

Making the Link

The Connection and Sustainable Management of Kon Ka Kinh National Park and Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserve

Terminal Evaluation



November 2010

Prepared for



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kon Ka Kinh-Kon Chu Rang Landscape (KKK-KCR Landscape) contains Kon Ka Kinh National Park (KKK NP) and Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserve (KCR NR) in north-eastern Gia Lai Province, central Vietnam. KKK NP and KCR NR are global priorities for biodiversity conservation because they support most of the unique biological attributes of the Central Annamites Priority Landscape.

This area was identified as a Priority 1 area in the Truong Son conservation landscape by the Truong Son initiative (Tordoff *et al.* 2003). The KKK-KCR Landscape supports over 100,000 ha of natural forest at 500-1,748 m altitude, including a large proportion of the forested catchments of the Ba and Con rivers.

Kon Ka Kinh (KKK) and Kon Chu Rang (KCR) were decreed as nature reserves by the Government of Vietnam in 1986¹, and rated as priority B in the Biodiversity Action Plan for Vietnam in 1994 (Government of Vietnam 1994). In 2002, KKK was upgraded to national park status². Currently, the intervening forest area between KKK and KCR remains under the management of Dakrong and Tram Lap State Forest Companies (SFCs), despite ongoing aspirations for them to be included in the protected areas. However, individually these two protected areas are too small to maintain viable populations of all species, particularly wide-ranging species that occur at naturally low densities, such as Tiger *Panthera tigris* and Gaur *Bos frontalis* (Tordoff *et al.* 2003).³

The GEF UNDP project has supported making the link between the two protected areas through the SFC lands for connectivity conservation. This has the purpose of maintaining the biological integrity of this unique priority landscape of the Central Annamites. The project has set out to develop the foundation of support and management for the SFCs and the protected areas strengthening their sustainability and mainstreaming biodiversity in the production landscapes.

The project is expecting to deliver results in three areas:

1. Strengthened institutional capacity of Gia Lai Forest Protection Department (FPD) in areas of forest management and protection, with specific emphasis on areas within and around the KKK NP and KCR NR.
2. Increased awareness among local communities, key decision-makers, scientific community and donors to the unique

¹ Following Decision No. 194/CT of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, dated 9 August 1986.

² Following Decision No. 167/TTg of the Prime Minister, dated 25 November 2002.

³ Towards the sustainable management of the Kon Ka Kinh – Kon Chu Rang Landscape: Forest Analysis, Development of an Ecological Monitoring Framework, and Hands-on Training of Protected Area staff for Ecological Monitoring at the Kon Ka Kinh – Kon Chu Rang Landscape

conservation values of the project area, building long-term support for forest management and protection throughout the project area.

3. Established conditions for sustainable forest management and forest management certification in Dakrong and Tram Lap SFEs, leading to the continued integrity of a forest corridor between KKK NP and KCR NR.

This project is implemented by the Government of Vietnam (GOV) in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through the UNDP National Execution (NEX) modality. This modality aims to ensure that projects are executed in close partnership with the government's relevant ministries and local government departments. The Forest Protection Department (FPD) managed the project on behalf of the Gia Lai PPC through a Project Management Unit based at FPD project office. Technical support was provided by UNDP through a Senior Technical Adviser (STA). Another key element of execution is the collaboration with local communities and community based organisations. The government has provided in-kind support. This project has parallel funding from the Tropical Forest Trust (TFT).

The project designed in 2000 was approved in 2004 by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and subsequently approved by GOV and UNDP, and implementation was underway in 2006. This followed some reallocation of budget and adjustment to activities due to the delay between design and implementation. No additional funding was available despite inflationary pressure on the budget resulting in some constraining of activities. However in 2009 some additional funding of USD50,000 was provided to the project from UNDP TRAK to cover some priority activities in Objective 3, further to the originally planned activities of TFT.

This report is the outcome of the terminal evaluation of this project. It is structured to meet the requirements of UNDP/GEF and is intended to provide findings of relevance both to the Vietnamese stakeholders and internationally. Learning and knowledge from UNDP /GEF final evaluations is shared within the GEF and with the partners as a basis for decision-making on policies and strategies, programme management and projects, to improve knowledge and performance. GEF results are monitored and evaluated for their contribution to global environmental benefits.

The project was well aligned with international, national and provincial strategic frameworks and established ownership foundations for the project goal from the diverse stakeholders. The FPD is the main agency responsible for the key project outcomes (through the Project Management Unit (PMU)) and is also the main agency responsible for biodiversity conservation in Gia Lai. The positive project results flow directly from the intention of the NEX modality through to the implementation of the project by the PMU. The results show alignment with the goals of the GEF.

The goal of the biodiversity focal area of GEF is the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the maintenance of ecosystem goods and services. To achieve this goal, the strategy encompasses five objectives:

- a. Improve the sustainability of protected area systems
- b. Mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes/seascapes and sectors
- c. Build capacity to implement the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- d. Build capacity on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing, and
- e. Integrate CBD obligations into national planning processes through enabling activities.

The GEF has some key approaches that it applies to help achieve these global objectives and these have been applied to this project specifically

- Building capacity.
- Increasing mainstreaming, i.e. the participation of non-environmental government agencies in biodiversity projects.
- Enhancing and sustaining participation of local and indigenous communities and the private sector in GEF projects.
- Improving the linkages with other focal areas of the GEF to maximise synergies that generate local and global environmental benefits.

The evaluation team focused their independent findings and recommendations on the achievement of the project objectives, including their assessment of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, and attainment of results. The method of evaluation is explained in Section 1.2.

The findings and recommendations (included in this summary) were presented to the key stakeholders at the conclusion of the mission. This terminal evaluation concludes that this innovative biodiversity connectivity conservation project is achieving some moderately satisfactory progress. This is through increased participation of the local communities (Ba Na) in biodiversity conservation, by strengthening the institutional capacity of the provincial Forest Protection Department and the progress made so far towards the green corridor establishment.

Criteria	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency
Objective 1 Rating Increase capacity of FPD	Highly satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Criteria	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency
Objective 2 Rating Increase conservation awareness	Highly satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Objective 3 Rating, following MTE Sustainable forest management – integrity of corridor	Highly satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory

There are some internal and external challenges to this project that impact on its effectiveness. Internal challenges include the limitation of the project design and budget constraints and their flow on impacts. External challenges include the context of the lack of enabling legislation and associated principles and policies for implementing green corridors, sustainable financing for biodiversity conservation, protected area management, difficulties of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification of natural forests and the environmental impacts from the new East Truong Son Road.

The project design does not adequately recognise the dependence of the Ba Na communities on the forest resources for food, income and shelter. These communities have a fundamental dependence on these benefits from the forest. The project does not directly address their need for sustainable use of the forest. The Inception Report does note this weakness and the associated challenges of resolving this⁴. The Feasibility Study for the Green Corridor in preparation at the time of the evaluation recognises this and identifies alternative income generation for the Ba Na people as an important follow-on activity.

The parallel funding arrangements with the Tropical Timber Trust (TFT) have created some challenges. There was a lack of clarity about the relationship with PMU at the outset, associated implementation challenges of FSC certification in SFCs, the lack of necessary GOV regulations, and a TFT funding shortfall caused some challenges under Objective 3. Despite this, TFT contributed to achievable elements of the project. TFT undertook project activities that were feasible at the time. Weak ownership of this component by the PMU and the associated communication problems between parties was evident. The lack of regulations and management mechanisms for the State Forest Companies (SFC) means that the goal of FSC certification is unable to be achieved within the project timeframe.

Following the midterm evaluation Objective 3.4 was adapted to include activities designed to push forward the critical enablers for the foundation of the Green Corridor, in particular the feasibility and investment plan. This is required by the Peoples Provincial Committee (PPC) for consideration and possible approval. Although this element under objective 3 was considered important as it reflected the intention of the project and picked up the

⁴ Inception report P4

recommendations from the midterm evaluation, this terminal evaluation also considered carefully all the objectives and the many project activities.

The budget constraints have limited some of the project activities. The logistical challenges of a remote project area make for difficulties in recruitment and internal project communication. Nevertheless these obstacles were overcome.

A key external challenge to the project is the new road, East Truong Son Road, bisecting the corridor and the associated impacts of interruption of the free movement of mammals and impacts from construction including construction workers illegally logging, harvesting non timber forest products and illegally hunting. These activities may be easier as a result of the road and it may also encourage agriculture and industrial rubber, coffee and encroachments associated with settlement. The ongoing management of the transportation infrastructure should aim to minimise impact on natural ecosystems, including watersheds. The provision of additional forest protection staff at entry and exit points to the road for enforcement purposes is planned.

Although the project itself does not seek to achieve a stronger legal framework it is an important enabling context for corridor establishment. The draft decree for implementation of biodiversity corridors under the biodiversity law remains in unapproved form. It provides the principles and policies required for implementation. Alongside these challenges is the opportunity to achieve the Green Corridor through the PPC and for it to be approved provincially. This in turn should encourage the GOV to implement the draft decree. The positive attitude of the PPC to the Green Corridor is important as they can approve the Green Corridor at the provincial level and in doing so promote the concept to GOV. With these variables it is unclear whether the sustainability of the project is assured. On balance the evaluation considered that there were significant risks to the financial sustainability of the project. The indication from Gia Lai PPC for likely approval of the Feasibility Study and Investment Plans, including follow-on activities is positive.⁵ The project highlights the need for sustainable financing for this protected area complex. Sustainable financing would ensure the investment to date is maximised in building the foundation for connectivity conservation of this unique landscape.

As connectivity conservation is in its infancy in Vietnam, this report includes some detail on lessons learned from the project and from connectivity conservation. These may be of interest to other Green Corridor projects in Vietnam and elsewhere. To illustrate the points made examples from the project are used in the body of the report.⁶ They include lessons from the project specifically and from connectivity conservation in general.

Recommendations associated with these lessons are included in the report⁷ for UNDP/ GEF in their support of protected area and connectivity conservation internationally as well as Vietnam. The lessons learned and

⁵ See Appendix - Section 9.7

⁶ See Section 7

⁷ See Section 8

recommendations will be of interest to the GOV, Gia Lai PPC and the key stakeholders.

This ambitious Green Corridor project is a working model that shows that creating the foundation for sustainable management of natural forest in the context of connectivity conservation in Vietnam is possible. This is through the strengthening of the institutional capacity in GOV forest management and protection, building community awareness of biodiversity connectivity conservation, and establishing co-management. It also demonstrates domestically and internationally that building the foundations for connectivity conservation can produce results in a relatively short time frame. To sustain the investment in the Green Corridor and taking into account the lessons learned will require an ongoing commitment to implementing follow-on activities including enforcement of protection. Working closely with the Ba Na people to ensure they share in the direct benefits of connectivity conservation and the sustainable management of the Green Corridor will be vital for its long-term success.

A number of recommendations are summarised for GEF/UNDP, GOV and the PPC below:

Project design and budget

1. **GEF/UNDP:** As the project design (2000) was outdated at the time the project budget was approved (2004 and implemented in 2006) there were impacts on the project achievements, as the costs had escalated, and threats and attitudes had changed. Although the inception report made some changes a full review of the project design should have been undertaken at this time and budget adjusted accordingly, including the provision of sufficient budget for relevant agencies to implement their activities – transportation, travel costs for workshops, living costs - to ensure the success of the project.
2. **GEF/UNDP** FSC component was overly ambitious as the wider policy frameworks and institutional capacity for implementation are not in place – currently in Vietnam for a SFC with natural forest the FSC criteria cannot be met. The appropriate policy frameworks for SFC ensuring the FSC principles and criteria can be applied are essential preconditions for effective implementation of FSC. This has contributed to the weak relationship with TFT, as well as the lack of clarity in the relationship between the PMU and TFT in the project documentation. Accordingly the project design should have clarified the relationships, been more strongly based on the existing policies and the realistic likelihood of any new policies that could be implemented during the life of the project.
3. **GEF/UNDP** Benefit sharing with the local people compared to other elements of the project is considered out of balance – a disproportionate amount of spending on fixed costs compared to the expenditure of the project on activities with local people and them sharing in direct benefits. Direct benefits to the local people

impacted by the project should be specifically addressed in the design phase. Identification of this as a challenge is insufficient.

4. **GEF/UNDP** The project logistics should be considered carefully in project design – e.g. the remoteness for project activities and the challenges created in staffing, transportation and fieldwork.

Project objectives and activities

Objective 1: Capacity Building

1. Training courses

GOV and Gia Lai PPC Ba Na language training (course 3 month full time) should be longer and focussed on the staff who work locally with the Ba Na people. All key individuals involved in the management of the Green Corridor should have some knowledge of Ba Na language, as Ba Na people are key to the corridor's success. Ba Na villagers should be involved in the language training providing assistance to ensure the learning is relevant. Students should be able to practise their language training with the Ba Na people in their villages to embed learning through direct experience.

2. Ecological monitoring

GEF/UNDP and GOV (FPD) The ecological monitoring component was intended to yield useful data for management. In reality it was an introduction to the concept for learning only. Ideally where information is gathered and the data analysed, the results should be sufficiently robust for building models for management decision making.

3. Study tours

GEF/UNDP Although useful for capacity building skills the following requirements should apply:

1. Only relevant people who can impart learning are selected to go.
2. Location of study tour should be a directly applicable model for good learning outcomes - first priority should be within Vietnam and learning from the more established protected areas. This is likely to be more relevant and cost effective.
3. Upon return there is a requirement for learning to be applied to implementation of activities and future plans: a report should be written on the application of the study tour to the home situation.

Objective 2: Community Awareness

1. **PPC and GEF/UNDP** The community awareness programme should be an ongoing annual activity, the responsibility of the relevant agencies of the Green Corridor (SFCs, PA's, Districts, Communes and PPC, FPD, DOF, DARD and DONRE) and should include consistent shared messages to all target groups.
2. **PPC** The CCG should continue to link community awareness activities into the local communities. PPC should fund this responsibility and allocate funding to the relevant communes for this activity.
3. **PPC and GEF/UNDP** For the community awareness raising programme to be sustainable it must include a direct benefit for the local community. For example the forest convention element of the awareness programme requires people to protect the forest and in doing so benefits the environment. There is no direct benefit to the Ba Na people as they continue to depend on the forest for livelihoods – ie convention says forest protection is required but there is no direct improvement to their incomes.
4. **PPC, FPD and GEF/UNDP** The staff of CCG, SFC, and staff of protected areas should all further develop their understanding of Ba Na language and culture to enable them to deliver more effective support through relevant training e.g. technical agricultural and silvi-culture extension and models.
5. **PPC and FPD** The community awareness programme should be further developed, reviewed and adapted every three years to ensure its ongoing relevance to the communities as they continue to develop and change.
6. **PPC** In parallel with awareness raising, the improvement of the livelihoods of the Ba Na people in the corridor and other minorities in the buffer zone should be a priority for PPC – not just for the mind but also the stomach!
7. **PPC** To ensure the effectiveness of the community awareness and schools education programme it should be given in the language that is most appropriate to the target group – e.g. for the remote villages in the corridor the programme should be delivered in Ba Na language.

Objective 3: Sustainable forestry

1. **GOV and PPC** To establish the Green Corridor the underlying principles and policies for biodiversity corridors must be approved by the PPC and the GOV. Without these arrangements in place the Green Corridor concept cannot be implemented.

2. **PPC** The PPC should establish a Green Corridor Management committee comprised of the relevant stakeholders. The committee's purpose is to ensure the coordinated management of the protected areas and the SFCs.
3. **PPC and GOV** should develop the regulations for the state forestry companies' sustainable management of natural forests.
4. **GOV** should put in place a national framework for SFC including the regulations and mechanisms to facilitate FSC in natural forests. This would enable companies such as Tram Lap and Dakrong to more clearly understand their roles and responsibilities for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development and enable them to achieve FSC certification.

Enabling of biodiversity corridor implementation

1. **GEF/UNDP and PPC** should promote and approve the Investment plan and feasibility study for the Green Corridor and provide budget for implementing the activities in the investment plan.
2. **GOV and PPC** should give priority to approving the principles and policies for the implementation of the green corridor biodiversity projects connecting protected areas within Vietnam.
3. **GOV and PPC GEF/UNDP** GOV and PPC and aid agencies are encouraged to invest in the development of a sustainable financing strategy for the project area and beyond through financing mechanisms (PES, REDD+, concessions and ecotourism etc), for the GOV protected area network at the national, provincial and local level and develop a range of possible models and tools that could be applied to specific protected areas and their financing.
4. **PPC and GOV** The PPC should urgently reduce the current environmental impact of the construction of the new East Truong Son Road on the Green Corridor. The new road's impact will include increased illegal logging, illegal hunting, illegal settlement etc and should be mitigated by PPC through enforcement and working in collaboration with the Ministry of Defence to ensure the Green Corridor is protected in perpetuity for the benefit of the environment and people. Consideration should be given to whether any bridging of the road for use by mammals would be beneficial.

Project management

1. **GEF/UNDP** Selection of consultants by the PMU should be done in conjunction with the STA to help ensure the highest possible quality of the contractors.

2. **GEF/UNDP** Ideally the STA should be located in country and accessible to the project and project sites to maximise both effective technical advice and also cost effectiveness.
3. **GEF/UNDP, PPC and PMU** should take responsibility for the implementation of the parallel funding activities and the project design should be clear about these expectations.

Future possibilities

1. **PPC** in the short term, undertake the 6 activities proposed in the feasibility study: forest protection, ecological monitoring, research studies, increase community awareness, build capacity of staff within the corridor and alternative livelihoods for socio-economic improvement. These activities should be undertaken in parallel with the establishment of the Green Corridor.
2. **GOV and Gia Lai and Binh Dinh PPCs** Longer term the feasibility of a larger protected areas complex including KKK NP, KCR NR, Green Corridor and An Toan NR should be investigated - combined for management coherence and biological integrity and to enable the possibility of a declaration of a larger Man and the Biosphere Reserve.



With Kong Bong 2 villagers

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BLI	BirdLife International
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCG	Community Consultative Group
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DONRE	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DPI	Department of Planning and Investment
DOF	Department of Forestry
ENV	Education for Nature - Vietnam
FRR	Forest Research
FPD	Forestry Protection Department
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GOV	Government of Viet Nam
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
KKK NP	Kon Ka Kinh National Park
KCR NR	Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserve
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool for Protected Areas
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MONRE	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MTE	Mid Term Evaluation
NEX	National Execution
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NTFP	Non timber forest products
PA	Protected Areas
PES	Payments for Environmental Services
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PMU	Project Management Unit
PO	Project Officer
PPC	Provincial Peoples Committee
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PSC	Project Steering Committee
REDD	Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
SFC	State Forest Company
SFE	State Forest Enterprise
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
STA	Senior Technical Advisor
TFT	Tropical Forest Trust
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDP-CO	United Nations Development Program Country Office - Viet Nam
VCF	Vietnam Conservation Fund
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Jo Breese specially thanks Pham Duc Chien for his collaboration during the mission in Vietnam. Thanks are extended to Ms Do Thi Huyen, and Ms Phan Minh Nguyet of UNDP, Mr Phuoc, his PMU team (especially Mr Tuan, Mrs Thu and Ms Linh) and Dr Fernando Potess for their helpful assistance. Further thanks are extended to our drivers who drove us safely for long days, and all others who assisted with arrangements for the evaluation, the supply of information and hospitality and made time available to attend meetings and share their perspectives.



Returning from the fields and forest at the end of the day

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVALUATION

1.1. Purpose of the final evaluation

UNDP/GEF project monitoring and evaluation have the following objectives:

- To monitor and evaluate results and impacts
- To provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvements
- To promote accountability for resource use
- To document, provide feedback on, and disseminate lessons learned.

This report meets the requirements of UNDP/GEF final evaluations in providing an independent evaluation of the relevance, performance and achievements of the project, Making the Link: The Connection and Sustainable Management of Kon Ka Kinh National Park and Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserve against established objectives and expected outcomes. A number of lessons learned are identified for consideration by GEF, UNDP and the Government of Vietnam (GOV) in their completion of this project and the planning and execution of future green corridor biodiversity and integrated community and sustainable development projects.

This final evaluation of the UNDP/GEF project for the Green Corridor Project is of relevance both to Vietnamese stakeholders and internationally. Learning and knowledge from UNDP/GEF final project evaluations is shared within the GEF and with its partners, as a basis for decision-making on policies, strategies, programme management and projects, to improve knowledge and performance. GEF results are monitored and evaluated for their contribution to global environmental benefits.

The report structure is in sections as follows:

- Part 1 gives a background to the evaluation and the methodology applied and the project
- Part 2 outlines the project background
- Part 3 presents the evaluation findings. It examines project design and implementation and includes ratings for the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation and evaluates the achievement of project objectives and associated outcomes

- Part 4 explores the execution and implementation modalities for the project
- Part 5 provides an assessment of the monitoring and evaluation system used
- Part 6 assesses the processes that have affected the project results
- Part 7 explores lessons learned from the project and from the perspective of connectivity conservation
- Part 8 provides the GEF and UNDP with specific recommendations from this terminal evaluation
- The Appendices include details of the evaluation and other relevant material.

The report also sets out to answer the questions posed in the terms of reference.⁸

1.2. Methodology of the evaluation

The evaluation applied an independent and evidence based approach. The process was:

- Deeper investigation of recurrent issues
- Verifying
- Analytical
- Participatory
- Constructive
- Observing.

The two-person team (local and international consultant) reviewed the full range of project documentation in detail. They also referred to other relevant sources during the process of the evaluation (see Appendix 9.8).

During the evaluation process they met and interviewed individuals, agency representatives and key stakeholder groups at national, provincial, district, commune and community levels. These meetings were held on site with the interviewees e.g. in the village Nam Rong (community meeting house), home of village leaders, Commune headquarters, Forestry Department office, protected areas headquarters, SFC headquarters, PMU office, national office of ENV and even on the road in the forest.

⁸ See Appendix 9.1

From this series of meetings, information was gathered, observations were made and perceptions were tested. An initial briefing was held with UNDP, and along with documentary review, was used to help define areas of focus and possible issues to explore. Other recurrent issues were identified from the early meetings and explored further in subsequent relevant meetings to test findings and enquire more deeply. This is an iterative process.⁹

Those interviewed were key to the project and primarily identified by UNDP and the Project Management Unit (PMU). The evaluation team added others to gain deeper insights.

The typical open-ended questions used as a framework to gather information in the interview process were:

- What do you think the project has achieved so far? Impact?
- What challenges or difficulties has the project encountered in your opinion?
- Why have these occurred?
- What are your recommendations for the future?
- If you were to design the project now what would you do differently?
- What lessons have you learned from the project?
- Any other points/recommendations you wish to make?

Interviewees were encouraged to give specific examples of the points made as an evidential basis for evaluation. Field inspections were undertaken and a survey of a wide range of key documents was used to verify information and provide background. See Appendix 9.8 for list. The evaluation team formulated personal independent conclusions and then as a team discussed perspectives and agreed findings, and sometimes chose to seek further information from the documents or individuals for clarity or other perspectives.

The preliminary findings were then presented to the key parties and their input sought. Following these inputs the preliminary findings were further developed into recommendations and were presented to key stakeholders as the preliminary findings of the final evaluation. There was agreement with the preliminary findings.

The evaluators put emphasis on open and engaging dialogue with the PMU, key stakeholders and the ethnic minority community, the Ba Na people. The Senior Technical Advisor (STA) was interviewed and he attended some stakeholder meetings with the evaluation team. The evaluation team had

⁹ Process for arriving at a progressively 'better' decision or understanding through repeating the rounds of analysis. The purpose is to bring the desired decision or understanding to a deeper or more robust evidential basis through each repetition (iteration).

hoped to meet with the STA for a final discussion but this was not possible due to flight delays.

1.2.1. Structure of the evaluation

The evaluation structure was as follows:

Phase	Activity
Briefing phase	Briefing by UNDP-VN and a further briefing with WWF on their Central Annamites programme strategy and an overview of implementation realities and an interview with lead contractor ENV.
Evidence gathering and issue identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing by project management – PMU. Face to face meetings with key executants - PMU staff, Steering Committee members, KKK NP and KCR NR staff, TFT, DOF, FPD, and DARD. Interviews with key project partners/participants - e.g. 3 Ba Na communities, 1 Tay and Kinh community, DPC, Kong Bong Commune, CCG members in 3 communities, and Tram Lap and Dakrong SFC Director and Vice Director. Community meetings with ethnic minority - Ba Na, Kong Bong Village 2, in Dakrong SFC and Bong Pim Village (adjoining Kon Ka Kinh National Park), and Ha Lam village Son Long Commune (adjoining Tram Lap SFC, visited during the MTE) and Village 4, Dakjota commune (Kinh and Tay people). Informal validation.
Analysis of evidence and issues	International and local consultant.
Review of background documents and plans	Prior to mission and during mission.
Cross referencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders and project executants. Some informal inputs were sought from others familiar with the issues. Some other relevant literature was reviewed in the evidence gathering and write up phases.
Sharing preliminary results with stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Met with PMU. Met with UNDP.
Review findings, if considered necessary adjust	International and local consultant considered feedback.
Finalise analysis	International and local consultant.
Conclude and submit terminal evaluation report to UNDP	International consultant.

See Appendix 9.2 for a full list of interviewees and timetable of the evaluation mission.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

The Kon Ka Kinh-Kon Chu Rang Landscape (KKK-KCR Landscape) contains Kon Ka Kinh National Park (KKK NP) and Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserve (KCR NR) in north-eastern Gia Lai Province, central Vietnam (see map below). KKK NP and KCR NR are global priorities for biodiversity conservation because they support most of the unique biological attributes of the Central Annamites Priority Landscape (Tordoff *et al.* 2002), and some of the most intact faunal and floral communities in Vietnam. As such, they were identified as Priority 1 areas in the Truong Son conservation landscape by the Truong Son initiative (Tordoff *et al.* 2003). The KKK-KCR Landscape supports over 100,000 ha of natural forest at 500-1,748 m altitude, including a large proportion of the forested catchments of the Ba and Con rivers.

Kon Ka Kinh (KKK) and Kon Chu Rang (KCR) were decreed as nature reserves by the Government of Vietnam in 1986¹⁰, and rated as priority B in the Biodiversity Action Plan for Vietnam in 1994 (Government of Vietnam 1994). In 2002, KKK was upgraded to national park status¹¹. Currently, the intervening forest area between KKK and KCR remains under the management of Dakrong and Tram Lap State Forest Companies (SFCs), despite repeated recommendations to incorporate this 12-km wide area into the two protected areas (Ministry of Forestry 1991; Government of Vietnam 1994; Wege *et al.* 1999). However, individually these two protected areas are too small to maintain viable populations of all species, particularly wide-ranging species that occur at naturally low densities, such as Tiger *Panthera tigris* and Gaur *Bos frontalis* (Tordoff *et al.* 2003).¹²

The overall goal of the project is the long-term conservation of the unique biological attributes of the Central Annamites Priority Landscape.

The four year project seeks to develop a foundation of support and management to maintain the biological integrity and connectivity of the Forest Complex, which includes the Tram Lap and Dakrong State Forest Enterprises (SFEs) (now Companies (SFCs), as well as the existing protected areas, strengthening their sustainability, and mainstreaming biodiversity in the production landscapes.

The project is expecting to deliver results in three areas:

Objective 1: Strengthened institutional capacity of Gia Lai Forest Protection Department (FPD) in areas of forest management and protection, with specific emphasis on areas within and around the KKK NP and KCR NR.

Objective 2: Increased awareness among local communities, key decision-makers, scientific community and donors to the unique conservation values

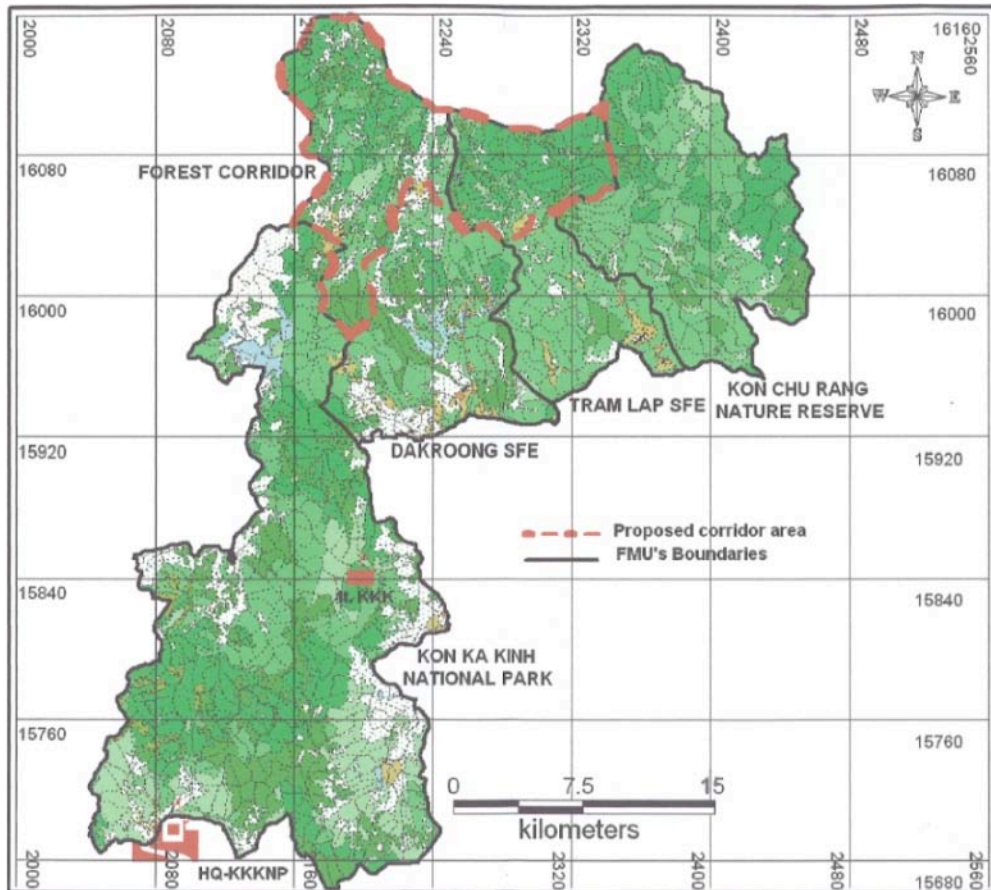
¹⁰ Following Decision No. 194/CT of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, dated 9 August 1986.

¹¹ Following Decision No. 167/TTg of the Prime Minister, dated 25 November 2002.

¹² Towards the sustainable management of the Kon Ka Kinh–Kon Chu Rang Landscape: Forest Analysis, Development of an Ecological Monitoring Framework, and Hands-on Training of Protected Area staff for Ecological Monitoring at the Kon Ka Kinh–Kon Chu Rang Landscape

of the project area, building long-term support for forest management and protection throughout the project area.

Objective 3: Established conditions for sustainable forest management and forest management certification in Dakrong and Tram Lap SFEs, leading to the continued integrity of a forest corridor between KKK NP and KCR NR.

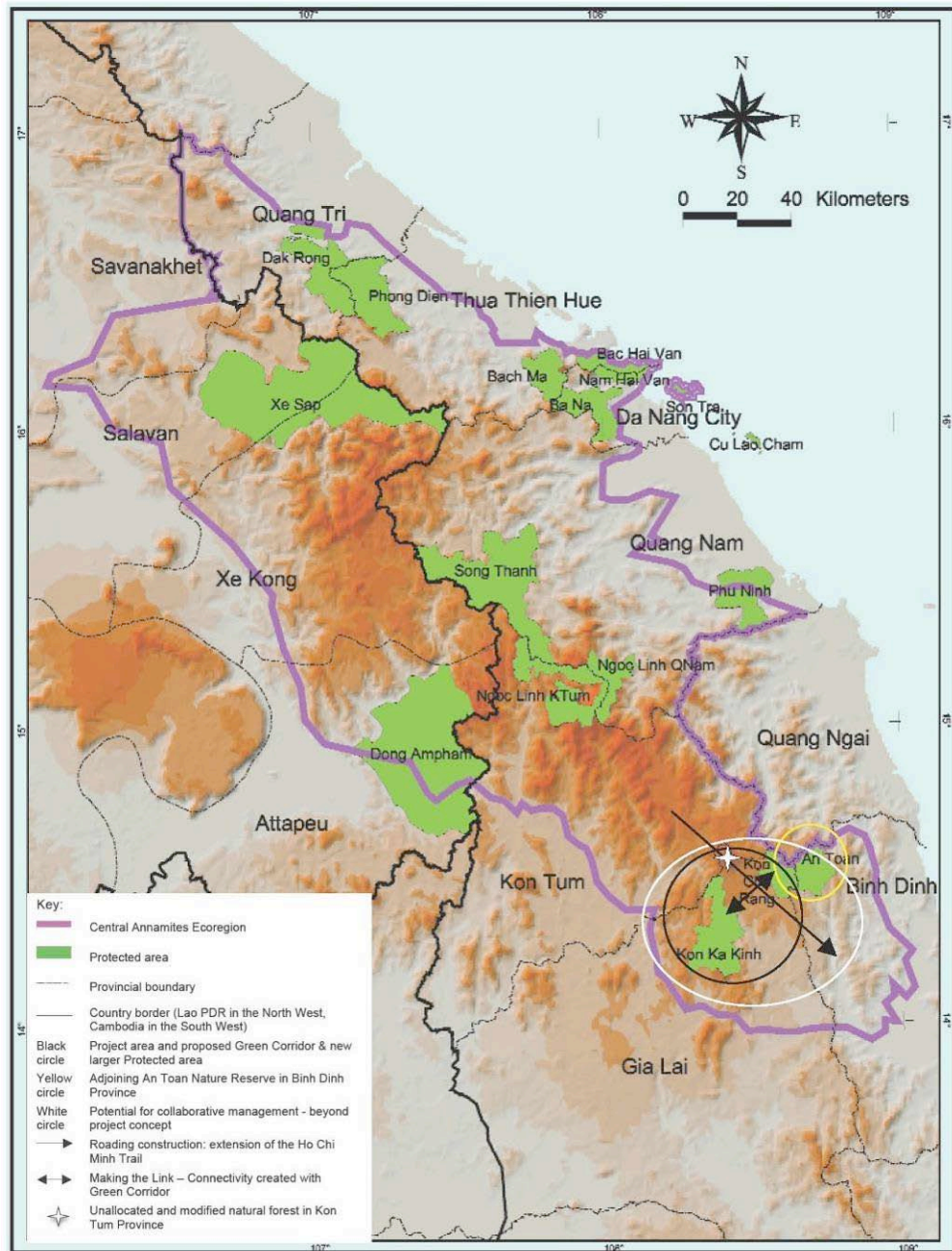


Project area showing proposed Green Corridor



Green Corridor forest

Village Kong Bong 2 within the Corridor



Location map showing Protected Area connectivity concepts

Legal Context

The Vietnamese Government has made gradual changes in its forest policy in that it has begun addressing the issues of social forestry through its Forestry Development Strategy 2006-2020. This, given that forest policy over the last 20 years has been based on state exploitation of natural forests, has moved more in the direction of social forestry. This strategy aims to mobilize the participation of people from all sectors.

At the time of the evaluation the team was aware of some key GOV legislative developments and consequential laws awaiting approval – these

are the draft regulations for the implementation of the biodiversity decree and for the establishment of the Green Corridors in Vietnam.

The GOV Biodiversity Law of 2008, introduces the concept of Biodiversity Corridors. The decree to implement it, including the guidelines for green corridors is yet to be approved. This is in draft awaiting approval. The draft decree (see Appendix 9,3) gives guidance on the formal planning process and the establishment of a formal management mechanism.

At the provincial level in 2008 Decree 53 QD UBND 4/2/2008 of Gia Lai PPC reclassified the Gia Lai forest into 3 categories: special use, production and protection forest. This moves more natural forest into production forest. However all forest types sit under the umbrella of the biodiversity law and its principles will have to be applied to the management of the forest.

This situation makes the establishment mechanism for implementing the Green Corridor difficult as there is no current legal framework for the establishment. The draft decree for implementation remains in unapproved draft form. It includes guidance on the planning process and management mechanisms including a Biodiversity Corridor Operation Committee. This committee's purpose is to co-ordinate the representatives of the key land owners and stakeholders and to ensure funding and fund management, including applying for an Investment Project for the corridor area. The committee does not have any direct control of the land within the corridor. Direct control of the land remains with the specific land manager/owner. Each corridor will be able to develop its own management organisation and regulations to govern management.

The draft decree does give the PPC the mandate to apply for national level investment for a biodiversity corridor approved by the PPC. It is possible that in the interim the PPC of Gia Lai may approve the Green Corridor. However as Gia Lai is a deficit province relying on GOV budgets their ability to fund the implementation of the Green Corridor is unclear. They could apply for a GOV budget for environmental protection and apply this to the corridor management or reallocate other budget.

To facilitate the implementation of the Green Corridor the necessary legislative frameworks are required. Consequently the GOV should approve the implementation decree and also the PPC could approve establishment of the Green Corridor at the provincial level.



Project sign in the buffer



"Road" Meeting with Commune leader

3. EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1. Overview of approach and ratings applied

This section of the report presents the evaluation of the project achievements. To determine the level of achievement of the project, the following three criteria are used to assess the achievements of objectives and outcomes:

Relevance: Were the project's outcomes consistent with the focal areas/operational programme strategies and country priorities?

Effectiveness: Are the actual project outcomes commensurate with the original or modified project objective?

Efficiency: Was the project cost effective?

Project Goal:

The overall goal of the project is the long-term conservation of the unique biological attributes of the Central Annamites Priority Landscape.

The four year project seeks to develop a foundation of support and management to maintain the biological integrity and connectivity of the Forest Complex, which includes the Tram Lap and Dakrong State Forest Enterprises (SFEs) (now Companies (SFCs), as well as the existing protected areas, strengthening their sustainability, and mainstreaming biodiversity in the production landscapes.

The project is expecting to deliver results in three areas:

Objective 1: Strengthened institutional capacity of Gia Lai Forest Protection Department (FPD) in areas of forest management and protection, with specific emphasis on areas within and around the KKK NP and KCR NR.

Objective 2: Increased awareness among local communities, key decision-makers, scientific community and donors to the unique conservation values of the project area, building long-term support for forest management and protection throughout the project area.

Objective 3: Established conditions for sustainable forest management and forest management certification in Dakrong and Tram Lap SFEs, leading to the continued integrity of a forest corridor between KKK NP and KCR NR.

The evaluation team considered each objective and the data gathered during the evaluation to determine their findings. The data includes the results of their interviews and all reviewed documents including the project logical framework and the implementation reviews. The analysis is provided in Section 3.2.

The following rating was applied:

Highly satisfactory (HS): The project had no shortcomings in the achievement of the objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Satisfactory (S): The project had minor shortcomings in the achievement of the objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Moderately Satisfactory (MS): The project had moderate shortcomings in the achievement of the objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): The project had significant shortcomings in the achievement of the objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Unsatisfactory (U): The project had major shortcomings in the achievement of the objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The project had severe shortcomings in the achievement of the objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

3.2. Results from the Evaluation

The table below provides at a glance overview of ratings against each objective and the three criteria to be applied.

Criteria	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency
Rating Objective 1: increase capacity of FPD especially within and around KKK NP and KCR NR	Highly satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Rating Objective 2: Increase awareness of conservation values and of forest protection	Highly satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Rating Objective 3: Following MTE sustainable forest management leading to integrity of corridor	Highly satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory

Criteria	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency
Objective 3 ¹³ as per inception report	Highly satisfactory	Unsatisfactory - FSC certification not possible at this time	Moderately unsatisfactory

The effectiveness rating of unsatisfactory for the original (prior to the MTE) Objective 3 is because the project was unable to deliver results of forest certification. It is important to note for the purpose of this terminal evaluation, the evaluation team did not assess this as being a fair measure for the project. The intention of the project is to lay a solid foundation of support and management for the establishment of the Green Corridor and this is being achieved.

Following the MTE objective 3.4 was adjusted and the evaluation team considered it more appropriate to rate the project based on this revision.¹⁴ Further additional activities have been added into Objective 3.4 including the feasibility study and investment plan, all designed to create the necessary foundations and information for the Green Corridor to be approved by the PPC.

The evaluators consider the project overall is delivering moderately satisfactory results.

3.2.1. Attainment of objectives

This table provides a summary of main points under each objective and supports the above ratings. The logical framework and progress reports were used throughout the evaluation process as key reference documents alongside the interview findings. The reader is encouraged to read this table as an overview with key points. Many of these points are further elaborated in the rest of the report.



¹³ For evaluation purposes Objective 3 should be evaluated for the activities under 3.4 following the MTE, not objective 3 from the Inception Report.

¹⁴ Following the MTE objective 3.4 was adjusted and the evaluation team considered it more appropriate to rate the project based on this revision. Pers com: Sameer Karki 24/8/2010 - GEF agreed with this approach

The long-term conservation of the unique biological attributes of the Central Annamites Priority Landscape.	The project provides a solid foundation that can be built upon (MS)
Assessment of results:	
1. To what degree have the project objectives and outputs been achieved so far:	Comment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased participation of local communities in biodiversity conservation Further Comments: Local communities participated in meetings (with staff of the project, CCG, protected areas, and SFCs), education (activities at schools), and particularly in meetings regarding the forest conventions (in 5 villages). Awareness of local people of biodiversity conservation has improved. Following the conclusion of the project awareness raising activities should be continued with all villages to help ensure the intentions of the signed conventions are carried out. However the local people do not enjoy direct benefits at this time. 	Forest conventions signed and community awareness improvement (S)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened institutional capacity and legal frameworks Further Comments: Staff of FPD, DoF, PAs, SFC and leaders of communes participated in workshops, training courses in relevant fields. However, the legal frameworks are not in place, particularly for the FSC certification. 	FPD, PAs SFC and communes' capacity built but legal frameworks not in place (MS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established conditions for sustainable forest management and forest management certification • Note adjusted 3.4 activities below Further Comments: Some technical courses in relation to FSC and sustainable forest management were carried out by TFT and project staff. However, due to the lack of principles and policies, this activity remained focussed on sharing information and techniques. 	Not possible at this time Investment plan and feasibility study and related activities undertaken (MS)
2. Has the project achieved the key results expected at this time (excepting FSC):	Comment
Further Comments: Except the FSC component all key results have been achieved.	Expected to achieve the key results. (S-MS)
3. Partnership Strategy: The project will be implemented in close partnership with concerned ministries, local government departments, and special collaborative arrangements involving community-based organisations and communities in the project sites, and other related projects in the region.	Comment
Further Comments: PMU has close relationships with UNDP, MARD, MONRE, PPC, FPD, DoF, PAs, SFEs, district and commune authorities during the implementation of the project. However, due to the remoteness of the site, and the nature of the objectives and activities, there is limited collaboration and sharing between this project and others (e.g. FLITCH).	Yes, the project has had good partnerships with relevant organisations, but a limited collaboration with other projects implemented in the region. (S)

IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 1:

- **Strengthened institutional Capacity of Gia Lai Forest Protection Department (FPD) in areas of forest management and protection, with specific emphasis on areas within and around the KKK NP and KCR NR**

1. Basic infrastructure of NRs established and key items of equipment provided	Comment
Further Comments: Forest protection stations, buildings, equipment (cars, computers, GIS etc) were provided. They have greatly contributed to the success of the project.	Basic infrastructure resulting from the project was very beneficial (HS)
2. Training programme for FPD staff conducted	Comment
Further Comments: Through a series of training workshops on project and financial management, using computer software, ethnic minority language (Ba Na language), forest protection regulation and techniques, and ecological monitoring and data analysis, knowledge and skills of FPD staff are improved. The computer software and Ba Na language training are particularly successful as people have to use daily. The expressed desire for more training demonstrates the value placed on it. The need for further embedding of the learning through practical experience was expressed as a minor shortcoming.	Relevant training to build FPD capacity was considered favourably at all levels (S), despite the ecological monitoring shortcomings expressed by Park management
3. Monitoring programme for project area established	Comment
Further Comments: Training courses and models in ecological monitoring were developed following project plan. However, that is a model and methodology only, so the results are not sufficiently comprehensive to be used for robust decision making.	Some monitoring undertaken as part of the learning exercise and follow-on. Focus on methodologies and concepts – not on gathering data suitable for park management decision making (MS).
4. System of Community Forest Protection Units (CFPUs) in villages throughout the project area strengthened and developed	Comment
Further Comments: Protection Units were established and implemented.	Yes (S) – rated as satisfactory because they have been developed and strengthened - positive relationships in village meetings observed - staff known and interactions positive
5. Institutional mechanisms for improved coordination between government agencies responsible for forest protection strengthened	Comment
Further Comments: Through workshops, training courses and results of the project, the coordination between government agencies responsible for forest projection is strengthened	The relationships were positive and productive and all understood the project objectives. Formal and informal mechanisms are utilised. (S)

6. Communications system established among agencies responsible for forest protection throughout the project area	Comment
Further Comments: Yes, it has been implemented and a number of mechanisms in place and mobile phones used as the main rapid communication device. The distance between sites and technology available sometimes makes communication problematic.	Formal and informal mechanisms are utilised. (S)
7. Long-term funding mechanism for KKK NP and KCR NR developed	Comment
Further Comments: PMU has developed a proposal for funding of the implementation of the corridor. FPD can secure some annual budget for follow-on activities. Efforts are also being made to secure funding from domestic and international donors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PES and REDD are also important future considerations for the province to maintain and develop funding for forest protection and related activities. Some discussion on PES and REDD took place with key stakeholders who are aware of and interested in these mechanisms Because no follow-on funding has been secured at this stage this is rated as a significant risk to the follow-on activities leading to corridor establishment 	Because all the project stakeholders including the PPC are aligned and positive about the project and further funding, it is a positive context in which to secure funding. This is alongside the progress with Investment Plan to go to PPC for approval with the intention of securing budget. (MS)
IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 2:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness among local communities, key decision-makers, scientific community and donors to the unique conservation values of the project area, building long-term support for forest management and protection throughout the project area 	
1. Increased conservation awareness among local communities	Comment
Further Comments: Through workshops, training courses and results of the project, the coordination between government agencies responsible for forest projection is strengthened	Yes (S)
2. Increased dialogue and understanding between ethnic minorities and FPD	Comment
Further Comments: Through activities (BA Na language training, community awareness raising - knowledge improvement, and forest protection) FPD staff, PMU staff and protected areas staff have more opportunities to work with and build understanding with the ethnic minorities – Ba Na and Tay peoples.	Yes (S) The relationships were positive and the frequency of interaction between FPD and the local communities was commented on as a positive project activity, translating into better understanding about the purpose of forest protection and the reported reduction in illegal activities.
3. Support for conservation of project area among conservationists, media and key decision makers generated	Comment
Further Comments: The Ba Na language training for protected areas (PA) staff is valuable. The PA staff say it has deepened their understanding of the management needs of the protected areas, especially in relation to the needs of the local people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website developed and TV programme screened 	Yes through wider dissemination and media activities and website (S)

4. Knowledge and “lessons learned” shared with conservationists in the region	Comment
Further Comments: Informally and through professional networks and relationships developed through study tours.	Indirectly Some linkages to other projects in region – e.g. FLITCH (MS)
IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 3:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established conditions for sustainable forest management and forest management certification in Dak Roong and Tram Lap SFEs, leading to the continued integrity of a forest corridor between KKK NP and KCR NR 	
1. Assessments of Dak Roong and Tram Lap SFEs to achieve Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification conducted	Comment
Further Comments: Through workshops, training and provision of resources some training was provided. However without the necessary frameworks in place for implementation this could not be progressed. TFT also lacked funding to meet all their pledged activities	Not progressed because FSC for SFC natural forests is not possible, as there is a lack of a clear framework for the necessary management and implementation mechanisms for sustainable forest management necessary to meet the FSC criteria.
2. Strengthened capacity of SFEs staff in sustainable forest management	Comment
Further Comments: Equipment purchase and training of SFC staff in sustainable forest management has been undertaken. Computer software and training, management resources have been provided to help improve capacity.	Yes but limited by opportunities to apply learning to their operational activities. (MS)
3. Dak Roong and Tram Lap SFEs certified by FSC	Comment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dak Roong and Tram Lap SFEs certified by FSC 	No
4. Revised 3.4¹⁵ Corridor Action Plan	Comment
1. Purchase satellite images <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis and production of new land cover map clarifying bottleneck areas and areas requiring action to rehabilitate Further Comments: The activities have been implemented. Satellite images of the corridor were purchased and used in the development of the action plan.	Yes for the corridor (S)

¹⁵ Following the MTE objective 3.4 was adjusted and the evaluation team considered it more appropriate to rate the project based on this revision. Pers com: Sameer Karki 24/8/2010 – GEF agreed with this approach.

<p>2. Review available data for 5 villages within the Biodiversity Corridor Landscape 09-10 and their natural resource use trends, stakeholder analysis and natural resource use audit Further Comments: Completed</p>	<p>Yes, reported (S)</p>
<p>3. Meetings to achieve data for five villages to discuss options and achieve consensus on enclave boundary for each village</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land use plan and participatory and land management system developed for each enclave. Natural resource use agreements developed with SFCs for use of forest. 	<p>Reported through interviews with the villagers and SFCs, and reported in progress documents. (S).</p>
<p>4. Monitoring mechanism developed (key community members involved in crucial aspects at the individual village and enclave level). A set of ToRs will define process</p>	<p>Yes underway (S)</p>
<p>5. Development of Forest Protection Contracts 09-10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of Forest protection groups and work plans, inclusive of monitoring activities by the community. 	<p>Yes this has been developed and plans include a two step increase in payments to communities. Still a relatively modest sum VND200,000 p.a. KKK NP and KCR NR continue to contract local people to protect forests (S)</p>
<p>6. Proposal for raising funds from PES. A set of ToRs will define the need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultants from Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (FIPI) to develop the investment Plan for the Biodiversity Corridor. A set of ToRs will define the need. <p>Further Comments: PES is now being implemented as a trial only, so it is difficult to raise funds at this stage from PES. Other trials are underway in Gia Lai.</p>	<p>Yes, this has been prepared for the PPC to approve. However PES is not well developed (MS)</p>
<p>7. Conduct workshops to finalise monitoring methodologies, and supplementary training of staff to be involved in the various monitoring activities</p>	<p>Yes staff understand need although constrained by budget limitations (MS)</p>
<p>8. 09-10 Monitoring of key biodiversity Further comments: Birdlife International reports that monitoring of key biodiversity is undertaken. Interviews indicated this was the case – but limited usefulness for management decision making. There was an expressed need for more robust monitoring</p>	<p>Yes within the limits expressed (S)</p>
<p>9. Livelihoods assessment/alternative income generation studies. A set of ToRs will define the need. Further Comments: This was implemented as a part of the corridor project.</p>	<p>Yes, reported (S)</p>
<p>5. Permanent Conservation Areas (PCAs) within Dak Rong and Tram Lap SFEs to “link” KKK NP and KCR NR designated</p>	<p>Comment</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanent Conservation Areas (PCAs) within Dak Rong and Tram Lap SFEs to “link” KKK NP and KCR NR designated 	<p>These areas have been identified and defined. However are yet to be permanently designated. (S)</p>

4. EXECUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

4.1. Financial Planning

4.1.1. Context

The financial planning for the project has been a challenge as the project was originally designed and costed 6 years prior to implementation (2000 designed, 2004 approved and 2006 implementation underway) and during this time costs escalated through inflation. The activities for the allocated budget were adjusted in the inception phase and following the MTE.

4.1.2. Evaluation

As a result of the delays between design and approval and implementation some activities within the project were constrained e.g. reduction in the frequency of the education programme, only 1 guard station was built where 2 were planned initially, and with some adjustments being required from the outset or due to technology changes e.g. walkie talkies were proposed for use for forest protection support, however mobile phones proved to be more cost effective.

As part of the evaluation the team asked for information on actual expenditure on some specific items against overall budget.

The results of this are shown below:

Table 1: Expenses since 2006-2010

	Items	Planned	Actual expense	% of total planned expenses
1	Building Kon Chu Rang guard station	33000	18211	2.08
2	Building Kon Ka Kinh guard station		19759	2.26
3	Community conservation awareness programme	16000	15797	1.81
4	Community and students awareness programme	32000	25824	2.95
5	Ecological monitoring	26000	934	0.11
6	Purchase 3 vehicles	49000	48000	5.49
7	PMU management	283301	267325	30.55
8	Other expenses	435699	430548	49.21
	Total	875000	826398	94.45

The fixed costs of the staffing of the PMU and the expenses of the STA are a substantial cost in this project. The budget constraints have forced some efficiencies where the costs are not fixed. This has had an impact on programme effectiveness e.g. most staff who undertook capacity building training said they would have benefited from more time to practise and to have access to follow on or refresher training to embed their learning. There was no budget available for this. The STA was engaged on an hourly basis to ensure cost effectiveness. He was able to spend limited time in the field (only 2 visits to the KKK NP and KCR NR) as the project's remote location and the associated travel time would have created a significant drain on the budget.

The evaluation team also reviewed the annual audited accounts and were satisfied by the explanations to their questions. They noted that due to budget constraints the FY 2008 accounts were not audited. It was also noted that the FY09/2010 had a qualified opinion regarding a posting error of UNDP and GOV disbursements. This was explained satisfactorily. All recommendations made within the audits had been actioned by management and some details of the particular issues raised in the 2009 audit were explored to verify, for example high petty cash levels, and reasonable explanations for this were made.

It is forecast that the budget will be exhausted at the conclusion of the project.

	Activities		Actual	As per Pro Doc	Budget	
	Actual	GOV Planned			Actual Expenditures	% of Project Budget
UNDP Planned						
875,000	875,000	312,000	312,000	1,125,010	1,187,000*	100%

*Includes further funds of USD50,000 from UNDP TRAK made available in 2010 to provide additional funding to support the prior investment and applied to the preparation of the key planning documents including the Feasibility Study and Investment Plan

Overall the financial planning was impacted by the delays in the approval and, although there were alterations made to mitigate the delays and additional funds from UNDP, the project budget was constrained for some activities reducing impact.

Finding: Moderately likely risks affect this dimension (ML).



4.2. Sustainability

4.2.1. Financial resources

Context

At the conclusion of the project the GEF assistance ends. Without financial resources the foundation created by the project will be lost over time. As Gia Lai is a net deficit province the need to secure funding for follow-on project activities is a challenge. Possible funding sources could include a reallocation of provincial budget, budget from GOV following request from PPC and assistance from aid agencies.

Evaluation

The greatest financial risk to the sustainability of the project is failure to secure any funding for follow on project activities that build on the foundation of this project. For example the ecological monitoring training provided methodology and limited practical experience. The training was for learning purposes only rather than providing key information for management decision making. Stakeholders expressed the wish for this training to be applied to management – this would require funding for properly designed

monitoring programmes including analysis of data gathered and its application to management decision making. However it is also understood the monitoring sequence and results were used to help define key locations in the corridor.¹⁶

During the field meetings the evaluation team assessed that the PPC, through the DPC and Communes may support the livelihoods of local people through further technical assistance for improving agriculture and forestry extension programmes. This would reduce their dependence on the forest.

It is conceivable that financial resources for biodiversity conservation resources may be available from the PPC, GOV and also other aid agencies who have an interest in further development of this corridor or conservation connectivity. This corridor once established could potentially be a model of the connectivity conservation.

At the time of the evaluation mission a corridor feasibility study and investment plan were being prepared for presentation to the PPC for their approval. PPC have requested this plan.

The plan includes the intention for improved income generating activities for local people and increased benefit sharing from the forest protection activities. Further a land use plan for the 5 villages within the corridor is under development. This plan includes proposals for enclaves and associated natural resource and land management systems.

Amongst all the stakeholders interviewed there was consensus that the current direct benefits in the form of payment from the project to the villages for forest patrolling are insufficient. The feasibility study and investment plan include proposals to improve this situation and to continue with forest protection activities and community awareness raising.

DARD are understood to be willing to consider allocating monies for agriculture and silviculture extension. Such activities would be supportive of the project objectives.

In the medium term there is also interest from stakeholders in PES¹⁷ and REDD¹⁸ as potential financing mechanisms for this area. REDD+¹⁹ is

¹⁶ Pers com STA Fernando Potess

¹⁷ Payments for environmental services (PES) are a class of economic instruments designed to provide incentives to land users to continue supplying an environmental (ecological) service that is benefiting society more broadly. In some cases, payments may be made to land users to adopt landuse practices that will produce the required service from scratch (e.g. growing trees for carbon sequestration). http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/pes/_ref/about/index.htm

¹⁸ REDD is a mechanism to create an incentive for developing countries to protect, better manage and wisely use their forest resources, contributing to the global fight against climate change. REDD strategies aim to make forests more valuable standing than they would be cut down, by creating a financial value for the carbon stored in trees. Once this carbon is assessed and quantified, the final phase of REDD involves *developed* countries paying *developing* countries carbon offsets for their standing forests. REDD is a cutting-edge forestry initiative that aims to tip the economic balance in favour of sustainable management of forests so that their formidable economic, environmental and social goods and services benefit countries, communities, biodiversity and forest users while also contributing to important

perhaps worthy of consideration because of the clear biodiversity component. Some limited knowledge of these concepts was evident amongst some key stakeholders. These mechanisms are developing globally, understood by the evaluators to be in their infancy in Vietnam and the necessary capacity for developing and applying these mechanisms appears to require significant development.²⁰ Ecotourism was also suggested as a possible future activity. This was considered by the evaluation team to be unlikely to be achieved in the short to medium term as this area is remote, politically sensitive and not located within the current tourism flows of Vietnam.

Although implementation funding is yet to be secured it is considered hopeful as PPC have requested the action plan to enable them to make a decision to implement the Green Corridor. If they are not able to, they will have the necessary prerequisite plans to seek and hopefully secure funding from GOV.

Because of the uncertainties over funding it is considered that there are some significant risks to the financial sustainability of the project's outcomes.

Finding: Moderately likely risks that affect this dimension (MU).

4.2.2. Socio-political

Context

The human population of the project area consists of indigenous ethnic groups (principally Ba Na) organised in village communities. These communities are among the poorest of the rural poor in Viet Nam, with some of the communes in the project area officially classified as poor or hungry. Most of these households depend on forest products to supplement their diets, particularly during periods of food shortage, lasting about three-to-four months per year.

It is good practise for local communities to obtain economic benefits from connectivity conservation management.

reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

http://www.unredd.org/NewsCentre/87_million_approved_for_Global_Activities/tabid/1413/language/en-US/Default.aspx

¹⁹ "REDD+" goes beyond deforestation and forest degradation, and includes the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. <http://www.un-redd.org/AboutREDD/tabid/582/Default.aspx>

²⁰ See <http://www.naturalcapitalproject.org/about.html> and screening criteria is included in Appendix 9.4 and

<http://www.katoombagroup.org/documents/publications/ConservationEconomyBackgrounder.pdf> for a Conservation Economy Backgrounder 2007

<http://www.katoombagroup.org/documents/publications/GettingStarted.pdf> Payment for Ecosystem Services, Getting Started: A Primer 2008

The main threats to the biological integrity and connectivity of KKK and KCR are human activity and its control. These human threats include timber extraction - legal and illegal, hunting, and conversion of forests. According to local authorities, the issues of illegal logging and hunting no longer pose threats. However, ensuring local people's living standards, strengthening and improving the relations between protection agencies and ethnic communities, and encouraging community participation in forest protection and conservation- particularly through collaborative management modalities, are key factors to ensure the ecological integrity and sustainability of the ecosystem, and in fact to support the socioeconomic development of the local communities.²¹ The threats from human activity are mitigated by biodiversity protection enforcement, community awareness raising and education.

Evaluation

The team considered the socio-political risks that will jeopardise the sustainability of the project outcomes. These include the dependence that the local people have on the forest for food, shelter and income.

Within the green corridor there are only 5 villages and yet in the immediate buffer there are many villages (over 30) of both Ba Na, and some Kinh people. There is potential for conflict over natural resources in the future for communities within and outside of the corridor. For example, if some benefits do not also flow to the communities that adjoin the Green Corridor these people may become frustrated if they continue to receive no direct benefits and are excluded from exploiting the forests in any way. e.g. those outside of the corridor are not able to enter the forest, derive no income from it and yet are required to protect it. Those within the corridor receive VD100,000/ha per year for forest protection with a possible increase to VD200,000/ha per year. The living situation for many of these people is difficult - the forest protection income is not considered by stakeholders to be sufficient benefit either.

As all the local people have limited knowledge of forest protection and have traditionally depended on the forest for their food the benefits of the awareness raising may be lost if it is discontinued. This is exacerbated by the lack of benefit sharing from the forest protection.

"When local people have enough food, they will not destroy forests. But, if they are hungry they will damage forests - harvesting timber, NTFPs, and doing slash and burn cultivation..."²²

The stakeholder ownership of the project is positive, however over time this may alter if there is no continued investment in key activities. If there is further investment in the activities of the project then the outcomes/benefits are likely to be sustained.

There is some risk that the SFC stakeholder ownership may be insufficient for the project benefits to be sustained. The SFCs are likely to have lower

²¹ Inception report, page 4.

²² Quote from Ha Lam village, and also see Appendix 9.5 for all village meeting notes.

ownership (“sub agency”) over time, as FSC is not possible to implement at this time. This was intended as a key SFC benefit from the project. The feasibility and investment plans for approval by PPC are supportive of biodiversity and the villages. However there is a key interplay between the 5 villages and the 2 SFCs that is critical for success of the Green Corridor. The risk is to the SFC/village relationships. Currently the SFC are not able to make their own management decisions in relation to the project outcomes – working according to PPC plans and monitored by FPD. Both SFCs explained to the evaluation team that they have mutually beneficial relationships with the villages. One company has a practise of always employing the poorest villagers when they require seasonal labour and the other spoke of giving rice in 2008 when it was a bad year for crops. The connection between the SFCs and with the villages is strong and direct.

Because of the Forest Conventions (agreements between the village and the project to protect the forest) village activities are increasingly focussed on agriculture, especially wet rice, as use of forest resources is not allowed. However there is some informal and sustainable use of the forest for gathering non-timber forest products and this is allowed by management discretion in both SFCs and the PAs.

Key stakeholders among the protected area managers, SFC managers, the key government agencies of DOF, FPD, and DARD are fully supportive of the project objectives in the long term as they align directly with their responsibilities. However without any further investment that builds on the foundation of the project the support over time is likely to decrease for those without a primary biodiversity conservation purpose e.g. SFC and villages. Support for the long-term objectives of the project is compromised if there is no direct benefit.

All noted in the interviews that without continued investment in continuity activities there is a real risk that the benefits will be lost over time. The various stakeholders do have a good understanding of the objectives however without financial resources there is a risk that project benefits will be lost. The project benefits are not yet built into institutional frameworks. The villages understand why they are being asked to protect the forest, however they have depended on the forest for food and shelter to survive and without alternative livelihoods they have short-term survival needs. These may need to be met from the forest.

The villages and communes are supportive of the long-term project objectives in theory. In practise for this support to continue in the long term the villages will need sustainable alternative income generating activities to enable direct benefits to flow that replace their dependence on the forest. The evaluation team noted the inclusion of livelihoods for socio economic improvement included in the follow-on activities recommended in the Feasibility Study.

The international NGOs, TFT, Birdlife and WWF and national NGO ENV expressed their long-term support for the project objectives as they align with their strategies. They all noted without continued investment in key activities the benefits of the investment to date will fade away.

The overall sustainability of the project is reduced because of uncertainty over future funding and the lack of direct benefit sharing with the local people. The incomplete legal framework impacts on sustainability. However this is potentially offset through the efforts being made in the feasibility and investment planning process to better meet these needs. At the time of writing the plans were in final preparation for presentation to the PPC for approval.

Finding: There are significant risks that affect this dimension of sustainability (MU).

4.2.3. Institutional framework and governance

Context

Good governance practice is essential for effective connectivity conservation. Institutions and decision makers should have legitimacy, be accountable and transparent. All stakeholders should have an opportunity to be heard and represented in decisions. Special efforts should be made to engage marginalised people. Typically connectivity initiatives will include many networked institutions at all levels (international, national, regional and local) and constructive linking connections between these levels typically through coordinating bodies, or positions and will often include significant devolution to the local level. The ability to adapt to changing political, social, economic and environmental circumstances is vital.²³

Governance addresses who in an organisation makes the decisions and how. It is about power, relationships, responsibility and accountability within and between organisations. It is about who has influence, and who makes the decisions.

Institutional frameworks are the formal systems of policies, regulations, and procedures, and informal conventions, and culture that restrain behaviour and support governance coherence and functionality. Both are important requirements for good management.

This Project is a partnership project between UNDP/GEF and the GOV and is executed in the NEX modality²⁴. TFT provide parallel funding.

Evaluation

The institutional framework for this project has several components as it is a partnership project between UNDP/GEF and the GOV. The central consideration of the NEX modality is the importance of country ownership and sustainability. Capacity building is the key underpinning of this approach.

²³ For further discussion on this topic see CONNECTIVITY CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT A GLOBAL GUIDE Part 3, WCPA, 2010.

²⁴ www.bi.undp.org/documents/NEX%20Procedures%20Manual.pdf.

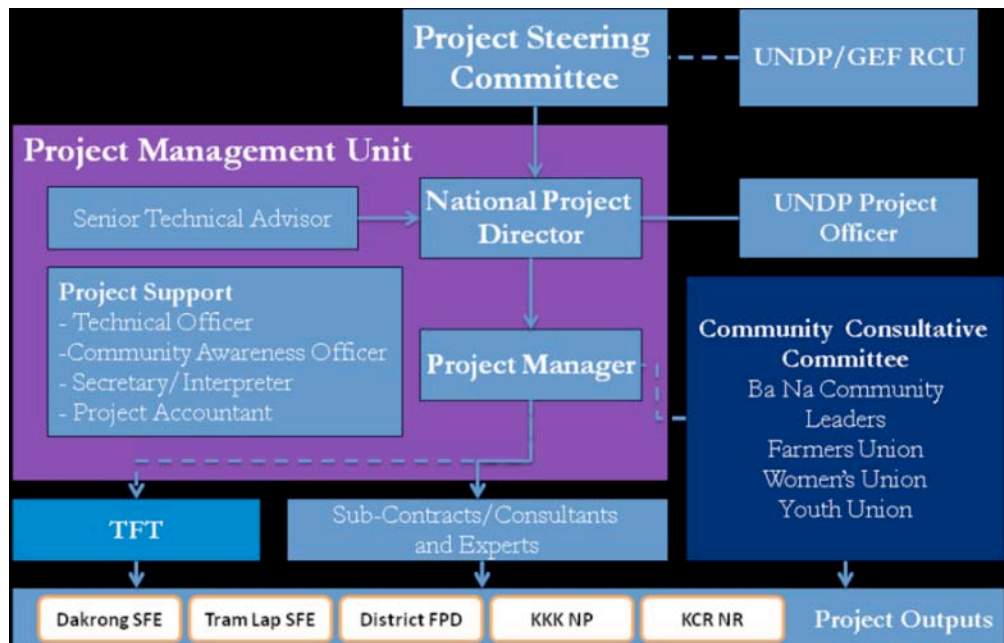
Usual frameworks and governance are in place for the project. The current project governance and structure is outlined in the diagram below and has a number of components including:

- PMU at the heart of the project
- Steering committee: membership includes key stakeholders
- UNDP linkage to the project is through STA and directly to PMU
- PMU staff links with FPD
- PMU links with FPD operations: KKK NP and KCR NR and SFCs
- PMU links with DOF and other relevant agencies e.g. DARD
- PMU links with the local community through the Community Consultation Groups through the community awareness officer
- PMU manages contracts and consultants, generally in conjunction with the STA.

Other related institutional and governance frameworks include:

- Frameworks for protected area management
- Frameworks and regulations for management of SFC
- GOV authorities: provincial, district and commune.

Governance Diagram



The GOV legal framework does currently pose a risk to the sustainability of the project. The GOV Biodiversity Law was approved in July 2009, while the decree to implement it including the green corridors is yet to be approved. This is in draft awaiting approval.

The direct relationships within the project are generally strong and there is good cross-linking between the mosaic of management agencies and their local government contexts. During the evaluation it was evident that the staff of all the key agencies communicate regularly both formally and informally e.g. the PA staff and the adjoining SFC staff communicate and they all co-operate on enforcement.

There are some challenges in operationalising the Green Corridor as the necessary legal frameworks and regulations are not in place. These include conservation legislative frameworks being under development, SFCs managing natural forests, lack of a clear framework for the necessary management and implementation mechanisms for sustainable forest management.

The wider legal context for biodiversity conservation in Vietnam is under development.²⁵ With regard to forests in Gia Lai as stated earlier Decree 53 QD UBND 4/2/2008 of Gia Lai PPC reclassified the Gia Lai forest into 3 categories: special use, production and protection forest. This moves more natural forest into production forest. However all forest types sit under the umbrella of the biodiversity law and its principles will have to be applied to the management of the forest. This situation lacks clarity and makes the establishment mechanism for implementing the Green Corridor difficult as there are currently no policies and principles for implementation.

This is further complicated by the PPC and MARD not having any national regulations for the state forestry companies with responsibility for natural forests, and so they lack a framework for SFC management and implementation mechanisms. This is a risk. If such a framework was in place this would enable companies such as Tram Lap and Dakrong to more clearly understand their roles and responsibilities for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development and in particular to become FSC certified. There are no regulations and management mechanisms for SFCs to accommodate the FSC standards, including the principles and criteria for independent decision making, marketing and planning, tenure use rights and compliance with law. This makes FSC impossible to achieve currently although the companies can see the potential benefits particularly in the marketing of their timber and ongoing improvement to forest management that would flow from certification.

TFT are supportive of the objectives. However they cannot achieve the FSC objectives because of the lack of the necessary framework for FSC to be implemented with the SFCs with natural forest in Vietnam. During the evaluation it was learned that certifications are proceeding for Vietnam plantation forests as they can meet the FSC requirements because the necessary frameworks are in place. WWF and TFT both see a difficulty with the incomplete legal framework for Green Corridors and FSC implementation for natural forests controlled by SFCs.

²⁵ On biodiversity conservation see the current situation in Section 2 Legal context.

Ideally TFT should continue to support the SFC in certification processes when the project is concluded. It is envisaged that the necessary regulations and management mechanisms will be put in place for the SFCs. In the event that this continues to be delayed TFT should be encouraged to continue their support for sustainable management of the forests through the SFCs and encourage GOV to put in place the regulations and mechanisms to facilitate FSC in natural forests. This would help redress the current situation of Vietnam being a net importer of certified timber.

TFT's involvement as a partner in the project was not fully developed by the PMU and TFT. At the outset of the project these challenges were identified in the inception report.²⁶ The MTE identified a lack of clarity in the relationship.

The MTE noted,

“The contribution by TFT of US\$375,000 in cash is parallel funding and focused on the sustainable forest management activities for Dak Rong and Tram Lap SFEs. TFT directly manages this money, and the associated activities. Consequently the PMU in 2008 was beginning to more fully recognise their responsibility for this component of the project and to build a more robust relationship with TFT. In the project governance diagram TFT is shown as being a member of the Steering Committee and should have also been shown as having a similar relationship to the PMU for project activities as BirdLife does.

Initially Component Three was regarded by the PMU as an indirect responsibility. This has improved during 2008 with TFT and the PMU meeting to discuss work progress, difficulties and TFT supplying quarterly and annual plans. There is potential for the PMU to build its capacity in sustainable forest management, through increased integration of Component Three into project management, despite the challenges of forest certification.”²⁷

This weakness identified in the MTE remains and during this evaluation the relationships appeared to have deteriorated with misunderstandings about progress reporting. TFT changed activities because of the difficulty of progressing with FSC (criteria 3 and 4 – financial control and land tenure), and their own funding constraints. They have supported the companies with training courses in GPS, for forest management, development of databases of resources, harvesting and planting maps, low impact harvesting training, forest inventory, and chain of custody as well as building the technical staff understanding of FSC including the provision of resource material. However, communication between TFT and the PMU was problematic at the time of the evaluation visit.

The project has practised adaptive management and this is evident at several times during the project. Examples are:

²⁶ Inception report P45 Risk No 16.

²⁷ MTE Page 11.

- Inception report – adjusted the activities to fit with changes over time e.g. technological changes and inflationary pressure on the budgets
- MTE – recommendations to prepare a feasibility study and investment plan for the Green Corridor have been undertaken with the changes made to 3.4.
- Contracting of the STA on an hourly rate to tightly manage this element of the budget.

The CCG mechanism has been useful for building the community relationships and played a role in supporting the awareness raising. However these groups will fall away without any follow on funding. The relationship between the coordinators and the PMU staff were strong and constructive. The CCGs will not continue after the project.

The STA provides technical guidance and is the conduit between the project (through the Project Manager) and UNDP CO as executing agent. This relationship is important strategically for the project implementation. Despite the challenges of language (7 interpreters during the project) and the PMU being located in Gia Lai, with the STA based in Bangkok (although much of his working time is spent in other parts of Vietnam) the project and the STA have developed strong and productive working relationships. The STA produces the terms of reference for all consultant missions.

The relationship between the project and UNDP is strong although there have been 4 UNDP staff responsible during the four year project. The site visits by 2 UNDP Programme Officers to gain an on ground appreciation and insight into the project have been positive from the PMU and the UNDP perspective.

In conclusion the project does have the required systems for accountability and transparency in place. The technical know-how and capacity has improved because of the project. There remains room for further development building from the learning activities of the project. The project may also help activate the development of the legal framework for the implementation of the biodiversity decree and the implementation of the biodiversity corridor. This will be clearer once the outcome of the PPC's consideration is known.

Further because the project has undertaken adaptive management and reoriented activities under Objective 3.4 towards the feasibility study and investment plan for the establishment of the Green Corridor, the evaluation team concluded that on balance the risks were significant but not severe. Should PPC approve the establishment of the Green Corridor then the risk reduces dramatically.

Finding: There are significant risks that affect this dimension of sustainability (MU).

4.2.4. Environmental

Context

Environmental risks to the sustainability of these forests include biodiversity loss caused by deforestation through slash and burn agriculture and industrial agriculture e.g. rubber, pepper, coffee etc; legal and illegal logging and harvesting of timber and non timber forest products; fires; fragmentation; infrastructure developments e.g. roads, hydro dams; and extractive industries e.g. mining.

Infrastructure development is recognised internationally as a significant threat to effective protected areas, for example at the 2008 IUCN World Congress on Protected Areas infrastructure development was singled out as a significant threat to protected areas' effectiveness.²⁸

Evaluation

There are both internal and external environmental risks to the project.

A key environmental risk is linked directly to the lack of direct benefits to the local communities from forest protection – resulting in a likely return to the use of the forest for timber, non-timber forest products and slash and burn agriculture, to provide food and shelter and generate income for the Ba Na people.

The new road - East Truong Son Road - creates a risk to the project as it bisects the corridor. The impact is evident during the current construction phase with large cuts in hillsides, much spoil pushed over banks and forest removal. The impact on biodiversity has not been measured but clearly there is impact both in the construction phase and over time.

The main negative impact of the road is the interruption of the free movement of mammals through the corridor – seed dispersal and bird movements are likely to be much less affected. A further impact may be the siltation of waterways from uncontrolled runoff from the road cuts. The road building activities may place the biodiversity under further pressure from the construction workers illegally logging, harvesting NTFPs, and illegally hunting. The creation of this transportation route may encourage illegal logging, illegal harvesting of NTFPs, and illegal hunting, as well as encourage agricultural and industrial rubber, coffee etc encroachments and associated settlement. These are all threats to biodiversity.

²⁸ CGR4.MOT111 Rev.1 Impacts of infrastructure and extractive industries on protected areas http://intranet.iucn.org/webfiles/doc/IUCNPolicy/Resolutions/2008_WCC_4/DRAFT_UNEDITE D/111_rev1_impacts_of_infrastructure_and_extractive_industries_on_protected_areas.pdf.



The East Truong Son Road under construction in the Green Corridor

During the evaluation a number of stakeholders commented that as it was a Level Three road there was no impact on the corridor. The villagers commented that there were benefits – easier transportation of goods to market – and negative impacts – potential for outsiders to come more easily and illegally harvest timber and non-timber forest products. Some stakeholders suggested biodiversity migration bridges could be considered – there is evidence of these being beneficial in some protected areas in North America.



A Trans-Canada Highway 'wildlife crossing', one of many structures which successfully provide Yellowstone to Yukon connectivity conservation across an otherwise dangerous barrier for wildlife.

Source: Graeme L. Worboys²⁹

However such interventions are best based on a thorough understanding of the range and movements of the impacted mammals. The evaluators did not ascertain whether the biodiversity data was sufficient for recommending action on this. However another equally valid approach would be to talk with scientific experts and gauge their opinion to inform management decisions on whether some bridging of the road would be useful.³⁰

Enforcement of forest protection is the responsibility of FPD. FPD have planned to put in place new guard stations and associated staff increases at the entry and exit of the road through the corridor. With an increase in enforcement personnel it is assumed the monitoring and analysis of protection enforcement will be undertaken and this information should aid management decision making on enforcement strategies.

²⁹ CONNECTIVITY CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT A GLOBAL GUIDE Draft - To be published by Earthscan in the UK and USA in 2010 Part 1 Page 5.

³⁰ CBD technical Series No 44 Making Protected Areas relevant – Wider Landscape Approaches: A guide to integrating protected areas into wider landscapes, seascapes and sectoral plans and strategies, page 25 for discussion on use of expert knowledge in the absence of robust data.

The environmental sustainability of the project has some moderate risks: use of the forest to provide food and, shelter and generate income and the environmental impacts of the East Truong Son Road.

Findings: Moderately likely risks affect this dimension (ML).

4.2.5. Catalytic Role

Context

KKK and KCR and the connecting Green Corridor offer an innovative model of protected area connectivity to contribute to Vietnam's biodiversity conservation initiatives.

Evaluation

This approach to protected area connectivity in priority landscapes and engagement of a range of stakeholders through capacity building and institutional strengthening could be replicated and learned from. Although a learning approach is central to the project the lesson sharing from the project has not been a focus at this stage. The MTE suggested that lesson sharing should be included as a specific activity of the project. However this has not been developed at the project level.

This project does not have a specific intention of being a catalytic project. From interviews with the staff of KKK NP and KCR NR there was discussion about the linkages established through study tours to Cat Tien and to other national parks for informal information sharing and networking. Perhaps this will prove to be catalytic for either party. The environmental education training provided by ENV introduced the opportunity for staff to become part of the environmental education network of Vietnam. Relevant staff are now part of this network and use it for information sharing and problem solving.

If the PPC of Gia Lai approves the Feasibility Study and Investment Plan then the following innovations could be considered catalytic if communicated to relevant agencies and lessons shared.

Suggested communication topics focussed on lesson sharing are:

- Protected area management and connectivity in Vietnam
 - Provides a model for the creation of a Green Corridor: identification, assessment, development and implementation including community (CCG) and stakeholder engagement
- Provincial authorities
 - Green Corridor concept adopted

- Building awareness and capacity
- Forestry companies
 - Biodiversity Conservation
 - Watershed management
 - Sustainable forestry practises
- Nature conservation in Gia Lai
 - Biodiversity Conservation
 - Sustainable forestry practises
 - Highly likely the creation of a larger protected area (within top 5 of Vietnam) and possibly subsequently a Man and Biosphere Reserve
 - Potential to create a cross provincial management linkage to An Toan Nature Reserve and into Kon Tum (unallocated land that adjoins the corridor and is in natural forest).

Although there is a GTZ Green Corridor project in planning for Central Vietnam, this project is not connected for learning purposes to this UNDP/GEF project. The GTZ project seeks to decrease deforestation and forest degradation in the border area of Central Vietnam and Southern Laos by avoiding leakages to maintain forest carbon pools and biological diversity. The project area includes 4 different protected areas in Vietnam and Laos: Vietnam: Bach Ma National Park, Saola Nature Reserve Hue, Saola Nature Reserve Quang Nam; Laos: Xesap National Park, (Xepian National Park). One of the objectives is for a species rich, transborder forest complex of four Protected Areas (in total 220,000 hectares) and two connected corridors (together, in total 100,000 hectares), enabling the development of sustainable management.³¹

Consequently the evaluation found there was no direct catalytic function of the project, although it would be readily possible if the provincial authorities approve the Green Corridor and other green corridor projects or biodiversity connectivity projects within Vietnam are connected for learning purposes.

³¹ During the evaluation contact was made with the GTZ lead on this project. It is possible that other conservation connectivity projects are underway in Vietnam that are unknown to the evaluation team.

5. ASSESSMENT OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM

5.1. M & E Design and Implementation

Context

Project monitoring and evaluation design includes institutional mechanisms for coordination e.g. MOUs, meeting and planning cycles. The following are the main mechanisms used by the project to monitor results and track progress towards achieving the objectives.

Mechanisms include	Prepared by	For
Weekly work plans	PMU staff	PMU Project Manager
Monthly reporting	PMU staff TFT KKK NP and KCR NR	Internal PMU
Quarterly reporting	PMU staff	UNDP and PPC
Mid year reporting	PMU staff	UNDP and PPC
Annual reporting	PMU staff	UNDP and PPC
PIR	PMU and UNDP	GEF
Project activities reporting	Implementer e.g. BirdLife, ENV, FRR	PMU, STA and UNDP
Planning retreat and specific project workshops	UNDP, STA and PMU staff	UNDP and PMU and selected stakeholders
Midterm evaluation	Independent international consultant and National consultant	GEF/UNDP and PMU
Terminal evaluation	Independent international consultant and National consultant	GEF/UNDP and PMU

There are also other ongoing project management mechanisms e.g. meetings schedule, one-on-one meetings and staff meetings as required, and project communications between stakeholders.

Evaluation

The design of the project monitoring and evaluation system is well thought out and has been applied systematically throughout the project. However SMART indicators for awareness raising and capacity building are challenging to design and this is the case for this project. There is a

tendency to use quantitative measures giving a picture of numbers participating and frequency. The success of awareness raising and capacity building is perhaps better explored through qualitative measures and being able to assess behaviour change. This is where good practice is evolving to although there is little consensus on the most effective measures. Factors such as multiple influences, indirect impacts, evidence and timescales make these measures very challenging. Management experience and insight alongside effective measures is also important.

Some other measures that could be considered for this project are the systematic recording and analysis over time of anecdotes that reflect behaviour and knowledge change e.g. voluntary staff participation in learning networks, staff behaviours when interacting with the Ba Na people (e.g. use of language, and customs, and recording the Ba Na people's attitudes to forest protection and their livelihoods) and the recording of relevant policy breaches (number of illegal activities reported by villages and the type of enforcement incidents reported by SFC and PA managers) – objectively audited to verify. During the evaluation these were explored and the results obtained indicated success, e.g. PA environmental education staff are now members of the ENV network, Ba Na language is commonly used by staff when greeting and during key points in community meetings, PA and SFC managers are reporting fewer enforcement incidents and discussing their insights into the reasons for these changes.

The implementation of the project monitoring and evaluation system has generally been systematic and the analysis of the results has been incorporated into management actions, e.g. the subsequent changes to activities (3.4) in Objective 3 as a result of the MTE in 2008. During the terminal evaluation some stakeholders commented on the benefit of the evaluation questions, helping them to think strategically about the future beyond the current project.

The biodiversity monitoring activities within the project are designed to build capacity (adjusted due to budget constraints) and relatively limited in coverage and as such the data gathered was not robust enough to be used for biodiversity decision making purposes according to the protected area managers. For example within the KKK NP the survey lines were 2km and within the KCR NR 1.5km. The topography and size of the protected areas and the location of the survey lines was considered by the PA managers as limited in usefulness. They advised that the data gathered could not confidently be applied to a larger scale and accordingly had reduced usefulness. This is noted in the Birdlife review of the ecological monitoring.³² However the value of this monitoring capacity building was evident in the interviews with both PA managers stating they wanted to continue monitoring and expand it so they could apply the findings to management. The PMU commented that ideally a baseline independent (evaluation) visit at the outset of the project would have been useful to help develop their thinking about the project implementation, its M & E and provide a PMU baseline. These reflections indicate an understanding and recognition of the

³² The final report for the project component entitled: Forest Analysis, Development of an Ecological Monitoring Framework, and Hands-on Training of Protected Area staff for Ecological Monitoring at the Kon Ka Kinh– Kon Chu Rang Landscape, Birdlife International, 2008, page ix.

value of monitoring and evaluation for both biodiversity and management purposes.

In summary the M & E design and implementation had minor shortcomings:

- No use of qualitative measures
- Biodiversity monitoring limitations
- Funding constraints impacted on the biodiversity monitoring value for decision making.

Finding: There were minor shortcomings with the M&E system (S).

5.2. Monitoring of Long Term Changes

The project may contribute to the establishment of a long term monitoring system through the capacity building of key staff. However without the resources to build from the foundations the long-term impact is unclear. This would be better assessed in the future - suggest in 2012. The project intends long term monitoring to happen as it has a capacity building focus, however the sustainability at the time of the terminal evaluation is unclear. Key staff will carry their knowledge beyond the project. It is difficult to determine whether this will be institutionalised and funded as decisions are yet to be made on the creation of the corridor.

The main accomplishments of the system were:

- Consistent and timely application of the project monitoring and evaluation system
- Significant adjustments were implemented following the mid term evaluation that should enhance the sustainability of the project impact.

The main weakness of the system was that:

- Within the project implementation phase, due to budget constraints, the biodiversity monitoring approach was altered to lay a capacity building foundation only. Consequently the direct application of monitoring data to management decisions was limited.

The project has strengthened institutional capacity and increased awareness of M & E of key stakeholders e.g. by the staff of the SFC being involved in the BirdLife International Green Corridor biodiversity assessments within the SFC boundaries; community consultation groups strengthening relationships between the Ba Na communities and KKK and KCR staff; environmental education programmes of ENV; staff training and capacity building for the PMU, KKK and KCR and the FPD.

Stakeholder participation is central to this project. Accordingly during the evaluation 20 organisations and approximately 40 stakeholders were interviewed, as well as 4 village groups of over 60 individuals. The application of the mechanisms of the M & E system was inquired into. As there are a large number of stakeholders their systematic engagement in M & E is appropriately varied and diverse.

6. ASSESSMENT OF PROCESSES THAT AFFECTED ATTAINMENT OF PROJECT RESULTS

This section summarises relevant factors that affected attainment of results.

Issue affecting project implementation and results	Key points
Preparation and readiness:	The objectives 1 and 2 were clear, practicable and feasible within the timeframe. However objective 3, the FSC component, was not. Adjustments made to 3.4 activities following the MTE were feasible and achieved within the project timeframe. The partnership arrangement with TFT lacked clarity at the outset and created challenges for the duration of the project.
Country ownership/drivenness:	The project concept is in line with GOV social forestry policy, however the implementation of the Green Corridor depends on the necessary decrees being passed by GOV, or the PPC approval of its establishment and the necessary budget being secured. The relevant agencies are involved. At the time of the evaluation ongoing financial commitment was unclear – although plans had been formulated to facilitate approval
Stakeholder involvement:	This is a strength of this project with many and diverse stakeholders linked into the project in appropriate ways. The weakness of the project in this regard was the lack of provision of alternative livelihoods for the vulnerable Ba Na people, who depend on the forest for food, shelter and income.
Financial planning:	See section 4.1 and 4.2.1
Implementing/Executing Agency's supervision and backstopping:	Although continuity of staffing at all levels was a challenge this did not adversely affect the project outcomes. It did create pressures on the PMU during the early mid phase of the project. Back stopping from UNDP occurred when necessary including the provision of additional funding to support 3.4 activities - Investment Plan etc
Project Outcomes and Sustainability:	See Section 3.2

7. LESSONS LEARNED

This section identifies key lessons learned from this project for consideration by the GEF and UNDP for learning purposes.

The lessons are in two parts: project specific and in the general context of connectivity conservation with examples used from the project.

7.1. Project lessons

Project design

- To ensure the best chance of success for a project, if there are delays between project design, approval and implementation, at the inception of the project a thorough review and update of all project elements including: analysis of enabling frameworks, budget, fixed costs and activities is required
- Project design and its preplanning should include a careful consideration and analysis of all the factors that are likely to impact on the achievements of the project. In the case of this project, achievement of the objectives was constrained by:
 - Project location logistics
 - The lack of the necessary policy frameworks and institutional capacity for FSC implementation making this element overly ambitious
 - The lack of direct benefit sharing with the local Ba Na people. Ba Na people depend on the forest resources for food, shelter and income. Their current need for natural resource exploitation is not accommodated adequately in the project design
- The project design should positively address the provision of direct benefits (livelihoods, needs for shelter and food) to local communities when these are altered or removed by the project.

Capacity building

- Capacity building programmes have an increased impact when undertaken over time and include experiential learning as a component of the programme
- The use of the local language can quickly enhance relationships and understanding between the communities and those responsible for the protected areas

- Connectivity conservation areas are not possible without building the capacity of connectivity conservation staff and local communities.

Community Awareness

- Community awareness programmes for biodiversity conservation require a long-term investment, review and adaption over time. They require an ongoing commitment to review content and delivery, with both aspects being regularly adjusted to suit the conservation and community needs at that particular time
- Qualitative measures should be developed to ascertain the effectiveness and impact of capacity building, awareness raising and environmental education
- For community awareness raising programmes to have a sustainable impact they must be supported by direct benefits for the local community.

Sustainable forestry

- For successful project outcomes applying new concepts in conservation and sustainable development (connectivity conservation) enabling legislation and frameworks are required alongside capacity building, community awareness raising and operational implementation
 - Project timeframe is too short for FSC to be established
 - No enabling framework for SFC to meet FSC requirements
 - Co-management is a new concept.

7.2. Context of Connectivity Conservation

Enabling of Biodiversity Corridor Implementation

- Conservation efforts must go hand in hand with economic opportunities and avoid adding to fragmentation of key biodiversity areas. The economic benefits of connectivity conservation to local communities and other key stakeholders should be recognised
 - The Ba Na people living in and adjoining this proposed corridor are some of poorest of the poor in Vietnam struggling with agricultural and resource exploitation activities. If such communities can see protection and

recognition of the corridor providing more sustainable economic activities they will support it.

Protected areas provide the anchors of connectivity conservation

- Protected areas are a prerequisite and the anchors for connectivity conservation
 - The two protected areas provide the anchors for this biodiversity corridor, and potentially for the creation of a mosaic of biodiversity protection that could include a transboundary collaboration involving the adjoining province protected area, unallocated forest, the two protected areas and the SFC's land for inclusion in the corridor.

Economic incentives are important and need development

- Economic rewards for retaining naturalness such as financial returns and yields for sustainable forest management, for retaining stored carbon, ensuring water quality and supply, other environmental services and in some cases for providing ecotourism destinations to natural and cultural sites is becoming increasingly important and an aspect of protected area management and funding that requires practical development
 - Within the project there was uneven understanding of these concepts and limited knowledge of their application as a part of process to achieve sustainable financing.

Long term commitment and political will are essential

- Long-term commitment and political will are essential for success for large scale connectivity conservation
 - Long-term commitment and leadership from proactive individuals and institutions and government are a requirement for success. Connectivity conservation and its implementation is best understood as a process, where local communities and key stakeholders and governments are vital actors. A major obstacle may come from weak governmental institutions and policies. Strengthening such organisations and individuals working within them is essential. In this case the foundation for the corridor is in place. However the GOV and PPC have yet to make the decisions required to enable implementation. If there is a reluctance to do so because of some data uncertainty then the precautionary principle should be applied.

Legislation and international agreements

- Legislation that supports the conservation and protection of biodiversity on all land tenures is critical for enabling connectivity conservation. Legislation specifically for this purpose is in its infancy. Sometimes other protection legislation has provided sufficient scope for biodiversity protection on all land tenures. International tools like UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere reserves can provide important 'hooks' for engaging governments and funding agencies in connectivity conservation
 - Currently the enabling legislation in draft includes specifics on connectivity with a chapter on Green Corridors. The GOV should be encouraged to pass this draft Decree and their leadership in doing so should be recognised internationally
 - There has been some discussion on the possibility of this larger area being considered for a Man and the Biosphere reserve – a feasibility study should be undertaken to determine whether it meets requirements.

Governance

- Governance of connectivity corridors will typically be multi-level and multi-actor usually requiring strong relationships and good communication between the site, local, district, province and national levels and in some cases internationally. A range of models exist. The one chosen needs to be financially sustainable and have the support of corridor champions within the key stakeholder groups
 - Within the project there is a view that PMU or the PMC should take on this function through the mechanism suggested in the draft decree as it brings the appropriate parties together. There is no clarity over who should take the lead at this time. Ideally this should be a champion for the corridor.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of recommendations are summarised for GEF/UNDP, GOV and the PPC below:

8.1. Project design and budget

1. **GEF/UNDP:** As the project design (2000) was outdated at the time the project budget was approved (2004 and implemented in 2006) there were impacts on the project achievements, as the costs had escalated, and threats and attitudes had changed. Although the inception report made some changes a full review of the project design should have been undertaken at this time and budget adjusted accordingly, including the provision of sufficient budget for relevant agencies to implement their activities – transportation, travel costs for workshops, living costs - to ensure the success of the project.
2. **GEF/UNDP** FSC component was overly ambitious as the wider policy frameworks and institutional capacity for implementation are not in place – currently in Vietnam for a SFC with natural forest the FSC criteria cannot be met. The appropriate policy frameworks for SFC ensuring the FSC principles and criteria can be applied are essential preconditions for effective implementation of FSC. This has contributed to the weak relationship with TFT, as well as the lack of clarity in the relationship between the PMU and TFT in the project documentation. Accordingly the project design should have clarified the relationships, been more strongly based on the existing policies and the realistic likelihood of any new policies that could be implemented during the life of the project.
3. **GEF/UNDP** Benefit sharing with the local people compared to other elements of the project is considered out of balance – a disproportionate amount of spending on fixed costs compared to the expenditure of the project on activities with local people and them sharing in direct benefits. Direct benefits to the local people impacted by the project should be specifically addressed in the design phase. Identification of this as a challenge is insufficient.
4. **GEF/UNDP** The project logistics should be considered carefully in project design – e.g. the remoteness for project activities and the challenges created in staffing, transportation and fieldwork.

8.2. Project objectives and activities

8.2.1. Objective 1: Capacity Building

1. Training courses

GOV and Gia Lai PPC Ba Na language training (course 3 month full time) should be longer and focussed on the staff who work locally with the Ba Na people. All key individuals involved in the management of the Green Corridor should have some knowledge of Ba Na language, as Ba Na people are key to the corridor's success. Ba Na villagers should be involved in the language training providing assistance to ensure the learning is relevant. Students should be able to practise their language training with the Ba Na people in their villages to embed learning through direct experience.

2. Ecological monitoring

GEF/UNDP and GOV (FPD) The ecological monitoring component was intended to yield useful data for management. In reality it was an introduction to the concept for learning only. Ideally where information is gathered and the data analysed, the results should be sufficiently robust for building models for management decision making.

3. Study tours

GEF/UNDP Although useful for capacity building skills the following requirements should apply:

1. Only relevant people who can impart learning are selected to go.
2. Location of study tour should be a directly applicable model for good learning outcomes - first priority should be within Vietnam and learning from the more established protected. This is likely to be more relevant and cost effective.
3. Upon return there is a requirement for learning to be applied to implementation of activities and future plans: a report should be written on the application of the study tour to the home situation.

8.2.2. Objective 2: Community Awareness

1. **PPC and GEF/UNDP** The community awareness programme should be an ongoing annual activity, the responsibility of the relevant agencies of the Green Corridor (SFCs, PA's, Districts, Communes and PPC, FPD, DOF, DARD and DONRE) and should include consistent shared messages to all target groups.

2. **PPC** The CCG should continue to link community awareness activities into the local communities. PPC should fund this responsibility and allocate funding to the relevant communes for this activity.
3. **PPC and GEF/UNDP** For the community awareness raising programme to be sustainable it must include a direct benefit for the local community. For example the forest convention element of the awareness programme requires people to protect the forest and in doing so benefits the environment. There is no direct benefit to the Ba Na people as they continue to depend on the forest for livelihoods – ie convention says forest protection is required but there is no direct improvement to their incomes.
4. **PPC, FPD and GEF/UNDP** The staff of CCG, SFC, and staff of protected areas should all further develop their understanding of Ba Na language and culture to enable them to deliver more effective support through relevant training e.g. technical agricultural and silvi-culture extension and models.
5. **PPC and FPD** The community awareness programme should be further developed, reviewed and adapted every three years to ensure its ongoing relevance to the communities as they continue to develop and change.
6. **PPC** In parallel with awareness raising the improvement of the livelihoods of the Ba Na people in the corridor and other minorities in the buffer zone should be a priority for PPC – not just for the mind but also the stomach!
7. **PPC** To ensure the effectiveness of the community awareness and schools education programme should be given in the language that is most appropriate to the target group – e.g. for the remote villages in the corridor the programme should be delivered in Ba Na language.

8.2.3. Objective 3: Sustainable forestry

1. **GOV and PPC** To establish the Green Corridor the underlying principles and policies for biodiversity corridors must be approved by the PPC and the GOV. Without these arrangements in place the Green Corridor concept cannot be implemented.
2. **PPC** The PPC should establish a Green Corridor Management committee comprised of the relevant stakeholders. The committee's purpose is to ensure the coordinated management of the protected areas and the SFCs.
3. **PPC and GOV** should develop the regulations for the state forestry companies' sustainable management of natural forests.

4. **GOV** should put in place a national framework for SFC including the regulations and mechanisms to facilitate FSC in natural forests. This would enable companies such as Tram Lap and Dakrong to more clearly understand their roles and responsibilities for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development and enable them to achieve FSC certification.

8.3. Enabling of biodiversity corridor implementation

1. **GEF/UNDP and PPC** should promote and approve the Investment plan and feasibility study for the Green Corridor and provide budget for implementing the activities in the investment plan.
2. **GOV and PPC** should give priority to approving the principles and policies for the implementation of the green corridor biodiversity projects connecting protected areas within Vietnam.
3. **GOV and PPC GEF/UNDP** GOV and PPC and aid agencies are encouraged to invest in the development of a sustainable financing strategy for the project area and beyond through financing mechanisms (PES, REDD+, concessions and ecotourism etc), for the GOV protected area network at the national, provincial and local level and develop a range of possible models and tools that could be applied to specific protected areas and their financing.
4. **PPC and GOV** The PPC should urgently reduce the current environmental impact of the construction of the new East Truong Son Road on the Green Corridor. The new road's impact will include increased illegal logging, illegal hunting, illegal settlement etc and should be mitigated by PPC through enforcement and working in collaboration with the Ministry of Defence to ensure the Green Corridor is protected in perpetuity for the benefit of the environment and people. Consideration should be given to whether any bridging of the road for use by mammals would be beneficial.

8.4. Project management

1. **GEF/UNDP** Selection of consultants by the PMU should be done in conjunction with the STA to help ensure the highest possible quality of the contractors.
2. **GEF/UNDP** Ideally the STA should be located in country and accessible to the project and project sites to maximise both effective technical advice and also cost effectiveness.
3. **GEF/UNDP, PPC and PMU** should take responsibility for the implementation of the parallel funding activities and the project design should be clear about these expectations.

8.5. Future possibilities

1. **PPC** in the short term, undertake the 6 activities proposed in the feasibility study: forest protection, ecological monitoring, research studies, increase community awareness, build capacity of staff within the corridor and alternative livelihoods for socio-economic improvement. These activities should be undertaken in parallel with the establishment of the Green Corridor.
2. **GOV and Gia Lai and Binh Dinh PPCs** Longer term the feasibility of a larger protected areas complex including KKK NP, KCR NR, Green Corridor and An Toan NR should be investigated - combined for management coherence and biological integrity and to enable the possibility of a declaration of a larger Man and the Biosphere Reserve.



9. APPENDICES

9.1. Terms of reference for the evaluation



TERMS OF REFERENCE
FOR SPECIAL SERVICE AGREEMENT

TITLE: 01 International and 01 National Consultants or a team of one international and one national consultant

COUNTRY OF ASSIGNMENT: Vietnam

1) GENERAL BACKGROUND

1. Project Summary

Project Title: Making the Link: The Connection and Sustainable Management of Kon Ka Kinh National Park and Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserves

Project ID: PIMS 2152 BD MSP: KKK-KCR/ Atlas: 00043767/00051178

Implementing Partner: Gia Lai Provincial Peoples Committee,

Responsible Agency: Gia Lai Forest Protection Department.

Project Sites: Kon Ka Kinh National Park, Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserve, and Tram Lap and Dakrong State Forest Enterprises

Country: Vietnam

Project Duration: 2006-2010

Budget: **USD 2,942,000**
GEF \$875,000; Government: \$312,000
TFT: \$375,000
WWF: \$700,000
BLI: \$30,000
ADB: \$650,000

Assignment Duration: 20 days (expected starting in August 2010)

Duty station: Pleiku City (Gia Lai Province), with travel to KKK National Park, KCR Nature Reserve, and Hanoi

2. Project goals and objectives

The medium-sized GEF project 'Making the Link: The Connection and Sustainable Management of Kon Ka Kinh National Park and Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserves' aims to establish a foundation of support and management to maintain the biodiversity integrity and connectivity of the Kon Ka Kinh National Park and Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserve, thus catalyzing sustainability of protected areas, providing a possible route for long term financing of protected areas and mainstreaming biodiversity in production landscapes.

The overall conservation goal of this project is the long-term conservation of the unique biological attributes of the Central Annamites Priority Landscape.

In order for the above conservation goal to be realized, it is essential that KKK NP and KCR NR, and the intervening SFEs be managed in a way that is consistent with the maintenance of their integrity as a single biological unit.

The purpose of the project is, therefore, to establish a foundation of support and management to maintain the biological integrity and connectivity of the Kon Ka Kinh and Kon Chu Rang, an integral part of the KKK-KCR Forest Complex.

3. Project Outcomes, Activities, and General Indicators

To this end, the project comprises three Project Outcomes and corresponding Priority Activities as follows:

Outcome 1. Institutional Strengthening

1. To strengthen the institutional capacity of Gia Lai Forest Protection Department (FPD) in areas of forest management and protection, with specific emphasis on areas within and around the KKK and KCR.

Priority Activities

- 1.1 Provision of basic infrastructure and key equipment items to the protected areas.
- 1.2 Conduction of training program for Forest Protection Department staff.
- 1.3 Establishment of a monitoring program for the protected areas.
- 1.4 Development Community Forest Protection Units at key villages in the landscape.
- 1.5 Strengthening of institutional mechanisms to improve coordination between forest protection agencies.
- 1.6 Establishment of a communications system amongst forest protection agencies within the project area.
- 1.7 Development of long-term funding mechanisms for KKK NP and KCR NR.

General Indicator

Government economic policies support growth that is more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable.

Outcome 2. Awareness and Education

2. To increase awareness among local communities, key decision-makers, scientific community, and donors to the conservation values of the project area, building long-term support for forest management and protection in the KKK-KCR Forest Complex.

Priority Activities

- 2.1 Increase conservation awareness among local communities
- 2.2 Increase dialogue and understanding between ethnic minorities and the Forest Protection Department
- 2.3 Generate conservation support for the KKK NP-KCR NR by conservationists and key decision makers

General Indicator

Economic growth takes into account environmental protection and rational use of natural resources for poverty reduction

Outcome 3. Sustainable Forest Management

3. To establish conditions for sustainable forest management and forest management certification in Dakrong and Tram Lap State Forest Enterprises, leading to the continued integrity of a forest corridor between KKK NP and KCR NR.

Priority Activities

- 3.1 Assess the Dakrong and Tram Lap enterprises to achieve Forest Stewardship Council certification.
- 3.2. Strengthen the capacity of the State Forest Enterprises staff in sustainable forest management
- 3.3. Secure forest certification to the Dakrong and Tram Lap State Forest Enterprises
- 3.4. Secure establishment of Permanent Conservation Areas within SFEs to “link” KKK NP and KCR NR

General Indicator

Systematic approaches to natural resources management and biodiversity conservation, with broad participation of local people and other stakeholders, fulfill obligations under global environmental conventions.

4. Project present status

The project has achieved important results, some of which include, amongst other:

- Baseline socio-economic surveys and assessment of collaborative management options carried out in areas between KKK NP and KCR NR, to assess possible locations for pilot collaborative management locations.
- Baseline biodiversity surveys to define possible and priority areas for proposed connecting forest corridors between KKK NP and KCR Nature Reserve, including areas targeted for strict conservation.
- Training needs assessment for key project conservation stakeholders, with conducting of follow-up training activities to address some of the training needs and improve stakeholder conservation management capacities.
- Elaboration of a conservation awareness strategy and action plan for the project area, targeting local communities, stakeholders, and government officers.
- Definition and training for biodiversity monitoring within the project area, with definition of monitoring modules and sequences.
- A number of training courses have been conducted for protected area staff and local stakeholders, resulting in improved management capacity and increased public awareness of environmental protection and natural resources.
- Measures for collaborative management of forests between KKK NP and KCR NR have been investigated
- Forest quality is likely to have increased through regeneration, and at least 88.4% of forest cover exists and is in process of expansion through increased protective measures
- Defined strategy for conservation management in the Forest Complex will take place as results field corroborations
- Implementation of forest protection and forest rehabilitation in Dak Roong and Tram Lap SFEs
- Increased efforts in engaging local communities in conservation management

The **mid-term Evaluation (MTE)** for the project was carried out in November 2008. This mid-term evaluation concludes that this bold and innovative biodiversity conservation project is achieving some satisfactory progress through increased participation of the local communities (Ba Na) in biodiversity conservation, by strengthening the institutional capacity of the provincial Forest Protection Department and

through the progress made so far with the State Forest Companies towards sustainable forest management.

The MTE also brought up several issues for the project to consider and some key recommendations, including:

1. Logistical challenges of a remote project area make for challenges in recruitment, internal project communication and building deeper connections between the various stakeholders
2. The forest certification process anticipates companies having independent decision making in a number of areas including marketing, management, planning, tenure use rights and compliance with law.
3. There is potential to link this Green Corridor complex to a further protected area for management coherence, however, there is a need for larger protected area creation, such as KKK NP, KCR NR, Green Corridor and An Toan NR should be connected for management purpose.
4. To implement further training building on the initial training activities.
5. Monitor ethnicity, caste and gender in all TRCP community activities on GIS, Biodiversity monitoring, community engagement skills.
6. Revision of the project budget to community education with villages, capacity building.
7. Link awareness raising programmes of KKK NP and KCR NR with the environmental education programme of the project and focus on women.
8. Prepare an EIA for road construction in the Green Corridor.
9. To find funding for co-management
10. The project share information with other projects and other stakeholders
11. Update information on the website
12. To increase staff retention for the remaining time.
13. Retain and transfer vehicles to the FPD, KKK NP and KCR NR.
14. The Committee for Green Corridor to ensure continuation and sustainability of the project

2) OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The terminal evaluation of the “Making the Link: The Connection and Sustainable Management of Kon Ka Kinh and Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserves” project will assess the relevance, performance and success of the project. The evaluation looks at early signs of potential impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental goals. The evaluation will also identify and document lessons learned and make recommendations that might improve design and implementation of other UNDP/GEF Projects. The following areas should be covered in the terminal evaluation report:

3) SCOPE OF WORK

1. General information about the evaluation

The terminal evaluation report will include information on when the evaluation took place, places visited, who were involved, the key questions and the methodology applied. The terminal evaluation report will also include the evaluation team's TOR and any response from the project management team and/or the country focal point regarding the evaluation findings or conclusions (as an annex to the report).

2. Implementation approach

The terminal evaluation will assess achievement of the project's objective, outcomes and outputs and will

provide ratings for the targeted objective and outcomes. The assessment of project results seeks to determine the extent to which the project objective was achieved, or is expected to be achieved, and assess if the project has led to any other short term or long term and positive or negative consequences. While assessing a project's results, the terminal evaluation will seek to determine the extent of achievement and shortcomings in reaching the project's objective as stated in the project document and also indicate if there were any changes and whether those changes were approved. If the evaluators judge that the project did not establish an adequate baseline (initial conditions), the evaluators should seek to estimate the baseline condition so that achievements and results can be properly established.

Assessment of project outcomes should be a priority. Outcomes are the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs. Examples of outcomes could include but are not restricted to stronger institutional capacities, higher public awareness (when leading to changes of behaviour), and transformed policy frameworks. An assessment of impact is encouraged when appropriate. The evaluators should assess project results against defined performance indicators and using other relevant tracking tools as appropriate. The evaluation will also note any outcomes that may be considered important but not adequately covered by the project's results framework – particularly on any policy impacts at different levels of governments and institutions as well as any development dividends of the project.

To determine the level of achievement of the project's objective and outcomes, the following three criteria will be assessed in the terminal evaluation:

- **Relevance:** Were the project's outcomes consistent with the focal areas/operational programme strategies and country priorities?
- **Effectiveness:** Are the actual project outcomes commensurate with the original or modified project objective?
- **Efficiency:** Was the project cost effective? Was the project the least cost option? Did delays in initial project implementation affect cost effectiveness? Wherever possible, the evaluators should also compare the cost-time vs. outcomes relationship of the project with that of other similar projects.

The evaluation of relevancy, effectiveness and efficiency will be as objective as possible and will include sufficient and convincing empirical evidence. Ideally the project monitoring system and *performance indicator reports* should deliver quantifiable information that can lead to a robust assessment of the project's effectiveness and efficiency. Outcomes will be rated as follows for relevance, effectiveness and efficiency:

Highly Satisfactory (HS): The project had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objective, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Satisfactory (S): The project had minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objective, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Moderately Satisfactory (MS): The project had moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objective, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): The project had significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objective, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Unsatisfactory (U) The project had major shortcomings in the achievement of its objective, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The project had severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objective, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency.

While rating the project's outcomes, relevance and effectiveness will be considered as critical criteria. If separate ratings are provided on relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, the overall outcomes rating of the project may not be higher than the lowest rating on relevance and effectiveness. Thus, to have an overall satisfactory rating for outcomes, the project must have at least satisfactory ratings on both relevance and effectiveness.

The evaluators will also assess other results of the project, including positive and negative actual (or anticipated) impacts or emerging long-term effects of a project. Given the long term nature of impacts, it might not be possible for the evaluators to identify or fully assess impacts. Evaluators will nonetheless indicate the steps taken to assess long-term project impacts, especially impacts on local populations, global environment (e.g. climate change adaptation), replication effects and other local effects. Wherever possible evaluators should indicate how the findings on impacts will be reported to the GEF in future.

3. Execution and implementation modalities

The evaluators will examine the effectiveness of integration of partner funded

Financial Planning:

The evaluators will include an assessment of the project cost by objectives, outputs, activities, the cost-effectiveness of achievements, financial management and co-financing. The following table should be completed to provide a summary of the planned and actual activities of the project as well as the expenditures up to the present.

Activities		Budget		
Planned	Actual	As per ProDoc	Actual Expenditures	% of Project Budget

4. Sustainability

The terminal evaluation will assess the likelihood of sustainability of outcomes at project termination, and provide a rating for this. Sustainability will be understood as the likelihood of continued benefits after the GEF project ends. The sustainability assessment will give special attention to analysis of the risks that are likely to affect the persistence of project outcomes. The sustainability assessment should also explain how other important contextual factors that are not outcomes of the project will affect sustainability. The following four dimensions or aspects of sustainability will be addressed:

- **Financial resources:** Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends? Resources can be from multiple sources, such as the Con Dao National Park Investment Plan, public and private sector investment (e.g. in tourism sector development and other local economic development), improved income generating activities of local people, and trends that may indicate that it is likely that in future there will be adequate financial resources for sustaining the project's outcomes.
- **Socio-political:** Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project

outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long term objectives of the project? In this context, particular attention should be paid to the effectiveness of the project in supporting integrated development planning that achieves sustainability through a balance of environmental, social and economic support measures.

- **Institutional framework and governance:** Do the legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, the evaluators also consider if the required systems for accountability and transparency, and the required technical know-how are in place.
- **Environmental:** Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes? The terminal evaluation should assess whether activities related to the long term development vision for the island archipelago will pose a threat to the sustainability of the project outcomes.

On each of the dimensions of sustainability of the project, outcomes will be rated as follows.

Likely (L): There are no or negligible risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.

Moderately Likely (ML): There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.

Moderately Unlikely (MU): There are significant risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.

Unlikely (U): There are severe risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.

All the risk dimensions of sustainability are critical. Therefore, the overall rating for sustainability will not be higher than the rating of the dimension with lowest ratings. For example, if a project has an 'Unlikely' rating in either of the dimensions then its overall rating cannot be higher than 'Unlikely'.

5. Catalytic Role

The terminal evaluation will also describe any catalytic or replication effect of the project. If no effects are identified, the evaluation will describe the catalytic or replication actions that the project carried out. No ratings are requested for the catalytic role.

6. Assessment of Monitoring and Evaluation System

The terminal evaluation will assess whether the project met the minimum requirements for project design of M&E and the implementation of the project M&E plan. GEF projects must budget adequately for execution of the M&E plan, and provide adequate resources during implementation of the M&E plan. Project managers are also expected to use the information generated by the performance indicators during project implementation to adapt and improve the project. The terminal evaluation report will include separate assessments of the achievements and shortcomings of the project M&E design and of implementation of the M&E activities.

M&E design: Projects should have a sound M&E plan to monitor results and track progress towards achieving project objectives. An M&E plan should include a baseline (including data, methodology, etc.), SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely) indicators and data analysis systems, and evaluation studies at specific times to assess results and adequate funding for M&E

activities. The time frame for various M&E activities and standards for outputs should have been specified.

M&E plan implementation: The terminal evaluation should verify that a M&E system was in place and facilitated timely tracking of progress towards the project objective and outcomes by collecting information on chosen indicators continually through the project implementation period; annual PIR were complete, accurate and with well justified ratings; the information provided by the M&E system was used during the project to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs; and, projects had an M&E system in place with proper training for parties responsible for M&E activities to ensure data will continue to be collected and used after project closure.

In addition to incorporating information on funding for M&E while assessing M&E design, a separate mention will be made of whether M&E was sufficiently budgeted at the project planning stage, and whether M&E was adequately and timely funded during implementation.

Project monitoring and evaluation systems will be rated as follows on quality of M&E design and quality of M&E implementation:

Highly Satisfactory (HS): There were no shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Satisfactory(S): There were minor shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were moderate shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Unsatisfactory (U): There were major shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The Project had no M&E system.

The overall rating of M&E during project implementation will be solely based on the quality of M&E plan implementation. The ratings on quality at entry of M&E design and sufficiency of funding both during planning and implementation stages will be used as explanatory variables.

The evaluators will also assess the project contribution to the Monitoring of Long Term Changes. This may include project contributions to determination of environmental baselines, specification of indicators, provisioning of equipment and capacity building for data gathering, analysis and use. This section of the terminal evaluation will describe any actions and accomplishments of the project in the establishment of a long term monitoring system. The evaluators will address the following questions:

Did this project contribute to the establishment of a long term monitoring system? If it did not, should the project have included such a component?

What were the accomplishments and short comings in establishment of this system?

Is the system sustainable, i.e. is it embedded in a proper institutional structure and has financing?

Is the information generated by this M&E system being used as originally intended?

7. Assessment of Processes that Affected Attainment of Project Results

Among other factors, when relevant, it is suggested that the evaluators consider the following issues affecting project implementation and attainment of project results. The evaluators are not expected to provide ratings or separate assessment on the following issues, but they could be considered while assessing the project performance:

- **Preparation and readiness:** Were the project's objectives and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe? Were the capacities of executing institution and counterparts properly considered when the project was designed? Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design? Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project approval? Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities), enabling legislation, and adequate project management arrangements in place at project entry?
- **Country ownership/drivenness:** Was the project concept in line with the sectoral and development priorities and plans of the country? Are project outcomes contributing to national development priorities and plans? Were the relevant country representatives, from government and civil society, involved in the project? Did the recipient government maintain its financial commitment to the project? Has the government approved policies or regulatory frameworks that are in line with the project's objectives?
- **Stakeholder involvement:** Did the project involve the relevant stakeholders through information-sharing, consultation and by seeking their participation in the project's design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation? For example, did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns? Did the project consult and make use of the skills, experience and knowledge of the appropriate government entities, NGOs, community groups, private sector, local governments and academic institutions in the design, implementation and evaluation of project activities? Were perspectives of those that would be affected by decisions, those that could affect the outcomes and those that could contribute information or other resources to the process taken into account while taking decisions? Were the relevant vulnerable groups and the powerful, the supporters and the opponents, of the processes properly involved?
- **Financial planning.** Did the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allowed management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allowed for timely flow of funds? Was there due diligence in the management of funds and financial audits? Did promised co-financing materialize? (**Please complete the co-financing table in Annex 1**).
- **Implementing/Executing Agency's supervision and backstopping:** Did Implementing/Executing Agency staff identify problems in a timely fashion and accurately estimate their seriousness? Did Implementing/Executing Agency staff provide quality support and advice to the project, approve modifications in time and restructure the project when needed? Did the Implementing/Executing Agencies provide the right staffing levels, continuity, skill mix, and frequency of field visits for the GEF projects?
- **Co-financing and Project Outcomes and Sustainability:** If there was a difference in the level of expected co-financing and actual co-financing, then what were the reasons for the variance? Did the extent of materialization of co-financing affect the project's outcomes and/or sustainability, and if it did affect outcomes and sustainability then in what ways and through what causal linkages?
- **Delays and Project Outcomes and Sustainability:** If there were delays in project implementation and completion, then what were the reasons? Did the delay affect the project's outcomes and/or sustainability, and if it did affect outcomes and sustainability then in what ways and through what causal linkages?

8. Lessons and Recommendations

The evaluators will present lessons and recommendations in the terminal evaluation report on all aspects of the project that they consider relevant. The evaluators will be expected to give special attention to analyzing

lessons and proposing recommendations on aspects related to factors that contributed or hindered the attainment of project objectives, sustainability of project benefits, innovation, catalytic effect and replication, and project monitoring and evaluation.

The evaluators should refrain from providing recommendations to improve the project. Instead they should seek to provide a few well formulated lessons applicable to the type of project at hand or to GEF's overall portfolio. The terminal evaluation will not contain any appraisal, preparation or justification for a follow-up project. Wherever possible, the terminal evaluation report will include examples of good practices for other projects in a focal area, country or region.

Methodology

The evaluation will consist of a desk review of relevant project documents and reports related to the planned evaluation. The evaluators will then visit the project area (Kon Ka Kinh NP, Kon Chu Rang NR) and the provincial capital (Pleiku) and conduct focused group discussions, meetings, and interviews with the Project Director and other partners on topics and issues that relate to the implementation and impact of the project. The evaluators are expected to become well versed as to the objectives, historical developments, institutional and management mechanisms, project activities and already documented 'lessons learned' of the project. Specifically, the evaluation will be based on the following sources of information:

- Review of documents related to the project such as project document, quarterly and annual progress reports, other activity/component specific deliverables, reports and evaluations. Review of final GEF BD Tracking Tool
- Structured interview with knowledgeable parties, i.e., Project Director, Project Personnel (including STA), UNDP Country Office Counterparts, members of the Project Steering Committee, Community Consultation Group, Project beneficiaries, UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Adviser etc.

4) DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT, DUTY STATION AND EXPECTED PLACES OF TRAVEL

Duration: The evaluation will begin in August 2010 and will last for 20 days. A first draft evaluation report will be prepared by the evaluators within the evaluation period and will be debriefed to the Project Steering Committee and the Project staff. The revised report will be forwarded to the Project Steering Committee and the other stakeholders for further deliberations and in order to obtain feedback necessary for finalization. A final version of the report will be prepared and delivered within one week after the evaluation exercise highlighting important observations, analysis of information and key conclusions, including its recommendations. The final draft report will be prepared and submitted to the UNDP CO

Duty Station: Hanoi and project site (estimated 10 days in Gia Lai province)

5) FINAL PRODUCTS

The following are the required outputs of the terminal evaluation:

- Complete Terminal Evaluation Report for the Project discussing the points raised in this TOR, and including relevant maps or tables pertinent to the review. The report should be delivered to UNDP CO not later than 15 November 2010 in hard copy form plus CD-Rom in electronic file format (MS Word).
- Presentation of the evaluation findings and recommendations to the Steering Committee in Pleiku city, and to UNDP CO.

See Annex 1

6) PROVISION OF MONITORING AND PROGRESS CONTROLS

The evaluation mission is expected to commence in August 2010. The evaluators will debrief to the project management unit and UNDP CO after carrying out the field work. The first draft of the evaluation report shall be submitted by 15 October 2010 to allow for comments from UNDP and the National Project Director. Upon receipt of these comments, the consultants shall submit the **final report by 15 November 2010**.

7) DEGREE OF EXPERTISE AND QUALIFICATIONS

- One international consultant with expertise in natural resource conservation projects, with solid experience in project management (implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes) and familiarity with GEF project approaches.
- One national consultant with extensive knowledge in Protected Areas and biodiversity conservation; natural resource conservation projects and associated livelihood development strategies in Vietnam, experience with Government planning processes, and experience in developing performance indicators, project appraisal and evaluation of development projects.

Specific requirements:

- Evaluators must be independent of both the policy-making process and the delivery and management of assistance to the project. They should not have been engaged in the activities to be evaluated, or responsible in decision-making roles for the design, implementation or supervision of the project. In cases where a member of an evaluation team has been involved with some aspects of the project, this member should refrain from evaluating those aspects.
- Evaluators will be impartial and will present a comprehensive and balanced appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the project and activities being evaluated.

Detailed requirements are attached as Annex 2

8) Admin support and reference documents

The PMU and STA Project will assist the UNDP CO and members of the evaluation team in preparing for the terminal evaluation of the project. The evaluation team will be composed of an independent highly qualified international consultant together with one independent national consultant. The implementing agency will provide in advance copies of the necessary documents needed by the evaluators during the evaluation period, including a list of contact persons representing the various stakeholders of the project, which will be the basis for the tentative itinerary/schedule of activities, which the STA and evaluators will prepare in consultation with the PMU and UNDP CO staff.

See Annex 3. List of Key Background Documents for the Evaluation

9) REVIEW TIME REQUIRED AND PAYMENT TERM

20% contract value will be made upon signed contract and site visit, final payment upon acceptance of the report

10) CONSULTANT PRESENCE REQUIRED ON DUTY STATION/UNDP PREMISES

NONE

PARTIAL

INTERMITTENT

FULL-TIME

Annex 1
(must be completed as part of terminal evaluation report)

Co-financing

Co-financing (Type/Source)	UNDP Financing (mill US\$)		Government (mill US\$)		Other* (mill US\$)		Total (mill US\$)		Total Disbursemen t (mill US\$)	
	Plann ed	Actu al	Plann ed	Actu al	Plann ed	Actu al	Plann ed	Actu al	Plann ed	Actu al
Grants										
Loans/Concessi ons (compared to market rate)										
Credits										
Equity investment										
In-kind support										
Other (*)										
TOTALS										

*Other refers to contributions mobilized for the project from other multilateral agencies, bilateral development cooperation agencies, NGOs, the private sector and beneficiaries.

Annex 2

Evaluation Team Requirements and Specific Tasks

General requirements

Candidates to the evaluation team must have relevant experience in Natural Resource Management or related fields and have adequate experience in evaluation of GEF projects. Candidates must also be physically fit and be willing to walk and work in remote locations. Consultants must bring their own computing equipment.

The main products expected from the evaluation are:

- Presentation(s) to key stakeholders;
- An interim draft report; and,
- A final comprehensive Terminal Evaluation report.
- Validated METT (draft METT to be provided by project team)

Evaluation methodology

Although participatory in nature, the evaluation methodology will be determined by the evaluation team, guided by the requirements of GEF and UNDP, as articulated in various guidelines, policies and manuals on the conduct of evaluations for GEF projects. It is also important to examine project documents such as the approved GEF project brief, the final UNDP project document, the inception workshop report, the project logical framework, annual budgets and work plans, Project Steering Committee and TPR minutes as available, earlier PDF-B reports, and other technical reports and relevant documents are important as relevant. A list of key documents is given in Annex 3

The evaluation methodology should be clearly documented in the terminal evaluation report including comprehensive details on: (a) documents reviewed; (b) interviews conducted; (c) consultations held with key stakeholders; (d) project sites visited; and, (e) techniques and approaches used for data gathering, verification and analysis.

The evaluation team will make a verbal presentation to stakeholders towards the end of the evaluation. After the presentation the team will take note of verbal and written responses to its presentation and consider these in preparing an interim draft evaluation report that will be provided to UNDP-Vietnam CO before the team leaves for distribution to stakeholders.

Reporting process

UNDP will circulate the draft report to all stakeholders requesting written feedback that should be sent directly to the evaluators within one week of receipt. The Terminal Evaluation report including all annexes should be finalized within ten days of the deadline for receiving comments on the first draft.

While the evaluation team is free to determine the actual layout of the terminal evaluation report, this must include the minimum content requirements, as suggested in GEF guidelines. The Team Leader will forward the final report by e-mail to UNDP–Vietnam CO for onward distribution to all stakeholders. The evaluators will be responsible for the contents, quality, and veracity of the report.

Individual requirements

International Consultant (Team Leader)

- PhD, or Masters degree plus ten years experience in biodiversity conservation, protected area management, conservation management, natural resources conservation, or related fields, with in-depth understanding of landscape ecology conservation approaches and community-based natural resource management.
- Familiar with integrated conservation development projects in developing countries, particularly in Asia, either through managing or evaluating donor-funded projects.
- Familiarity with collaborative management theory and practice, and substantive knowledge of participatory monitoring and evaluation processes is essential.
- Familiarity with forest management practices, particularly under state enterprises logging natural forests, and experience with ethnic minorities is an advantage.
- Experience in the evaluation of technical assistance projects, if possible with UNDP or other UN development agencies and major donors.
- A demonstrated understanding of GEF principles and expected impacts in terms of global benefits is essential.
- Demonstrated ability to assess complex situations in order to succinctly and clearly screen critical issues and draw forward-looking conclusions.
- Experience leading small multi-disciplinary, multi-national teams to deliver quality products in high stress, short deadline situations.
- Previous relevant experience in Vietnam is an advantage but not essential.
- Excellent English writing and communication skills.

National consultant (Protected Areas and Biodiversity Conservation)

- Professional background in natural resources management, conservation and community development, and related fields with a minimum of eight years of relevant experience.
- Knowledge of monitoring and evaluation and working experiences in evaluating conservation and development projects.
- Demonstrated understanding of both conservation and development decision-making processes, at national and provincial level is essential.
- Knowledge of participatory and community participation in natural resources management.
- Proficient English writing and communication skills, with an ability to act as translator for international counterpart and to translate written documents from/ to Vietnamese are essential.
- Experience with the United Nations or other international development agency is an advantage.

Evaluation Team Specific Tasks

The main final output of the evaluation will be an independent and comprehensive Terminal Evaluation report with annexes as needed. However, the main report should not exceed 50 pages, and presenting annexes as needed. The minimum requirements for the content of the final Terminal Evaluation report are given in GEF guidelines.

The basis for the evaluators' main conclusions must be clear and the methodology clearly documented within the final report. Recommendations made must be based on clearly substantiated findings and stated in operational terms. They must address all issues identified by the evaluation mission, including changes in modalities, processes, strategies, and focus and otherwise deemed necessary and appropriate

International Consultant/ Team Leader

The Team Leader will have overall responsibility for the work and operation of the evaluation team, including the coordination of inputs from different team members. The Team Leader is responsible and overall accountable for the production of the agreed outputs.

In addition to the above, the Team Leader is responsible for the following:

- Desk research of existing management plans, survey/ research/ evaluation reports and databases.
- Conduct fieldwork together with the national counterpart and interview stakeholders, forest management and protection officials, and communities to generate authentic information and opinions.
- Write and compile the information and reports as needed.
- Make a presentation of key findings highlighting achievements, constraints, and make practical recommendations to decision makers and stakeholders.
- Finalize the Evaluation Report

National Consultant

- The national consultant will assist and collaborate with the Team Leader in all the tasks mentioned above including fieldwork, desk based translation, report writing as agreed with Team Leader, and assist with translation in the field.
- The national consultant will be mobilized several days before the Team Leader in an effort to collect and collate data related to the project beforehand.

Annex 3. List of Key Background Documents for the Evaluation

1. Final Approved Project Document “Making The Link: The Connection and Sustainable management of Kon Ka Kinh National Park and Kon Chu Rang Nature Reserve”
2. Annual Project Implementation Review (PIR) 2006 – 2008 (2 PIRs)
3. Minutes of the Annual Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meetings
4. Annual financial audit reports
5. Quarterly Operational Reports (QORs)
6. PDF-B related report
7. GEF Monitoring & Evaluation Policy 2006
8. The Evaluation Policy of UNDP 2006
9. GEF Focal Area Strategy Paper 2007
10. GEF Tracking Tools for Strategic Objective 1 and Strategic Objective 2
11. Final Project Document
12. Inception Report, inclusive of Logical Framework
13. Implementation plans for areas corresponding to State Forest Enterprises
14. Quarterly and annual reports, including PIR/APR and Minutes of National Steering Committee Meetings.
15. MTR Report

Key consultants’ reports, including:

16. Training Needs Assessment,
17. Community-based Forest Protection System, Review of Capacity and Procedures for strengthened coordination among forest protection agencies in KKK-KCR area, Training Document: Ecological Monitoring Framework,
18. Training on Forest Protection Regulations and Techniques for Stakeholders of the Kon Ka Kinh Kon Chu Rang Project,
19. Participatory Social Assessment of Ethnic Minority Villages in the Project Area and Definition of Pilot Sites to Implement Collaborative Management,
20. Report on Ecological Monitoring Program, and documentation related to the implementation of the project’s Conservation Awareness Program.
21. Maps of the project sites, KKK National Park, KCR Nature Reserve, Tram Lap and Dakrong State Forest Enterprises
22. Report on Strategy and Action Plan into the Establishment of the ‘KKK-Corridor-KCR’ within the Kon Ka Kinh-Kon Chu Rang Forest Complex.
23. Report by CPCU on Baseline Rapid Natural Resource Use Assessment in support to the establishment of the ‘KKK-Corridor-KCR’.
24. GIS mapping for the Establishment of the ‘KKK-Corridor-KCR’ within the Kon Ka Kinh- Kon Chu Rang Forest Complex.
25. Maps and corresponding Report from (upcoming): 2nd GIS Mission: Clarification of Forest Status GIS Mapping for the Establishment of the ‘Biodiversity Conservation Corridor’ within the Kon Ka Kinh- Kon Chu Rang Forest Complex.
26. Results from upcoming: Defining Village Boundaries Review Land-use Data and Resource-use Trends Enclave Boundaries and Participatory Land-use Management System.