

THE CENTRAL TRUONG SON BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION INITIATIVE

2004-2020



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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**THE CENTRAL TRUONG SON
BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
INITIATIVE**

2004–2020

Hanoi – 2004

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT Independence - Freedom - Happiness**

No: 06/2004/QĐ-BNN

Hanoi, March 22, 2004

**DECISION OF MINISTER
OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**
on issuing Central Truong Son Biodiversity Conservation Initiative,
period 2004-2020

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Pursuant to Law on Forest Protection dated August 12, 1991;
- Pursuant to Decree No. 86/2003/ND-CP dated July 18 2003 issued by the Government regulating functions, responsibilities, authority and organization structure of MARD;
- Pursuant to Decision no. 192/2003/QĐ-TTg dated September 17 2003 issued by the Prime Minister ratifying the Strategy on Vietnam Protected Area Management System to 2010;
- Based on Document no. 81/CP-NN signed by Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung in January 9, 2004 on the approval of "Central Truong Son Biodiversity Conservation Initiative, period 2004-2020";
- In consideration of the proposal of Director of Forest Protection Department-MARD in the statement document no. 174/TTr/KL-BTTTT dated March 15, 2004

TO DECIDE:

Article 1: To issue the Central Truong Son Biodiversity Conservation Initiative for the period 2004 - 2020 with the following key components:

I. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

1. Long-term objectives

To establish an integrated mosaic of complementary land-use and development practices to protect, manage and restore natural resources and biodiversity in the Truong Son during the industrialization and modernization

process of Vietnam, while also contributing to institutional development, good governance and an increased standard of living for local communities

2. Specific objectives

a. To restore the global biodiversity values of the CTS so that they can be sustainably used for the benefit of the people of the CTS in particular and Vietnam in general and will contribute to national and international conservation efforts

b. To raise awareness of the responsibility of every individual, organization and local community in the CTSL to protect, manage and restore ecosystems in the area

c. To establish and implement a legal, policy and institutional framework to strengthen the management, protection and restoration of natural resources in the Central Truong Son. All regional initiatives and development schemes routinely address conservation priorities and conform to legal documents pertaining to conservation

d. To strengthen capacity of all management staff to protect, manage and restore the natural ecosystems of the CTS landscape

e. To manage and use natural resources and biodiversity at a sustainable level in order to raise the standard of living of local people by reducing poverty and eradicating hunger while meeting the demand for socio-economic development

II. PROGRAMME SCOPE

The Central Truong Son Initiative, which will be implemented from 2004 - 2020, covers six administrative provinces within the Central Truong Son region including Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue, Quang Nam, Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Binh Dinh provinces and Da Nang City.

III. IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES AND METHODOLOGY

1. Review biodiversity and socio economic status and value in CTS

2. Prioritize issues and localities where the biodiversity is potentially high or endangered and where insufficient investment has been made

3. Strengthening conservation management capacity
4. Ensure activities contribute to hunger eradication and poverty reduction, and improve livelihoods of the local community
5. Establish and manage effectively a network of protected areas; strengthen conservation of habitat and species in priority areas
6. Develop a strategic environment framework for provinces within CTS as the basis for deciding on appropriate development and land uses
7. Base government budgets and policies on an understanding of the socio-economic value of biodiversity. Train and equip protection forces of CTS provinces

IV. PROGRAMME CONTENT

1. Conservation

Develop and complete a system of protected areas. By 2010, a network of strictly protected areas will be established and effectively managed by preparing a feasible project/investment plan for existing and proposed protected areas (including buffer zone projects). Establish and strengthen management boards of special-use forests in Central Truong Son landscape. Increase forest management and protection staff of nature reserves to appropriate levels. Establish and demarcate - on the ground - boundaries of protected areas and buffer zones. Develop management plans for protected areas in the Central Truong Son Landscape, which meet conservation targets of each area; Establish new protected areas for Central Truong Son Landscape.

2. Awareness strengthening

a. To provide environmental education on a wider scale: By 2010, an effective programme of conservation education and awareness will be delivered throughout the landscape. Review current and potential conservation education activities in the CTSL. Establish a network of conservation education staff. Consult on the drafting of a CE plan for CTS.

b. To mobilize resources for conservation education in each province: By 2010, individual provinces will mobilize available resources for conservation education. Utilize and develop regional facilities, such as Bach Ma and a regional wildlife rescue center (in Da Nang), as outreach centers.

c. To educate and raise the awareness of provincial decision makers: Link conservation education to government programmes. By 2010, effective conservation/environment education activities in the programme will support major government programmes related to conservation, hunger eradication and poverty reduction in mountainous areas such as FSSP, 661, 133 and 135.

3. Legal framework completed

a. Establish a legal framework to implement a strategy for meeting conservation objectives in individual province in CTS: By 2010, provinces in CTS will have a legal framework for conservation to guide the implementation of appropriate decisions regarding plans for land use and development.

b. Develop a conservation and action plan for each province in the CTS which is integrated into socioeconomic development plans. By 2010, all provinces of the CTSL will have a fully developed, comprehensive conservation plan which has been integrated into the provincial socio-economic development plan.

c. Develop a policy on the sustainable management of forests. By 2010, each province in the CTSL has a clear plan for the management of sustainable forests (based on production, protection and special-use forest system) and has implemented standards for sustainable forestry. Develop site-based models of SFM in pilot areas of the CTS.

d. Support the development of institutions responsible for managing natural resources in the area and controlling the illegal exploitation of natural resources and biodiversity. By 2010, natural resources will be effectively managed so that the benefits for provinces and local communities are maximized while social and environmental sustainability are maintained.

4. Capacity strengthening

Provide training and equipment for forest protection forces within CTS provinces. By 2010, the forest protection forces of provinces within CTS have been given expertise training and are equipped. Provide training for provincial FPDés in conservation biology and research techniques. Provide training in culture and language skills, especially English and those of ethnic minorities. Provide training in community outreach and conservation education. Provide training to monitor wildlife and enforce wildlife protect laws. Produce field guides and training manuals. Evaluate provincial needs, the working structure, motivation and

monitoring systems within each FPD unit. Provide essential equipment to FPD units. Strengthen community-based conservation in priority areas.

5. Economic development

a. To meet in part the needs of local communities for forest resources, help eradicate hunger, alleviate poverty and improve livelihoods of local people in the area: By 2010, models of community-based management and the co-management of resources by local people along with the government and private sector partners will demonstrate innovative methods of combining the conservation of biodiversity with the development of sustainable livelihoods

b. To support the appropriate allocation and management of forest land: Support and develop programmes for allocating forest land for each CTSL province under the guidance of the national policy on decentralization. Consult with communities about what they need from the forest and conduct a spatial analysis. Develop systems for monitoring and evaluating benefits to management, conservation and the economy. Organize study tours to successful land allocation projects elsewhere in Vietnam. Develop regional models and networks. Ensure the institutional capacity exists to manage forests at the local level.

c. To develop models of protection and co-management of natural resources and community-based conservation of species

d. To develop ecotourism to increase awareness of conservation, and involvement of a wide sector in conservation. By 2010, a full programme is underway to promote sustainable tourism that contributes significantly to the conservation of biodiversity, promotes the natural beauty of the landscape and provides appropriate livelihoods.

e. To facilitate the local community to develop alternative means of generating incomes and jobs. By 2010, facilitation will be provided to local community to develop new jobs that are inline with conservation objectives and alternative sources of income have increased. Understand the traditional trade of the locality. Identify trades that are relevant to conservation. Introduce new alternative livelihoods and means of generating income for the local community.

Article 2. Designate Forest Protection Department as the focal point to advise Minister of MARD to develop plan for implementing the Initiative in collaboration with relevant ministries, government agencies and provincial

people's committees within CTS.

All agencies under MARD are responsible for coordinating with the Director of FPD to develop a feasible plan for each period effectively to achieve the objectives of the Initiative approved by the Minister.

Article 3. The Decision is effective after 15 days since being published in the Gazette.

Article 4. The Chief of MARD, Director of FPD, head of agencies under MARD and relevant PPCs are responsible for executing this Decision./.

Recipients:

- Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers
- Government Office
- Ministries and line agencies
- Government agencies
- PPCs: Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue, Quang Nam, Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Binh Dinh and Da Nang City
- Departments under ministries
- Gazette
- Document records

**ON BEHALF OF MINISTER
OF MARD
VICE MINISTER
BUI BA BONG
*(Signed and stamped)***

THE GOVERNMENT

SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

Independence - Freedom - Happiness

No: 81/CP-NN

Hanoi, January 9th 2004

Ref: Approval on CTS Biodiversity
Conservation Initiative

To:

- Ministries: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior Affairs, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Fishery, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of Culture and Information
- Committee of Ethnics
- Vietnam National Administration of Tourism
- Provincial People's Committees of Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue, Quang Nam, Binh Dinh, Gia Lai, Kon Tum and Da Nang city

Upon the consideration of MARD proposal (statement No. 3541/BNN-CKL dated November 5th 2003); comments of MPI (official document no.7499/KHGDTN&MT dated December 8th 2003) on the approval on the document of the Central Truong Son Biodiversity Conservation Initiative, the Prime Minister has commented as follow:

Agree on the content of the CTS Biodiversity Conservation Initiative document proposed by MARD

Assign MARD to take comments of Ministry of Planning and Investment as in the above mentioned official document from MPI to revise, amend and complete the content of the Initiative and sign the Decision issuing the Initiative./.

Recipients:

- Same as above
- Prime Minister,
Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung
- Government's Office: Minister-Chairman,
Vice Chairman Nguyen Cong Su,
Department of General Economics,
Department of International Cooperation,
and General Department
- Filed in the Agriculture Department (4),
Administration Department

**ON BEHALF OF THE PRIME MINISTER
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
NGUYEN TAN DUNG**

(Signed and stamped)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to send our sincere thanks to the leaders of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development for their approval of the development of the Central Truong Son Initiative; Dr. Nguyen Ba Thu, director of the Forest Protection Department, MARD for his enthusiastic leadership and comments during the development process of this Initiative.

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We highly appreciate the comments and supports from the Advisory Group to the document of the Central Truong Son Initiative from the beginning to the end of the development period.

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ACRONYMS

CCG	Core Consultative Group
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CE	Conservation Education
CTS	Central Truong Son (the Central Truong Son)
CTSI	Central Truong Son Initiative
CTSL	Central Truong Son Conservation Landscape
CEMMA	Committee for Ethnic Minorities and Mountainous Areas
CPRGS	Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FIPI	Forest Inventory and Planning Institute
FPD	Forest Protection Department
FSSP	Forest Sector Support Programme
GDLA	General Department of Land Administration
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GOV	Government of Vietnam
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
LAO PDR	People's Democratic Republic of Laos
M&E	'Monitoring and Evaluation'
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MOSAIC	Management of Strategic Areas for Integrated Conservation
MOSTE	Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
NBCA	National Biodiversity Conservation Area (National protected areas in Lao PDR)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
PA	Protected Area
PFPD	Provincial Forest Protection Department
PPC	Provincial People's Committee
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
SEF	Strategic Environmental Framework
SFE	State Forest Enterprise
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SHM	Sustainable Hunting Management
TOR	Terms of Reference
VNAT	Vietnamese National Administration for Tourism
WB	World Bank
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature / World Wildlife Fund (USA)
133	National Programme on Hunger Eradication and Poverty Reduction
135	Programme on Socio-economic Development for Mountainous and Remote Communes of Extreme Difficulties
661	The 5 Million Hectare Programme (1998 - 2010)

GLOSSARY

Central Truong Son Priority Landscape

This landscape was selected as the highest priority within the Greater Truong Son Ecoregion for conservation interventions. The area is important for many Truong Son endemic species, for habitat connectivity, and is the centre-pin for conservation of the wider ecoregion as a whole.

Conservation foci

Species, habitats and ecological services identified as of priority conservation value.

Ecoregion

Ecoregions are relatively large areas of land or water that harbour a characteristic set of species, communities, dynamics and environmental conditions. Because ecoregions are delineated along a biological basis, it is possible to set more strategic conservation goals focusing on important populations, processes and ecological phenomena. The ecoregion approach requires us to address threats that affect the entire ecoregion, often occurring beyond the ecoregion boundaries.

Flagship species

A charismatic species that represents cultural, socio-economic and biological values within the landscape. The conservation of a flagship species can serve to protect a variety of subsidiary values and systems. For example, to conserve tigers, a large area of diverse habitat must be protected, and threats such as poaching, habitat conversion and intensive harvest of forest products must be neutralised. The tiger, in this case, therefore serves as a banner under which conservation efforts can unite.

Forests Of the Lower Mekong Ecoregion Complex

The FLMEC is an amalgamation of four ecoregions within Indochina, all outstanding yet endangered.

Global 200

The Global 200 is WWF's blueprint for conservation of the earth's biodiversity. The 238 ecoregions selected under the Global 200 represent the richest, rarest and most distinctive examples of all the earth's diverse natural habitats. It is based on the principle that that only by conserving representative samples of all the world's ecosystems can we protect the broadest array of species and maintain the complex ecological and evolutionary processes that make up the web of life.

Greater Truong Son Ecoregion

This Ecoregion encompasses not only the mountains and valleys of the Truong Son, but also the surrounding foothills and lowland areas of conservation significance. It stretches in part across Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. The Ecoregion is characterised by distinctive biodiversity, attributed to the persistence of warm and wet climatic conditions in this area during the last ice-age.

Habitat

This is a term to describe a type of biological community that supports an assemblage of species

and functions. Habitat normally refers to the predominant vegetation type, such as lowland forest, mangrove, montane forest, scrubland and so on.

Initiative

An initiative is a strategic programme that combines planning with innovation, action and dynamic approaches.

IUCN Red List

The IUCN Red List is a global listing of threatened species of fauna and flora. The most recent edition was in 2001.

Landscape

An ecoregion is comprised of a mosaic of landscapes. Landscapes are areas within an ecoregion sharing very similar characteristics, yet slightly distinctive in terms of interactions and biological processes.

Red Data Book of Vietnam

First produced by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment in 1992, the "Red Book of Vietnam", in two volumes, lists all the protected species in Vietnam, with 365 animal species and 350 plant species identified. Categories range from Endangered, Vulnerable and Rare, to Threatened and Insufficiently Known. Each category provides regulations on the restrictions on use or exploitation of such species. The most recent version was 2000. The Vietnam book is based on the IUCN global lists of threatened species.

Special-use Forest

In Vietnam, the classification "special-use forest" covers three main categories, with four types of gazettement. First is National Park, second is a split category, with both Nature Reserve and Species and Habitat conservation area. Finally, Cultural Heritage Area.

Stakeholder

Stakeholders are parties, groups or individuals who have an interest in any particular issue, conflict or situation. In terms of the ecoregion approach, stakeholders represent both threats and opportunities to successful conservation activities. The more stakeholders that can be engaged and motivated, the more chance to achieve a sustainable landscape.

Truong Son

The Truong Son is the spinal mountain chain running north-south along the Vietnam and Laos border. The highest peak is mount Ngoc Linh, in Quang Nam province, Vietnam, at 2,596m a.s.l.

Vision

A vision is a collaborative statement about how we view the future state of a particular object or area. In the case of this Initiative, a collaborative vision described how the Central Truong Son landscape will hopefully be encountered by the next and future generations.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Central Truong Son Initiative has been developed as a pilot part of the larger effort (ecoregion based or landscape based) to ensure the effective conservation across the Greater Truong Son Ecoregion. Large-scale conservation programmes based on maintaining and restoring essential ecosystem functions is now recognised as an effective method to achieve long-term conservation results that benefit both biodiversity and people. Large-scale conservation (ecoregion or landscape based) has been developed in recognition that:

- most ecological processes and components function at larger scales than protected areas - the traditional scale of conservation focus
- threats to and opportunities for biodiversity conservation operate at greater scales than at the site level and effect more than one site. Efforts to halt or mitigate threats are therefore more effectively and efficiently dealt with at larger scales
- biodiversity can not be viewed, managed and planned as a single isolated unit cut off from outside processes but must be incorporated and integrated as part of a larger mosaic of complementary land-uses
- the scale of investment required to ensure that biodiversity is effectively conserved in the future is too limited by site-by-site based conservation. Large-scale conservation mobilises larger scale of investment.

The Central Truong Son Initiative was designed to be one of the world's first comprehensive large-scale conservation efforts. It was developed in response to the need to take a large-scale approach to conservation in the Greater Truong Son and particularly in the Central Truong Son Landscape (CTSL).

The natural resources and biodiversity of the CTSL have deteriorated and degraded dramatically over the past 50 years, only a large-scale effort aimed to return social, economic and environmental balance across the entire landscape is enough to secure the natural wealth for now and for the future.

This Initiative plan has been designed to provide a vision and direction for biodiversity conservation and the sustainable management of natural resources as part of wider efforts to establish sustainable development in the landscape. The goal of the Initiative has been designed to address the conservation targets of the CTSL, it also aims to promote the social and economic development of the landscape. The Initiative cannot stand alone from a wider plan for sustainable development, it is an integral component of sustainable development as it is a key factor of a sustainable environment, an essential foundation for poverty alleviation in the landscape.

Phases of the Initiative

The Central Truong Son Initiative is divided into 3 key phases:

- Phase one 2003-2010: Creating the Foundations for a Sustainable Landscape
- Phase two 2011-2015: Expanding the Priority Landscape
- Phase three 2016-2020: Making the Connections

Scope of the Initiative

The Central Truong Son Priority Landscape lies within the administrative boundaries of 06 provinces of Quang Tri, Thua Thien - Hue, Quang Nam, Gia Lai, Kon Tum, Binh Dinh and Da Nang City except the coastal areas.

The Long-term Objective of the Initiative

To establish an integrated mosaic of complementary land-use and development practice to protect, manage and restore natural resources and biodiversity in the Truong Son in the industrialization and modernization process, while also contributing to institutional development, good governance and raised standards of living for local communities.

Partnership

Large-scale comprehensive conservation programmes cannot be achieved without the collaboration of a large group of stakeholders and partners representing a wide sector of interests, issues, threats and opportunities. Biologists and protection staff have traditionally conducted conservation focused at the site level. Over the last twenty years with the introduction of Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDPs), many other partners particularly those involved with natural resource management and rural development have become part of the conservation efforts. Large-scale conservation approaches such as ecoregion and landscape scale conservation recognizes that in addition to these partners, the involvement and cooperation of many other partners such as those responsible for designing agricultural and other socio-economic policy is crucial to long-term success over large scales. Large-scale conservation is based on the principles of partnerships and collaboration.

PART I

OVERVIEW AND THE NEED OF THE INITIATIVE

1. BACKGROUND TO THE CENTRAL TRUONG SON INITIATIVE

In 1998, WWF embarked on "Ecoregion-based conservation" in response to the increasing pace of biodiversity loss and the need to enhance the scale and impact of global conservation efforts. Ecoregion-based conservation allows for planning and action across larger spaces to address protection of viable species populations and ecosystem processes. The benefit of this large-scale approach is the ability to integrate human development dimensions and social responses into a sustainable conservation landscape.

Ecoregion conservation begins with the "Global 200" - 238 large, biologically-defined regions identified as representing the highest priorities for conservation across all the Earth's major habitat types (see Map 1). The Forests of the Lower Mekong is a complex of four diverse and threatened ecoregions (see Map 2), three of which are listed as Global 200 ecoregions. Established in 1999, the Ecoregion Action Program (EAP) in the Forests of the Lower Mekong is currently working to conserve the distinct, beautiful and endangered biodiversity of the Greater Truong Son, the most diverse and distinctive of these ecoregions. The Greater Truong Son Ecoregion comprises some of the world's most unique and threatened wildlife - from its charismatic endemic species such as the stunning Douc langur and the remarkable saola, to some of the world's most endangered and evocative species like the Asian elephant, tiger and Javan rhinoceros. The future of these and many other species is dependent on successful, long-term conservation of the ecoregion as a whole that must be undertaken immediately, before they are lost forever.

Key objectives of the Ecoregion Action Programme consist of:

- Mobilising conservation throughout the entire Greater Truong Son Ecoregion
- Protecting key sites and species through integrated conservation and development activities in priority landscapes
- Promoting a supportive policy environment for conservation and sustainable development

² The four ecoregions consist of Greater Truong Son Ecoregion, Central Indochina Dry Forest, Lower Mekong Flood Land and Cardamom mountains

³ Three ecoregions in the Global 200: The Greater Truong Son Ecoregion, Central Indochina Dry Forest and Lower Mekong Flood land

- Laying the foundations for sustainable development

In March 2000, over 80 of the region's conservation biologists met in Phnom Penh to design a blueprint for biodiversity conservation for the globally important biodiversity of the Forests of the Lower Mekong Ecoregion Complex as the first stage of a long-term programme for these ecoregions. The meeting identified key indicators of long-term success and defined landscapes for priority attention. Within the Greater Truong Son, one of the four key major ecoregions within the complex, 15 large landscapes were identified as the priority areas of critical importance. Following on from the meeting, WWF began the process of facilitating and coordinating a long-term, ambitious, collaborative programme for the Truong Son Ecoregion. As the first step in the programme, key government and non-government partners decided to establish an integrated, long term conservation initiative for the Central Truong Son Landscape, as a pilot for large-scale conservation in the Truong Son.

In November 2000, a meeting was held in Hue, Vietnam to discuss the feasibility, scope and orientation of a conservation initiative for the Central Truong Son Landscape. The meeting concluded that a thorough consultative planning process was required to formulate a long-term programme and ten to fifteen year action plan. The government of Vietnam, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, provided their official seal of approval for the initiative in January 2001 and nominated the Forest Protection Department as the lead agency responsible for the creation of the programme. A Core Consultative Group (CCG) was formed to guide the formulation of the Programme. The six-member CCG represents major national-level stakeholders. The CCG coordinated a year-long participatory process of information gathering and analysis, the results of which have been used to construct this programme.

Due to the outstanding biodiversity value of the Central Truong Son Landscape, the high degree of threats and the need for coordinated conservation action, the Central Truong Son Initiative was launched at the Hue meeting, to bring together government institutions at central and local levels, and international organizations, for an intensive, collaborative conservation effort. The conservation programme presented in this document will be critical to guide the Initiative and ultimately achieve success.

The Initiative is based on three key principles:

- The Initiative will aim to ensure that natural ecosystems' functions are maintained to secure the global biodiversity value of the landscape for future generations, ensure environmental services such as watershed protection and soil conservation remain stable at the site scale and increase throughout the landscape and, through sustainable management support stable, improved livelihoods for rural communities;
- The Initiative will aim to engage stakeholders at all levels, across a multitude of

administrative and institutional boundaries, in conservation planning and action to create a constituency acting towards the long-term integrity of the landscape. Rural communities must be recognised as the key custodians of their local natural resources;

- The Initiative will be based on long-term, ambitious goals designed and achieved by the key stakeholders.

2. PROGRAMME PHASES

The Initiative has been divided into three key phases, and actions and targets have been designed to meet these phased objectives.

2004 – 2010 Phase One – "Creating the Foundations for a Sustainable Landscape"

Immediate Objective: To create the foundations for long-term conservation and remove the immediate threats to highly threatened habitats and species.

Based on the analysis of the current situation for biodiversity conservation in the CTSL, the first phase of the Initiative should establish the capacity and framework that will facilitate effective conservation and sustainable natural resource management into the long term. In addition and perhaps more importantly, this phase must successfully put a halt to the major factors that threaten to reduce or extirpate many elements including some of the most valuable biodiversity from the CTSL. The focus of this phase will be on the most critical sites and species and ensure that the forest cover and quality is not further reduced.

2011 – 2015 Phase Two – "Expanding the Priority Landscape"

Intermediate Objective: To expand the representation of biodiversity throughout all of the landscape including restoration of degraded habitat, improve the quality of the ecosystems and maximise the sustainable benefits from natural resources and biodiversity.

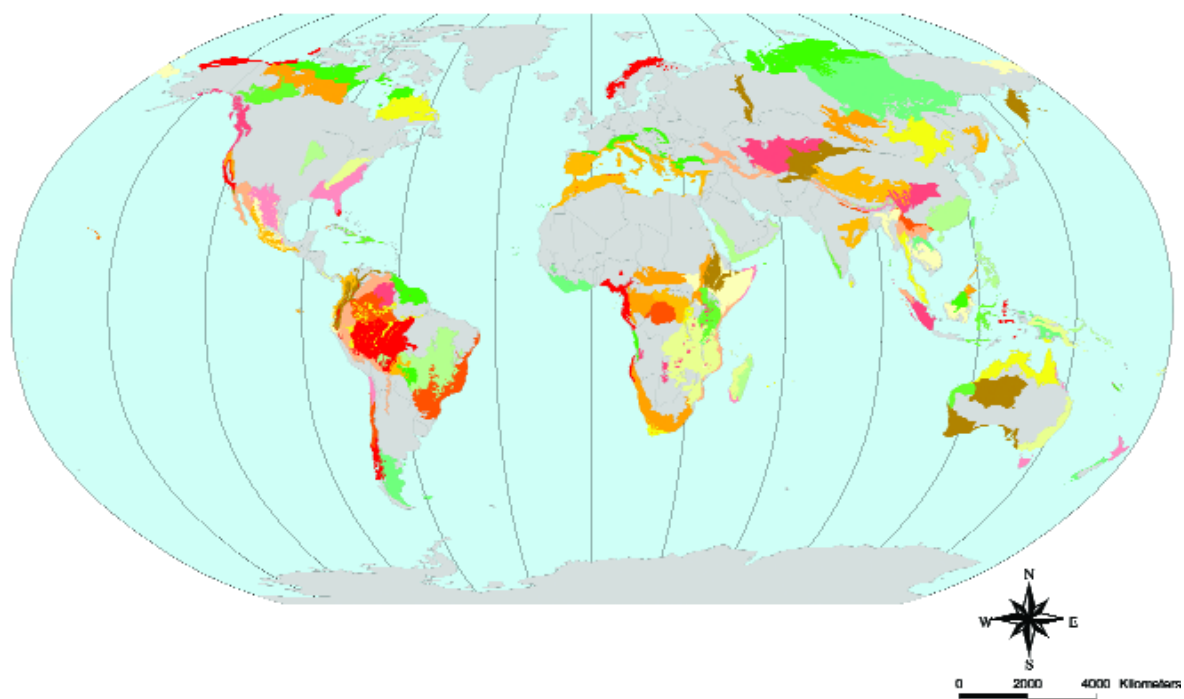
Once the priority areas have been secured in the first phase of the project and the capacity has been raised, the objective will be to expand the scope of the protection efforts to restoration and management of the priority 2 areas. It is also assumed that successful conservation efforts in the first phase would have contributed to the stability of threatened populations. The objective during the second phase is to increase the populations and productivity of the natural systems to the point where use can be sustainable and benefits can be obtained.

2016 – 2030 Final Phase – "Making the Connections"

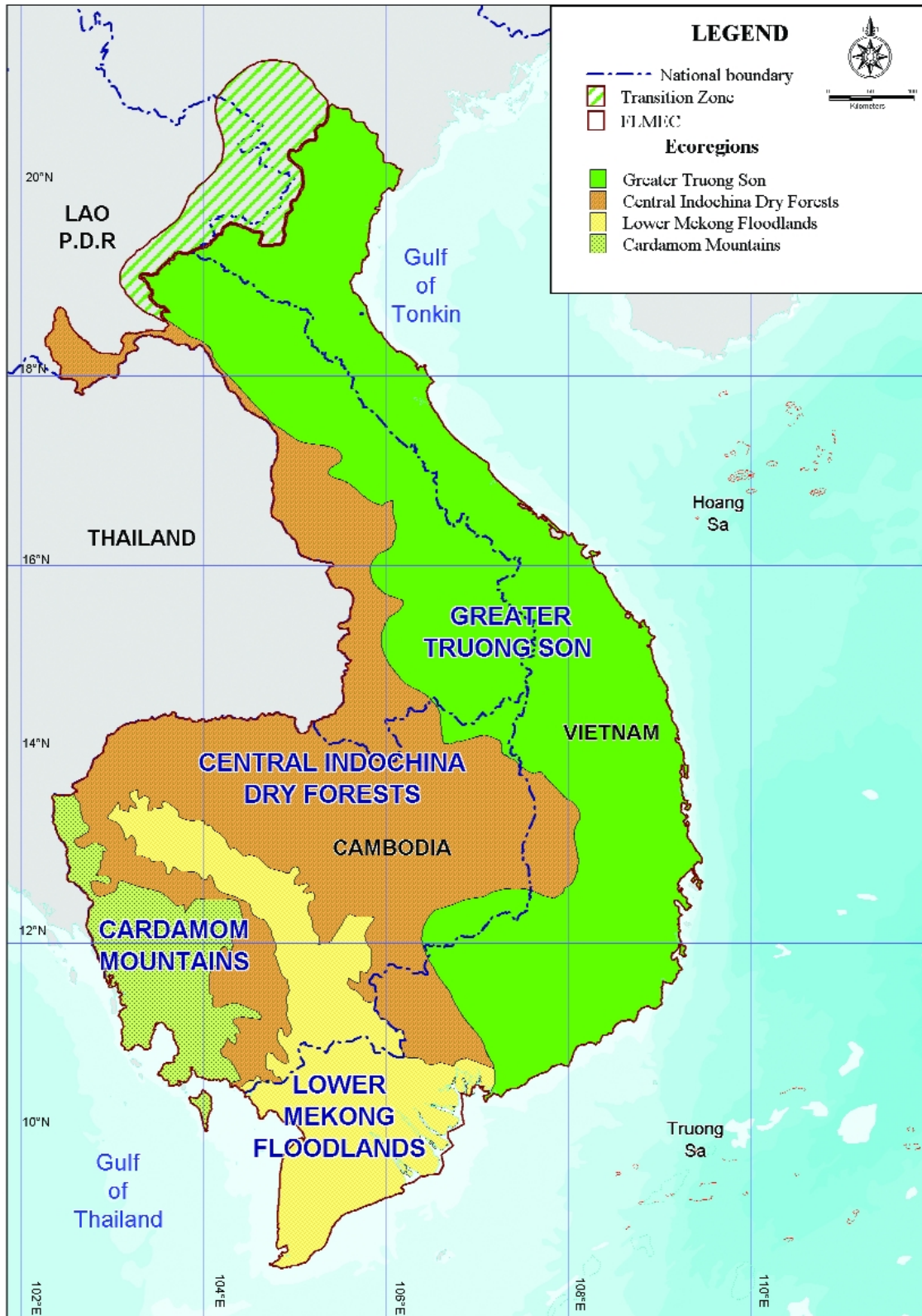
Final Objective: To establish effective habitat corridors between the CTSL and neighbouring landscapes to ensure evolutionary processes are maintained.

In the long-term, the objective is to link the CTSL with its neighbouring landscapes. This is likely to require the restoration of large areas of habitat depending on the socio-economic situation and land-use patterns established over the last fifty years in the Landscape.

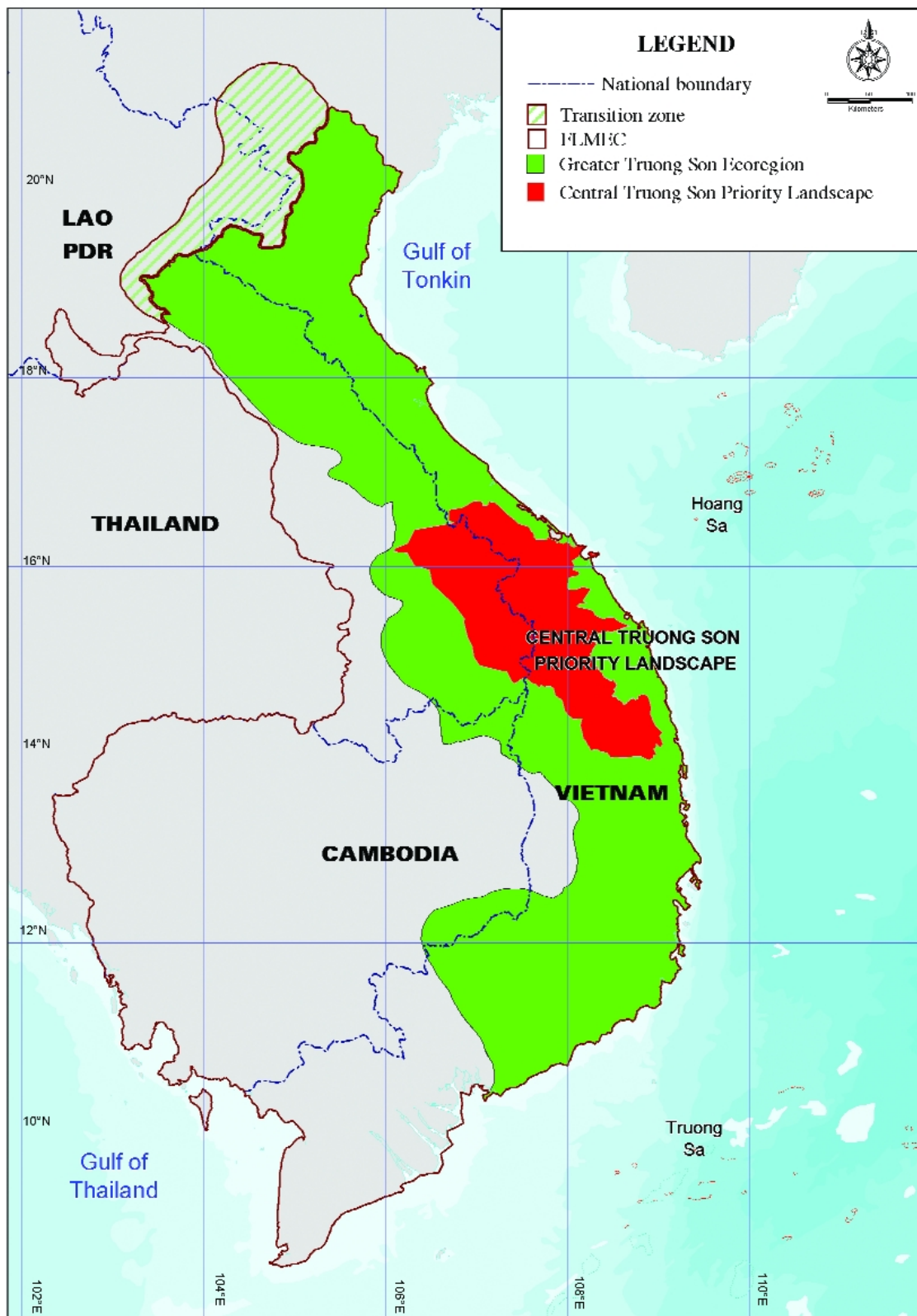
Map 1: The Global 200



Map 2: 4 Ecoregions within the Forests of the Lower Mekong Ecoregion Complex



Map 3: The Greater Truong Son Ecoregion and the Central Truong Son Priority Landscape



3. LEGAL AND SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATION FOR THE PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Legal Foundation

In 1986, the government of Vietnam (GOV) initiated reforms labelled "*Doi Moi*", or "renovation". These reforms were designed to overcome poverty and develop the country. The defining quality of *Doi Moi* is a fundamental change in Vietnam's approach towards a market-oriented economy and socialist democracy. In April 2002, the 9th National Congress of the Communist Party adopted its second ten-year Socio-Economic Development Plan for 2001-2015. The CTSI is designed to support key strategic elements of the Socio-Economic Development Plan, including the "Democracy Strengthening at the Local Level" (Decree 29, 11 May 1998), as well as new environmental legislation. On 25 June 1998, the Vietnam Central Communist Party Politburo issued Directive 36CT/TW on strengthening environment protection during industrialization and modernization, wherein the concern of biodiversity and nature conservation, and the enhancement and diversification of investment in environmental protection was highlighted.

Since the beginning of *Doi Moi*, Vietnam has essentially reorganized the mechanism and approach by which land and natural resources are managed. Government policy has gradually shifted away from a centrally planned economy with collective land property and land management towards a more market oriented system. Reforms designed to increase land productivity and ensure better land management have steadily increased the importance of individual households, household groups and other local institutions in the management of land resources, whilst reducing state control and changing the role of government agencies and state enterprises accordingly.

During this period, Vietnam has also made great strides in formulating policies on a range of conservation issues. Important decrees include the Law on Forest Protection and Development (1991), Law on Environment Protection (1993), and Strategies of Conservation and Development. The Central Truong Son Initiative, which is designed to provide support at the landscape level for priority plans and programming, contributes directly to the Biodiversity Action Plan (1995), the comprehensive national strategy for biodiversity conservation in Vietnam.

Furthermore, the Forest Sector Support Programme (FSSP), established in 2001, is designed to increase the efficiency of technical and financial support to the Vietnamese forest sector. Implementation of this national programme will be coordinated through regional "agro-ecological zones". Eight such units have been defined according to agricultural and ecological criteria and are based on provincial administrative boundaries. Regional interpretation of the FSSP's national goals will establish priorities for forestry development in agro-ecological zones, three of which overlap the CTSL. These priorities

biophysical, geomorphic parameters, traverses six provinces in Central Vietnam including Quang Tri, Thua-Thien Hue, Quang Nam, Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Binh Dinh and Da Nang City; and four administrative provinces in southern Lao PDR including Savanakheth, Salavan, Sekong and Attapeu. Approximately two-thirds of the landscape, or roughly 2.5 million hectares, falls in Vietnam, with a population of over 1.5 million directly within the initiative scope. **This programme refers only to Vietnam component of the landscape.** Parallel conservation efforts are underway in Lao PDR, through the same approach and process and it is aimed to bring the two initiatives together at a convenient point in the future. Linkages and transboundary cooperation between Vietnam and Lao PDR will evolve and increase as each country works towards their part of the whole conservation landscape of the Central Truong Son.

4. THE NATURAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC FEATURES AND CONSERVATION VALUES OF THE CENTRAL TRUONG SON

4.1. Natural features

The Vietnam part of the Central Truong Son (coded "CA1" in Baltzer *et al.* 2001) falls in the administrative provinces of Quang Tri, Thua-Thien Hue, Quang Nam, Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Binh Dinh and Da Nang City.

The CTSL consists of two geographical units: the first is the narrow mountain range with the height below 1,500m, running from Lao Bao Pass (Quang Tri) to Hai Van Pass, and the second is the vast Kon Tum Plateau with basalt stone characteristics, connecting Ngoc Linh Mountain with the height of 2,598m - the highest peak in the area. These two geographical units are separated by the granite stone mountain chain running across from east to west from the coast in Hai Van Pass.

Climatically, the CTSL is characterised by considerably high rainfall and less seasonal subjection. The annual rainfall in the belt area is around 3,000mm. The rainfall and temperature of the central area of CTSL varies dramatically according to topography and the wind directions. The east of the CTSL is drier and is more affected by the northeast monsoon than the west. The west of the CTSL, including Bach Ma National Park, receives rainfall above 3,600mm in the foothills and around 8,000mm near the summit. Ngoc Linh Mountain in Quang Nam province has over 3,800mm rainfall (Tordoff *et al.*, 2001).

To the west of the CTSL is the Mekong River basin. The two main rivers flowing from within the CTSL to the Mekong are the Sesan and Sekong. To the east, a multitude of rivers flow into the "East Sea", such as the Ba, Thu Bon, and Quang Tri rivers.

Regarding biogeography, the CTSL is characterised by evergreen forest. To the south and the west of the CTSL the evergreen forest is overlapped and replaced by drier vegetation in this lower section of central Indochina. In the northern area of the landscape, forest types and fauna and flora are similar to the assemblages in the northern Truong Son.

With its characteristically complex topography, the CTSL harbours strong ecological differences within its boundaries. The CTSL is a key transition zone between the climactic temperate zone to the north and the tropical south. The CTSL has the highest rainfall in Vietnam. The CTSL maintains a unique and highly diverse biodiversity in Indochina.

4.1.1. Habitats

The CTSL includes a wide diversity of natural habitats, across an elevation range from sea level to over 2,500 m. It is this altitudinal range that classifies the main forest habitat types, ranging from highly threatened lowland forest (0-700m ASL, especially the lower ranges up to 400m ASL), through the key forest restoration reservoirs of lower and medium montane forests (700-1,500m ASL), to the rare and often unique upper montane forests (above 1,500m ASL). In addition to these broad altitudinal communities, pockets of important natural habitats such as conifer forests and natural bamboo forests are also found in the landscape.

The most important major habitat in the CTSL is the moist tropical forest that once would have covered the entire landscape. These forests support a remarkably rich and unique biodiversity due to a number of key biological and geographical factors. The CTSL is based on the central massif of the Truong Son Mountain chain. This montane massif is responsible for local climatic patterns that have created conditions for unique species to evolve. On the eastern and northern bases of the mountains, there are exceptionally high levels of rainfall, halting the passage of rain-laden clouds traveling westwards. These forests have remained wet during much drier periods and have therefore provided refuge to rich and isolated groups of plants and animals. Isolated from other populations of their species, this flora and fauna has developed its own characteristics. Unique species that we know from the CTSL such as Edward's pheasant *Lophura edwardsi*, Truong Son muntjac *Muntiacus truongsongensis*, saola *Pseudoryx nghetinhensis* and many other endemic species are the result of this isolation.

Forests on the mountain tops have also remained colder and wetter and have therefore provided refuge to many species more associated with the colder, temperate north. A number of bird and plant species are unique to this Landscape, such as the Golden-winged laughingthrush *Garrulax ngoclinhensis* and the conifer *Amentotaxus poilanei* - only found on the highest mountain areas in the CTSL.

In addition to the forest habitat, rivers and streams also harbour valuable biodiversity. While little is known about the full biodiversity of the rivers and streams, many rare species of high scientific value such as the Chinese three-striped box turtle, *Cuora trifasciata*, and the keeled box turtle *Pyxidea mouhoti*, and several species of eel in the genus *Anguilla*, such as *Anguilla marmorata*, have been recorded. The rivers and streams are also crucial to the people of the CTSL as a source of food and clean water.

4.1.2 Flora

Although surveys and identification remains incomplete in the CTSL, certain vascular plants have been identified, especially in protected areas such as Bach Ma National Park (1,406 species), Song Thanh Nature Reserve (831 species), and Phong Dien Nature Reserve (597 species). This is a strong indication of the floral diversity of the CTSL.

Of the plant species identified in the CTSL, there are 133 species for conservation priority, of which 46 species are listed in the 2000 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, and 38 are listed in the Vietnam Red Data book of 1996. Based on the distribution of floral species, 21 species are endemic to the CTS, 56 species are endemic to Vietnam, and two species are endemic to Indochina.

The boundaries in the north and south of the CTS are of particular interest, as species including *Erythroleum fordii*, *Sindora tonkinensis*, *Artocarpus styracifolius*, in the south boundary, and *dipterocarpaceae spp*, *Leguminosae* species typical of the south flora such as *Hopea odorata*, *Dipterocarpus alatus*, *D. turbinatus*, *Dalbergia oliveri*, *Afzelia xylocarpa* have been documented. Therefore, the CTSL is a potential site for researchers on gene and propagation programmes.

4.1.3. Fauna

Mammals

Some zoologists have noted that CTSL is the major distribution centre of endemic yet endangered species of Vietnam and Indochina. Of the 28 mammals identified as priorities for protection in the area, 25 species are listed in the IUCN Red List of Endangered Species, and 20 are highlighted in Vietnam Red Data book (Tordoff *et al* 2001); 10 species are of the highest conservation priority. Additionally, 7 of these species are endemic to Indochina. Two species endemic to Vietnam were recently discovered and described: the 'Grey-shanked' Douc langur (*Pygathrix nemaeus cinerea*) described in 1997 and the Truong Son muntjac (*Muntiacus truongsoneensis*) described in 1997. The discovery of the saola in 1992 drew the world's attention to the biodiversity of the Truong Son. Since that discovery, many other new species have been revealed to science, such as the large-antlered muntjac (*Muntiacus vuquangensis*) and the Annamite striped rabbit (*Nesolagus timminsi*). A host of other endemic or near-endemic Truong Son species inhabit the Central Truong Son Landscape including several species totally restricted to the area such as Edwards' pheasant and the Grey-shanked Douc langur. As well as these unique residents, several other wider ranging, highly threatened species such as the tiger (*Panthera tigris*) and Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) also hold important populations in the landscape.

The most threatened are species targeted by the wildlife trade, and those requiring large habitats for survival.

The future of these species and their co-existence with the human communities living in and around the priority forest habitat areas, is dependent on successful, long-term conservation of the landscape as a whole. Action must be undertaken immediately, and sustained, before they are lost forever.

Birds

Since the 1980's, bird research has revealed a comprehensive list of species for the CTS. At present there are 394 species of bird identified in the Vietnam part of the CTS, accounting for 50% of the known bird species in the whole of the country. The following endemic bird species are conservation targets

Table 1: Restricted range bird species in the CTS

Vietnamese name	Scientific name	Distribution in Protected areas								
		DK	PD	BM	BN	QN	KT	KP	KK	KC
Vietnamese pheasant	<i>Lophura hatinhensis</i>	?								
Imperial pheasant	<i>L. imperialis</i>	X								
Edwards's pheasant	<i>L. edwardsi</i>	X	x	x						
Annam partridge	<i>Arborophila merlini</i>	X	x	x						
Short-tailed scimitar babbler	<i>Jabouilleia danjoui</i>	X	x	x			x	x	x	X
Crested argus	<i>Rheinardtia ocellata</i>	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X
Grey-faced tit babbler	<i>Macronus kelleyi</i>		x	x					x	X
White-cheeked laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax vassali</i>		x				x	x	x	X
Golden-winged laughingthrush	<i>G. ngoclinensis</i>				x	x	x			
Black-hooded laughingthrush	<i>G. milleti</i>					x	x	x	x	X
Chestnut-eared laughingthrush	<i>G. konkakinhensis</i>							x	x	
Yellow-billed nuthatch	<i>Sitta solangiae</i>					x	x	x	x	
Black-crowned barwing	<i>Actinodura sodangorum</i>									

Source: A. Tordoff et al, 2002

DK: DaKrong; PD: Phong Dien; BM: Bach Ma; BN: Ba Na; QN: Ngoc Linh Quang Nam; KT: Ngoc Linh Kon Tum; KP: Kon Plong; KK: Kon Ka Kinh; KC: Kon Cha Rang.

CTS is home to 12 restricted range bird species of Vietnam, of which there are 3 species of special priority: *Garrulax konkakinhensis*, *Garrulax ngoclinensis*, *Actinodura sodangorum*.

Furthermore, the CTS is also home to 35 near-endemic species of Indochina and Thailand, of which 20 are endemic to the CTS.

Amongst the species and sub-species of birds listed in the CTS, 19 are priority bird species found within the landscape, 15 species are listed in the IUCN Red List of 2000, and 14 listed in the Vietnam Red Data book.

Reptiles and Amphibians

These two groups have scarcely been surveyed to date in the CTS. Preliminary surveys listed at least eleven species of reptiles and amphibians in the area identified in the Vietnam Red Data book, and at least three species listed in IUCN Red List of 2000. Among the listed reptiles and amphibians, at least ten species are endemic to Indochina.

The following reptiles and amphibians need to be prioritised for protection, *Cuora trifasciata*, *Cuora galbinifrons*, *Geoemyda spengleri*, *Python molorus*, *Ophiophagus hannah*.

4.2. Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Central Truong Son

4.2.1. The People of the Central Truong Son

Some 1.5 million people live in the CTSL in Vietnam. Population densities are highest in the narrow coastal belt of the "East Sea" (South China Sea) decreasing as the topography rises in the west mountains close to the Vietnam-Lao PDR border. The remoter, often mountainous areas, encompassing the majority of the focal conservation areas, are amongst the poorest in the country. The majority populations in these areas of the CTSL in Vietnam are made up of ethnic minority peoples, such as the Ka Tu, Bru, Pa Co, M'Nong, Gie Trieng, and Gia Rai, whereas the lower - lying areas are predominantly home to the Kinh people, Vietnam's majority ethnic group. In the focal areas of the CTSL, ethnic minority peoples are geographically clustered. Consequently, although they represent only 30% of the total population they represent close to 100% of the population in targeted areas of Kon Tum and Gia Lai provinces, as well as in specific districts in Quang Nam⁴, Thua-Thien Hue⁵ and Quang Tri⁶. Similarly, over 90% of the population in the "corridor areas" belong to ethnic minorities

Table 2: Poverty status in the CTS

No.	Province	Total provincial population	Mountainous population	Poverty status of provinces (%)	Poverty status in mountainous areas (%)
1	Quang Tri	573,331	114,346	24.58	41.50
2	Thua Thien- Hue	1,048,791		15.40	38.00
3	Da Nang City	709,449	22,434	6.67	19.52
4	Quang Nam	1,367,058		-	-
5	Gia Lai	958,251	-	16.00	-
6	Kon tum	319,216	319,216	29.20	36.29
7	Binh Dinh	1,461,046	-	12.15	28.40

Source : Nguyen Lam Thanh, 2001

⁴ Tra My, Phuoc Son, Nam Giang, Hien, Hiep Duc.

⁵ A Luoi, Huong Hoa, Nam Dong.

⁶ DaKrong.

The Central Truong Son region is now settled by 37 ethnic minority groups, of which 11 ethnicities have resided here for many generations and can be labelled as indigenous. Other ethnic minority groups, originating from the north, have settled in areas convenient for cultivation or advantageous for transport and access. Therefore, in recent years, close or shared settlement between ethnic groups has become more apparent, particularly after the appearance of the Tay, Nung, Thai, and Muong migrant groups. Of the ethnic minority population in the region, 9% are recent migrants, mainly settling in Gia Lai and Kon Tum.

The dependence and impact on forest resource varies, subject to ethnic groups. The ethnicity of local communities is a strong indicator of type of impact on forest resources. Ethnic minority communities, typically poor and located in remote mountainous areas, are highly dependent on forest resources for their food production, building materials, handicraft material and cultural practice. Many ethnic minority peoples still practice shifting cultivation (making it difficult to obtain "red-book" land ownership certificates). In comparison, the Kinh majority culture is less forest-based although they also hunt and gather in the forests. Most important for this programme, the Kinh practice permanent cultivation. Expansion of settlements and agricultural production has resulted in clearing large swathes of critical lowland forest, decreasing the area and biodiversity of critical lowland forest habitat and fragmenting forest cover.

Large cities like Da Nang and Pleiku, have high population densities of 563 people/km² and 737 people/km² respectively, while the density in Kon Tum province as a whole is only 34 people/km². However, urban population accounts for 26%, with the remaining 74% in rural areas where agriculture is the dominant production industry. The establishment and growth of the administrative management units (cities, towns, and townships) are increasing the overall urban population. The population growth rate in the region is 1.65% - higher than the country's average rate of 1.53%. Importantly, many people in the urban areas still earn their living through cultivation, by raising livestock or other agro-forestry activities.

4.2.2. The Socio-economic Situation

According to 1999 statistics, the number of people of working age in the region accounts for just over 50% of the population in region. In recent years, GDP growth rate of the focal provinces has increased steadily. The average GDP in the region increased by over 9% annually during 1996-2000, higher than the national average rate. Gia Lai and Kon Tum, which are mainly dependent on the agro-forestry industry, achieved relatively high growth rates. The yield of industrial crops, namely coffee, rubber, and pepper, is an important factor in GDP totals. In addition, the yield of such goods depends heavily on export markets, most importantly the price in the international market. During 1999-2000, natural disasters, drought and the fall in price of farming products decreased the economic growth rate of these provinces. Da Nang City has a fairly high growth rate which is mainly dependent on the industrial-constructional sector growth rate (15.53%). However, in

general, the region still relies on agro-forestry production, which represents 50% to 60% of each provinces' GDP. The growth rate of the industrial sector has increased dramatically in recent years. This growth rate mainly stems from the development of the construction sector through urbanization as well as investment into infrastructure development in the provinces.

Tourism is still at a nascent stage compared to other industries, yet in general, the development of economic sectors has gradually reduced the dependence on the agricultural sector, capitalising on industrial, construction, commerce and tourism growth. However, progress has been slow, especially in the predominantly agricultural provinces like Quang Tri and Kon Tum. The income per head in the provinces is around 200 USD/year, equivalent to 70% of the national income per head. The highest income per head is in Da Nang (436 USD/year), in contrast to Kon Tum (only 170 USD/year).

4.2.3. Impacts of Decades of War

War affected not only people and their livelihoods, but also the region's rich natural heritage. Large areas were wiped out by millions of litres of defoliants containing lethal toxins such as dioxin (TCDD). 'Agent Orange' rained down on village communities, forests and agricultural land. The Central Truong Son area was the worst hit, as the foothills concealed a web of jungle pathways the world later knew as the legendary Ho Chi Minh Trail. Huge trees were destroyed along with their resident wildlife. "Viet Cong" soldiers have since reported that it was not uncommon in remote areas to see bodies of elephant and wild buffalo. Although nearly 30 years have passed, in many areas forests have still not regenerated and soil deterioration and destruction have resulted in massive erosion problems.

A considerable constraint that remains today is the amount of unexploded ordinance, especially in the northern area of the CTSL, and in the forested mountainous areas. Every year brings more fatalities from mines and bomb blasts. In Quang Tri, flooding has displaced mines that were previously cordoned and under removal, spreading the devices across a wide area from the mountains to the coast. Across the whole CTSL, the residual effects of Agent Orange are still a concern, especially in terms of the freshwater ecosystem, to where much of the toxin has seeped.

Cultural displacement and loss are further effects of the war, where many of the ethnic groups were engaged by different sides during the decades of conflict. Although the country and the people of the CTSL have shown great resilience and strength in overcoming the degradations caused by the war, there is still a need to heal wounds to the landscape and its people.

4.3. Biodiversity Value and Conservation Targets in the Central Truong Son

The Central Truong Son has the characteristics of a transition zone, and therefore has a very unique biodiversity value, different from the other landscapes of the lower Mekong Ecoregion Complex. The initiative primarily aims at conserving biodiversity and maintaining the value of natural resources of the landscape. The success of the initiative has been defined based on successful conservation of biological targets.

For effective management of the biodiversity value of the landscape, a set of biological targets were suggested for protection priority based on the four principles of biodiversity conservation (adapted from Noss 1991):

- Maintenance of viable populations of species
- Design and manage the system to be responsive to short-term (as habitat loss) and long-term (as climate change) environmental change by maintaining connectivity of the habitat in the landscape
- Maintenance of ecological and evolutionary processes that create and sustain biodiversity
- Representation of all distinct natural communities

4.3.1. Habitat with High Biodiversity Value in the Landscape

- Lowland forest (0-700 m, with primary focus on 0-400m) north and south of Hai Van Pass
- Lower and medium montane forest (700-1,500 m) along the Vietnam - Laos border, the boundary between Hue and Quang Nam provinces and Ngoc Linh mountain
- Upper montane forest (>1,500 m)
- Rapids and headwaters
- Middle reaches of main rivers

4.3.2. Priority Species Groups for Conservation

Many species fall into particular groups of high conservation priority and can be better planned for and managed as part of these groups than as individual species. These groups fall into several categories such as animals under specific threats (and likely to be always under threat) such as large mammals and birds, or species with high medicinal, food and ornamental values such as turtles and orchids. Other species have very specific ecological requirements that require special attention such as wide-ranging mammals, such as tiger and Asian elephant, that need large areas of continuous forest to survive. Species confined totally to the CTSL are of the conservation importance and therefore require a high level of consideration.

Priority species group foci identified were:

- Endemic and near-endemic animal species
- Wide-ranging large mammals
- All primates
- Lowland galliformes
- Large, congregatory bird species
- All turtle species
- Eels in the genus *Anguilla*
- Commercially valuable catfish
- Endemic and near-endemic animal species
- Endemic and near-endemic plant species
- Species severely threatened by over-exploitation

4.3.3. Flagship Species

A number of species are highly suitable as flagship species and therefore require individual attention. The conservation of these species are clear indicators of success.

- Saola
- Truong Son muntjac
- Grey-shanked Douc langur
- Edward's pheasant
- Crested argus
- Ngoc Linh ginseng

4.3.4. Areas of Conservation Priority in the CTSL

To identify the most important areas to manage, protect and restore the key factors of biodiversity, conservation foci are zoned on a map based on a series of complicated indexes identified and agreed upon by leading conservation biologists in Vietnam and Lao. Conservation priority areas are identified to conserve biological process and biodiversity in the CTSL.

A conservation landscape needs to meet the biological requirements of the conservation foci. The landscape is based on compromises and tradeoffs between the needs of the local people, national development plans and ecological requirements of the plants and animals that the landscape must support. A conservation landscape therefore is typically designed as a series of core areas linked by corridors which allow the movement and dispersal of plants and animals across and between the landscapes. The location of core areas and corridors is based on areas of high biodiversity foci and opportunities for conservation. The process of identification is the most crucial component of the CTS conservation strategy development.

The **conservation landscape** for the CTSL was zoned into priority areas. Three types of priority areas were defined:

Priority 1 Areas:

These areas are the highest immediate priority for conservation. They are the core areas of the CTSL. It is essential that these areas are provided with the highest degree of protection and management to ensure that these areas are secure and safe for the biodiversity they support. It is not essential to exclude human activities from these areas. They do not need to be converted to areas of strict protection. They do however require the highest levels of management and protection that can ensure that these areas are secure and safe for the biodiversity they support. Priority 1 areas were designed using the existing protected areas as the basis. However, the existing protected areas were insufficient to meet the quantitative goals for the conservation landscape, and, therefore, the priority 1 areas include additional, contiguous areas.

Priority 1 areas must be secured within the next ten years to ensure that no species are lost. Without effective management in the next ten years, the CTSL will lose its global conservation significance forever.

The Six Priority 1 Areas are:

- Phong Dien/Dakrong
- Xe Sap/Nam Thua-Thien Hue
- Bach Ma/Ba Na/Hai Van
- Ngoc Linh/Song Thanh/Phou Ahyon
- Dong Ampham
- Kon Ka Kinh/Kon Cha Rang

Priority 2 Areas:

These areas do not offer the most optimum conditions or opportunities for conservation but will play a vital role in the long-term survival of many species and are crucial to the correct function of ecological systems at the landscape scale. These areas are particularly important as corridors for the dispersal of plants and animals across the landscape to facilitate mixing between populations and to support increases in population levels.

Priority 2 areas play significant roles as corridors and additional habitat. These areas are not immediately important; action is required in the next ten years to ensure that these corridors are not irretrievably lost forever.

Priority 2 areas were identified as:

- A Luoi (Thua-Thien Hue)
- East Dong Ampham
- Thach Nham (Kon Tum)
- Dak To (Kon Tum)
- Dak Choong (Kon Tum)
- Xe Kong/Quang Nam border area

Priority 3 Areas:

In the very long-term conservation success will be defined by how well evolutionary processes are defined and how well the landscape can buffer major impacts such as climate change. In the long-term therefore, the CTSL will need to be linked to its neighbouring landscapes in the Greater Truong Son Ecoregion. Corridors and linkages have been roughly delineated. These areas connect to Priority Landscape CA2 (Dong Phou Vieng) to the west and Survey Area CAS2 (Central Annamite Southern Extension) to the south. While efforts in the next thirty years should not be diverted from the Priority 1 and 2 areas, efforts should be made to establish conditions now that will facilitate securing these areas in the future.

In addition to the priority areas, four critical areas were identified as areas requiring immediate priority attention as they represent irreplaceable areas in the Landscape and are under threat of being lost in the very near future. The loss of these areas will jeopardise the success of the entire landscape scale initiative.

These four Critical Areas were identified as:

1. A Luoi – Nam Dong Green Corridor

The forests of southern Thua-Thien Hue province are pivotal to the entire landscape as they provide the link east to Bach Ma National Park and the forests of the Hai Van chain, west to Xe Sap NBCA and the forests on the western side of the massif, north to Phong Dien and Dakrong Nature Reserves and south to the forests of northern Quang Nam and the rest of the forests in the southern areas of the landscape. These vital forests are threatened by the increasing number of roads surrounding the area. These forests are becoming increasingly accessible and as a consequence illegal exploitation is expected to increase. The area also comprises a number of state forest enterprises that as yet do not incorporate sustainable practices and biodiversity conservation into their management plans.

2. Ngoc Linh – Song Thanh Corridor

The entire landscape hinges on a corridor linking Song Thanh and Ngoc Linh Nature Reserves. However, the corridor is dissected by the Ho Chi Minh National Highway. The highway does not necessarily need to be a barrier to the movement and dispersal of plants and animals. However, urgent action is required to secure this corridor and ensure that the forests within the corridor are secured.

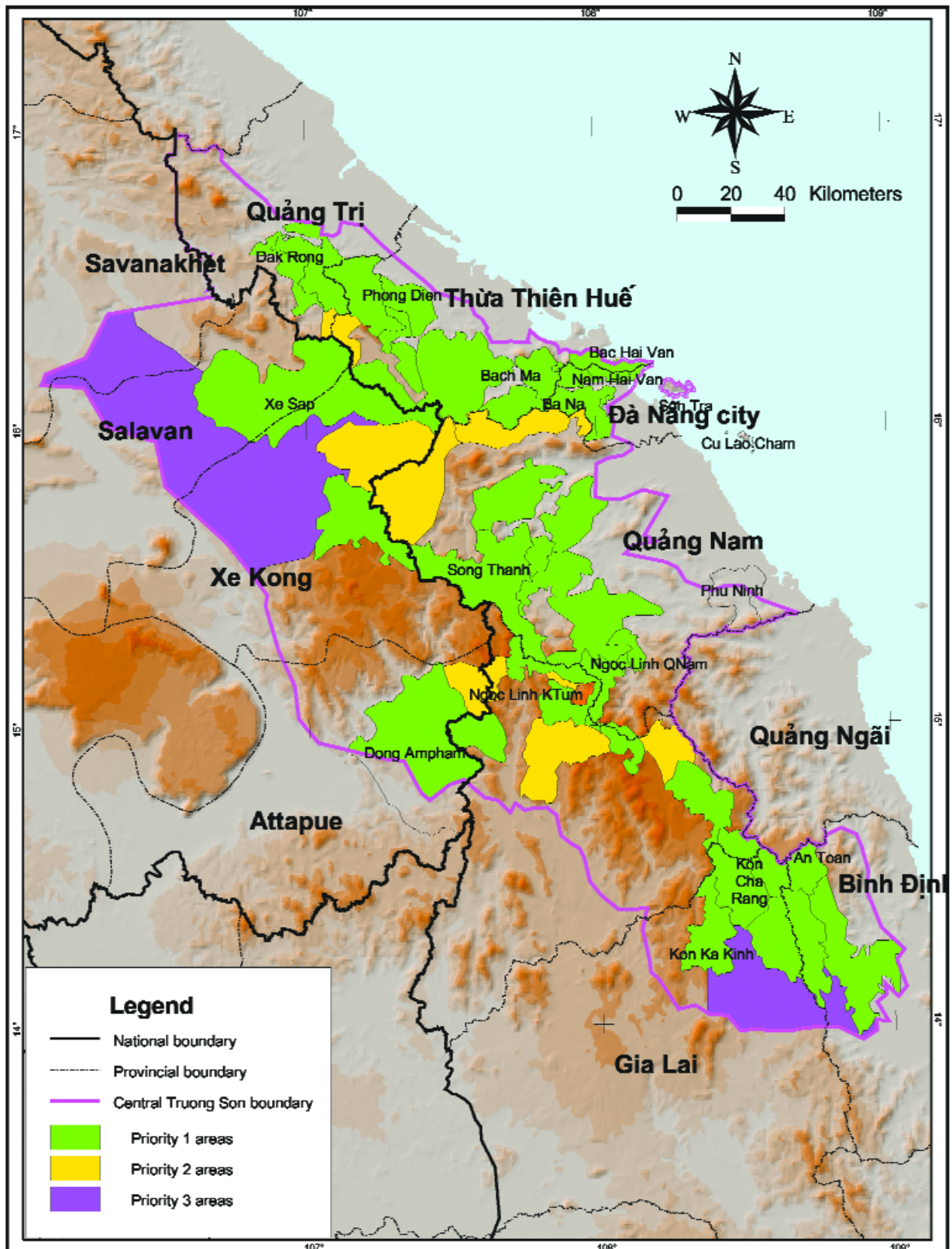
3. Kon Cha Rang – Kon Ka Kinh Corridor

The largest most intact forest area in the landscape falls within the Kon Cha Rang - Kon Ka Kinh priority 1 area. These two protected areas are linked by a critical area of forest presently identified as under particular threat as the area is earmarked for production forestry. Present forestry practices would not provide sufficient conservation measures to meet the conservation needs of these forests. The implementation of sustainable forestry practices aligned with sound land-use planning and management in this area is crucial in the short term.

4. Vietnam "Ho Chi Minh" National Highway No. 2

The construction of the Ho Chi Minh National Highway is likely to be the single most influential factor on the biodiversity and natural resources of the landscape. The Highway cuts through the landscape from north to south. The highway has been planned and constructed with little to no social or environmental impact assessment and no mitigation for its impact on biodiversity has been planned or implemented. The construction of the highway has already been responsible for forest clearance, massive soil erosion and major sedimentation of rivers. While the highway will bring many benefits to CTSL, without direct and specific interventions it will lead to a significant reduction in the biodiversity value of the Landscape. The highway will increase access to the forest, encourage new settlements and agricultural expansion. The future integrity of the landscape depends on the successful mitigation of negative impacts from the highway throughout the CTSL.

Map of the Three Priority Areas



5. PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT STATUS

5.1. Organization of biodiversity and forest management

Currently, of the total area of 7 provinces within CTSL 2,501,811ha are forested, of which 2,205,915ha are natural forest and 295,898ha are planted forest. The average forest coverage is 42.5% (Table 3)

Table 3: Area and Forest Cover of 7 Provinces in CTS

Unit: 1ha

Provinces/Cities	Land Area	Forest Area	Natutsl Forest	Planted Forest	Forest cover (%)
Quang Tri	476,887	172,709	109,894	62,815	36.2
Thua-Thien Hue	505,399	234,454	177,550	56,904	46.4
Da Nang City	125,625	53,297	37,066	16,231	42.4
Quang Nam	1,040,514	431,668	388,803	42,865	41.5
Kon Tum	961,450	631,276	602,109	29,167	65.7
Gia Lai	1,549,571	760,245	728,907	31,339	49.1
Binh Dinh	602,506	218,162	161,586	56,577	36.2
Total	5,261,952	250,1811	2,205,915	295,898	42.5 (Tb)

Source: Report on national forest area inventory in July 2002

Forests are classified into 3 categories for effective management: Production forest, protection forest and special use forest (Table 4).

Table 4: Three Forest Categories by 7 Provinces in CTSL

Unit: 1ha

Provinces/Cities	Total forested area	Production Forest	Special Use Forest *	Protection Forest
Quang Tri	172,709	68,811	32,466	71,430
Thua Thien- Hue	234,454	109,399	53,505**	71,304
Da Nang City	53,297	16,412	16,553	20,330
Quang Nam	431,668	250,738	35,826***	145,104
Kon Tum	631,276	201,087	80,586	349,602
Gia Lai	760,245	153,137	36,388	570,726
Binh Dinh	218,162	114,752	0	103,409
Total	2,501,811	914,336	255,324	1,331,905

Source: Report on national forest inventory, July 2002;

* Note: SUF figures are not current. Much of the Production forest has, in each province, been added to areas of SUF, or transformed into SUF management, or is in the process of management reform.

**Note: Does not include final demarcation of Phong Dien Nature reserve, still under gazettelement.

***Note: Song Thanh Nature Reserve measures 93,249ha, yet remains to be finally demarcated, and hence is not included in these figures

Under Prime Minister Decision no. 245/1998/QĐ-TT dated 21 December 1998, which describes the implementation process for managing responsibility of forest and forest land under state management, forest management is classified at province and district levels as:

At provincial level:

- The chairman of the Provincial People's Committee (PPC) is responsible to the Prime Minister for forest development and protection, forest and forest land use in their province (Article 4.1)

- The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is the focal agency to support the PPC in implementing state management responsibility on forest and forest land (Article 4.2)

- The PFPD is the agency responsible for implementing, examining and monitoring law enforcement on forest management, protection and development throughout the province (Article 4.3)

At district level:

- The chairman of District People's Committee (DPC) is responsible to the PPC Chairman for forest protection, development and forest and forest land use throughout the district (Article 5.1).

- The District Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) is the agency to support the DPC in implementing state management function on forest. (Article 5.2).

- The District Forest Protection Department (FPD) is the agency responsible for examining and monitoring law enforcement in forest management protection and development in the district.

During the past ten years, the national forest area as a whole, and the forest area in 7 provinces within the CTSL in particular, has increased in terms of coverage, as forest management and reforestation has received enhanced investment. However, forest quality, biodiversity and other important values are still decreasing: natural forest with a high stock of timber and forest products is being superseded by poor forest or restored forest with a low stock of timber and forest products; many plant and animal species of high economic and biodiversity value have decreased alarmingly. Key habitats have been destroyed or badly degraded. To put a halt to the degradation of forest and biodiversity, the government of Vietnam has set targets for forest development for the period 2000-2010:

- To develop forest resources, the government targets include reforesting 5 million ha in the following ways: 1 million ha zoned for nurseries, 1 million ha of regenerated protection forest and special use forest, 2 million ha of economic forest and 1 million ha of industrial perennial crop and fruit plants. In addition to the 5 Million hectare activities additional targets are to protect existing forest cover, increase the growing capacity of forest and raise the forest cover up to 43% nationwide, contribute to environmental security, mitigate natural disasters and protect biodiversity. A further goal is to halt forest destruction and protect the genetic resources of wildlife.

- Complete land and forest allocation to organizations, households and individuals for

effective use of fallow and barren hills, generate more employment for local people in order to contribute to hunger eradication and poverty reduction, sedentarization and fixed cultivation where appropriate; increase income generation for rural and mountainous people; stabilize the political and social situation, including defence and security in the border areas in particular.

- Promote economic reforestation to provide sufficient material for the paper industry, artificial boards (particle board, fibre board); meet timber, fire wood and NTFP demands, for both domestic consumption and export.
- Ensure sustainable exploitation and use of forest. The Government recognises that the encouragement and facilitation of the business of planted forest and use of products made from planted forest timbers is a long term forest development.

The government and local authorities of 7 provinces within the CTSL are also concerned about nature and biodiversity conservation. Currently, there are 18 special use forests in the CTSL are established with a total area of 354,003 ha. (Table 5)

Table 5: Special-use forests (protected areas) in the CTS

No.	Name of protected area	Type	Province	Staff/ Contracts	Area (ha)
1	Dakrong	NR	Quang Tri	9/20	40,526
2	Ru Linh	LPA	Quang Tri	2/0	270
3	Bach Ma	NP	Thua Thien Hue	40/0	22,030
4	Phong Dien	NR	Thua Thien Hue	0	41,433
5	North Hai Van	LPA	Thua Thien Hue	22/10	25,037
6	Southwest Hue	LPA	Thua Thien Hue	5/0	1,260
7	South Hai Van	LPA	Da Nang	10/2	10,850
8	Ba Na	NR	Da Nang	10/10	8,838
9	Son Tra	LPA	Da Nang	9/2	4,371
10	Cu Lao Cham	NR	Quang Nam	4/0	1,535
11	Song Thanh	NR	Quang Nam	22/0	93,249
12	Gheng Rang	LPA	Binh Dinh	0	2,080
13	An Toan	LPA	Binh Dinh	0	2,500
14	Phuoc Son	LPA	Binh Dinh	0	120
15	Nguyen Hue Orange Garden	LPA	Binh Dinh	0	800
16	Kon Ka Kinh	NP	Gia Lai	13/2	41,780
17	Kon Cha Rang	BTTN	Gia Lai	n/a	15,900
18	Ngoc Linh Kon Tum	BTTN	Kon Tum	n/a	41,424

Notes: NR: Natural Reserve; NP: National Park; LPA: Landscape Protected Areas.

Source: Tran Quoc Bao, 2003

Bach Ma National Park is the only protected area under the administration of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), the remainder of the protected areas are under the administration of the provinces, and some protected areas have not yet established a management board.

In recent years (1999 - 2002), the government and PPC have invested to develop these special use forests, through annual funding and funds from forest protection programmes, silviculture programmes, and programme 661. However, some recently established special use forests do not yet have any investment plan or management structure.

5.2. Natural Resource and Biodiversity Trends

In recent years, the forest area of the CTS in general has increased but the quality of the forest and biodiversity of the area is still declining due to several reasons:

- Investment in protected areas has not been sustainable
- Illegal forest exploitation and wildlife hunting are not strictly controlled
- Land use and planning has not been systematically addressed
- Infrastructure construction has fragmented many important habitats of the CTS
- Awareness raising and education initiatives have been neither comprehensive nor profound
- Law enforcement has not been strict or effective

5.3. Threats and Challenges

5.3.1. The decline in resource

The ecological integrity of the Central Truong Son has declined rapidly, particularly in the last 50 years. The richness of plants and animals living in the Landscape has dramatically reduced, natural resources have been dramatically depleted and lost and soil erosion and flooding has increased as the Landscape is unable to provide the vital services to the people of the Central Truong Son.

Unsustainable management of the natural resources, habitat loss, fragmentation of forest landscapes and depletion of biodiversity have led to the current situation where:

- The economic base, traditions and customs of rural communities are deteriorating
- Key species are on the verge of extinction
- The integrity of the landscape is threatened as the links between blocks of the landscape come under increasingly heavy pressure
- Ecological services such as flood control, soil conservation and pest control significantly reduced.

Local communities and their resource management practices are often assumed to be the underlying cause of resource degradation. Poor rural populations can contribute to pressure on biodiversity resources; however, they are neither the sole nor necessarily the key threat in any specific locality. The key stakeholders related to threats were identified as: (1) people in new economic zones, (2) local communities (3) changing land-use as land

has been converted for agriculture and basic construction, (4) overexploitation of natural resources, and (5) weak management.

5.3.2. Institutions, Policy, and Law Enforcement

At present, a complicated institutional environment with incomplete or confused responsibilities of management agencies causes numerous constraints in the management of land, forest and biodiversity. Combined with the equally unclear, overlapping, and seemingly conflicting rules and regulations to protect habitats and biodiversity, the enforcement task is difficult at best.

Key enforcement issues for the CTSL include:

- Awareness of the law and its rationale is limited, too few know what is being protected, and why. Too few can therefore develop any personal conviction towards conservation.
- Rules, regulations and guidelines need to be streamlined, harmonized and clearly codified.
- Skills and numbers of staff need to better match the tasks to which they are assigned.

A management institution is a system of popular rules and regulations and management agencies. The institution is a decisive factor in the efficiency of protection. As in the case of CTSL, two issues related to institutions are of concern:

- The capacity and capability of authority in existing and newly established conservation agencies needs to be improved.
- Engage with a broader range of stakeholders, particularly those that have negative impacts on conservation, and including stakeholders from sectors which support socio-economic development.

5.3.3. Insufficient Involvement of Local Communities in Natural Resource Management

Natural resources can only be protected if both the local governments and local populations are committed to do so. "Protection of resources" usually implies loss of de jure control over harvest of the resources in question. Prohibitions are rarely accompanied by new solutions for addressing local resource needs. De facto resource use often continues unabated, or in some instances may even increase as the whole practice moves into the shadow of illegality and unscrupulous exploitation, especially where enforcement cannot begin to match the provisions of the new protection decrees. Furthermore, the awareness of local people about government conservation priorities is low to non-existent. For the truly poor, there are few resources or skill training available to help local communities re-orient their economic base towards either sustainable practices or away from forest

resources. Local communities are not yet meaningfully involved in co-managing and protecting local forest resources.

Key resource use issues for the programme are:

- Local communities need training, infrastructure, and information to practice either sustainable harvest models, or to develop new, non-forest-based economic activities;
- Low awareness about which natural resources are to be protected and why
- Local communities need to be engaged in planning and managing local natural resources or development initiatives
- The local population does not have a strong capacity to communicate its interests and needs to the government. Where there is a will, there is often a lack of community representation or link to express interests to the authorities.

5.3.4. Professional Ventures such as Logging and Poaching High Commercial-Value Species

Professional hunters and gatherers (as distinguished from local community resource collectors) come from other towns, districts or provinces to exploit, for example, Po Mu timber (*Fokienia hodginsii*) in Kon Ka Kinh Nature Reserve (Gia Lai) or tiger and bear in Phong Dien Nature Reserve (Thua-Thien Hue) and Song Thanh Nature Reserve (Quang Nam). These outsiders, linked to national and international markets, are organized, well-equipped, and intimidating. The skills and resources needed to curb the international wildlife trade are hence different than those normally available to the average forest ranger.

The key enforcement issues for this programme are:

- The existing penalty system does not match the conservation crime;
- Disincentives: the higher the probability of arrest, prosecution or capture, the less incentive for illegal exploitation. A high penalty, yet low chance of prosecution, is not an adequate deterrent;
- Approaches, skills and equipment are needed to efficiently enforce regulations.

5.4. Opportunities within the CTSL

The CTSL offers significant potential for achieving the goals and vision set out in the programme. It is important not only to focus on threats, but to act on the positive opportunities that are available or that can be fostered. A brief summary of opportunities includes the following:

Forest cover within the CTSL: Although the integrity of the CTSL forests is under threat from a variety of root causes, and forest loss has steadily reduced coverage over the last few decades, there still remain large tracts of forest and some areas are showing an

increase in forestation due to initiatives such as Programme 327 and the "Five Million Hectare" programme. This is a basis from which to work on protection, management and restoration activities.

Protected area network - Within the CTSL there is an existing network of protected areas and protection management. Attention and focus is needed to enhance the management and enforcement capacity. Conservation actions for CTSL will be well implemented due to the management of existing protected areas and conservation concern of the local authorities.

Enabling policies and GOV initiatives to date - Frameworks, policies and programmes currently implemented by the GOV can both support and be supported by the CTS Initiative. These include both specific forestry and biodiversity policies, protected area management, and sustainable forest management as well as wider economic and development programmes, hunger eradication and poverty reduction programmes such as the 135 Programme and the Five Million Hectare Programme. These programmes include policies on special-use forests, decentralisation, forestry reform and sustainable forest management, and in some cases poverty alleviation programmes.

The Vietnam Biodiversity Action Plan and commitments to international conventions - Vietnam developed its Biodiversity Action Plan, with support from WWF and GEF, in 1995. The CTS Initiative will work within the existing BAP in addition to providing support to review and phase updates to the BAP. Furthermore, Vietnam is signatory to a wide range of International Conventions, such as CITES, RAMSAR, and the Convention on Biodiversity.

High level of education and literacy in Vietnam - Vietnam's national policies on social strengthening have put a high priority on education, at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The literacy and general education levels in Vietnam are considerably high, especially compared to regional standards. This is a fundamental opportunity within the CTSL in Vietnam, especially in terms of conservation awareness raising and the capacity to manage and plan for conservation.

Existing communications network and mechanisms - Vietnam's communications system and infrastructure is rapidly improving, and can be capitalised on in terms of selling the CTSL vision to a wide constituency of stakeholders, and for mobilising communication across the landscape scale.

New technologies are being developed and adopted by Vietnamese practitioners in the fields of conservation and development - The absorption of new research, field technologies and methods into the Vietnam context provides an opportunity for conservation success. Techniques such as GIS, conservation networking, database management, and research of international standard, are all supported by the base of academic and research institutions

that currently operate within the CTSL. Furthermore, there exist a variety of training institutions and potential "models of good practice" (such as Bach Ma National Park) at national level.

Strong NGO presence and bilateral and donor support - Vietnam cooperates with a number of NGOs and international support agencies to further conservation and development goals within the country, and there are numerous opportunities for increased collaboration and exchange towards achieving the CTS landscape vision.

The national institutional structure and capacity at all levels - The State administrative structure is undergoing a parallel decentralisation process hand-in-hand with economic renovation under *Doi Moi*. There exists in Vietnam sufficient institutional capacity to participate in, mobilise and develop conservation and development agendas at all administrative levels.

Economic factors - Economic factors can both enhance and exacerbate conservation achievements. The recent growth rate and reduction in poverty levels allows for a higher degree of choice concerning conservation issues, as dependencies and subsistence level-limitations are resolved.

PART II

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS OF THE CTS INITIATIVE

1. THE LONG-TERM OBJECTIVE OF THE CTSI:

To establish an integrated mosaic of complementary land–use and development practice to protect, manage and restore natural resources and biodiversity in the Truong Son in the industrialization and modernization process, while also contributing to institutional development, good governance and raised standards of living for local communities.

To achieve the long-term objective, five specific objectives have been identified as critical to implement the Programme.

1.1. Specific Objective I – "Conservation"

The global biodiversity values of the CTS will be protected, maintained and restored for the benefit of the people of the CTS and Vietnam to contribute to national and international conservation efforts.

1.2. Specific Objective II – "Awareness and Responsibility"

To increase responsibility of every individual, organization and local community in the CTSL to protect, manage and restore ecosystems in the area.

1.3. Specific Objective III – "Legal framework"

To establish a legal, policy and institutional framework to strengthen the management, protection and restoration of natural resources in the Central Truong Son. All regional initiatives and development schemes routinely address conservation priorities and conform to legal documents of conservation.

1.4. Specific Objective IV – "Capacity"

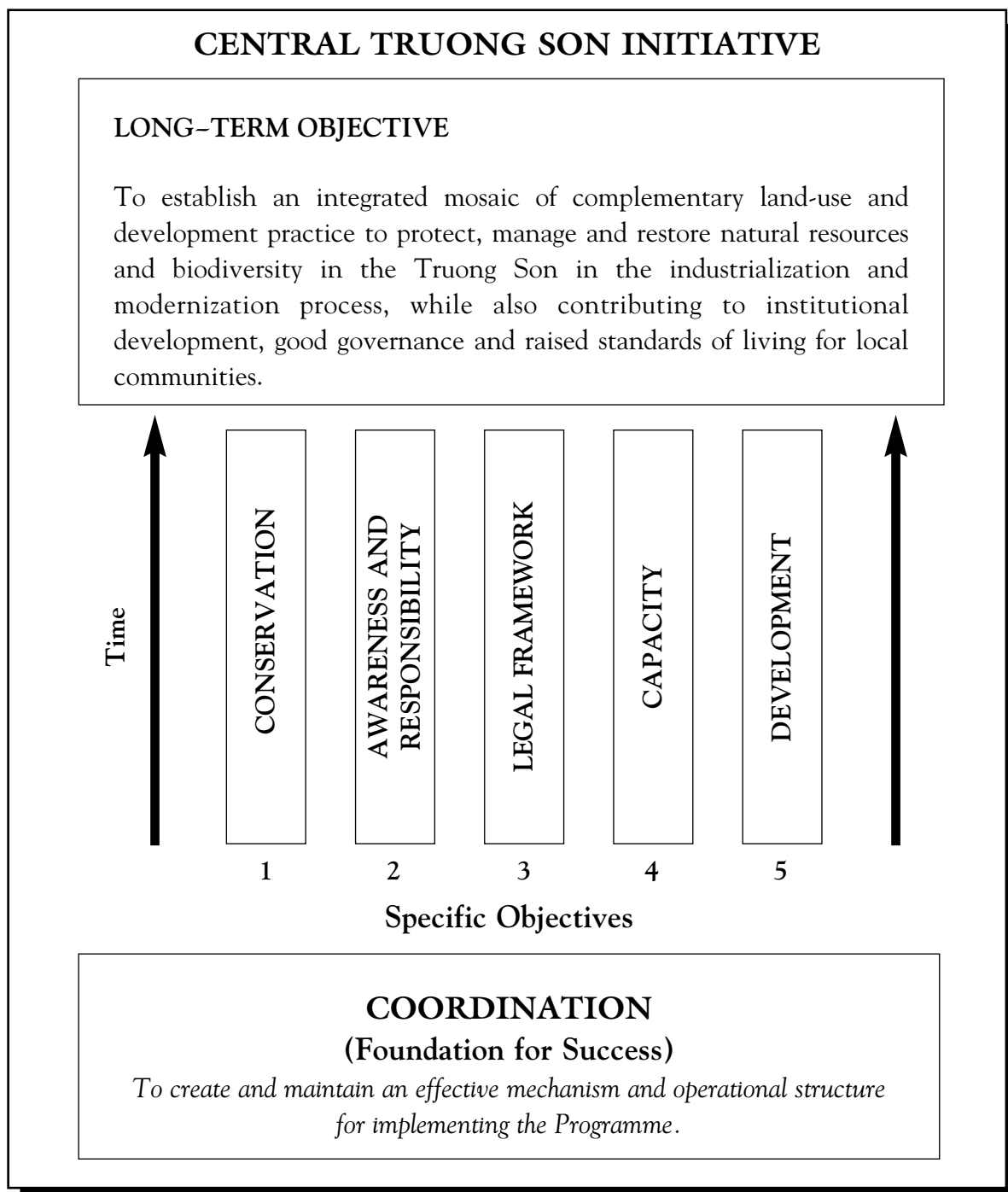
To strengthen the capacity and skills for all stakeholders to protect, manage and restore the natural ecosystems of the CTS landscape.

1.5. Specific Objective V – "Development"

To manage forest resources and biodiversity at a sustainable level in order to raise the standard of living for local people, contributing to poverty alleviation and hunger eradication, and meet the demands of socio-economic development.

Long term objective and specific objectives are presented in Chart 1 below:

Chart 1



2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITY ACTIONS OF THE CTSI

Principles of defining priority actions:

- Biodiversity and socio-economic status in the CTSL
- Basis of high biodiversity in the area
- Priority for problems and localities of high yet critical biodiversity potential that have not or have been insignificantly invested.
- Low capacity for conservation
- Current government objectives of hunger eradication and poverty reduction for poor areas throughout Vietnam.

Priority actions under each specific objective have been developed. During the implementation of the initiative, the definition of priority actions and priority areas can be reviewed and adjusted.

2.1. Specific Objective I: "Conservation"

The global biodiversity values of the CTS will be protected, maintained and restored for the benefit of the people of the CTS and Vietnam to contribute to national and international conservation efforts.

2.1.1. Milestones by 2010

- A network of strictly protected areas will be established and effectively managed
- Effective conservation secures habitat and species in all priority 1 areas
- Key threats in the four "hotspot" areas will be fully mitigated
- Unsustainable exploitation of the most threatened animals and plants will be reduced to zero
- Specific direct and effective conservation measures provide adequate protection for key species
- Understanding of the ecology and threats to the species of conservation foci is sufficient to support effective conservation efforts
- The competency and skills of those key players responsible for the protection, management and restoration of key species and habitats in priority 1 areas is sufficient to provide effective conservation
- Freshwater conservation priorities will be clearly identified and effective conservation will be implemented for one entire waterway (from headwater to coast).

To preserve blocks of natural habitat resilient enough to disturbance and long-term changes, the programme is based on a large-scale landscape management approach with

locality specific action. Sound scientific analysis and broad-based participation of stakeholders in decision making will define more precisely the process of setting conservation priorities. The programme is designed to achieve the principle objective of protection, management and restoration of interconnecting sites and species. A comprehensive list of biological conservation targets was prepared during the biological assessment and is presented as the biological vision. This is summarised in Appendix 2 and detailed in the Central Truong Son Initiative Report No.1. The Vision is represented by a complex number of short-term, mid-term and long-term targets. Short term targets are aimed to provide immediate protection for those habitats and species under immediate threat. Longer-term targets aim to restore and manage the habitats and species, from their baseline state at present until they are flourishing and self-sustaining. The targets of the Initiative are based on these biological conservation targets but also include an important target aimed to ensure that the initiative contributes to the socio-economic development of the landscape.

2.1.2. Eight Priority "Conservation" Actions

Action 1

DEVELOP AND COMPLETE NETWORK OF PROTECTED AREAS	
<i>By 2010, a network of strictly protected areas will be developed and effectively managed</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>There is currently a system of 18 existing and proposed protected areas in the Central Truong Son Landscape to protect its biodiversity value and ecosystems specific to the Central Truong Son provinces.</p> <p>In order for this network to function effectively, capacity must be built within these protected areas, gaps within the network must be identified and filled, and the landscape surrounding these protected areas must function to support the protected areas.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accomplish feasible project/investment plan for existing and proposed protected areas 2. Establish and strengthen management board for special use forests in Central Truong Son Landscape 3. Strengthen forest management and protection staffing in Nature Reserves to appropriate levels 4. Redefine management classification from Nature Reserve to National Park where necessary 5. Demarcate and redefine boundaries on the ground for protected areas and buffer zones 6. Develop management plan for protected areas in Central Truong Son landscape following conservation targets of each area 7. Establish new protected areas for Central Truong Son landscape 8. Ensure effective management of all strict protection areas

Action 2

EFFECTIVELY CONSERVE EXISTING AND PROPOSED PROTECTED AREAS IN PRIORITY 1 AREAS	
<i>By 2010, effective conservation secures habitat and species in all priority 1 areas.</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Whilst protected areas serve as the key role in biodiversity conservation, they cannot successfully act as isolated units. The final stage of developing an effective protected area network/conservation landscape is to ensure that the surrounding areas function to support the protected areas.</p> <p>This includes areas such as watershed protection forest, state forest enterprises and landscape corridors that must all be managed with biodiversity conservation targets in mind.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare conservation zonation management plans for all provinces using the "MOSAIC" method 2. Establish sustainable forest management in appropriate sites in priority 1 areas 3. Protect and maintain important corridors between protected areas 4. Establish effective enforcement mechanisms to maintain conservation values of the priority 1 areas 5. Implement targeted reforestation/restoration activities in Priority 1 areas 6. Establish provincial, district and commune regulations for all priority areas

Action 3

MITIGATE THREATS IN ALL "CRITICAL AREAS" OF THE LANDSCAPE	
<i>By 2010, key threats in the four "CRITICAL" areas will be fully mitigated.</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Within the Central Truong Son Landscape, four key "CRITICAL" areas have been identified that are the highest priority for immediate action as they represent irreplaceable elements of the landscape and are under extreme immediate threat. These "CRITICAL" areas are the highest priority for immediate protection from threats.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mitigate threats and secure forest areas in the four "CRITICAL" areas 2. Establish Green Corridor 3. Establish Song Thanh – Ngoc Linh Corridor 4. Protect forests linking Kon Cha Rang – Kon Cha Kinh 5. Mitigating impacts of the Ho Chi Minh Highway

Action 4

ELIMINATE THE UNSUSTAINABLE EXPLOITATION OF FOREST AND WILDLIFE	
<i>By 2010, unsustainable exploitation of forest and the most threatened animals and plants will be reduced to zero</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Illegal exploitation practices such as the trade in threatened species and illegal logging is arguably both the most significant and least understood immediate threat to the biodiversity of the Central Truong Son.</p> <p>The main problem is that existing wildlife protection laws are poorly understood by both local communities and those enforcing them, and effective enforcement is limited. Penalty systems also limit the effectiveness of enforcement and are not targeted to act as a deterrent to the key offenders and drivers of the wildlife trade. Through improvements to the understanding, enforcement and laws themselves, this threat could be significantly reduced.</p> <p>In addition, it is recognized that sustainable use of biodiversity is an important source of income to some of the poorest communities in the Landscape. Therefore effective enforcement of illegal practices is essential.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and strengthen provincial capacity for enforcement 2. Promote and activate local community participation in wildlife law enforcement and resource protection 3. Establish mechanisms for dealing with confiscated animals and plants (including timber) 4. Improve penalty systems as effective deterrent 5. Licensing system for restaurants based on conservation criteria 6. High profile awareness and education campaign to reduce wildlife consumption and illegal logging 7. Promote sustainable practices that provide incentives for forest conservation

Action 5

STRENGTHEN CONSERVATION MEASURES TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE PROTECTION FOR KEY SPECIES GROUP	
<i>By 2010, specific direct and effective conservation measures provide adequate protection for key species group</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>In addition to working to develop a functioning conservation landscape, specific focus must also be placed upon those taxa that have been identified as conservation priorities. Conservation activities for these species may often fall outside key areas (such as dealing with trade), and also need to be approached in a coordinated manner (often with other key areas outside the CTSL).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate and establish specific protected areas 2. Develop conservation plans for key species 3. Develop awareness campaigns for key species

Action 6

RAISE UNDERSTANDING OF THE ECOLOGY AND THREATS TO CONSERVATION TARGETS, EXCHANGE INFORMATION TO SUPPORT EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION	
<i>By 2010, understanding of ecology and threats to key conservation foci and exchange of information will support effective conservation</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>One of the greatest limiting factors to successful biodiversity conservation in the CTSL is a paucity of data. The information that is available is not always reliable and varies greatly in quality, quantity and format.</p> <p>The capacity does exist within universities and research institutions to fill many of these gaps in our knowledge. With a targeted and coordinated approach to gather the right kinds of data on the right subjects, this limiting factor can be rapidly reduced in significance. Gathering such data as soon as possible is also critical to monitoring the success of our actions.</p> <p>Through storing such data at a central focus point, in a logical and easily accessible manner, the benefits of this action will also be more immediately felt by a much wider audience.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare detailed research plan and encourage research institutions in Vietnam and internationally to participate in the research 2. Conduct biological surveys of areas of importance for biodiversity conservation 3. Survey and monitor biodiversity focused on key taxa groups in the CTSL, potentially through thesis research 4. Develop a biodiversity monitoring plan for the CTSL. Data and information stored in central database 5. Survey and monitor forest cover and integrity across landscape focused on protected areas, sites of strategic importance and landscape hotspots 6. Develop a better understanding of the flora and vegetation and identify plant species and vegetation types of high conservation value

Action 7

IMPROVE COMPETANCY AND SKILLS FOR MANAGEMENT STAFF, PROTECT AND RESTORE KEY SPECIES AND HABITATS IN CTS TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION	
<i>By 2010, the competency and skills of those key players responsible for the protection, management and restoration of key species and habitats in priority 1 areas will be sufficient to provide effective conservation</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Whilst establishing protected areas, laws and management systems will go a long way towards successful biodiversity conservation, it should also be remembered that significant progress has already been made. The existing systems and capacity provide a sound basis for development and can in themselves go a long way towards securing the landscape's conservation if provided with the necessary skills and training.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Management of conservation and biodiversity (targeted to management staff, senior staff in protected areas, watershed protection forests and production forests) 2. Sustainable forest management 3. Community-based forest and biodiversity management 4. Biodiversity survey and monitoring skills should be developed in Universities and within protection agencies, protected area management boards and within local communities 5. Survey and evaluation of rural communities through participatory rural appraisal techniques. New skills are required by those planning and implementing conservation 6. Promote more sustainable practices by diversifying income generation skills in local communities 7. GIS applications in biodiversity monitoring and natural resource management 8. Community-level training on sustainable natural resource utilization 9. Wildlife law status and enforcement training for enforcement staff

Action 8

STRENGTHEN CONSERVATION OF FRESHWATER ECOSYSTEM IN THE CTS

By 2010, freshwater conservation priorities will be clearly identified and effective conservation will be implemented for one entire waterway (from headwater to coast)

Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Freshwater and terrestrial systems are intrinsically linked in the CTSL. Without effective conservation of freshwater systems, terrestrial conservation will never achieve full success. Freshwater resources are arguably the most important nutritionally and economically to local communities and are often exploited in conjunction with terrestrial resources.</p> <p>In addition, a number of terrestrial species also depend on freshwater habitats as a source of shelter, food and water.</p> <p>Intact freshwater systems are also vital to maintaining a complex web of ecological processes through functions such as flood protection.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conservation prioritization process undertaken for freshwater systems following completion of baseline studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biological surveys of aquatic systems on a catchment-by-catchment basis - Habitat integrity/level of alteration study - Threat analysis 2. Research conducted into the effects of hydroelectric power systems (large, small and micro scale) on aquatic systems and biodiversity 3. Identification and clarification of roles, procedures and responsibilities related to management of freshwater capture fisheries in Vietnam 4. Review and amendment of current laws related to freshwater capture fisheries 5. River bank rehabilitation and protection 6. Establishment of freshwater protected areas 7. Establishing pilot community-level sustainable fisheries (including river restocking component and identification and opening of new markets such as aquarium trade) 8. Economic study into the dependence and usage of aquatic resources by local communities 9. Biological monitoring system developed and implemented for aquatic systems across the landscape based on selected indicator species and simple chemical analysis

2.2. Specific Objective II – "Awareness and Responsibility"

Awareness and responsibility of organizations, relevant individuals and local communities within the CTSL are improved to protect, manage and restore the ecosystems and environment in the area.

2.2.1. Milestones by 2010

- An effective programme of conservation education and awareness is being delivered throughout the Landscape*
- Individual provinces mobilize available resources for conservation education*
- Key stakeholders understand the principles of sustainable natural resource management and have the skills to apply them*
- Major government programmes such as 661, 133 and 135 and the FSSP are supported by effective conservation/environmental education activities*
- Government agencies in each province understand the significance and details of the biodiversity of their province*
- The government budget and decisions on policies are based on the understanding of socio-economic value of biodiversity.*

Education, information and communication programmes will be covered by this objective. Raising awareness of the significance of conservation action, at all levels, and amongst all stakeholders, is fundamental to the success of the overall objective. Through concerted conservation awareness-raising and education, the programme will foster change in behaviour and action. The programme will also increase advocacy for the principles of conservation and sustainable natural resource management. There is a need for three separate, yet complementary tracks in advocacy: (1) at the local level, (2) at the district and province levels, and (3), regional and national levels to include a broad constituency such as private enterprise, and educational, economic or social interests related to the environment and land use policy. Raised awareness and increased conservation advocacy will in turn lead to strengthened framework conditions (legal, policy, and institutional) for integrating natural resource management principles into planning for the CTSL. A sustained combination of awareness and advocacy will create a coherent body of partners to work towards positive conservation action and reduce negative threats.

2.2.2. Six Priority "Awareness and Responsibility" Actions

Action 1

CONDUCT A CTSL WIDE 'CONSERVATION EDUCATION' (CE) PROGRAMME	
<i>By 2010, an effective programme of conservation education and awareness is being delivered throughout the Landscape led by provincial agents</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>The landscape approach to CE is necessary to achieve a broad and uniform base of conservation awareness. Cross-border links and institutional partnerships are facilitated if there exists a comparable high understanding of conservation issues. Furthermore, specific activities requiring raised conservation awareness, such as species conservation, often transcend provincial or site-based units, with a target group spread across administrative or institutional units within the landscape. A programme across the CTSL will address this.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold a mission to review current CE activities and potential in the CTSL 2. Develop a network of CE agents 3. Consultation to draft a CE programme for the CTSL 4. Maximise existing/ potential CE centres (such as Bach Ma) for regional capacity building and outreach 5. Conduct pilot CE activities

Action 2

MOBILIZE RESOURCES FOR CONSERVATION EDUCATION IN INDIVIDUAL PROVINCES	
<i>By 2010, available resources in individual provinces are mobilized for conservation education</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Within the framework of the CTSL conservation education programme, and related to projects developed within/across each province, a specific provincial action plan should be developed and implemented. This CE plan should aim to mobilize departments with a normally marginal role in conservation, such as the Education Department, Women's Union and Youth Union, as well as develop expertise and raise awareness in other mainstream development and conservation-related departments, such as DARD and GDLA. Ideally, a provincial plan and co-coordinating team will allow CE to evolve from an 'external activity' to mainstream task of each partner department within each province. Furthermore, the use of "flagship" species as standards for conservation should be linked to particular species in each province, such as saola for Hue, elephant for Quang Nam, pheasants for Quang tri, and tiger for Kon Tum.</p> <p>The C.E. plans should be firmly linked into ongoing and potential conservation and development projects, especially in the field of tourism, for example with visitor interpretation and responsible tourism promotion.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilise and develop regional facilities, such as Bach Ma and a regional wildlife rescue centre (Da Nang) as outreach centres 2. Pilot CE plans and implementation in Hue and Quang Nam 3. Establish a 'CE working group' and/or CE department in each province (i.e. in FPD, with members from each key department) 4. Consultation to draft a comprehensive CE plan aimed at all identified target groups

Action 3

LINK AWARENESS RAISING TO NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	
<i>By 2010, key stakeholders understand the principles of sustainable natural resource management and have the skills to apply them</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Where appropriate, skills development in NRM should be underpinned by a comprehensive knowledge of the resources in question. With a particular focus on the biophysical aspects of NRM, an understanding of resource cycles, maximum sustainable yield, and related resource-behaviour, will benefit the long-term management practice of natural resources, at all levels, across the CTSL. Such examples include harvest effort for quarry species; agroforestry systems to increase productivity and reduce human-animal conflict (elephant-deterrent crops, crop-raiding hedge systems).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mobilise trained extension workers 2. Pilot agroforestry and sustainable hunting activities linked to CE, for example in Phong Dien, Hue and Hien, Quang Nam. 3. Conduct regional assessment of NRM and harvesting models, and establish linkages 4. Implement awareness and education activities for key provincial decision makers

Action 4

LINK CONSERVATION EDUCATION TO GOV PROGRAMMES	
<i>By 2010, major government programmes such as 661⁷, 133⁸ and 135⁹ and the FSSP are supported by effective conservation/environmental education activities</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Many government programmes in Vietnam have broad objectives, targeted funds, and involve a wide section of both provincial and district departments, as well as access local communities. An array of programmes target different local development needs, many of which can integrate conservation priorities into their activities, yet often provide only limited conservation-oriented support. One key area that GOV programmes can act as catalysts for conservation is through CE. CE can be specific and in addition to the wider linkages outlined elsewhere in the Action Plan</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mobilise 661 programme funds for increased investment into CE and NRM skills training, especially agroforestry 2. Mobilise 133, 135 and other provincial programmes to take on CE responsibilities relating to NRM and sustainable economic practice for communities 3. Develop CE as a component of FSSP

⁷ The 5 million ha Programme in 1998 - 2010

⁸ National Programme on hunger eradication and poverty reduction

⁹ Programme on socio-economic development for mountainous and remote communes of extreme difficulties

Action 5

DEVELOP CTSL 'BIODIVERSITY GUIDE'	
<i>By 2010, government agencies in each province understand the significance and details of the biodiversity of their province</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>A widely disseminated, comprehensive and accessible guide to the significance of the biodiversity of the CTSL, combined with the current policies on biodiversity, such as the Vietnam Red Data Book and the Biodiversity Action Plan, will provide decision-makers with a guiding tool when considering conservation and development plans.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involve relevant institutions, especially national and CTSL FPD departments, as well as universities and research institutions in the compilation of biodiversity data specific to the landscape 2. Produce, publish and widely disseminate a Biodiversity Guidebook as a core document, a summary, and through workshop presentations

Hành động 6

CONSIDER AND REFLECT CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES FOR NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS INTO STATE BUDGET ALLOCATION WHILST PLANNING LAND USE	
<i>By 2010, the government budget and decisions on policies are based on the understanding of socio-economic value of biodiversity.</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>The protection of ecosystems is often promoted without supportive arguments for quantifiable benefits from biodiversity conservation. Assisted by the Strategic Environmental Framework, a comprehensive valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services, such as watershed protection and climate regulation, as well as micro-benefits such as sustainable harvest benefits, will assist regional and national decision-makers to weigh conservation cost and benefits when faced with development planning of conservation-development conflicts. Furthermore, local institutions and authorities can access economic models when planning land use or business ventures.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop participatory economic research objectives and methodologies 2. Conduct economic evaluation at macro (landscape) scale of ecosystem services 3. Conduct economic evaluations at micro (site-based) levels within each province of biodiversity benefits 4. Ensure research is practical, leading to management and land-use planning recommendations 5. Ensure results are disseminated widely in accessible form at all levels.

2.3. Specific Objective III – "Legal framework"

To establish a legal, policy and institutional framework to strengthen the management, protection and restoration of natural resources in the Central Truong Son. All regional initiatives and development schemes routinely address conservation priorities and conform to legal documents of conservation.

2.3.1. Milestones by 2010

- The provinces of the CTSL have a strategic framework from which to guide decisions on appropriate development interventions and land–use planning decisions*
- All provinces of the CTSL have a fully developed comprehensive conservation plan integrated with the provincial socio–economic development plans*
- Each province in the CTSL has a clear plan for sustainable management of the forest (based on production, protection and special use forest system) and has implemented standards for sustainable forestry*
- Effective governance of natural resources is attained maximising the benefits to the provinces and local communities whilst maintaining social and environmental sustainability*
- The provinces of the CTSL have the legal and administrative framework to effectively control the illegal and unsustainable exploitation of biodiversity and natural resources*

Underlying all actions undertaken to conserve biodiversity and manage natural resources sustainably must be a strong legal and policy framework that promotes the goals and supports the achievement of the targets of the programme. In addition, a key threat identified during the assessments was the conflicts between different development plans and policies and the goals of biodiversity conservation. Despite the fact that the government of Vietnam makes significant efforts to protect biodiversity, conflicting development plans such as poorly planned infrastructure construction and blanket agricultural policies undermine these comparatively modest conservation achievements.

This objective therefore aims to create a legal and policy framework that promotes biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management by aligning development strategies, improving the legal framework for protection/sustainable management of natural resources, establishing standards and procedures to guide sound development and ensuring sufficient mitigation of negative impacts of development.

This result area focuses on strengthening the planning procedures responsible for economic and social development in the landscape to ensure that the planning results in a 'sustainable landscape'.

2.3.2 Four Priority 'Legal' Actions

Action 1

DEVELOP STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR INDIVIDUAL PROVINCES IN THE CTSL	
<i>By 2010, the provinces in the CTSL have a strategic framework from which to guide decisions on appropriate development interventions and land-use planning decisions</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>A Strategic Environmental Framework will comprehensively place conservation targets and other environmental and social targets within the context of current and proposed developments within the CTSL. This will provide provincial and national level stakeholders with an accurate planning and decision-making tool to provide for the integration of conservation priorities into socio-economic development, and help address conflict.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct landscape level analysis of existing and proposed development, industry and infrastructure projects 2. Identify areas and landscape based factors of high conservation and environmental value 3. Involve wide-ranging participation of decision-makers in the development, implementation and analysis, and widely disseminate results from the framework.

Action 2

DEVELOP PROVINCIAL CONSERVATION SUB-STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS, INTEGRATE WITH SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS OF INDIVIDUAL PROVINCES	
<i>By 2010, all provinces in the CTSL have a fully developed comprehensive conservation plan integrated with the provincial socio-economic development plans</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>The provinces within the CTSL form the backbone administration unit for the implementation of the programme across the landscape. Provincial situations, desires and particulars need to be incorporated into the ground-level implementation of the programme. Project development within the CTSL can be enhanced through comprehensive provincial plans, assisting the CTSL coordination unit to reach milestones, match targets and achieve the CTSL vision.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draw on lessons and expertise from the 'pilot' strategy under development within Quang Nam province 2. Develop provincial project processes, engaging all relevant stakeholders, to develop sub-strategies and action plans for each of the 7 provinces of the CTSL 3. Coordinate regional CTSL projects to match provincial priorities 4. Ensure the conservation plan is integrated with the provincial socio-economic plans

Action 3

DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT (SFM) POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION	
<p><i>By 2010, each province in the CTSL has a clear plan for sustainable forest management (based on production, protection and special use forest system) and has implemented standards for sustainable forestry</i></p>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Current GOV policies are seeking to address renovation of the State Forest Enterprise sector across Vietnam, through Decision 187, the 661 programme and others. The sustainable management of forest enterprise is fundamental to the integrity of the CTSL. Research and participatory development of sustainable forest management models can be reflected in provincial and national policies, and initiatives such as the FSSP.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop site-based models of SFM in pilot areas of the CTSL 2. Create a network of SFM managers across the CTSL 3. Develop management plan support materials, such as EIA manuals, and Reduced Impact Logging guidelines 4. Assist SFEs across the CTSL to make the transition to protection forests, or as production forests with diversified production modes, or as service entities for small and medium enterprises and community economies 5. Mirror site-based successes into provincial and national policies

Action 4

SUPPORT INSTITUTION DEVELOPMENT FOR NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT THROUGH THE AREA AND CONTROL ILLEGAL EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND BIODIVERSITY	
<p><i>By 2010, effective governance of natural resources is attained maximising the benefits to the provinces and local communities whilst maintaining social and environmental sustainability</i></p>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Recent GOV policy has shifted away from a centrally-planned system, with increased devolution of institutional roles and land management to provincial and locality control. There is a need to assist the decentralisation process in terms of supportive policies and methodologies to allow for smooth transition of institutional and land management responsibilities to achieve conservation targets.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist drafting of national and provincial-level circulars guiding national decentralisation policies, such as Decision 187 2. Mirror provincial and site-based successes across the CTSL and provide national-level policy makers with pilot models 3. Ensure a supportive policy framework and institutional support for locality participation in the decentralisation process, and for administrative support in new roles and responsibilities to the benefit of conservation

2.4. Specific Objective IV – "Capacity"

Strengthen capacity skills for all stakeholders to protect, manage and restore the natural ecosystems of the CTS landscape.

2.4.1. Milestones by 2010

- The government budget and policy decisions are based on an understanding of economic and social value of biodiversity.*
- Capacity of protection staff within provinces in CTSL are strengthened with training on expertise and equipment*
- All managers of forest and biodiversity (local communities in particular) in priority areas are have sufficient capacity to sustainably manage natural resources and biodiversity.*
- CTSI stakeholders are supported to develop a system for providing information and exchanging experience and research results on conservation and sustainable management.*

This objective will build the capacity for integrated natural resource management among the full range of forest managers in specific sites. Emphasis will be placed on appropriate skills, institutional and infrastructure development, with a programme of discrete capital investments to address urgent biodiversity needs, and ensure adequate information on the impacts towards conservation and on socio-economic development is regularly available to decision makers.

Crucial to the long-term success of the Initiative will be the provision of a research facility that will support effective implementation of conservation actions. The Initiative will need to encourage the participation and collaboration of research institutions and promote the development of research capacities within implementation agencies such as protected area management boards.

2.4.2 Four Priority 'Capacity' Actions

Action 1

PROVIDE TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT FOR FOREST PROTECTION DEPARTMENTS OF PROVINCES WITHIN THE CTSL	
<i>By 2010, the forest protection departments of provinces within CTS are trained and equipped</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>FPD departments are the most important units for protection, PA management and research activities, with a wide range of tasks involving multiple aspects of the conservation paradigm. To achieve success, FPD capacity should be strengthened through comprehensive skills and management support.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide training for provincial FPDs in conservation biology and research techniques 2. Provide training in language skills, especially English and ethnic minority languages and culture 3. Provide training in community outreach and conservation education 4. Provide training in wildlife law enforcement and monitoring 5. Produce field guides and training manuals 6. Enforce training capacity within select institutions 7. Evaluate provincial needs, working structure, motivation and monitoring systems within each FPD unit 8. Provide essential equipment to FPD units

Action 2

INCREASE COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION IN PRIORITY AREAS	
<p><i>By 2010, all stewards of forest and biodiversity (particularly local communities) in priority areas have sufficient capacity to manage natural resources and biodiversity sustainably</i></p>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Local stakeholders and communities need the skills and capacity to tackle CBNRM, with sustainable benefits to households and local economies, and to conservation. This capacity may already exist in part, yet need external support or institutional and technical backup. However, the capacity for successful CBNRM lies also with local and district authorities, who can greatly facilitate CBNRM processes as well as provide vital extension and services.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish networks of extension providers within the CTSL for specific skill-base fields 2. Strengthen institutional capacity and support to plan for and manage NRM tasks and responsibilities, such as community based "Forest Management Units" 3. Develop monitoring and evaluation systems for communities to adopt towards sustainable NRM 4. Intra-community exchange and information dissemination to learn lessons from successful pilot NRM activities

Action 3

SUPPORT TO ESTABLISH AN EFFECTIVE SYSTEM FOR PROVIDING QUALITY INFORMATION BASED ON LESSONS LEARNED AND RESULTS OF APPLIED RESEARCH	
<p><i>By 2010, CTSI partners and stakeholders are supported to establish an effective system for providing information, sharing lessons learned and research results of conservation and sustainable management.</i></p>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>At present, actions and interventions are based on the thinnest layer of information. Little data and applied research are available to help support effective decision-making by all levels of stakeholders. A critical factor for success will be the provision of improved quality information based on a well-targeted research agenda and information sharing mechanisms. Important for success will be the mobilization and collaboration of research institutes and the development of institutional capacity for research within key partner organizations such as the management boards of special-use forests.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify key research needs 2. Identify key research partners, gaps in present research support within existing partner institutions 3. Develop research plan for the Initiative based on clear priorities 4. Improve capacity of partner Institutions to provide effective research services 5. Establish effective systems for sharing information and lessons learned

Action 4

MONITOR NATURAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT FOR INDIVIDUAL PROVINCES WITHIN CTSL	
<i>By 2010, monitoring of natural resource and biodiversity assessment is effectively implemented.</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Monitoring of natural resources and biodiversity assessment are essential and routinely implemented for individual provinces within CTSL. At present, provincial forest protection departments are monitoring and providing annual data on forest and forest land. However, the Initiative needs to support to improve the quality of the monitoring.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop plan of monitoring and assessment of natural resources for each province within CTSL 2. Conduct biodiversity assessment every 5 years

2.5. Specific Objective V – "Development"

Natural resources and biodiversity of the CTSL are sustainably managed to improve the living standard of local people, contributing to poverty alleviation and hunger eradication and meeting demands of socio-economic development.

2.5.1. Milestones by 2010

- Effective systems of sustainable use of biodiversity to alleviate pressure on core populations of threatened species will be established*
- Models of community based enterprises and co-management of resources with government and private sector partners will demonstrate innovative methods to combine biodiversity conservation with the development of sustainable livelihoods*
- A full programme to promote sustainable tourism is underway that provides a significant contribution to biodiversity conservation, promotes the natural beauty of the landscape and provides appropriate livelihood support for local people*

A key to the success of the Initiative will be innovative enterprises that find solutions to conservation issues whilst improving the long-term well-being of the poorest communities in the CTSL. The Initiative needs to develop and test models of co-management among state land managers, households and other key stakeholders. A participatory planning process will involve local communities in defining resource needs and defining investments and interventions to improve the sustainability of local economic activities. This analysis would help drive the decision of what infrastructure and public services (e.g., extension services) may need strengthening to ensure an adequate economic base from which local communities can legitimately be expected to take advantage of new opportunities.

2.5.2. Five Priority 'Development' Actions

Action 1

SECURE ACCESS TO FOREST RESOURCES FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN ORDER TO CONTRIBUTE TO HUNGER ERADICATION AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN THE AREA.	
<i>By 2010, models of community based management and co-management of resources by local people in partnership with the government and private sector will demonstrate innovative methods to combine biodiversity conservation with the development of sustainable livelihoods.</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Communities across the CTSL have a varied relationship with forest resources, locally or through secondary links, and form a mosaic of land-use practices that impact on forest resources and biodiversity. There is no model, reliable indicator or blanket method to quantify the impact or benefit that local stakeholders have on the CTSL. Each stakeholder unit has a relationship with forest resources that may or may not be mirrored in similar circumstances elsewhere. Therefore, to minimise impacts and capitalise on positive practices, the capacity of each locality to tailor appropriate interventions is based on the level of research conducted and information available on local stakeholder links to forest resources.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop standardised research methodologies based on participatory tools, and devised through local consultation 2. Pilot PRA research in key areas of CTSL developing research skills and capacity simultaneously 3. Ensure mechanism for speedy analysis of results, database update and dissemination 4. Monitor change through repeat surveys based on standardised methodologies.

Action 2

SUPPORT FORESTLAND ALLOCATION AND APPROPRIATE FORESTLAND MANAGEMENT

By 2010, systems for maximising the benefits of sustainable use of biodiversity to alleviate pressure on core populations of threatened species will be established.

Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Common property resource management regimes, based on forestland tenure, offer intrinsic incentives for a sustainable landscape. Open access and loose tenure encourages unsustainable exploitation as there is no collective responsibility or ownership of resources. In line with the GOV decentralisation policy, the allocation of forestland is occurring in all of the CTSL provinces, especially in the mountainous areas and most frequently to ethnic minority communities. Support to this process is essential in achieving a conservation landscape, as such decentralisation loosens control over land-use and land management practice by State agencies. The risk that unsustainable land-use and management practice will occur needs to be countered by a focused support structure for both the allocation procedure as well as the contractual management practice once forestland is allocated.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support and develop forestland allocation programmes within each CTSL province, under the guidance of national decentralisation policy 2. Develop official capacity within each province, such as provincial coordinators, interdepartmental cooperation and task alignment, and district-level allocation teams 3. Streamline the land allocation process 4. Conduct community consultation during forest needs and spatial analysis 5. Develop monitoring and evaluation systems for management, economic and conservation benefits and safeguards 6. Organize study tours to successful land allocation projects elsewhere in Vietnam 7. Develop regional models and networks 8. Ensure institutional capacity exists to tackle forest management at the local level

Action 3

DEVELOP MODELS OF PROTECTION, CO-MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, AND COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION OF SPECIES	
<i>By 2010, models of forest and natural resource co-management and community-based species conservation will be established in order to achieve success in conservation and maximise the benefits for local people.</i>	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>A landscape approach across the CTS needs to be adopted and adapted to appropriate management for particular forest areas. This approach will form a mosaic of complementary management regimes which will combine to match conservation foci, conservation targets, and milestones. Site-based successes should be developed during the immediate phase to serve as models for replication across wider areas throughout the time span of the programme, and to achieve the final vision.</p> <p>The use of species as flagships should ultimately be reflected in models of community management and mobilisation towards species protection and participation in enforcement, monitoring and research activities. Especially for species-based protected areas, such as the proposed saola conservation area, the successful engagement of local communities will both cement conservation measures as well as serve as a model for similar sites across the CTSL.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Select appropriate sites across the landscape for each of a range of management options, based on thorough socio-economic and institutional research 2. Work at the provincial level to establish management regimes for protection; co-management (community, private sector); forest production; and full community-based resource management regimes 3. Pilot participatory measures involving communities, such as village protection teams, community patrol groups, and involve community members in species research (such as camera trapping, monitoring surveys) 4. Ensure incentives for community involvement are matched to the level of responsibility in species protection 5. Ensure sites are researched and monitored; experience and output are documented and disseminated across the CTSL

Action 4

DEVELOP ECOTOURISM TO BENEFIT BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION, COMMUNITY AND PROVINCIAL ECONOMIES, AND PROMOTES WIDE-SECTOR INVOLVEMENT IN CONSERVATION.

By 2010, a full programme to promote sustainable tourism is underway that provides a significant contribution to biodiversity conservation, promotes the natural beauty of the landscape and provides appropriate livelihoods.

Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Tourism development and benefits are increasing year by year in Vietnam, with an estimated 2.5 million foreign visitors to the country in 2002, as well as burgeoning domestic tourism. Annual tourism revenue reaches 1.36 billion USD in 2001. Nature-based tourism is a potential source of economic benefit to underpin conservation efforts and justify ecosystem protection as a viable form of land-use. However, the risk of negative environmental impacts is also high, and the tourism industry is notoriously fickle. Within the CTSL the development of ecotourism needs to be accompanied by good social, ecological and environmental practice to make a positive contribution to the sustainability of the conservation landscape.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the potential for ecotourism in key sites and all provinces of the CTSL 2. Delineate institutional and legal arrangements for ecotourism management, monitoring and benefit sharing. 3. Develop inter-departmental cooperation and links with private and state tour operators 4. Document and research existing tourism within Vietnam and elsewhere to recommend ways to reduce impacts on the environment 5. Implement ecotourism activities at key sites based on sound feasibility studies and ecotourism guidelines 6. Create a code of practice and networks for tour operators within the CTSL

Action 5

FACILITATE LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO DEVELOP RELEVANT TRADE AND ALTERNATIVE INCOME GENERATION.

By 2010, support will be provided to local communities to develop new trade relevant to conservation objectives and diversify income alternatives.

Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>The development of alternative income and relevant trade for local people in and adjacent to PAs is an important issue.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1. Gain an understanding of traditional trade of the locality 2. Identify relevant trades with conservation objectives 3. Facilitate relevant trade development, through training, to generate and diversify income for local community

PART III

IMPLEMENTATION METHODS

1. IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLE

The purpose of the Central Truong Son Initiative is to mobilise additional, coordinated support to ensure that this critical Landscape maintains its natural heritage and globally significant biodiversity. The Initiative will provide support to the seven provincial governments, local people and other stakeholders in the CTSL to achieve this ambitious goal.

The Initiative will provide a coordination function by bringing together the various stakeholders' interests, will promote activities of partners, support the development of new activities, monitor and evaluate progress towards the goals and help mobilise additional financial support for Initiatives. The Initiative will actively promote the achievement of sustainable development throughout the CTSL.

The principle unit for implementation will be individual provinces, districts and communes. The Initiative will also contribute and support other regional based natural resource management programmes based on complementary units such as the Vietnamese agro-ecological zones.

2. IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

A broad implementation mechanism will include organizational functions at national and international levels, in order to closely coordinate activities within the landscape.

2.1. Implementing Organizations

The Initiative will be implemented by the stakeholders and partners who have opted to support the Initiative. Once the Programme is approved by the government, partners will be encouraged to sign a memorandum of understanding. Partners will include relevant organizations from the government of Vietnam, non-governmental organizations, private sector, universities, research organizations, mass organizations, interest groups, societies, traditional institutions and individuals.

A full description of the key stakeholders is provided in the companion document entitled '*The Cast of the CTSI: the main actors and their role in achieving a sustainable landscape*'.

2.2. Management Mechanisms for the CISI

The Initiative will be closely coordinated to achieve the set objectives. The management mechanism of the Initiative is presented in the Chart 2.

Board of Signatories

The Board of Signatories consists of representatives of all relevant ministries, sector/agencies, donors and non-governmental organizations who are signatories on the MOU. The Board will be ultimately responsible for the macro direction of the Initiative. This Board will meet every two years to discuss the progress and future of the Initiative.

Steering Committee

A Steering Committee comprises representatives of key group of stakeholders. The Committee is responsible for providing leadership and consultation to the Initiative Director. The Committee is to prepare an annual report to the Board of Signatories.

Suggested Representation on the board:

- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)
- Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI)
- Ministry for Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)
- Ministry of Science and Technology
- Ministry of Fisheries
- Ministry of Culture and Information
- Ministry of Finance (MoF)
- Ministry of Defence
- Committee of Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA)
- Provincial Authorities across the Landscape
- WWF Indochina Programme

Coordination Committee

The Coordination Committee is principally organized under the institutional management of MARD, yet is financially independent. The Committee is to provide essential functions to support implementation of the Initiative.

Responsibilities of the Coordination Committee include:

- Coordinate the implementation of programmes and projects among implementing agencies

- Supervise and evaluate effectiveness of implementation of specific projects
- Ensure secure and target-driven funding for projects both for immediate and long-term development and phased implementation of the Initiative.

The Coordination Unit will be lead by a single Director responsible for the reporting to the Core Steering Committee. The Coordination Unit will be housed in the FPD - MARD office. The function of the Coordination Unit should remain coordination and supervision for the Initiative and will not be responsible for implementing specific projects.

Provincial Agencies

The Coordination Unit will cooperate with PPCs and relevant sectors in each province to implement specific projects. PPCs will provide leadership and direction for provincial sectors/agencies responsible for projects and specific activities.

Provincial Project Offices

Specific projects within the Initiative will have offices located in departments or Provincial FPDs which are directly related to projects. The offices will be nominated by PPCs and relevant agencies.

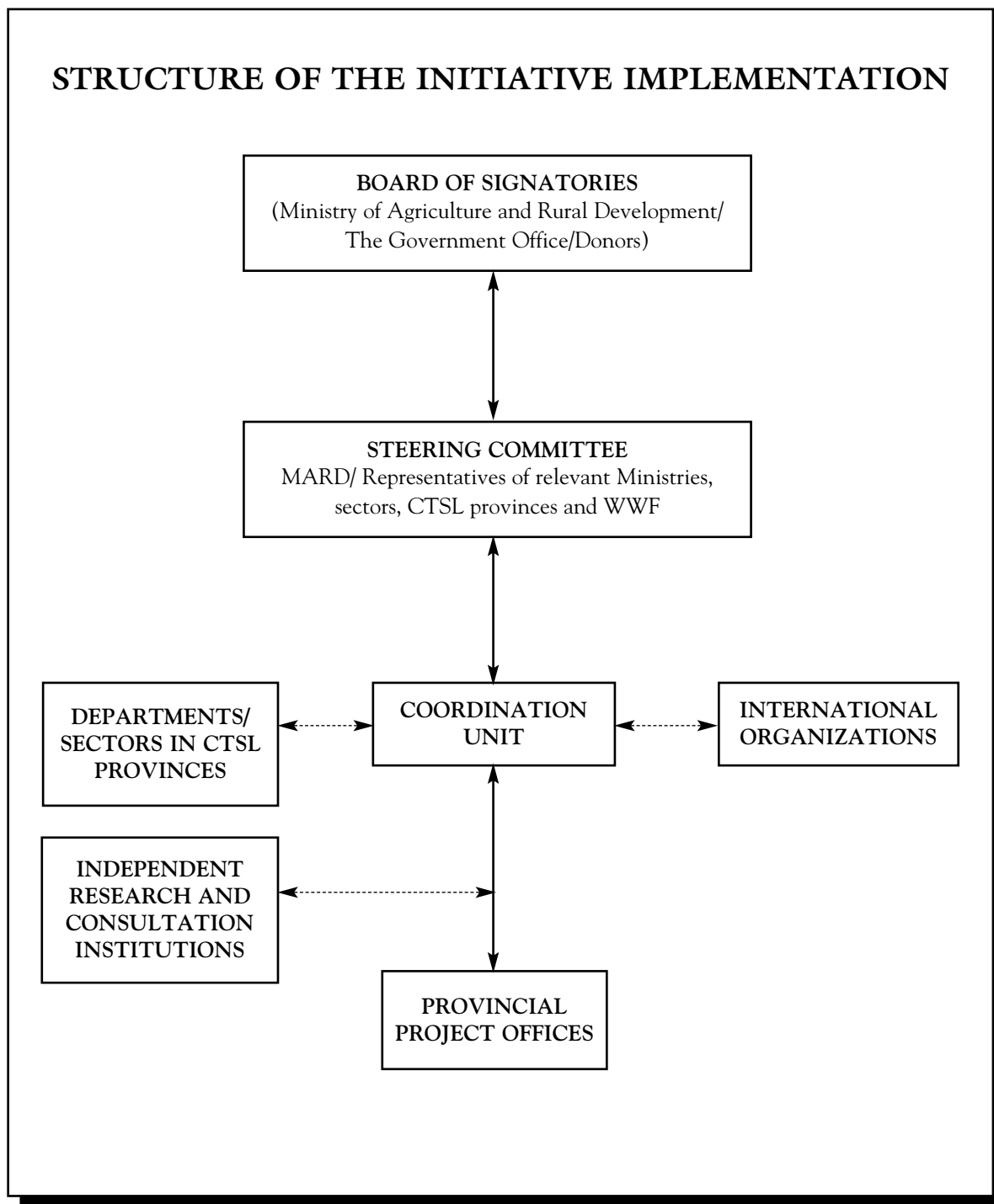
Non-Governmental Organizations

NGO involve in this Initiative will support the Coordination Unit in funding raising and project development. These organizations will be simultaneously involve in the implementation of specific project in province's.

Independent Consultation and Research Institutions

These institutions will support projects that implement research, and carry out surveys on biodiversity and socio-economics. These institutions will also provide consultation to the Coordination Unit to achieve objectives of the Initiative.

Chart 2



Notes:

———— Steering mechanism

----- Coordination mechanism

2.3. Coordination and Mobilisation

The foundation of the Initiative will be the role of coordination and mobilization. The Initiative will create an effective mechanism and operational structure for implementing the programme for the CTS. The coordination mechanism will require:

- **Management structure.** Appropriate committees and permanent staff are established to facilitate and coordinate initiatives in the Landscape. The management structure is responsible for developing position papers to focus attention on where legislation needs to be harmonized, developing and distributing broadly negotiated criteria for ranking priority areas/priority projects, defining the process of project selection, etc.
- A system for **monitoring and evaluating** the success of the programme throughout the Landscape is established and built in to the long term planning process.
- **Communications.** A system for communicating the approach, activities and success of the Initiative to partners will be developed and coordinated by the Initiative supporting institution.
- **Fundraising and Project Development Support.** Development and management of a portfolio of projects including services such as project development assistance, fund raising assistance, management of a small grants fund for projects addressing biodiversity priorities.

Coordination Action 1

IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>The most immediate priority is to establish a sound implementation structure for the Initiative. Within the first year of the programme, two 'steering and coordination' groups must be established:</p> <p>CTSI Coordination Unit CTSI Steering Committee</p> <p>Each unit will require a MoU and Terms of Reference. Funding will be required to support a permanent CTSI Coordination Unit and regular meetings for evaluating progress.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify/invite suitable unit members 2. Establish CTSI units 3. Develop TOR 4. Sign MoU 5. Set-up clear funding mechanisms for units 6. Review operational structure once established

Coordination Action 2

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Support is needed to stimulate project activities and co-ordination in the CTSL. A key function of the CTSI unit will be to ensure the Initiative achieves its targets through activities conducted by partners and stakeholders within (and external to) the CTSI. The Coordination Unit therefore needs to develop its own capacity for project development and fundraising or be able to seek support from partners and grant-making agencies.</p> <p>In addition, a scheme for small funding grants is required to stimulate project activities focusing on particular issues, to strengthen the capacity of partners and to support the development of projects. Where possible, local partners will be encouraged to develop conservation activities related to their field, with support for training, institutional and logistical development, and technical input.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete a business plan for the CTSI 2. Develop the capacity to provide project development and fundraising support for the Initiatives partners 3. Develop and maintain a small grant scheme to stimulate activities

Coordination Action 3

MONITORING & EVALUATION	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>A key responsibility of the CTSI Coordination Unit will be to report progress to the Steering Committee and Board of Signatories. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are used as an early warning system for threats, to promote adaptive management and chart the progress and achievements of the Initiative. A comprehensive M&E system will be coordinated by the Unit and will include participatory designed criteria, indicators and procedures for measured collection, compilation and evaluation of data, reporting results and feedback streamed into the Initiative implementation process. It is anticipated that support from key partners will be sought to operate the M&E system.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete design of the M&E system 2. Develop Implementation framework for M&E 3. Regularly report and share information

Coordination Action 4

COMMUNICATION	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>Communication between actors across the CTS is essential. Regular contact between the CTSL management units and all partners will maintain the momentum and objectives of the programme. Reporting and information exchange between projects, dissemination of results, and broadly publicised activities will foster a wider constituency of conservation actors.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop System of reporting and information exchange, dissemination (as well as M&E system in 1.3) 2. Design and manage database for key information fields, accessed and managed by partners 3. Mobilise media, IT and web communication 4. Develop a communication strategy including guidelines for partners

Coordination Action 5

LINKING VIETNAM & LAO PDR	
Rationale	Specific Activities
<p>The Central Truong Son landscape covers 4 provinces in Lao PDR. In order attain the true landscape approach; an integrated transboundary initiative is required. However, political, social and economic realities determine that the best immediate approach is to develop two tandem programmes that can be joined at a convenient point in the future. Until then, it is critical that some bridges are constructed between programmes from the outset. Currently, the potential for transboundary conservation at priority sites is limited to two areas: Xe Sap (Lao) and southern Thua-Thien Hue (Vietnam); and Phou Ahyon (Lao) and the Song Thanh- Ngoc Linh area (Vietnam).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive lessons from each country mirrored where appropriate 2. Institutional exchange programme, cross visits and bridging 3. Data and skills transfer at key transboundary sites 4. Customs co-operation at key border points

2.4. Funding Mechanisms and Source

Four key sources of funding are anticipated for the Initiative:

1. International funding sources for individual projects and programmes under the Initiative such as originating through the Forest Sector Support Programme
2. World Bank Conservation Fund
3. Domestic fund resources such as the Vietnam Government Environment Fund
4. Private sector support for inclusion of conservation activities within future or existing economic enterprises

3. ALIGNMENT OF THE CTSL CONSERVATION PROGRAMME WITH NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

There are four national strategies related to the Central Truong Son landscape conservation programme as follows:

- Biodiversity action plan developed in 1994 and approved by government in 1995
- Forest Development Strategy (2001-2015)
- Management of Protected Area System Strategy in Vietnam (2002-2015) approved by the government in 2003
- National Strategy on Environment Protection 2001-2015 completed in June 2002 but not yet approved by the government

Relevant existing key government plans:

- The Forest Sector Support Programme
- The Five Million Hectares programme (programme 661)
- The Hunger Elimination and Poverty Reduction programme (135) for remote areas

Relevant international programmes:

- Conservation Fund of The World Bank and Global Environment Facility
- Asian Development Bank
- Vietnam Government Environment Fund

4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A monitoring and evaluation system has been developed by the Forest Protection Department and WWF. It will measure trends in environmental and social factors, help in communicating the Initiative's achievements and provide information on threats and opportunities for adaptive management. Over 40 meetings have taken place with stakeholders at national, provincial, district and commune level to identify around 20 core indicators, which will form the backbone of the system. They measure progress on four fronts: forest condition and biodiversity; forest ecosystem services; livelihoods; and capacity for good management of natural resources. Many indicators come from existing government statistics, sometimes with extra analysis, and some additional indicators will be monitored by WWF and other stakeholders. Examples of monitoring may be that WWF could monitor stakeholder attitudes to conservation and progress in sustainable forest management, while the World Bank could monitor management effectiveness of protected areas. The Initiative will coordinate data collection from these different sources, wherever possible by linking databases. Core indicators will be augmented by additional information gained from research reports and field surveys, so that trends will be set within a richer picture drawn from the increasing knowledge of the region. Succinct annual reports will summarise data, trends and key issues and information which has emerged over the previous 12 months.

Further details of the M&E system is presented in an separate report entitled '*M&E system for forest landscape restoration in the Central Truong Son Landscape*'.

PART IV

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INITIATIVE

The CTSI will create opportunities for all stakeholders including local people, communities, organizations and authorities. The Initiative will develop capacity, skills and motivation in order to achieve these opportunities for benefits of people and sustainable development of the CTSL.

The CTSI integrates the scientific knowledge of the International and Vietnamese conservation community, with programmes and policies of national and regional authorities. The Initiative is based on the needs and expectations of local stakeholders who include rural communities, protected areas staff and mass organisations. Over the next ten years the Initiative is expected to achieve:

Awareness - Authorities in the landscape and developers of all sectors will be aware of the need for special support for conservation and environment activities in policies and planning. People at all level will be aware of their role in developing a sustainable development area.

Linkage - National, regional and provincial policies will integrate conservation with development policies.

Capacity - Stakeholders will be aware of and motivated to implement policies and plan in a sustainable manner for the benefit of the environment, and local and regional economies. Technical skills and financial resources of organizations will be strengthened to actively implement sustainable management of natural resources.

Conservation - Natural forest and endangered species in the landscape will be supported, and populations strengthened and maintained.

Environment services - Results of awareness raising, supportive policy and capacity strengthening for conservation will generate increased socio-economic and environmental benefits originating from a well-functioning ecosystem. Flood, forest fire, river pollution, draught and erosion will be mitigated and controlled.

Economic stabilization - Stable environment services will contribute to increase economic productivity through long-term and sustainable utilization of natural resources in the CTSL.

PART V

RECOMMENDATIONS

Government:

1. Review and approve the CTSI in 2003 - 2020; including objectives, actions, priority projects and implementation methods of the Initiative.
2. Support, supplement or develop new legal documents, policies related to biodiversity conservation, management, protection and restoration of ecosystems in the CTSL.
3. Guide relevant Ministries - especially the role of the new Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), sectors and PPCs in the CTSL to implement effectively priority projects of the Initiative.
4. Support calling on investment and funding from international nature conservation organizations, donors on activities of the Initiative.
5. Combine CTSI with other national and regional programme and projects.

Relevant ministries and sectors:

1. Ministries and sectors related to conservation of natural resources and biodiversity actively involve in coordination of activities of the Initiative.
2. Support provincial project offices for effective operation.

Provinces:

1. Guide, coordinate and directly involve in activities of the CTSI.
2. Support provincial project offices for effective operation.
3. Implement effectively priority projects within the local management.

PART VI

CONCLUSION

The CTSI is a regional initiative with long-term benefits for people in the CTS area in particular and across Vietnam as a whole. It is critical that the initiative is implemented immediately to address escalating threats to biodiversity within the CTSL. Successful biodiversity conservation will ensure the environmental stability and ecosystem balance in the area, and will contribute to the sustainable development of the country. Implementation of the CTSI requires cross sector involvement at all levels and active participation of stakeholders.

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ANNEX I: TWELVE PRIORITY PROJECTS

TWELVE PRIORITY PROJECTS TO DEVELOP UNDER THE CTSL ACTION PLAN

1. DEVELOP A STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE CTSL

Aim of the project: The Strategic Environmental Framework (SEF) will comprehensively place conservation targets within the context of current and proposed developments within the CTSL.

Principle objective: to provide provincial and national level stakeholders with an accurate planning and decision-making tool to provide for the integration of conservation priorities into socio-economic development, and help address conflict.

Background: The SEF is a planning and conflict mitigation tool. It will be vital to the success of the conservation strategy if conservation priorities are harmonised with socio-economic development. A SEF provides a baseline document against which all proposed developments and conservation activities can be measured.

Main activities:

- Landscape level analysis of existing and proposed development, industry and infrastructure projects
- Measure such projects against their environmental impact
- Provide detailed recommendations on development and conservation zoning
- Involve wide-ranging participation of decision-makers in the development, implementation and analysis, and widely disseminate results from the framework

Key Outputs:

- A Strategic Environmental Framework document for the CTSL
- Pilot lessons from SEF use as a planning tool
- Pilot lessons from SEF use as a conflict mitigation tool for conservation and development

Timeframe: two years

Principle partners: FPD, DARD, Provincial PCs

Expected budget: 250,000 USD

2. MANAGEMENT OF STRATEGIC AREAS FOR INTEGRATED CONSERVATION (MOSAIC) IN TARGET PROVINCES OF QUANG TRI, BINH DINH-QUANG NGAI, KON TUM AND GIA LAI

Aim of the project: To provide on-the-ground support within each province to develop specific conservation sub-strategies and action plans, building on site-based experiences and provincial partnerships

Principle objectives: To establish a process of conservation planning at three main levels: provincial, district and community, towards appropriate management for each 'forest management unit'

Background: The MOSAIC approach is already being piloted in Quang Nam province with reasonable success in developing a provincial conservation strategy, in conducting detailed area prioritisation and threat analyses through research and training, and in piloting alternative models of forest management in pilot sites throughout the province.

Main activities:

- Area prioritisation using a variety of research and analysis tools, such as GIS
- Develop provincial partnerships and responsibilities towards conservation action
- Collaborative development of a provincial conservation strategy based on full participation and research at all levels
- Site-based pilot activities to provide lessons and models for the strategy and for provincial / regional replication
- 'Training of trainers' focus to all activities (such as PRA, GIS, Biological surveys)

Key Outputs:

- Provincial conservation sub-strategies per province
- Piloted models of appropriate forest management for prioritised forest units
- Intra-provincial networks and partnerships

Timeframe: 2 Years

Principle partners: FPD, DARD, GDLA, District and Provincial PCs, local communities

Expected budget: 100,000 per province, per year

3. PROTECTED AREA SUPPORT PROGRAMME - ESTABLISHMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF NETWORKS ACROSS THE CTSL

Aim of the project: Areas of high strategic conservation importance are appropriately managed towards adequate protection for key elements of CTSL province's biodiversity, and such protected areas benefit from regional support and management extension networks

Principle objective: Protected area establishment, development and management strengthening

Background: Protected Areas are the vital tiles in the mosaic of forest management regimes across the CTSL, acting as sanctuaries and reservoirs for the persistence of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Management and development of PAs needs to comprehensively address threats to these high priority areas and the species they contain.

Main activities:

- For existing PAs
 - Develop a practical and applicable management plan linked to devolved contractual management responsibilities for local communities
 - Training of staff in biology, community outreach, enforcement, ethnic languages, GIS, map use, GPS, monitoring systems
 - Study trips to gain experience from successful protected areas in Vietnam
 - Motivating and monitoring of staff
 - Purchase of equipment (GPS, communications, camera-traps)
 - Enforcement strengthening
 - Initiate community outreach
 - Conservation education
- Establish sanctuaries for priority species, i.e.:
 - Douc langurs
 - Saola
 - Gibbons
 - Elephants
 - Lowland birds (esp. Edwards' pheasant)
 - Highland birds (esp. Golden-winged laughingthrush & Black-crowned barwing)
- Networking between protected areas
 - Establish Special-Use Forest management and support departments within each provincial FPD department

Key Outputs:

- Protected areas effectively managed and protected in partnership with local communities
- Trained, motivated, equipped and monitored PA staff
- Communities involved in forest management and protection of Special-Use Forests
- Wildlife crimes removed from protected areas
- Informed and aware communities living in and around protected areas
- Key elements of CTSL's biodiversity are protected in perpetuity

Timeframe: 5 years

Partners: FPD, PA management boards, wide-ranging, especially local communities

Expected budget: 3 million USD

4. STRENGTHENING THE FOREST PROTECTION FORCE OF VIETNAM, SPECIFICALLY WITHIN THE CTSL

Aim of the project: Provinces within the CTSL have trained, motivated and equipped Forest Protection forces.

Principle objectives: To revitalise FPD through support to organizational structure, high quality biological and community-based work and increased capacity to combat wildlife crime.

Background: FPD departments are the most important units for protection, PA management and research activities, with a wide range of tasks involving multiple aspects of the conservation paradigm. To achieve success, FPD should be strengthened through comprehensive skills and management support, as well as forming strong partnerships with other departments and agencies, and with local communities

Main activities:

- Training for provincial FPDs in conservation biology and research techniques
- Training in language skills, especially English and ethnic minority languages and culture
- Training in community outreach and conservation education
- Training in wildlife law enforcement and monitoring
- Produce field guides and training manuals
- Enforce training capacity within select institutions
- Provincial evaluation of needs, working structure, motivation and monitoring systems within each FPD unit

- Develop FPD partnerships and mutual assistance
- Provision of essential equipment to FPD units
- Regional links and training of trainers between FPDs
- Regional information exchange and databases

Key Outputs:

- Revitalised and restructured FPD
- High quality biological and community work
- Decreased wildlife crime due to increased enforcement capacity by FPD
- Motivated and monitored FPD staff
- FPD partnerships can target resources and mobilise assistance in forest protection

Timeframe: 3 Years

Principle partners: FPD, Training institutions

Expected budget: 1,200,000 USD (50,000 per province per year)

5. COMBATING THE WILDLIFE TRADE IN THE CTSL

Aim and objective of the project: To crackdown on all illegal trade in threatened and listed species, in accordance with current national and international law (Vietnam Red Book, CITES), resulting in the cost of wildlife crime exceeding the benefit to the trader, whilst simultaneously reducing consumption through targeted enforcement and awareness programmes

Background: Wildlife trade is one of the most persistent threats to many species, and the CTSL is one of the main exploitation areas and trade routes for wildlife in Southeast and East Asia.

Main activities:

- Strengthen the mobile FPD units through training and equipping across the CTS, with all activities first piloted in Quang Nam and Hue.
- Motivate the mobile FPD unit through exposure in a mass media campaign
- Increase the frequency and intensity of forest patrols
- Establish community forest management and protection teams, monitored and assisted by FPD
- Purchase of communication equipment
- Review legal framework for FPD enforcement
- Strengthen links with police and border police

- Strategically locate new guard stations for maximum benefit using GIS
- Review the financial system of fines and confiscations to streamline the process and free up funds for performance related enforcement to reduce corruption and increase enforcement
- Wildlife trade crackdown, especially bush-meat restaurants
- Increase enforcement on roads through forest in accordance with Decision No. 18/QĐ-TTg

Key Outputs:

- Decrease in forest crimes
- Reduction in the trade of illegal wildlife products
- Trained, motivated, equipped and monitored FPD enforcement staff
- Strengthened enforcement through community partnerships
- Strengthened enforcement through partnerships with police and border army
- Reduction in corruption due to increased benefits for enforcement
- Increased efficiency in legal and financial aspects of enforcement
- More effective enforcement by FPD due to strategic planning and partnerships

Timeframe: 3 Years

Partners: Wide Ranging, led by FPD

Expected budget: 1.5 million USD

6. CONSERVATION EDUCATION ACROSS THE CTS LANDSCAPE

Aim of the project: To set, reach and achieve regional conservation education targets through an evolving strategy based on capacity, motivation and mobilization across the CTSL

Principle objectives:

1. To achieve CE targets over an effective ecoregional unit
2. To establish a regional network of provincial CE working groups and agents
3. To develop provincial conservation education plans based on clear inter-departmental roles and responsibilities, and aimed at identified needs and targets
4. To provide training and technical support for conservation agents to implement phased activities, which in turn provide working examples for the development of CE plans

Background: The landscape approach to CE is necessary to achieve a broad and uniform base of conservation awareness. Cross-border links and institutional partnerships are facilitated if a comparable high understanding of conservation issues exists. Furthermore, specific activities requiring raised conservation awareness, such as species conservation, often transcend provincial or site-based units, with a target group spread across administrative or institutional units within the landscape.

Main activities:

- Regional Workshop - introduction to the project and confirm goals, objectives and define a vision for CE in Central Annamites
- Scope current CE/EE activities and agents across the six provinces: past, present and potential
- Develop a model working group in Quang Nam, based on inter-departmental consensus and co-operation
- Training for Quang Nam working group, both in-situ and external courses for key agents, especially for FPD
- Develop Quang Nam working group planned activities
- CE analysis in Quang Nam: needs, objectives, target groups, partners and potential activities
- CE workshop in Quang Nam, with representation from other provinces, to develop a Quang Nam CE programme
- Begin phased activities aimed at each objective and towards each target group
- M&E systems in place
- Begin activities in Hue, Quang Tri, Da Nang, Binh Dinh, Quang Ngai, Gia Lai and Kon Tum
- Wide range of materials development for use across the CTSL
- Resource centres in each province
- Cross-over visits

Key Outputs:

- Comprehensive CE programmes within each province raise awareness of all target groups on conservation
- All target groups able to participate in appropriate conservation action
- Network of competent educators and trainers

Timeframe: 3 years

Partners: Wide ranging

Expected budget: 800,000 USD

7. FOREST CONSERVATION THROUGH SECURE INDIGENOUS LAND AND RESOURCE RIGHTS

Aim of the project: To secure common-property resource management regimes amongst communities in forested areas to the benefit of local socio-economic development and conservation goals.

Principle objectives: To ensure land allocation to community management units enhances conservation of the CTSL forests.

Background: Common property resource management regimes, based on forestland tenure, offer intrinsic incentives for a sustainable landscape. Open access and loose tenure encourages unsustainable exploitation as there is no collective responsibility or ownership of resources. In line with GOV decentralisation policy, the allocation of forestland is occurring in all of the CTSL provinces, especially in the mountainous areas and most frequently to ethnic minority communities. Support to this process is essential in achieving a conservation landscape, as such decentralisation loosens control over land-use and land management practice by State agencies. The risk that unsustainable land-use and management practice will occur needs to be countered by a focused support structure for both the allocation procedure as well as the contractual management practice once forestland is allocated.

Main activities:

- Support provincial programmes of forest land allocation to indigenous communities across the CTSL
- Capacity building for officials
- Streamline the land allocation process
- Community consultation during spatial and forest needs analysis
- Training and institutional capacity building for sustainable forest management by community units
- Develop monitoring and evaluation systems for management, economic and conservation benefits
- Study tours to successful land allocation projects elsewhere in Vietnam

Key Outputs:

- Circa 1 million ha of forested land allocated to local management by 2010
- Adaptive framework for land allocation to suitable community units
- Trained officials in appropriate forest land allocation
- Effective forest ownership rights and management at the community level
- Appropriate forest management systems established in 500 communes

Timeframe: 7 years

Partners: PPCs, GDLA, DARD, FPD, DPC/CPC, local communities, research institutions

Expected budget: Technical assistance to PPC programmes, who will contribute the main operational budget under national / provincial programmes. Circa 50,000 USD per year per province, or 2 million USD

8. SUSTAINABLE HUNTING PRACTICE BY INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN THE FORESTS OF THE CTSL

Aim: To develop sustainable hunting management (SHM) in key areas of the CTSL

Principle objectives:

- To participate with local Ka Tu and Pa Co communities in Quang Nam and Hue, Vietnam, and Bru people in Quang Tri, to fully document hunting practice, needs, traditions, and quarry species.
- For each key quarry species, research as far as possible the ecology, population growth rate, and intrinsic and extrinsic factors affecting abundance.
- Develop appropriate sustainable harvesting regimes with full participation of local communities and collaboration with local and provincial authorities.

Background: Apart from a variety of hunting studies and NTFFP/ resource use surveys in all three sites, the issue of sustainable use of quarry species has not been addressed in Vietnam, especially for maintaining abundant quarry species such as wild pigs and common muntjac and to lessen hunting of more threatened species such as sambar, hog deer or saola. It is also a useful pilot for CBNRM options, especially in terms of co-management of PAs, and in offering practical solutions to over-exploitation of forest resources and food security. It may also be useful in curbing bushmeat consumption by piloting sustainable, registered sources of wild meat. Furthermore, recent PRA results in Quang Nam and Hue, showed that a key local conflict with wildlife comes through crop raiding by wild pig and muntjac. Finally, sustainable hunting management, if effective, will greatly increase the benefit value of an area of forest in return for conservation trade-offs linked to an allocation or protection contract (*i.e.* 661, red book certificate).

Key Activities and Outputs:

- Documented information on hunting practice, needs, quarry species and potential for SHM in pilot sites in Quang Nam, Hue and Quang Tri, with a view to wider CTSL replication
- Key quarry species for SHM targeted
- Documented abundance, and intrinsic/extrinsic population factors for key species

- Participation to develop appropriate form of SHM (i.e., limited quota, season, technology etc.)
- Collaborative development of SHM regulations and monitoring, strong FPD involvement
- Pilot harvest season underway
- Complementary research and monitoring (i.e. collection of skulls, mapping key hunting grounds)
- Action plan for SHM development / replication

Timeframe: 3 years

Partners: FPD, PPCs, local communities, other relevant departments

Expected budget: 450,000 USD

9. CONSERVATION OF THE PRIORITY FRESHWATER ECOSYSTEMS WITHIN THE CTSL

Aim of the project: To research all aspects of the freshwater biodiversity of the CTSL with particular focus on commercially valuable species, species under heavy exploitation, and keystone ecofunctions, and to implement comprehensive freshwater conservation across the CTSL

Principle objective: Freshwater habitat protection, management and restoration to match conservation habitat foci and targets for the CTSL.

Background: Freshwater ecosystems are vital to overall forest functions, climate change, but most importantly to the sustainable socio-economic development of the CTSL in harmony with conservation priorities. To date, little research has been conducted, institutional and legal frameworks for freshwater conservation are conflicting, and infrastructure developments and pollution from on-land activities are threatening biodiversity and ecosystem services both within the river networks as well as far-reaching areas such as marine and estuary habitats, forests and urban centres. Focused freshwater conservation is vital for achieving the landscape vision.

Main Activities:

- Conservation prioritization process undertaken for freshwater systems following completion of baseline studies: Biological surveys of aquatic systems on a catchment-by-catchment basis; habitat integrity/level of alteration study; threat analysis
- Research conducted into the effects of hydroelectric power systems (large, small and micro scale) on aquatic systems and biodiversity
- Identification and clarification of roles, procedures and responsibilities related to

management of freshwater capture fisheries in Vietnam

- Review and amendment of current laws related to freshwater capture fisheries
- River bank rehabilitation and protection and establishment/ representation of freshwater in protected areas
- Establishing pilot community-level sustainable fisheries (including river restocking component and identification and opening of new markets such as aquarium trade) and economic study into the dependence and usage of aquatic resources by communities
- Biological monitoring system developed and implemented for aquatic systems across the landscape based on selected indicator species and simple chemical analysis

Key Outputs:

- Freshwater species, habitats and ecosystems are understood, and knowledge is converted to conservation action across the CTSL
- Appropriate institutional and management systems, such as community fisheries and river wardens, act towards freshwater conservation and sustainable use of river resources
- Development projects have reduced impact on freshwater ecosystems

Timeframe: 3 Years

Partners: Wide ranging

Expected budget: 750,000 USD

10. DEVELOPING RESPONSIBLE ECOTOURISM TO SUPPORT CONSERVATION ACROSS THE CTSL

Aim of the project: Ecotourism developed to benefit conservation awareness, community and provincial economies, and wide-sector involvement in conservation, with minimal impact on target ecosystems and biodiversity across the CTSL.

Principle objective: To assess potential for and implementation of ecotourism across the CTSL.

Background: Tourism development and benefits are increasing year by year in Vietnam, with an estimated 2.5 million foreign visitors to the country in 2002, as well as burgeoning domestic tourism. Annual tourism revenue reaches 1.36 billion USD in 2001. Nature-based tourism is a potential source of economic benefit to underpin conservation efforts and justify ecosystem protection as a viable form of land-use. However, the risk of negative environmental impacts is also high, and the tourism industry is notoriously fickle. Within the CTSL the development of ecotourism needs to be accompanied by good social, ecological and environmental practice to make a positive contribution to the sustainability of the conservation landscape.

Main Activities:

- Identify the potential for ecotourism in key sites and all provinces of the CTSL
- Delineate institutional and legal arrangements for ecotourism management, monitoring and benefit
- Develop inter-departmental cooperation and links with private and state tour operators
- Document and research existing tourism both within Vietnam and elsewhere to recommend ways to reduce impacts on the environment
- Implement ecotourism activities at key sites based on sound feasibility studies and ecotourism guidelines
- Create a code of practice and networks for tour operators within the CTSL

Key Outputs:

- Provincial codes of practice for ecotourism development
- Cooperation and institutional arrangements for ecotourism management with clear benefits to State, private enterprises, local communities, and especially conservation
- Model ecotourism sites
- Feasibility studies and ecotourism development guidelines specific to CTSL

Timeframe: 5 years

Partners: Wide-ranging

Expected budget: 2.5 million USD

11. PEOPLE AND PLANTS - FLORAL CONSERVATION IN THE CTSL

Aim and objective of the project: To research all aspects of the floral biodiversity of the CTSL with particular focus on commercially valuable species, species under heavy exploitation, ethnobotanical and medicinal plants and keystone ecosystem species, to subsequently implement comprehensive plant conservation activities across the CTSL

Background: The biodiversity assessments of the CTSL recognise that research data on the extent of floral species and their role in ecosystems and local economies, as well as the specific conservation status of many species is limited. A key example is Ngoc Linh Ginseng, *Panax Vietnamensis*, a highly valuable product whose natural status is unknown but is estimated to be critical or near-extinct in the wild. Similarly, ethnic understanding of botany and medicines is being lost or distorted as socio-cultural and generational changes decrease the knowledge base. Research is urgently needed to support detailed conservation action across the CTSL for flora species.

Main Activities:

- Botanical research and surveys in priority areas of the CTSL
- Ethnobotanical and social research into medicinal plants
- Economic evaluations of the benefit of sustainable harvest of many commercial species, such as rattans
- Research and development of propagation projects and nursery programmes in CTSL PAs as well as within community-managed forests
- Integration of plant conservation into provincial conservation planning and sub-strategy development

Key Outputs:

- Increased knowledge base of floral biodiversity and their role in conservation and local economies and cultures
- Increased protection afforded to key plant species
- Sustainable harvest of commercial species, such as rattan, is widely adopted in the CTSL
- Key plant species are propagated and restored to viable populations in the forests of the CTSL

Timeframe: 3 Years

Partners: Research institutions, PA management boards, FPD, private enterprises, Provincial authorities

Expected budget: 1 million USD

12. SUPPORTING COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE CTSL

Aim of the project: To provide targeted activities to integrate community-based conservation into landscape protection within the Central Annamites priority area.

Principle objectives:

- To develop and support grassroots conservation interventions across the landscape through the use of effective community participation, skills-share, consultation and mobilisation tools.
- To apply these tools in areas of high biodiversity conservation value, particularly PAs and buffer zones, logging enterprises, and areas of high local resource-dependence.

Background: Local stakeholders and communities need the skills and capacity to tackle

CBNRM, with sustainable benefits to households and local economies, and to conservation. This capacity may already exist in part, yet needs external support through institutional and technical backup. However, the capacity for successful CBNRM lies also with local and district authorities, who can greatly facilitate CBNRM processes as well as provide vital extension and services.

Main Activities:

- Establish networks of extension providers within the CTSL for specific skills-base fields
- Strengthen institutional capacity and support to plan for and manage NRM tasks and responsibilities, such as community based 'Forest Management Units'
- Develop monitoring and evaluation systems for communities to adopt towards sustainable NRM
- Intra-community exchange and information dissemination to learn lessons from successful pilot NRM activities

Key Outputs:

- Successful models of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in forest areas of the CTSL
- Trained and networked extension and service providers supporting community initiatives
- Strong institutional fabric to support community management in partnership with protection forces

Timeframe: 2 Years

Partners: Wide-ranging

Expected budget: 500,000 USD

ANNEX II. BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION PROJECTS TO IMPLEMENT IN THE CTSL

No	Project	Objectives	Funding (USD)	Donors	Executing agencies	Status	Implementation area	Time
1	Develop CTS biodiversity conservation initiative	Develop a long term programme for CTSL and mobilize funding for sustainable conservation in the area	250,000	USAID and WWF US	WWF Indochina Programme, FPD, MARD	in progress	the whole CTSL	2000-to the future
2	From schools to villages	Develop training capacity on community environmental education to strengthen conservation	180,000	USAID-EAPEI	WWF and Xuan Mai Forestry University	in progress	CTSL, pilot in Quang Nam and Hue	2002-2004
3	Tiger conservation corridor in central Vietnam	Raise awareness and community training	39,000	Tiger conservation fund of National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	FPDs of Thua Thien Hue, Quang Nam and Kon Tum provinces	in progress	Hue, Quang Nam, Kon Tum	2003
4	Green Corridor - Support global conservation objectives in a productive landscape	Protect and maintain global conservation of high value of the productive landscape in the Green Corridor	1,997,413	GEF, Cofinance - The government of Vietnam - WWF - Alliance WB/WWF - SNV	WWF Indochina Programme and the government of Vietnam and partners in Thua Thien Hue	in process of getting approval	Thua Thien Hue	4 years, start in 2004
5	Promote forest sustainable management in Vietnam	Formulate procedures that allow state and private forest owners to promote and actively	500,000	The government of Switzerland	WWF Indochina Programme, MARD and DARDs	implementation to commence 2004	Pilot in Gia Lai	2003-2006

No	Project	Objectives	Funding (USD)	Donors	Executing agencies	Status	Implementation area	Time
6	Increase quality of forest management in SFEs Vietnam	Raise awareness and skills of forest sustainable management in DARDs and SFEs to ensure that production forests in the CTSL play a role in the sustainable landscape	104,000	WWF Switzerland	WWF Indochina Programme, DARDs of Quang Nam and Binh Dinh	in process of getting approval	Quang Nam and Binh Dinh	2003-2004
7	Co-management of Phong Dien NR	Develop pilot models for community-based co-management framework and encourage using indigenous knowledge	225,000	MacArthur Foundation	Thua Thien - Hue FPD	implementation to commence 2004	Thua Thien Hue	2003-2006
8	Strengthen management and conservation of Dakrong PA and buffer zones	Develop conservation management plan for Dakrong NR	180,000	MacArthur Foundation	Centre of Natural Resources and Environment, Quang Tri FPD	in progress	Quang Tri	5/2003 - 5/2006
9	Management of strategic areas for integrated conservation (MOSAIC)	Strengthen capacity for provincial staff and Quang Nam people to assess, plan and establish appropriate forest management models.		MacArthur Foundation; USAID and WWF US; various donors and partnerships	Quang Nam FPD, WWF Indochina Programme	in progress	Quang Nam	2002-tương lai
10	Establish conservation supporting groups in Endemic Bird Areas in Vietnam	Support stakeholders in important bird areas	200,000	MacArthur Foundation	Birdlife International - Vietnam Programme	implementation to commence 2004	Quang Binh Quang Tri, Thua Thien - Hue	2003-2006

No	Project	Objectives	Funding (USD)	Donors	Executing agencies	Status	Implementation area	Time
11	Sustainable development and establishment areas linking Kon Ka Kinh and Kon Cha Rang PAs	Quản lý bền vững đa dạng sinh học giữa hai khu BTTN	900,000	GEF/TFT	Birdlife International - Vietnam Programme and Gia Lai PPC	in process of getting approval	Kon Ka Kinh- Kon Cha Rang- Kon Ha Nung (Gia Lai)	4 years
12	Support forestland allocation in Quang Nam	Eradicate hunger and reduce poverty through forestland allocation to local communities to manage and protect natural resources and biodiversity	160,000	Cofinance of Ford Foundation and Quang Nam	Sectors and departments in Quang Nam and WWF Indochina Programme	in progress	Quang Nam PPC	2 years (2003 - 2005)
13	NTFP sector supporting project É Phase II	Strengthen capacity of research and management in Vietnam to use NTFPs in a sustainable manner and ecological balance, contributing to biodiversity conservation and improving living standard of the poor people in and adjacent to forest and socio-economics.	N/A	The Royal Netherlands Embassy	IUCN, non-timber forest products research centre/FSIV Provincial Forest Development Department, Policy Department, Forestry University under MARD, other institutions and provinces within the pilot sites of the projects.	in progress	The whole Vietnam (3 northern provinces, 3 central provinces and some other areas)	2002 - 2007

ANNEX 3: REPORTS USED/COMMISSIONED TO INFORM THE CENTRAL TRUONG SON PROGRAMME

Towards a Biodiversity Vision for the Forests of the Lower Mekong Ecoregion Complex

Michael C. Baltzer, Nguyen Thi Dao, and Robert G. Shore

a) Main Report

This report, commonly termed "the biovision" details the biodiversity of the Forests of the Lower Mekong Ecoregion Complex (FLMEC), which is an amalgamation of four ecoregions - one of which is the Greater Truong Son. This report is responsible for the delineation of the Greater Truong Son Ecoregion. Within the report is a description of the ecoregion, its biological features of importance, and the threats faced by the ecoregion. The report goes further, by identifying and ranking conservation priorities within the Greater Truong Son, with the ultimate goal of ensuring the conservation of all biodiversity of the ecoregion for future generations

b) Technical Annex

The Technical Annex is the second document in the 'biovision' series. This report expands on the information provided in the main report by providing more detailed information about each area identified as a conservation priority (termed a 'priority landscape'). In addition, the Technical Annex contains condensed versions of the scientific desk studies on the birds, mammals, vegetation and fish of the entire FLMEC

Socio-economic Scoping Report for the Forests of the Lower Mekong Ecoregion Complex

John Baker, Bruce McKenney and Jack Hurd

To compliment the large scale biological assessment conducted for the FLMEC, a socio-economic scoping study was also conducted.

This "situational analysis" is less detailed than the biological assessment with the intention of providing only essential background information about the main threats to biodiversity and the underlying and exacerbating socio-economic factors. In conclusion, goals and recommendations for improving conservation are outlined.

1. A Biological Assessment of the Central Truong Son Landscape

Compiled by: Andrew W. Tordoff, Robert J. Timmins, Robert J. Smith and Mai Ky Vinh

Biodiversity Advisory Group:

Nguyen Xuan Dang (IEBR); Jack Tordoff (Birdlife International); Le Trong Trai (FIPI); Le Xuan Canh (IEBR); Nguyen Cu (IEBR/Birdlife International); Nguyen Tien Hiep (IEBR); Nguyen Kim Son (IEBR); Vu Van Dung (FIPI); Do Tuoc (FIPI); Pham Mong Giao (FPD); Tran Quoc Bao (FPD); Pham Nhat (Xuan Mai Forestry College); Phan Ke Loc (Hanoi University); Nguyen Van Sang (IEBR); Nguyen Huu Duc (Hanoi Pedagogical University); Rob Shore (WWF Indochina); Alexander Monastyrski (VRTC); Andrei Kuznetsov (VRTC).

This is the first report produced under the Central Truong Son Initiative. Covering one of the Greater Annamites most critical priority landscapes, *A Biological Assessment of the Central Truong Son Landscape* follows a similar process to the 'biovision' report for the Forests of the Lower Mekong Ecoregion Complex (FLMEC).

This report details the biological importance and status of the Central Truong Son priority landscape, and identifies threats to the region. Furthermore, the report outlines conservation priorities for the region and develops broad targets for each of these priorities. Subsequent Geographical Information Systems (GIS) analyses aid in defining a "conservation landscape" for the Central Truong Son Landscape.

2. The Socio-economic Issues of Provinces in the Central Annamites

Compiled by: Nguyen Lam Thanh

This report provides an extensive overview of the socio-economic situation and issues found within the Vietnamese portion of the Central Truong Son priority landscape.

The report contains a great deal of "benchmark data" that is essential to planning for successful conservation and development efforts. This information highlights clear differences between provinces within the priority landscape, and to a lesser extent within individual provinces. Due to the diverse nature of the region, resulting from vast geographical, climatic and cultural differences, the benchmark data is needed to tailor conservation efforts to each area.

3. An assessment of Development Initiatives in the Central Truong Son landscape

Compiled by: Aylette Villemain, Herbert Christ, Nguyen Thanh Hai, Tran Kim Long, Bach Tan Sinh and Do Duc Tho

The Central Truong Son Initiative aims to combine successful biodiversity conservation with sustainable development. In order to achieve a balanced result, it is essential that existing and planned development initiatives are identified and integrated into conservation strategies.

This report focuses on the provinces located within the Vietnamese portion of the Central Truong Son priority landscape. Planned and existing development initiatives, such as road construction and poverty alleviation projects, are detailed in the report and the potential effects on conservation are commented upon.

4. Existing Land-use Management Practices in the Central Truong Son Landscape

Compiled by: Tran An Phong

Research Team: Tran An Phong, Dao Van Can, Ta Hoa Binh and Nguyen Xuan Phuong

Within Vietnam, extensive work has been carried out in designating land-use management practices. This report attempts to pool the often confusing and scattered information into one cohesive map of existing land-use management practices in the Central Truong Son Landscape.

The main outputs of the study are detailed Geographical Information System (GIS) data and maps; they may be combined with additional data for further analyses. However, a brief accompanying report provides some explanation of land-use management within the Central Truong Son Landscape.

5. People, Land and Natural Resource Interactions in the Central Truong Son Landscape

Compiled by: Huynh Thu Ba

Research Team: Huynh Thu Ba, Le Cong Uan, Vuong Duy Quang, Pham Ngoc Mau, Nguyen Ngoc Lung, Nguyen Quoc Dung

In addition to extensive biological and situational data, an understanding of how local communities utilize and interact with their environment is essential to developing effective and integrated conservation strategies.

This report aims to develop a more detailed understanding of the current issues related to people, land and resources - in particular Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM). The study focuses on two pilot sites within the Central Truong Son Landscape, where extensive fieldwork was conducted. Detailed comparisons both within and between the sites are made and key recommendations are listed.

6. Tourism in the Central Truong Son Landscape

Compiled by: Hoang Phuong Thao

Tourism within the region is a rapidly expanding sector. If developed properly, this could provide significant financial benefits to the inhabitants of the Greater Annamites.

This report investigates existing tourist attractions and facilities with a view towards their potential enhancement. The study also examines the potential of developing additional tourism infrastructure, investigating the full range of possibilities (including ecotourism), as all tourism has the potential to either benefit or harm conservation in a direct or indirect manner.

7. Hunting and Collecting Practices in the Central Truong Son Landscape

Compiled by: Le Trong Trai, Dang Thang Long, Phan Thanh Ha and Le Ngoc Tuan

Phong Dien Nature Reserve (Thua Thien Hue Province) is a critical part of the Central Truong Son conservation landscape as it protects one of the last remnants of lowland forest and is home to important species such as saola and Edward's pheasant.

This study builds on existing data collected from Phong Dien, and expands the scope to include seven villages. The study investigated which natural resources are used in the area, where they are collected from and their value in financial and cultural terms. The analyzed information points out a local dependence on natural resources.

ANNEX IV: SUPPORTING DOCUMENT FOR OBJECTIVE I - CONSERVATION AND ACTIONS

1.1 Conservation objective – the overarching conservation objective of the Initiative

The important biodiversity values of the CTS will be protected, restored and sustainably used for the benefit of the people of the CTS and Vietnam to contribute to national and international conservation efforts.

1.2 Purpose of this Document

This document sets out detailed targets, activities and milestones that precisely detail specific actions required to ensure that the biodiversity is protected and managed.

The objective comprises seven key result areas and targets set for 2010. Each result area is further divided into main activities required to achieve that target. Specific actions are listed under these activities as milestones representing very short term targets. These will direct the exact focus of the work.

Each activity listed below includes an indicative time based target and is ranked with colour codes according to its priority level:

CRITICAL PRIORITY ACTIVITY TO BE COMPLETED BY 2007
HIGH PRIORITY ACTIVITY TO BE COMPLETED BY BY 2010
SECONDARY PRIORITY ACTIVITY TO BE IN PROGRESS BY 2010

The time based target has normally been written as 'by 20**'. This activity is best completed by the end of that year. The activity can be completed anytime up to that date.

1.3 The Biological Assessment and Vision

This component of the strategy is based on the biological "vision" structured on the biological assessment conducted as part of the development of the strategy and action plan. The biological assessment (published as part of this series of documents) clearly lists the specific targets for the conservation foci for which the programme is aimed to protect, manage and restore. The biological assessment together with this implementation plan are essential components of any monitoring and evaluation efforts.

Priority Actions	Priority Activity	Milestones
ACTION 1 Develop and Complete Effective Network of Protected Areas (Special Use Forests) <i>Immediate target: By 2010, a network of protected areas will be developed and effectively managed</i>	Complete investment and feasibility plans for all existing and proposed Special Use Forests	By 2007, investment plan conducted for Ngoc Linh (Quang Nam) and An Toan Nature Reserves completed and Reserves officially gazetted.
	Establish and strengthen management board for existing special use forests in Central Truong Son Landscape	By 2007, management boards established for Dakrong, Phong Dien, An Toan, Ngoc Linh (Quang Nam), Ngoc Linh (Kon Tum), and Kon Cha Rang Nature Reserves. Staffed in accordance with Decision 08 /2001/QĐ-TTg, dated 11 January 2001 (or revised versions of the same Decision).
		By 2010, management boards established in the two landscape protection sites of Bac Hai Van (Thua-Thien Hue), Nam Hai Van (Da Nang City).
	Strengthen forest management and protection staffing in Nature Reserves to necessary levels	By 2007, ensure each existing and proposed protected area has completed an assessment of threats, prepared a management effectiveness evaluation and drafted an interim management plan.
		By 2007, procedures, guidelines and training provided to all existing (and developing PAs) to implement effective participatory management of PAs.
	Redefine and demarcate boundaries on the ground for protected areas and buffer zones	By 2010, all existing protected areas will have defined within the Land registry the boundaries of the reserves and their respective buffer zones (to be included also in the Strategic Environmental Framework for the CSTL provinces).
		By 2010, all protected areas will have clearly defined their boundaries on the ground.
	Develop management plan for protected areas with appropriate conservation objectives for each area	By 2007, Bach Ma National Park, Dakrong, Phong Dien, Song Thanh, Ngoc Linh (Quang Nam and Kon Tum), Kon Cha Rang, Kon Ka Kinh Nature Reserves have completed full management plans.
	Establish new protected areas for Central Truong Son landscape	By 2007, each province will have completed a full conservation plan for their respective priority 1 areas. These plans will have identified any proposed protected areas.
		By 2010, all proposed protected areas will be officially recognised.
Ensure effective management of all protected areas	By 2007, a consensus based system for measuring effectiveness produced and plans to achieve graduated system of effectiveness agreed for individual protected areas. By 2007, sufficient investment for individual protected areas in place to finance action plans agreed for achieving effectiveness.	

Priority Actions	Priority Activity	Milestones
ACTION 2 Effective Conservation of Existing and Proposed Protected Areas in Priority 1 Areas <i>By 2010, effective conservation secures habitat and species in all priority 1 areas</i>	Prepare conservation zonation management plans for all provinces using the "MOSAIC" method	By 2007, all provinces have a detailed conservation plan for all forest and rivers within priority 1 areas.
	Establish sustainable forest management in appropriate sites in priority 1 areas	By 2007, production forest in the Watershed forest of Bo and Huong rivers sustainably managed.
		By 2010, Kon Plong production forest (Gia Lai) sustainably managed.
		By 2007, forest of two SFEs between Kon Ka Kinh and Kon Cha Rang Nature Reserves sustainably managed.
		By 2007, production forest of An Son SFE (An Lao, Binh Dinh) sustainably managed.
		By 2007, Identify all SFEs of conservation importance and identify plans to meet conservation targets as part of sustainable management.
	Protect and maintain important corridors between protected areas	By 2007 Kon Ka Kinh-Kon Cha Rang/An Toan covering 42,777 ha of green corridor.
		By 2010 Kon Ka Kinh-Kon Cha Rang and forest of Kon Plong.
		By 2010 Forest in Kon Plong and Ngoc Linh Nature Reserve (Kon Tum).
		By 2007 Song Thanh/Ngoc Linh/Phou Ahyon nature reserves.
		By 2007 Forest in the green corridor between Xe Sap and Bach Ma National Park.
		By 2007 Forest in the green corridor between Bach Ma Hai Van and Phong Dien Nature Reserves.
		By 2010 Bac Hai Van-Nam Hai is a green corridor linking Bach Ma and Ba Na covering 9,773ha.
	Establish effective enforcement mechanisms to maintain conservation values of the priority 1 areas	By 2007, each priority 1 area will have clear plans for effective enforcement. By 2010, all threats from unsustainable hunting, wildlife trade, illegal logging, encroachment and other sources of forest loss are reduced to ZERO.
Implement targeted reforestation/restoration activities in Priority 1 areas	By 2010, gap analysis to indicate key sites within priority 1 areas for restoration and develop mechanisms to establish restoration activities completed.	
	By 2010 on going research to investigate the opportunity for carbon sequestration credits as incentives for natural forest restoration has led to pilot models in priority 1-3 areas.	
Establish provincial, district and commune regulations for all priority areas	By 2007, using the "MOSAIC" method, establish resource use and conservation based regulations for all zones of priority 1 areas.	

Priority Actions	Priority Activity	Milestones
<p>ACTION 3</p> <p>Mitigation of Threats in all "CRITICAL Areas" of the Landscape</p> <p><i>By 2010, key threats in the four "hotspot" areas will be fully mitigated</i></p>	Green Corridor	Create effective protection of forest landscape linking forests north, south, east and west.
	Song Thanh and Ngoc Linh	Establish strict protection and ecological restoration activities for key corridor area linking Song Thanh and Ngoc Linh Nature Reserves.
	Forests linking Kon Cha Rang - Kon Cha Kinh	Establish sustainable forestry practices for forests linking these two protected areas.
	Ho Chi Minh Highway	<p>Undertake an assessment of critical impacts from the Highway and develop and implement plan for mitigation</p> <p>Implement activities identified in assessment.</p>

Priority Actions	Priority Activity	Milestones
<p>ACTION 4</p> <p>Illegal Exploitation of Forest and Wildlife Eliminated</p> <p><i>By 2010, illegal exploitation of the most threatened animals and plants will be reduced to zero</i></p>	Develop and strengthen provincial capacity for enforcement.	<p>By 2007, Develop a landscape scale enforcement plan based on individual provincial plans including a pilot provincial plan in Quang Nam province by 2004.</p> <p>By 2007, Identify gaps in capacity by undertaking a training needs assessment for each province.</p> <p>By 2007, Implement training plan and provide equipment.</p>
	Promote and activate local community participation in wildlife law enforcement and resource protection.	<p>By 2007, Develop pilot community enforced protected areas in each province (MOSAIC pilot sites in Quang Nam as models).</p> <p>By 2007, Establish pilot mechanisms to improve relations between local communities and provincial enforcement staff in at least two provinces (FPD).</p>
		By 2007, Integrate local communities into provincial strategies for enforcement.
	Establish mechanisms for dealing with confiscated animals and plants (including timber).	<p>By 2007, Establish a rescue centre in suitable location to deal with confiscated wildlife and plants</p> <p>By 2007, Streamline and increase transparency for the process of redistribution of confiscated timber and proceeds from sale to provide effective incentives for improved enforcement.</p>
	Improve penalty systems as effective deterrent.	By 2007, Develop set of penalty systems based on thorough consultations with provincial enforcement teams and local communities.
	Licensing system for restaurants based on conservation criteria.	<p>By 2007, Establish licensing system for wildlife restaurants as first step before phasing out all restaurants piloted in one province.</p> <p>By 2007, Establish systems for tracking chain of custody and exploitation rates of wildlife in restaurants.</p> <p>By 2007, Stop the selling of wildlife in restaurants until sustainable practices are established.</p>
	High profile awareness and education campaign to reduce wildlife consumption and illegal logging.	By 2007, Undertake consumption and practices analysis.
		By 2007, Develop communication mechanisms.
By 2007, Use Mass Groups to spread message of 'ZERO TOLERANCE' for illegal practices.		

Priority Actions	Priority Activity	Milestones
<p>ACTION 5</p> <p>Strengthen Conservation Measures to Effectively Protect Key (groups of) Species</p> <p><i>By 2010, specific direct and effective conservation measures provide adequate protection for key (groups of) species</i></p>	<p>Action for three flagship species.</p>	<p>Saola: By 2007, an action plan for the entire global population of saola is prepared detailing specific actions for the populations in Quang Tri, Thua-Thien Hue and Quang Nam. By 2007, create a "southern team" for the saola based in Thua-Thien Hue province responsible for mobilizing conservation efforts in Quang Tri, Thua-Thien Hue and Quang Nam provinces. By 2007, create effective protected area for saola in the green corridor in Nam Dong and A Luoi district- Thua-Thien Hue), and forest in Hien district bordering to Lao.</p> <p>Tiger: By 2007, establish a pilot provincial based enforcement mechanism in Quang Nam province and expend to Thua Thien - Hue and Kon Tum provinces. By 2007, establish Song Thanh Nature Reserve as a centre of excellence for tiger conservation in the Central Truong Son. By 2007, establish priority area 1 based tiger conservation efforts as the core of the tiger conservation efforts. By 2007, link conservation efforts to tiger conservation efforts in Lao PDR. By 2007, ascertain the distribution and population of tigers remaining in the Central Truong Son.</p> <p>Hog Deer: By 2007, undertake surveys to ascertain the presence and absence of Hog Deer in the Kon Ka Kinh/ Kon Cha Rang priority 1 area. By 2007, implement emergency protection for existing hog deer populations if found.</p>
	<p>Conservation plans for key species developed and implemented.</p>	<p>By 2007, Central Truong Son Coordination Unit must create "action groups" for each flagship species and key species groups comprising local and international research organizations, awareness expertise and implementation bodies. These action groups must prepare action plans for each species/species group.</p>
	<p>Action to protect species groups affected by hunting and trade.</p>	<p>Terrestrial and freshwater Turtles: Undertake provincial investigations on the scale and scope of the trade and include as a key target for enforcement efforts for trade crackdowns. Large mammals and birds snared: The impact of the indiscriminate practice of snaring needs to be reduced to non-key species if not eliminated entirely. Investigate the social and economic basis for hunting to determine effective policy and legislation Primates: focus priority on Red-shanked Douc langur and Grey- shanked Douc langur and all gibbon taxa. Establish new protected areas to ensure that viable populations of each taxa are protected throughout the landscape. Use tourism as a tool for improving conservation incentives. Asian Elephant: Establish effective management in Que Lam, Tra My and Tien Phuoc district (Quang Nam). All species under trade; clear understanding the scale and nature of all species involved in the trade to influence actions.</p>

Priority Actions	Priority Activity	Milestones
<p>ACTION 6</p> <p>Raise Understanding of the Ecology and Threats to Key Conservation Foci, Exchange Information to Support Effective Conservation Efforts</p> <p><i>By 2010, understanding of the ecology and threats to the key conservation foci and information exchange will support effective conservation efforts</i></p>	Prepare detailed research plan and encourage research institutions in Vietnam and internationally to participate in the research.	By 2007, identify (as part of the stakeholder consultation) key research institutions and individuals within Vietnam and particularly in the Central Truong Son provinces. By 2007, develop a detailed research plan with partners for the Central Truong Son.
	Conduct biological surveys of areas of suspected importance for biodiversity conservation.	By 2007, Identify gaps in present understanding of the distribution and status of key species and prioritise survey plan.
		By 2007, urgent rapid biodiversity reconnaissance surveys required in: -An Toan Nature Reserve (Binh Dinh province) and neighbouring forest areas in Quang Ngai province - Northern Quang Tri province
	Survey and monitor biodiversity focused on key taxa groups in the Central Truong Son landscape, potentially through thesis research	By 2010, all flagship species and key species and species groups are high priority for detailed survey and ecological research. Initiative needs to mobilise increased capacity and effort on ecological survey and research .
	Survey and monitor forest cover and integrity across landscape focused on protected areas, sites of strategic importance and landscape hotspots.	By 2010, ensure management boards in special-use forests and others implement their own monitoring programme.
	A biodiversity monitoring plan for the CTSL. Data and information stored in central database.	By 2010, The University network in the Central Truong Son linked to the government departments including IEBR and FIPI establish effective biological monitoring and data storage facility for the Initiative.
	Develop a better understanding of the flora and vegetation and identify plant species and vegetation types of high conservation value.	By 2007, a detailed forest cover map with annotations on forest integrity must be developed.
		By 2007, a full list of the most threatened plant species for the Central Truong Son will be created. By 2010, an increasing and comprehensive understanding of the vegetation and flora of the Central Truong Son must be achieved.

Priority Actions	Priority Activity	Milestones
<p>ACTION 7</p> <p>Increase Management Capacity and Skills for Forces of Management, Protection and Restoration of Species and Ecosystems in CTS for Effective Conservation</p> <p><i>By 2010, the competency and skills of those key players responsible for the protection, management and restoration of key species and habitats in priority 1 areas is sufficient to provide effective conservation</i></p>	<p>Management of conservation and biodiversity (targeted to management staff, senior staff in protected areas, watershed protection forests and production forests).</p>	<p>By 2007, a full assessment of the training and capacity building needs for all key partners and stakeholders responsible for the protection, management and restoration of the Central Truong Son Landscape should be completed. The results of the assessment need to be built into a large scale capacity building programme under the initiative.</p> <p>The assessment should be based on the categories listed in the "priority activity" to the left.</p>
	<p>Sustainable forest management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low impact logging - Resource inventory and evaluation - Biodiversity monitoring and management 	
	<p>Community-based forest and biodiversity management.</p>	
	<p>Biodiversity survey and monitoring.</p>	
	<p>Survey and evaluation of rural community with participatory rural appraisal.</p>	
	<p>Alternative income generation skills.</p>	
	<p>Community-level training on sustainable natural resource utilization.</p>	
	<p>Wildlife law status and enforcement training for enforcement staff.</p>	
<p>GIS applications in biodiversity monitoring and natural resource management.</p>		

Priority Actions	Priority Activity	Milestones
ACTION 8 Strengthen Freshwater Conservation in the Area <i>By 2010, freshwater conservation priorities will be clearly identified and effective conservation will be implemented for one entire waterway (from headwater to coast)</i>	Baseline studies of freshwater systems conducted throughout the CTSL	<p>By 2007, provincial teams set up with expertise in freshwater biodiversity assessment.</p> <p>By 2007, biological surveys of aquatic systems on a priority catchment-by-catchment basis completed. Surveys should include assessments of habitat integrity, and threat analysis.</p>
	Research conducted into the effects of hydroelectric power systems (large, small and micro scale) on aquatic systems and biodiversity	<p>By 2010, expertise will be available in Vietnam to conduct environmental impact assessments of international standards and to conduct research to determine future impacts of planned hydroelectric schemes.</p> <p>By 2010, through research begun within the early part of phase 1 (2003-2007) the impacts of hydroelectric schemes of any scale will be understood in specific relation to the rivers and streams of CTSL.</p>
	Review and amendment of current laws and clarification of roles, procedures and responsibilities for government bodies related to freshwater fisheries management	<p>By 2007, Identification and clarification of roles, procedures and responsibilities related to freshwater capture fisheries in Vietnam.</p> <p>By 2007, a review of the current legislation and present administrative control must be completed to guide future activities aimed to improve effectiveness.</p> <p>By 2007, management of rivers, lakes and streams under improved policy and legal framework.</p>
	River rehabilitation and protection and establishment of freshwater protected areas	By 2010 one pilot catchment based aquatic conservation project piloted in one province.
		By 2010, a map of all critical waterways and locations for protection and restoration created and plan for protection, management and restoration.
		By 2010, all priority freshwater sites are progressing towards effective management.
	Establishing pilot community-level sustainable fisheries	By 2010, a pilot project aimed to establish community based regulations for management and utilization of aquatic biodiversity underway.
		By 2007, an economic study into the dependence and usage of aquatic resources by local communities conducted (including river restocking component and identification and opening of new markets such as aquarium trade).
	Biological monitoring system developed and implemented for aquatic systems across the landscape based on selected indicator species and simple chemical analysis	By 2010, indicators of aquatic ecosystem health identified and a monitoring system established in a pilot catchment and expanded to the CTSL the reafter.

BIOLOGICAL AND CONSERVATION SURVEY PRIORITIES BY PROVINCE

Province	Focal Areas	Focal Habitats	Focal Taxa
Quang Tri	Northern Huong Hoa district	Lowland Forest	Endemic pheasants, saola, tiger, gaur, Giant muntjac.
Thua Thien Hue	Bo and Huong river watershed in A Luoi and Nam Dong districts	Lowland Forest	Saola, Truong Son Muntjac, Giant muntjac, Annamite striped rabbit, tiger and endemic pheasants
Da Nang	Corridor between Ba Na - Hai Van - Bach Ma	Lowland Forest Lower Montane Forest	Saola, Giant muntjac, Truong Son muntjac, and primates, endemic pheasant and Crested argus
Quang Nam	Forest in Hien, Nam Giang, Phuoc Son, Que Son, Tra My districts	Lowland Forest	Elephant, saola, Truong Son muntjac, Giant muntjac, Crested argus and pheasants
Binh Dinh	An Son SFE, An Lao district (Bung/Kon river watershed)	Lowland Forest Transition zone to central highlands (Kon Ha Nung Plateau)	Grey-shanked Douc langur, tiger, Hog deer, Giant muntjac, Masked finfoot, Crested argus
Gia Lai	SFEs around Kon Ka Kinh and Kon Cha Rang Nature Reserves	Lower and moderate montane Forest Fokienia hodginsii Forest	Tiger, Hog deer, Truong Son muntjac, Giant muntjac and primates (Douc langurs, Yellow-cheeked gibbon)
Kon Tum	Natural forest in Dak To, Kon Plong, and Dak Glei districts	Montane Forest	Tiger, primates, endemic bird species of the Kon Tum Plateau Endemic Bird Area (EBA), Vietnamese ginseng

The Greater Truong Son ecoregion comprises some of the world's most unique and threatened wildlife - from its charismatic endemic species such as the stunning Douc langur and the remarkable saola, to some of the world's most endangered and evocative species like the Asian elephant, tiger and Javan rhinoceros. The future of these, and many other species is dependant on successful, long-term conservation of the ecoregion as a whole that must be undertaken immediately, before they are lost forever. EAP in the Greater Truong Son aims to conserve this ecoregion through:

- Mobilising conservation throughout the entire Greater Truong Son ecoregion
- Protecting key sites and species through integrated conservation and development activities in priority landscapes
- Promoting a supportive policy environment for conservation and sustainable development
- Laying the foundations for lasting conservation

The Central Truong Son Initiative is a pilot initiative being developed by WWF's Greater Truong Son EAP in cooperation with the Governments of Vietnam and Lao P.D.R.. The aim of this fledgling initiative is to create partnership of a broad range of stakeholders - from local communities to government institutions and international organisations - working together to secure biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in the Central Truong Son Landscape.

WWF is one of the world's largest and most experienced conservation organizations, with almost five million supporters and a global network active in more than 90 countries.

WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans can live in harmony with nature, by:

- Conserving the world's biological diversity
- Ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable
- Promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption

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The FPD, located under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), is responsible for providing technical advice and guidance in regard to Special Use Forests, and for wildlife management and law enforcement.

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