,048	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support development of proposal for wetland ecosystem service payments in TG-CH		124,632					124,632	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support capacity building in management effectiveness, governance, and law enforcement of proposed PA management boards, BCAs, OECM sites, and Wetland Nature Reserves		118,754					118,754	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support feasibility studies for enhancing contiguity and establishing transboundary connectivity between landscapes (such as Lao PDR as appropriate)		98,856					98,856	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support establishment of provincial biodiversity corridors		80,608					80,608	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support community and women's engagement, and other creative approaches in Central Vietnam		71,722					71,722	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support testing and proliferating innovations for wildlife conservation, landscape management, and human-wildlife conflict		116,556					116,556	MoAE

Services and consultancies to support sustainable livelihoods for local forest, mangrove and wetland dependent communities, inclusive of gender considerations		104,176					104,176	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support assessment of climate vulnerability for Central Vietnam to identify areas significantly impacted by climate change, degraded forests, mangroves and wetlands to underpin restoration efforts			119,198				119,198	MoAE
Services and consultancies to conduct study on feasibility of biodiversity credit for policy support			42,700				42,700	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support site selection and restoration of degraded forests, mangroves and important wetlands leveraging nature-based solutions, increasing carbon sequestration and realizing carbon benefits to benefit long-term population viability of keystone, and threatened species			74,356				74,356	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support documenting best practice approaches to forest, mangrove and wetland restoration and reforestation / sustainable harvesting, and capacity building through training and locally-relevant and gender responsive guidelines			27,518				27,518	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support application of nationally-tailored methodology for measuring carbon stocks applied, demonstrated and validated for the target areas in Central Vietnam			45,138				45,138	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support establishment of a mechanism to manage, track, and disseminate the impact of public-private financing models and the OECM approach in Central Vietnam				24,468			24,468	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support development and implementation of gender-responsive communication strategy				57,084			57,084	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support development of proposal for scaling up the landscape approach model for the key wetland area of Dong Thap Muoi and other larger-scale areas within the Mekong Delta Landscape, inclusive gender considerations				34,280			34,280	MoAE
Services and consultancies to support development and implementation of gender-responsive knowledge management plan, including				26,244			26,244	MoAE

South-South cooperation activities								
<b>Total National Consultants</b>	<b>516,907</b>	<b>1,085,928</b>	<b>308,910</b>	<b>142,076</b>			<b>2,053,821</b>	MoAE
Project manager						\$133,023.67	\$133,023.67	MoAE
Admin and Finance Staff						\$118,023.67	\$118,023.67	MoAE
Project Coordinator/s (site)						\$115,023.67	\$115,023.67	MoAE
M&E officer					76,500		<b>76,500</b>	MoAE
Gender and safeguard officer					75,000		<b>75,000</b>	MoAE
<b>Total Staff Costs</b>					<b>151,500</b>	<b>\$366,071.00</b>	<b>\$517,571.00</b>	
Workshops/meetings and capacity building activities to support activities to enable environment for biodiversity conservation via collaborative and adaptive landscape conservation/management approach	930,400						<b>930,400</b>	MoAE
Workshops/meetings and capacity building activities to support sustainable landscape management, biodiversity conservation and application of innovative tools in key globally-important wildlife habitats		1,374,250					<b>1,374,250</b>	MoAE
Workshops/meetings and capacity building activities to support enhancement of climate resilience			198,500				<b>198,500</b>	MoAE
Workshops/meetings and capacity building activities to support awareness raising and knowledge management to improve landscape management				174,875			<b>174,875</b>	MoAE
<b>Total Trainings, Workshops, Meetings</b>	<b>930,400</b>	<b>1,374,250</b>	<b>198,500</b>	<b>174,875</b>			<b>2,678,025</b>	
Travel under Component 1	42,194						<b>42,194</b>	MoAE
Travel under Component 2		115,280					<b>115,280</b>	MoAE
Travel under Component 3			46,922				<b>46,922</b>	MoAE
Travel under Component 4				105,716			<b>105,716</b>	MoAE
PMC travel						37,500	<b>37,500</b>	MoAE
M&E travel					37,500		<b>37,500</b>	MoAE
<b>Total Travel</b>	<b>42,194</b>	<b>115,280</b>	<b>46,922</b>	<b>105,716</b>	<b>37,500</b>	<b>37,500</b>	<b>385,112</b>	
Printing, communication, policy brief, website etc.	4,009	8,981	3,227	178,837			<b>195,054</b>	MoAE
<b>Total Office Supplies</b>	<b>4,009</b>	<b>8,981</b>	<b>3,227</b>	<b>178,837</b>			<b>195,054</b>	
Annual Audit						25,000	<b>25,000</b>	MoAE
<b>Total Other Operating costs</b>						<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,604,010</b>	<b>4,611,529</b>	<b>1,503,759</b>	<b>601,504</b>	<b>250,627</b>	<b>428,571</b>	<b>9,000,000</b>	

Please explain any aspects of the budget as needed here

Full Excel version is attached as an annex

## ANNEX I: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS

From GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF.

## Annex: Responses to GEF Council and STAP Comments

No.	Country	Comment	Agency Response
GEF Council Comments			
1	United States of America	On page 36, please ensure that Target 4 on human-wildlife conflict includes all species also listed in “National Program on Conservation of Endangered and Rare Wildlife species prioritized for protection until 2030, with a vision to 2050”.	Please see description of Output 2.4.2 and corresponding activities where this is referenced, as well as in Target 4 of the table referencing alignment to Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets.
2	Denmark / Norway	The project promotes new approaches in unlocking investment resources and addressing the root drivers of biodiversity loss. There seems to be good continuation and linkages with previous projects/initiatives with regional collaboration. WWF is coordinating agency in partnership with MONRE, which is responsible for biodiversity conservation in Vietnam. These are relevant partners. However, it is crucial to engage MARD, which is mandated to manage forestry, protected areas, and forestry carbon credits as well as local communities and private sector in this process.	Thank you for the observation. The project fully recognizes the importance of engaging all relevant sectors involved in biodiversity conservation, forestry, and climate-related land management. As of the recent government restructuring, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) have merged to form the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MOAE). This newly unified ministry now holds a consolidated mandate encompassing biodiversity conservation, forestry management and protected areas. Accordingly, the project is being designed in close coordination with MOAE to ensure integrated planning, cross-sectoral alignment, and coherent implementation across biodiversity, forest, and climate finance agendas, while maintaining strong partnerships with local communities, the private sector, and regional collaborators.
STAP Comments			
1	STAP	Under the description of the project components, STAP suggests that the description of sub-components 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 be revised to be more specific and provide further details of planned activities.	Please see more detailed and augmented descriptions of Outputs 2.4.1 and 2.4.2, along with their corresponding indicative activities.
2	STAP	The ToC diagram could be simplified and streamlined, perhaps removing some of the elements. Logical pathways (i.e. arrow connectors) could also be simplified by reducing their number. It is good to see the use of different shape boxes and colors for different elements of the ToC, but labeling could be improved to ensure consistency with narrative description.	Thank you for the constructive feedback. The Theory of Change (ToC) diagram and narrative were developed through a participatory process, drawing on inputs from MOAE and a wide range of stakeholders during consultative workshops held throughout the PPG inception phase. The updated ToC reflects feedback from these engagements and was further reviewed and validated during the national validation workshop to ensure alignment

			<p>with the project’s strategic logic and stakeholder priorities. While the current version seeks to capture the complexity of integrated landscape-level interventions, the recommendation to simplify the diagram is acknowledged and the project has worked to streamline arrow connectors and improve labeling consistency with the narrative, without compromising the clarity of the causal pathways. The diagram is also supported by a detailed narrative.</p>
3	STAP	<p>Component 2 includes a list of possible interventions, including payments for ecosystem services, OECMs, solutions for human wildlife conflict and alternative livelihoods, but does not provide any detail to assess their scientific merit or technical feasibility. In all of these cases, there are scientific and technical issues that would influence the effectiveness of proposed interventions. The PPG phase should assess the viability of these options along the lines of the planned studies of different nature-based solutions and their relevance to biodiversity enhancements in Central Vietnam. STAP’s advisory documents can provide useful guidance on a number of these issues, for example STAP’s background note on Alternative Livelihoods and Advisory document of Payment for Ecosystem Services.</p>	<p>Thank you for this important observation. In addition to the information provided in the CEO Endorsement Request (CEO ER), the PPG phase generated a robust body of due diligence focused on the viability and contextual relevance of key interventions under Component 2, including Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES), Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), human-wildlife conflict (HWC) mitigation strategies, and alternative livelihood approaches. These assessments are documented in detail through supporting Annexes, which include a landscape use analysis, a comprehensive biodiversity status report for the target area, and a funding baseline and investment opportunity study for integrated landscape management. These studies not only examined technical feasibility but also addressed ecological, social, and governance considerations critical to the success of each intervention.</p> <p>The PPG process actively drew upon a broad reference pool, including STAP’s advisory documents—specifically those on Alternative Livelihoods and Payments for Ecosystem Services—as well as case studies from GEF and non-GEF projects in similar ecological and socio-economic contexts. Additionally, the viability of proposed interventions was vetted through stakeholder consultations and expert review sessions, including with MOAE and provincial-level authorities, to ensure their alignment with national policy, local realities, and scientific best practices. These findings and assessments have directly</p>

			informed the design of Component 2 to ensure the interventions are not only technically sound but also contextually appropriate and scalable.
4	STAP	The proposed mitigating measures for the macro-economic risk category should be revised to account for any potential macro-economic risks/shocks that are exogenous to the project and could be triggered during implementation. The project should at least have a broad contingency plan on how to mitigate address these.	Risks have been reviewed during the PPG and updated accordingly in consultation with government, executing agency and key stakeholders during the inception and validation workshops.
5	STAP	The rating for fiduciary risk should be revised to moderate because the project will work extensively with/through govt. partners and Vietnam is a high-risk environment for fiduciary issues.	<p>Thank you for this comment. The fiduciary risk for this project has been assessed as “low” following extensive consultation with the implementing and executing agencies and in light of the strong track record of MOAE (formerly MONRE and MARD) in managing similar GEF-financed projects. Previous initiatives executed by MOAE—including the GEF-6 project (GEF ID: 9361) and GEF-7 project (GEF ID: 10787)—have demonstrated sound fiduciary performance, with no significant issues raised in external audits or supervision missions. A robust Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) assessment was conducted by UNDP Vietnam under the latter project, confirming adequate financial management and oversight systems within MOAE.</p> <p>For this project, a dedicated organizational due diligence and risk assessment was also completed during the PPG phase, which examined institutional capacity, internal controls, procurement protocols, and financial accountability mechanisms. These assessments have concluded that the fiduciary environment—while requiring continued monitoring—does not present elevated risks beyond those that are manageable through standard mitigation measures, including regular audits, financial reporting, and capacity-building where needed. As such, and in light of the strengthened integration of environmental and agricultural mandates under MOAE, the fiduciary risk rating remains appropriate as “low” and will be continually reviewed</p>

			throughout implementation in alignment with WWF and GEF risk management standards.
6	STAP	The rating for stakeholder engagement risk should also be revised to moderate because it is quite possible that some ethnic minority groups may be adversely affected, or may perceive that they will be and obstruct/protest against implementation of specific segments of project activities.	<p>Thank you for the observation. The rating for stakeholder engagement risk has been carefully considered and is aligned with the safeguards documentation and findings from consultations conducted during the PPG phase. These consultations included meaningful engagement with ethnic minority groups across the project provinces and were used to inform the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). As outlined in these annexes, the project has already initiated key elements of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), and a culturally appropriate grievance redress mechanism has been set in motion to address any concerns raised by affected communities throughout implementation.</p> <p>Based on this early engagement, no significant objections or resistance were identified, and stakeholders—particularly ethnic minority communities—expressed broad support for the project's objectives, particularly those relating to sustainable livelihoods and natural resource co-management. Moreover, the project design includes tailored safeguards, targeted benefit-sharing measures, and inclusive planning processes to ensure that all stakeholder groups, especially those that may be vulnerable or marginalized, are actively involved in and benefit from project activities. As such, and with continued monitoring and adaptive stakeholder engagement planned during implementation, the “low” risk rating remains appropriate. It will be monitored carefully and calibrated as necessary based on implementation. Please also note that there is a dedicated Gender / Safeguards expert that will be responsible for building ownership with local communities and bridging any gaps were needed.</p>

