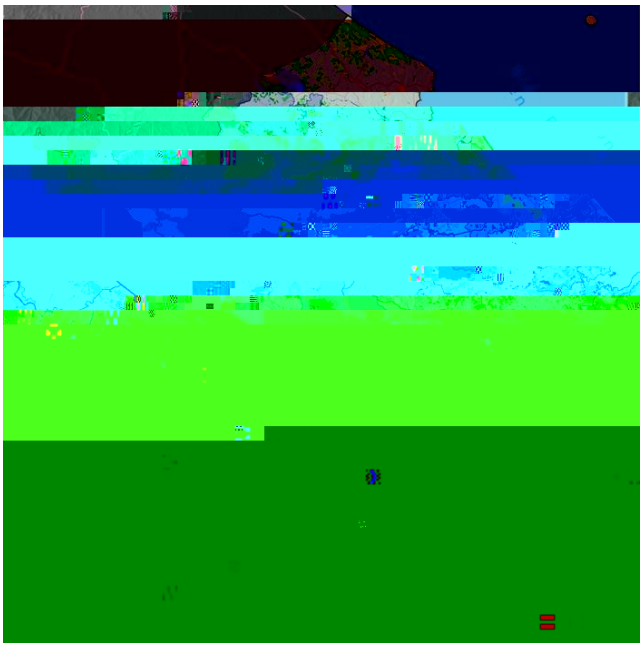
Assessing Opportunities for Forest Landscape Restoration in Quang Tri, Vietnam

Located on the Demilitarized Zone in the Central of Vietnam, Quang Tri Province was devastated during the American War. Following the economic reforms initiated in the late 1980s, the province embraced forest restoration by planting fast growing eucalyptus and acacia species. Forest cover quickly increased from 98,000 hectares in 1989 to 235,000 hectares in 2016. However, forest quality is generally low, and plantations are almost entirely geared toward short rotation acacia for low-value wood chips. Meanwhile, natural forest has declined. Quang Tri also faces increased pressure on its forests from expanding agriculture. The expansion of cassava cultivation on steep slopes is of particular concern.

In collaboration with Quang Tri Department of Forest Protection, IUCN conducted a Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM) to map Forest landscape restoration (FLR) opportunities. Provincial stakeholders defined three FLR goals:

1. Increase forest biodiversity and quality
2. Conserve and enhance ecosystem services (including watershed protection, erosion prevention and habitats for biodiversity)
3. Improve livelihoods for local people to reduce incentives to encroach on the forest

Box: ROAM methodology in Quang Tri Quangi 2)ied(u)1sio.ogy in Quao.



Map 3: Plantations upstream key river basins

Map 4: Agricultural erosion and high risk area

Map 5: Priority restoration areas in Quang Tri

Benefits, costs and barriers

FLR options were assessed in terms of benefits, costs and barriers. EP/ANR are effective in restoring degraded natural forest and enhancing biodiversity. But their costs are high and vary greatly depending on the amount of labor required, and success depends strongly on maintenance and follow-up.

Alternatives were explored to transition short rotation acacia plantations. UNIQUE, a German consultancy, has developed two business models: for ER (11 years) and for NSI (long-term, with stepwise acacia replacement during first 11 years). Longer rotations reduce soil erosion by limiting the amount of time that soil is bare. Both options are more financially profitable

but also due to costs of inputs. Again, this is an area where government can play a key role by strictly protecting the remaining areas of natural forest and training farmers on sustainable intensification while improving access to key resources.

communication along value chains to create institutional arrangements whereby wood processors assist farmers to overcome technical and financial barriers to achieve FSC certification while ensuring a stable and high-quality supply of timber.

Improved extension: Intercropping, cross-