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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The successful conduct of a review such as this depends on the input and contribution of many people. We would like to acknowledge the considerable assistance we have received as we have undertaken our tasks. The project team arranged efficient and effective logistical support throughout the mission, and this made our task easier. We are particularly grateful for the way that project staff and partners offered their considered thoughts and assessments about the project in an open and constructive manner. The constructive engagement we had with everyone involved helped us greatly to clarify and crystallise our ideas.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 *Introduction and recurrent themes*

This internal review took place in February 2004, approximately one and a half years after the project commenced. The team was in-country for two weeks, of which five days were spent in the field. The review was conducted in close dialogue with the project team and key partners in an endeavour to assist the project to reach conclusions about the challenges faced in moving ahead, and in formulating broad approaches to do this. The detailed recommendations we have made are our own, but they have built on many of the broader ideas and suggestions that have come from project staff and partners. Not all groups will be satisfied by all of our recommendations, but our deliberations and conclusions have benefited from a variety of perspectives, and we have tried to integrate these. Our final conclusions have been guided by one major consideration:

1. What is necessary for the project in order to help it achieve its goal and objectives of using NTFPs to contribute to poverty alleviation and conservation in Vietnam.

During the course of the review several recurrent themes became evident. These are:

2. Lack of a clear vision, and strategies (both short and long term) for guiding project activities;
3. Slow progress with initiating activities (particularly field activities);
4. Problems associated with organisational structures (particularly unclear roles and overlapping authority and responsibility among key project and partner groups and individuals);
5. Problems with managing project affairs.

We have framed our response to these themes by identifying specific *issues* and suggesting specific *recommendations* aimed at addressing each issue. These are given below.

1.2 *Learning from Phase I* aTD0.0018 1 Ts;



Recommendation 2:

Major revision of the LFA in the original PD should be delayed until substantial implementation experience is gained (possibly until early 2005). If the PMU decides that there are some small sections of the LFA seriously constraining the project's ability to implement activities effectively, then these sections could be revised by a small team of those staff directly involved.

Issue:

The PIP fails to give sufficient strategic guidance for implementation, and it gives undue emphasis to the strengthening of the NTFP RC over that intended in the PD, by raising this aspect to be the first of three themes.

Recommendation 3:

The PIP should be set aside as a vehicle for viewing the project, and the project should revert to the conceptual structure outlined in the PD. This should provide a sufficient framework for guiding implementation and reporting on project activities. However, the draft progress report for the second semester of 2003 should be accepted in its current three-theme format to avoid unnecessary additional work.

Issue:

The absence of a clear and shared "vision" ap

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High quality outside support and guidance for this task is needed on a regular basis during the life of the project. The IUCN Country and Regional Offices will need to play an important role in providing and facilitating this regular support.

Issue:

A clear and focused strategy for project support to the NTFP RC is necessary. This is particularly important regarding the GoV signals for research centres to become more self-sufficient (and by implication more client-oriented) in the years ahead (see Box 3 for an elaboration of this issue).

Recommendation 6:

The project should concentrate capacity building of the NTFP RC on a limited number of areas which are considered a high priority in terms of contributing directly to the sustainable use of NTFPs for poverty alleviation and conservation of biodiversity.

1.4 Organisation and structure of the project

Issues:

- The PSC could be more proactive in helping the project focus on the “big picture” issues through strategic guidance;
- The NTAB, which was designed to provide linkages between the project and FSSP, the 5 MHRP and other relevant programmes, could play an important role as a sounding board for discussing both strategic and technical aspects of the project to complement the role of the Steering Committee.

Recommendation 7:

We encourage the PSC and NTAB to adopt a strategic role. This should be reflected in the task descriptions of these committees.

Issue:

The enlargement of the PMU to include the Director of the FSIV as the Project Director, along with unclear limits of authority and responsibility of individual members of the PMU, has complicated and slowed management decision making and led to a situation where there is lack of clarity and confusion over many management issues.

Recommendation 8:

The PMU undertake an exercise to review the working methodology and approaches of its members, to define the limits of authority and responsibility that apply to individual members and various groupings of members of the PMU.

Issue:

The increased demands of Phase II compared with Phase I (plus the assumption of additional work loads by the DPD) have meant that the DPD is unable to devote the time needed to exercise effective management of the project.

Recommendation 9:

Options be considered for providing necessary high level management inputs into the project, including the possibility of:

- ***appointment of a senior national expert to support the PMU in decision making and implementation or,***

- *making the DPD position a dedicated full time position.*

Issue:

There are different opinions among the main project implementing partners about what types of administrative and technical support are needed by the project and can be provided from

representatives from IUCN RO and the Netherlands Embassy, to consider what is needed to address the recommendations made by the review team, in particular:

- *Recommendations 11 (re. Management style of the PMU)*
- *Recommendation 17 (re. Budget line 402).*

1.6 Activities

Issue:

Notwithstanding the difficulties normally associated with establishing projects, the general perception is that the project has been excessively slow in initiating substantive activities. Undue attention has been paid to micro management and elaborate and time consuming decision making processes rather than encouraging decentralised initiatives and field work.

Recommendation:

Action needed to address this issue is captured in Recommendation 11 above.

Issue:

The original project design as intended in the PD included decentralised authority to the ROs for major decision making in the planning, implementing and monitoring of field activities. Such a decentralised approach to management has not been put in place.

Recommendation 13:

The authority for planning, implementing and monitoring of field activities should be decentralised to the ROs. ROs should be given adequate support so that they can fulfil their mandate to strengthen communications and partnerships with local authorities, other

Recommendation 15:

PMU should adopt a more consultative and participatory approach to developing partnerships with an emphasis on effective two-way communication and dialogue leading to equitable give-get outcomes in the relationships. This process should aim to (re)define the nature of the relationships so that the partners are able to provide added value.

Recommendation 16:

Carry out an inventory of potential partners plus an analysis of their strengths to identify what they can contribute to the work of the project—particularly to aspects such as:

- *Analysis of field experience and identification of lessons learned in relation to scaling up;*
- *Policy implications emanating from project experiences;*
- *Providing support for specific technical expertise such as NTFP surveys, production and processing in Vietnam;*
- *Market analysis for NTFPs;*
- *National and regional policy and strategy formulation for the NTFP sub-sector development (in particular aimed at poverty alleviation and conservation);*

1.8 Budget

Issue (see also Section 5.3):

There are different views among the Vietnamese partners (including MARD), IUCN Country Office and IUCN Asia Regional Office on which group has the authority to access budget line 402. These differences have become deeply divisive to the extent of seriously inhibiting some aspects of project progress and damaging relationships between these project partners.

Recommendation 17 (to be read in conjunction with Recommendation 10):

There should be a meeting between IUCN Regional and Country Offices, PMU, Chairman of Steering Committee, Director of ICD and the Netherlands Embassy to reach agreement on procedures for accessing budget line 402, and in particular, to identify:

- *The needs of the project for different types of support from IUCN Regional and Country Offices;*
- *The procedure for making decisions about how and when this support should be provided and how to assess results.*

1.9 Monitoring and evaluation

Issue:

The focus in the M&E systems set up to date is on compliance monitoring (“Has the activity been carried out?”). This is important for planning and reporting purposes, but the biggest challenge for the project will be to monitor and evaluate the *impact* of the project’s activities, i.e. to develop indicators and to measure progress towards achieving the higher levels in the logical framework hierarchy: the project’s goal and objectives, particularly: What is the project’s impact on biodiversity conservation, poverty alleviation and national economic development (i.e. the project goal)?

Recommendation 18:

The project further develops its M&E system to address explicitly the issue of impact monitoring, including the evaluation of unintended consequences of project activities. Systems need to be put in place (e.g. collection of baseline data) from the onset of the

project so be able to measure impact later. The project might need to seek outside assistance to establish a comprehensive impact monitoring system, including formats and methods for (1) profiles/ baseline data, (2) case studies by project teams, and (3) additional in-depth studies on selected issues.

1.10 Discussion

All project partners who were interviewed by the RT insisted that the project is very relevant and that they are keen to see the project succeed:

- The project has been designed to address specific result areas of the FSSP, and MARD is looking for a significant contribution from the project to increase the Government's capacity to promote poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation;
- For IUCN, in addition to assisting Vietnam's poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation efforts, the project represents an important opportunity to further the learning about NTFPs and their role in the poverty alleviation – conservation nexus. Because of the size, relevance and potential of the project, IUCN considers it a “flagship project” and it is looking for the project to provide experiences and lessons which can be applied not only in Vietnam but regionally and globally.
- The Netherlands Embassy regards this project as a major investment of its available budget in an area of key interest for the Netherlands Government.

All these parties follow project progress closely and are committed to its success.

The review team recognises that the time consuming tasks necessary to establish a project as a functional entity make it difficult to commence meaningful activities early in the life of a project. Nonetheless, we feel that the PMU could have been more effective in ensuring that output oriented activities were given a higher priority.

Perhaps the most important deficiency in the project to date is the lack of a clear vision and strategies (short and long term) for guiding the project's implementation, in particular in the field. We believe this is a serious short coming and needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. The PMU, and particularly the CTA, has an important responsibility in addressing these issues. We do not underestimate the difficulties involved and emphasise that it will require the on-going input of high quality technical support from outside the project. It is also not something that should be seen as a one-off activity, but will require commitment over the life of the project. If it is done well it could be the conceptual (and intellectual) pivot of the project and the vehicle to bring the project team (and its partners) together around a common mission. IUCN has a critical role to play (and a responsibility) in bringing international thinking and best practice to bear on these issues.

We have suggested 18 recommendations for consideration by the project and its key partners. However, among these are several that we believe to be critical to ensure the future well being of the project. These are:

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- *Recommendation 12* regarding a high level meeting to address the management recommendations of the RT;
- *Recommendation 17* regarding budget line 402.

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2. CONDUCT OF THE MISSION

The mission was carried out in February 2004 on the request of the PMU and the IUCN Vietnam Country Office. The Terms of Reference for the mission are shown in Appendix I. The proposed workplan for the mission was discussed with IUCN and the project team on 11th February, and adapted to reflect the needs of the project and the government. This is shown in Appendix II. The team spent five days in the field, with two days spent in the north

have attempted to address all topics in the ToR, although we have given emphasis to those aspects that we considered to be critical in terms of assisting the project to move ahead effectively and quickly.

3. EVOLUTION OF THE PROJECT

3.1 The link with the Phase I project

The Non Timber Forest Product Sub-Sector Support Project Phase II (in short, the NTFP project, Phase II) was preceded by a pilot NTFP project (or Phase I) (1998 – 2002). The pilot NTFP project contributed significantly to enhancing the knowledge and capacity of the Government of Vietnam for understanding and guiding NTFP use in Vietnam (See Box 1).

After the conclusion of Phase I, there were numerous outstanding challenges to supporting the sustainable use and development of NTFPs. Phase II was designed in order to:

- Expand geographically and thematically the positive results of the pilot NTFP project
- Continue the method development and action-learning activities of the pilot NTFP project to address key challenges and critical gaps in NTFP knowledge, capacity and governance.

Proposal development started after the external evaluation of Phase I in August 2001. A design team worked in March 2002 to formulate the proposal and write the project document for Phase II. The formulation of the project proposal for Phase II has taken account of the following events and inputs:

- Adjustments and additions to forest sector strategies and programmes, including the establishment of the Forest Sector Support Programme (FSSP);
- The specific importance and dominance of the Five Million Hectare Reforestation Programme (5MHRP) in the forest sector, and the importance and relevance of Government poverty reduction and forest conservation programmes;
- The external evaluation of the pilot NTFP project;
- The results of the pilot NTFP project (documented in various project reports and through several reviews and assessments); and,
- Consultations with national level stakeholders undertaken in late 2001 and early 2002.

The project was designed as a clear contribution to the FSSP, contributing to several of the FSSP result areas. Integration with national level priority setting and coordination processes was further promoted through the establishment of a joint PSC with the Vietnam Programme of Tropenbos International.

Finally, given the size and importance of the project, and to promote better entry into the national policy arena, it was decided to “elevate” the project in the government hierarchy, by making the Director of FSIV the National Project Director. (In Phase I, the Director of the NTFP RC, which is a sub-centre of FSIV, was the National Project Director. In Phase II, he is the Deputy Project Director.)

Box 2. Phase II goal and objectives Ta663 d4.5(e g th)n.096national1e4.20663 d4.n1

Objective 1	National strategic and policy frameworks relevant to the ecologically sustainable and equitable development of NTFPs are improved
Objective 2	Capacity of the NTFPRC/MARD and other relevant institutions is strengthened to assist with the development and implementation of national strategies and policies related to the ecologically sustainable and equitable development of NTFPs.
Objective 3	Other institutions and stakeholders involved in forest research and development; poverty reduction; and, biodiversity conservation programmes are financially supported to undertake NTFP related research & development and engaged in information sharing through networks
<i>Component 2. Transferring existing methods for sustainable NTFP development to practitioners and training institutions</i>	
Objective 4	The use of existing approaches and methods for promoting ecologically sustainable and equitable development of NTFPs is expanded through relevant training and extension institutions.
<i>Component 3. Demonstration and Pilot sites</i>	
Objective 5	Knowledge is gathered and local systems of sustainable NTFP management are piloted and demonstrated to inform and assist the implementation of reforestation, poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation programmes.
<i>Component 4. Enhancing Project effectiveness and sustainability</i>	
Objective 6	Project approaches and practices are established that foster the institutionalisation of effective resource use, partnership building, action-learning, and gender responsiveness in project implementation and within the host and partner organisations.

and livelihoods consultancy, the formulation of a communications strategy, an M&E plan and a consultancy to formulate a marketing strategy. Basic operational procedures have also been developed and implemented.

Table 1. Project milestones since the beginning of Phase II

Phase I that has been brought into Phase II, relatively little of this is being used to inform activities in Phase II. This point was made quite strongly by the staff during the participatory workshop. Examples of the outcomes and lessons that came from Phase I that could be relevant for Phase II include:

- Strategies for making decisions on the selection of project interventions at the pilot sites and approaches for establishing pilot scale models;
- The methodology for NTFP market analysis;
- Several activities in support of the RC, such as the formulation of an HRD plan;
- Approaches for impact monitoring.

The individuals involved in implementing Phase I and designing Phase II currently hold formal positions in the IUCN Regional Office in Bangkok. They are available to provide bridging between the phases and to provide technical oversight of Phase II. However, to date, the project has chosen not to take advantage of their expertise. We find this reluctance inexplicable.

Issue:

A considerable knowledge base is available from Phase I of the project. Phase II was designed to build on that base, but relatively little of this has been extracted and applied to Phase II—there is a sense that the wheel is being re-invented once again.

Recommendation 1:

An explicit attempt be made to re-visit the documentation from Phase I and extract the information that can be of strategic and tactical guidance for approaches and activities in Phase II. Guidance in this task should be sought from the IUCN Country and Regional Offices.

4. PROJECT DESIGN, APPROACH AND STRATEGY

4.1 The Project Document

Views on the Project Document (PD) are mixed, with some people feeling that the document is an effective vehicle for viewing the project, while others feel that it is somewhat difficult to understand and not clear in terms of the guide ksc

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Much of this is implicit throughout the PD, but it could be useful to make it explicit if it is agreed that this is a useful and achievable aim.

- The importance of including marketing issues as part of the overall project strategy, in particular in the field site activities. Again, market related issues are identified implicitly in the PD (see for example the discussion of sector issues in Chapter 2), but more explicit guidance about how to address these issues in Phase II would have been useful. This is particularly significant since Phase I generated much experience in this domain, through the adaptation of the MA&D methodology and accompanying capacity building activities.
- An analysis of the lessons learned from Phase I regarding partnerships and the implications for Phase II. This issue is discussed in more detail in Section 8 below.

Some aspects of the LFA in the PD are considered (by a few project staff) to be poorly done and need to be revisited to give better conceptual and practical guidance for implementation. We acknowledge that a few parts of the LFA could be improved, but we also feel that it would be premature at this early stage of implementation to devote substantial resources to doing a complete revision of the LFA. It would distract staff from getting on with implementation. Such a major revision is best left until sufficient implementation experience is gained to make a revision meaningful—perhaps early 2005 when a full year of field implementation has been carried out. If there are some small parts of the LFA that the PMU considers to be so poorly done that they constrain the ability of project staff to implement activities effectively, then these parts could be revisited as a small exercise involving only those staff who are directly involved.

By and large, project implementation to date generally follows the approach outlined in the PD.

Issue:

The PD has proven to be an adequate guide for project implementation, and activities basically follow its format. However, some project staff feel that it gives inadequate strategic guidance and that aspects of the LFA need major revision.

Recommendation 2:

Major revision of the LFA in the original PD should be delayed until substantial implementation experience is gained (possibly until early 2005). If the PMU decides that there are some small sections of the LFA seriously constraining the project's ability to implement activities effectively, then these sections could be revised by a small team of those staff directly involved.

4.2 The Project Implementation Plan

The PIP was produced in August 2003 and revised in October 2003 in conjunction with the Inception Report. It re-ordered the project components and objectives into three themes:

- Capacity building of the NTFP RC;
- Sustainable NTFP resources development and management—at project sites and elsewhere (through ALF) in target provinces;
- NTFP sector development.

- When should the project provide subsidies and when not?

In order to respond to these questions and to develop a coherent programme of work that contributes effectively to achieving project objectives and goals, a “vision” and a strategic framework is required to guide project implementation. Formulation of the framework through a participatory process contributes to the creation of a common understanding amongst project staff and partners of what the project is about. The framework should evolve over time, incorporating project experience and lessons learned. Such a “vision” does not come from a document, but needs to be articulated by the PMU, and relies particularly on leadership from the CTA.

Formulation of such a framework does not require rocket science. Some examples of elements of a strategic framework (based on Phase I experiences) are provided in Appendix VII.

During the participatory workshop with staff on Day 2 of the review, the project staff reached consensus that a major problem for the project is the absence of a vision or strategy emanating from the PMU. This results in an absence of a common understanding on how to

Component 3. Demonstration and Pilot sites

Objective 5 Knowledge is gathered and local systems of sustainable NTFP management are piloted and demonstrated to inform and assist the implementation of reforestation, poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation programmes.

- Defining the role of the ROs (See also Section 7)

Recommendation 5:

The PMU should focus its attention on strategic issues (as indicated above), prioritisation of activities and creating opportunities for project staff and partners to participate in this process. This should include revisiting the five “strategic approaches” outlined in Section 3 of the PD.

High quality outside support and guidance for this task is needed on a regular basis during the life of the project. The IUCN Country and Regional Offices will need to play an important role in providing and facilitating this regular support.

4.4 Strategy for supporting the NTFP RC

The Review Team received several comments from project staff that the nature, extent and focus of the capacity building support to be provided by the project to the NTFP RC is unclear. Furthermore, mixed signals were received by the RT about the ability of the RC to make the best use of the opportunity for support presented by the presence of the NTFP project.

Issue:

A clear and focused strategy for project support to the NTFP RC is necessary. This is particularly important regarding the GoV signals for research centres to become more self-sufficient (and by implication more client-oriented) in the years ahead (see Box 3 for an elaboration of this issue).

Recommendation 6:

The project should concentrate capacity building of the NTFP RC on a limited number of areas which are considered a high priority in terms of contributing directly to the sustainable use of NTFPs for poverty alleviation and conservation of biodiversity.

Box 3. Comments on the fate of research centres in a new globalised, client-oriented environment

The Government of Vietnam has signalled that research centres in the country will need to move towards becoming more financially self sufficient during the coming decade. This is a move that is occurring throughout the world and is not peculiar to Vietnam. Research centres in most countries are undergoing a rigid scrutiny of their role, focus and method of operating in a changing global environment. Government agencies (including research centres) are being forced to become more efficient, accountable and client-oriented. This requires fundamental changes in their way of working, for example in the form of:

- Competing with other institutions, forcing a clear definition of “comparative advantage”;
- Delivering quality outputs that are required by clients;
- Pro-active fundraising and acquisition of work;
- Cost cutting.

These shifts are part of the overall thrust towards becoming more economically efficient in a globalised world—one that Vietnam is steadily embracing.

The experience in other parts of the world is that research centres that do not re-invent themselves to become more aligned to client needs steadily become irrelevant, lose funding support and often disappear.

There is a golden opportunity during the coming three to four years for the research centre to go through a strategic planning process to ensure that it is aligned to meet the future needs of Vietnam in

the area of NTFPs. The project's resources (technical and financial) are available to support such a strategic strengthening of capacity to support this difficult transition. A draft strategy was developed during Phase I and a discussion paper has already been circulated during Phase II to stimulate thinking. It is highly likely that failure to embrace change will result in the demise of the research centre within a decade. Maintenance of the *status quo* is not a serious option if the research centre wishes to survive.

The decision to commence the process of adaptation and change is outside the control of the project *per se*, and depends on leadership from MARD, the FSIV and the NTFP RC itself. The project can assist with:

- Creating awareness of the imperative to change (e.g. providing examples of successful and unsuccessful change processes);
- Some aspects of the change process.

5. ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT

5.1 *External to the project*

There is some overlap between the discussion in this section and that in the following one on Administration and Management. This is inevitable, but we have done our best to maintain a distinction between organisational *structure* and the *management* and administration of that structure.

Most of the organisational structures set out in the PD have been established and are operating. The Steering Committee has met twice. One comment that could be made of its deliberations is that it focused mainly on reviewing the details of how the project was progressing rather than giving guidance on the vision and strategy needed by the project in order to achieve something of lasting value for Vietnam in the NTFP sub-sector. It would be desirable if the Steering Committee could play a stronger role in really steering the project in an appropriate “big picture”, strategic direction.

The formation of a National Technical Advisory Board (NTAB) was proposed in the PD, and it is currently being modified to be more representative of the technical areas in which the project is working. We did not form an opinion on the appropriateness of the NTAB, or its ability to be an effective organisational structure.

Issues:

- **The PSC could be more proactive in helping the project focus on the “big picture” issues through strategic guidance;**
- **The NTAB, which was designed to provide linkages between the project and FSSP, the 5 MHRP and other relevant programmes, could play an important role as a sounding board for discussing both strategic and technical aspects of the project to complement the role of the Steering Committee.**

Recommendation 7:

We encourage the PSC and NTAB to adopt a strategic role. This should be reflected in the task descriptions of these committees.

5.2 *The Project Management Unit*

The PMU was established on the arrival of th

project staff					
IUCN staff supervision					C
Consultant's contracts			D		
Planning & reporting					
Annual project workplan			C		
Quarterly project workplan			DA		
Annual project report			C		
Six-monthly project report			DA		
Quarterly unit work-plans and reports			DA		
Activities					
Approval of requests for missions/fieldtrips			DA		
Approval of trip reports					D
ToRs and selection of consultants			DA		
Workplans of consultants					D
Day-to-day supervision of consultants					D
Reports of consultants			DA		
Financial management					
Approving equipment purchase up to \$XX			DA		
Annual Budget			C		
Six-monthly liquidity planning			DA		
Monthly financial reports			DA		
Quarterly Unit budgets and financial reports			DA		
Etc.					
Etc.					

It is recognised that in the multi-level authority sharing system that applies in the project, it is often difficult to place clear boundaries on authority as suggested in Table 3. The table might prove a useful basis for discussing the issues objectively, but efficient decision making will ultimately depend not on the slavish following of a table of authorities, but on the building of collegiate and trusting relationships within the PMU.

During the review team's discussions with the ICD Director, a suggestion was made that a mid level English speaking support person could be provided to the PMU. Another possibility could be for a senior national expert to fill this position to provide advice and assistance to the PMU in decision making and implementation. However, we also feel that there could be dangers inherent in such a move, as an additional person in the PMU could further complicate the situation unless lines of authority and responsibility are very clearly defined. Such a person could also easily subsume the role of the DPD unless the relationships were carefully managed. We believe that the project is sufficiently large and important for all major partners to warrant considering the appointment of a full time DPD.

Issue:

The enlargement of the PMU to include the Director of the FSIV as the Project Director, along with unclear limits of authority and responsibility of individual members of the PMU, has complicated and slowed management decision making and led to a situation where there is lack of clarity and confusion over many management issues.

Recommendation 8:

The PMU undertake an exercise to review the working methodology and approaches of its members, to define the limits of authority and responsibility that apply to individual members and various grouping of members of the PMU.

Issue:

The increased demands of Phase II compared with Phase I (plus the assumption of additional work loads by the DPD) have meant that the DPD is unable to devote the time needed to exercise effective management of the project.

Recommendation 9:

Domain	MARD	PMU	IUCN
reporting			
Organising PSC meetings & minutes	JR	JR	C
Organising NTAB meetings & minutes	C	R	C
Liaison with other relevant ODA projects		R	S
<i>Human Resources</i>			
Staff Recruitment & contracts: • Advisors • Consultants • National Staff	C	C R JR	R JR
Staff supervision: • CTA • TAs • Consultants • National staff		R R R	R
<i>Planning & Reporting</i>			
• Annual workplan & report • Six monthly Progress report • Annual Budget & financial report • Quarterly Unit workplans & reports • PIP & Inception report		JR JR JR R R	JR JR JR JR
<i>Financial Management</i>			
• Expenditure BL 101–104 (CTA & TAs) • Expenditure on other BLs		R	R
Etc.			
Etc.			

NB. Within IUCN, a task division would need to be established between: Country Representative, Programme Coordinator, Programme Officer, Office Manager, Accountant (all in the IUCN Vietnam Office) and the Head of ELG and the Coordinator of the Regional Forest Programme (both in the Regional Office in Bangkok).

The views of the project team were very clear on this issue of the provision of support from IUCN during the participatory workshop on Day 2 of the mission when they reached consensus that:

- Technical support from IUCN VN has been limited (so far mainly administrative support only);
- The role of IUCN in the project – Country Office and Regional Office – is unclear and (there is limited) acceptance of IUCN’s role by partners;
- IUCN does not respond effectively to the project’s technical needs;
- (The project) has not yet tapped into IUCN’s wider technical expertise.

The suggestion from the staff for addressing these issues was to develop a “detailed plan to enhance support from IUCN” to address:

- Technical;
- Supervision / quality control;
- Advisory support;

We agree with this general assessment by the project staff, although we acknowledge that there are many aspect of IUCN's support that would not normally be obvious to many of the project staff. Hence, their comments need to be qualified somewhat. Nonetheless, their perceptions were strongly expressed and universally held. Project staff are clearly looking for more technical support from IUCN than they are currently receiving.

It is clear that there are many technical and other inputs needed by the project if it is to have any chance of moving ahead quickly and effectively. The notion of the PMU engaging the IUCN Regional Office on a consultancy basis only when the PMU thinks it needs certain services is not a useful way of thinking of the relationship. IUCN has much more to offer than occasional technical cons

Our analysis has confirmed the perceptions expressed by the staff, and we have summarised the situation more comprehensively by attempting to identify the underlying causes behind the problems identified by staff. These are:

- Cumbersome and time consuming decision making arrangements;
- Poor prioritisation of activities (particularly emphasis on tactical rather than strategic issues);
- Tendency towards strongly centralised control rather than maximising decentralised authority and responsibility;
- Strong tendency to micro-manage project activities in the centre and the ROs;
- Tendency (on occasions) to by-pass ROs in making decisions with district partners;
- Excessively bureaucratic procedures and systems that consume considerable time and energy for limited benefit;
- Lack of clear definition of authorities and responsibilities for PMU members, ROs, IUCN and partners;
- Insufficient exchange of ideas and information through discussions and visits to ROs and field sites;

It is possible that if these management challenges are not addressed effectively, there is a danger of losing good staff in the near future.

An indicative list including some of these management challenges is presented in Table 5, along with some suggestions for possible solutions.

Table 5. Indicative list of examples of PMU management challenges and some possible solutions

Management challenges	Examples	Possible solutions
Cumbersome and time consuming decision making arrangements.	Three people are members of the PMU, with the NPD distant from the project office.	NPD formally delegate <i>specific</i> tasks to the DPD for day-to-day operations, so that everyone is aware of the arrangements.
Strong tendency to micro-manage project activities in the centre and the field offices.	CTA spends time on small issues such as reviewing the fuel consumption of project vehicles; approving small items of expenditure; DPD concerned with minor details relating to arrangements of student visits to NRO.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devote time to strategic management and delegate tactical management to work units. • Spend more time in the field, guiding project interventions, building capacities, facilitating learning and extracting policy lessons.
Poor prioritisation of activities.	Time has been allocated to tactical details at the expense of strategic issues	

Tendency towards strongly centralised control rather than maximising decentralised authority and responsibility.

consume considerable time and energy for limited benefit.	focusing on small details) before approval.	get on with the job.
Poor information flow and collaboration within the PMU.	Sending students to the field (DPD is aware for several months, CTA is informed a few days before students are about to leave). DPD and CTA do not give the same message	Work towards building good relationships within the PMU, and ensure information is shared.
Poor information flow between PMU and RO	DPD has meetings with Cam Xuyen DPC without informing RO; Students are dropped without informing RO.	Ensure that ROs are kept fully informed of activities that fall within their sphere of authority and responsibility.

Issues:

The management style emanating from the PMU is not effective in encouraging staff enthusiasm and moving forward efficiently and effectively with project implementation.

Good working relationships have not always been established between the project and partner organisations. This has inhibited the ability of the project to move ahead.

Recommendation 11:

The PMU members, and in particular the CTA, should change their management style and adopt appropriate working methods and approaches for project management with a focus on:

- ***Improving, clarifying and speeding up decision making processes;***
- ***Decentralising relevant decision making and project management, with a clear role for ROs and field site partners in the implementation of field activities;***
- ***Prioritising and allocating time to the fundamental functions of the PMU; i.e. focusing on strategic issues and on promoting common understanding of project strategies, rather than on minor tactical issues;***
- ***Stimulating and facilitating debate, thinking and action learning, both within the project team and with project partners;***
- ***Establishing a cooperative relationship within the PMU and with the project partners.***
- ***Reviewing and clarifying authority and responsibility for key areas of decision making among PMU members, and between the PMU and IUCN.***

Issue:

Many management challenges have been identified during the course of this Review.

We have suggested several changes aimed at making the project run more smoothly and efficiently. However, it is wise to remember that a perfect organisational structure and sound procedural systems will not guarantee effective outcomes if they are managed badly. Conversely, good management will normally triumph over bad structure and bad systems. Of fundamental importance is the *quality of management*, which is founded on sound, mutually supportive and respectful personal relationships. We want to emphasise here that building and maintaining these relationships is not the responsibility of one person alone: all members of the PMU and partner organisations have an important role to play in this.

7. ACTIVITIES

7.1 *General progress*

Almost everyone met with during the conduct of the review commented that progress in initiating activities (particularly field activities) has been very slow. We recognise that commencing a new phase of any project can be a lengthy and difficult process. Delays often occur with staff recruitment and because lengthy bureaucratic decision making procedures can slow down such things as: purchasing equipment, negotiating and signing MoUs, establishing field offices, etc. The milestones shown in Table 3 of Section 3 indicate the various steps taken since the project commenced and this gives some indication of what was necessary to set up the project. Much has been achieved--all staff are in place, regional offices are established and functioning, procedural systems and operating practices have been established, some MoUs have been signed with implementing partners and PRA surveys have

Issue:

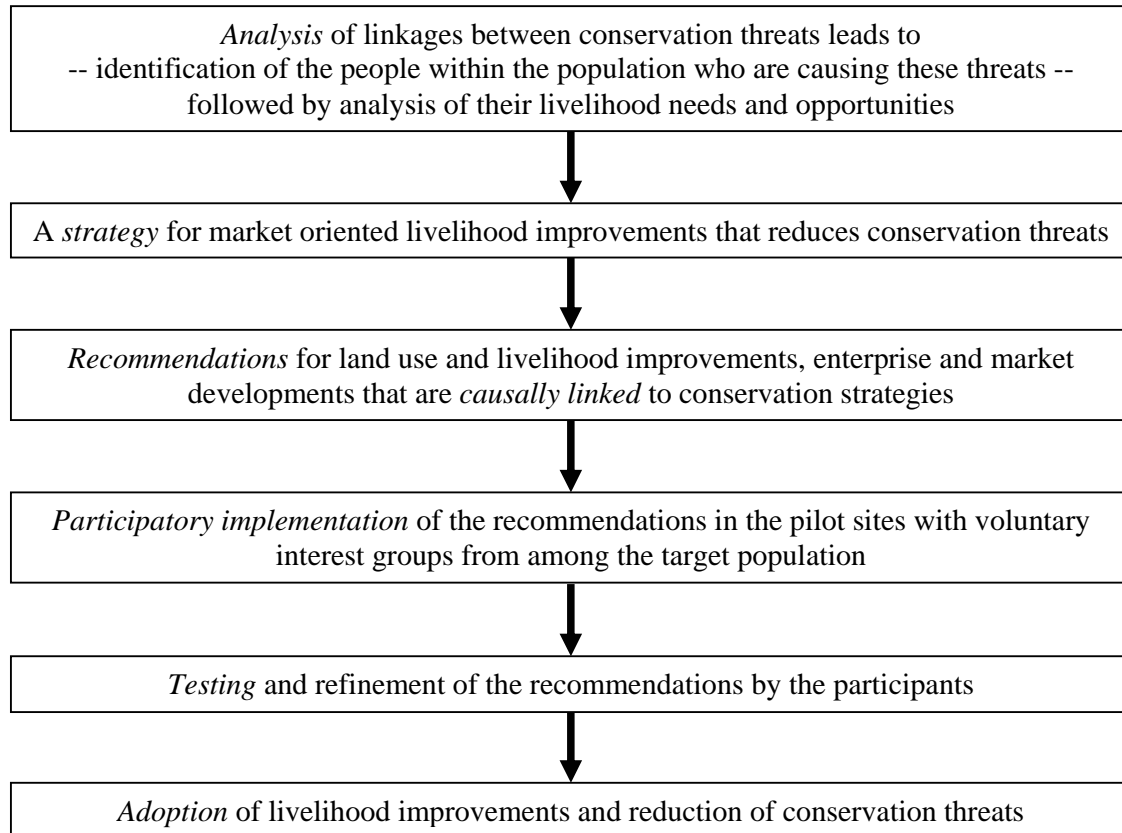
The original project design as intended in the PD included decentralised authority to the ROs for major decision making in the planning, implementing and monitoring of field activities. Such a decentralised approach to management has not been put in place.

Recommendation 13:

The authority for planning, implementing and monitoring of field activities should be decentralised to the ROs⁶. ROs should be given adequate support so that they can fulfil their mandate to strengthen communications and partnerships with local authorities, other

The process of identifying and testing appropriate conservation – development related interventions (from Phase I)

The schema below outlines the action-learning steps used for testing market oriented interventions which benefit conservation.



It is acknowledged by staff that the project is supposed to have a “learning” culture. However, it is not at all clear just what this means and how they might go about learning from their experiences and applying the learning to advancing the cause of using NTFPs in Vietnam for poverty alleviation and conservation outcomes. Korten (1980) suggested that projects should go through several stages in their development with each stage being marked by explicit learning (see Box 5).

Box 5. Development stages of a project

Because the way ahead is never clear (with projects such as ICDPs), the implementers need to feel their way forward. Korten suggests a “learning process approach” where:

*“...a new program should progress through three development stages in which the focal concern is successively on learning to be **effective**, learning to be **efficient**, and learning to **expand**.”*

(Korten, 1980: 480). Note the emphasis Korten has given to *learning*.

Phase II of the NTFP project is largely still trying to learn to be effective and efficient, although there is some potential to learn to expand by building on some of the experiences in Phase I. The question arises about the form that the learning will take, and how the knowledge coming from the learning will be packaged and made relevant for Vietnam.

Further, little attention has been given to debating just what the project is aiming to leave behind at the end of the phase. Should the project be aiming to develop and test a set of generic strategies and approaches to address poverty alleviation and conservation by focusing

greater access to knowledge and understanding about action learning. This could be an opportunity for broadening the partnerships and increasing linkages with other organizations.

8. LINKAGES WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The NTFP sub-sector in Vietnam has many players with different roles, responsibilities and capacities. Among these players, the NTFP RC plays an important but not exclusive role. Therefore, in order to adequately support the development of the sub-sector, the focus of the project should not exclusively be on the NTFP RC, but on a range of important players. To this end, the PD emphasizes the importance of establishing partnerships, both at the field level and nationally.

The project has undertaken a number of initiatives in this field: the PIP provides a partial inventory of potential partners, MoUs have been established with several field site partners, a networking meeting with a large number of different institutions was organised and the training unit has established connections with a number of potential training partners. The choice of several of the local field site partners, based on considerations of sustainability, seems a reasonable one and it will be interesting to monitor the evolution of these local partnerships.

Notwithstanding these initiatives, the RT feels that to date the project has paid insufficient attention to:

- Articulation of the mutual benefits and “strategic importance” of some of the partnerships currently being established. Partnerships should be based on a “give-get” relationship: each of the actors in a partnership should bring something to the relationship and should get something out of the relationship. For example, it is not at all clear what the added value is of bringing in Hanoi based partners to implement field activities at sites remote from Hanoi. What do they bring to the project and what does the project bring to them?
- Exploring the possibility for establishing innovative, strategic partnerships that have the potential to contribute to advances in the NTFP sub-sector. The establishment of such partnerships is particularly significant at the national level with relevant units of MARD and FSIV.

The RT acknowledges that these are not simple matters. Many organizations in Vietnam seem to have only a fairly vague notion of their own identity, niche and strengths and it is often difficult to identify specific added value of entering into partnerships. Furthermore, establishing (or ceasing!) partnerships is often partly driven by other agendas (political, personal relationships, etc.).

The PD was perhaps not explicit enough in ex

Issues:

The added value of the present partnerships (particularly with Eco-Eco, CRES and some of the District partners) has not been adequately or effectively explored (Objective 4 in the PD has not been effectively developed).

There has been insufficient inventory and analysis of the potential of various new partners (including departments of FSIV) to work with the project.

Recommendation 15:

PMU should adopt a more consultative and participatory approach to developing partnerships with an emphasis on effective two-way communication and dialogue leading to equitable give-get outcomes in the relationships. This process should aim to (re)define the nature of the relationships so that the partners are able to provide added value.

Recommendation 16:

Carry out an inventory of potential partners plus an analysis of their strengths to identify what they can contribute to the work of the project—particularly to aspects such as:

- *Analysis of field experience and identification of lessons learned in relation to scaling up;*
- *Policy implications emanating from project experiences;*
- *Providing support for specific technical expertise such as NTFP surveys, production and processing in Vietnam;*
- *Market analysis for NTFPs;*
- *National and regional policy and strategy formulation for the NTFP sub-sector development (in particular aimed at poverty alleviation and conservation);*

9. BUDGET

Disbursement of the budget in 2003 (the first full year of project operations) has been quite low at less than 9% of the total project budget (see table 5). This reflects both the normal delays encountered in establishing a project and the slow start to activities noted in earlier sections of this report.

Table 5. Project budget and expenditure for 2003

2003 budget (euros)			2003 expenditure (euros)	% expenditure /total project budget
As at Nov 2002	Revised in Feb 2003	Revised in June 2003		
1,258,017	1,000,926	668,487	592,425	8.86

One area of the budget that has caused difficulties in the past relates to budget line 402, which is the budget allocated to IUCN for various inputs. There are various perceptions and points of view about where the control for this budget line should rest and the purpose to which it should be put. The Netherlands Embassy has made it quite clear that this line was inserted into the budget to harness IUCN's expertise. It would not be available for other purposes in the event that IUCN input does not ev

Strong positions have been taken about how decisions are made about accessing this budget line, and feelings have run high.

We believe that the major question to be addressed in making decisions is: what is the best way to assist the project to reach its objectives?

Issue (see also Section 5.3):

There are different views among the Vietnamese partners (including MARD), IUCN Country Office and IUCN Asia Regional Office on which group has the authority to access budget line 402. These differences have become deeply divisive to the extent of seriously inhibiting some aspects of project progress and damaging relationships between these project partners.

Recommendation 17 (to be read in conjunction with Recommendation 10):

There should be a meeting between IUCN Regional and Country Offices, PMU, Chairman of Steering Committee, Director of ICD and the Netherlands Embassy to reach agreement on procedures for accessing budget line 402, and in particular, to identify:

- ***The needs of the project for different types of support from IUCN Regional and Country Offices;***
- ***The procedure for making decisions about how and when this support should be provided and how to assess results.***

Following on from this meeting, the IUCN Regional Director should determine the roles and responsibilities of the various IUCN components in both the Country and Regional offices in providing the required support to the project.

It was noted that the PIP changed the focus of several budget lines (301-303) from general capacity building of a range of institutions, to capacity building for the NTFP RC alone. This may have been an unintended shift and an artifact of the PIP. However, as it stands it is too narrow an interpretation of the capacity building aspects of the project. Going back to the PD from the PIP for conceptual guidance (as suggested in Recommendation 3) will provide an opportunity to reassess this situation and broaden the focus of capacity building as intended in the original project design.

10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The project has undertaken several initiatives to set up and implement an M&E system: a draft M&E plan has been developed, indicators for the activities of each project group have been developed in a participatory fashion and M&E training has been carried out. This work has been well carried out and is an excellent start. However, the focus in the M&E systems set up to date is on compliance monitoring (“Has the activity been carried out?”). This is important for planning and reporting purposes, but the biggest challenge for the project will be to monitor and evaluate the *impact* of the project’s activities, i.e. to develop indicators and to measure progress towards achieving the higher levels in the logical framework hierarchy: the project’s objectives and goal. For example:

- What is the project’s impact on biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation (project goal)?

8. The project design is basically sound and comprehensive and the project is endowed with adequate financial resources;
9. Enthusiastic staff in all units – the RT was particularly impressed with the RO teams.

The early months in the life of the project were taken up largely with the normal logistical tasks that face all projects during the inception stage. That stage is now past—staff have been appointed and are in place; necessary equipment has been purchased and is in use; and operating procedures and systems have been established. Field implementation is poised to commence. In spite of this, we feel that there are major constraints that apply to the project that, unless addressed, will seriously limit the project's ability to achieve its objectives. There are four recurrent themes that have become evident during the review. These are:

10. Lack of a clear vision and a strategies (both short and long term) for guiding project activities;
11. Slow progress with initiating activities (particularly field activities);
12. Problems associated with organisational structures (particularly unclear roles and overlapping authority and responsibility among key project and partner groups and individuals);
13. Problems with managing project affairs.

Perhaps the most important deficiency in the project to date is the lack of a clear vision and strategies (short and long term) for guiding the project's implementation, in particular in the field. We believe this is a serious short coming and needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. The PMU, and particularly the CTA, has an important responsibility in addressing these issues. We do not underestimate the difficulties involved and emphasise that it will require the on-going input of high quality technical support from outside the project. It is also not something that should be seen as a one-off activity, but will require commitment over the life of the project. If it is done well it could be the conceptual (and intellectual) pivot of the project and the vehicle to bring the project team (and its partners) together around a common mission. IUCN has a critical role to play (and a responsibility) in bringing international thinking and best practice to bear on these issues.

The review team recognises that the time consuming tasks necessary to establish a project as a functional entity make it difficult to commence meaningful activities early in the life of a project. Nonetheless, we feel that the PMU could have been more effective in ensuring that output oriented activities were given a higher priority.

The list of four themes given above contains a mix of structural and management issues along with substantive technical issues all of which need to be addressed. It is useful to repeat here a comment made in an earlier section of this report:

“...it is wise to remember that a perfect organisational structure and sound procedural systems will not guarantee effective outcomes if they are managed badly. Conversely, good management will normally triumph over bad structure and bad systems. Of fundamental importance is the quality of management, which is founded on sound, mutually supportive and respectful personal relationships.”

We feel that addressing the structural issues should be a relatively easy task, although it may need to be facilitated because of the (at least partial) breakdown in some relationships. This could provide the platform around which to address the management issues. However,

fundamental changes in management require an acceptance of the need for fundamental changes to management style.

An additional observation relates to the conceptual and practical difficulties associated with implementing an ICDP, such as the NTFP project. Because of the dual objectives of poverty

Wells, M., Gugenheim, S., Khan, A., Wardojo, W. and Jepson, P. (1999)

APPENDICES

<i>Appendix I</i>	<i>Terms of Reference for internal review</i>
<i>Appendix II</i>	<i>Mission workplan and itinerary</i>
<i>Appendix III</i>	<i>List of documents consulted during internal review</i>
<i>Appendix IV</i>	<i>People met during review</i>
<i>Appendix V</i>	<i>Results of participatory workshop with project staff</i>
<i>Appendix VI</i>	<i>Tasks of the IUCN Programme Officer in support of the NTFFP project</i>
<i>Appendix VII</i>	<i>Examples of elements of a conceptual framework for decision making developed in Phase I</i>
<i>Appendix VIII</i>	<i>Generic lessons learned from ICDPs – globally and from Vietnam</i>

APPENDIX I Terms of reference for internal review

1. Introduction

Background

1.1 The Project

Phase II of the Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) Sub-sector Support

Objective 2 Capacity of the NTFPRC/MARD and other relevant institutions is strengthened to assist with the development and implementation of national strategies and policies related to the ecologically sustainable and equitable development of NTFPs.

Objective 3 Other institutions and stakeholders involved in forest research and development; poverty reduction; and, biodiversity conservation programmes are financially supported to undertake NTFP related research & development and engaged in information sharing through networks

Component 2. Transferring existing methods for sustainable NTFP development to practitioners and training institutions

Objective 4: The use of existing approaches and methods for promoting ecologically sustainable and equitable development of NTFPs is expanded through relevant training and extension institutions.

Component 3. Demonstration and Pilot sites

Objective 5 Knowledge is gathered and local systems of sustainable NTFP management⁸ are piloted and demonstrated to inform and assist the implementation of reforestation, poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation programmes.

Component 4. Enhancing Project effectiveness and sustainability

Objective 6 Project approaches and practices are established that foster the institutionalisation of effective resource use, partnership building, action-learning, and gender responsiveness in project implementation and within the host and partner organisations.

1.2 Context of the review

In addition to permanent technical and managerial assistance to the project, IUCN provides support through review missions and other short-term inputs, such as this mission, which will be the first review mission in Phase II of the project. The present review will help the project team to consolidate initial implementation experience into a firm platform for the extensive scaling up of project implementation anticipated during 2004. It will also assist the project partners make an initial assessment of project performance, and may identify adjustments needed to enhance effectiveness and efficiency of project implementation.

2. General terms of reference

2.1 Objectives of the review

The objectives of the review are:

- To assist the project team and the project implementing partners in assessing the achievements, lessons learned and strengths and weaknesses of the project to date;
- To assist the project team in formulating possible adjustments in response to this assessment.

⁸ Work in this component will focus on plant NTFP species.

2.2 Approach of the review

It is important that the project team and the implementing partners learn as much as possible from the review, both in terms of process (How does one carry out an assessment?) and in terms of content (What does this particular assessment teach us?). Therefore, the review team will work in close collaboration with the project team. Frequent meetings and a number of workshop-like sessions and mini-seminars, together with informal interactions will form part of the activities of the mission in order to create fruitful interactions between the mission team members and the members of the project team.

3. Specific terms of reference

In principle, the mission members will review the entire project, "from project document to present activities and progress." It will focus on the general direction, approach and priorities of the project. Specific areas of attention will include:

a) Implementation issues

- *Conformity with project design*

How well does the project implementation follow the Project Document and the Project Implementation Plan

- *Approach and strategy*

Are the approaches and strategies selected by the project appropriate?

Are the approaches and strategies well articulated and understood by all relevant parties?

- *Activities*

Do activities reflect the project goal, objectives, approaches and strategies?

What is the project's progress compared with planned achievements?

Are the activities carried out in an appropriate way?

Are the priorities right (should eco-tourism and work with NTFP animal species be included?)

- *Organisation and structure*

Is the project structure effective? (including Steering Committee, National Technical Advisory Board, Project Management Unit, Project Secretariat, Project Implementation Units). What recommendations could be made in order to improve its effectiveness?

Are the co-ordination mechanisms between participating organisations appropriate and effective? Do they allow for the co-ordination of activities and for an exchange of information and ideas?

Are the roles and responsibilities of project principle partners (FSIV, NTFP RC, and IUCN (at both Country and Regional level)) clearly understood and carried out in an appropriate and effective way?

- *Management and administration*

Have project management and administrative procedures been established in a timely manner; are they appropriate and effective?

Are the project planning procedures appropriate and effective?

- FSIV
- The Chairman of the project Steering committee (Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Binh - Director of the Department of Forestry - DoF)
- MARD: ICD and DoF
- Netherlands Embassy
- Possible other resource persons or institutions, which may help the team to better the project context.
- On each field visit meet with Regional Office staff, District Peoples' Committee, DARD, local level partners such as farmers' associations etc.
- To facilitate and contribute to mini-seminars, workshops and other meetings
- To write a report with its findings.

A detailed Working Agenda will be discussed and agreed with the PMU and concerned people/organisations and the final version will be attached to this TORs.

4.3 Mode of operation

The team will be working closely with the Project Management Unit (Project Director, Deputy Project Director and Chief Technical Advisor), Adjustments to the Terms of Reference of the mission will be discussed and agreed with the Project Management Unit (PMU) before the changes become effective.

The mission's final report will be submitted to IUCN VN and the project PMU on the 25 February 2004 before the Team Leader's departure from Hanoi. Comments on the draft report will be emailed to the Team Leader by March 5th. He will then work to produce the final version of the report which he will submit to the IUCN Country Office and the project PMU by March 12th, 2004.

4.4 Outputs

The outputs of the mission will include:

- Increased understanding amongst the project team about project assessments and reviews
- A report prepioa.o, including

A brief description ofivities carried out

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APPENDIX II Mission workplan and itinerary

<i>Day</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>What</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>Where</i>
	10.00 - 11.30	Briefing	Mrs. Aban M. Kabraji (IUCN Regional Director), Mr. Andrew Ingles (Head ELG group), Dr. Don Gilmour and Mr Guido Broekhoven	IUCN Asia Regional Office, Bangkok

	16.00 - 17.00	Meet with Support Group	Tien Anh, Thuy, Chat, Dat, Hoa & <i>Group 2 (Don, Duc)</i>	NTPF RC, Hanoi
	15.00 - 17.00	Meeting	Don Gilmour & Mr. Thong	IUCN Country Office, Hanoi
Sat 14	09.00 - 11.00	Reading Project Docs	Team meeting	NTPF RC, Hanoi
	11.00 - 12.00	Meeting	RT, Maurits	NTPF RC, Hanoi
Sun 15	Whole day	Travel to Ha Tinh		-
	08.00 - 09.00	Meeting	Leaders of PPC, Dard, DOSTE	Ha Tinh PPC
	09.30 - 10.00	Discussion	RT and all NCRO project staff	NCRO, Cam O2 CaLi 568.98 0.47-03 -10.338142.74

	15.30 – 16.30	Meeting	DPD, Duc, Can	NTFP RC, Hanoi
	17.00 - 18.00	Meeting	CTA, Don, Guido	NTFP RC, Hanoi
Sat 21	Whole day	Report writing	RT	Hotel, Hanoi
Sun 22	Whole Day	Report writing & reviewing	RT	Hotel, Hanoi
Mon 23	Whole day	Report writing	RT	Hotel, Hanoi
	08.30 – 12.00	Preparation of presentation	RT	NTFP RC, Hanoi
	13.00 - 15.00	Debriefing	RT, relevant IUCN staff , Project staff	NTFP RC, Hanoi

APPENDIX III List of documents consulted during internal review

- Project Document (Jul 2002)
- Project Inception Report (Aug 2003)
- Project Implementation Plan (Aug 2003 – Revised Oct 2003)
- Progress Report Semester 2, 2002 (Feb 2003)
- Progress Report Semester 1, 2003 (Aug 2003)
- Annual Workplan 2003 (Rev version Feb 2003)
- Annual Workplan 2004 (Nov 2003 – Donor approval pending)
- MoU between IUCN VN, FSIV NTFP RC for project implementation (Apr 2003)
- MARD Comments on the Project Document (Nov 2002)
- Project Communication Strategy (Consultant Report Nov 2003)
- Gender and Livelihoods Strategy (Consultant Report Dec 2003)
- Marketing Strategy (Consultant Report (draft) Dec 2003)
- Project Partnerships – Discussion paper (May 2003)
- Partner selection criteria (Sep 2003)
- NTFP RC Training Needs Assessment (Jul 2003)
- NTFP RC Strategic Development Options - Discussion paper (Oct 2003) and also minutes of PMU meeting on this paper (Dec 2003)
- NTFP Research Fund - Strategy (Aug 2003)
- NTFP RF - Guidelines for Applicants (Sep 2003)
- NTFP Action Learning Fund (ALF) - Strategy (Mechanisms) (Dec 2003)
- NTFP ALF - Guidelines for Applicants (Dec 2003).
- Tam Dao Workshop Report (June 2003)
- Draft M&E Plan (Feb 2004)
- Training Annual Report (Jan 2004)

APPENDIX IV People met during the internal review

Nr	Name	Affiliation
<i>IUCN Country Office</i>		
1	Mr. Nguyen Minh Thong	IUCN Country Representative
2	Ms. Nguyen Thi Yen	IUCN CO, Project Officer
3	Mr. Warwick Browne	IUCN CO, Programme Coordinator
<i>IUCN Regional Office⁹</i>		
4	Mrs Aban Marker Kabraji	IUCN Regional Director, Asia Region
5	Mr. Andrew Ingles	IUCN ELG Group Head, Asia Region
<i>NTFP Project PMU</i>		
6	Dr. Trieu Van Hung	Project Director
7	Dr. Le Thanh Chien	Deputy Project Director
8	Mr. Gerry Neville	Project Chief Technical Advisor
<i>NTFP Project Staff</i>		
9	Mr. Maurits Servaas	Training advisor
10	Mr. Nguyen Van Duong	Marketing Officer
14	Mr. Le Tuan Anh	Training Officer
15	Ms. Nguy7.52 t[(108.6(Mark)6.4(etios.uffi)-5.3(.4518TJJu)11.u 1.87.nioi)-5.r6.4(1hbDi)-D Le enfBT10.3303 0 0 116	

<i>ECO-ECO</i>		
40	Prof. Nguyen Van Truong	Director
41	Prof. Ha Chu Chu	Deputy Director
42	Ms. Nguyen Lan Anh	Son Dong Project Site Officer
<i>CRES</i>		
43	Prof. Truong Quang Hoc	Director
44	Ms. Vo Thanh Giang	Researcher
<i>MARD</i>		
45	Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Binh	Director General, Forestry Department
46	Dr. Le Van Minh	Director General, Internat. Cooper. Dpt
47	Dr. Tran Van Long	Dep. Dir. Gen., ICD
<i>Ha Tinh Provincial Authorities</i>		
48	Mr. Nguyen Xuan Tinh	Director of DOST
49	Mr. Nguyen Quoc Trieu	Director of Agricultural Extension Center
<i>Cam Xuyen District Authorities</i>		
50	Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Bao	Chairman, District People Commission
51	Mr. Tran Dinh Tien	Chairman, District People Committee
52	Mr. Tran Van Sinh	Director, Technology Extension Center
53	Mr. Nguyen Van Ly	Dep. Dir., Technology Extension Center
54	Mr. Nguyen Thanh Son	Dir. Protection Forest Management Com.
<i>Cam Son Village Authorities and Farmers</i>		
55	Le Viet Chinh	Village Head
56	Tran Dinh Duy	Extension Expert
57	Tran Van Bieu	Farmer
58	Nguyen Tien Dung	Farmer
<i>Van Don District Authorities</i>		
59	Mr. Truong Cong Huu	Dep. Dir. Economics Office
60	Mr. Nguyen Van Son	Forestry Expert. Field Site Coordinator
<i>Van Yen Commune Farmers</i>		
61	Ms. Pham Thi Nguyet	Farmer, Field Team member
62	Mr. Le Van Hung	Farmer
63	Mr. Nguyen Van Sinh	Farmer, mushroom producer

APPENDIX V Results of participatory workshop with project staff

Process

During a 3.5 hour session, facilitated by the Leader of the Review Team, each project group (technical group, communications, training, ROs, CTA, DPD) was asked to identify three strengths of the project, three challenges faced by the project and three recommendations to assist the project to move ahead more effectively. Each group took it in turns to identify an issue, which was then written on a whiteboard in English and Vietnamese, and discussed until consensus was reached over the exact nature of the issue, and the formulation of appropriate wording. The results are presented below. In a limited number of cases, no consensus was reached during the discussion, and this is noted after the item.

Strengths

1. Many lessons learned and some accomplishments from Phase I
2. Project focuses on NTFPs which play a [potentially] important role in the forestry sector and poverty reduction
3. Sufficient (ample) budget for implementation
4. Equipment meet requirements for project implementation
5. Intention to link practical field experience with policy development at national and local level
6. Project has comprehensive scope (Policy, research centre, field sites, wide partnership)
7. Phase II has introduced communication component
8. Project selected the correct counterpart (NTFP RC) [in theory]
9. Strong interest from MARD, FSIV and many groups want to join
10. Design emphasizes implementation through partnerships
11. Good (Sufficient) human resources
12. Project generally has good support from local government & people

Challenges/problems

1. No vision or strategy or common understanding on what the project is about and on how to accomplish project objectives (no priorities) among project staff and stakeholders [conservation versus livelihood nexus]
2. Limited integration with NTFP RC, FSIV and MARD
3. Present organizational structure and management systems [between project & its partners, between head office & regional offices (lack of delegated authority)] is not effective – organizational structure is cumbersome (many levels & partners), unbalanced (staff resources) & inequitable (staff salaries)
4. Technical support from IUCN VN has been limited (So far mainly admin support only)
5. Role of IUCN in project – CO; RO unclear & acceptance of IUCN's role by partners
6. IUCN does not respond effectively to the project's technical needs
7. Have not yet tapped into IUCN's wider technical expertise
8. Project document is not easily understood and does not build on achievements of Phase I.
9. Some omissions from Project document, e.g. marketing
10. Information flow and communication within project is poor
11. PMU does not work cooperatively and lead effectively (link to 10.)
12. Lack of transparency in some PMU decisions

13. Inappropriate approach to support poor local people & partners
14. The NTFP RC has difficulty in accessing RF
15. NTFPs interpreted narrowly (plants only; geographic focus)
16. Project budget is large – but investment to local people is small

Recommendations for project

1. Management capacity of PMU should be strengthened (within PMU and between PMU and other groups)
2. Need to review project document and PIP and make adjustment to address deficiencies noted under challenges
3. Develop a vision, strategy and implementation plan for the project and set priorities
4. To change mechanisms (including members and rules) of RF Board *[not full agreement]*
5. Build capacity of NTFP RC staff to write effective research proposals
- 6.

APPENDIX VI Tasks of the IUCN Programme Officer in support of the NTFP project

by Nguyen Thi Yen - Forest Conservation Programme Officer
IUCN Vietnam Country Office
(presented to the project and revised based on the project comments in October 2003)

1. Areas for support and contribution agreed with PMU

- Reporting, monitoring and evaluation
- Development of project Administrative manual
- Communication and Networking
- Liaising and providing information
- Gender

Basically following support activities would be carried out in discussion and agreement with the relevant units/staff of the project:

1) Project management and coordination/monitoring and evaluation:

Support the preparation of sixth-monthly and annual progress reports, annual workplan, liquidity planning, etc. for submission to the donor; comment on draft reports, annual audit, workplans. Support revision of draft reports, workshops, etc.

Prepare progress reports and annual workplans for my own involvement and contribution to the project implementation: reports, workshop evaluation:

Support the preparation of the Gender strategy and plan as well as its implementation
Participate in field surveys if required

4) Other technical areas

Provide relevant information on training programmes; support possible collaboration with other IUCN programme/projects in organising relevant training courses
Support in preparing TORs for short-term consultancies and recommend potential candidates -consultants as required by the project

2. Time allocation:

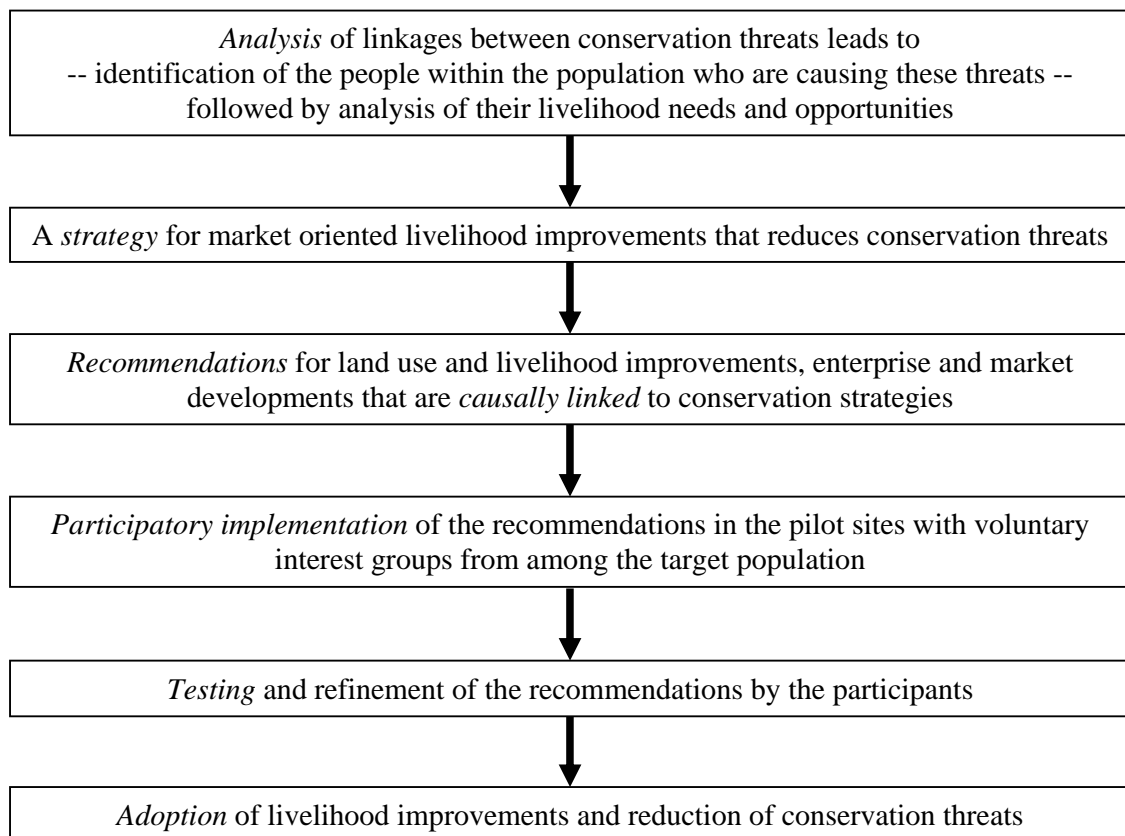
About 10 days per month of which 5 days based at the NPO and 5 days based at their Office.]TJ/TT4 1 Tf-1.3303 0 0 10.3303 110.52 571.5212m0.0c0 Tw()Tj/T-1.1558D()Tj/T-1.1558 TDC

APPENDIX VII Examples of analytical frameworks used for decision making in Phase I

The following three schema illustrate the type of planning and analytical frameworks used in Phase I to guide, test and analyse project interventions. The schema were used in project discussion papers and presentations and they are obviously presented here somewhat in isolation, merely to give an idea of the form that such analytical frameworks could take.

a) The process of identifying and testing appropriate conservation – development related interventions

The schema below outlines the action-learning steps used for testing market oriented interventions which benefit conservation.



b) *In-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation strategies

This schema illustrates how different interv

c) The relationship between the NTFP marketing strategy with the conservation strategy for the protected area

This schema depicts:

- That the

