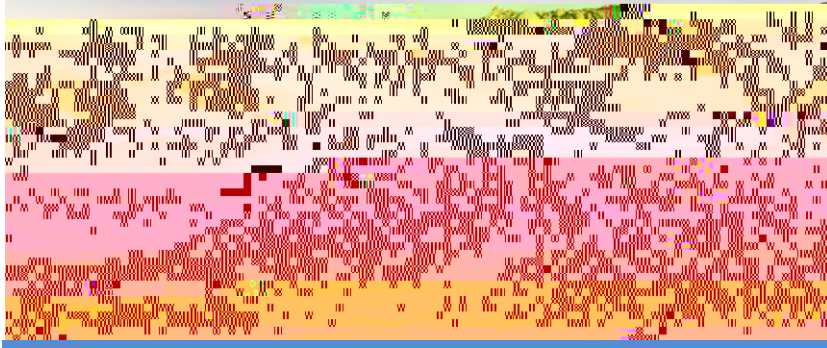
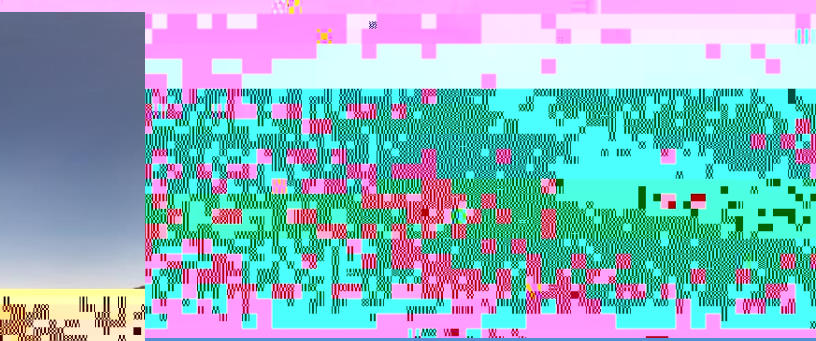
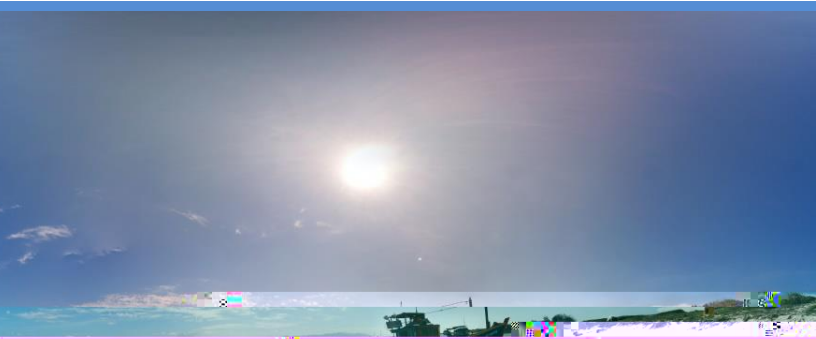
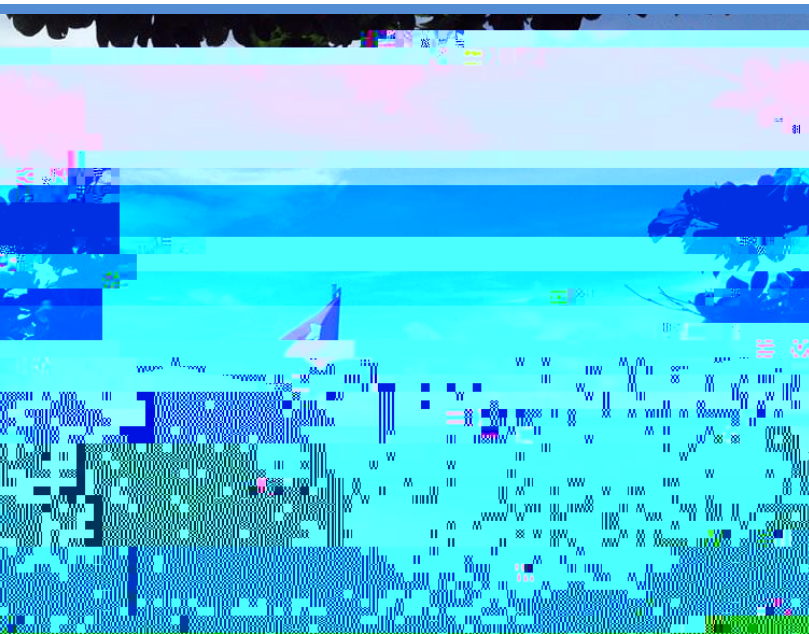




Annual Review 2015

Viet Nam Country Office

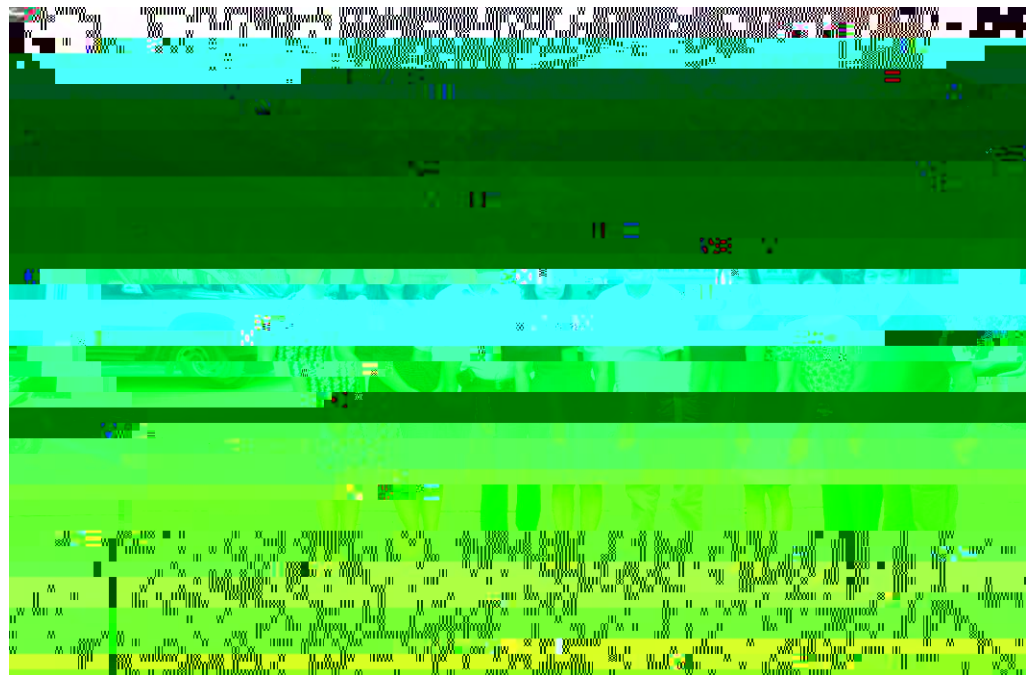


International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has a long history in Viet Nam since the middle of 1980s. In 1993, Vietnamese Government became an IUCN state member and IUCN Viet Nam Country Office also opened on the same year.

Since then, IUCN has made important contribution to biodiversity conservation and environmental protection, primarily through support to the development of laws and policies such as National Biodiversity Action Plan (1995), Law on Forest Protection (2004), Law on Environmental Protection (2005), the Biodiversity Law (2008).

In addition, IUCN works with partners to both support and bring pressure to increase transparency and accountability of government. IUCN Viet Nam's partners include the National Assembly, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics and Public Administration, ministries, and businesses, and local NGOs.

IUCN Viet Nam's programmes include the formation of multi-stakeholder groups to supervise project activities, support local NGOs through small grant financing, finance pilot projects to test improved practices, improve the quality of environmental news, engaging business to improve their environmental performance, and cooperate with provincial governments to demonstrate the benefits of nature



IUCN continued with their ongoing commitment to the country's **Marine Protected Areas (MPA)** in 2015 by signing an MOU with the Directorate of Fisheries (D-FISH) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) covering MPA management effectiveness (MEE) and financing, and species conservation.



A rapid MEE study of all 10 protected sites along and off Vietnam's coasts was carried out. The initial results were presented to MARD Vice Minister Vu Van Tam. **The study results including on-line MEE template for future application** were also presented at a workshop in Ninh Thuan Province. The presentations highlighted the very small proportion of MPAs that are off-limits to fishing, thereby limiting their value for fish recovery.

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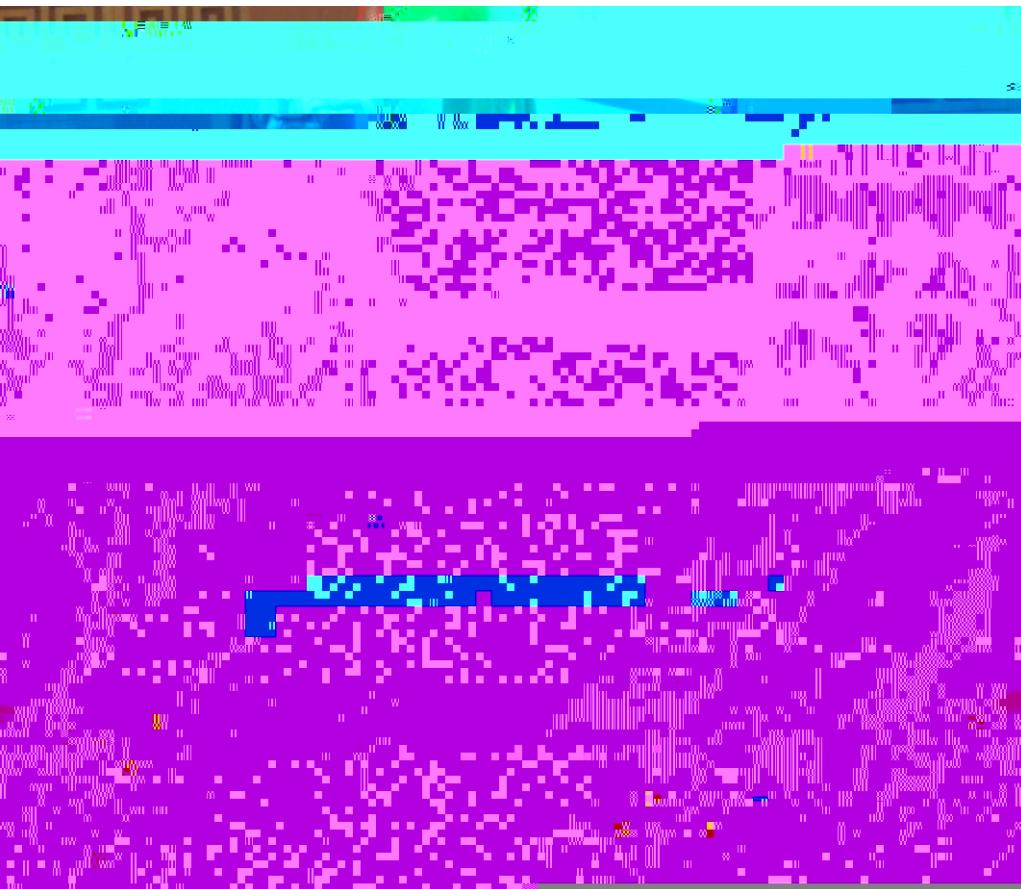
In early 2015, a launch workshop was organised in Ha Long province in partnership with Ha Long Bay Management Board. Cat Ba was added to the title of the project as the fact that improved management of the bay requires cooperation between Quang Ninh Province and Hai Phong. IUCN also met with the Hai Phong People's Committee to discuss ***cooperation on a possible re-nomination of the Ha Long Bay WHS (nominated under criteria vii and viii) as the Ha Long Bay-Cat Ba Archipelago WHS (under criteria x on species).***

IUCN and partners have ***recommended some approaches to designing a certification system for day and overnight cruise boats in Ha Long Bay WHS.*** Three – part approach is recommended including (1) the putting in a place of a decentralised and possibly mobile waste water treatment system for cruise boats that would be cost-effective and allow the government to implement its environmental regulations; (2) the establishing of a certification system for both day and overnight cruise boats that build on the existing Green Lotus standard; and (3) the establishing of a Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) accredited destination certification for the entire Ha Long Bay-Cat Ba Archipelago.

Two important milestones of the HLCBA in 2015 were organising two leadership committee meetings in May and December 2015. The meetings highlighted important outputs of the project and proposed a certification system to set out environmental standards for boat cruises to address environmental problems in Ha Long Bay. The first meeting was chaired by US Ambassador Ted Osius and the Vice Chairman of Quang Ninh Province. Participants witnessed the ***signing ceremony of MOU between Quang Ninh, Hai Phong and IUCN on mutual collaboration.***



project, IUCN and National Parks also provided technical support to volunteers to aid them in supporting the park rangers' activities. IUCN called for applications from volunteers around Viet Nam and received 571 applicants. Through a thorough selection process, 63 volunteers were selected to participate in IUCN's volunteer activities. The programme received lots of positive feedback from the voluntary



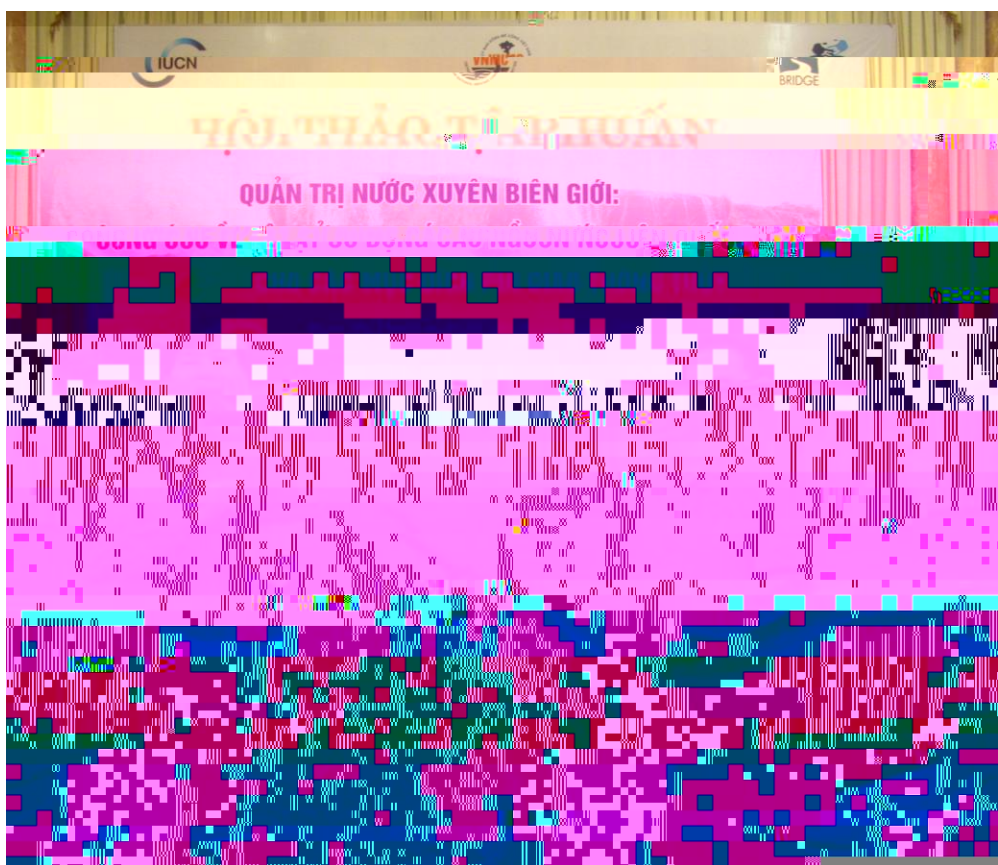
A policy brief on R2R approach on Integrated River Basin Management of Vu Gia-Thu Bon and coastal Quang Nam and Da Nang has been published in English and Vietnamese.

Under MFF's Sino-Viet Nam Initiative (SVI), IUCN organised a workshop in Ha Noi and field trip in Quang Ninh for Vietnamese and Chinese mangrove specialists. The purpose was to ***compare the state of mangrove based shrimp farming in the adjacent provinces of Quang Ninh and Guangxi and share technical expertise and lessons learnt between two countries.***

In February, IUCN participated in the **Mekong Delta Forum** in HCMC, which was organised by the World Bank and the Dutch Embassy. An important result that stemmed from the event was a broad agreement amongst officials and experts that rice production should be de-

Also as a part of IP, IUCN joined a development partners retreat near Ha Noi to discuss a new approach to development and planning in the Mekong Delta. This is based on the principles of the Mekong Delta Plan, which **recommends a shift to a more natural hydrology including, critically, a move away from growing three crops of rice a year.**

Another significant step forward for Viet Nam in terms of water and wetlands last year came as part of the **Building River Dialogue and Governance (BRIDGE)** project. Twenty officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries attended an event organised by the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam (DAV), MOFA's in-house think tank. The key message taken away from the event was that hydro diplomacy can unlock cooperation in a range of fields, not just water. Importantly too, was that senior DAV officials stated that Vietnam wants to be **the ASEAN leader in promoting and improving regional cooperation on shared rivers.**



Viet Nam Limited (HVL) have been working in partnership since 2007. The major milestones of the



IUCN organized a mid-term review workshop for participants from Ca Mau and Ben Tre. The key issues that emerged were the ***potential productivity gains that could be achieved through better post***



Through HLCBA, so far IUCN has called for the participation of five businesses to become members of the Alliance which are Bhaya Cruise, Coca-Cola, Grant Thornton, Trails of Indochina and Indochina Junk. These members will provide both in-kind and in-cash contributions to the implementation of the objectives of the Alliance. It is expected that the number of members will continue growing in the future.

Recognizing that implementing sustainable agriculture and aquaculture practices are a vital way to protect ecosystems such as Vietnam's threatened mangroves, ***IUCN assisted Ca Mau in submitting a USD \$20 million proposal for inclusion in a World Bank loan intended to scale up organic shrimp production over 70,000 hectares in the southern region.***

This represents 50% of all of Vietnam's remaining mangrove forests and the initiative would make a major contribution towards their sustainable usage and future survival.

IUCN worked with partners and communities in 2015 with ***ongoing assessments of the feasibility of organic shrimp production*** in other areas of Vietnam too, building on our experience in Ca Mau under the Mangroves and Markets project.

As part of global project, Viet Nam is one of implementing countries of the **Forest & Farm Facility (FFF) initiative**. In March, FFF's baseline survey of forest and farm producer organizations was carried out by Viet Nam Farmers Union and IUCN in Yen Bai and Bac Kan Province. The most successful was a cinnamon cooperative. ***Despite the demand for legal timber, there was no producer of furniture grade timber due in part to the difficulties of getting a permit to log legally.***

In October, an exchange visit of 20 Myanmar participants with Viet Nam Farmer Union was organized in Bac Kan, Phu Tho, Hoa Binh and Nam Dinh Provinces. The group visited different agro-forestry models in these provinces. The visitors were particularly interested in forest certification, organic vegetables, the role of banks, and forest-based businesses. They observed that by

