



Part I: Project Information

GEF ID

10906

Project Type

MSP

Type of Trust Fund

GET

CBIT/NGI

CBIT No

NGI No

Project Title

Mainstreaming Marine and Coastal Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting into Viet Nam's Development Planning for Blue Economic Growth of Key Sectors

Countries

Viet Nam

Agency(ies)

UNEP

Other Executing Partner(s)

Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment (ISPONRE) - Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Executing Partner Type

Government

GEF Focal Area

Biodiversity

Sector

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Climate Change, Climate Change Mitigation, Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use, Biodiversity, Biomes, Mangroves, Coral Reefs, Wetlands, Sea Grasses, Financial and Accounting, Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Coastal and Marine Protected Areas, Mainstreaming, Tourism, Fisheries, Influencing models, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Stakeholders, Private Sector, SMEs, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Communications, Awareness Raising, Type of Engagement, Information Dissemination, Consultation, Local Communities, Beneficiaries, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Gender results areas, Capacity Development, Access and control over natural resources, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Learning, Theory of change, Indicators to measure change, Knowledge Generation, Knowledge Exchange

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation

Significant Objective 1

Climate Change Adaptation

No Contribution 0

Biodiversity

Principal Objective 2

Land Degradation

Submission Date

1/3/2023

Expected Implementation Start

1/1/2024

Expected Completion Date

12/31/2026

Duration

36In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

129,573.00

A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS

Objectives/Programs	Focal Area Outcomes	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
BD-1-3	Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting	GET	1,363,929.00	12,653,954.00
Total Project Cost(\$)			1,363,929.00	12,653,954.00

B. Project description summary

Project Objective

Natural capital values and protection of coastal and marine ecosystems integrated in development planning and improved landscape management as part of the national blue economic growth policy in Viet Nam

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co- Financing(\$)
------------------------------	---------------------------	------------------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------	---	---

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing (\$)
1. Setting up the national institutional system, data and monitoring for application of natural capital accounting (NCA) for a sustainable blue economy in Viet Nam	Technical Assistance	1.1 National Capital Accounting system operational, including clear institutional mandates and increased institutional capacity, for applying and monitoring a blue economic growth model	<p>1.1.1. Coherent and consistent national methodology, institutional arrangements and national system adopted for NCA in Viet Nam - involving all ecosystems and related line agencies, whilst zooming in on Ocean accounting.</p> <p>1.1.2. Staff training and institutional capacity building on ocean/coastal natural capital accounting in support blue economic development for national and provincial institutions</p> <p>1.1.3. National Spatial Data Framework established for compiling marine and coastal accounts ? with specific provisions for the pilot in Quang Ninh Province</p> <p>1.1.4. Development of agreements with ISPONRE, VASI, GSO/MPI, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural</p>	GET	549,742.00	6,112,500.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing (\$)
			<p>Development (MARD), etc., on national platform on NCA for information exchange and blue economy growth policy advocacy</p>			
			<p>1.1.5. A system to harmonize and link marine and coastal NC accounts with routine government indicators and reporting procedures adopted, e.g., Green GDP (Gross Domestic Product), SDGs, gender inclusion</p>			

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing (\$)
2. Integration of marine and coastal natural capital accounting into provincial and local development planning and operations in Quang Ninh Province	Technical Assistance	2.1. Results of marine and coastal NCA applied toward development and implementation of blue economic growth and land-/seascape conservation planning for Quang Ninh Province	<p>2.1.1. Two or three marine and coastal (SEEA-EA-based) NC ecosystems-accounts established and operationalized ? with specific data sets for Quang Ninh Province (see 1.1.1).</p> <p>2.1.2. Corporate commitments and plans secured and options for PA friendly operations/investments identified through quantification of impacts, dependency and interlinkages on marine and coastal NC in Quang Ninh Province communicated through outreach and sector roundtables.</p> <p>2.1.3. Socio-Economic development plan (2026 - 2030) in Quang Ninh Province, optimizing sector co-existence and spatial use of coastal and marine resources as well as identifying sector investments and operations for improved (financial)</p>	GET	465,090.00	4,025,000.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
			<p>management effectiveness of protected areas - leading to reducing vectors of NC impact, using integrated NC ecosystems-account.</p>			

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing (\$)
3. Outreach and knowledge management for national uptake	Technical Assistance	<p>3.1. Better understanding on the importance of natural capital and NCA towards a sustainable blue economy in Viet Nam</p> <p>3.2. Project impact monitoring and knowledge management system enables national replication</p>	<p>3.1.1. Set of awareness raising and outreach activities and establishment of ?community of practices? which connects local and national institutions and stakeholders to increase understanding and enable increased impact from applying NC accounting</p> <p>3.1.2. Targeted replication and engagement mechanism ? facilitated by MONRE and GSO, establishing additional NCAs in Quang Ninh as well as in at least three additional provinces, based on the applicable government legal directives, secured funding and specified sustainable development and environmental protection.</p> <p>3.2.1. Project sex disaggregated M&E system enables tracking of project progress, performance; and specifically capturing best practice to enable</p>	GET	225,104.00	1,319,396.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
			replication of NCA and blue economy in additional province(s)			
				Sub Total (\$)	1,239,936.00	11,456,896.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)						
	GET		123,993.00			1,197,058.00
			Sub Total(\$)	123,993.00		1,197,058.00
			Total Project Cost(\$)	1,363,929.00		12,653,954.00

Please provide justification

C. Sources of Co-financing for the Project by name and by type

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
GEF Agency	UN Environment Programme	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	100,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) ? ISPONRE (blue economy; provincial scenario analysis socio-economic development planning)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,076,400.00
Donor Agency	GOAP	Grant	Investment mobilized	367,500.00
Donor Agency	USAID	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	8,294,396.00
Donor Agency	GOAP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2,815,658.00
Total Co-Financing(\$)				12,653,954.00

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

The co-financing offered to the project by the national and local provincial governments will come from counterpart and provincial funds supported from State Budget for the direct cash costs on project meetings, workshops and salary allowances for officials involved in the project related to spatial planning, training, socio-economic development planning, protected area support budgets, etc. The mechanism would be that these institutions would pay for cash costs for services to be provided to the project as agreed, instead of channeling cash funds to the project bank account.

D. Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNEP	GET	Viet Nam	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	1,363,929	129,573	1,493,502.00
Total Grant Resources(\$)					1,363,929.00	129,573.00	1,493,502.00

E. Non Grant Instrument

NON-GRANT INSTRUMENT at CEO Endorsement

Includes Non grant instruments? **No**

Includes reflow to GEF? **No**

F. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required **true**

PPG Amount (\$)

50,000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

4,750

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNEP	GET	Viet Nam	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	50,000	4,750	54,750.00
Total Project Costs(\$)					50,000.00	4,750.00	54,750.00

Core Indicators

Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
90128.00	90128.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
90,128.00	90,128.00		

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value or other forest loss avoided

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

Documents (Please upload document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Submitted

Indicator 5 Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity (excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
910.00	910.00		

Indicator 5.1 Fisheries under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations

Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
---------------------------------	---	---------------------------------	--------------------------------

Type/name of the third-party certification

Indicator 5.2 Large Marine Ecosystems with reduced pollution and hypoxia

Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (achieved at MTR)	Number (achieved at TE)
0	0	0	0

LME at PIF	LME at CEO Endorsement	LME at MTR	LME at TE
-------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------	------------------

Indicator 5.3 Marine OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
--------------------------	----------------	-----------------------------------	---	-----------------------------------	----------------------------------

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO ₂ e (direct)	1255227	907308	0	0
Expected metric tons of CO ₂ e (indirect)	0	0	0	0

Indicator 6.1 Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO ₂ e (direct)	1,255,227	907,308		
Expected metric tons of CO ₂ e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting	2023	2024		
Duration of accounting	20	20		

Indicator 6.2 Emissions Avoided Outside AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) Sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO ₂ e (direct)				
Expected metric tons of CO ₂ e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting				
Duration of accounting				

Indicator 6.3 Energy Saved (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Total Target Benefit	Energy (MJ) (At PIF)	Energy (MJ) (At CEO Endorsement)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at MTR)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at TE)
Target Energy Saved (MJ)				

Indicator 6.4 Increase in Installed Renewable Energy Capacity per Technology (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	336	336		
Male	504	504		
Total	840	840	0	0

Provide additional explanation on targets, other methodologies used, and other focal area specifics (i.e., Aichi targets in BD) including justification where core indicator targets are not provided

The Project will help Viet Nam to monitor and report the SDGs implementation, especially the SDG14 'Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development' identified under the National Action Plan for the Implementation of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. Contributing to SDG14 'Life Below Water' is the most relevant goal for the Blue Economy. This is being pursued through the stated objectives under the two Blue Economy resolutions as well as the broader Vietnamese environmental response to deliver on Targets (14.1 Pollution reduction; 14.2 protecting NC and BD; 14.3 responses to climate change and sea-level rise; 14.4 sustainable fisheries management, and 14.5 expanding on the MPA to at least 6% and restoring mangroves to the year 2000 area). The NCA approach on marine and coastal ecosystems will support an improved understanding and methodology to capture the economic valuation of these systems and their contribution to the Blue Economy. This will support GSO in their monitoring of SDG indicators as reflected in the NSIS, as reflected in Output 1.1.5, linking marine and coastal NC accounts with routine government indicators and reporting procedures for Green GDP, SDGs and gender inclusion. The Project would contribute to several of the Aichi biodiversity targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity, notably Target 2, which is focused on integrating biodiversity values into development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes including national accounting systems; as well as Aichi Targets 1, 4 and 19. The project will support to integrate the value of marine resources in blue economy policy at national level and development planning at provincial level (i.e. provincial master plan) in Quang Ninh. The NCA results will be used to inform protected areas (spatial) planning, supporting improvement of landscape management at Quang Ninh Province, including reduction in environmental pollution. Core Indicator 4. Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas): 90,128ha, consisting of 77,871ha of forest and 12,257ha of mangrove forest. Indicator 4 captures the total area of landscapes under improved practices, that lead to improved environmental conditions and/or for which management plans have been prepared and endorsed and are under implementation. This indicator is directly related to Aichi Biodiversity Target 7 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, whereby areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry, by 2020, are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity (CBD, undated). The project will support better integration NCA into provincial planning and

operations in buffer areas and special-use protection forests adjacent to the selected PAs in Quang Ninh. Measures to improve management effectiveness, including development of a set of indicators for monitoring the blue economy in Quang Ninh, development of sustainable business plans/strategies for at least four corporate entities related to especially tourism, and fishery sectors; identification of sustainable business opportunities, investments and improved operations towards reducing vectors of NC impact and awareness raising activities on NCA will be supported in 77,871ha of forest and 12,257ha of mangrove forest outside the selected PAs. The total area to be covered is around 90,128 ha (excluding PAs). It is expected that the activities under Output(s) 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3 will collectively contribute to the achievement of core indicator 4. Core Indicator 5. Area of marine habitat under improved practices (excluding protected areas): 910ha. Indicator 5 captures the total area of marine habitat under improved practices, that lead to improved environmental conditions and/or for which management plans have been prepared and endorsed and are under implementation. The 910 ha reflect areas of marine and nearshore habitats, of which 884.5ha of seagrass and 25.5ha of coral reef). Core Indicator 6 was calculated as a co-benefit of 907,308 tCO₂e carbon mitigation over 20 years period (3 years project and 17 years post project) with 559,489 tCO₂e through avoided deforestation and a total of 347,869 tCO₂e extra carbon sequestration through actions such as habitat protection, natural regeneration. See Annex 16 of the ProDoc for the details provided by the EX-ACT calculation. This calculation deviates slightly from the PIF in which a total of 1,255,227 tCO₂e was calculated. For the interventions related to 'Management and Degradation' it is assumed that forest degradation level for moist tropical forest will be reduced from the present 'low' (reflecting the baseline rate of 22%) to 'very low' and for mangroves also from 'low' to 'very low'. In the PIF the baseline degradation level was estimated as 'large' and the resulting level with project as 'moderate'. These degradation level reflect forest degradation (biomass loss) reference levels of 60%, which seems too high. Therefore, in the present calculation the reference level is taken as 'low', reflecting a reference level of 20% biomass loss. For mangrove the PIF estimated the reference level as 'moderate' (40%), which is lowered for the present calculation to 'low' (20%). Core Indicator 11. Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment: Direct benefits to at least 840 people (504 men and 336 women). The estimate of direct beneficiaries is 840 based on due diligence conducted during the PPG stage. The average male-to-female- ratio in Quang Ninh is about 60:40 then the breakdown would be around 504 men and 336 women in project site.

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

describe any changes in alignment with the project design with the original pif

Topic	At PIF Stage	At CEO Endorsement Stage
<p>Target Contributions to GEF7 Core Indicators</p>	<p>Table F, Project's Target Contributions to GEF7 Core Indicators, included Core Indicator 6, Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated (1,255,227,000t CO₂eq)</p>	<p>The GEF Focal Area Outcomes have been defined and the measurement against the applicable GEF corporate indicators are shown in Table E in Part I of this document. For Table E on the project's target contributions to GEF7 Core Indicators, the following changed:</p> <p>Core Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated Expected metric tons of CO₂eq. (direct): 1,255,227, was calculated in the PIF, with duration of accounting of in total 20 years. Calculation of the expected Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated under Core Indicator 6 are presented in Annex 16 of the ProDoc, detailing the methodology used for this calculation (EX-ACT). Based on this analysis a slight reduction in expected carbon benefits from the project was calculated, estimated in terms of lifetime direct as well as consequential GHG emissions avoided over a time horizon of 20 years, (3 years project and 17 years post project) with 559,489 tCO₂e through avoided deforestation and a total of 347,869 tCO₂e extra carbon sequestration through actions such as habitat protection, natural regeneration, totalling 907,308 tCO₂eq. These have to be reassessed during MTR and TE for realism.</p>

Topic	At PIF Stage	At CEO Endorsement Stage
<p>Project Outcomes and Outputs</p>	<p>The PIF included a set of four results-oriented project Outcomes, grouped under three Components.</p> <p>The following Output had the following formulation at PIF stage:</p> <p><i>2.1.3. Socio-Economic development plan (2026 - 2030) in Quang Ninh Province, optimizing sector co-existence and spatial use of coastal and marine resources as well as identifying sector investments and operations for improved (financial) management effectiveness of protected areas - leading to reducing vectors of NC impact, using integrated NC ecosystems-account.</i></p> <p>The PIF reflected the GEF financing for Components 1 and 2 as 500,000, and 239,936 for Component 3</p>	<p>At CEO Endorsement stage, Project Outcomes and Outputs remained largely unchanged, with one exceptions: Output 1.1.4 was rephased to: <i>2.1.3. Socio-Economic development plan (2026 - 2030) in Quang Ninh Province developed, optimizing sector co-existence and spatial use of coastal and marine resources as well as identifying sector investments and operations for improved (financial) management effectiveness of protected areas - leading to reducing vectors of NC impact, using integrated NC ecosystems-account.</i> Through adding <i>developed?</i> , completing the syntax, it is emphasized that the project intends to contribute to the development of the Socio-economic development plan</p> <p>Overall, for all outputs more comprehensive narratives were developed with inclusion of the various activities needed to achieve the results aimed at in these outputs, as the PIF only presented the titles of the outputs, without any details on the activities.</p> <p>Refer to Part I, Table B of this document for a reference to current formulations of Outcomes and Outputs.</p> <p>At CEO Endorsment Stage the amount for Component 1 has been changed to 549,742 and for Component 2 to 452,844, based on the more detailed costing of the activities anticipated for the various outputs. The amount for Component 3 has been slightly adjusted to 237,350.</p>

Topic	At PIF Stage	At CEO Endorsement Stage
<p>Project Strategy</p>	<p>The PIF reflected the objective of the project and the strategy to obtain the desired results.</p>	<p>The project's strategy is now fully developed and consolidated in the ProDoc, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? A revised and updated Theory of Change, linking root causes, barriers and assumptions with interventions, intermediate outcomes and ultimately (post-project) impact. ? A detailed description of Outcomes, outputs and related activities has been developed with indication of leading institutions and collaborating partners/entities. ? These activities have been costed and reflected in a temporal work plan overview. ? Core Indicator 6 has been slightly adjusted from the PIF stage, using EX-ACT to assess the avoided GHG emissions through project interventions. ? The project landscape has been further defined, after consultation with key stakeholders during the inception and validation workshop and explored in a field mission and reflected with a more detailed map and protected area descriptions to reflect baseline conditions. ? A stakeholder analysis was carried out with identification of and consultation with key stakeholders and partners, with description of their roles and engagement and a stakeholder engagement plan. ? A more detailed description of how the project intends to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, including a gender action plan. ? The baseline conditions were further detailed and an incremental cost reasoning was added. ? The risk assessment was updated and risk related to climate change and COVID-19 were added. ? The Strategic Results Framework was developed with indication of indicators, targets, means of verification and assumptions. ? The M&E plan was developed and costed and a monitoring plan added. ? The project budget has been detailed per component and outcome, with some slight adjustments. ? Social and environmental safeguards were updated and detailed in the SRIF, to reflect potential risks and how the project intends to mitigate these risks.

Topic	At PIF Stage	At CEO Endorsement Stage
Co-financing	The PIF reflected a total amount of co-financing of 13,690,000, committed by UNEP, the Vietnamese Government and various donor agencies.	During the PPG phase it became clear that some of the co-financing projects will end before expected start of the project (e.g. WB-ProBlue, ADB) and therefore alternative donor agencies have been approached and have committed co-financing, namely GOAP (3,183,158) and USAID (8,294,396). The commitment of MONRE (Recipient Country Government) changed from 5,180,000 to 1,076,400, reflecting more recent projects. The overall committed co-finance budget of the PIF (13,690,000) has therefore been slightly reduced to 12,653,954.

1a. *Project Description*. Elaborate on: 1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description); 2) the baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects; 3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project; 4) alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies; 5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing; 6) global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF); and 7) innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up. ?

1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed

Rich biodiversity as a basis for natural capital assets in Viet Nam

The unique variety and value of Viet Nam's biodiversity both at species as well as ecosystems level, is an important basis of its diverse natural capital, which is directly and indirectly related to its potential towards sustainable blue economic development in the marine and coastal zones of the country. Viet Nam is part of the global Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot, which is considered to be very rich in biodiversity, and playing an important role for nature and human life not only at the national level but also regionally. Viet Nam is one of the world's most biologically diverse countries. It is ranked 16th globally in terms of species diversity with having about ten percent of the world's species whilst covering less than one percent of its land area; having 63 Important Bird Areas; and a total of six out of 238 global priority ecoregions for conservation. It is rich in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and has up to 95 ecosystem types including seven terrestrial, 39 wetland and 20 marine ecosystems.

Viet Nam's 3,260 km long coastline hosts a variety of coastal ecosystems. The rich diversity is reflected in the high number of species of mangrove trees, finfish and penaeid shrimps, among others, that are associated with mangrove swamps. Coral reef ecosystems offer a variety of fauna and flora, with about 255 species and 69 genera in the Southern coastal areas and 95 species and 35 genera in the Northern coastal areas. These collectively include 157 fish species, 208 mollusks, 76 crustaceans, 70 seaweeds, 78 polychaeta and numerous species of plankton. Viet Nam's biodiversity is recognized internationally, as indicated with having eleven Biosphere Reserves[1]¹, two World Heritage Sites[2]², nine Ramsar

Sites[3]³, and 10 ASEAN Heritage Parks[4]⁴. Viet Nam's natural capital, in addition to the above biodiversity, also includes e.g. its water, forests, agriculture land, oil, gas and minerals, marine resources.

Importance of natural capital for coastal economic development in Viet Nam

Along with human and financial capital, natural capital resources have been identified as the main factors contributing to the country's economic growth, accounting for more than 50% of GDP and for almost a third of total wealth[5]⁵ (30%). Almost half of the country's labor force is currently employed in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector which contributes to 17.7% of national GDP. Gender inequalities in agriculture, food and nutrition security are visible in labor and in the access to resources (land, finance, technology, training and markets) as well as in agricultural extension services; yet women constitute a critical workforce in agricultural production, especially in rural areas, where 63.4 percent of working women are in agriculture compared to 57.5 percent of working men[6]⁶.

Natural capital also supports many fast-growing manufacturing and service sectors and a large percentage of the value of Viet Nam's exports is based on natural capital resources, notably from rice, seafood, crude oil, timber, coffee and rubber[7]⁷. One key sector of Viet Nam, the tourism industry, is based largely on its scenic beauty derived from natural capital and contributes to 6.6% of GDP in 2016 and directly accounted for 8% of GDP a year later in 2017. In 2019 and before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the total contribution of tourism to the GDP of Vietnam was USD32 billion in 2019.. From the standpoint of aquaculture sector, Viet Nam is one of the world's leading producers and exporters of shrimp and now ranks third in the terms of shrimp production[8]⁸.The agriculture sector (including fisheries) ? which is fully reliant on natural capital such as land, soil and water, remains a source of significant revenue and an important domestic source of food.[9]⁹ Viet Nam has a long history of coastal urban settlement, economic development and related sectors such as fisheries and tourism, as well as coastal infrastructure for transport, harbors as well as coastal protection, which for a sizable part depend on and/or impact the coastal NC resources.

As a result, coastal and marine biodiversity and other natural capital resources are key to achieving sustainable development as well as a basis for human welfare in Viet Nam. For instance, coastal forests in Viet Nam are an important natural capital resource and distributed across its 28 coastal provinces with a total area of about 238,954 ha, accounting for 1.6% of the country's total forest area. Of those coastal forests, 124,381 ha is classified as Protection Forest, 38,504 ha is classified as special-use forest and 76,069 is classified as production forest[10]¹⁰. In the context of climate change, coastal forests can contribute to buffering against storm surges and windstorms as well as helping to reduce coastal erosion due to sea-level rise. While several policies emphasize the need to manage coastal forests in a sustainable manner, in practice there are increasing threats and pressures on these forests.

Therefore, the recent trends in coastal development may not always have been fully sustainable. In line with its past and looking to the future, currently, the blue economy [11]¹¹ has become a significant direction in its economic growth path. The intensity of use of land, water, and energy resources to produce economic output in Viet Nam tended to decrease during the period 1990-2007; in other words, the country tended to use fewer resources per million of GDP. However, the absolute level of resource use has continued to increase. [12]¹² Also, the rapid economic growth has additionally led to an accelerated as well as increased level of environmental degradation as well as pollution. Taken together, population growth, urbanization, and industrialization have had significant impacts on natural capital in the coastal and marine zone. For instance, by sector the most serious water pollution emanates from the production of textiles and food sectors. This development in Viet Nam is also threatening its biodiversity.

Natural capital resources and economic baseline in Quang Ninh Province - project geographic focus

Quang Ninh Province - the area chosen for the project for field interventions, shares a border with China in the North, and is surrounded by Lang Son, Bac Giang in the Northwest, Gulf of Tonkin, Hai Phong City and Hai Duong Province in the East and the South. Quang Ninh includes 617,800 hectares of terrestrial land resources and over 612,000 hectares marine resources. Quang Ninh is a key economic region including Mong Cai Plaza which is a trading point between Viet Nam and China and remains one of the country's top tourist attractions with the Natural World Heritage Site - Ha Long Bay. The provincial GDP at current price in 2020 reached VND219.4 billion (USD 9 Billion USD). The average economic growth of Quang Ninh for the period of 2016-2020 was 10.7 percent, which was 1.6 times higher than national level.

In 2018, the agricultural, forestry and fishery sectors increased by 4% from the previous year; whilst manufacturing and construction sectors increased by nearly 11 % compared to the previous year. The population in 2018 was 1,280,6 thousand persons, increased by 1,8% compared to 2017, in which the urban population was 822,1 thousand persons, occupied 64,2%; the rural population was 458,5 thousand persons, accounted for 35,8%; the male population was 646,6 thousand persons, occupied 50,5%; the female population was 634 thousand persons, occupied 49,5%.

Notwithstanding this high rate of economic development, Quang Ninh Province is also rich in biodiversity. There were 4,350 species recorded, including 2,236 genera and 721 families of fauna, fungi and plants. A total of 98 endangered plant species have been identified, of which, 57 species included in the Viet Nam Red Book (2007) - with 22 stated as Endangered (EN) and 33 as Vulnerable (VU), plus 2 species Critically Endangered (CR) - the Northern Antlers (*Rauwolfia serpentina* (L.)), and *Cinnamomum parthenoxylon* (Jack.). However, none of these plant species is listed as CR in the IUCN Red Data Book. Of the total of 69 mammal species in the province, 16 species are listed in the IUCN Red Data List (2010); 22 species are listed in Viet Nam Red Data Book (2007); and 22 species are included in the Viet Nam Government Decree 32/2006 ND-CP on "Plant and Animal Management" (2006). Additionally, of the 39 amphibian and 95 reptile species found in the province, 12 are included in Decree 32/2006, including the Near Threatened (IUCN Red Data Book) Python (*Python molurus*) and the VU King Cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*). Birds: 174 bird species in 55 families were identified, including species listed in the IUCN Red Data Book, the Vulnerable Collard Crow (*Corvus torquatus*). Quang

Ninh's coastal area is diversified in terms of topography, influenced by tropical monsoon climate, thus having diverse ecosystems such as: coral reefs (Ha Long Bay, Bai Tu Long Bay, Co To and Tran islands); mangroves (coastal area from Mong Cai - Quang Yen); seagrass (in Hai Ha (Quang Phong, Thoi Xanh Island), Tien Yen (Hai Lang) and Quang Yen (Lien Vi, Tan An, Hoang Tan); intertidal estuaries (including Ka Long, Tien Yen, Bach Dang-Nam Trieu); coastal islands and the Gulf-bay ecosystem (Cua Luc Gulf); lagoons (Mong Cai, Tien Yen, Quang Yen); as well as limestone mountains (Ha Long Bay, Bai Tu Long Bay). To protect this diversity in ecosystems and biodiversity, Quang Ninh established one National Park, one nature reserve, one landscape protection area, and one World Natural Heritage site. Biodiversity, both at species as well as ecosystems level, plays a significant role in the socio-economic development of local communities, key national economic sectors and environmental protection in the province, especially related to agriculture, aquaculture, tourism and water services sector. However, NC are exploited legally or illegally, sustainable or unsustainable, by many individuals and groups both from inside or outside the Province.

?

A key challenge for Quang Ninh Province is to manage its rapid economic development in a sustainable manner and to prevent adverse impacts to natural capital and its services ? e.g. as provided by mangroves, reduce pollution of water resources (see below) or reduce the impact by climate change to agriculture through resilient NC resources (also see below). Establishment of brackish water shrimp farms, industrial development, as well as the reclamation and filling of tidal flats for the expansion and construction of residential quarters have strongly impacted the condition of coastal ecosystems in the province ? particularly its mangrove forests and seagrass meadows. According to the statistical records from the provincial Forest Protection Department (FPD), Quang Ninh had 40,000 hectares mangrove forests in 1983, 24,000 ha in 1997 and 21,737 ha in 2006, and 19,372 ha in 2017. The Province experienced a significant loss of mangroves between 1999 and in 2008 notably in Ha Long (927.5 ha) and Mong Cai (1,144.4 ha). The average annual reduction of mangroves was 3.13 ? 4.98% (127.2 ? 132.5 ha), which is much higher than that of the whole of Viet Nam stated at 0.1% for the period 2000 ? 2005). More recent inventories using Focal Group Discussions led by CIFOR indicated that most considered the area of mangroves in the province to have yet availability of fish and invertebrates to have decreased since 2014. This is line with national findings where over the past 20 years, with support of international donors, the Government of Viet Nam has invested significant resources to restore and develop mangroves. This has led mangrove area to increase, on a national scale, from 155,290 ha to 164,701 ha between 2000 and 2017 (unspecific source by MARD 2018). Yet, in contradiction with this, thousands of hectares of mangrove forests in Yen My, Dong Rui and Cai Dam in Quang Ninh Province are still scheduled for aquaculture development. The project landscape in Quang Ninh is reflected in Figure 1, the map of Quang Ninh Province. Indicating the challenges faced by the Province towards sustainable development, Decision No. 2754/QD-UBND has been issued on October 25th, 2012 approving the ?Quang Ninh Province Action Plan on Biodiversity until 2020?, however, the Decision has not been implemented due to the lack of resources, but also low level of experience and practical experience in incorporating NC value in provincial planning, monitoring and reporting.

Threats, root causes and barrier analysis

When Viet Nam transformed from a poor to a lower middle-income country, more than 40 million people were lifted out poverty over the past two decades. Whilst Viet Nam's average population density in the coastal zone of 448 persons/km² is 1.6 times higher than the nationwide population density, coastal areas are also characterized by limited land resources combined with fast economic growth, and these two factors has had direct impact on the conversion as well as degradation of natural capital resources in Viet Nam.

Agriculture has driven growth and remains an important economic sector, accounting for 43% of total employment and contributing almost 20% of GDP. A very significant part of agriculture production in Viet Nam ? including inland fisheries and coastal aquaculture is situated on its extensive coastal lowlands, which is a mosaic landscape of former river floodplains and estuaries, with those converted to especially irrigated rice (e.g. lower Mekong) and brackish water shrimp farms. Viet Nam is now the world's second largest exporter of rice. This rapid transformation has contributed to environmental degradation ? including loss of key natural capital resources including its biodiversity, increased pollution, growing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and reduced soil fertility. Population- and economic growth in Viet Nam ? including in the coastal zone, is expected to continue, thus increasing the demand for food, energy, and water, and could further hasten the depletion of natural capital. This loss of natural capital has implications for Viet Nam's continued sustainable development and resilience to climate change.

While aiming to create new economic opportunities, this level of economic growth also carries environmental and social costs that have yet to be fully understood, and its potential impact on natural capital in the country has yet to be accounted for.

Threats

In more detail, some of related **threats** to biodiversity and natural capital resources and (ecosystem) services in the coastal zone in Viet Nam, as well as specifically for Quang Ninh Province, include:

a. *Marine and coastal pollution:* In some locations in Viet Nam's coastal and nearshore zone, environmental pollution is severe. Wastes from domestic, agricultural, mining and industrial sources, along with sediment runoff are the major sources of pollutants in both freshwater and coastal ecosystems. For instance, the mining industry in Quang Ninh Province causes serious problems to the coastal environment through an estimated 25-30 million m³/year in untreated effluent flowing directly into rivers and the other public water bodies, and eventually reaching Ha Long Bay. Coal mining in Quang Ninh Province accounts for over 90% of total production in Viet Nam[13]¹³. Effluents from coal mines has a high acidity (pH 3.1 to 6.5) and can negatively affect aquatic ecosystems through excessive sedimentation in e.g. seagrass meadows[14]¹⁴, as well as deterioration of water quality through eutrophication and other chemical pollutants, which can lead to blue algae blooms or red tides,

smoldering reef systems[15]¹⁵ with algae growth as well as affecting fish populations. Additionally, coastal domestic activities generate many kinds of waste and discharge into the sea through rivers and canals. The amount of waste continuously increases, especially in coastal cities, where much economic development and consequently population is concentrated, including water pollution from marine transport and fisheries sector. In 2016, Viet Nam had more than 1,700 transport vessels, and 130,000 fishing boats, many with outdated technology lacking emission treatment systems leading to toxic emission and related water pollution with toxic gases such as SO₂, CO₂, CO, NO₂, which in addition impacting marine ecosystems and biodiversity, affects peoples' health. Additionally, discharge of marine plastics is increasingly polluting the seas in Viet Nam, damaging its marine ecological system and threatening human food safety. Microplastics pollution rates in aquatic taxa in Viet Nam have been found to be high in comparison with e.g. Bivalvia in Europe[16]¹⁶, or fish in the Mediterranean[17]¹⁷; or as compared to some wild fish sampled in the estuary of Pearl River, China[18]¹⁸. Local people in Viet Nam consume mussels and other kinds of fish and shellfish, which are often eaten without first removing the digestive organs before cooking, with the associated health risks caused by microplastics and other chemical pollutants attached to the surface of ingested microplastics.[19]¹⁹

b. Loss and degradation of coastal terrestrial ecosystems due to unsustainable economic development

Almost half of Viet Nam's provinces are located by the sea, and six transboundary rivers pass through Viet Nam to the South China Sea.[20]²⁰ In these coastal provinces, marine capture fisheries and coastal aquaculture account for a significant share of income, employment and food security[21]²¹. As an example, the main drivers of mangrove loss in Viet Nam are closely related to economic development in the coastal zone and high population pressure near mangrove areas. Development impact due to the cumulative effect of various small-scale activities by a large number of domestic households such as for roundwood, fishnet stakes, fodder etc., as well as large-scale government-led development has impacted the mangrove ecosystem. Another driver of loss of forests and other coastal ecosystems such as wetlands is the increasing demand for land from fast growing sectors such as aquaculture, infrastructure and tourism. Fish, shrimp, clam, crab, and algae aquaculture is mainly targeting relatively easier and cheaper available coastal land, with its readily available brackish water resources found in mangroves. Additionally, wood products derived from mangroves yet also coastal Acacia plantations are consumed both by domestic and foreign markets. Because of the higher revenues derived from export of e.g. Acacia roundwood, environmental sustainability has become at stake due to foreign demands becoming a market priority. As a result, key coastal ecosystems like mangroves. Estuaries and other wetlands have disproportionately been lost, further exacerbated by changes in local hydrology due to drainage, the building of ponds, embankments and dikes. The aquaculture industry has been the second most important driver of mangrove deforestation in Viet Nam due to increased potential and export volumes in shrimp since early 1980s. In total over 80% of the original area of mangroves in Viet Nam have been lost over the last 50 years due to conversion to aquaculture. A more recent observation is that 62% of former

mangrove habitat in Viet Nam have subsequently been converted to urban land, possibly due to failing aquaculture production. Additionally, aquaculture operations lead to significant water and soil pollution due to use of antibiotics and other chemicals, which indirectly affect marine fauna as well as nearby mangrove ecosystems. The loss of mangrove forests has been and continues to be particularly acute, from the reported 400,000 ha existing in 1943 to only 155,000 ha remaining today.[22]22 Although the area of mangroves forests accounts for only 1.5% of the total of Viet Nam's forest area, it plays a vital role in coastal protection, coastal fisheries and climate change mitigation[23]23, as well as support millions of people with market priced goods, including wood, timber and food. In addition, mangroves provide natural habitat to hundreds of fauna and flora species whose benefits are not recorded in market prices due to lack of a standardized and nationally adopted valuation and NC accounting system.

About 1/5 of the country's population depend on fishery resources as livelihood, yet the fisheries sector is reportedly unsustainable and needing improved management. Seafood constitutes a large part of domestic consumption in Viet Nam as well as for a growing export market. The total annual catch in marine fisheries has increased almost fivefold in the past 30 years; and (annual) fishery production increased from 14.5% in 1995 to over 46% in 2018. However, the increase in demand together with unsustainable fishing and weak management of resources have led to overexploitation of aquatic products in many regions. Valuable marine species are decreasing drastically, such as lobster (*Panulirus* spp.), abalone (*Haliotes* spp.), and *Chlamys* spp, etc. Destructive fishing techniques such as use of explosives, poison and electricity are frequently used in both inland and coastal waters and considered a severe threat to more than 80% of coral reefs in Viet Nam, leading both loss of benthic and fish diversity, as well as destruction of the coral ecosystem. In Quang Ninh Province, the growing imbalance between fishing capacity and coastal fisheries resources is of great concern to the local government. As with the situation elsewhere in Viet Nam, there are clear signs that coastal fish stocks are being overexploited and fishing of economically less-valuable fish species down the food chain has becoming prevalent. Additionally, floating cage mariculture of groupers, snappers and labridae in nearshore sheltered waters of the province, raises the additional environmental concern of depleting natural fish stock used as 'cheap' feedstock. Readily available fish of lower economic value is sold to mariculture operations as feedstock (reportedly fishermen receive a higher price for selling their 'trash fish to the cage farms), Juveniles for stocking cages are from wild caught sources, which is an additional burden to the natural ecosystems. These high value fish are exported life to Hong Kong.

Additionally, in Viet Nam, the tourism sector plays an important role for economic development and environmental protection. The total contribution of tourism to GDP of Viet Nam is US \$ 32 billion in 2019[24]24. Tourism directly accounted for 8 % of Viet Nam's GDP in 2017 (with additional contributions via indirect multiplier effects) and was the country's single largest services export.[25]25 While nature tourism has emerged as one of the fastest-growing segments of the tourism industry in Viet Nam, these have produced challenges and opportunities. In terms of challenges, infrastructure developments and tourism operations in sensitive habitats could have severe impacts on biodiversity and the very NC resources and services on which tourism depends. While there is limited information from Viet Nam, physical construction in areas of high biodiversity value, riparian areas, mangrove and other

coastal habitats can have a direct impact on biodiversity through clearance of natural vegetation leading to loss and fragmentation of habitats, disruption of feeding and breeding of key species, erosion of beach habitat and filling up of coastal lagoons and wetlands, to mention a few. However, it is reported that in Nha Trang Bay, hard coral cover in Hon Mieu islands has decreased from 27% to 3% in 2015 and has almost fully depleted coral fish communities due to impact of local tourism development.

Root Causes

Root Causes of threats to coastal and marine natural capital resources including biodiversity

Root causes leading to or exacerbating unsustainable economic development as well as pollution and loss of NC and biodiversity in the coastal zone of Vietnam include:

1. *Weak economic development planning.* Loss of biodiversity and natural capital resources in the coastal zone in Viet Nam is attributed to inadequate development planning. For instance, an already issued policy may be either inappropriate in its technical contents or lacking suitable conditions to achieve successful implementation, including those related to funding, management or monitoring responsibilities for improved protection and the sustainable management of NC.

2. *Lack of incorporating value of NC.* An underlying cause for this is that the value of coastal natural resources is not fully being considered in development planning processes. Viet Nam currently has a system of national accounts and does not have a SEEA. This raises questions on how effectively provinces and the national government will take on board ecosystem values in their planning process, and also raises questions related to the capacity in country to carry out such work. It is important to inform planning activities by generating information on the value of coastal assets and the opportunities for using coastal assets for revenue generation and increasing wealth. It would be ideal to inform the planning processes with the relevant information in a manner that is replicable ? for example using the elements of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem accounting framework (which a.o. takes a spatial approach to ecosystem assets and develops a system of accounts that present a coherent and comprehensive view of ecosystems, including ecosystem extent accounts, ecosystem condition account, ecosystem services accounts, monetary asset accounts, and thematic accounts, i.e., covering specific topics).

3. *As yet ineffective policy application on reducing impact of climate change, and effect to economic sectors and NC in the coastal zone.* Viet Nam is ranked 8th in its vulnerability to climate change in the Global Climate Risk Index 2017. Its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) states that it is ?facing losses and damages, which are beyond its resilience and capacity, even after climate change adaptation measures and mitigation of GHG emissions?. In the last 50 years, the average temperature has increased by approximately 0.5°C, sea level has risen by about 20cm, and extreme climate events have increased in frequency and intensity. National climate change projections for 2100 include: an increase in annual average temperature of 2-3°C; increased seasonality of precipitation; and sea level rise of 78-100cm, the latter aspect of great risk to the sustainability of coastal settlements, production systems as well as natural capital resources such as mangroves, estuaries, coastal wetlands, including those included in marine and

other protected areas. The NDC lists the most climate change vulnerable sectors as agriculture, natural ecosystems, biodiversity, water resources, public health and infrastructure, and the most vulnerable areas as the Mekong (coastal) Delta, the Red River (coastal) Delta, and the Central Coast. With rising sea level, areas impacted by flooding will expand as well as lead to greater saltwater intrusion in rivers and groundwater, resulting in very serious social and economic costs and displacement of populations and economic infrastructure and activities. By 2100, almost 5,500 km² of arable lands may be lost, as would some 168 km² of aquaculture area and 320 km² of forest land be submerged. In coastal zones, mangrove, indigo and Melaleuca forests may be severely threatened by sea level rise. Climate change will lead to total loss of mangroves unless accommodations are made in coastal zone master plans and investments for mangrove forests to naturally migrate and/or be artificially established further inland. Climate change will adversely impact coral reefs and other marine habitats. The accompanying loss of habitat will be the cause reduction in stocks of fish, mollusks and crustaceans dependent upon these habitats[26]26. The intrusion of saltwater into freshwater estuaries and coastal lagoons will cause the replacement of freshwater species by their brackish and saline water counterparts. Impacts on the aquaculture subsector could include damage and loss of ponds in exposed coastal areas due to increased coastal erosion and rising sea level, loss of suitable land area for aquaculture caused by coastal inundation, and rising feedstock costs if climate change adversely affects coastal marine fisheries[27]27. Additionally, coastal agriculture yields in Viet Nam could decline because of extreme temperatures, the increasingly saline water intrusion into the extensive coastal lowlands used for crop production due to rising sea levels, increased drought, and the effects of wind and soil erosion[28]28. The Red River Delta and Quang Ninh (Province) climate zone is among the most vulnerable to climate change in Viet Nam. The delta of the Red River, of which a small part situated in Quang Ninh Province, is particularly vulnerable due to sea level rise. This is compounded by subsidence from groundwater extraction and loss of sediment supply as rivers become more affected by dams. Saline intrusion will significantly affect agricultural production, especially rice, but also natural capital resources such as wetlands, riverine habitats, coastal forests and others. The Viet Nam Institute of Water Resources Planning estimates that water intrusion with 4% salinity will occur 40 km inland in the Red River Delta and affect 300,000 ha of high-yielding rice paddy fields.

Long-term solution and barriers

Barrier Analysis

Key barriers preventing sustainable use and protection of biodiversity and NC, as well as adoption of sustainable blue economic growth

In recent years, many efforts have been devoted in Viet Nam for the protection of marine and coastal ecosystems and biodiversity conservation, including e.g., the (ongoing) establishment of new coastal and

marine protected areas, mangrove restoration, review of coastal fisheries sustainability, as well as adoption of blue economic growth path through new national strategies. Given fast economic growth in Viet Nam, a strong planning basis with up-to-date data and analysis, including on environmental stock and flows is a prerequisite.

However, the effect of conservation of NC and both biodiversity, as adoption a blue economic growth path has been hampered by the above mentioned root causes related to the lack of appropriate mechanisms, policy and institutions that enable capturing and analyzing of NC values through well-functioning NCA and mainstreaming the information provided by NCA in government and corporate decision-making processes.

Based on the general baseline situation analysis above, the project is designed to address the following specific barriers.

1. Low level of understanding and capacity to develop and operationalize new NCAs on coastal and marine NC resources with government

The fast pace of economic growth in Viet Nam ? which is largely targeting the lowlands in the coastal and marine zone, has not only directly led to conversion and loss of natural capital but also its degradation due to pollution as well as the effects on key ecological processes and services. Despite the existence of a national policy framework for integrating NC into government policy and programs as well as the recently promulgated national and sectoral sustainability strategies, including green and blue economic growth, progress on these remains very modest, due to the low of capacity to develop and use new NCAs specifically regarding coastal and marine NC resources. Currently, there is little robust information on the links between the environment and the economy in Viet Nam and the Government seeks to develop NCAs to provide an integrated and consistent measurement of environmental stocks and flows that clearly demonstrate the links between the environment and the economy and thereby contributes to the long-term sustainable development of the country.

Although priority accounts for development in Viet Nam were identified through the National Plan for Advancing Environmental-Economic Accounting in Viet Nam (NP-AEEA, 2015), including those on Ecosystem Extent (Land Cover), Water Assets, Biodiversity, Carbon Stock and Ecosystem Services Supply, especially with respect to carbon sequestration, water provision and regulation, fish provision and erosion control; these have not been taken further towards formal establishment and application ? including by GSO, due to lack of resources, restricted capacity as well as lack of a fully established national NCA system (including formal link to SNA- Barrier 2 below; as well as the need for a spatial data platform - Barrier 4 below) that can support the establishment of those accounts. Furthermore, currently, there is no NCA available on coastal and marine ecosystems based on SEEA and SEEA-EA framework and therefore spatial and economic planning and influencing investment decisions do hardly refer to nor integrate NC values, which makes the national agenda on Ocean/Blue Economic growth challenging, especially at provincial level. Lack of understanding the advantages of NCA among line agencies in Viet Nam dealing with e.g., economic development, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, public water services relating to NCA is another major barrier. Their staff lack basic understanding of what environmental-economic accounting is and why it is important. In addition, technical and practical know-how in development of natural capital accounts in the technical units remains limited. A further challenge to government agencies involved is the limited availability of policy-relevant information on the status

of NC, that can inform policy and planning processes through scenario analyses ? based on international recognised and standardised methodology (ref. to the SEEA framework).

2. Institutional barriers

The current lack of a nationally agreed framework including clarity on institutional mandates, as well as methodological constraints for systematic capturing, analysing, and monitoring of the status of NC through NCA is a, institutional barrier to advancing the national policy framework described above, and to ensure that the information generated through NCA feeds into routine government institutional processes such as policymaking, budgeting, and regular monitoring and reporting. The General Statistics Office (GSO) under the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) is responsible for statistical data collection and analysis and is a key institution for undertaking NCA. However, the present mandate, capacity, and operations of GSO are insufficient to enable a leading role with regards environmental-economic accounting and its associated new information requirements - especially for the coastal and marine zone in Viet Nam. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that environmental/ecosystems NCA (based on e.g., the SEE-EA framework) have not formally been linked to the System of National Accounts (SNA) and as such its exclusion from formal government monitoring and reporting systems. There is also lack of agreement both on the methods, institutional collaboration, mandates, and responsibilities, as well as formats to be adopted for a SEEA-based system of NCA, inclusive of at least GSO, VASI, ISPONRE and other relevant agencies. As a requirement, any SEEA-based NCA needs yet to be linked to the System of National Accounts run by GSO, which currently is not the case.

Therefore, adoption of agreed SEEA-based data standards, spatial data system, as well as an clarified institutional structure regarding NCA mandates and roles are required at national level to ensure that the NCA system is developed and fully operationalized that enable dependence/impacts from key economic sectors on near-shore and coastal natural resources/environment to be fully understood, monitored and incorporated in sector policies, planning and operations to support the transformation towards the sustainable blue economy.

3. Lack of practical experience by provincial governments and corporate sectors in integrating results of NCA in provincial development planning and sector business operations and investment plans

Mainstreaming of biodiversity and natural capital is sophisticated and its practical applications is generally poorly understood - preventing practitioners to try and apply integrating NC values, scenario analysis and monitoring in their work. Provinces in particular struggle with conducting true integrated planning which acts upon principles of sustainable development including blue economic growth in the coastal and marine zones, informed by NCA. There has also not been much progress by government and private sector with integrating the already piloted SEEA-Central Framework accounts (forestry, land, water, waste/pollution, fisheries, and minerals and energy) into ongoing production indicators, and developing macro-economic indicators/aggregates for Green GDP as well as Ecological Footprint reporting. Without these, it has been difficult to ensure that the information generated through NCA is integrated and reflected in planning, monitoring, and reporting e.g., with regards progress in Vietnam on SDGs, as well as better targeting the protection of NC in the coastal and marine zone of Viet Nam.

However, experience among provincial government planners/resource managers and the private sector in Viet Nam to apply the results of NC accounting is limited, first of all due the capacity and institutional barriers described above, and secondly due to lack of guidance and practical examples applied to their field of work (e.g. economic development planning, spatial planning, business sustainability initiatives, SDG monitoring and reporting etc). There is limited capacity among practitioners to utilize NCA, and apply a wide range of decision support tools such as modelling programmes to map the quantity and values of ecosystem services, as well as conduct scenario analysis to assist spatial and economic planning processes such as e.g. towards the improved design and management of coastal and marine protected areas, landscape connectivity and ecosystem services etc.

This underscores the importance of facilitating provincial planners, academic institutions, as well as corporate staff in gaining practical experience - including through KM, in applying NCA results to their field of work. In general, most provincial agencies dealing with e.g., economic development planning and management in sector dependent on or impacting coastal NC such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, public water services, and their staff lack basic understanding of what environmental-economic accounting is and how it can benefit their work through applications. In addition, as stated in Barrier, 1 above, the technical and practical know-how in development of natural capital accounts in the technical units remains limited.

So far, the extent to which the private sector entities have incorporated NC considerations into their business models and operations have been driven mainly by their reporting and CSR obligations and to a lesser extent by economic considerations and longer-term sustainability issues. Limited focus has been placed so far on incorporating the values of NC in core operations or their business models. Transforming the operations of these corporate stakeholders to minimize potential negative impacts of their operations on NC will require a broader and more comprehensive approach to fully integrate the information provided through the NCA into their business models or sustainable business plans. This implies a better integration of economic valuation of impacts of trends of natural capital on costs, profitability and ultimately sustainability of inputs and business models.

With regards Quang Ninh Province, it is due soon to conduct its new socio-economic development plan for the period 2026 ? 2030, which is both an opportunity to pay more attention to the value and critical role of NC to sustainable development and human welfare, as well as a challenge to comply with the Planning Law of 2019 by integrating a blue economic development growth path. However, currently there are no NCAs in the province with specific data sets on extent, condition, ecosystem services, asset, and thematic accounts of marine and coastal resources (Barrier 1), etc. that can enable the incorporation of NC values in the Socio-Economic planning, as well as highlighting sector dependencies and trends of impact on NC in areas included for provincial spatial planning on the establishment and zoning of existing and new coastal and near-shore protected areas in the Province.

4. Weak data infrastructure and knowledge management act as disincentives towards adoption, budgeting and replication of NCA in Viet Nam

Challenges related to data gaps, access and sharing, lack of documentation and data quality assessment frameworks, hamper the application of NCA at provincial level, as well as these needs national agreement, budget resources to assure sustainability and replication of NCA in Viet Nam. The current statistical data/infrastructure system is not compliant with this need, and the data contained - on e.g., resources? extend does not enable true environmental-economic accounting for ecosystems and their

services. The accounting framework we have today in Viet Nam focuses only on indicators for socio-economic development a situation which is further exacerbated by lacking a data framework for conducting NCA based on the SEEA or SEEA-EA frameworks. The current data framework follows the guidance on statistical systems provided as part of the SNA. However, there is no guidance on how a spatial data framework - as preferred for NCA, should be established and operated. It thus leads to the lack of information on the status of NC in the government's regular monitoring and reporting processes in a systematic manner.

Knowledge management in the field of NC as well as NCA is weak in Viet Nam and leads to missed opportunities to share and disseminate knowledge on NCA and associated tools and methodologies among policymakers and practitioners in both public and private sectors, as well as the rare sharing of information with regards good workable applications of NCA suitable in the context of Viet Nam. This is because there is no community of practice to facilitate KM as well as that can connect and facilitate interactions between local and national institutions to raise awareness and understanding on the benefits of applying NCA in development planning processes, facilitate networking on the technical aspects of NCA among policymakers and practitioners, and through which best practices can also be shared. As a result, NC-valuation related programs have received only modest support and government resources to ensure long-term sustainability and scaling up in the country, as demonstrated by the many NCA-related initiatives implemented in the past under which the efforts did not continue once the projects ended. As a result, there is lack of a clear national incentive mechanism and dedicated budget allocated within the government that enables GSO and key partners to take the lead in scaling up the NCA in Viet Nam in the long-term.

1b. Project Map and Geo-Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.

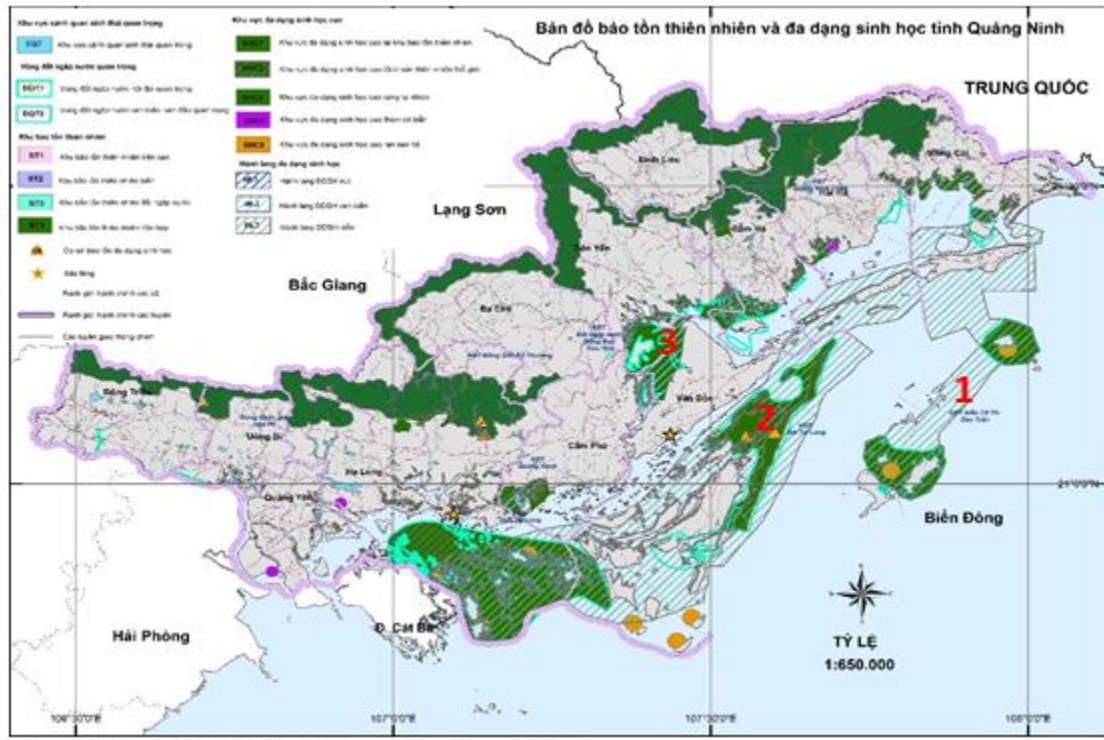


Figure 1 Project landscape in Quang Ninh Province with location of focal areas of Co To-Dao Tran (1), Dong Rui ? Tien Yen (2) and Bai Tu Long (3) Source: Quang Ninh PPC (2022), Identification Report on Master Planning for Quang Ninh Province in the period of 2021 - 2030 and vision toward 2050

Name	Area	Status
Co To-Dao Tran	13,230ha, 5,184ha buffer zone	MPA
Bai Tu Long	15,783ha	NP
Dong Rui-Tien Yen	4,375ha and 4,406ha	Wetland conservation area
Total	42,978ha	

Table 1 Conservation areas within the project landscape

In consultation with the provincial authorities of Quang Ninh it has been suggested to focus within the Province on a number of coastal and marine areas with important landscape and biodiversity value and offering a range of various natural capital conditions and economic settings. These areas include the Marine Protected Area (MPA) Co To-Dao Tran, offering a constellation of islands and shallow ocean waters, the National Park of Bai Tu Long, with a beautiful karst morphology landscape, forested islands and near-shore shallow waters, and Dong Rui ? Tien Yen wetland conservation area, an estuary with mangrove forest complexes in the fringe zone between a small river delta and a tidal landscape. The total area for these protected areas is 42,978, slightly deviating from the 51,658ha as reflected in the PIF, and reducing the targeted landscape area from 142,696ha to 134,016ha.

2) the baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects;

Baseline analysis and gaps

Vietnam has developed a significant and complex body of environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, PAs management and planning policies and legislation over the past two decades. This includes various strategies, action plans, laws and numerous associated decrees, decisions, circulars and regulations, although few directly relate to NCA.

Viet Nam has not adopted the terminology of a Blue Economy in any official Government documents. However, the Resolution No. 36-NQ/TW on Sustainable Development of Marine Economy with a vision to 2045 was adopted by the Central Party (October 2018) in order to enhance the sustainable socio-economic development and environmental protection in marine and coastal areas and islands, see section 2.2.

Viet Nam has a baseline of NCA and Blue Economy programs and projects closely associated with the objectives of the GEF project, and to which the project will be able to provide incremental support to improve, apply, replicate and better sustain these initiatives at provincial and national level. Yet in the business-as-usual scenario, the outcomes of these baseline initiatives would be less positively contributing to the national policy and programming related to the protection of NC, biodiversity and its ecosystem services as well as establishing and applying NCA, towards adoption of a blue economic growth path, as summarized below.

NC and BD: Viet Nam is progressing on its path of economic growth at higher-than-average global figures, both in e.g. aquaculture, agriculture such as rice, tourism, trade, harbor and marine transport sectors, but also urban development due to population growth and industrial development, including in its coastal provinces. The 28 coastal provinces and cities of Viet Nam are targeted to contribute 65 - 70% of the national GDP by 2030 as outlined in its two Blue (Ocean) Economy Strategies (see below). Against this strategic background as well as natural capital resources being key to many of the above stated sectors and already accounting for more than 50% of GDP, there is a significant risk that in the BAU scenario the trends seen over the last many years will continue and result in further loss and degradation of coastal and near-shore natural capital resources, their service as well as their biodiversity.

In the business-as-usual scenario for Quang Ninh Province, key natural capital and biodiversity ? including those included in the protected areas, will continue to be impacted due to conversion to other land use, impacted by pollution, fire, drainage, excessive harvesting of products, as well as becoming disconnected and losing minimum ecological flows to keep these ecosystems healthy and functional. As an example, whilst the latest figures show that the mangrove area in the province has slightly recovered and reportedly increased in area, it actually lost over 97.5% from its original area of 40,000 ha in 1983, as well as reportedly experienced a drop in available fish and shellfish resources important to coastal fisher households (see above CIFOR assessment). Main factors of loss are reportedly conversion due to urban development as well as to aquaculture (mainly brackish water shrimp farming). Also, without specific provincial programs, investments and monitoring to attain enhanced levels of environmental sustainability, the growing imbalance between fishing capacity and fish- and other targeted stock is expected to lead to further degradation of the coastal and marine environment (mudflats, estuaries, mangroves, seagrass meadows, shallow-water reefs, demersal ecosystems etc.) because fisherman are forced to use even less-sustainable fishing gear and catch volumes. Additionally, the growing mariculture sector in the province has direct impact on natural fish stock and its off-and near-shore habitats due to unsustainable fishing for cheap footstock. Urban and industrial development as well as intensive forms of agriculture, will continue generating solid and dissolved pollutants such as microplastics, chemical fertilizer and pesticides and other forms of environmental pollution, with a direct impact on the functioning and resilience of coastal and near-shore ecosystems where much of the pollutants accumulate both physically through downstream water flows as well as biologically through bio-accumulation by benthic fauna in e.g. mudflats, seagrass meadows, and estuaries.

In the BAU scenario, the above trends are not expected to improve much and various coastal and near-shore NC resources will further decrease in area, ecological health as well as their resilience to the effects of climate change, impacts of unsustainable tourism and chemical pollution load brought in from inland watersheds; except if the government builds effective alliances with provincial governments, financial

institutions and corporate sector to invest both human, financial and programmatic resources towards the improved protection and restoration of natural capital resources in the coastal and near-shore zone, as well as improve both the spatial as well as functional alignment of economic development with the ecological functions and services provided by these resources of natural capital.

NCA and its applications: Various donor-funded initiatives have assisted Viet Nam to develop NCA, build capacity and pilot modest applications. These include e.g. the ADB study on 'Investing in Natural Capital for a Sustainable Future in the Greater Mekong Subregion?', the World Bank support in development of Draft Natural Capital Roadmap up to 2020; as well as the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) support for development of the 'National Plan for Advancing Environmental-Economic Accounting (NP-AEEA) In Viet Nam?'. These initiatives have identified the need for (i) creating enabling policy and broad-based partnerships for furthering the development of NCAs; (ii) Raising awareness on the significant role played by NC, and hence changing the way in which policy makers, organizations, and individuals perceive and account for natural capital; (iii) Developing and deploying an analytical framework and processes to integrate the value of NC in development decisions and (iv) Mobilizing public and private finance for the implementation of programs and activities aimed at conserving and growing NC. However most of these have been focusing on partial aspects of NCA (i.e. focus solely on forests, or calculation of extend/stock accounts only), were modest in scope or short-lived; as well as not yet adopting the full SEEA-EA framework through a truly national partnership of data providers and users. As a result, in the baseline scenario, whilst data for NCA continues coming from both international and national sources, there is lack of up-to-date and complete national sets of data to enable sensible analysis and conclusions. Also, NCA will not have the needed level of central government support and sustainability, given it has yet to be integrated into the System of National Accounts since there is no standard for harmonizing the two systems. In the baseline situation, the pilot initiatives have hardly been replicated or upscaled beyond the original project area or data sets and have not led to a national standardized and formally adopted NCA framework and data platform. Whilst this is not unique to Viet Nam, in the baseline the biggest weakness is the lack of broad partnership of the many institutions with a mandate related to coastal and marine planning, mapping, investments, or environment monitoring - including at provincial level, the lack of national standardized spatial data framework ? especially in support of provinces to develop and apply NCA. Also the unfamiliarity or lack of experience towards the application of NCA in routine government processes is affecting adoption of NCA. As a result, in the BAU scenario, great inefficiencies exist as well as the results of data analysis related to NC are hardly being applied at provincial level towards improved integrated planning (e.g. through ICZM) for better protection and the restoration of NC resources, including related to enhancing the management effectiveness of coastal marine protected areas.

Recent global and regional programs and activities involving Viet Nam all looked to the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting framework (SEEA) for providing the underlying statistical measurement framework to ensure consistency among economic and environmental statistics; yet did not use the expanded and more recent SEE-EA framework. For instance, in the baseline, the former WB-led WAVES project (Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystems Service)in Viet Nam conducted valuation studies associated with aquaculture and capture fisheries production, carbon sequestration, and coastal protection in Quang Ninh Province, and which were largely based on assessing the 'stock' of the natural capital resources (applying SEEA rather than SEEA-EA framework including

NC services) yet which remain very useful for the UNEP/GEF project. Additionally, to ensure the breadth of coverage of environmental-economic measurements, the SEEA is being adapted by the FAO to better apply to agriculture, forestry and fisheries (SEEA-AFF), as well as by ESCAP under the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP).

The latter NCA baseline project led by GOAP called *Advancing Ocean Accounting* (2021-2022) has as overall objective to build a global community of practice for ocean accounting through technical and methodological advancement as well as national capacity strengthening support in the implementation of ocean accounts. The focus of the GOAP support to ISPONRE (and GSO) is to respond to the need for integrated statistics in the form of ocean accounts to support integrated policies, including but not limited to the national sustainable blue economy policies in Viet Nam. Pilot implementation in Quang Ninh Province (2019-2020) by ISPONRE with support by UN-ESCAP will be used by the UNEP/GEF project to develop the standard methodology, build upon the data set already established, as well as to mobilize experts' input from GOAP, as well as learn experiences from the ongoing program in other participating countries such as Indonesia, Fiji, South Africa, Kenya and Mozambique. The pilot study focused on: (i) estimating and allocating land-based pollution to drainage basins; (ii) ecosystem mapping and (iii) estimating impacts of tourism on ecosystems. This pilot work developed maps of critical coastal ecosystems as well as estimates of tourism discharge that can be further elaborated in GEF project activities[29]²⁹. However, in the BAU, the provincial authorities would lack specific NCA technical capacity and not be able to apply the available data towards development of SEEA-based NCA, and unable to apply the results to their routine government processes such as spatial planning, social-economic development planning, or the advancement of the various PA and MPAs in the province. Based on the *Advancing Ocean Accounting* baseline project, in the BAU scenario, whilst the country should be able to benefit from the SEEA ? and specifically towards better protecting and managing NC and Biodiversity resources through application of the ?expanded? SEEA ?Ecosystem Accounting framework, this will not lead to the necessary national and formal adoption of SEEA-EA-based accounts, these will not be linked to the System of National Accounts run by GSO, as well as unlikely lead to any direct application. Also, in the BAU scenario, tracking of the progress on SDGs is problematic particularly in relation to fast growing ocean industries such as targeted under the two Blue Economy strategies.

GSO is the mandated agency for collating, interpreting, and reporting national statistics through the baseline program *National Statistical Indicator System (NSIS)* issued in conjunction with the 2015 Law on Statistics. The NSIS assigns and coordinates between ministries and agencies in collecting and reporting statistics including environmental statistics related to e.g. the contribution of marine dependent sectors to GDP (i.e. fishery, mining, tourism); forest stock and trends in forests, area of degradation of natural forests, area of (new) plantation, output of wood and other forestry products; area of protected areas, area and trends in land degradation; stock of water resources and pollution; expenditures on environment protection; environment sustainability index; as well as greenhouse gas (GHG) emission per capita. Ministries and other ?data? agencies are expected to report on the criteria stated in the NSIS with regards collecting and synthesizing data and send to GSO for evaluation, consolidation and annual or bi-annual publication. In the baseline scenario, the GSO-NSIS, will continue having gaps in data and focus with regards coastal and near-shore NC, lack spatial context, and will not be fully SEEA-compliant, which is a prerequisite for the proper development of the Viet Nam NCA framework (with or

without GEF support). However, the NSIS - led by GSO, is also the best available baseline program, partnership of data providers and users, as well as a good basis to provide GEF incremental support towards strengthening the data and statistical framework towards a fully-fledged and more sustainable NCA program.

In terms of SDG reporting, ISPONRE is implementing a small national baseline project on *Assessing the implementation of environment and sustainable development indicators by 2030*, including the annual assessment of the implementation of goals and indicators set in the Action Plan for the implementation of the national sustainable development by 2030 in the natural resources and environment sector. The budget for this Project is around \$18,000/year. Whilst this involves assessment of NC data set, including for the coastal and near-shore zone, it does not follow the SEEA-framework with regards specific parameters used nor benefits from a national standardized NCA system.

Without the UNEP/GEF project, several closely related baseline initiatives towards NC/BD protection in Quang Ninh Province, which are ongoing or recently completed, may not fully benefit from the GEF incremental support to make attainment of their objectives more achievable, more sustainable or better representing the provincial objectives towards the protection of NC and biodiversity. This would be achieved through developing and applying NC accounting specifically for the targeted land-/seascapes in Quang Ninh province as well as the buffer zones and corridors of the protected areas in the project area, involving at least 19,390 hectares of terrestrial Protected Areas landscapes, as well as 23,588 ha of MPAs. Much of these PA support programs are based on the recently completed Project on Biodiversity Conservation Planning in Quang Ninh Province, including formal Decision No. 199/QD-UBND of Quang Ninh Province People's Committee on approving the Biodiversity Conservation Plan in Quang Ninh Province (running until 2020) and its Vision Towards 2030. The Plan aims at conserving critical natural ecosystems, conserving endangered and precious species and genetical resources, as well as the recovery of ecosystems in line with other planning processes such as guided by the existing 10-year Economic Development Master Plan (2021-2030) as well as the soon to be developed 5-year Provincial Socio-economic Development plan 2026-2030.

Blue Economy: Contributing to SDG14 'Life Below Water' is the most relevant goal for the Blue Economy. This is being pursued through the stated objectives under the two Blue Economy resolutions as well as the broader Vietnamese environmental response to deliver on Targets (14.1 Pollution reduction; 14.2 protecting NC and BD; 14.3 responses to CC and sea-level rise; 14.4 sustainable fisheries management, and 14.5 expanding on the MPA to at least 6% and restoring mangroves to the year 2000 area). The Blue Economy resolutions are targeting growth in marine industries with 10% contribution to national GDP, increase aquaculture with 70% and marine fisheries catch with 30%, double tourism revenues, as well as significantly increase investments and almost double volumes in seaport development and trade volumes by 2030^[30]; yet do not specify actions or governance mechanisms to enable attainment of SDG14, including the mainstreaming of NC values in decision making, budgeting and monitoring which are key to planning for and measuring the SDGs. Also, the Blue Economy resolutions and other relevant instruments do not actively consider the role that aquatic ecosystems and marine foods (32% of the VN coastal/ocean economy) play in food security as stated in SDG 2 'Zero Hunger'. Additionally, Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) which has been widely used in Viet Nam as a planning tool and basis towards operational programs in 24 of its 28 coastal provinces,

involves many elements of coordination across a range of sectors that might underpin effective blue economy planning and development, but is not referred to at all within the two Blue Economy resolutions. Additionally both would benefit well from standardized NC inventories, valuation and planning. Past projects in the Mekong Region ? including in Viet Nam, provide for an historic yet essential baseline towards a better alignment and methodological approach of the GEF project related to green growth/blue economy, e.g. *Unleashing Green Growth in the Mekong Delta* (started 2013 and completed now) supported by the Global Green Growth Institute focusing on the role of water for socio-economic development and green growth; *Green Economy in the Greater Mekong* (Wild Wildlife Fund - WWF), looking at ecosystems values in the Mekong Region) and future change of ecosystem services under different scenarios.

The GEF project will build upon ongoing baseline initiatives related to blue growth, including the ongoing (2016-2022) USD 310 million WB project *Mekong Delta Integrated Climate Resilience and Sustainable Livelihoods Project* (with a GEF MSP grant support) which targets better climate-smart planning and improved climate resilience of land and water management practices. Activities under the first component of interest to the GEF project include: (i) monitoring systems to enhance Mekong delta knowledge base; and (ii) infrastructure and information systems for enhanced decisions. The Project which is jointly implemented with Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Planning and Investment and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment will benefit both male and female farmers (especially on rice production) in the upper delta provinces and aquaculture farm and fisher-folk households along the coastal provinces in the Mekong region, the latter of specific baseline interest to the proposed GEF project.

Another key baseline program concerns the *WB ProBlue Trust Fund* launched in 2018 and its related investment programs in Viet Nam. ProBlue current contributions in the region amount to over \$151 million (ProBlue 2021 annual report). ProBlue is assisting Viet Nam with prioritizing and mobilizing new investments for a blue economy - defined as the sustainable and integrated development of oceanic sectors in healthy oceans. Part of ProBlue, the WB has been supporting the Viet Nam Administration of Seas and Islands under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, with various past and ongoing initiatives, including:

? Support Plastic Policies and Investments to Reduce Ocean Plastics in Viet Nam (\$700,000), as part of the National Action Plan on Marine Plastic Debris Management;

? WACA Sustainable Ports Partnership (\$450,000);

? Additional Financing: Support Plastic Policies and Investment to Reduce Marine Plastics in Viet Nam (\$50,000);

? Additional Financing Fisheries Status Assessment Toolkit (\$20,000);

? Informing the development of Viet Nam's blue economy strategy (\$200,000) which reportedly will receive follow up funding support by the WB.

? Supporting Development of Sustainable Fisheries in Viet Nam: Informing the policy framework and investments (\$1.1 million).

With the support by ProBlue program, VASI is developing the proposal for national blue economy partnership. The partnership is to strengthen national to local coordination and collaboration among partners involved in blue economy development in Viet Nam and also to contribute to enhanced information sharing and communication between the Government agencies and development partners,

business communities, industries, academies, sectors, coastal provinces and NGOs. Establishment of partnership would be an opportunity for the GEF supported project in the later phase.

Whilst the WB and VASI are in advanced discussion towards ProBlue support to marine spatial planning in Viet Nam (MSP), VASI is now conducting the USD 9 million baseline program on *National Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and development of Master Plan on Sustainable exploitation and Use of Coastal Resources in the Period of 2021-2030, with Vision to 2045*. The key tasks are (i) to assess and analyze coastal and marine natural assets, their condition, the context of drivers and impacts, and the current state of utilization of the marine space in Viet Nam's coastal areas, islands, archipelagos, seas and skies; (ii) to forecast trends of natural resources and environment fluctuations; climate change impacts; potential for utilization of marine natural resources and the requirement for integrating the environmental protection in the planning of government, and (iii) to conduct spatial zoning of the area included under Vietnamese sovereignty right and jurisdiction. According to schedule the final draft Master Plan was submitted to the Government for review and approval in 2022; and the WB ProBlue MSP support in its last phase of implementation takes this further with capacity building and implementation modalities. Although the ProBlue support will end before the start of the project, the capacity buildt and lessons learnt will be supporting the piloting work in Quang Ninh Province.

In Viet Nam, around 2,000 tonnes of plastic waste leaks from the country into the Ocean every day^[31]³¹. It is estimated that there will be more plastic than fish in the Ocean by 2050. Against this background, UNDP^[32]³² (May 2022) produced the report *Blue Economy Scenarios for Viet Nam* in partnership with the Viet Nam Administration of Seas and Islands (VASI) of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. The intention of the scenarios is to support Viet Nam to accelerate the development of its Blue Economy and realize the objectives of Resolution 36/NQ-TW on sustainable development of the marine economy and protection of the Ocean of Viet Nam to 2030, with a vision to 2045. The report covers the six key ocean economic sectors of fishery, renewable energy, oil and gas, tourism, transportation, environment and ecosystem. Firstly, for each economic sector, a baseline scenario for up to 2030 was developed that reflects existing and planned policy and strategies set by the governmental administrations of Viet Nam within each sector to 2030. Secondly, a blue scenario was developed with the aim to optimize socio-economic and environmental benefits. The report shows that blue scenarios lead to benefits over and above the baseline scenarios in terms of GDP for all marine sectors and also an increase in GNI per capita beyond the baseline scenarios.

UNEP has been supporting ISPONRE in the framework of the UNEP Transitional Framework to a Blue Economy with a report on a Pilot Rapid Readiness Assessment (RRA) in Vietnam (UNEP, 2022). The primary objective of the RRA is to support Vietnam in understanding: 'what desired national impacts will justify transitioning to an SBE?' and 'what will need to be readied in order to implement the TF approach?'. Prior to undertaking the RRA, the Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS) at the University of Wollongong, Australia, prepared a report for the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on governance frameworks to support an SBE in Vietnam. The ANCORS report (ANCORS, 2021) formed the baseline information for the RRA.

In contribution to the aspect of pollution control and protection of the coastal and marine environment under a blue or SD development strategy, Viet Nam is implementing the *Mitigating Marine Plastic Debris in Viet Nam* Project with a budget of Euro 9.8 million for the period 2019 ? 2023, supported by WWF-Germany (Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety,

Germany). The project is implemented in seven cities (A Luoi, Da Nang, Dong Hoi, Ha Tinh, Long An, Rach Gia, Tuy Hoa) and 3 marine protected areas in Viet Nam (Con Dao, Cu Lao Cham and Phu Quoc). The project developments policy advocacy, communication programs as well as capacity building in terms of minimizing the source as well as impact of plastic waste on marine ecosystems; conserving marine biodiversity, particularly in marine protected areas that are seriously impacted by marine plastic pollution; improving community and society's understanding on the causal relationship between plastic waste disposal and adverse effects on the marine environment and human health; and enhancing authorities' plastics management capacity. The program could benefit from better valuation of both the costs of marine pollution to NC, as well as the cost/benefit of alternative development scenarios ? e.g. as part of the evolving 5 years socio-economic development plan in Quang Ninh Province.

Another related baseline program to the GEF project is the regional technical assistance project *Promoting Action on Plastic Pollution from Source to Sea in Asia and the Pacific* (2019 ? 2023) supported by Asian Development Bank and the Global Environment Facility with total budget of \$1,963,650. The project is being implemented in 6 countries (Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, People's Republic of China, Thailand and Viet Nam) and help deliver their commitments to reduce marine plastic pollution from source to sea. It is in the process of preparing (i) national action plans; (ii) guide policy and regulations to encourage a circular economy; and (iii) facilitate investments in integrated solid waste management and the adoption of circular economy (from additional outside sources). The information generated by this project, that has ended when the NCA project will start, will still contain valuable lessons to incorporate in the implementation phase.

A key baseline project in the field of sustainable or blue economy planning in Quang Ninh Province is the completed \$ 3 million, *Socio-economic Development (Master) Planning for the period 2021-2030? with a Vision to 2050; which is soon to be followed by the more detailed and more sector specific Provincial Socio-economic Development Planning for the period 2026-2030*. This is implemented by the provincial office of Ministry of Planning and Investment ? MPI (of which GSO is part). The purpose is to align the planning of Quang Ninh Provincial development with various national strategies and principles of SD, including e.g. the National Socio-economic Development Strategy for 2021-2030; the Sustainable Development Strategy of Viet Nam's Marine Economy to 2030 - with a Vision to 2045; National Strategy for Green Growth and Sustainable Development; as well as various applicable sector master plans, including biodiversity conservation (Quang Ninh Province Action Plan on Biodiversity until 2020). Of interest as baseline to the GEF project are the planning elements related to: (i) Analysis of socio-economic situation of Quang Ninh Province, selection of optimal development scenario? whilst ensuring long-term sustainable development on all 3 pillars, economy - social - environment; (ii) **Setting** direction of development in key industries; plans on development of networks and spaces for technical and social infrastructure systems, environmental protection, resource efficiency in exploitation, use and protection of natural resources, biodiversity as well as response to climate change; (iii) Development of inter-district development planning schemes; (iv) Development of an portfolio and priority list of investment projects; as well as (vi) Establish an unified planning information system.

Directly related to the previous *Socio-economic Development Planning for the period 2021-2030* ISPONRE has a small project (April 2021 to 2022, budget \$120,000 coming from Quang Ninh Province) called *Solutions for improving the total factor productivity^{[33]³³ (TFP) in Quang Ninh Province}*, which includes (i) assessing TFP contribution to economic growth and factors affecting TFP in the province and (ii) to propose solutions to improve TFP in the province. The work is scheduled to directly assist Quang Ninh Province with its baseline *Socio-economic Development Planning* for the period 2021-2030

through e.g. proposing solutions to achieve its set development objectives such as mobilizing forces to promote inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development, improving people's quality of life; and transforming of Quang Ninh Province to a modern and sustainable industrialized development center as part of the Northern zone of Viet Nam.

However, in the expected BAU scenario, the application of Blue Economic growth at national yet especially provincial level in Quang Ninh, will remain challenging for local government institutions due to lack of guided linkages with key national priorities of e.g. food security, as well as the lack of standardized metrics and clearly identified tools to integrate NC in development planning and actions ? such as e.g. applying results of NCA to ICZM, with as expected direct effect on coastal and near-shore NC and BD, the sustained loss and degradation of the these resources due to the ongoing environmental trends as well as targeted growth of related economic sectors and unsustainable practices seen over the last many years. Without nationally adopted and standardized metrics and indices to guide and measure what is ?blue?, particularly in relation to environmental sustainability and social equity, the investment and development of the sectors stated in the two Blue Economy strategies as well as the above baseline program in Quang Ninh Province *Socio-economic Development Planning for the period 2021-2030* could easily compromise environmental sustainability and equity across all sectors. Also, whilst the recent expansion in the area of MPA in the province is commendable, the Blue Economy strategies, do not say nor measure anything related to the quality of management and effective protection and resilience of NC and biodiversity contained in the PA system; and as such the environmental sustainability aspect are less assured and could easily lead to further degradation of NC and biodiversity due to heavily focusing on coastal and ocean industrial development.

Table 2. Key Identified Gaps in Baseline

Type	Gap (in baseline ?status quo? scenario)
Policy framework	Although previous projects and initiatives have introduced and further developed NCA approaches in Vietnam, there is still a lack of a nationally agreed framework. A draft NCA roadmap was developed, but never formally adopted. There remains therefore a need for clarity on institutional mandates and an agreed direction for policy support to develop NCA. This is coupled with existing methodological constraints for systematic capturing, analysing, and monitoring of the status of NC through NCA. The existing NC accounts have not yet been formally linked to the the System of National Accounts (SNA) for planning, monitoring and reporting systems. No specific indicators for sustainable BE growth and guidelines on the application of NCA in monitoring sustainable BE growth have been formalized.
Legislative context	Very few laws, policies and guidelines in Viet Nam directly relate to NCA, although the NCA approach fits very well with broader national legislation as the LEP, Law on Planning, the Statistics Law and Resolution No.36-NQ/TW on Sustainable Development of Marine Economy with a vision to 2045.
General institutional issues	At present various NCA system elements exist and have been developed, but mostly project-based and lacking a consistent national methodology, a clear institutional arrangement and a related forward looking policy guiding document. GSO, as essential institution to advance and apply NCA, has presently still insufficient capacity to enable a leading role with regards to environmental-economic accounting and it associated new information requirements. Institutional structures and stakeholder capacities at all levels are not effective at integrating biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use into overall/provincial and sectoral planning and management.

Specific Technical issues	The concept of NCA is relatively new and as a consequence not well defined and broadly understood in Viet Nam. The strengthening of the national policy, legal, and institutional framework on NCA involves a complex technical and political decision-making processes. The present low level of understanding and technical capacity within government hampers the further development and operationalization of new NCAs on coastal and marine NC resources. This is further complicated by a present lack of technical guidelines for NCA application.
Data	At present, there is a weak data infrastructure towards adoption, budgeting and replication of NCA in Viet Nam. This is evidenced by the lack of General Spatial Data Framework for marine and coastal accounting (at national level), able to capture, store and process of the (geo)spatial data required for proper storage, analysis and monitoring. There is not yet a systematic scheme for data collection and compilation and how to link provincial data sets within a national data framework.
Research and development	Although several projects and initiatives have introduced and applied NCA approaches in Viet Nam, there is still a limited volume of researches and/or studies on NCA in Viet Nam. This results in a still restricted volume of scientific and technical publications, providing evidence of and advocacy for the effective application of NCA in Viet Nam.
Management practices	There is overall very limited experience with best practices in NCA in Viet Nam through implementation of specific case studies to learn lessons, share knowledge and experiences (and constraints) and document these emerging good management practices with a wider audience. The previous initiatives on NCA have had a limited impact on advancing knowledge management towards adoption, budgeting and replication of NCA in Viet Nam. The lack of practical experience by provincial governments and private sectors in integrating results of NCA in provincial development planning and sector business operations and investment plans hampers a further replication and uptake of NCA approaches.

3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project;

Project Components and Expected Results

Project Rationale

Based on the barriers described above, the project aims at achieving general objective of: ?Natural capital values and protection of coastal and marine ecosystems integrated in development planning and improved landscape management as part of the national blue economic growth policy in Viet Nam?) and Post Project Result of ?enhanced environmental sustainability of critical coastal and marine ecosystems in Viet Nam including protection of global significant biodiversity?. To achieve this Objective, the project will implement three project Components with intervention pathways as shown in the ToC in Annex 4A.

The ToC outlines the problem the project is trying to address, and the causal logic that has informed the project design to ensure that the objective is achieved. The TOC summarizes the activities through which the project will achieve its intended outcomes, and longer-term impacts and global environmental benefits. The TOC can be summarised as follows: in order to address the serious threats to biodiversity in Viet Nam arising from unsustainable development trends and practices and nurture the potential of the emerging blue economy segment, the project will mainstream NC values and protection of coastal and marine ecosystems into the development planning by creating a standardized supportive national regulatory environment of relevant guidance, methodology on NCA that will subsequently be tested at the landscape level. Marine and coastal NCA will be developed through the establishment of SEEA-EA-based NC ecosystem accounts (provincial ?satellites?) in Quang Ninh province. Provincial and local

development planning and operations will be improved by mainstreaming the results from NCA development and database to ensure the planning will take in consideration the sustainable use as well as protection of NC resources in the coastal and near-shore zone of the Quang Ninh province. Local companies and communities will be better integrated into the planning process and trained so that they benefit from biodiversity-based livelihoods/business, value biodiversity, and contribute to its conservation and monitoring. Raising awareness through trainings at all levels there will be a marked shift attitudes towards more sustainable behaviour and operations. The project embeds activities to address persistent threats and challenges of uncontrolled development and mass tourism, pollution, destruction and disturbance of marine habitats and species from unsustainable development pattern, unsustainable fishing and harvesting of marine products, and climate change, which will collectively help to prevent and mitigate threats to biodiversity.

The ToC is based on four impact pathways: (i) Established national coherent and consistent institutional framework and SEEA-EA-based methodology; (ii) Triggering awareness raising and behaviour change among key stakeholders on the values as well as need for integration of NC in government and private sector planning, monitoring and sustainability reporting; (iii) Demonstration of improved planning practices in concert with NC ecosystem accounts in Quang Ninh province across different landscape types to improve management practices, reduce threats and enhance development planning; and (iv) Design and implementation of systems to ensure monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management and gender mainstreaming to facilitate upscaling and replication.

The targeted project Outcomes and Post Project Results, depend on the following Critical Assumptions:

- ? Continued political-will incorporates NCA system and analysis in planning and development
- ? NC value proposition for blue economic growth is recognized at provincial level
- ? Stakeholders at provincial level follow national guidelines towards blue economy
- ? Public, Private and CSO willing to collaborate on improving the planning, design and operations of tourism and fisheries, or other sectors of NC concern.
- ? Corporate business-case and partnership on adoption of NC Protocol and sustainability reporting is strong enough to adapt practices in tourism and fisheries sectors
- ? Effective project management

Project components and expected results

Component 1

Setting up the national institutional system, data and monitoring for application of natural capital accounting for a sustainable blue economy in Viet Nam

The overriding purpose of this Component is setting up the national institutional, methodological as well as spatial data system for application of NCA in Viet Nam - which for reasons of government buy-in (demand driven), feasibility as well as sustainability focusses on coastal and near-shore ecosystems their related NC, and the development of related NCA. However, for purpose of consistency and raising the readiness at national level the project will facilitate national institutional compatibility and consistency with NCA for all ecosystems, which would involve a range of ministries and line agencies beyond those mandated or involved in coastal and marine NC. It is anticipated that this would be agreed and summarized in an updated Roadmap for NCA in Viet Nam, taking further and formalizing the already

existing draft roadmap drafted under the WB baseline program (see section 1.2). As a next step and based on Government of Viet Nam request and in line with applicable national policies as well as its two Blue Economy Resolution, the project will zoom in on ocean accounting and will build upon one of the baseline programs - the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP). As a result, institutional capacity building and establishment of NCAs under Comp 1, 2 and 3 will focus on marine and coastal only. As part of Component 1, the project will specifically develop a coherent and consistent methodology for coastal and marine accounting for Viet Nam (called 'ocean accounting' as noted above), based on application guidance developed by the UN and GOAP on the SEEA-EA framework, the developing GOAP technical guidance for ocean accounting^[34], and the results of ongoing and planned pilots of ocean accounting by ESCAP and GOAP (Output 1.1.1). Through a nationally validated methodology, the project will demonstrate the capacity of ecosystem accounting to provide information needed for tracking changes in ecosystems and linking those changes to economic and other human activity. Incremental support to staff and institutional development (1.1.2) in the field of establishing and applying NC accounts for various purposes, will enable the programs of Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment (ISPONRE), Viet Nam Administration of Seas and Islands (VASI), GSO, as well as provincial partner institutions playing a more coordinated and effective role in NC accounting. Under the Project, the Viet Nam General Statistic Office will lead the review of the national accounting system and specifically develop a National Spatial Data Framework for coastal and marine resources with specific provisions for the provincial level pilot application in Quang Ninh Province (1.1.3) which are in line with the national data framework of Viet Nam to facilitate data collection and analysis as part of the coastal/ocean accounts to be established at the provincial level. The design of the spatial data framework will follow the SDG statistic indicators regulated under Circular 03/2019/TT-BKH?T on SDGs indicators of Viet Nam and supported through a small baseline project led by ISPONRE as well as build upon the ongoing baseline program on the National Statistical Indicator System (NSIS) led by GSO. The project will support development of a National Platform on NCA to bring all related stakeholders, including policy makers (i.e. GSO-MPI, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), MARD, development partners, Non-Government Organizations (NGO), etc. together to ensure mobilization of all resources for NCA (1.1.4). The platform partnership will review and discuss natural capital objectives in national sector policy, as well as will play a key role for advocacy in term of enhancing awareness/knowledge of policy makers on NCA and promoting integration of NCA into national planning process, promoting blue economy approach to different sectors such as tourism and agriculture for sustainable management of coastal and marine resources (1.1.4).

The Project will support the use of NCA to enable monitoring progress of SDG implementation, especially the SDGs 14&15, by mainstreaming the proposed accounts into routine government indicators and reporting procedures, including on gender. Gender equality needs to be mainstreamed in these NCA as well as the mentioned reporting procedures towards better protection and monitoring coastal areas and developing small-scale sustainable fishing that benefit local communities and help reduce gender gaps. The proposed NCA account will also be aligned (as much as feasible) with targets/indicators identified in the main national/sectors action plan on SDGs, protected areas and marine natural resources (1.1.5). The results of the work of the national NCA Platform, and specifically through Output 1.1.4, will be linked with Government procedures for reporting SDGs implementation at national and local level.

Component 1 has one Outcome, *Outcome 1.1 Increased institutional capacity, clarified mandates and NCA system operational for applying and monitoring a blue economic growth model*. Outcome 1.1 is composed of 5 separate outputs.

Output 1.1.1. Coherent and consistent national methodology, institutional arrangements and national system adopted for NCA in Viet Nam - involving all ecosystems and related line agencies, whilst zooming in on Ocean accounting.

Under this output a coherent and consistent methodology for coastal and marine accounting for Viet Nam (called 'ocean accounting' as noted above) will be developed, based on application guidance developed by the UN and GOAP on the SEEA-EA framework, the developing GOAP technical guidance for ocean accounting[35]³⁵, and the results of ongoing and planned pilots of ocean accounting by ESCAP and GOAP. The developed mechanism will be submitted for approval as a unified and harmonized approach to be used by line ministries and results and lessons from the related NCA piloting will be reflected in a report as guidance for policy development. As part of this Output the project will develop an updated NCA roadmap at the national level.

Indicative activities under Output 1.1.1 include:

1.1.1.1 Review and analyze current methodologies, institutional arrangements and regulations relating to NCA in Viet Nam to identify key gaps in application of NCA with special emphasis on Ocean accounting. This review process intends to build upon the existing NCA Roadmap document and support the process towards an updated national NCA Roadmap adopted, covering all ecosystems and mandated agencies in and reflecting a consistent national methodology and a clear institutional arrangement (Lead: ISPONRE, collaborating: GOAP-ESCAP, GSO, VASI, University and research institutions).

1.1.1.2 Support development of guidance on methodology and application for NCA with special emphasis on Ocean accounting. This development will be supported by TA working with key stakeholders to come to a consistent and agreed methodological approach. The resulting guidelines to unify and harmonize the NCA methodologies used by line ministries will be submitted for approval.

1.1.1.3 The mechanism as developed under 1.1.1.2 will be used by the project and the results and lessons from the piloting at provincial level will be documented in a report as guidance for further policy development to support further harmonization of the NCA methodologies used by line ministries.

1.1.1.4 Based upon the review carried out under 1.1.1.1, an updated National NCA Roadmap will be developed, sketching a mechanism to unify and harmonize the NCA methodologies used by line ministries and offering a common approach to NCA development in Viet Nam.

1.1.1.5 Policy learning and report on the results from piloting NCA at project site and recommendations for policy revision and improvement. This activity will support the compilation of a report documenting the results from the NCA piloting in Quang Ninh province, highlighting the emerging best practices as developed, indicating existing challenges and providing recommendations for further policy development and improvement to enhance NCA replication, based on the pilot experience.

-

Output 1.1.2. Staff training and institutional capacity building on ocean/coastal natural capital accounting in support blue economic development for national and provincial institutions

Through a nationally validated methodology, the project will demonstrate the capacity of ecosystem accounting to provide information needed for tracking changes in ecosystems and linking those changes

to economic and other human activity. Incremental support to staff and institutional development in the field of establishing and applying NC accounts for various purposes, will enable the programs of Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment (ISPONRE), Viet Nam Administration of Seas and Islands (VASI), GSO, as well as provincial partner institutions playing a more coordinated and effective role in NC accounting.

Indicative activities under Output 1.1.2 include:

1.1.2.1 Design and deliver an awareness raising program among stakeholders on the importance of NCA in development planning and the roles of blue economy in safeguarding environment and improving social livelihood, building on the existing efforts made on the Sustainable Blue Economy, e.g. the Rapid Readiness Assessment on Sustainable Blue Economy Transition^[36]³⁶. A targeted awareness raising programme will be developed by a national consultant in order to demonstrate the potential contribution of NCA and will be delivered as a training/workshop to selected stakeholders and their staff. Lead: ISPONRE, Collaborating: GSO, University and research institutions).

1.1.2.2 Under this activity, first a training needs assessment on the NCA methodology and tools will be carried out by a consultant to define the existing knowledge and specific capacity gaps. Based on this training needs assessment the consultant will develop a standard curriculum on NCA for national institutionalization, providing them theoretical background and competence to establish and apply NC accounts for various purposes, but with emphasis on the GOAP technical guidance for ocean accounting. The training curriculum will serve as the basis to train national and provincial staff within different sectors on the interpretation of NCA, methodology, data requirements, data collection as well as how to use NCA in sectoral, development planning with an emphasis on ocean and coastal accounting, but still providing a broader overview of NCA application in other landscapes. (lead: TA, collaborating: ISPONRE, GSO, VASI, VASI, DONREs, University and research institutions).

1.1.2.3 Conduct international exchanges on knowledge in NCA. In order to broaden the capacity and understanding of staff involved in NCA development an exchange will be organized to learn from emerging best practices in the region and to consider how and to what extent these experiences can be applied in Viet Nam. (Lead: ISPONRE, collaborating: GSO, VASI, Quang Ninh PPC)

Output 1.1.3. Provincial Spatial Data Framework established for compiling marine and coastal accounting in Quang Ninh Province

Under this Output, the Viet Nam General Statistic Office will lead the review of the national accounting system and specifically develop a National Spatial Data Framework for coastal and marine resources with specific provisions for the provincial level pilot application in Quang Ninh Province, which are in line with the national data framework of Viet Nam to facilitate data collection and analysis as part of the coastal/ocean accounts to be established at the provincial level. The design of the spatial data framework will follow the SDG statistical indicators regulated under Circular No.03/2019/TT-BKHDT dated 22 January 2019 of the Minister of Planning and Investment, on SDGs indicators of Viet Nam and supported through a small baseline project led by ISPONRE as well as build upon the ongoing baseline program on the National Statistical Indicator System (NSIS) led by GSO.

Indicative activities under Output 1.1.3 include:

1.1.3.1 Review the national accounting system and National Statistical Indicator System as well as SDGs indicators of Viet Nam in order to see what specific indicators do presently reflect the marine and coastal ecosystem and to identify what information is presently missing and should be included to enable an improved monitoring of the Blue Economy system. (Lead: GSO, Collaborating: ISPONRE, VASI, MARD, GOAP, UNEP)

1.1.3.2 Based on the review carried out under 1.1.3.1, the project will support the development of a set of indicators for monitoring the blue economy (with the support of VASI project on Indicators for Blue economy). Tentatively, the following will be defined for each indicator:

- ? The objectives and definition of each indicator;
- ? The users of the indicator, and the methods and kinds of usage;
- ? The method to identify each indicator;
- ? The inputs and how to collect the information (sources, quality requirements, quality control and quality assurance);
- ? The baseline value.

After selection and development of the set of indicators a manual for application of these indicators to monitor ocean and coastal status and pressure will be compiled. (Lead: GSO, Collaborating: VASI, ISPONRE, UNEP, University and research institutions).

1.1.3.3 Under this activity the project will develop with the support of a consultant a General Spatial Data Framework for marine and coastal accounting (at national level), able to capture, store and analysis the (geo)spatial data required for proper storage, analysis and monitoring. (Lead: GSO, Collaborating: ISPONRE, VASI, MARD).

1.1.3.4 Establish and implement a Provincial Spatial Data Framework for marine and coastal accounting for Quang Ninh to facilitate (geospatial and temporal) data collection and analysis as part of the coastal and ocean accounts to be established. The established Provincial Spatial Data Framework will guide and support the further design of Spatial Data Framework for marine and coastal accounting at national level. (Lead: GSO, Collaborating: ISPONRE, VASI, MARD, DONRE Quang Ninh, DSO Quang Ninh).

1.1.3.5 In line with and supporting the Provincial Spatial Data Framework developed under 1.1.3.3 the project will develop guidelines and standard operating procedures (SOP) on compiling marine and coastal accounting in Quang Ninh, to be contracted to a consultant who will develop the guidelines and SOP and reflect these in a related manual (Lead: GSO, Collaborating: ISPONRE, VASI, MARD, Quang Ninh DSO).

1.1.3.6 Based on the guidelines and SOP developed a consultant will conduct a specialized training on compiling marine and coastal accounting in Quang Ninh Province, providing the provincial staff the methodologies and competence to establish various NC accounts for ocean/marine and coastal ecosystems. (Lead: ISPONRE, Collaborating: GSO, Quang Ninh DSO, Quang Ninh DONRE).

Output 1.1.4. Development and agreement with ISPONRE, VASI, GSO/MPI, MARD, etc., on national platform on NCA for information exchange and blue economy growth policy advocacy

Under Output 1.1.4, the project will support development of a National Platform on NCA to bring all related stakeholders, including policy makers (i.e. GSO-MPI, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), MARD, development partners, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), etc. together to ensure mobilization of all resources for NCA. The platform partnership will review and discuss natural capital objectives in national sector policy, as well as will play a key role for advocacy in term of enhancing awareness/knowledge of policy makers on NCA and promoting integration of NCA into national planning process, promoting blue economy approach to different sectors such as tourism and agriculture for sustainable management of coastal and marine resources.

Indicative activities under Output 1.1.4 include:

1.1.4.1 Assessment of the current state of existing committees/mechanism established, as well as requirements to support the NCA platform (Lead: ISPONRE, Collaborating: GSO, VASI, MARD, NGOs, UNDP, ADB, WB, etc.)

1.1.4.2 Support the formalization and operationalization of the NCA platform with a focus on thematic area of blue economy, including (i) agreeing on its mandate and scope; (ii) identification and confirmation of line agencies and other entities to participate in the platform; (iii) assembling / convening the platform; and (iv) validation and adoption of its Terms of Reference (Lead: ISPONRE, Collaborating: GSO, VASI, MARD, NGOs, UNDP, UNEP, ADB, WB, etc.)

1.1.4.3 Formalize and operationalize the communication function and prepare documents for meetings during the operation of the Platform for 3 years (Lead: ISPONRE, Collaborating: GSO, VASI, MARD, NGOs, UNDP, ADB, WB, UNEP, etc.)

1.1.4.4 Augment the 3-year action plan of the Platform to integrate the thematic area of blue economy (Lead: ISPONRE, Collaborating: GSO, VASI, MARD, NGOs, UNDP, ADB, WB, UNEP, etc.)

1.1.4.5 Support the operationalization, transition, and sustainability of the national NCA platform. This will also entail a comprehensive review of its effectiveness, mandate, value added to blue economy and transition plan post-project upon its operational closure. (Lead: ISPONRE, Collaborating: GSO, VASI, MARD, NGOs, UNDP, ADB, UNEP, WB, etc.).

Output 1.1.5. A system for linking marine and coastal NC accounts with routine government indicators and reporting procedures adopted for Green GDP, SDGs, gender inclusion.

The Project will support, under Output 1.1.5, the use of NCA to enable monitoring progress of SDG implementation, especially the SDGs 14&15, by mainstreaming the proposed accounts into routine government indicators and reporting procedures, including on gender. Gender equality needs to be mainstreamed in these NCAs as well as the mentioned reporting procedures towards better protection and monitoring coastal areas and developing small-scale sustainable fishing that benefit local communities and help reduce gender gaps. The proposed NCA accounts will also be aligned (as much as

feasible) with targets/indicators identified in the main national/sectors action plan on SDGs, protected areas and marine natural resources.

Indicative activities under Output 1.1.5 include:

1.1.5.1 Review and assess SDG indicators, especially the SDGs 14&15 and data requirements for monitoring purposes to identify the gaps and conformity with marine and coastal NC accounts. This assessment will be done along with Activity 1.1.3.1. (Lead: GSO, Collaborating: ISPONRE, University and research institutions).

1.1.5.2 Develop guidelines for mainstreaming the NCA into routine government indicators and reporting procedures, including on gender based on parameters defined in Activity 1.1.5.1, ensuring that data is captured, fed into the monitoring system and information generates knowledge to support decision making (Lead: GSO, Collaborating: ISPONRE, University and research institutions MONRE, others).

1.1.5.3 Based on the review and assessment of indicators under 1.1.5.1 and the related guidelines for mainstreaming NCA into routine government indicators under 1.1.5.2, a training of national and provincial staff and associated governmental and non-governmental partners will be rolled-out on the use of the indicators and on related reporting. (Lead: GSO, Collaborating: ISPONRE, University and research institutions MONRE).

Component 2

Integration of marine and coastal natural capital accounting into local development planning and operations in Quang Ninh Province

Component 2 will involve working with decision makers and practitioners in different sectors active in Quang Ninh Province to develop at least two SEEA-EA-based NC ecosystem accounts (provincial ?satellites?) ? based on the SEEA-based NCA formats and partnership, spatial data platform as well as increased institutional capacity established under Comp 1. The focus would be on establishing accounts useful for spatial and sector planning purposes, including NCA on environmental assets (ecosystems and condition); flows of goods and services from the ocean to the economy (supply/use of ecosystem services); flows from the economy (pollutants, residuals) into the ocean environment (2.1.1), whilst building on the methodology and related baseline work by the GOAP/ESCAP supported Ocean Accounting program as well as the data framework and partnership under the National Statistical Indicator System (NSIS) led by GSO.

The results from NCA development and data assessment will be used to inform (socio-economic and spatial) development planning in Quang Ninh Province to ensure the planning will take in consideration the sustainable use as well as protection of natural capital resources in the coastal and near-shore zone of the province (2.1.3). The project will conduct outreach including sector round tables with both NGO, public and private entities), to discuss and adopt the results of a comprehensive assessment on the dependence, interlinkages and impacts of different sectors (i.e. tourism, fishery, agriculture, etc.) on coastal and marine ecosystems and services; followed by agreed corporate commitments and plans/strategies, including through sustainable business investments benefitting (M)PAs, targeting key drivers of coastal and marine NC loss and degradation (2.1.2). As a result, development of Sustainable Business Plans/strategies is targeted for at least four (4) corporate entities related to especially tourism, and fishery sectors; yet also the identification of sustainable business opportunities, investments and improved operations towards reducing vectors of NC impact, including nutrient-, plastics and other

pollution, critical habitat loss and degradation, and loss of connectivity for key ecosystem services, including towards increased financial resources for meeting costs of PA management. This work will build on the good work done in Viet Nam under the WB ProBlue Program related to a blue economy growth strategy, (marine plastics) pollution control, the implementation of the baseline program Mitigating Marine Plastic Debris in Viet Nam with a budget of Euro 9.8 million for the period 2019 - 2023, supported by WWF-Germany, as well as related work funded by ADB.

NCA results as well as the incremental support towards a national data system will be used for better spatial planning, optimized resource allocation and reduction in potential development conflicts as part of the upcoming master plan on socio-economic development in Quang Ninh. The ecosystems condition NC account will be established to track the change of PAs condition over time to inform policy makers for taking actions for improvement management and protection of the NC contained in the PAs, including especially a reduction in impact vectors in the landscape and economic sectors around the PAs.

The developed NCAs will directly support optimizing spatial planning for restoration and protection as well as for improved management and monitoring of coastal and marine NC resources over an area of 90,128 ha (excluding three PAs) - especially related to reducing vectors of NC impact, as well as indirectly over a total area of 42,978 ha of these three protected areas - 1 terrestrial and 1 marine PA, and one NP with the status of MPA pending. The project will provide incremental support to local implementation of the baseline program led by VASI on National Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and development of Master Plan on Sustainable exploitation and Use of Coastal Resources in the Period of 2021-2030, with Vision to 2045. The provincial NCA would assist tracking PA condition using the Ecosystem Condition NCA to inform decision makers on required actions to be taken, e.g. as part of the socio-economic development planning process. NC accounting would also analyze levels of 'cost-benefit' (both ecological as well as monetary) of terrestrial and coastal resources for aquaculture and environmental protection; sustainable exploitation and restoration, reduction of impacts of natural disasters, as well as adaptation to climate change of e.g. agriculture through mechanization and nature-based solutions.

The basis for this is the NCAs as well as their input to the development of the government provincial master plan on socio-economic Development Plan 2026-2030, including optimizing spatial planning and NC resource allocation (output 2.1.3). The improved spatial allocation, management and monitoring of coastal and marine resources - similar with the above enhanced corporate sector operations, would target reducing vectors of NC impact such as nutrient-, plastics and other pollution, critical habitat loss and degradation, and loss of connectivity for key ecosystem services.

The few listed historic initiatives (section 2.7) provide various data sets, tried methodologies, established partnership as well as examples of NCA development and application in Quang Ninh Province; including suggested collaboration with the ProBlue program of the WB towards their anticipated support on spatial planning. Additionally, the results of the GEF supported pilot testing at the provincial level will feed into national and provincial policies, regional learning platforms and the global dialogue (i.e. GOAP) on natural capital accounting and its applications, to promote replication and widespread dissemination. Component 2 has one Outcome, Outcome 2.1 Results of marine and coastal natural capital accounting applied toward development and implementation of blue economic growth and land-/seascape conservation planning for Quang Ninh Province. Outcome 2.1 is composed of 3 separate outputs.

Output 2.1.1. Two or three marine and coastal (SEEA-EA-based) NC ecosystems-accounts established and operationalized ? with specific data sets for Quang Ninh Province (see 1.1.1).

Under this Output the focus would be on establishing accounts useful for spatial and sector planning purposes, including NCA on environmental assets (ecosystems and condition); flows of goods and services from the ocean to the economy (supply/use of ecosystem services); flows from the economy (pollutants, residuals) into the ocean environment, whilst building on the methodology and related baseline work by the GOAP/ESCAP supported Ocean Accounting program as well as the data framework and partnership under the National Statistical Indicator System (NSIS) led by GSO. (Lead: ISPONRE, Collaborating: VASI, GSO, GOAP-ESCAP, DONRE, DARD etc.)

Indicative activities under Output 2.1.1 include:

2.1.1.1 Review and identify key issues of marine and coastal natural resources in Quang Ninh for policy intervention. The project under this activity will support the inventarisation of all relevant spatial data resources and other data sources available needed to establish NC ecosystems accounts for the main coastal ecosystems in Quang Ninh.

2.1.1.2 Economic valuation of ecosystem goods and services of marine and coastal ecosystem of Quang Ninh through putting monetary value on the existing stocks and flows.

2.2.1.3 Development of at least two marine and coastal (SEEA-EA-based) NC ecosystems-accounts for Quang Ninh for improving spatial and sector planning based on the results of activities of 2.1.1.1. The focus would be on establishing accounts useful for spatial and sector planning purposes, including NCA on environmental assets (ecosystems and condition); flows of goods and services from the ocean to the economy (supply/use of ecosystem services); flows from the economy (pollutants, residuals) into the ocean environment, whilst building on the methodology and related baseline work by the GOAP/ESCAP supported Ocean Accounting program as well as the data framework and partnership under the National Statistical Indicator System (NSIS) led by GSO. The project will support the development through involvement of TA, in collaboration with GOAP, to guide the provincial staff and the involved staff of national level institutions.

2.1.1.4 In order to make optimal use of the established NC accounts in Quang Ninh and to use the information generated for spatial and economic planning purposes, the project will initiate and implement training and capacity building on NCA satellite accounts operations. This activity will focus on the removal of capacity barriers, prioritizing accounts development, data compilation and system operation skills, enabling the staff to confidently continue development, monitoring and application of natural capital accounts information and analysis into development planning.

Output 2.1.2. Corporate commitments and plans secured and options for PA friendly operations/investments identified through quantification of impacts, dependency and interlinkages on marine and coastal NC in Quang Ninh Province communicated through outreach and sector roundtables.

Under Output 2.1.2 the project will conduct outreach including sector round tables with both NGO, public and private entities, to discuss and adopt the results of a comprehensive assessment on the dependence, interlinkages and impacts of different sectors (i.e. tourism, fishery, agriculture, etc.) on

coastal and marine ecosystems and services; followed by agreed corporate commitments and plans/strategies, including through sustainable business investments benefitting (M)PAs, targeting key drivers of coastal and marine NC loss and degradation. As a result, development of Sustainable Business Plans/strategies is targeted for at least four (4) corporate entities related to especially tourism, and fishery sectors; yet also the identification of sustainable business opportunities, investments and improved operations towards reducing vectors of NC impact, including nutrient-, plastics and other pollution, critical habitat loss and degradation, and loss of connectivity for key ecosystem services, including towards increased financial resources for meeting costs of PA management. This work will build on the good work done in Viet Nam under the WB ProBlue Program related to a blue economy growth strategy, (marine plastics) pollution control, the implementation of the baseline program Mitigating Marine Plastic Debris in Viet Nam with a budget of Euro 9.8 million for the period 2019 ? 2023, supported by WWF-Germany, as well as related work funded by ADB. Another key source of information is the recent UNDP (May 2022) report on Blue Economy Scenarios for Viet Nam, covering key ocean economic sectors, amongst others fishery and tourism and related blue economy scenarios to optimize socio-economic and environmental benefits. In addition to the UNDP report, recent work by UNEP through the Pilot Rapid Readiness Assessment (UNEP, 2022, UNEP Transitional Framework to a Sustainable Blue Economy) and the report of the Wollongong University of Australia on Governance Frameworks to support a Blue Economy, ANCHORS (2021) provide relevant information. (Lead: ISPONRE, Collaborating: VASI, WWF, ADB, DONRE, UNEP etc.).

Indicative activities under Output 2.1.2 include:

2.1.2.1 Conduct surveys and options analyses to develop an assessment of priority sectors/entities for project intervention. This will be supported through the organization of sector round tables to bring together key sectoral stakeholders in order to come to a shared assessment of the interlinkages and dependence of these sectors on coastal and marine ecosystems and services (Activity 2.1.2.2). Based on this understanding the project aims at securing support from corporate partners to adopt some of the results of the NC data sets and results of NCA in partnership with the provincial government. This common understanding stemming from the sector round tables will ultimately be supported by 2.1.2.2.

2.1.2.2 Under this activity, the project aims at the development of at least 4 Sustainable Business Plans/strategies of four corporate entities related to especially the tourism, and fishery sectors; and identification of sustainable business opportunities, investments and improved operations towards reducing vectors of NC impact. These sustainable business plans, or protocols, will take into consideration the value of natural capital, and through a consultative process for planning purposes in collaboration with provincial authorities and local stakeholders, to reduce or avoid impact from sector or corporate operations or investments in e.g. tourism or fisheries. Apart from the incentive to these corporations to integrate the protocols into their CSR programs, there is also a direct business or economic incentive by enhancing secured supply of environmental services (reduced impact of plastic waste on aquaculture, safeguarding a clean landscape and environment as key environmental asset for the tourism sector etc.). For this output the target is set at least 4 Sustainable Business Plans or protocols, depending on how many separate corporations express their interest and willingness to develop and implement the plans.

2.1.2.3. In support of and follow-up to the Sustainable Business Plans developed under 2.1.2.3, the project will support capacity building and training of representatives of the private sector on sustainable

business planning towards reducing vectors of NC impact, aimed at enhancing effective implementation of the plans/protocols and to identify those interventions with most impact.

Output 2.1.3. Socio-Economic development plan (2026 - 2030) in Quang Ninh Province developed, optimizing sector co-existence and spatial use of coastal and marine resources as well as identifying sector investments and operations for improved (financial) management effectiveness of protected areas - leading to reducing vectors of NC impact, using integrated NC ecosystems-account.

Under Output 2.1.3 NCA results as well as the incremental support towards a national data system will be used for better spatial planning, optimized resource allocation and reduction in potential development conflicts as part of the upcoming master plan on socio-economic development in Quang Ninh. The ecosystems condition NC account will be established to track the change of PAs condition over time to inform policy makers for taking actions for improvement management and protection of the NC contained in the PAs, including especially a reduction in impact vectors in the landscape and economic sectors around the PAs. The basis for this is the NCAs as well as their input to the development of the government provincial master plan on socio-economic Development Plan 2026-2030, including optimizing spatial planning and NC resource allocation. (Lead: ISPONRE, Collaborating: VASI, DONRE, PPC).

Indicative activities under Output 2.1.3 include:

2.1.3.1 Conduct an assessment and mapping of biological, socio-economic, environmental and institutional aspects, including assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services values and threats, climate risks, land degradation priorities for Socio-Economic development plan (2026 - 2030) in Quang Ninh Province (jointly with activities developed under Output 2.1.1).

2.1.3.2 Support optimizing spatial planning for restoration and protection as well as for improved management and monitoring of coastal and marine NC resources. Based on the information provided by the establishment and analysis of the ecosystem account, condition account, ecosystem services account and pollutant account, the project under this activity aims to inform the PA's management teams and provincial authorities on temporal and spatial changes that could inform the management teams on specific actions to mitigate or reduce specific impact vectors and to channel targeted financial support to identified areas of negative change or impact in PAs and related buffer zones and ecological corridors. Whilst not anticipating the direct involvement of (M)PA management teams or work inside PAs, this may lead to the enhanced management effectiveness through new or additional financing for the costs of PA management, either through earmarking of line budgets or mobilizing interest for investment by other projects and or corporate entities. The NC accounts to be piloted in Quang Ning Province are intended to be able to document and monitor ongoing trends (spatially and over time), making use of the spatial database (GIS-based) and its various satellite accounts. The NC accounts to be established are therefore seen as the monitoring tool to measure the total area of landscape that has been improved through the application and use of the analysis provided by the NC accounts to the development of the social-economic development plan.

2.1.3.3 Building on the draft Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) and the information provided by the NC accounts, the project will support the development of the provincial Socio-Economic Development Plan 2026-2030, incorporating present trends in natural capital and the environmental services they provide

and highlighting identifying areas for targeted interventions to limit negative impact on socio-economic development, while optimizing sustainable use of the environmental resources provided by the ecosystems of Quang Ninh.

Component 3

Outreach and knowledge management for national uptake

The project will develop and implement a set of awareness raising and outreach activities focused on the linkage between NC, biodiversity and economic development. Outreach activities will mainly highlight the effectiveness and economic benefits of resources being spent to enhance NC and their ecosystem services; adverse impacts to both sectors and country in general of degradation of NC, and the trade-offs between the different uses, impacts and dependencies of sector on NC and their ecosystem services derived from alternative business plans, sector development plans and other planning related NC (3.1.1).

The project will support the establishment of a 'Community of Practice' (CoP) to enable members to engage in joint activities and discussions on the establishment and use of NCA, share information, help, and learn from each other. The main agenda of the CoP will be seeking national experience and connecting with them, facilitate the development of a shared repertoire of resources, share similar programming experiences, best practices, tools, as well as successful ways of addressing recurring problems. The CoP will also coordinate the development of national strategy on knowledge management; documenting best practices; mapping knowledge and identifying gaps (3.1.1).

Under the project upscaling strategy (3.1.2) facilitated by GSO, MONRE-ISPONRE and the CoP, agreement will be reached on new or expanded provincial collaboration with GSO towards at least three additional provinces to develop new NCAs (co-financed) as well as their application under national government policies and programs on blue economic growth path/PA landscape management, and other sustainable development and environmental protection directives. It would establish the formal government process as well as budget resources leading to replication of the development of new NCAs in (other) coastal provinces of Viet Nam. Additionally, the project will engage with key line agencies such as MoNRE, GSO, VESA and provincial government (e.g. DOIT) to secure extrabudgetary resources under different donor initiatives (i.e. Defra, GOAP) to facilitate replication NCA to other coastal provinces in Viet Nam taking in consideration the anticipated positive project experiences from Quang Ninh.

The Project M&E system will follow project performance indicators and targets to capture the information and best practices required to track the project progress and effectiveness (3.2.1), including applying context-specific gender indicators. The in-depth gender gap analysis will help to identify situations of gender inequitable that will need to be addressed and monitored to ensure overall successful and sustainable outcomes and impact. The main outcomes and outputs of Component 3 are as following: *Outcome 3.1. Better understanding on the importance of natural capital and NCA towards a sustainable blue economy in Viet Nam.* Outcome 3.1 is composed of 2 separate outputs. *Outcome 3.2. Project impact monitoring and knowledge management system.* Outcome 3.2 is composed of 1 output.

Output 3.1.1. Outreach and establishment of ?Community of Practice? which connects local and national institutions and stakeholders to increase understanding and enable increased impact from applying NC accounting

Outreach activities will mainly highlight the effectiveness and economic benefits of resources being spent to enhance NC and their ecosystem services; adverse impacts to both sectors and country in general of degradation of NC, and the trade-offs between the different uses, impacts and dependencies of sector on NC and their ecosystem services derived from alternative business plans, sector development plans and other planning related NC.

Under Output 3.1.1 the project will support the establishment of a ?Community of Practice? (CoP) to enable members to engage in joint activities and discussions on the establishment and use of NCA, share information, help, and learn from each other. The main agenda of the CoP will be seeking national experience and connecting with them, facilitate the development of a shared repertoire of resources, share similar programming experiences, best practices, tools, as well as successful ways of addressing recurring problems. The CoP will also coordinate the development of a national strategy on knowledge management; documenting best practices; mapping knowledge and identifying gaps. The ultimate goal of the CoP will be to catalyze NCA knowledge and awareness in Viet Nam. (Lead: ISPONRE, Collaborating: VASI, GSO, UNDP, WB, UNESCAP-GOAP, WWF, NGOs, Academia etc.).

Indicative activities under Output 3.1.1 include:

3.1.1.1 Develop a Knowledge Management Plan and Communications Strategy and disseminate lessons via awareness materials from the demonstration landscape, including through different digital channels and databases, both provincially, nationally and within the region.

3.1.1.2 Establish a one-stop project ?digital front door/website? and multichannel presence, including on social media, on NCA, hosted by ISPONRE/MONRE, that will be sustained for the duration of the project, and will continue to be used by MONRE subsequently.

3.1.1.3 Identify, review and systematically document lessons learnt from the demonstration landscape and conduct landscape and national level workshops on NCA development to share project lessons with stakeholders. The documentation of emerging good/best practices will be reflected in both technical documents for active practitioners, as well as more broadly accessible publication to create awareness on the opportunities NCA methodology offers. Annual knowledge sharing events will be the platform to bring together an audience interested in NCA and to exchange experiences with NCA applications in Viet Nam and in the region.

3.1.1.4 Collaborate with the regional and international organizations on NCA knowledge sharing and on potential participation in relevant events.

Output 3.1.2. Targeted replication and engagement mechanism ? facilitated by MONRE and GSO, establishing additional NCAs in Quang Ninh as well as in at least three additional provinces, based on the applicable government legal directives, secured funding and specified sustainable development and environmental protection.

Under the project upscaling strategy (3.1.2) facilitated by GSO, MONRE-ISPONRE and the CoP, agreement will be reached on new or expanded provincial collaboration with GSO towards at least three

additional provinces to develop new NCAs (co-financed) as well as their application under national government policies and programs on blue economic growth path/PA landscape management, and other sustainable development and environmental protection directives. It would establish the formal government process as well as budget resources leading to replication of the development of new NCAs in (other) coastal provinces of Viet Nam. Additionally, the project will engage with key line agencies such as MoNRE, GSO, VASI and provincial government (e.g. DOIT) to secure extrabudgetary resources under different donor initiatives (i.e. Defra, GOAP) to facilitate replication NCA to other coastal provinces in Viet Nam taking in consideration the anticipated positive project experiences from Quang Ninh. (Lead: ISPONRE-MONRE, Collaborating: GSO, VASI, CoP, UNESCAP-GOAP, WWF, UNDP).

-

Indicative activities under Output 3.1.2. include:

3.1.2.1 Identify and validate provinces for replication of NCA pilot activities and their priorities. Based on the piloting experiences in Quang Ninh province, the project will work closely with GSO in identifying additional coastal provinces to replicate the piloted NCA approach. In the selection process it will be considered to select coastal provinces with varying ecosystem and socio-economic conditions to further test and validate the NCA approach and facilitate further learning and testing.

3.1.2.2 Identify the feasible financial sources to implement the NCA and make proposals on how to mobilize resources. Based on the initial selection of provinces for replication, the project will support GSO in identification and securing of the funding resources to actually implement the NCA approach in these additional provinces. This will require the project to proactively share the piloting experiences and create interest from potential funding partners to collaborate in replication, including the NCA platform and the CoP.

3.1.2.3 Expansion of awareness of and training of NCA to other provinces of Viet Nam, with an explicit focus on effectiveness and economic benefits of NC and their ecosystem services; and the trade-offs between the different uses, impacts and dependencies of sectors on NC and their ecosystem services derived from alternative business plans, sector development plans and other planning related to NC and NCA. The awareness and outreach at provincial level will support further understanding of the potential benefits of mainstreaming NCA applications into (spatial) development planning processes.

Outcome 3.2. Project impact monitoring and knowledge management system Outcome 3.2 is composed of 1 output.

Output 3.2.1. Project gender disaggregated M&E system enables tracking of project progress, performance and specifically capturing best practice

Under Output 3.2.1 the Project M&E system is developed and operationalized with definition of project performance indicators and targets to capture the information and best practices required to track the project progress and effectiveness, including applying context-specific gender indicators. The design and implementation of the M&E system will be geared towards active participation in monitoring activities by beneficiaries and stakeholders to ensure a participatory approach and transparency in the documentation and learning process. The in-depth gender gap analysis will help to identify situations of gender inequities that will need to be addressed and monitored to ensure overall successful and

sustainable outcomes and impact and to monitor the effective implementation of the gender action plan is formulated. (Lead: ISPONRE-PMU, Collaborating: GSO, VASI, UNEP etc.).

Indicative activities under Output 3.2.1 include:

3.2.1.1 Convene project inception workshop and compile inception workshop report within the first 60 days of the project. During the inception phase of the project key stakeholders will review the ProDoc and in particular the strategic results framework, reconsider the indicators and targets for realism and completeness and formulate the annual work plan and budget for the first year of project execution. During the inception phase the ToRs of key project staff will be reviewed and finally endorsed by the stakeholders and ultimately by the PSC.

3.2.1.2 Annual work plan and budget preparation and monitoring of indicators in project results framework for adaptive management including annual lesson learning session among project stakeholders. This annual exercise will be organized as an annual planning and review workshop, in which one part will be focused on stock-taking and learning from the lessons of current implementation, reflecting positive outcomes and identifying existing challenges. The other part will be forward looking and result in an annual work plan and budget, infusing learning from previous experience and adjusting, where needed, focus and budget allocation.

3.2.1.3 Support the monitoring of project implementation, which includes completion of annual PIR review of annual work plan implementation status for adaptive management of project activities. This will entail regular progress reporting in accordance with both the guidelines of the Government of Viet Nam as well as the required reporting by UNEP and GEF. This will include financial reporting and standard audit processes.

3.2.1.4 Develop gender monitoring methodology with rating and manual and conduct gender auditing analysis of the project at baseline and end of project, in addition to annual implementation review of the Gender Action Plan and SRIF, and complete sensitization workshops on gender and other safeguards for the Project Management Unit and executing partners.

3.2.1.5 Prepare a project completion report to compile project results and lessons learned, to inform the Terminal Evaluation team.

3.2.1.6 Conduct and support an independent Terminal Evaluation (TE) in line with UNEP/GEF requirements.

3.2.1.7 Review and update Capacity Development Scorecard with identified national ministries and with Quang Ninh DONRE at project start, and end of project (Year 3). Set for CDC both the baseline and the expected target at End-of-Project (% of increase of effectiveness).

3.2.1.8 Convene PSC meetings for providing annual oversight as the main governing body of the project, overseeing the overall project delivery according to the ProDoc and approving the annual work plans and budgets.

4) alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies;

Linkages with other GEF and non-GEF interventions

Link to GEF Focal Area Strategies: As described above, the alternative scenario will integrate natural capital accounting into development master planning in Quang Ninh Province in Viet Nam and support to link NC accounts with routine government indicators and reporting procedures such as reporting on SDG implementation. The project will help to reduce the impacts from economic sectors (i.e. tourism, fishery) to marine and coastal ecosystems and their services. The project is therefore in line with the goal of the GEF-7 biodiversity regarding: (a) Mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors as well as within production landscapes and seascapes; (b) Reduction in direct drivers of biodiversity loss.

The Project is closely aligned with *GEF7- BD-1-3 Strategic program to ?Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting?* by supporting Viet Nam to build system- and operational capacity to measure, value and account for coastal and marine natural capital resources and integrate NC value in development master planning as well as sector operations in Quang Ninh province in Viet Nam. The Project will provide support to reduce the pollution and impacts of different sectors on the coastal and marine environment through application of a Blue Economy model for selected sectors (i.e. tourism, fisheries and agriculture). The Project will build upon the previous and ongoing WB support to Viet Nam on the development of forest accounts, the ProBlue program, the ESCAP and GOAP support toward development of the ocean accounting framework ? whilst taking guidance from the GOAP/UNESCAP Technical Guidance and SEEA-EA framework.

Table 3. List of Baseline Projects

Name of on-going and planned program/project, years of implementation and sites	Program/project objectives and targets	How proposed UNEP/GEF project will collaborate with the program/project?
GEF/MONRE Mainstreaming Natural Resources Management and Biodiversity Conservation into Socio-economic planning and management of Biosphere Reserve (2020-2025)	Mainstream biodiversity conservation objectives into governance, planning and management of socio-economic development and tourism in biosphere reserves. Functional governance and coordination mechanisms to support decision-making between provinces and national levels Guidelines for biodiversity impact assessment and tools for environmentally friendly tourism business planning and strategic planning for ecotourism development	The Project experiences in mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in governance and planning would be useful to the GEF NCA project

<p>Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting coordinated by GOAP[38]³⁷ (since 2019)</p>	<p>Adapts aspects of the System of National Accounts (SNA) to ensure a common approach to defining the ocean economy. It adapts aspects of the SEEA-Central Framework to ensure appropriate delineation of national boundaries and the measurement of land-based pollution and marine resources. It also adapts aspects of SEEA Ecosystems to ensure appropriate identification of coastal and marine ecosystems, their condition, the services they provide and the benefits of these services in terms of monetary and non-monetary measures. It adds to the existing frameworks a consideration of governance, institutional, social and technological concerns required for addressing SDG14. The GOAP coordinates the development of the Technical Guidance including through further research, testing and experimentation of the ocean accounts framework by UNESCAP and GOAP.</p>	<p>UNESCAP and GOAP will provide advice and work with GEF/UNEP to develop methodology for Viet Nam</p> <p>GOAP can mobilize international experts to support Viet Nam since ISPONRE is a member of GOAP</p>
<p>WB PROBLUE with VASOI, MONRE and MPI (completed sub-projects only)</p>	<p>Support to prioritize and mobilize new investments for a blue economy Support development of Sustainable Fisheries in Viet Nam: Informing the policy framework and investments Develop the proposal for blue economy partnership & blue economy strategy guidance marine plastics prevention and pollution control marine spatial planning</p>	<p>The project will build on the results from PROBLUE (i.e. blue economy partnership, sustainable fishery and water pollution control in coastal NC/PAs.); as well as upcoming collaboration with VASI on marine spatial planning.</p>
<p>ISPONRE - Development of scheme on "Building a blue economy model towards sustainable marine economy development to implement the Strategy on sustainable development of Viet Nam's marine economy until 2030 with vision towards 2045" (2020 - 2022).</p>	<p>Develop a draft Decision of the Prime Minister towards approval of the scheme on "Building a blue economy model towards sustainable marine economic development to implement the Strategy on sustainable development of Viet Nam's marine economy until 2030 and vision towards 2045"</p>	<p>Guidance from the scheme would be used for designing the spatial data framework for ocean accounting</p>

<p>VASI - National tasks on development of national marine spatial planning, and Master Plan on Sustainable exploitation and use of coastal resources in the period of 2021-2030, with vision to 2045</p>	<p>To analyze, assess natural resources stock and condition, direct impact drivers, context and current state of using the Viet Nam coastal areas, islands, archipelagos, seas and skies; To forecast trends of natural resources and environment fluctuations; climate change impacts on natural resources and environment; needs for resources for exploitation and the requirement of environmental protection in Viet Nam's coastal areas, islands, archipelagos, seas and skies during the planning period To conduct zoning for resource utilization in the marine space of Viet Nam, sovereignty right and jurisdiction. According to the plan, the Master plan will be submitted to the Government for approval in 2022</p>	<p>The national marine spatial planning will support the development of national spatial data framework</p>
<p>ISPONRE - Pilot study for ocean accounting (2019 ? 2020)</p>	<p>Estimate and allocate land-based pollution to a watershed/drainage basin; Map(ping) of mangrove ecosystems Estimate impacts of tourism on ecosystems</p>	<p>ISPONRE was the implementing Agency. Some data collected under the pilot study can be utilized for GEF/UNEP project</p>
<p>WB Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystems Services (WAVES)</p>	<p>Implement the project ?Valuing the Forests ? an application of Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) in 2013. Conduct study on the estimated values associated with aquaculture and capture fisheries production, carbon sequestration, and coastal protection in Quang Ninh and the Tam Giang-Cau Hai Lagoon.</p>	<p>ISPONRE was the implementing Agency. The studies will help refine the methodologies that will be applied in this project</p>

<p>Quang Ninh provincial projects</p>	<p>Project on Biodiversity Conservation Planning in Quang Ninh Province until 2020 ? with vision towards 2030</p> <p>Project on establishment of Dong Rui Wetland PA in Tien Yen District (2017 to 2018). The Project aimed the sustainable management and protection of mangrove forests and other coastal ecosystems in line with RAMSAR; and to develop this as center for regional agrobiodiversity conservation, with focus on endemism, and sustainable utilization for farming/fisheries;</p> <p>Project on planning for the establishment of Co To ? Dao Tran MPA, to be the baseline for the establishment and operation of Co To ? Dao Tran MPA, including developing eco-tourism, improving livelihoods, as well as fisheries resource management. It also proposed functional zoning of the MPA. However, in the baseline, economic and ecological values of natural capital and ecosystem services were not assessed nor integrated in the planning process, which is a weakness as well as opportunity to the GEF project to build on in its targeted intervention areas.</p> <p>Project on planning for the development of Quang Ninh Coastal Protection Corridor, developed a plan for a coastal setback to protect key ecosystems and ecosystem services, and to reduce risks to human settlements due to coastal erosion and sea-level rise.</p> <p>Project on Profile to nominate Bai Tu Long National Park as ASEAN Heritage Park</p> <p>Project on Investigation on endanger, precious, rare and priority species in Bai Tu Long National Park and recommendation for the management plan</p> <p>Project on Master Plan for Protection and Development of Bai Tu Long National Park</p>	<p>Provide data and GIS maps, partnership for GEF/UNEP project; as well conservation targets and sites for inclusion into the new Socio-economic development planning.</p>
---------------------------------------	--	--

<p>UNEP's global initiative ?Strengthening decision making through Valuation and Accounting of Natural Capital for Green Economy (VANTAGE)?</p>	<p>Contribute to a better integration of the value of ecosystem services and subsequent accounting for better macroeconomic policies and national development planning to support efforts of stakeholders and in turn to help in achieving the elements of a green economy and the sustainable development goals (SDGs).</p>	<p>Experiences from VANTAGE on valuation of ecosystem services can be applied to calculate the contribution from ocean resources to national economy. Enhanced capacity to apply ecosystem services tools and to integrate them in decision-making processes as well as to build partnerships between national and international parties to foster the best knowledge available. Unlocking inclusive green growth requires the recognition that macroeconomic policies and national green growth strategies affect women and men differently. It is necessary to enhance capacity for policymakers in incorporating gender-responsive approaches in the development and implementation of their policies.</p>
<p>UNEP - The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB)</p>	<p>Draw attention to the economic benefits of biodiversity including the growing cost of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation. TEEB presents an approach that can help decision-makers recognize, demonstrate and capture the values of ecosystem services and biodiversity.</p>	<p>Experience from TEEB on valuation of ecosystem services can be applied to calculate the contribution from ocean resources to national economy</p>
<p>The Natural Capital Project</p>	<p>Develop InVEST ('Integrated Valuation of Environmental Services and Tradeoffs'), a free and open-source software that enables users to quantify natural capital in biophysical, socio-economic and other dimensions.</p>	<p>Experiences from InVEST on valuation of ecosystem services can be applied to calculate the contribution from ocean resources to national economy</p>
<p>UNSD - Draft Programme of Work drafted for the Experimental Ecosystem Accounting (EEA) under the SEEA</p>	<p>Develop a National Programme for Viet Nam on Ecosystem Accounting for 2015-2020</p>	<p>Institutional structure for SEEA-EA was identified and which can be used as the input for getting related stakeholders on natural capital accounting</p>
<p>WB project ?Valuing the Forests ? an application of Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) in Viet Nam?</p>	<p>Develop the National Forestry Account and Natural Capital Accounting Roadmap up to 2020. WB also supported a recent project that estimated values associated with aquaculture and capture fisheries production, carbon sequestration, and coastal protection in Quang Ninh and the Tam Giang-Cau Hai Lagoon</p>	<p>Experiences of these projects on forest accounts and ecosystem service valuation will help refine the methodologies that will be applied in this project</p>

<p>UNEP/GEF 10385 ?Mainstreaming Natural Capital Values into Planning and Implementation for Sustainable Blue Economic Growth in Indian Coastal Districts, India.</p>	<p>Applying natural capital accounting to enhance biodiversity conservation and environmental sustainability of critical coastal wetlands in two landscapes (in Karnataka and Kerala States) in India by integrating natural capital and ecosystem services values in District-level blue economy strategy and spatial planning processes, as well as coastal sector operations.</p>	<p>This is one of the other few GEF projects targeting the development as well as specifically its application of natural capital accounting to coastal development planning and sector operations; which will provide valuable lessons about approach, how to secure local government interest and involvement as well as on how to sustain such programs through government and statistical entities and programs.</p>
<p>UNEP/GEF 10386: ?Natural Capital Accounting and Assessment: Informing development planning, sustainable tourism development and other incentives for improved conservation and sustainable landscapes (Philippines).</p>	<p>The Project will catalyze implementation of the country?s national NCA Roadmap, thereby integrating the value of natural capital, ecosystem services and biodiversity into planning and decision-making processes within government, the private sector and financial institutions. As a result, the Project will lead to enhanced conservation and sustainable management of PA landscapes throughout the Philippines by scaling up field demonstrations, including investment in initial replication steps.</p>	<p>The project will benefit from another - soon to start, example on the use of NCA for integration of natural capital in development planning. It's approach in using NCA to benefit PA landscapes, including PA financing, will be of great interest to the targeted Vietnam PA landscapes, and socio-economic development planning.</p>

5 and 6) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing;

The Project?s Baseline, its Alternative and the Global Environmental Benefits that it is expected to produce are summarized in Table 4 (below).

Table 4. Incremental Cost Reasoning

<p>Baseline Scenario B (Business as Usual)</p>	<p>Alternative Scenario A (with project interventions)</p>	<p>Local/National and Global Environmental Benefits (A ? B)</p>
--	---	--

Component 1: National institutional system, data and monitoring for application of natural capital accounting (NCA) for a sustainable blue economy in Viet Nam

Baseline: Whilst legislation in Viet Nam requires consideration for NC resources in planning and development e.g. the Planning Law 2019; Viet Nam Green Growth Strategy; or e.g. the Law on Environmental Protection, lack of systematic evidence on the value of NC and ecosystem services will continue leading to the underestimation of these and limited integration in decision making processes. Additionally, very little of the revenue generated coming from NC through their *provisioning services* ? such as fish, *regulating services* such as avoidance of costs in building coastal protection, or *cultural services* such as recreation/tourism, will be re-invested in the protection, maintenance and restoration of NC; with as a result their continued decline.

Whilst related NCA baseline initiatives in Viet Nam such as the Advancing Ocean Accounting (GOAP/ESCAP), the GSO led NSIS or the ISPONRE-led National SDG reporting will continue the coming years, provinces including specifically Quang Ninh, will continue lacking capacity in NCA, their natural resources-related data systems not being SEEA-compliant, as well as not being able to apply the results of NCA to routine government mechanisms such as socio-economic or spatial development planning. Provincial governments will continue to struggle to integrate NC in development planning? notwithstanding the two Blue (Ocean) Economy strategies targeting a 65-70% contribution to GDP coming from its 28 coastal provinces by 2030. The NSIS will continue in isolation as well as not being based on the inter-nationally and nationally acknowledged SEEA Framework for true NCA, and will continue lacking spatial context, making it hard to apply such data to e.g. spatial planning, as well as do not specifically focus on nor enable NCA for coastal and near-shore including incorporation its results in planning for Blue Economy. National SDG reporting will not be based on the SEEA indicator systems nor benefit from a standardized system of NCA. Whilst, Viet Nam took good steps towards establishing of a national unified framework for NCA, through the draft Natural Capital Roadmap (up to 2020), the National Plan for Advancing Environmental-Economic Accounting ?both led by ISPONRE with GSO such as e.g. under the UNSD-supported Draft National Program for Viet Nam

Through GEF incremental support and collaboration with the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership, UN-ESCAP and related technical guidance, Viet Nam would finally be able to take the draft NCA Roadmap as well as the (UNSD-supported) draft National Program for Viet Nam on Ecosystem Accounting for 2015-2020, towards completion and national endorsement ? especially in collaboration with GSO, including a coherent and consistent methodology, agreed institutional arrangements as well as the national operational system for natural capital accounting (NCA) ? with an initial focus on coastal and marine resources and development sectors. GEF incremental support will also bring together the many data-providers and -users and with GSO establish the National Spatial Data Framework for compiling NCA, especially focusing on marine and coastal accounts. With this improved institutional and data framework, GEF incremental support under Comp 2 will enable the development and application of a number of provincial-level NC accounts and sustained through related baseline government programs ?

Local/national benefits:

? Operational NCA system with ability to include national Ocean and coastal NC accounting

? Improved methodological harmonization and consensus in application of NCA between key national institutions

? Updated national NCA roadmap

? Indicators for sustainable BE growth, captured through NCA, linked to NSIS

? Staff capacity in NCA increased by 50%, expressed in #staff trained and ability to effectively apply NCA

Global benefits:

? Enhanced capacity to monitor Viet Nam's Blue Economy through application of ocean and coastal NCA and the ability to report this to regional partners

? Knowledge exchange on NCA piloting on Ocean Accounting through the regional knowledge exchange between CoPs.

on Ecosystem Accounting for 2015-2020, are unlikely to consolidate-data systems nor upscale through applications in routine government-led planning, investment decisions or monitoring related to NC resources (e.g. on SDG progress).

such as a.o the ProBlue program funded by the WB in line with the enhanced focus in Viet Nam on Blue/Ocean growth, marine spatial planning, provincial socio-economic development planning, as well as improving landscape connectivity and resilience involving various PAs/MPAs in the province. Additionally, GEF incremental support will enable stronger sustainability and prospect of replication of applied NCA beyond the project, by establishing and formalizing a truly multiagency national platform on NCA with a.o ISPONRE, VASI, GSO/MPI, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), as well as the local government of Quang Ninh Province, including its operational linkages towards blue economy growth policy advocacy, application of NCA as well as joint programming.

Component 2: Integration of marine and coastal natural capital accounting into local development planning and operations in Quang Ninh Province

Baseline: Quang Ninh Province will continue being challenged to plan, implement and monitor its rapid economic development in a sustainable manner. Its policy and government sponsored program to expand fishing and tourism capacity, as well as the ongoing conversion and reclamation of coastal mangroves and tidal flats for urban and industrial use, will lead to continued degradation of valuable coastal NC in the province and make restoration efforts such as on mangroves less impactful due to - at the same time, losing mangroves elsewhere.

The baseline Socio-economic Development plan for 2026 ? 2030, will not capture the value of NC nor the cost/benefit related to NC) of different development scenarios; and its application to (marine) spatial planning under the evolving VASI national spatial planning programme, the VASI-led Master Plan for Sustainable Exploitation of Coastal Resources, as well as the counterpart WB ProBlue marine spatial planning support ? especially for Quang Ninh province. Other sustainable Blue Economy related baseline programs such as initiatives related to water pollution control, especially marine plastic litter, would lack a standardized approach or even exclude proper valuation of the cost/benefit of as well as alternative development scenarios related to pollution prevention and management.

Sector development under the recent guidance of Blue/Ocean Growth and ? spearheaded by corporate entities, whilst referring to the need to protect natural resources or mitigate impacts of sector operations, will highly likely continue its BAU approach by excluding NC values, the quantification of dependencies and impacts, as well as the likely positive business outcomes from investing in NC.

Without the UNEP/GEF project and its NCA approach, several closely related baseline initiatives towards NC/BD protection in Quang Ninh Province which are ongoing or recently completed, may not attain their objective of the protection of NC and biodiversity, specifically for the targeted land-/seascapes as well as the

GEF incremental support will both enable the adoption and utilization of SEEA-based metrics and analytical capacity, as well as the incorporation of NC values in the scheduled government baseline project towards the provincial socio-economic development planning, as well as its translation into improved spatial plans and resource allocation for pollution control and other environmental protection measures, including those under the selected baseline initiatives on marine spatial planning, reduction of coastal pollutions, as well as the application of NCA, including in Quang Ninh Province.

GEF incremental support will make attainment of the objectives of government policies and programs especially those directly related to the two national Ocean/Blue Growth strategies, more achievable, more sustainable or better representing the provincial context towards the protection of NC and biodiversity, through developing and applying NC accounting specifically for the targeted land-/seascapes in Quang Ninh province over a total targeted landscape area of 90,128 ha (including buffer zones and corridors of PAs), as well as indirectly a total

Local/national benefits:

- ? Socio-economic development plan for QN province developed with application of NCA analysis
- ? NC protocols or sustainable business plans developed by at least 4 private sector groups
- ? Improved landscape management with direct benefit through reduced NC impact vectors, including on nutrients, plastics and other pollution, critical habitat loss and degradation, and loss of connectivity for key ecosystem services. PAs with indirect benefit through e.g. enhanced planning and financial resources incorporated in SE Development Plans

Global benefits:

Core Indicator 4: putting 90,128ha of landscapes under improved practices.

Core Indicator 5: : putting 910ha of marine habitat under improved practices.

Core Indicator 6: Mitigation of GHG emissions over a 20 year accounting period through avoided deforestation and carbon sequestration (Total 907,358tCO₂eq.)

buffer zones and corridors of the protected areas in the project area.

area of 42,978 ha of the 3 protected areas ? 1 terrestrial and 1 marine PA, and one NP with the MPA status in process, through reduction of impact drivers coming from outside development and suboptimal planning. Additionally, through GEF incremental support, NC analysis and valuation, as well as running a number of sector round tables including with the corporate sector active in the coastal zone of Quang Ninh Province, interest will be created towards the development and application of NC Protocols or Sustainable Business Plans, specifically towards reducing NC impact vectors as well as on how to maintain NC critical to their operations (such a clean water). Whilst not included as a core indicator, the project will enable provincial government and private sector to take these plans further through e.g. green investments, modifying investment plans and reporting on sustainability aspects related to e.g. attainment of SDG in provincial programs and projects. In the alternative, GEF incremental support will offer NC-based holistic, spatial and functional analysis and planning, as well as facilitate corporate and local provincial government

coordination of effort, commitment and follow up to several environmental policies and programs to improve environmental sustainability of coastal development in Quang Ninh Province.	
--	--

Component 3: Outreach and knowledge management for national uptake

Baseline: In the baseline very few national and likely no provincial programs target communications and partnership building towards the advantage of SEEA-based NC assessments, analysis and reporting ? except as part of the occasional annual International Day of BD, and related global commitments. Adoption of NCA will be ad-hoc, project-based or led by few innovative government staff, as well as ISPONRE, yet not in broad partnership with those national agencies mandated in NC-related sectors such as fisheries, agriculture, forestry, water services or green corporate investments. As a result, well-meant national projects and local activities such as the former WAVES, ProEcoServ, as well as the more recent Global Ocean Accounting Partnership (with a.o ESCAP) remain short-lived, unconsolidated nor replicated elsewhere.

Collaboration with GSO and national entities leading on NCA, will remain challenging for provincial government and even more so to reach out to corporate entities, especially to move beyond the more common qualitative NC-assessments, and instead incorporate quantified results in modified plans, spatial allocation or investment decisions.

GEF incremental support will enable particularly ISPONRE, GSO and local provincial government, to beef up their environmental communications with regards national polices related to protecting, managing and reporting on NC through the benefit of using SEEA-EA-based NCA; as well as establishing national partnership with key agencies to agree on standard methodology, a national spatial data framework for NCA, as well as the foreseen applications of NCA in Viet Nam.

The project will enable analysis and communicating of best practice, including on gender, institutional collaboration and replication of NCA ? with as targeted result one additional province added on collaborating with GSO in the establishment of new provincial NCA accounts including their application to blue economic growth path/PA landscape planning, management and monitoring. The strengthened national community of practice as well as National Platform on NCA for information exchange and blue economy growth policy advocacy, is expected to significantly enhance the mainstreaming of NCA in routine government procedures, especially as part of the targeted 28 coastal

Local/national benefits:

? Establishment of an operational Community of Practice on NCA to catalyze NCA awareness and knowledge

? At least 3 additional provincial plans developed with application of NCA for blue economic growth planning

? A consolidated knowledge management system on NCA is available with documentation of best practices, technical reports and other outreach materials

? Knowledge product development of ocean/coastal accounting will be supported by the collaboration with GOAP.

Global benefits:

? Emerging best practices on NCA as developed in Viet Nam documented and shared with a regional and global audience, including the regional networks of GOAP and USAID .

	provinces under the two prevailing national strategies for Ocean/Blue economic growth.	
--	--	--

Global significance

Agreements.

Contributing to SDG14 "Life Below Water" is the most relevant goal for the Blue Economy. This is being pursued through the stated objectives under the two Blue Economy resolutions as well as the broader Vietnamese environmental response to deliver on Targets (14.1 Pollution reduction; 14.2 protecting NC and BD; 14.3 responses to CC and sea-level rise; 14.4 sustainable fisheries management, and 14.5 expanding on the MPA to at least 6% and restoring mangroves to the year 2000 area).

There are 4,350 species recorded in Quang Ninh Province, including 2,236 genera and 721 families of fauna, fungi and plants. Among them, most species are angiosperms (1580 species), Arthropods (722 species), Mollusks (438 species), Guts (Coelenterata, 157 species) and Silica algae (Bacillariophyta, 153 species). A total of 98 endangered plant species have been identified, of which, 57 species included in the Viet Nam Red Book (2007) with 22 stated as Endangered (EN) and 33 as Vulnerable (VU), plus 2 species Critically Endangered (CR) the Northern Antlers (*Rauvolfia serpentina* (L.), and *Cinnamomum parthenoxylon* (Jack.); however none of these plant species is listed as CR in the IUCN Red Data List. Of the total of 69 mammal species in the province, 16 species are listed in the IUCN Red Data List (2010); 22 species are listed in Viet Nam Red Data Book (2007); and 22 species are included in the Viet Nam Government Decree 32/2006 ND-CP on "Plant and Animal Management" (2006). Additionally, of the 39 amphibian species and 95 reptiles species found in the province, 12 species are included in Decree 32/2006, including the Near Threatened (IUCN Red Data Book) Python (*Python molurus*) and the Vulnerable King Cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*). Birds: 174 bird species in 55 families were identified, including a species listed in the IUCN Red Data Book, the Vulnerable Collard Crow (*Corvus torquatus*).

Innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up

Innovativeness: The project is based on the concept of NCA, which although not new, is emerging as an alternative concept in Vietnam and represents an innovative approach unto itself within the current state. NCA has been identified as a tool to measure the changes in the stock of natural capital at a variety of scales and to integrate the value of natural capital into accounting and reporting systems at international and national level. This will result in better management of the country's natural capital. The project will seek to build off existing international and national best practices for NCA and adapt these into a national/provincial economic planning and policy decision. Opportunities to provide guidance for monitoring NC impacts/benefits and incorporating climate change adaptation and

mitigation into planning, development and operation will also be explored ? these are emerging issues where more guidance is needed.

Where practical, the project will also leverage technology such as a NCA platform and a range NCA applications and tools to support NC monitoring. It is also innovative in its approach to reducing negative impacts from fast and unsustainable development by mobilizing participation of the private sector, and contributing to biodiversity conservation.

Specific innovations being planned through the project are the following: First, the project will develop a coherent and consistent methodology based on the guidance from UNESCAP and GOAP on ocean accounting and the SEEA-EA framework, as well as provide support to link NC accounts with routine government indicators and reporting procedures such as the implementation of national action plan on SDGs. The current SNA of Viet Nam has not included the value of natural capital and the project will support mainstreaming NC functions and values into the system by developing a Spatial Data Framework which is in line with on-going policy and systems (i.e. the accounting system of GSO). Further, the project will support reducing pressures on coastal ecosystems through conducting a comprehensive assessment of impacts/dependence of economic sectors on NC, and use the results from the assessment to inform policy makers to develop an appropriate Blue Economy Model in Quang Ninh Province to reduce the pollution from land-based sources and contribute to sustainable conservation of coastal ecosystem.

Sustainability: An important contribution to sustainability will be through significant investments in capacity building under Output 1.1.2 (Staff training and institutional capacity building on ocean/coastal natural capital accounting in support blue economic development for national and provincial institutions) and Component 3, for all the national and local stakeholders (government, community, and private sector) who are involved in some way in project delivery. The investment in these individuals is expected to give long-lasting benefits on the ground, well beyond the end of the project. The development of a tailored NCA curriculum, the training of government staff with this curriculum and the development of the Community of Practice and the national NCA platform are all aimed at building a catalyzing environment in which learning built within the project context will be embedded in structures that will persist after the project implementation period.

The project will empower decision makers to work with national and international experts in order to incorporate NC, biodiversity and ecosystem services into development planning. All tools and methods developed and adapted will be locally validated in order to make sure that the tools can be used by the resource managers as well as the likelihood these would be formally adopted in policies and regulation, ensuring a longer-term durability of project impact.

The integrated set of business plans (under Output 2.1.2) and SDG's monitoring indicators (under Output 1.1.5) will also collectively include opportunities for business and livelihood enhancement so that the resilience is enhanced through the creation of sustainable business and employment, incomes to local communities toward blue economic growth model. The project will work with the mandated government agencies and build coordination mechanism to follow up to several national as well as provincial policies and programs to improve sustainability of coastal development in Quang Ninh Province. The project will also work upstream to enable the incorporation of NC values in the Socio-Economic planning, as well as highlighting sector dependencies and trends of impact on NC in areas included for provincial spatial

planning, including the establishment and zoning of existing and new coastal and near-shore protected areas in Quang Ninh Province.

Financial and institutional sustainability are key to enhance durability of the project outcomes beyond the project closure and will be achieved by working through existing government agencies and social groups and strengthening existing multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms to secure the engagement of policy-makers and decision-makers across multiple government agencies. The project has been purposely designed to dovetail with government policy directions for NCA and bring together the mandates of different Ministries in an integrated fashion. This alignment will support the longer-term impact of the project as its mainstreaming focus will help embed the project approaches and NCA within a National Action Plan for the Implementation of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, Resolution on sustainable development of blue economy, etc. The provision of guidelines, criteria, standards, and requirements, as well as capacity development programmes on NCA will strengthen awareness on NCA at national, provincial, and local level. The project aims to mobilize participation of the private sector, and contribute to biodiversity conservation through development of Sustainable Business Plans/strategies. This will support the ongoing development initiatives related to Blue Economy. Financial sustainability will be further supported by identification of pathways for enhancing opportunities for sustainable business, financing, improving revenue generation in the project landscape.

Replication: The project in its design follows a sequential approach in which the increased institutional capacity and arrangements are used in a pilot set-up in Quang Ninh Province, testing the application of natural capital accounting into local development planning and ultimately, making use of this strengthened capacity and piloting and emerging best practice, the targeted replication in at least three additional provinces (Output 3.1.2). To facilitate an effective replication the project intends to support this replication process through applicable government legal directives, secured funding and expanded provincial collaboration.

Scaling up: Through its approach of testing and refinement, the project will demonstrate NCA at provincial/site level that can be scaled up to other sites at national level. For example, Viet Nam has 28 coastal provinces/cities, a coastline 3,260 km long and with the total coastal area of over one million square kilometers, which suggests a huge working area for upscaling. The Ocean Blue Economy is the national policy direction set by the Government of Viet Nam for all coastal provinces. Pilot implementation of NCA in Quang Ninh Province therefore would be a good example to replicate to other 28 coastal provinces in Viet Nam.

The project's focus at national level on development operational policies and guidelines facilitating NCA application in combination with demonstration at landscape level will support scaling up and replication of project lessons and best practices across Vietnam, and lessons learned will be captured and integrated into final guidelines and standards that can be applied nationally through relevant Ministries and sectoral associations, and NGOs working in the field of NCA and biodiversity conservation.

The project will establish knowledge management platforms and mechanisms that support the transfer of project experiences and knowledge between sites and Ministries, and with other GEF projects focused on mainstreaming marine and coastal NCA into development planning. It will also facilitate Viet Nam's public officials, academicians and private entities to directly access global expertise on the application of NCAs based on the SEEA-EA framework and to have a formally established community of practice

(platform) for exchange of knowledge, partnership and tools. The knowledge management component of the project will engage with stakeholders at national scale which will enable the Project to disseminate the findings and best practices at a broader scale and enable replication through other funding and baseline mechanisms

The project will work closely with key agencies at national level in the policy development process to include the projects/programme of NCA in national policy and legal documents to secure the financial resource from government and other development partners for replication of NCA to other provinces of Viet Nam. GOAP is currently working with Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) to ensure funding for replicating the application of the Technical Guideline on Ocean Accounting for Sustainable Development to other coastal provinces in Viet Nam.

[1] Eleven BRs in Vietnam include: Can Gio Mangrove (Designated in 2000), Dong Nai (former Cat Tien, extended in 2011), Cat Ba (2004), Red River Delta (2004), KienGiang (2006), Western Nghe An (2007), Mui Ca Mau (2000), Cu Lao Cham - Hoi An (2009), LangBiang (2015), Nui Chua (2021) and Kon Ha Nung (2021).

[2] Ha Long Bay and Phong Nha - Ke Bang National Park were listed as natural sites in 1994 and 2003, respectively, before receiving the extension on the criteria for exceptional geological and geomorphologic values by the World Heritage Committee in 2000 and 2015

[3] Vietnam has had nine wetlands designated as Ramsar sites so far which are: (1) Xuan Thuy NP, (2). Bau Sau Wetlands and Seasonal Floodplains, (3) Ba Be NP, (4) Tram Chim NP, (5). Mui Ca Mau NP, (6) Con Dao NP, (7) Lang Sen Wetlands Reserve, (8) U Minh Thuong National Park, (9). Van Long Wetland Nature Reserve.

[4] Ten national parks in Vietnam have been named as ASEAN Heritage Parks include: (1) Ba Be, (2) Hoang Lien, (3) Chu Mom Ray, (4) Kon Ka Kinh, (5) U Minh Thuong, (6) Bai Tu Long, (7). Bidoup Nui Ba, (8). Ngoc Linh (Natural Reserve), (9). Vu Quang, and (10) Lo Go - Xa Mat.

[5] For the definition of wealth and the methodology: Silva, P. C. D., Tarp, F., Mortensen, J. B., Vu, H. N. X., Nguyen, H. M., & Ho, H. C. (2007). Accounting for Viet Nam's Wealth: The Role of Natural Resources. HaNoi, Viet Nam: Central Institute for Economic Management, CIEM

[6] FAO. 2019. Country Gender Assessment of Agriculture and the Rural Sector in Viet Nam.

[7] Asian Development Bank. 2015. Investing in natural capital for a sustainable future in the Greater Mekong Subregion.

[8] FAO. 2016. The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture: Opportunities and Challenges; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: Rome, Italy.

[9] Talaue-McManus, L. 2000. Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis for the South China Sea. EAS/RCU Technical Report Series No. 14. UNEP, Bangkok, Thailand.

[10] MARD. 2021. Decision No. 1558/QD-BNN-TCLN on announcing the current forest status nationwide in 2020.

[11] According to the World Bank, the blue economy is the "sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystem." European Commission defines it as "All economic activities related to oceans, seas and coasts."

[12] Natural Resources Management: Viet Nam Development Report, 2011, The World Bank

[13] ESCAP, 2019: Viet Nam Ocean Accounting: Case study in Quang Ninh, Final Report

[14] Viet Nam has 9,620 ha of seagrass, of which Quang Ninh has 830 ha. Key seagrass species are *Enhalus*

acoroides, *Thalassiahemprichii*, *Cymodoceaserrulata*, *Haloduleuninervis*, *Halophila ovalis*, and

Zostera japonica

[15] Quang Ninh has at least two locations with coral reef ecosystems, including Co To - Thanh Lan and Ha

Long - Cat Ba

[16] Phuong N.N., Poirier L., Pham Q.T., Lagarde F., Zalouk-Vergnoux A., 2018. Factors influencing the microplastic contamination of bivalves from the French Atlantic coast: location, season and/or mode of life?. *Mar. Pollut. Bull.*, 129(2), 664-674.

[17] Tsangaris, C., Digka, N., Valente, T., Aguilar, A., Borrell, A., de Lucia, G.A., Gambaiani, D., Garcia-Garin, O., Kaberi, H., Martin, J., Maurio, E., Miaud, C., Palazzo, L., del Olmo, A.P., Raga, J.A., Sbrana, A., Silvestri, C., Skylaki, E., Vighi, M., Wongdontree, P., Matiddi, M., 2020. Using Boopsboops (osteichthyes) to assess microplastic ingestion in the Mediterranean Sea. *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 158, 111397.

[18] Lin, L., Ma, L.-S., Li, H.-X., Pan, Y.-F., Liu, S., Zhang, L., Peng, J.-P., Fok, L., Xu, X.-R., He, W.-H., 2020. Low level of microplastic contamination in wild fish from an urban estuary. *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 160, 111650.

[19] Khu L? Th?y Chung, Tr?ng Tr?n Nguy?n Sang. 2021. Accumulation of microplastics in some aquatic animals in Viet Nam.

[20] Talaue-McManus, L. 2000. Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis for the South China Sea. EAS/RCU Technical Report Series No. 14. UNEP, Bangkok, Thailand.

[21] General Statistics Office (GSO) Viet Nam Household Living Standard Surveys (VHLSS) 2006-2008.

[22] Biodiversity Conservation for Sustainable Development, 2020, Army Newspaper.

[23] Opportunities and challenges for mangrove management in Viet Nam: Lessons learned from Thai Binh, Quang Ninh and Thanh Hoa provinces, 2019, Center for International Forestry Research.

[24] <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1077310/Viet-Nam-annual-revenue-of-tourism-sector/>

[25] TAKING STOCK: Recent Economic Developments of Viet Nam, Special Focus: Viet Nam's Tourism Developments: Stepping Back from the Tipping Point-Viet Nam's Tourism Trends, Challenges, and Policy Priorities, The World Bank, July 2019.<http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/pt/821801561652657954/pdf/Taking-Stock-Recent-Economic-Developments-of-Viet-Nam-Special-Focus-Viet-Nams-Tourism-Developments-Stepping-Back-from-the-Tipping-Point-Viet-Nams-Tourism-Trends-Challenges-and-Policy-Priorities.pdf>

[26] NOTE: Seagrass beds and mangroves are critically important habitat for very large numbers of benthic and coral reef dwelling species. Research in some parts of the world have shown that up to 90% of commercial fish may rely on seagrass beds and mangrove forests at some point in their lives.

[27] IFAD, 2010, Viet Nam Environmental and Climate Change Assessment, IFAD's Country Strategic Opportunities Programme 2012-2017, IFAD Environment and Climate Division.

[28] Asian Development Bank. 2015. Investing in natural capital for a sustainable future in the Greater Mekong Subregion.

[29] ISPONRE-ESCAP (2022) Vietnam Ocean Account. Case study in Quang Ninh Province, March 2022

[30] Voyer, M, Rambourg, C. & Farmery, A (2021) Governance frameworks to support a Blue Economy in Viet Nam. Report to the Vietnamese Government and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security, Wollongong, Australia

[31] <https://www.vn.undp.org/content/vietnam/en/home/presscenter/undp-in-the-news/marine-plastic-waste-an-urgent-issue-in-coastal-vit-nam.html>

[32] UNDP (2022). Blue Economy Scenarios for Vietnam

[33] TFP or also multi-factor productivity, is usually measured as the ratio of aggregate output (e.g., GDP) to aggregate inputs (e.g. use of NC resources)

[34] See e.g. Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting <https://www.oceanaccounts.org/technical-guidance-on-ocean-accounting-2/>

[35] See e.g. Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting <https://www.oceanaccounts.org/technical-guidance-on-ocean-accounting-2/>

41 UNEP (2022). UNEP Transitional Framework to a Sustainable Blue Economy: A Pilot Rapid Readiness Assessment in Vietnam, October 2022.

[37] Suggested is to do this for Bai Tu Long National Park, in the process of obtaining the status of Marine National Park as well.

[38][38] See <https://www.oceanaccounts.org/technical-guidance-on-ocean-accounting-2/>

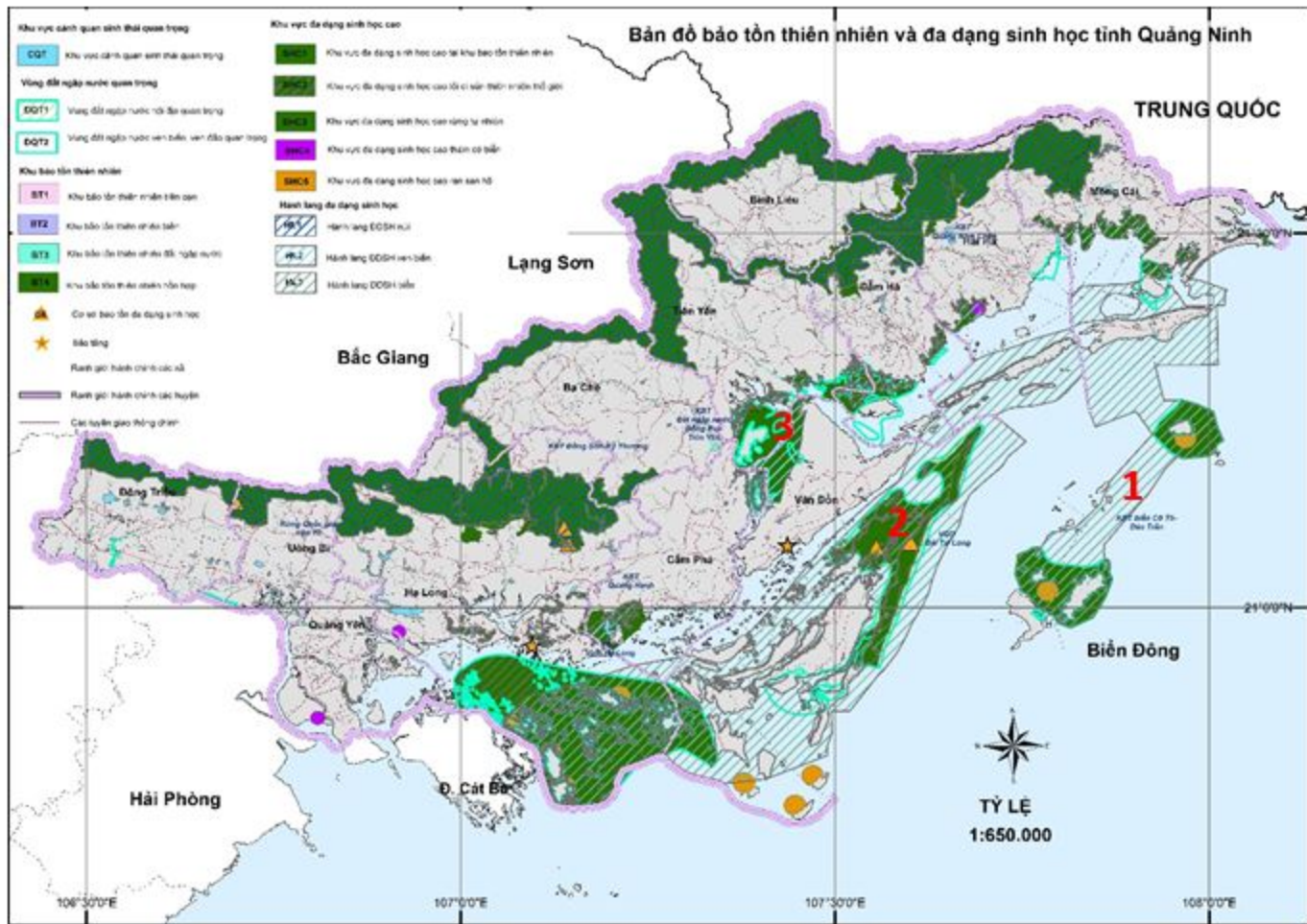
1b. Project Map and Coordinates

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.

ProDoc Figure 1. Project Landscape in Quang Ninh Province with Location of Focal Areas of Co To-Dao Tran (1), Dong Rui-Tien Yen (2) and Bai Tu Long (3)

Source: Quang Ninh PPC (2022), Identification Report on Master Planning for Quang Ninh Province in the period of 2021 - 2030 and vision toward 2050

Quang Ninh Province is situated along the Northeastern coast of Viet Nam from N20°40' to N21°40' and from E106°25' to E108°25'.



1c. Child Project?

If this is a child project under a program, describe how the components contribute to the overall program impact.

2. Stakeholders

Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase:

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Yes

Private Sector Entities Yes

If none of the above, please explain why:

Please provide the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent assessment.

Stakeholder mapping and analysis

The success of the project intervention requires the active involvement and participation of the various stakeholders[1]. The main project stakeholders are (i) the national ministries and affiliated bodies at national level; (ii) Provincial stakeholders, including local authorities; (iii) Private sector representatives; (iv) civil society, CBOs, NGOs, Academic Institutions; and (v) multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors, international organizations and development partners.

Table 5. Overview of Stakeholders, their Mandate and Expected Role in Execution

Stakeholder	Mandate/responsibility	Role in the project and expected role in execution
1. National Government		
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) and its constituent authorities	The wide-ranging state management functions of MONRE include the management of air, land and water and natural resources under the amended Law of Environmental Protection (2020), as well as biodiversity under Viet Nam's Law of Biodiversity (2008). MONRE's mandate also includes coordination with ministries, ministerial committees and government agencies in providing guidance for implementation of resource use, environmental protection and biodiversity conservation in the sector areas managed by these ministries and agencies. MONRE is, among others, the national focal point for various multilateral environmental agreements, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UNFCCC, the Ramsar Convention, and the UNCCD.	<i>Direct beneficiary and National Executing Agency</i> MONRE is the designated national Executing Agency (NEA) for the project. MONRE will assume all duties assigned to the NEA, will chair the Project Steering Committee (PSC), and assume a leading role in engaging national and local level stakeholders in implementing project activities. MONRE will lead Annual Review meetings on project planning and reporting, and will appraise and approve all project related documents, including Annual Work Plans and Quarterly Work Plans.

Stakeholder	Mandate/responsibility	Role in the project and expected role in execution
Institute of Natural Resources and Environment (ISPONRE)	ISPONRE is a subsidiary body under MONRE responsible to advise and assist the Minister of MONRE in the field of environmental management laws and policies. ISPONRE undertakes researches and develops strategies and policies in the areas of MONRE's mandate including NCA.	<i>Direct beneficiary and National Implementing Agency</i> ISPONRE will assume the responsibility for overall project implementation as Project Owner under delegated responsibility by MONRE. ISPONRE is also responsible for coordinating relevant stakeholders in support of the overall implementation of the project. ISPONRE and its department of Research and International Cooperation (SICD) will be responsible for day-to-day coordination and management of project activities at the national level and coordination of project activities at the provincial level, financial management and reporting. ISPONRE has past experience of managing UN Projects, including GEF funded-projects.
Viet Nam Administration of Seas and Islands (VASI)	Under MONRE, Viet Nam Administration of Seas and Islands (VASI) has the mandate for state management of seas and Islands, in accordance with laws and regulations in cooperation with other ministries. Institutionally VASI is the agency authorized for the preparation of Vietnam marine spatial planning	<i>Direct beneficiary</i> VASI will collaborate with the project to identify gaps and priorities in promoting NCA through development of national platform on NCA, data requirements for marine spatial planning and mainstreaming NCA in to marine/ocean policies policy and legislation.
Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI)	MPI performs State management functions in the field of planning and investment, including the provision of general advices on strategies and plans on national socio-economic development, on mechanism and policies for general economic management and some specific fields, on domestic and foreign investment, etc.	<i>Direct beneficiary</i> MPI will be a beneficiary of the project results, specifically capacity building, training and policy advice on how to integrate natural resources use and NCA into national and provincial planning procedures, strategies, and plans.
General Statistical Office (GSO)	General Statistics Office of Viet Nam (GSO) serves under MPI realizing the function as an adviser for the MPI Minister in state management for statistics; conducting statistical activities and providing social and economic information to organizations and individuals domestically and internationally in accordance with the laws.	<i>Direct beneficiary and Co-implementing partner</i> GSO will collaborate with the project to develop data framework for NCA and to be in charge of integrate NCA into SNA. It also will support in project activities to identify gaps, priority issues, methodology for NCA and pilot the NCA at project site.

Stakeholder	Mandate/responsibility	Role in the project and expected role in execution
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)	MARD has the responsibility for exercising the State management over forest protection and development as well as fisheries management nationwide, through its Forest Protection Department, Special Use Forest and Protection Forest Department, and Department for Capture Fisheries and Resource Protection. Prior to the 2008 Biodiversity Law, MARD has been responsible for developing the national PA system within forests (Special Use Forests), marine and inland water ecosystems (Marine Protected Areas and Inland Water Conservation Areas, respectively).	<i>Direct beneficiary</i> MARD will collaborate and support in project activities to identify gaps, priority issues and solutions for sustainable forest and fisheries management, ecotourism, and biodiversity conservation of NPs, including strengthening PA management, identification of HCV set-aside forest and marine conservation areas, etc.
2. Provincial and Local Government		
Provincial People's Committees (PPCs) in pilot site	PPCs are headed by a Chairman and supported by Vice-Chairmen for each major sector including a Vice Chairman for Natural Resources and Environment. Under Viet Nam's decentralization policies, PPCs play a major role in provincial development and planning and implementation, including on environmental management and biodiversity conservation. PPCs also have an important role in ensuring that biodiversity and natural capital are integrated into provincial planning and programs at the local level. Specifically, they are responsible for coordinating the biodiversity conservation activities of various line departments at the provincial (and city) level. PPCs currently have management responsibility for those PAs ? SUFs, Integrated Water Management and MPAs - that lie entirely within their provincial territory.	<i>Direct beneficiary and Co-implementing partner</i> The PPCs in pilot site and their subsidiary agencies at the provincial level will participate in project implementation, providing information, support and co-financial contributions. The PPCs will coordinate and oversee implementation, management and monitoring of project activities including: (i) review work plans; (ii) preside over inter-agency coordination meetings including district authorities as well as sectoral stakeholders; (iii) integrate marine and coastal natural capital accounting into provincial and local development planning and operations.
Department of Natural Resources & Environment (DONRE)	DONRE is the provincial arm of MONRE and as such the State agency responsible for managing natural resources and environment at the provincial level (including issues related to biodiversity, and currently on land administration). DONRE also undertakes activities on pollution monitoring.	DONRE is the primary technical government partner of this project at the provincial level. DONRE will collaborate with the project to collect information for NCA at local level, to integrate marine and coastal natural capital accounting into provincial and local development planning and operations.

Stakeholder	Mandate/responsibility	Role in the project and expected role in execution
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD)	DARD has responsibilities for the agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture sectors. DARD also has considerable experience of managing PAs across Viet Nam. DARD also has good human resources at the local level for ensuring the integration of marine and coastal natural capital accounting into provincial and local development planning and operations.	<i>Collaborating partner</i> DARD will participate and support in project activities to develop an integrated vision, map out of natural resources/ capital and detailed planning of project activities, including HCV areas, forest restoration areas, marine conservation areas etc.
Department of Planning and Investment (DPI)	DOIT is the provincial arms of MPI and thus critically important for integration of marine and coastal natural capital accounting into provincial and local development planning and operations. DPI also has considerable experience implementing green growth at local level.	<i>Collaborating partner</i> DPI will be beneficiary of project results, specifically related to integrated vision on marine and coastal natural capital to mainstream NCA into strategies and planning.
Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism (DOCST)	DOCST is the provincial representative of MOCST, assigned to implement its mandate at the province level, including on provincial level tourism development, and certifying tourism certification within provincial tourism activities.	<i>Collaborating partner</i> DOCST will support tourism related initiatives, including private-partnerships, sustainable business plan, and models for sustainable tourism practices.
National park/Protected Area Management Boards (NP/PA MBs)	NP/PA MBs are designated authorities responsible for the management of national park, including Special-Use Forests under forest protection and development regulations, Marine protected areas under fisheries regulations, and nature reserves under provincial regulations.	<i>Collaborating partner</i> NP/PA MBs will be involved with the implementation of project activities at local level through providing information, identifying priority issues at each site, and participating in trainings provided by the project.
3. Private sector		

Stakeholder	Mandate/responsibility	Role in the project and expected role in execution
<p>Private Sector, including at national and provincial levels</p>	<p>There are many private companies are operating in and cooperating with Quang Ninh e.g. Accor Lived Limited, Quang Ninh Fishery Import ? Export Company, Halotour Company, Ha Long Tourism Company Limited etc.</p> <p>There is a significant interest among the private sector to understand and internalize the true costs of their operation to NC, including quantification of their dependency on NC.</p>	<p><i>Collaborating partner</i></p> <p>The project will engage private sector as much as possible in project formulation and execution at provincial level through broad consultations. The Project will also build on the good work being done on integrating marine and coastal natural capital accounting into provincial and local development planning and fishery sector operations by engaging and supporting private sector companies.</p> <p>The private sector will also be project technical support in corporate sustainability reporting and/or business planning by incorporating NC (e.g. NC Protocols), project capacity building beneficiary, member of provincial project working group. Public outreach and education campaign on mainstreaming biodiversity and natural capital into tourism delivered to tourism industry, CSOs, and domestic and international tourists and knowledge exchange during the project implementation.</p>
<p>4. Civil society/ community-based organizations, Non-profit organization (international and national NGOs), Academy and research institutions</p>		

Stakeholder	Mandate/responsibility	Role in the project and expected role in execution
<p>Civil Society, local communities and community-based organizations (CBOs), e.g. Viet Nam Tourism Association, Fisheries Associations (FA), Farmers Unions, Women's Unions and Youth Union, Quang Ninh Tourism Association</p>	<p>Civil society/ community-based organizations are custodians, primary users and managers of the landscape resources and key target groups for all components of the project. The project recognizes the particular importance of female representation and decision-making rights in both national and provincial Women Unions; the scientific and technological community; workers and trade unions; business and industry; and local authorities.</p>	<p><i>Collaborating partner</i> Local communities, including CBOs, will participate in the implementation of project activities and be beneficiaries of project investments in Quang Ninh province. Their involvement will be sought in the provincial developing planning. Civil Society will be involved in the analysis of priority issues and the design of project interventions/activities at project site. A number of local Fishers Associations, Tourism Association exist in Quang Ninh Province, which have been active in several aspects of wetland and marine management and conflict resolution. Specific interests and project roles will be determined as part of the stakeholder and gender engagement planning process.</p>
<p>National and international NGOs</p>	<p>NGOs (WWF, IUCN, GOAP etc.) play an important role in a variety of sectors like biodiversity conservation; sustainable natural resources use, NCA, minimizing impacts from development, pollution abatement, as well as otherwise addressing the country's and local needs, including on themes like policy and legislation, research, education and awareness raising. They play a vital role in convincing and supporting governments and business to undertake needed reforms through evidence-based research and advocacy. Relevant local, national and international NGO active in the project-relevant fields of NCA and blue economy with links to the project's thematic and/or spatial focus include WWF, GOAP.</p>	<p><i>Collaborating partner</i> National and international NGOs are all potential project partners in respect of co-financing, sharing experience, and providing technical support and consultations. Policy development by the project will benefit from their technical inputs. Appropriate partner organizations will be identified during project implementation.</p>

Stakeholder	Mandate/responsibility	Role in the project and expected role in execution
Academic research institutions	<p>A number of institutes at national and landscape level have strong environment and statistical research units with knowledge and experience relevant to this project. The Vietnam Academy of Natural Science & Technology (VAST), conducting multi-disciplinary studies in socio-economic development, ecology and environmental management, policy analysis, culture. Three VAST Institutes are of particular relevance to this project, namely the Institutes of Ecology and Biological Resources (IEBR), Institute of Marine Environment and Resources (IMER) in Nha Trang, and Southern Institute of Ecology (SIE).</p> <p>The Institute of Statistical Science (ISS) is an affiliate of GSO. ISS is functioned to conduct research on developing statistical strategies, planning, policies for state management in the field of statistics; provide research and consultancy services.</p>	<p><i>Collaborating partner</i></p> <p>Appropriate partner organizations will be identified during project implementation, as relevant and in line with their thematic focus and experience.</p> <p>Universities and research institutes are potential collaborators on the project for capacity building and execution. They will be involved in consultancy activities, including on legal-regulatory framework, field studies on mapping, inventory, data compilation, trainings and capacity building.</p>
5. Multilateral and bilateral donors, international organizations and development partners		
Development Partners (DPs)	<p>A number of DPs have on-going projects either in the marine spatial planning or covering themes of interest to the project and its NCA focus.</p>	<p><i>Collaborating partner</i></p> <p>Relevant DPs will be engaged as partners to facilitate coordination and collaboration at national and project landscape levels, to ensure convergence of ongoing programs. The Project Management Board (PMB) and UNEP will maintain close relations with all relevant DPs, as appropriate; provide them with observer status participants during PSC meetings.</p>

Stakeholder	Mandate/responsibility	Role in the project and expected role in execution
UN- Environment	The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) is the GEF Agency for this project.	<p><i>GEF Agency</i></p> <p>The roles and responsibilities of UNEP will include quality assurance, oversight, and support. It may also facilitate linkages to other relevant programs and projects, access to data and specialized technical advisory services. UNEP will also be responsible for the project's GEF specific M&E function, including evaluation services according to its UNEP-GEF procedures, as well as compliance with GEF requirements. UNEP has a broader collaboration partnership with ISPONRE-MONRE under the UNEP Transitional Framework to a Sustainable Blue Economy with the for the project relevant Pilot Rapid Readiness Assessment in Vietnam.</p>
UNDP	The United Nations Development Programme has a broad portfolio on environmental projects in Viet Nam, among which their support to Blue Economy scenarios, integrated coastal planning, ocean waste and marine spatial planning are of direct interest.	<p><i>Collaborating partner</i></p> <p>UNDP is involved with VASI on a national action plan on marine plastic litter and is also involved in a regional project to fight plastic waste and is supporting capacity building. There is a good synergy scope in spatial planning, with UNDP focusing on Southern coastal provinces.</p>
United Nation Statistic Division (UNSD)	UNSD's functions are to compile and disseminate global statistical information, develop standards and norms for statistical activities, and support countries' efforts to strengthen their national statistical systems.	<p><i>Collaborating partner</i></p> <p>UNSD will provide a more comprehensive and multipurpose view of the interrelationships between the economy and the marine and coastal ecosystem services and the stocks and changes in stocks of marine and coastal ecosystem services. This is based on the global agreed SEEA and SEEA-EA frameworks as basis for standardized NCA.</p>

Stakeholder	Mandate/responsibility	Role in the project and expected role in execution
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)	ESCAP is the most inclusive intergovernmental platform in the Asia-Pacific region. Commission supports inclusive, resilient and sustainable development in the region by generating action-oriented knowledge, and by providing technical assistance and capacity-building services in support of national development objectives, regional agreements and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	<i>Collaborating partner</i> UNESCAP will provide technical support in development and application of the methodology for calculating coastal and marine resources through their expertise in different countries and their piloting including in Viet Nam and other Asian countries

Stakeholder consultation and engagement methods

There are a variety of engagement techniques used to build relationships with stakeholders, gather information from stakeholders, consult with stakeholders, and disseminate project information to stakeholders. When selecting an appropriate consultation technique, appropriate consultation methods, and the purpose for engaging with a stakeholder group will be considered.

Guiding principles during consultations and other forms of engagement are commitment, integrity, respect, transparency, inclusiveness and trust. Through these principles the project will be able to engage the stakeholders, understand their needs and values, respond to specific concerns and questions, ensure that a broad participation is encouraged and ultimately building mutual trust in the process of formulation and implementation of the project.

The goal of this Stakeholder Engagement Plan (Table 8) is to involve all stakeholders of the project, as early as possible in the implementation process and throughout project duration to ensure that, their views and concerns are made known and taken into account. The plan will help the project in implementing effective communication channels and working relationships. The Executing Agency will continue to hold consultations throughout project implementation as deemed necessary. This section provides a summary of the engagement of the major stakeholders. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be implemented in conjunction with the Gender Action Plan.

The Project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Stakeholder engagement is an important feature of the project bringing together stakeholders to enhance the application of natural capital accounting of coastal and marine ecosystems, as well as working with in a multi-stakeholder context to achieve project goals and support the development of strategic and relevant knowledge products, The preparation of this project has included a number of consultations and information sharing activities with various actors that have a key stake in the proposed project.

Table 6. Methods for engaging project stakeholders and related engagement activities.

Stakeholders	Engagement Methods/Means	Engagement Activities
National Government Ministries and Agencies	Emails, consultation meeting, online meetings, face to face meetings, project technical workshops, formal dialogues, information sharing sessions, conferences, project symposia, electronic communications, site visits, digital media (video call apps).	<p>National and local government stakeholders are aware of the project from the project design phase. They will be convened again at the beginning of the project, through the inception workshop, where they will be informed of the project and will have the opportunity to provide further inputs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Management Unit meetings through the Technical Advisory Group - Project Steering Committee meetings - Project Inception workshop - Consulted and briefed during MTR and Terminal project evaluation - Annual Planning and Review Meetings - Participation in NCA platform, Community of Practice (CoP)
NGOs and civil society organizations	Emails, online meetings, training, face-to-face meetings, project technical workshops, informal dialogues, information sharing sessions, conferences, project symposia, electronic communications, knowledge exchange, questionnaire/ surveys, public outreach event, digital media (video call apps).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Inception workshop - Consulted and briefed during MTR and terminal project evaluation - Participation in capacity building events as beneficiary

Stakeholders	Engagement Methods/Means	Engagement Activities
Provincial Government Quang Ninh (PPC, Provincial Line Departments, NP Management Boards)	Emails, provincial project working group meetings, MoU agreements, consultation meeting, online meetings, face to face meetings, project technical workshops, formal dialogues, information sharing sessions, conferences, project symposia, electronic communications, site visits, digital media (video call apps).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Inception workshop - Provincial working group (at minimum semi-annually) - Consulted and briefed during MTR and Terminal project evaluation - Annual Planning and Review Meetings - Participation in Community of Practice (CoP) - Participation in capacity building events - Participation in outreach/advocacy events - Participation in the Project Steering Committee
Private Sector	Emails, face-to-face meetings, workshops, digital media (video call apps).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Inception workshop - Consulted and briefed during MTR and Terminal project evaluation - Annual Planning and Review Meetings - Participation in NCA platform, Community of Practice (CoP) - Participation in capacity building events as beneficiary
Bilateral/ Multilateral Entities	Emails, face-to-face meetings, formal dialogues, information sharing sessions, conferences, project symposia, electronic communications, site visits, digital media (video call apps).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Inception workshop - Consulted and briefed during MTR and Terminal project evaluation - Annual Planning and Review Meetings - Participation in NCA platform, Community of Practice (CoP) - Experience sharing and lessons learning meetings

Detailed stakeholder consultations were conducted during the project identification and preparation phase with representatives of the MONRE, MPI/GSO, MARD, UNEP, UNDP, WWF, GOAP the World Bank, ADB, provincial authorities of Quang Ning Province (PPC, DONRE, DARD, DSO, DOCST) academic and research institutions, local NGOs, private sector, and local communities. Inputs from stakeholders were taken into account in the elaboration of the project work plan (see Annex 5 for details).

Under Output 3.1.2, the project will develop a targeted replication and engagement strategy to ensure information dissemination and sharing of knowledge with (global) project stakeholders, making use of an operational project portal (Output 3.2) to share good practices, lessons learned and knowledge products for global stakeholder groups and sector specific knowledge and outreach products will be made available.

The PMU, under the overall supervision of MONRE, will be responsible for implementing the stakeholder engagement as outlined in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Stakeholder Engagement Matrix. It will also be responsible for monitoring and reporting on stakeholder engagement through the annual project implementation reports (PIRs). Relevant tasks have been incorporated into the Terms of Reference of the project staff (see Annex 11). Budget for stakeholder engagement has been allocated through the meeting, training and travel budget lines as shown in Annex 1.

In the annual PIRs, the PMU will report on the following indicators: Number of government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector, communities and other stakeholder groups that have been involved in the project implementation phase. Number of engagements (such as meetings, workshops, official communications) with stakeholders during the project implementation phase. Number of grievances received and responded to/resolved (see Grievance Redress Mechanism described in the section below). T

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Stakeholder Engagement Matrix in Table 8 includes information on how stakeholders will be involved and consulted in the project execution, as well as how stakeholder engagement will be continuously fostered during project implementation. More detailed planning will be conducted as part of the project implementation.

COVID-19 and stakeholder engagement The present COVID-19 pandemic and its restrictions influence and limit the possible engagement methods of the project. Although direct person-to-person contact is often the most desirable, the project in its preparation phase has made and, in its implementation, will make use of digital video call applications as Zoom to enable frequent consultations and dialogues with project stakeholders, both in stakeholder consultation as in capacity building activities.

Grievance redress mechanism

The project will develop a grievance-redress mechanism, accessible to project stakeholders and beneficiaries, which will facilitate all stakeholders to bring forward any complaints, to be responded and addressed by the project accordingly.[2] The details of the mechanism will be further worked out during the project inception phase and the project will ensure that all relevant stakeholders are informed adequately on the mechanism. The essence of the mechanism is that the project will have a system in place through which stakeholders are able to bring forward any complaint they have regarding project

interventions that have, or assessed to have, a negative impact (be it social or environmental). This could, e.g., relate to cases where access to natural sources would be limited. The mechanism will describe the procedure where and how complaints can be brought forward, with description of a clear focal point, where grievance can be submitted. The mechanism will describe how complaints will be addressed (first through dialogue and forms of mediation to seek a resolution) and what will be done if this does not lead to consensus: unresolved complaints will be brought forward to UNEP and ultimately to GEF.

Participation during project development:

Based on stakeholder analysis and using approach to stakeholder engagement, the PPG team has conducted a series interviews/ consultation meetings with representatives of relevant stakeholders at all levels during PPG phase, including: (i) National government, (ii) Provincial and local government, (iii) Civil society/ community-based organizations (CBOs), Non-profit organization (international and national NGOs), academy and research institutions, and development partners, and (iv) private sector.

For the purpose of announcing and initiating the project preparatory phase, **an inception meeting** was organized on 11 October (Tuesday) 2022 at ISPONRE in Hanoi, Viet Nam. In this meeting about 20 representatives of various stakeholders participated in plenary presentations on the three components of the project. The Workshop Objectives were to:

- ? Familiarize the participating stakeholders with the project background, concept, GEF/UNEP project design requirements, and project preparation process and timeline (PPG phase).
- ? Confirm project stakeholders and outline their roles in project design and implementation;
- ? Discuss the project's draft strategic results framework and formulate initial lists of indicators, baselines/information gaps, targets and assumptions/risks for the various project outcomes and outputs.

The report of the inception meeting is attached as Annex 17.

An overview of the stakeholders consulted during the PPG phase is annexed as Annex 18.

A stakeholders Validation meeting was organized on 25 November 2022 (Friday) in Hanoi with objective to present the draft project design in full and elicit comments, clarifications and additional information for finalization of the project document and related supplementary information. The report of the validation workshop is attached as Annex 19.

During full project execution it will enable provincial-level sector roundtables involving public and private entities, based on comprehensive assessment and analysis of key local industry players, impacts/dependency of the targeted economic sectors, as well as to ensure the collaboration of the private sector with the provincial government towards implementation of Blue Economy Growth model to reduce pollution and other impacts to marine/coastal ecosystems in the targeted landscapes. Additionally, it is expected that full corporate sector engagement would be facilitated through GEF incremental support to integrate NC considerations in Natural Capital Protocols specific per sector or private entity and/or conducting business planning for more sustainable operations and reporting. The sectors to be considered include the tourism and fishery sectors, both consulted during the project design phase in Quang Ninh. Initial talks have been conducted with entities such as Viet Nam Tourism Association and Accor Lived Limited at national level, as well as with the Department of Tourism and Sport - Quang Ninh Province, the Quang Ninh Tourism Association, as well as the Ha Long

Tourism Company Limited - working at local level, to understand what their contribution to the GDP consists of, as well as what main sector activities involve marine natural resources and need for introducing sustainable operations related to NC.

[1] See Section 5 Stakeholder Participation for more details on participation of specific stakeholders.

[2] GEF (2012) Articles 42-44

In addition, provide a summary on how stakeholders will be consulted in project execution, the means and timing of engagement, how information will be disseminated, and an explanation of any resource requirements throughout the project/program cycle to ensure proper and meaningful stakeholder engagement

Select what role civil society will play in the project:

Consulted only;

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor; Yes

Co-financier;

Member of project steering committee or equivalent decision-making body;

Executor or co-executor;

Other (Please explain)

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Provide the gender analysis or equivalent socio-economic assesment.

Gender and social issues are fully integrated in this project as they are important drivers and incentives for achieving global environmental benefits. Women as well as men have been directly be involved in the project development. Special attention has been paid to gender issues in planning processes at national and provincial level, and in the capacity-building activities. Specifically, a gender gap analysis which identifies gender inequalities in access to and control over natural resources, women's participation and decision-making; and socio-economic benefits or services for women was conducted during the project preparation phase in order to incorporate gender perspectives in project interventions and provide an impartial platform to address gender concerns. Additionally, specific log frame indicators and targets were set related to gender equality or inclusiveness, as well as explicit budget allocations to enable meaningful M&E through collection of gender-disaggregated data. Representatives from

women's unions, non-governmental organizations, and other groups advocating on behalf of women were invited to participate in stakeholder consultation meetings.

Equal participation and representation of women and men will be ensured in project implementation activities by requesting from the executing partners to set targets for equal participation of women. Furthermore, the planned gender sensitive project outputs will be materialized by planning related activities and allocating specific budget for gender related activities. The project will seek a gender balance in all activities. Gender equality and empowerment issues will be mainstreamed into the project implementation and monitoring, considering the differences, needs, roles and priorities of women and men.

To promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, the project conducted stakeholder consultations to understand, among others, the context on gender and identify specific dimensions and entry points for gender mainstreaming. Based on these consultations, a gender-responsive approach has been identified for the project outcomes, outputs, and activities, and specific gender-sensitive indicators have been developed for the proposed project and integrated into the project results framework for implementation. Gender aspects are cross-cutting and multi-dimensional and therefore it is imperative to recognize and deal with differentiated situation and needs of women, men and various social groups at all phases of the project and secure their equal participation as an essential ground for successful project implementation. This will further facilitate engaging local women, men and different social groups in more appropriate utilization of natural resources as well as improving their capacities towards climate change adaptation and mitigation processes and sustainable landscape management.

General gender assessment

Over the years, Vietnam has made efforts and commitments to implement and promote gender equality in all areas of social life. Notably, the adoption of the Law on Gender Equality (GE) in 2006 and effective since 2007, stipulates gender equality in eight areas of economic, labor, political, cultural, educational, and social life, association, culture - physical training - sport, and family. These have confirmed the Government's determination in promoting comprehensive gender equality in national development. The formation of the state management apparatus on GE (GE Department, MOLISA) and domestic violence prevention (Department of Family, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism) as well as the development and implementation of a series of National Strategies and Programs. The study on GE and the advancement of women in the 2000-2010 period, and in the 2011-2020 period, demonstrated the government's continued efforts in promoting and implementing GE.

Notwithstanding, Vietnamese women still face many barriers to participating in the implementation of GE.

Women still have less access to land and productive resources than men. In Vietnam, only 9% of women own farms; Women are mainly engaged in small-scale and household agricultural production, and they have less access to land than men due to the gender stereotypes about women's lack of entrepreneurial ability, such as the proportion of men in the red book is higher than that of women. The proportion of women named in the land use right certificate accounts for only 20%, much lower than that of men named in the land use right certificate (62%). The results also show that 18% of women jointly own land use rights. The fact that women have fewer rights to land has hindered their access to credit sources, limited rights related to disposition, mortgage, etc.

Both female and male employed workers increased in the period 2015-2018; however, the average annual employment growth rate of men is nearly 4 times higher than that of women. In 2018, employed female workers were 25.92 million people, accounting for 69.7% of the population aged 15 and over; while this rate for men is 80.0%. The proportion of female workers in industry and construction accounted for only 21.7% compared with 29.3% for men (GSO 2017). This gender imbalance needs to be improved in order to promote employment opportunities and participate in the inclusive development of women in Vietnam.

Women of all age groups, ethnicities, urban or rural areas, perform more unpaid care work than men. Women spend 105 minutes more per day than men doing non-nursery care, which equates to 275 minutes per day (4.5 hours), 32 hours per week and 207 days per year. This means that each year, each woman contributes almost 7 months to unpaid care work and much of it is not recognized or shared with husbands, children, sons and other family and community members. The average income of women is always lower than that of men and the gender pay gap index is almost unchanged, at around 0.9. In the period 2015-2018, the annual income growth rate of women was slower than that of men (7.30% per year for women and 7.87% per year for men). There is a difference in the average income of women and men when considering urban-rural areas, economic and occupational areas, etc.

The proportion of women in the political system has increased in recent years, but the proportion of women in top management positions remains low and remains much lower than that of men. For the 2016-2020 term, female Politburo members account for 15.78%. The number of women holding positions of responsibility in the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee has not changed much over the congresses, with around 10% per term. The number of female deputies holding important positions in agencies of the National Assembly has increased in recent years, the percentage of Vietnamese women participating in the National Assembly in the 2016-2021 term reached 26.8%, an increase of 26%; 2.4% higher than the previous term. However, up to now, this indicator is still very low, not meeting the requirements set out in the National Strategy on Gender Equality for the 2011-2020 period (from 35% or more for the 2016-2020 term).

Provincial gender assessment

At provincial level of Quang Ninh, men play more important role (54%) in labor force compared to the women (46%). Men are more directly involved in the mining, industrial sector and fisheries, while women play a critical role in services sector and agriculture. Traditionally, women in the rural and mountainous areas Quang Ninh work in the agricultural fields, take care of livestock, collect non-timber and other agricultural products, as well as taking care of elderly people, children, other household members and various other household chores. They generally have a very limited role in decision-making on the livelihood choices and development of their families. They are also not often involved in training courses, social networks (other than the Women's Union), local meetings or micro-credit systems, and so they have limited access to knowledge, skills or inputs to adapt their household and livelihood practices to enhance their own wellbeing.

In the implementation of activities at the project pilot sites, specific attention will be focussed on ensuring the active participation of women, particularly in public consultation and awareness raising on sustainable livelihoods and business.

Gender Mainstreaming Strategy

In alignment with the gender analysis, a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy was formulated for this project based on the GEF Gender Policy's Guiding Principles for mainstreaming gender and promoting

the empowerment of women, addressing gender-related issues in GEF-Financed activities, refraining from exacerbating existing gender inequalities, ensuring gender different knowledge, needs, roles and interests of women and men are addressed, applying a gender-responsive approach and identifying gender gaps to achieve global environmental benefits. The project will mainstream gender into the GEF Project and Programme Cycle, Monitoring, Learning and Capacity Development, Agency Policies, Procedures and Capabilities and Compliance. Therefore, the project design has ensured that indicators, activities, monitoring and evaluation, and learning are gender responsive. In correlation with this gender-responsive approach, the project budget includes resources to support its integration into the project activities.

The SRIF, the gender analysis and gender mainstreaming strategy have provided a foundation for the Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan, which provides comprehensive and systematic guidance for project design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Project evaluations and reporting (e.g. the PIR) will monitor the progress of the project on gender equality and women's empowerment and evaluate its performance. Routine sex-disaggregated records of participants in all activities will be an important tool to track women's participation in the project. Knowledge management and development of good practices will incorporate a dedicated section on women's role in project implementation. Case studies and stories of women leaders in this project will also create an impact to a wider audience.

The Project Management Unit (PMU) will appoint a staff member (as focal point) to coordinate project supported activities related to gender issues and make sure gender considerations will be integrated into all project sponsored activities. This gender focal point will provide capacity building on gender issues and facilitate gender mainstreaming as an integral part of the overall project implementation, project monitoring, as well as reporting. The PMU will provide M&E reports to the PSC annually, in which gender participation in Project Management and project activities will be included. The project-related gender indicators will include but not be limited to: (i) number of female staff and women trained by the project (presented as numbers, percentages over time); (ii) number of female staff and women that participate and play a role in project activities (also with accompanying data on rates and percentages).

Table 7. Proposed Gender Action Plan for Project Implementation

Outcome/ Output	Responsible	Gender Mainstreaming Actions
Component 1: Setting up the national institutional system, data and monitoring for application of natural capital accounting for a sustainable blue economy in Viet Nam		
Output 1.1.1. Coherent and consistent national methodology, institutional arrangements and national system adopted for NCA in Viet Nam - involving all ecosystems and related line agencies, whilst zooming in on Ocean accounting.	ISPONRE	Actively involve women in working groups and committees involved in policy planning and review (MONRE, GSO, MARD)
Output 1.1.2. Staff training and institutional capacity building on ocean/coastal natural capital accounting in support blue economic development for national and provincial institutions	ISPONRE	? Identifying training needs considering gender factors ? Program development and implementation of participatory training ? When possible provide targeted training courses for groups of women

Output 1.1.3. Provincial Spatial Data Framework established for compiling marine and coastal accounting in Quang Ninh Province	GSO	? Actively include women in working groups and committees related provincial spatial data framework and compilation. ? Report on implementation of NCA system with consideration of gender factor
Output 1.1.4. Development and agreement with ISPONRE, VASI, GSO/MPI, MARD, etc., on national platform on NCA for information exchange and blue economy growth policy advocacy	ISPONRE	Participation of the female officials at national level departments and agencies in the plan to establish the national platform on NCA
Output 1.1.5. A system for linking marine and coastal NC accounts with routine government indicators and reporting procedures adopted for Green GDP, SDGs, gender inclusion.	GSO	Promoting women?s participation in policy design groups; participate in the assessment of existing indicators and reporting procedures adopted for Green GDP, SDGs, gender inclusion.
Component 2: Integration of marine and coastal natural capital accounting into local development planning and operations in Quang Ninh Province		
Output 2.1.1. Two or three marine and coastal (SEEA-EA-based) NC ecosystems-accounts established and operationalized ? with specific data sets for Quang Ninh Province (see 1.1.1).	GSO, ISPONRE	Actively involve women in related NCA development activities
Output 2.1.2. Corporate commitments and plans secured and options for PA friendly operations/investments identified through quantification of impacts, dependency and interlinkages on marine and coastal NC in Quang Ninh Province communicated through outreach and sector roundtables.	QN DONRE	Women at project site are involved in the development of sustainable business plan
Output 2.1.3. Socio-Economic development plan (2026 - 2030) in Quang Ninh Province, optimizing sector co-existence and spatial use of coastal and marine resources as well as identifying sector investments and operations for improved (financial) management effectiveness of protected areas - leading to reducing vectors of NC impact, using integrated NC ecosystems-account.	QN PPC	Actively include women in working groups and committees related to policy and regulatory review.
Component 3: Outreach and knowledge management for national uptake		
Output 3.1.1. Outreach and establishment of ?community of practices? which connects local and national institutions and stakeholders to increase understanding and enable increased impact from applying NC accounting	ISPONRE	? Actively include women in working groups related to policy and regulatory review, research and communication. ? Establish and maintain a system for sharing project information and knowledge, including internet platforms, social media, etc. with the active contribution of the women.

<p>Output 3.1.2. Targeted replication and engagement mechanism ? facilitated by MONRE and GSO, establishing additional NCAs in Quang Ninh as well as in at least three additional provinces, based on the applicable government legal directives, secured funding and specified sustainable development and environmental protection.</p>	<p>ISPONRE</p>	<p>? Actively include women in working groups and committees related to policy and regulatory review.</p> <p>? Develop recommendations, lessons learned with consideration of gender factors</p>
<p>Output 3.2.1. Project gender disaggregated M&E system enables tracking of project progress, performance and specifically capturing best practice</p>	<p>ISPONRE</p>	<p>? Based on a comprehensive review of relevant indicator systems, criteria and guidelines, develop an indicator system, including gender mainstreaming criteria, to monitor and evaluate progress toward goals including gender equality and women?s empowerment.</p> <p>? The Gender Action Plan is operated and implemented</p> <p>? Specific monitoring of gender mainstreaming progress during project implementation</p> <p>? Hold annual stakeholder meetings as part of the preparation of the annual work plan with full representation of women.</p> <p>? Prepare final project report, final assessment report including gender aspects.</p> <p>? Carry out regular monitoring, evaluation and updating of the gender action plan, SRIF and stakeholder engagement plan.</p> <p>?</p>
<p>Overall, for all monitoring and evaluation activities</p>	<p>Project Team</p>	<p>? Ensure gender-inclusive monitoring, evaluation, and reporting with sex-disaggregated data in project management and information system</p>

GENDER RESPONSIVE COVID 19 ACTIONS

Two key messages running through the UNEP COVID-19 response are firstly, that despite the COVID-19 crisis, the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change still constitute our best, and only, global road map for the future. Secondly, COVID-19 does not provide a ?silver lining? for the environment but lessons learned from the management of this crisis provide an opportunity to both revisit our relationship with nature and rebuild a more environmentally responsible world.

UNEP?s gender based COVID-19 interventions are grounded in the overall UNEP COVID-19 response where the following key pillars have been identified[1]:

? Medical and humanitarian emergency phase.

? Transformational change for nature and people.

? Investing to build back better.

? Modernizing global environmental governance.

The overall UNEP response seeks to ensure that environmental dimensions are adequately captured in the management of the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath. Key interventions on gender equality and COVID-19 include:

? Development of gender mainstreaming guidelines to be used by project managers to address the intersection between gender, environmental management and effects of COVID-19 whilst developing and implementing projects.

? Addressing increasing inequalities as well as protecting environmental defenders during and after the crisis. A focus will be placed on women environmental rights defenders and indigenous groups

? Collection of sex disaggregated data and inclusion of gender analytical data to support the delivery of policy responses to zoonotic threats, including by addressing ecosystem connectivity and integrity, illegal wildlife trade and alternative livelihoods.

? Develop integrated gender sensitive/responsive environment and health methodologies, tools and policies for a better understanding of the human and environment health linkages

? Develop gender sensitive/responsive methodologies, tools and policies aimed at enhancing proactive and sound conservation practices, ecosystem management, ecosystem restoration and sustainable use of natural resources and their biodiversity.

? To achieve transformational change that will ensure safeguarding of our environmental support systems, we need to develop gender responsive, tools and methodologies to support the work of the secretariats of the UNEP administered Multilateral Environment Agreements for example the secretariats of the Convention of Biodiversity, or the Secretariat of Basel Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. In addition, support should be given to the integration of gender equality perspectives into work on climate change, climate and security, chemicals and waste management.

? Aspire to build partnerships with UN agencies and international environmental agencies and civil society provide support (where required) to UN county teams as they address the gender differentiated impacts of COVID-19.

[1] <https://www.unenvironment.org/covid-19-updates>

Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment?

Yes

Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources; No

Improving women's participation and decision making Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services or women

Does the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?

Yes

4. Private sector engagement

Elaborate on the private sector's engagement in the project, if any.

The project has engaged in its consultations with various private sector stakeholders, in particular with regard to Output 2.1.2 on the development of corporate commitments and plan for PA friendly operations/investments identified through quantification of impacts, dependency and interlinkages on marine and coastal NC in Quang Ning Province communicated through outreach and sector roundtables. The project will engage private sector as much as possible in project formulation and execution at provincial level through broad consultations. Key sectors consulted are the tourism sector and the fishery sector. The Project will also build on the good work being done on integrating marine and coastal natural capital accounting into provincial and local development planning and fishery sector operations by engaging and supporting private sector companies. The private sector will also receive technical support in incorporating sustainability reporting and/or business planning by incorporating NC (e.g. NC Protocols), be a project capacity building beneficiary, and be a member of provincial project working group. The project will support public outreach and education campaign on mainstreaming biodiversity and natural capital into tourism delivered to tourism industry, CSOs, and domestic and international tourists and knowledge exchange during the project implementation.

5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Elaborate on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, the proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation.(table format acceptable):

Table 8. Identified Risks and Mitigation Measures

Risk	Risk Level	Mitigation Strategy
------	------------	---------------------

<p>Over-lapping institutional mandates and responsibilities among ministries and institutions could complicate and challenge the development of natural capital accounts and linking them with routine government processes such as e.g. budgeting</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>The stakeholder mapping analysis as presented in the ProDoc will be updated at the inception phase. Those with high power and high potential will be involved in the project execution. These important partners' roles will be clarified in the project execution. A Project Steering Committee will be established with representatives of line Ministries (i.e. MPI, MARD, MOF and MONRE).</p>
<p>Raising of unrealistic/false expectations among policy makers; champions; key decision makers; technocrats about natural capital accounts and subsequent difficulties related to integration of these tools into decision making processes</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>During the inception phase, project outcome and outputs will be carefully reviewed together with key stakeholders and updated if and when felt necessary by the stakeholders. Institutional capacity building has been identified as key output of the project to ensure that policy makers can understand NCA. Policy advocacy will be conducted to transfer key messages to policy makers and support NCA mainstreaming into planning processes.</p>
<p>Current institutions have inadequate technical capacity to develop/adapt natural capital accounting and valuation of ecosystem methodologies</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Under Component 3, the project will establish a national community of practice group, which will be supported with technical inputs and guidance from international experts. In case of unavailability of local experts in the country to lead some specific technical interventions, the project will facilitate support from international experts.</p>
<p>NCA results are not used to shape the targeted provincial development plan, i.e. if the additional NC information would not be used or does not translate into change in practice</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Active participation of local authorities in Component 2 further enabled by capacity building under Component 1 will ensure the adoption of NCA as well as integration of NC values, trends and targets into planning process. Further, direct project support on the development of 5-year plan will ensure the utilization of NCA results for planning process.</p>

<p>Climate change risks may disrupt pilot testing in Quang Ninh Province, as well as requires the provincial socio-economic development planning to incorporate climate impact predictions and mitigation measures.</p> <p>Foreseen impact of climate change in Quang Ning ranges from frequency of severity of cyclones and related storm surges, impact on coastal erosion and sedimentation, higher sea water temperature and impact on fisheries (types, abundancy) to rises in annual maximum and minimum temperatures are expected to be stronger than the rise in average temperature, likely amplifying the impacts on human health, livelihoods, and ecosystems. etc.</p> <p>Vietnam's low-lying coastal and river delta regions have very high vulnerability to rising sea-levels. Depending on the emissions pathway 6?12 million people will potentially be</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Quang Ninh's Department of Natural Resources and Environment will support to provide sufficient and updated baseline data on climate impact predictions, as well as incorporate these in the design and operations of the socio-economic development plans of the province.</p> <p>The foreseen climate change impacts and the present and predicted trends need to be carefully considered in the NC accounts to be developed for Quang Ninh province to record, analyse and document present trend and impacts on biodiversity and vulnerability of ecosystems and the services they provide to the society. The coastal ecosystems are vulnerable to the direct impact of coastal erosion, sedimentation patterns and the impact of saline intrusion into brackish and fresh water systems and ground bodies. The NC accounts provide a spatial and temporal platform to record and monitor potential losses of agricultural productivity, projected for key food and cash crops, for which multiple drivers have been proposed, including saline intrusion and shifts in the viable geographical range of plant species. These observed trends and emerging impacts on ecosystems and the ecosystem services they provide will be essential information to inform the socio-economic plan development at provincial level. This will support identification and prioritization of action to reduce ecosystem vulnerability and related negative impact on socio-economic development, e.g. through impact on yield from fisheries, mangrove degradation through storm and wave impact and loss of protection function etc.</p>
---	------------	---

affected by coastal flooding by 2070?2100 without effective adaptation action[1].		
Exclusion of women from consultation processes	Low	The Project calls for and will apply and track the equitable participation of men and women, which may require measures to remove the socio cultural and economic barriers that silence women's voices; provide project guidelines on gender towards selection of staff, consultants and sub-contractors, and importantly in the implementation of the many project activities.
Risk	Risk Level	Mitigation Strategy
Over-lapping institutional mandates and responsibilities among ministries and institutions could complicate and challenge the development of natural capital accounts and linking them with routine government processes such as e.g. budgeting	High	The stakeholder mapping analysis as presented in the ProDoc will be updated at the inception phase. Those with high power and high potential will be involved in the project execution. These important partners' roles will be clarified in the project execution. A Project Steering Committee will be established with representatives of line Ministries (i.e. MPI, MARD, MOF and MONRE).
Raising of unrealistic/false expectations among policy makers; champions; key decision makers; technocrats about natural capital accounts and subsequent difficulties related to integration of these tools into decision making processes	Medium	During the inception phase, project outcome and outputs will be carefully reviewed together with key stakeholders and updated if and when felt necessary by the stakeholders. Institutional capacity building has been identified as key output of the project to ensure that policy makers can understand NCA. Policy advocacy will be conducted to transfer key messages to policy makers and support NCA mainstreaming into planning processes.

Current institutions have inadequate technical capacity to develop/adapt natural capital accounting and valuation of ecosystem methodologies	Medium	Under Component 3, the project will establish a national community of practice group, which will be supported with technical inputs and guidance from international experts. In case of unavailability of local experts in the country to lead some specific technical interventions, the project will facilitate support from international experts.
NCA results are not used to shape the targeted provincial development plan, i.e. if the additional NC information would not be used or does not translate into change in practice	Medium	Active participation of local authorities in Component 2 further enabled by capacity building under Component 1 will ensure the adoption of NCA as well as integration of NC values, trends and targets into planning process. Further, direct project support on the development of 5-year plan will ensure the utilization of NCA results for planning process.
Climate change risks may disrupt pilot testing in Quang Ninh Province, as well as requires the provincial socio-economic development planning to incorporate climate impact predictions and mitigation measures	Low	Quang Ninh's Department of Natural Resources and Environment will support to provide sufficient and updated baseline data on climate impact predictions, as well as incorporate these in the design and operations of the socio-economic development plans of the province.
Exclusion of women from consultation processes	Low	The Project calls for and will apply and track the equitable participation of men and women, which may require measures to remove the socio cultural and economic barriers that silence women's voices; provide project guidelines on gender towards selection of staff, consultants and sub-contractors, and importantly in the implementation of the many project activities.

COVID-19 Risks

The project is aligned with the *GEF White Paper on a GEF COVID-19 response strategy*^[2], which highlights opportunities to effect change including activities at project site in Quang Ninh, that are less reliant on long-distance travel; and explores innovative financial mechanisms to buffer economic impacts of the pandemic. Ways that the project will address these include by: (i) developing more communication/working strategies that are less reliant on long-distance travel; and (ii) by promoting and disseminating project results and experiences to stakeholders through online platform, social media, as well as through virtual experiences.

The key risks presented by the COVID-19 pandemic to implementation of this project and achievement of its intended outcomes include (i) Availability of technical expertise and capacity; (ii) Changes in implementation timelines; (iii) Stakeholder engagement processes; and (iv) Financing. These are elaborated with a description of planned mitigation measures. The project will be consistent with the 'One Health' principle, which promotes multi-stakeholder communication and collaboration in achieving better health outcomes – this includes public health threats at the human-animal ecosystem interface.

Table 9. COVID-19 Risks and Mitigation Measures

COVID-19 related risk	Mitigation actions to be implemented by the project
Implementation/operational challenges	
<p>The inability to manage COVID-19 in the country and a future upsurge may result in strict movement/social distancing/travel bans, which can hinder the recruitment and visits of international consultants, as well as local travel for national consultants and PMU. This may also hinder stakeholder engagement processes, capacity building programmes and consultations.</p>	<p>The inception workshop before project implementation in full will review the logical sequence of studies and assess the field visits including options for virtual discussions in which case the local consultants shall prepare additional materials and background information for the national and international consultants.</p> <p>The Inception workshop will review the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Gender Action Plan, SRIF and all project outputs requiring consultations and meetings. Based on the situation, stakeholder consultation and engagement processes including the number of participants will be further agreed upon during the inception meeting. For example, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan also integrated an option to assess and follow COVID-19 norms and where feasible and effective, stakeholder consultations will be done virtually. For all consultations, COVID-19 norms and all government requirements based on prevailing situations will be followed.</p>
Financial risks in the enabling environment	
<p>While the government has contingency plans to boost the economy, a worst-case scenario projects Vietnam's GDP plunging to negative 6-6.5%^[3] which would affect government co-financing contributions.</p>	<p>The project remains well-aligned to government COVID-19 socioeconomic recovery priorities and proposed activities have been adjusted during PPG to maximize this alignment. Any short-term risk to realization of government co-finance will be offset by the diversity of secure sources from which the project's co-finance will accrue. The project's major co-financing are from the approved projects/programs with assured co-financing: e.g. public investment projects/programs including from government and donors-funded projects (e.g. UNDP, WB). These projects are ongoing despite the pandemic crisis.</p>
Health and safety risks	
<p>Project staff, consultants travelling to the demonstration landscape in Quang Ninh Province could potentially bring COVID-19 infection risk to remote communities</p>	<p>Project staff and consultants will abide by all government restrictions and SOPs regarding COVID-19 social distancing and movement restrictions. Personal protective equipment (PPE) and social distancing measures will be used for all project activities and consultations in accordance with these restrictions, with use of virtual consultations and meetings as needed as set out in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan. PPE for PMU/local stakeholders has been included in the project budget.</p> <p>For stakeholders (government staff, private sector), project will adhere to all government requirements and social distancing/movement restrictions on tourism facilities and operations. COVID-19 hygiene and safety considerations will be considered across all project outputs.</p>

Notwithstanding the likely ongoing impact of COVID on Government programming and funding, it is not expected that this will affect the listed baseline and co-financing projects. We however see the close alignment and real contribution of the project to a green/blue recovery effort and expect an added opportunity for the GEF project to seek collaboration with such national programs, and especially to highlight the need and collaborate on a green recovery approach in Viet Nam, through the project outputs strengthening ecosystem resilience. Specifically, The Project incremental support towards adoption of blue economic growth path under 2.1.3 will enhance medium- to long-term land-/seascape ecological resilience ? and indirectly the resilience of e.g. local communities as well as physical infrastructure, through the protection, restoration and sustainable utilization of the ecosystem services of NC in Quang Ninh Province.

The project will strictly observe all national and provincial government COVID-19 regulations and guidance as well as UN CO guidance. Measures and protocols on health and safety standards will be developed for the project implementation. Such protocols may include a health and safety checklist for field visits, small and big group trainings and consultations. For example, meetings have been held during the PPG with stakeholders remotely using effective virtual platforms, health hazard assessments will be required for gatherings of multiple people, and mitigation measures will be implemented, e.g., ensuring physical distancing, providing personal protective equipment, avoiding non-essential travel, delivering trainings on risks and recognition of symptoms, etc. These management measures are not expected to adversely impact the service delivery of the project. Social and environmental risk assessments will be regularly updated (e.g., in the annual review of the SRIF. Moreover, activities to be developed in the demonstration landscape will include relevant social and environmental safeguards.

6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination. Describe the institutional arrangement for project implementation. Elaborate on the planned coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

Reproduction of the ProDoc section 4 Institutional Framework and Implementation Arrangement (ProDoc pp. 82-85).

[1] https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/37618/CCDR%20E%20O_01.07_FINAL.pdf?sequence=16

[2] <https://www.thegef.org/council-meeting-documents/white-paper-gef-covid-19-response-strategy>

[3] According to the resolution of the National Assembly, the Government has set tasks for 2022, in which the GDP growth rate will reach 6-6.5%.

6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination

Describe the institutional arrangement for project implementation. Elaborate on the planned coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

Reproduction of the ProDoc section 4 Institutional Framework and Implementation Arrangement (ProDoc pp. 82-85).

Institutional Framework and Implementation Arrangements

The project will be implemented under the government's regulations for ODA project/program management (Decree No.114/2021/ND-CP dated 16 December 2021), and the Viet Nam - United Nations Harmonized Programme and Project Management Guidelines (HPPMG). Specifically, MONRE will act as the national executing agency (NEA)/ Implementing Partner (IP) given its formal role as a lead institution in the biodiversity sector for the Government. The project is co-financed and as such will also include major participation from Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), Provincial People's Committee (PPC) of Quang Ninh and others. These agencies, as well as national stakeholder agencies will be involved both in the managerial as well as in the technical implementation of the project.

The Executing Agency of the project is responsible and accountable to UNEP for the timely implementation of the agreed project results, operational oversight of implementation activities, timely reporting, and for effective use of GEF resources for the intended purposes and in line with UNEP and GEF policy requirements.

MONRE, as NEA, will be responsible to the Government with UNEP providing oversight as the GEF Implementing Agency as described below. The NEA will designate ISPONRE to be project owner and will be responsible for the day-to-day management of project results entrusted to it in full compliance with all terms and conditions laid out below. ISPONRE will be responsible for enhancing a coordinated cross-sectoral approach to promoting NCA - especially in collaboration with GSO, bringing together VASI-MONRE, the GSO at national level and the Provincial Administrations for mainstreaming of coastal and near-shore natural capital into socio-economic planning 2026 - 2030 at the local level, with participation of Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DONRE), Department of Planning and Investment (DPI), Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) as well as selected private sector partners. The IP is the equivalent of the NIP (National Implementing Partner) as defined in HPPMG. The IP is responsible for executing this project. Specific tasks include:

- ? Project planning, coordination, activity implementation and management, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting. This includes providing all required information and data necessary for timely, comprehensive, and evidence-based project reporting, including results and financial data, as necessary. The Implementing Partner will strive to ensure project-level M&E is undertaken by national institutes and is aligned with national systems so that the data used and generated by the project supports national systems;
- ? Overseeing the management of project risks as included in this project document and new risks that may emerge during project implementation;
- ? Procurement of goods and services, including human resources;
- ? Financial management, including overseeing financial expenditures against project budgets;
- ? Approving and signing the multi-year workplan;

- ? Approving and signing the combined delivery report at the end of the year;
- ? Signing the financial report or the funding authorization and certificate of expenditures;
- ? Ensuring that the required assessment (environmental and socio impact assessment or targeted assessment) and assessment report and the required management plan(s) (a SRIF and/or stand-alone management plan, as above) are developed, disclosed for public consultation and approved, and management measures are adopted and integrated during project implementation;
- ? Reporting, fairly and accurately, on project progress against agreed work plans in accordance with the reporting schedule and required formats;
- ? Maintaining documentation and evidence that describes the proper and prudent use of project resources in conformity to the signed Project Document and in accordance with applicable regulations and procedures;
- ? Ensuring all requirements of UNEP and national regulatory/policy frameworks and relevant international standards have been addressed (e.g., mitigation of identified adverse social and environmental impacts);
- ? Procurement of goods and services, including human resources required to ensure compliance regulations.

The project implementation structure includes a Project Steering Committee (PSC) and a Project Management Unit (PMU).

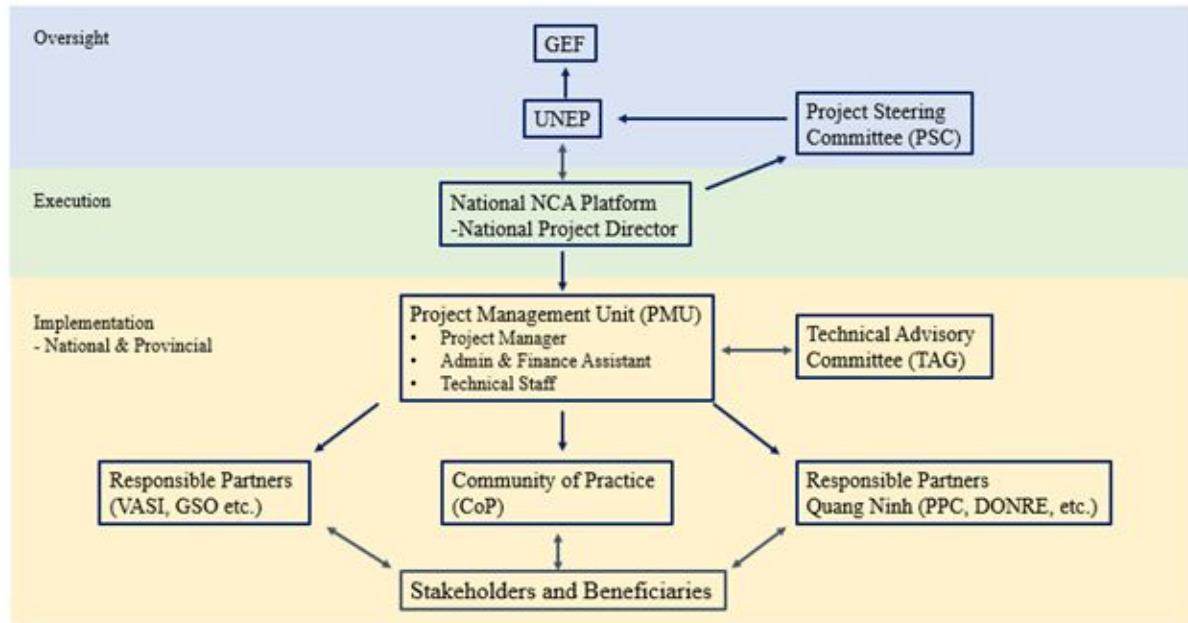


Figure 2. The Decision-making Flowchart and Organizational Chart

Project Steering Committee (PSC) The **Project Steering Committee (PSC)** will be the main governing body of the project, responsible for taking corrective action as needed to ensure the project achieves the desired

results. The PSC oversees the PMU for the overall project delivery according to the UNEP-MONRE GEF Project Document and takes necessary decisions based on PMU documentation provided in advance of PSC meetings, including the approval of the annual work plans and budgets, the approval of project reporting before submission to the GEF agencies. It will also provide strategic guidance to the PMU and to all executing partners. The PSC will be comprised of representatives from MONRE, the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), a UNEP representative, the Quang Ninh Government, and representatives of the private sector and civil society. The specific tasks and responsibilities of the PSC are reflected in the ToR of the PSC, as part of Annex 11, ToRs.

The PSC will be chaired by a MONRE leader and will meet annually, and additional meetings can be arranged if deemed necessary. It must be noted that in case consensus cannot be reached within the PSC, the UNEP (or its designate) will mediate to find consensus and take the final decision by majority vote to ensure project implementation is not unduly delayed. The members of the PSC will each fulfil the role of a Focal Point for the project in their respective agencies. Hence, the project will have a Focal Point in each concerned institution. As Focal Points in their agency, the concerned PSC members will: (i) technically oversee activities in their sector; (ii) ensure a fluid two-way exchange of information and knowledge between their agency and the project; (iii) facilitate coordination and links between the project activities and the work plan of their agency and approve annual work plan and budget; and (iv) facilitate the provision of co-financing to the project. The government will designate a **National Project Director (NPD)**, senior officer of ISPONRE, seconded part-time to the project. The NPD will be responsible for coordinating the activities with all the national bodies related to the different project components, as well as with the project partners. He/she will also be responsible for supervising and guiding the Project Manager (see below) on the government policies and priorities.

Project Management Unit (PMU)

The project will establish a **Project Management Unit (PMU)** as unit to ensure effective implementation of the project. The PMU is responsible for overall project coordination and with the other implementing agencies responsible for the delivery of project outputs in a timely and effective manner. The PMU is also responsible for overall project monitoring and reporting. MONRE will designate a National Project Director (NPD), seconded by ISPONRE. The NPD will be responsible for coordinating the activities with all the national bodies related to the different project components, as well as with the project partners. He/she will also be responsible for supervising and guiding the Project Manager (PM) on the government policies and priorities.

The PMU will be composed of a **Project Manager (PM)** who will work full-time for the project lifetime, financed by the Government. In addition, the PMU will include:

- ? a Project Coordinator, who will support the project manager in effective implementation of the project activities, providing field-based technical project support and oversight at the landscape level, coordination of activities with key stakeholders and take part in regular monitoring and evaluation activities, including acting as gender focal point for the project and supporting consultants in their project contributions, and
- ? an Administration and Finance Officer to support the financial management of the project as well as Technical Consultants. The officer will provide input for regular M&E reporting and the preparation

of annual work plans and budgets and be responsible for the drafting of financial reports and assist in regular audit processes.

The PMU office will be allocated in the premises of the ISPONRE. The PMU will follow guidance of the PSC in order to achieve efficient management and coordination between the project components and for effective implementation of the annual work plan and budgets (AWP/Bs). Members of PMU, except two Project Office positions (i.e. Project Admin and Finance officer, project coordinator) will represent government in-kind contribution to the project and therefore nor be paid from project funds.

The PM has the authority to administer the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of MONRE and UNEP, within the parameters determined by the PSC. The PM's prime responsibility is to ensure that the project produces the results specified in the project document, to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost. The PM will liaise and work closely with all partner institutions to link the project with complementary national programs and initiatives. The NPM is accountable to the MONRE and UNEP for the quality, timeliness and effectiveness of the activities carried out, as well as for the use of funds. For a more detailed description of the tasks and responsibilities of the PM, please find the ToR of the PM in Annex 11, TORs.

The PMU will be supported by a **Technical Advisory Group (TAG)** consisting of a group of individuals carefully selected to represent expertise on natural capital accounting, to provide technical inputs on project oversight, guidance, and support to project implementation (representatives from key projects will be invited to participate.)

The TAG is responsible for reviewing and providing recommendations to the PMU on all technical methodological processes developed and followed the Project, and on technical aspects of implementing activities. Additionally, the TAG is responsible for reviewing the technical quality of implemented activities and for clearance of technical methodologies. TAG meetings will take place at least quarterly (or biannually) and will be facilitated by the ISPONRE through the PMU. An additional role of the TAG is to ensure synergies and dialogues between the project and other related initiatives in Viet Nam and the region.

The project will coordinate closely with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives, in collaboration with MPI, MONRE and Quang Ninh Province. Mechanisms to coordinate are proposed to include (a) a Project Board/Steering Committee which will be chaired by MONRE and include national and provincial partners (e.g. DONRE, MPI, other provincial administrations, etc.) and serve as the key governance and decision-making body for the project (b) a national technical advisory group to provide technical inputs on project methodology, outputs and activities (representatives from key projects will be invited to participate); (c) project-to-project coordination through regular contact of the PMUs of respective projects; (d) coordination through common executing partners/supporting partners (e) knowledge management activities.

The project will coordinate with GOAP and UN-ESCAP during the implementation to ensure the execution of the project will be complementary with GOAP/UN-ESCAP activities on ocean accounting and mobilize technical inputs from them.

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Describe the consistency of the project with national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions from below:

NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc.

- National Action Plan for Adaptation (NAPA) under LDCF/UNFCCC
- National Action Program (NAP) under UNCCD
- ASGM NAP (Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining) under Mercury
- Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) under Minamata Convention
- National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan (NBSAP) under UNCBD
- National Communications (NC) under UNFCCC
- Technology Needs Assessment (TNA) under UNFCCC
- National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) under UNCBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD
- National Implementation Plan (NIP) under POPs
- Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)
- National Portfolio Formulation Exercise (NPFE) under GEFSEC
- Biennial Update Report (BUR) under UNFCCC
- Others

Consistency with national priorities or plans

Viet Nam is a signatory to the National Capital Accounting communiqué that emerged from Rio+20, which calls on governments, UN agencies, financial institutions and other international organizations to strengthen the implementation of natural capital accounting.

In addition, the achievement of Aichi Target 2 under the Convention on Biological Diversity was noted as specifically relevant to the advancement of environmental-economic accounting in Viet Nam. The project contributes to many elements of the National Biodiversity Strategy (2015) and to priorities set out in Viet Nam's Fifth National Report to The United Nations Convention On Biological Diversity (2014).

Viet Nam's National Strategy for Environmental Protection until 2020 and Vision Towards 2030 calls for speeding up the application of economic mechanisms and tools in conformity with market economic regimes in order to realize macro manipulations of development activities toward environmental friendliness, especially through fiscal policy (tax, fee, security, payment for environment services) and regulatory policy

with and environmental economic accounts. These are consistent with international policy drivers such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Aichi Target 2.

The Project will support to implement the Resolution No. 36-NQ/TW on sustainable development of blue economy, which has the objective on improving management of marine/coastal ecosystem; increase the areas of marine protected area covering 6% of total country area, restoration of coastal mangrove.

The project is also aligned to more recent biodiversity priorities. Under Decision No. 149/2022/QĐ-TTg dated 28 January 2022, the Government of Vietnam has approved a national strategy on biodiversity to 2030, vision to 2050, encouraging the development of mechanisms, policies for biodiversity conservation; Investigating, inventory, evaluating and building a national database on biodiversity; Assessing the status, mapping the distribution of important wetlands, seagrass beds, coral reefs and other specific natural marine ecosystems in order to deploy solutions, and measures to protect and restore wetland and marine ecosystems; monitoring forest resource changes nationwide; organizing the effective implementation of the scheme on inventory, monitoring, reporting and building the national biodiversity database up to 2030, with a vision to 2050, in which priority is given to inventory, biodiversity monitoring in nature reserves, areas of high biodiversity, endangered, precious and rare species prioritized for protection. The project will promote the application of NCA to integrate natural capital and biodiversity values and protection of coastal and marine ecosystems in development planning and improved landscape management as part of the national blue economic growth policy in Viet Nam.

Furthermore, a national action plan on biodiversity protection, namely as National Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, Vision to 2030 (approved under Decision No.1250/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister), in which one of the three specific objectives is to improve the quality and populations of endangered and rare species, ensuring that no new species are extinct. As a result, the status of endangered, rare and threatened species is greatly improved. In addition, the overall goal of the Master Plan on biodiversity conservation to 2020 and vision to 2030 (approved under Decision 45/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister) is that critical natural ecosystems, endangered, rare species and genetic resources are preserved and sustainably used. Therefore, this project is in line with both aforementioned important Decisions on biodiversity.

The Project will help Viet Nam to monitor and report the SDGs implementation, especially the SDG14 on Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development identified under the National Action Plan for the Implementation of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

The Project will apply gender empowerment as regulated in the Viet Nam Law on Gender Equality to ensure gender equality in project approach and activities, including implementing natural capital accounting. It is consistent with UN Convention on Biological Diversity's gender action plan 2015-2020.

Institutional, sectoral and policy context

Alignment with national policy or environmental and developmental targets

Policy Context

The project rationale and approach are fully consistent with broader government planning and policy at the national and provincial levels. Therefore, the overall intent of the project is to be strategically aligned with and to operationalize national policy - where it is not already - ranging from the Law on Environmental Protection (LEP) (Law No.72/2020/QH14), Law on Planning (Law No.21/2017/QH14), Statistics Law (Law

No. 01/2021/QH15), and Resolution No.36-NQ/TW from October 2018 on Sustainable Development of Marine Economy with a vision to 2045.

The project components and activities are developed in-line with the the Resolution No.36-NQ/TW from October 2018 on Sustainable Development of Marine Economy with a vision to 2045 adopted by the Central Party in order to enhance the sustainable socio-economic development and environmental protection in marine and coastal areas and islands. It also sets development targets to key priority ?coastal? sectors such as: sea and island tourism; maritime economy; petrol and other resource exploitation; aquaculture; shipbuilding industry; renewable energy[1].The principal objective of this resolution is to turn Viet Nam into a strong, safe, prosperous and sustainable maritime nation by 2045. This resolution is supported by Resolution No. 26/NQ-CP Promulgating Government?s Master Plan and the 5-Year Plan for Implementation of Resolution No. 36-NQ/TW (Marine Economic Development Plan), which lays out the following requirements for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy. These two Ocean Economy Resolutions put forward a governance structure aimed at encouraging integration across a range of ministries with ocean related portfolios. The resolutions also articulate have to coordination between central authorities and local provincial governments. Operational programs outlined in the resolutions, include a.o the development of national marine spatial planning and the establishment of economic development zones or hubs. Blue Economy approaches less explicit within the Vietnamese strategies include: (i) Natural capital accounting (fully absent); and (ii) Blue Finance.

The proposed project consistent with Viet Nam Green Growth Strategy (VGGS), which prioritizes sustainable management of forests, mangroves and biodiversity and adaptation to climate change. The VGGS identifies the need to develop economic and financial policies and incentives for sustainable use of natural capital, as well as mobilizing all economic sectors to invest in ecological services. The strategy sets the objectives of effective and sustainable use of land resources and prioritizes the application of green accounting through valuing natural capital.[2]. This national scale strategic direction has led to national pilot initiatives on environmental accounting and environmental information.

The Party Resolution to Respond to Climate Change, Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Management (24-NQ/TW, June 2013) recognizes that natural resources are nationally important and finite capital assets, which require thorough assessment, valuation and inclusion in national economic accounting. A series of tasks related to NCA are stated, including the development of databases for land, water and mineral assets and research and implementation of natural resource pricing, valuation, and accounting. The proposal specifies the need to conduct analyses and establish legislation, processes and standards for natural resource accounting. Also, key actions for the country stated in the National Action Plan for the Implementation of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (Decision No. 622/QD-TTg, May 2017) include conducting research, developing guidance and piloting biodiversity and ecosystem service valuation.

The project is aligned with specific objectives of Decision No. 450/2022/QD-TTg on the Vietnam?s national environmental protection strategy to 2030, vision to 2050, specifically the need to ?strengthen the protection of natural heritages, restore ecosystems; prevent the trend of biodiversity loss?, and while there are no explicit references to NCA in the national environmental protection strategy, the project will act as a conduit for action on its priorities, especially in the context of augmenting NCA provisions in the existing NCA framework, through relevant guidance. The above policies and plans have created a wide range of legal and policy frameworks to mobilize support, participation and integration of NCA in planning process in Viet Nam.

The NCA project is highly relevant for Viet Nam, as it reflects national priorities and a pioneering nature to support national capacities on NCA and strengthening monitoring systems for environmental management/monitoring. Particularly, the project is contributing to the implementation of a new national Law on Planning (2017), LEP (2020), Law on Statistics (2021), the in-country work on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Agenda 2030 and 2015 Global Climate and Disaster Agreements.

The basic legal framework for environmental protection in Vietnam is the Law on Environmental Protection (LEP), which was first adopted by the National Assembly (NA) in late 1993, amended in 2005, 2014 and 2020. The LEP was enacted to serve the long-term and sustainable development of the nation. It has articles on environmental management including encouraged activities; forbidden activities; and civil and organizational responsibilities relating to environmental protection and biodiversity conservation. The LEP gives priority to investment in the maintenance and development of renewable types of natural capital to provide ecosystem services. The Law encourages government entities to exploit, use, enhance and re-invest revenues obtained from the exploitation of natural capital for the maintenance and development of natural capital, as well as to incorporate these principles in their socio-economic development strategies, programs and budgets. The issuance of revised LEP and its guiding documents provide a good opportunity for the NCA project to mainstream some NCA policy recommendations into this process by integrating NCA requirements and indicators into provincial planning and development policy. Since 2019, MONRE as project implementing agency, takes an active role in supporting project efforts to introduce NCA concept and economic valuation of biodiversity in Vietnam.

In 2017, Vietnam passed a dedicated Law on Planning (Law No.21/2017/QH14) which came into effect on 01 January 2019, The Law on Planning establishes a national system of master plans and fundamental principles for planning work and defines the responsibility for state management of planning work. The Law defined different planning processes including national comprehensive planning; national marine spatial planning; national land use planning; national sector planning; regional planning and provincial planning. The Law on Planning also clarified the concept of integrated planning, which means an approach that integrates fields and sectors related to infrastructure, use of natural resources, and environmental protection in a uniform manner in order to achieve the goal of balanced, harmonious, effective and sustainable development. Additionally, the Planning Law (2019) requires all master plans (provincial, regional and national) to conduct integrated planning with consideration for cross-sectors issues and protection of natural resources and ecosystem services, through making adjustments in both the spatial allocation as well as decision-making process, securing institutional and technical capacity to handle multi-sectoral collaboration, and to mediate on conflicting interests. This applies similarly to marine spatial planning or socio-economic development planning concerning the 28 coastal provinces and related areas of Viet Nam. However, the lack of systematic evidence on the value of natural capital and ecosystem services has led to the underestimation of these and limited integration in decision making processes. This is especially the case with natural capital in coastal areas.

Government of Viet Nam (GoV) collects, manages, and disseminates data through two systems: the Centralized Statistics System (CSS) and the statistics systems of the line ministries (SSM). CSS consists of General Statistical Office (GSO) at central level and Provincial Statistical Office (PSO) at provincial levels and including District offices. Each line ministry has a statistical unit at central level and one or two statistical officers at provincial levels. CSS and SSM form the Vietnam Statistical Information System (VSIS), which is supposed to provide officials with the information necessary for state management. Currently, two main types of environment related sets of indicators are being produced in Vietnam: The National Statistical

Indicator System (NSIS) which is managed by the CSS and Statistical Indicator Systems (SISs) for the sectors, which are managed by SSM, including MONRE, Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), Health, Transport, Industry and Trade, Construction.

A Statistics Law was approved in 2015, and emended in 2021 describing the NSIS in the country. Attached to the new Law is a list of 230 indicators, which replaced the old NSIS (186 indicators) from the end of 2022. The NSIS and reporting process is further detailed in the Decree No.97/2016/ND-CP dated July 1st, 2016. There is a number of indicators directly and indirectly related environmental aspect. 11 indicators were designed for Group of environmental protection, compared to 2015 NSIS (8 indicators).

At ministerial level, there are two legal documents in force that regulate the statistical environment indicators of Viet Nam, i.e. the Statistical Indicator System (SIS 2017) and the National Environment Indicator System issued in 2015 (NEIS 2015). The SIS 2017 of MORNE was issued by Circular No.73/2017/TT-BTNMT dated 29 December 2017 on Statistical Indicator System of MONRE and Circular No.20/2018/TT-BTNMT dated November 8, 2018 on reporting Statistical Indicator. The statistical indicators in the SIS 2017 reflect the state of natural resources and environment for state management purposes in assessment, forecasting, strategy and policy making and planning for resource and environment development. The SIS 2017 contains 14 groups with 84 indicators.

[1] Voyer, M, Rambourg, C. & Farmery, A (2021) Governance frameworks to support a Blue Economy in Viet Nam. Report to the Vietnamese Government and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security, Wollongong, Australia

[2] National Green Growth Strategy, Solution 8.d Restoration and development of 'natural capital'.

8. Knowledge Management

Elaborate the "Knowledge Management Approach" for the project, including a budget, key deliverables and a timeline, and explain how it will contribute to the project's overall impact.

Public awareness, communications and mainstreaming strategy

Knowledge management is an integral part of the UNEP/GEF project formulation. Component 1 and 3 aims to establish a strong knowledge management process within the project. Under Output 1.1.4, the project will support development of a National Platform on NCA to bring all related stakeholders, including policy makers (i.e. GSO-MPI, MONRE, MARD, development partners, NGOs, etc. together to ensure mobilization of all resources for NCA. The platform partnership will review and discuss natural capital objectives in national sector policy, as well as will play a key role for advocacy in term of enhancing awareness/knowledge of policy makers on NCA and promoting integration of NCA into national planning process, promoting blue economy approach to different sectors such as tourism and agriculture for sustainable management of coastal and marine resources.

The project will establish a community of practice (CoP) to connect local and national practitioners who work on economics of biodiversity, valuation of ecosystem services and natural capital accounting on a process of collective learning (Output 3.1.1). The main agenda of the CoP will be seeking national experience

and connecting with them; coordination and development of national strategy on knowledge management; including a.o data collection for the national knowledge depository including documenting best practices, discussing developments; mapping knowledge and identifying gaps. The CoP will also support the agreement on, partnership building between data providers and data users, as well as access to data under the project sponsored National Spatial Data Framework for compiling marine and coastal accounts. Additionally, the knowledge and information shared through the CoP will also feed into the dialogues, information exchange and capacity building opportunities provided under the Blue Economy Partnership facilitated by VASI, specifically relating the natural capital accounting and its application to sustainable blue economic growth. This linkage will be ensured by ISPONRE, which has also been actively engaged in Vietnam's Blue Economy Partnership.

The Project's knowledge management strategy will focus on collecting, analyzing and disseminating information on what does and does not work in mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services through NCA and other methods. In addition to the project's technical reports, the project will establish a talent and expertise database which can enhance further collaboration. The project team will collaborate with other international initiatives working in this new thematic area. ISPONRE will play an essential role in these efforts, for example, through its active engagement under the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership, as well as through Vietnam's active participation in UNEP's Sustainable Blue Economy initiative through which experience and knowledge can be shared with other participating countries. It is critically important to disseminate and make accessible the information concerning the project's work or information generated through its execution as widely as possible. Transparency, accountability, and openness can become a catalyst for achieving a greater impact. The use of modern information and communications technology will enhance the effective participation of stakeholders in a cost-effective manner. ISPONRE – as the national policy and strategy development agency in MONRE, is best placed and has the data and hardware/software capacity to run the KM system under the project in support of sustaining the national NCA program and its support to key agencies such as VASI and GSO, as mandated agencies on blue economy and statistics, respectively.

The Project will establish an online national knowledge access depository. The depository will store national policies, norms, standards and guidelines on economics of biodiversity, valuation of ecosystem services and natural capital accounting, as well as the evolving KM products generated by the project.

The Project will develop and implement a set of awareness raising and outreach activities focused on using the results of the project (e.g. round tables and analytical work on NC impact and dependencies for corporate sectors, the linkage between NC, ecosystem services, biodiversity and economic development), as well as KM products such as to be captured in 'best practice' factsheets, short video clips and use on social media accounts and existing websites under the management of ISPONRE and other government entities.

In addition to physical presence at stakeholder consultation meetings, trainings, workshops; online participation in project activities will also be made possible through information sharing platforms and discussion forums which will also enhance capturing and disseminating project's lessons learned.

Under Outputs 3.1.1. and 3.1.2, project best practices and lessons learned will be identified, documented and disseminated across Viet Nam and with other relevant GEF-financed projects and initiatives supporting NCA. All communication and knowledge management activities will apply a gender sensitive approach with following principles:

• Use male and female knowledge product and public education developers for diversity of perspectives and approaches, as well as male and female reviewers of these products.

? Use gender sensitive language and gender balanced images (women not presented as victims but as agents of change).

? Check context and content (use gender analysis; use convincing gender arguments based on reliable sources and qualitative and quantitative data including sex disaggregated data).

? Refer to (inter-)national policy framework, policies, strategies and plans, as applicable and appropriate.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Describe the budgeted M and E plan

The project will compile submit M&E data at baseline, and completion. The main M&E instruments that will be used by the project are: (i) the Project Results Framework (PRF); (ii) Capacity Development Scorecard; (iii) independent qualitative reviews and (iv) the METT Tracking Tool.

The project will implement the following suite of M&E activities:

- ? Host a project inception workshop and generate a comprehensive Inception Report;
- ? Collect and collate monitoring data to report on project performance indicators in the Project Results Framework (PRF), including updating of the METTs;
- ? Prepare the annual PIR;
- ? Monitor and report on the implementation of the project's Gender Action Plan and conformance to the project's SRIF;
- ? Prepare and submit quarterly and annual progress reports;
- ? Host regular Project Steering Committee meetings;
- ? Undertake Mid-Term review and terminal evaluation review.

The project results, corresponding indicators and end-of-project targets in the project results framework will be monitored annually and evaluated periodically during project implementation.

Project Inception Phase. A Project Inception Workshop (IW) will be held within the first two (2) months of project start-up with the participation of the full project team, relevant counterparts, co-financing partners, and the UNEP Focal Point, as appropriate. A fundamental objective of the IW will be to help the project team to understand and take ownership of the project's goal and objectives, as well as finalize preparation of the project's first annual work plan on the basis of the project results framework and the GEF Core Indicators. This will include reviewing the results framework (indicators, means of verification, and assumptions), imparting additional detail as needed, and on the basis of this exercise, finalizing the Annual Work Plan (AWP) with precise and measurable performance indicators, and in a manner consistent with the expected outcomes for the project. Specific targets for the first-year implementation progress indicators together with their means of verification will be developed at the inception workshop. These will be used to assess whether the implementation is proceeding at the intended pace and in the right direction and will form part of the Annual Work Plan.

Additionally, the purpose and objective of the IW will be to (a) introduce project staff to project stakeholders that will support the project during its implementation; (b) detail the roles, support services, and complementary responsibilities of UNEP staff in relation to the project team; (c) provide a detailed overview of UNEP-GEF reporting and M&E requirements, with particular emphasis on the Annual Project Implementation Reviews (PIRs) and related documentation, the Annual Project Report (APR), mid-term review, final evaluation and financial reporting. Equally, the Inception Workshop will provide an opportunity to inform the project team on UNEP project-related budgetary planning, budget reviews including arrangements for the annual audit, and mandatory budget re-phrasings. The IW will also provide an opportunity for all parties to understand their roles, functions, and responsibilities within the project's decision-making structures, including reporting and communication lines and conflict resolution mechanisms.

The Terms of Reference (ToRs) for project staff and decision-making structures will be discussed again, as needed, in order to clarify each party's responsibilities during the project's implementation phase. A report of the Inception Workshop is a key reference document and must be prepared and shared with participants.

Monitoring Responsibilities and Events. A detailed schedule of project review meetings will be developed by the project management team in consultation with project implementation partners and stakeholder representatives. It will be incorporated in the Project Inception Report. The schedule will include: (a) tentative timeframes for Project Steering Committee meetings (and other relevant advisory and/or coordination mechanisms; and (b) project-related M&E activities.

Day-to-day monitoring of implementation progress will be the responsibility of the Project Manager based on the project's Annual Work Plan and its indicators. The Project Manager will inform the UNEP, on behalf of the Executing Agency of any delays or difficulties faced during implementation so that the appropriate support or corrective measures can be adopted in a timely and remedial fashion. The Project Manager will fine-tune the progress and performance/impact indicators of the project in consultation with the full project team at the IW with support from UNEP Task Manager.

At the inception workshop, specific targets for the first-year implementation progress indicators together with their means of verification will be developed. Targets and indicators for subsequent years will be defined annually as part of the internal evaluation and planning processes undertaken by the project team. Measurement of impact indicators related to global benefits will be done during the annual evaluation.

Periodic monitoring of implementation progress will be undertaken by the UNEP Task Manager through six-monthly exchanges with the project implementation team, or more frequently as deemed necessary. This will allow parties to take stock of and to troubleshoot any problems pertaining to the project in a timely fashion to ensure the timely implementation of project activities. The UNEP Task Manager, as appropriate, will conduct yearly visits to the project's field sites, or more often based on an agreed upon schedule to be detailed in the project's Inception Report/AWP to assess first-hand project progress. Any other member of the Steering Committee can also take part in these trips, as decided by the Steering Committee and as determined by project resources. A Field Visit Report will be prepared by the UNEP Task Manager and circulated no less than one month after the visit to the project team, all Steering Committee members, and UNEP-GEF.

Annual monitoring will occur through the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings. This is the highest policy-level meeting of the parties directly involved in the implementation of a project. The project will be subject to the Project Steering Committee meeting at least once every year.

The first such meeting will be held within the first twelve (12) months of the start of full implementation. The Project Lead Technical Expert will prepare an Annual Project Report (APR) and submit it to UNEP GEF Task Manager at least two weeks prior to the PSC for review and comments. The APR will be used as one of the basic documents for discussions Project Steering Committee meeting. The Project Manager will present the APR to the PSC, highlighting policy issues and recommendations for the decision of the PSC. The Project Manager will also inform the participants of any agreement reached by stakeholders during the APR preparation on how to resolve operational issues. Separate reviews of each project component may also be conducted if necessary. UNEP has the authority to suspend disbursement if project performance benchmarks are not met. Benchmarks will be conveyed by UNEP to project stakeholders at the IW, based on delivery rates and qualitative assessments of achievements of outputs.

In line with the GEF Evaluation requirements and UNEP's Evaluation Policy, any project with a duration of 4 years or more will be subject to an independent Mid-Term Evaluation or management-led Mid-Term Review at mid-point. All GEF funded projects are subject to a performance assessment when they reach operational completion. This performance assessment will be either an independent Terminal Evaluation or a management-led Terminal Review.

In case a Review is required, the UNEP Evaluation Office will provide tools, templates, and guidelines to support the Review consultant. For all Terminal Reviews, the UNEP Evaluation Office will perform a quality assessment of the Terminal Review report and validate the Review's performance ratings. This quality assessment will be attached as an Annex to the Terminal Review report, validated performance ratings will be captured in the main report.

However, if an independent Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the project is required, the Evaluation Office will be responsible for the entire evaluation process and will liaise with the Task Manager and the project implementing partners at key points during the evaluation. The TE will provide an independent assessment of project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine the likelihood of impact and sustainability. It will have two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP staff and implementing partners. The direct costs of the evaluation (or the management-led review) will be charged against the project evaluation budget.

The TE will typically be initiated after the project's operational completion. If a follow-on phase of the project is envisaged, the timing of the evaluation will be discussed with the Evaluation Office in relation to the submission of the follow-on proposal.

The draft TE report will be sent by the Evaluation Office to project stakeholders for comment. Formal comments on the report will be shared by the Evaluation Office in an open and transparent manner. The project performance will be assessed against standard evaluation criteria using a six-point rating scheme. The final determination of project ratings will be made by the Evaluation Office when the report is finalized.

The evaluation report will be publicly disclosed and will be followed by a recommendation compliance process.

The evaluation recommendations will be entered into a Recommendations Implementation Plan template by the Evaluation Office. Formal submission of the completed Recommendations Implementation Plan by the Project Manager is required within one month of its delivery to the project team. The Evaluation Office will monitor compliance with this plan every six months for a total period of 12 months from the finalisation of the Recommendations Implementation Plan. The compliance performance against the recommendations is then reported to senior management on a six-monthly basis and to member States in the Biennial Evaluation Synthesis Report.

The project will be reviewed or evaluated at mid-term (tentatively in mid 2025 as indicated in the project milestones). The purpose of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) is to provide an independent assessment of project performance at mid-term, to analyze whether the project is on track, what problems and challenges the project is encountering, and which corrective actions are required so that the project can achieve its intended outcomes by project completion in the most efficient and sustainable way. In addition, it will verify information gathered through the GEF Core Indicators.

The project Steering Committee will participate in the MTR and develop a management response to the evaluation recommendations along with an implementation plan. It is the responsibility of the UNEP Task Manager to monitor whether the agreed recommendations are being implemented. The MTR is managed by the UNEP Task Manager.

The Terminal PSC Review is held in the last month of project operations. The Project Manager with support of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer and guidance from UNEP is responsible for preparing the Terminal Report and submitting it to UNEP GEF. It shall be prepared in the draft at least two months in advance of the PSC meeting in order to allow review and will serve as the basis for discussions in the PSC meeting. The terminal PSC review considers the implementation of the project as a whole, paying particular attention to whether the project has achieved its stated objectives and contributed to the broader environmental objective. It decides whether any actions are still necessary, particularly in relation to the sustainability of project results, and acts as a vehicle through which lessons learned can be captured to feed into other projects being implemented.

Since this is a Medium-Size Project (MSP) of less than 4 years of duration, no Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) will be undertaken. However, if the project is rated as being at risk or if deemed needed by the Task Manager, he/she may decide to conduct an optional Mid-Term Review (MTR). The review will be carried out using a participatory approach whereby parties that may benefit or be affected by the project will be consulted. Members of the Project Steering Committee could be interviewed as part of the MTR process and the Project Manager will develop a management response to the review recommendations along with an implementation plan. Results of the MTR will be presented to the Project Steering Committee. It is the responsibility of the UNEP Task Manager to monitor whether the agreed recommendations are being implemented.

Project Monitoring Reporting. The Project Manager, with support from the monitoring officer and guidance from UNEP-GEF team, will be responsible for the preparation and submission of the following reports that form part of the monitoring process and that are mandatory.

•A **Project Inception Report (IR)** will be prepared immediately following the IW. It will include a detailed First Year/AWP divided in quarterly timeframes detailing the activities and progress indicators that will guide implementation during the first year of the project. This work plan will include the dates of specific field visits, support missions from the UNEP Task Manager or consultants, as well as timeframes for meetings of the project's decision-making structures. The IR will also include the detailed project budget for the first full year of implementation, prepared on the basis of the AWP, and including any M&E requirements to effectively measure project performance during the targeted 12-month timeframe. The IR will include a more detailed narrative on the institutional roles, responsibilities, coordinating actions, and feedback mechanisms of project-related partners. In addition, a section will be included on progress to date on project establishment and start-up activities and an update of any changed external conditions that may affect project implementation. When finalized, the IR will be circulated to project counterparts who will be given a period of one calendar month in which to respond with comments or queries. Prior to the IR's circulation, the UNEP/GEF will review the document.

•The **Annual Project Report (APR)**. An APR will be prepared on an annual basis prior to the PSC Review, to reflect the progress achieved in meeting the project's AWP and assess performance of the project in contributing to intended outcomes through outputs and partnership work. The format of the APR is flexible but should include the following sections: a) project risks, issues, and adaptive management; b) project progress against pre-defined indicators and targets, c) outcome performance; and d) lessons learned/best practices.

•The **Project Implementation Review (PIR)** is an annual monitoring process mandated by the GEF. It has become an essential management and monitoring tool for project managers and offers the main vehicle for extracting lessons from on-going projects. Once the project has been under implementation for one year, a PIR must be prepared by the project management and submitted by UNEP to the GEF. The PIR should then be discussed in the PSC meeting so that the result would be a PIR that has been agreed upon by the project counterparts and the UNEP. The individual PIRs are collected, reviewed, and analysed by the UNEP Operational Focal Point prior to sending them to the GEF by UNEP-GEF Coordination Office.

•**Half year (July-December) Progress Reports** outlining main updates in project progress will be provided every six months to the UNEP/GEF Task Manager. The January - June progress report stands as the PIR described above.

•**Specific Thematic Reports** focusing on specific issues or areas of activity will be prepared by the project team when requested by UNEP-GEF or the project implementing partners. The request for a Thematic Report will be provided to the project team in written form by UNEP and will clearly state the issue or activities that need to be reported on. These reports can be used as a form of lessons learned exercise, specific oversight in key areas, or as troubleshooting exercises to evaluate and overcome obstacles and difficulties encountered. UNEP is requested to minimize its requests for Thematic Reports, and when such are necessary will allow reasonable timeframes for their preparation by the project team.

•A **Project Mid-Term Review Report**. As described above, the project will be reviewed or evaluated at mid-term (tentatively in mid 2025 as indicated in the project milestones). The purpose of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) is to provide an independent assessment of project performance at mid-term, to analyze whether the project is on track, what problems and challenges the project is encountering, and which corrective actions are required so that the project can achieve its intended outcomes by project completion in the most efficient and sustainable way. In addition, it will verify information gathered through the GEF Core Indicators.

• **A Project Terminal Report** will be prepared by the project team during the last three (3) months of the project. This comprehensive report will summarize all activities, achievements, and outputs of the project; lessons learned; objectives met or not achieved; structures and systems implemented, etc.; and will be the definitive statement of the project's activities during its lifetime. It will also lay out recommendations for any further steps that may need to be taken to ensure sustainability and replicability of the project's activities.

• **Publications/Technical reports.** The project intends to publish some documents covering specific themes. In the Inception Report, the project team will prepare a draft list of publications that are expected during the course of the project and tentative due dates. Where necessary, this publications list will be revised and updated, and included in subsequent APRs. Publications may also be prepared by external consultants and should be comprehensive and specialized analyses of clearly defined theme of research within the framework of the project. These publications will represent, as appropriate, the project's substantive contribution to specific issues, and will be used in efforts to disseminate relevant information at local, national, and international levels.

Terminal evaluation. UNEP will be responsible for managing the terminal evaluation. The Project Management Unit and partners will participate actively in the process. All GEF funded projects are subject to a performance assessment when they reach operational completion. This performance assessment will be either an independent Terminal Evaluation or a management-led Terminal Review.

In case a Review is required, the UNEP Evaluation Office will provide tools, templates, and guidelines to support the Review consultant. For all Terminal Reviews, the UNEP Evaluation Office will perform a quality assessment of the Terminal Review report and validate the Review's performance ratings. This quality assessment will be attached as an Annex to the Terminal Review report, validated performance ratings will be captured in the main report.

However, if an independent Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the project is required, the Evaluation Office will be responsible for the entire evaluation process and will liaise with the Task Manager and the project implementing partners at key points during the evaluation. The TE will provide an independent assessment of project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine the likelihood of impact and sustainability. It will have two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP staff and implementing partners. The direct costs of the evaluation (or the management-led review) will be charged against the project evaluation budget. The TE will typically be initiated after the project's operational completion. If a follow-on phase of the project is envisaged, the timing of the evaluation will be discussed with the Evaluation Office in relation to the submission of the follow-on proposal.

The Evaluation Office will monitor compliance with this plan every six months for a total period of 12 months from the finalisation of the Recommendations Implementation Plan. The compliance performance against the recommendations is then reported to senior management on a six-monthly basis and to member States in the Biennial Evaluation Synthesis Report.

The indicative Monitoring and Evaluation Work Plan is provided in Table 10 (Costed M&E Plan).

The indicative Monitoring and Evaluation Work Plan is provided in the table below. The estimated cost of M&E activities is USD **68,131** (GEF), fully integrated into the project budget, as shown below. The majority of these M&E costs are covered under Outcome 3.2, Component 3, Project impact monitoring and KM system enables national replication. Some activities are covered under Component 1, 2 and 3.1, such as the documentation and publication of lessons learnt. Audit costs are covered under PMC costs.

Table 10 Costed M&E Plan

Type of M&E activity	Responsible Parties	Budget from GEF	Co-finance	Time Frame
Inception Workshop and Report (including consultant costs and travel)	1 Project Manager (PMU) 1 PSC 1 UNEP	18,845[1]	20,000	Within 2 months of project start-up Report will be done 1 month after the inception workshop
Tracking of project indicators (outcomes, output indicators, GEF Core indicators) including baseline data collection	1 Project Manager (PMU) 1 Project Partners	To be covered by PMC	30,000	Outcome indicators: start, and end of project Progress/perform. Indicators: annually (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
Semi-annual Progress/ Operational Reports to UNEP	? Project Manager (PMU)	0	15,000	Within 1 month of the end of reporting period i.e. on or before 31 January and 31 July (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
UNEP Quarterly Financial Report	? Project Manager ? Admin & Finance Assistant (PMU)	0	5,000	Quarterly on or before 30 April 30 th , July 31 st , Oct 31 st , Jan 31 st
Cash Advance request and details of anticipated disbursements	? Project Manager ? Admin & Finance Assistant (PMU)	0	1,000	Quarterly, or when required
Final inventory of non-expendable equipment	? Project Manager ? Admin & Finance Assistant (PMU)	0	1,000	Within 2 months of the project technical completion/closure
Equipment transfer letter	? Project Manager ? Admin & Finance Assistant (PMU)	0	1,000	Within 2 months of the project technical completion/closure
Final expenditure statement	? Project Manager ? Admin & Finance Assistant (PMU)	0	1,000	Within 2 months of the project technical completion/closure

Project Final Report	? Project Manager ? Admin & Finance Assistant (PMU)	3,200	10,000	Within 2 months of the project technical completion/closure
Project Steering Committee Meetings	? Project Manager (PMU) ? A representative of UNEP ? A senior representative of MONRE ? A representative of ISPONRE ? Other PSC members	3,000[2]	30,000	At least once a year, and via electronic media per request and need Costs are mainly related for travel of PSC members
Reports of PSC meetings	? Project Manager (PMU)	0	6,000	Within 1 month after PSC meeting
Project Implementation Review (PIR)	? Project Manager (PMU) ? UNEP	0	10,000	Annually, part of reporting routine (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)
Review and update METT and Capacity Development Scorecard with identified national ministries and with PAs at project start, and end of project	? Project Manager (PMU) ? Project Partners	10,826	20,000	At project start, and before TE mission takes place
Terminal Evaluation	? ISPONRE ? Project Partners ? UNEP	27,260[3]		Within 6 months of end of project implementation
Audit	MONRE	To be covered by PMC		Annually
Co-financing report	? Project Manager ? Finance Manager (PMU)	0	5,000	Within 1 month of the PIR reporting period, i.e. on or before 31 July (Cost incorporated in project components and management budget)

Risk Monitoring (Safeguards, and Risk Register) and Monitoring of project safeguards management frameworks and/or plans and gender action plans	Project Manager (PMU)	5,000[4]	20,000	On-going
Project Supervision missions	? Project Manager (PMU) ? Project Steering Committee	None[5]	10,000	Annually
Troubleshooting missions	? Project Manager (PMU) ? Project Steering Committee	None	5,000	Troubleshooting as needed
UNEP Annual Project Oversight Missions	UNEP	Agency fee	0	Annually
Total M&E Plan Budget		68,131	190,000	

[1] Includes cost for IC and NC and travel and workshop costs (\$5,000)

[2] Regular meetings: 1 meeting per year*\$1,000/meeting*3 years = \$3,000

[3] Includes cost of IC (\$16,750), NC (\$8,000) and travel costs (\$2,510).

[4] M&E system incorporating risk, gender mainstreaming and social and environmental safeguards developed and implemented for adaptive project management (\$5,000). This includes cost of a NC (\$4,000); and a total of \$1,000 has been allocated for travel.

[5] The costs of UNEP-GEF Unit's participation and time are charged to the GEF Agency Fee.

10. Benefits

Describe the socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the project at the national and local levels, as appropriate. How do these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of global environment benefits (GEF Trust Fund) or adaptation benefits (LDCE/SCCF)?

Socio-economic benefits

The contribution to national and level socio-economic development in Viet Nam is based on the premise that linking and applying NCA, ecosystem service valuation, and results of other economic analyses towards development planning in Viet Nam is linked on three key drivers enabling change. First, the project focuses on enabling institutional and policy conditions and a broader recognition of the importance of capturing NC values, adopting unified methods and establishing institutional mandates towards the integration of NC values in government planning, sector operations and monitoring of environmental sustainability (and for this project focused on NCA for coastal and marine). Second, the project will support decision makers both at national and provincial level to enhance their capacity and to gain practical experience in utilizing information on the status and value of NC resources, as well as integrating these in core government planning/budgeting/M&E/reporting mechanisms. Third, through the project support, incentives will be in place to enable wider adoption, increased budgeting and replication for NCA in Viet Nam.

The project will support to integrate the value of marine resources in blue economy policy at national level and development planning at provincial level (i.e. provincial master plan) in Quang Ninh. The NCA results will be used to inform protected areas (spatial) planning, supporting improvement of landscape management at Quang Ninh Province, including reduction in environmental pollution. The piloting of NC protocols or sustainable business plans of corporate entities will contribute to more explicit recognition of the incorporation of NC values in corporate decision making with a broader recognition of economic value of reduction of negative environmental impact vectors.

Additional, the GEF project will lead to reduced pressure on natural resources from competing land uses through adoption of new policies and methodologies to integrate biodiversity and ecosystem services conservation into development planning processes as well as sector operations at provincial level. The development of Natural Capital Accounting will give Viet Nam a basis for assessing the sustainability of economic activities in the coastal zone, enable better socio-economic development planning and its implications to coastal and nearshore natural capital, show what a sustainable development path would look like, and allow decision-makers to design blue economy-based policies, sector plans and monitoring systems.

11. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

Provide information on the identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project/program based on your organization's ESS systems and procedures

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification *

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Low	Low		

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

Elaborate on the types and risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and impacts (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and any measures undertaken as well as planned management measures to address these risks during implementation.

This is a low-risk project. It plans to apply marine and coastal NCA toward development and implementation of blue economic growth and land-/seascape conservation planning for Quang Ninh Province. GP (reflected through the GP questions 1-10) should be considered even for the low-risk projects. Please pay particular attention to identify and effectively engage right stakeholders when formulating the socioeconomic development plan.

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title	Module	Submitted
Annex 9 SRIF	CEO Endorsement ESS	
Viet Nam_SRIF- ver2 FINAL for signature Yunae	Project PIF ESS	

ANNEX A: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK (either copy and paste here the framework from the Agency document, or provide reference to the page in the project document where the framework could be found).

ANNEX A Reproduction of the Project Results Framework, Annex 4 of the ProDoc

Project Results Framework

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Project Objective: Natural capital values and protection of coastal and marine ecosystems integrated in development planning and improved landscape management as part of the national blue economic growth policy in Viet Nam				
Component 1: Setting up the national institutional system, data and monitoring for application of natural capital accounting (NCA) for a sustainable blue economy in Viet Nam				
Outcome 1.1: National Capital Accounting system operational, including clear institutional mandates and increased institutional capacity, for applying and monitoring a blue economic growth model				

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p>Operational NCA system with ability to include national Ocean and coastal NC accounting</p> <p>Updated NCA Roadmap document with reflection of institutional mandates developed and endorsed</p> <p>Staff capacity in NCA increased by 50%, expressed in #staff trained and ability to effectively apply NCA[1]</p> <p>Indicators for sustainable BE growth, captured through NCA, linked to NSIS</p>	<p>NCA system elements exist, but mostly project-based and lack a consistent national methodology, a clear institutional arrangement and limited capacity to apply for and monitor a blue economic growth model</p> <p>A draft document for NCA development, covering all ecosystems and mandated agencies was developed in 2014, but not formally adopted</p> <p>Staff capacity in NCA on ocean/coastal NC is limited[2]</p> <p>There are no specific indicators for sustainable BE growth and guidelines on the application of NCA in monitoring sustainable BE growth</p> <p>At present, no NCA system incorporates disaggregated data</p>	<p><i>Project End</i></p> <p>Target 1: Guidelines on NCA methodology and application with special emphasis on Ocean accounting developed, adopted and being implemented to unify and harmonize the NCA methodologies used by line ministries</p> <p>Target 2: Updated national NCA Roadmap adopted covering all ecosystems and mandated agencies in Vietnam</p> <p>Target 3: Staff (of which >40% women) capacity in NCA of ISPONRE, Viet Nam Administration for Seas and Islands (VASI? both Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), General Statistics Office (GSO) ? Ministry of Planning and Investment(MPI), and provinces increased by 50%</p> <p>Target 4: Set of indicators[3] and guidelines on the application of NCA in monitoring sustainable blue economic growth developed, adopted and being implemented</p>	<p>Project progress reports</p> <p>Terminal Evaluation</p> <p>Adopted guidelines on NCA methodology</p> <p>Project progress reports</p> <p>Terminal Evaluation</p> <p>Approved national NCA roadmap</p> <p>Training reports</p> <p>Curricula</p> <p>Capacity Development Scorecard</p> <p>Project progress reports</p> <p>Terminal Evaluation</p> <p>Set of indicators and guidelines on the application</p>	<p><u>Assumptions:</u></p> <p>Continued commitment and political will to incorporate NCA system and analysis in planning and development</p> <p><u>Risks:</u></p> <p>Overlapping institutional mandates could complicate and challenge the development of NCA</p> <p>Raising unrealistic expectations among policy/decision-makers could hamper effective integration of NCA tools into decision making</p>

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
Disaggregated data are reflected in the NCA system		Target 5: NCA system design and selected data fields incorporate gender parameters	of NCA in monitoring sustainable BE growth Progress reports	
<p>Outputs</p> <p>1.1.1 Coherent and consistent national methodology, institutional arrangements and national system adopted for NCA in Viet Nam - involving all ecosystems and related line agencies, whilst zooming in on ocean accounting</p> <p>1.1.2 Staff training and institutional capacity building on ocean/coastal natural capital accounting in support blue economic development for national and provincial institutions</p> <p>1.1.3 National Spatial Data Framework established for compiling marine and coastal accounts ? with specific provisions for the pilot in Quang Ninh Province</p> <p>1.1.4 Development of agreements with ISPONRE, VASI, GSO/MPI, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), etc., on national platform on NCA for information exchange and blue economy growth policy advocacy</p> <p>1.1.5 A system to harmonize and link marine and coastal NC accounts with routine government indicators and reporting procedures adopted, e.g., Green GDP (Gross Domestic Product), SDGs, gender inclusion</p>				
Component 2 Integration of marine and coastal natural capital accounting into provincial and local development planning and operations in Quang Ninh Province				
Outcome 2.1 Results of marine and coastal NCA applied toward development and implementation of blue economic growth and land-/seascape conservation planning for Quang Ninh Province				

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p>Socio-economic development plan for QN province developed with application of NCA analysis</p> <p>4# of NC protocols or sustainable business plans developed by at least 4 private sector groups</p> <p>Core Indicator 4: Area under improved landscape management with direct benefit through reduced NC impact area</p> <p>Area under improved landscape management with</p>	<p>At provincial level results of NCA of marine and coastal areas are not available or applied to socio-economic planning to capture trends in BE</p> <p>Sustainable business plans or protocols do exist but are not reflecting NC values among private sector groups related to tourism, fishery, agriculture etc.</p> <p>Blue Economy sustainable growth is hampered by exclusion of a proper valuation of NC and ongoing impact vectors such as pollution, degradation, habitat loss and loss of ecosystem services</p> <p>Limited reduction of NC impact vectors and enhanced planning on PAs and related</p>	<p><i>Project End</i></p> <p>Target 1: Quang Ninh provincial socio-economic development plan for the period of 2026-2030 adopted incorporating the results of NCA</p> <p>Target 2: NC Protocols or Sustainable Business Plans developed by at least 4 corporate entities related to i.e. tourism, fishery, agriculture planning, investments and operations - including towards (M)PAs (towards reducing NC impact vectors, including nutrients, plastics and other pollution, critical habitat loss and degradation, and loss of connectivity for key ecosystem services)</p> <p>Target 3: A total of 90,128 ha with direct benefit through reduced NC impact vectors, including on nutrients, plastics and other pollution, critical habitat loss and degradation, and loss of connectivity for key ecosystem services.</p> <p>In total 42,978 ha in three Protected Areas (PA) - with indirect benefit through e.g. enhanced planning and</p>	<p>Socio-economic development provincial plan for the period of 2016-2030</p> <p>Project progress reports</p> <p>Terminal Evaluation</p>	<p>Assumptions:</p> <p>NC value proposition for blue economic growth is recognized at provincial level</p> <p>Stakeholders at provincial level follow national guidelines towards blue economy</p> <p>Public, private and CSO willing to collaborate on improving the planning, design and operations of tourism and fisheries, or other sectors of NC concern</p> <p>Corporate business case and partnership on NC protocol is strong enough to adopt practices in tourism and fisheries sectors</p> <p>Risks: NCA results are not used to shape</p>

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p>indirect benefit in PAs</p> <p>Core Indicator 5: Area of marine habitat under improved practices (excluding protected areas)</p> <p>Core Indicator 6: Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU sector [tCO₂eq.]</p> <p>Core Indicator 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment:</p>	<p>funding mobilization.</p> <p>0ha</p> <p>0 metric tons of CO₂eq</p> <p>0</p>	<p>financial resources incorporated in SE Development Plans</p> <p>(a) Area of indirect benefit: 42,978 ha</p> <p>(b) Additional PA funding mobilized</p> <p>910ha, reflecting areas of marine and nearshore habitats, of which 884.5ha of seagrass and 25.5ha of coral reef)</p> <p>Expected metric tons of CO₂eq. (direct): 907,308</p> <p>Direct benefits to at least 840 people (504 men and 336 women).</p>	<p>Progress reports</p> <p>NC accounts with GIS/RS data, reflecting spatial impact/trends</p> <p>EX-ACT calculations</p> <p>Progress reports</p> <p>Progress reports, training reports with disaggregated data</p>	<p>the targeted provincial development plan, i.e. if the additional NC information would not be used or does not translate into change in practice</p>

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p>Outputs</p> <p>2.1.1 Two or three marine and coastal (SEEA-EA-based) NC ecosystems-accounts established and operationalized ? with specific data sets for Quang Ninh Province (see 1.1.1).</p> <p>2.1.2 Corporate commitments and plans secured and options for PA friendly operations/investments identified through quantification of impacts, dependency and interlinkages on marine and coastal NC in Quang Ninh Province communicated through outreach and sector roundtables</p> <p>2.1.3 Socio-Economic development plan (2026 - 2030) in Quang Ninh Province developed, optimizing sector co-existence and spatial use of coastal and marine resources as well as identifying sector investments and operations for improved (financial) management effectiveness of protected areas - leading to reducing vectors of NC impact, using integrated NC ecosystems-account</p>				
<p>Component 3 Outreach and knowledge management for national uptake</p>				
<p>Outcome 3.1 Better understanding on the importance of natural capital and NCA towards a sustainable blue economy in Viet Nam</p>				

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
<p># of outreach materials</p> <p># of awareness events</p> <p>Establishment of an operational Community of Practice on NCA to catalyze NCA awareness and knowledge</p> <p>% increase of the government capacity demonstrated through 4 institutions</p> <p>At least 3 additional provincial plans developed with application of NCA for blue economic growth planning</p> <p>The piloted application of NCA for blue</p>	<p>Communication and partnership building on NCA assessments, analysis and reporting and its application opportunities remain ad-hoc and unconsolidated</p> <p>No provincial plans are developed informed with NCA analysis for blue economic growth and landscape management</p>	<p><i>Project End</i></p> <p>Target 1: Increased awareness as measured with e.g. Capacity Development Scorecard for GEF Projects ? including gender[4]</p> <p>(a) # of outreach materials: 3 technical reports, 2 leaflets/brochures, 2 training curricula</p> <p>(b) at least 4 of awareness events</p> <p>(c) Operational Community of Practice on NCA to catalyze NCA awareness and knowledge: 1</p> <p>d) Capacity development score for ISPONRE increase with 20%</p> <p>(e) Capacity development score for GSO increase with 20%</p> <p>(f) Capacity development score for VASI increase with 20%</p> <p>(g) Capacity development score for Quang Ninh DONRE increase with 20%</p> <p>Target 2: At least three additional provincial governments (DPIs) collaborating with MONRE/GSO towards additional NCAs and</p>	<p>CDS</p> <p>Progress reports</p> <p>Terminal evaluation</p> <p>Provincial plans</p> <p>-</p> <p>Lists of participants in Component 3 activities (disaggregated data)</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>	<p><u>Assumptions:</u></p> <p>Stakeholders show lasting commitment to a CoP</p> <p>Additional provinces are willing to replicate the piloted NCA approach</p> <p><u>Risks:</u> Current institutions have inadequate technical capacity to develop/adapt natural capital accounting and valuation ecosystem services</p>

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
economic growth planning catalyses replication in additional provinces (at least 3).		their application to blue economic growth path/PA landscape management and monitoring		
<p>Outputs</p> <p>3.1.1 Set of awareness raising and outreach activities and establishment of ?community of practices? which connects local and national institutions and stakeholders to increase understanding and enable increased impact from applying NC accounting</p> <p>3.1.2 Targeted replication and engagement mechanism ? facilitated by MONRE and GSO, establishing additional NCAs in Quang Ninh as well as in at least three additional provinces, based on the applicable government legal directives, secured funding and specified sustainable development and environmental protection</p>				
<p>Outcome 3.2 Project impact monitoring and knowledge management system enables national replication</p>				

Outcome Level Indicators	Baseline	Targets and Monitoring Milestones	Means of Verification	Assumptions & Risks
# of progress reports # of technical reports # of best practices documentation reports Social media reports # of knowledge exchange events Project exit strategy highlighting replication strategy and impact factors	No consolidated knowledge management system on NCA is available	Project End Target 3: Best practice analyzed and annually communicated, including on gender, institutional collaboration and replication of NCA (a) # of progress reports: at least 3 (b) # of technical reports: at least 4 (c) # of best practices documentation reports: at least 2 (d) Social media reports: consolidated series, digital repository (e) # of knowledge exchange events: at least 3 (f) Project exit strategy highlighting replication strategy and impact factors developed	Workshop and training reports Curricula, course material, and resources Lists of participants in Component 3 activities (disaggregated data) Progress reports Terminal evaluation	
Outputs 3.2.1. Project sex disaggregated M&E system enables tracking of project progress, performance; and specifically capturing best practice to enable replication of NCA and blue economy in additional province(s)				

[1] This ability will be measured by self-assessment of training participants before and after training

[2] (Staff capacity and training need assessment will be done in the first year of project)

[3] Including SDG indicators

[4] Capacity Development Scorecard will be based on <https://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/publication/Monitoring%20Guidelines%20Report-final.pdf>

ANNEX B: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS (from GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF).

Annex B: Response to Project Reviews (from GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion, and responses to comments from the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF).

GEF Secretariat Review Sheet d.d 5 May 2022, approval of PIF and guidance		
Comments	Responses	Document reference
<p>In relation to 2 and 5, during PPG, please further:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identify how the project can improve the enabling environment for NCA in general, beyond the well justified marine and coastal focus of the project. - explore the possibilities for the project to improve management effectiveness of the PAs present in the landscape (as measured by the METT) and report the corresponding project impact on core indicator 1. 	<p>UNEP response 5 May 2022: No problem, we will do so during the PPG</p>	<p>In the ProDoc the broader enabling environment is sketched through the foreseen development of the National NCA roadmap, covering all Vietnamese ecosystems and related entities and the establishment of the Community of Practice on NCA, bringing together all national practitioners and intended to serve as broad enabling platform for NCA.</p> <p>Following further discussion, it has been decided not to make use of the METT as a proxy to monitor project impact on enhancement of management effectiveness of the three PAs in the project area. The impact of the project interventions is seen as indirect through reduction of negative impact vectors, enhanced planning and potential mobilization of additional funding, but the interaction with the PA management teams will be relatively limited.</p>

<p>All previous comments are cleared. Thank you for the much improved ToC narrative. During PPG, please further elaborate the ToC and in particular the diagram.</p>	<p>Agency response 25 April: sorry; now corrected in PIF Table B. Also, we will indeed revisit the ToC (diagram) based on PPG baseline analysis.</p>	<p>The ToC, Annex 4A in the ProDoc has been further updated, linking the provided threats and barriers with the project strategy, foreseen interventions and(anticipated (long-term) impact, with related assumptions.</p>
<p>During PPG, please :- further identify how the project can improve the enabling environment for NCA in general, beyond the well justified marine and coastal focus of the project, and</p> <p>- further explore the possibilities for the project to improve management effectiveness of the PAs present in the landscape (as measured by the METT), reporting any corresponding project impact on core indicator 1. Examine the opportunities of adding a target under 4.4 (avoided loss of High Conservation Value Forest). Refine the target on core indicator 6.</p> <p>- Refine the ToC</p>		<p>See first comment above.</p> <p>See the second comment above on METT. With regard to a potential of adding an additional Core Indicator 4.4 (avoided loss of High Conservation Value Forest) we have brought this up in discussions in Quang Ning Province and were informed that a limited area of well conserved High Conservation Value Forest is present within BA Tu Long NP within the project landscape. The area however is presently in good condition and the PA management team saw very limited potential in improving the present good conservation state of the area. Therefore an additional CI has not been added in the ProDoc.</p> <p>The comments on the ToC are given above.</p>

**ANNEX C: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG).
(Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status
in the table below:**

activities financing status in the table below:

PPG Grant Approved at PIF: \$50,000			
<i>Project Preparation Activities Implemented</i>	<i>GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)</i>		
	<i>Budgeted Amount</i>	<i>Amount Spent To date</i>	<i>Amount Committed</i>
Project Design Expert, IC	27,775	22,924	4,851
National NCA expert and baseline consultant	13,750	11,000	2,750
Stakeholder consultation/surveys	5,975	4,934	1,041
Inception workshop, technical design and validation meeting	2,500	2,000	500
Total	50,000	40,858	9,142

If at CEO Endorsement, the PPG activities have not been completed and there is a balance of unspent fund, Agencies can continue to undertake exclusively preparation activities up to one year of CEO Endorsement/approval date. No later than one year from CEO endorsement/approval date. Agencies should report closing of PPG to Trustee in its Quarterly Report.

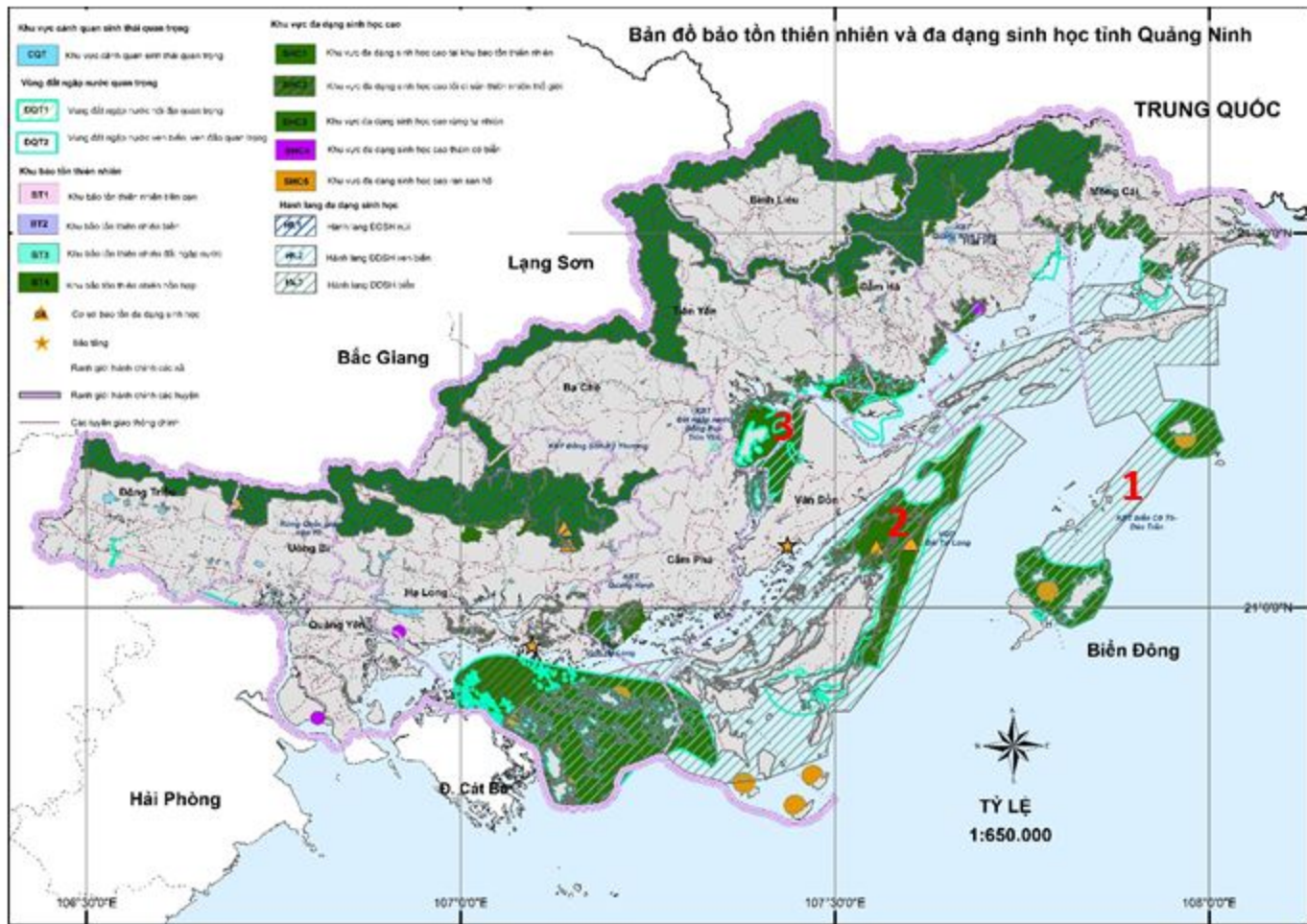
ANNEX D: Project Map(s) and Coordinates

Please attach the geographical location of the project area, if possible.

ProDoc Figure 1. Project Landscape in Quang Ninh Province with Location of Focal Areas of Co To-Dao Tran (1), Dong Rui-Tien Yen (2) and Bai Tu Long (3)

Source: Quang Ninh PPC (2022), Identification Report on Master Planning for Quang Ninh Province in the period of 2021 - 2030 and vision toward 2050

Quang Ninh Province is situated along the Northeastern coast of Viet Nam from N20°40' to N21°40' and from E106°25' to E108°25'.



ANNEX E: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

Budget Line		Component				Sub-total	PMC	Tot
		Comp. 1	Comp. 2	Comp.3				
		Outcome 1.1	Outcome 2.1	Outcome 3.1	Outcome 3.2 (M&E)			
120	Contractual Services - Individual	299,626.00	281,832.00	51,114.00	53,429.00	686,001.00	9,000.00	695,001.00
	International consultants	33,500.00	-	-	23,625.00	57,125.00		57,125.00
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to review methodologies, support guidance, pilot lessons and update NCA roadmap, together with policy learning report under output 1.1.1	12,875.00						
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to review the accounting system/indicators, development of BE monitoring indicators, development of a GSDF and establishment of a Provincial GSDF, with guidelines, SOP and related straining under output 1.1.3	20,625.00						
	Sub-contract for consultancy services for inception WS				6,875.00			
	Sub-contract for consultancy services for TE				16,750.00			
	Local consultants	266,126.00	281,832.00	51,114.00	29,804.00	628,876.00	9,000.00	637,876.00
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to review methodologies, support guidance, pilot lessons and update NCA roadmap, together with policy learning report under output 1.1.1	40,800.00						
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to design and deliver an awareness raising program, develop and deliver a NCA training curriculum under output 1.1.2	17,310.00						
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to review the accounting system/indicators, development of BE monitoring indicators, development of a GSDF and establishment of a Provincial GSDF, with guidelines, SOP and related straining under output 1.1.3	105,344.00						
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to review existing NCA mechanism, support and formalization of the NCA platform, including action plan drafting and effectiveness review under output 1.1.4	66,400.00						
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to review indicators , guideline development for mainstreaming NCA into routine government indicators, including a related roll-out of a training under output 1.1.5	36,272.00						
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to review key issues of NC in Quang Ninh, economic valuation of ecosystem goods and services and the development of at least 2 NC accounts for QN under output 2.1.1		88,260.00					
	Sub-contract for consultancy services for surveys to assess priority sectors and organize sector round tables and development of at least 4 sustainable business plans and capacity training aimed at effective plan implementation under output 2.1.2		39,412.00					
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to assess biodiversity and ES values and trends in QN, and supporting spatial planning to mitigate and reduce NC threats and support the Socio-Economic development Plan, incorporating NC trends under output 2.1.3		154,160.00					
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to develop a knowledge management and communication plan, development of a digital front door/website and awareness materials to disseminate and documentation of lessons learnt under output 3.1.1			32,000.00				
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to identify replication provinces, including possible financial resources and mobilize funding partners and deliver an awareness raising training on NCA to other provinces under output 3.1.2			19,114.00				
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to support the monitoring of project implementation, which includes completion of annual PIR review of annual work plan implementation status for adaptive management of project activities under output 3.2.1							
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to support the gender, SRIF, and landscape impacts monitoring of project implementation				8,000.00			
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to review and update Capacity Development Scorecard with identified national ministries and with Quang Ninh DONRE at project start and end of project				5,804.00			
	Sub-contract for consultancy services to prepare a project completion report to compile project results and lessons learned, to inform the Terminal Evaluation team				3,200.00			
	Sub-contract for consultancy services for inception WS				4,800.00			
	Sub-contract for consultancy services for TE				8,000.00			
	Sub-contract for auditing service						9,000.00	
10	Salary and benefits / Staff costs	-	-	-	-	-	93,600.00	93,600.00
320	Training, Workshops and Meetings	150,970.00	102,875.00	81,500.00	9,750.00	345,095.00		345,095.00
	Training activities under output 1.1.1	28,970.00						
	Training activities under output 1.1.2	19,000.00						
	Training activities under output 1.1.3	53,375.00						
	Training activities under output 1.1.4	22,500.00						
	Training activities under output 1.1.5	27,125.00						
	Training activities under output 2.1.1		22,000.00					
	Training activities under output 2.1.2 (including round table meetings)		40,125.00					
	Training activities under output 2.1.3 (including trainings on business plan implementation)		40,750.00					
	Training activities under output 3.1.1			31,250.00				
	Training activities under output 3.1.2			50,250.00				
	Workshops and meetings under output 3.2.1				6,750.00			
	PSC meeting				3,000.00			
160	Travel	31,646.00	26,792.00	3,846.00	4,952.00	67,236.00	10,300.00	77,542.00
	For activities under output 1.1.1	3,670.00						
	For activities under output 1.1.2 (including international exchanges)	16,010.00						
	For activities under output 1.1.3 (including airfare IC)	9,514.00						
	For activities under output 1.1.4	1,680.00						
	For activities under output 1.1.5	772.00						
	For activities under output 2.1.1 (including IC air fare)		9,860.00					
	For activities under output 2.1.2		1,972.00					
	For activities under output 2.1.3		14,960.00					

ANNEX F: (For NGI only) Termsheet

Instructions. Please submit an finalized termsheet in this section. The NGI Program Call for Proposals provided a template in Annex A of the Call for Proposals that can be used by the Agency. Agencies can use their own termsheets but must add sections on Currency Risk, Co-financing Ratio and Financial Additionality as defined in the template provided in Annex A of the Call for proposals. Termsheets submitted at CEO endorsement stage should include final terms and conditions of the financing.

ANNEX G: (For NGI only) Reflows

Instructions. Please submit a reflows table as provided in Annex B of the NGI Program Call for Proposals and the Trustee excel sheet for reflows (as provided by the Secretariat or the Trustee) in the Document Section of the CEO endorsement. The Agencies is required to quantify any expected financial return/gains/interests earned on non-grant instruments that will be transferred to the GEF Trust Fund as noted in the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy. Partner Agencies will be required to comply with the reflows procedures established in their respective Financial Procedures Agreement with the GEF Trustee. Agencies are welcomed to provide assumptions that explain expected financial reflow schedules.

ANNEX H: (For NGI only) Agency Capacity to generate reflows

Instructions. The GEF Agency submitting the CEO endorsement request is required to respond to any questions raised as part of the PIF review process that required clarifications on the Agency Capacity to manage reflows. This Annex seeks to demonstrate Agencies? capacity and eligibility to administer NGI resources as established in the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy, GEF/C.52/Inf.06/Rev.01, June 9, 2017 (Annex 5).