

Promote Wildlife Conservation and Responsible Nature Based Tourism for Sustainable Development in Vietnam

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID

10787

Project Type

FSP

Type of Trust Fund

GET

CBIT/NGI

CBIT No

NGI No

Project Title

Promote Wildlife Conservation and Responsible Nature Based Tourism for Sustainable Development in Vietnam

Countries

Viet Nam

Agency(ies)

UNDP

Other Executing Partner(s)

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)

Executing Partner Type

Government

GEF Focal Area

Biodiversity

Taxonomy

Biomes, Biodiversity, Focal Areas, Stakeholders, Gender Equality, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Sustainable Development Goals, Financial and Accounting, Payment for Ecosystem Services, Species, Threatened Species, Illegal Wildlife Trade, Wildlife for Sustainable Development, Mainstreaming, Tourism, Coral Reefs, Sea Grasses, Tropical Dry Forests, Tropical Rain Forests, Mangroves, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Community Based Natural Resource Mngt, Coastal and Marine Protected Areas, Local Communities, Communications, Behavior change, Education, Awareness Raising, Indigenous Peoples, Private Sector, SMEs, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Type of Engagement, Partnership, Participation, Consultation, Information Dissemination, Gender Mainstreaming, Beneficiaries, Gender-sensitive indicators, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Women groups, Gender results areas, Access to benefits and services, Participation and leadership, Capacity Development, Access and control over natural resources, Knowledge Exchange, Learning, Adaptive management, Theory of change, Knowledge Generation, Innovation, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Influencing models, Deploy innovative financial instruments, Demonstrate innovative approach, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances

Rio Markers**Climate Change Mitigation**

Climate Change Mitigation 1

Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation 1

Duration

60 In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

679,250.00

Submission Date

3/24/2021

A. Indicative Focal/Non-Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
BD-1-1	GET	4,767,000.00	26,800,000.00
BD-2-7	GET	2,383,000.00	13,400,000.00
Total Project Cost (\$)		7,150,000.00	40,200,000.00

B. Indicative Project description summary

Project Objective

To promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods through innovative solutions of nature-based tourism.

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
Component 1: Enabling framework to harmonize tourism development with nature conservation	Technical Assistance	<p>Outcome 1: Strengthened and harmonized policy, regulatory and incentive framework for promotion of nature-based tourism while reducing threats to wildlife and habitats. This is measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Nature-based tourism strategy integrated into revised biodiversity and tourism policy, regulations and master plans.</i> - <i>Improved institutional capacity for nature-based tourism development, as measured by</i> 	<p>1.1. Inter-agency effective governance framework established for multi-level planning for tourism in high biodiversity areas and supporting implementation of the national biodiversity conservation and development strategy to 2030 and vision to 2050 and mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into the national tourism development strategy to 2030 and vision to 2050</p> <p>1.2. Environmental standards, criteria and guidelines for sustainable tourism development, management and operations in high biodiversity areas developed and adopted, supported by monitoring, verification and reporting systems.</p> <p>1.3 National nature-based tourism guidelines developed for mainstreaming biodiversity into tourism policy, regulations and master planning for development of national tourism areas and integration in PA management policies.</p> <p>1.4 Policy framework for operationalizing nature-based tourism strengthened, in particular for promotion of: (i) public-private partnerships in nature-based tourism and (ii) community participation and benefit sharing from nature-based tourism.</p>	GET	1,700,000.00	8,500,000.00

UNDP capacity development scorecard.

-Number of monitoring methodologies and guidelines developed and operationalized for promotion of effective protected area management and nature-based tourism[1]

-National policy and legislative framework for PMES (payment for marine ecosystem services) developed and approved

1.5. Practical and standardized methodologies for ecological and social impact assessment developed for tourism in high biodiversity areas to identify and minimize impacts on wildlife, habitats, local culture and lifestyles, along with standards to ensure compliance.

1.6. National policy and legal framework for promotion of payment for ecosystem services from wetlands and marine ecosystems (PMES) that channels revenues from tourism in high-biodiversity areas is developed and approved.

[1] These could include: (i) national tourism ecological capacity and impact monitoring methodology; (ii) national guidelines for ecotourism monitoring,

evaluation and reporting; (iii) ecological and social impact monitoring guidelines and procedures; etc.

Component 2: Nature-based tourism partnerships benefitting communities, wildlife and habitats at Nui Chua and Phong Nha-Ke Bang national parks	Investment	<p>Outcome 2: Strengthened public-private partnerships for nature-based tourism enhance local livelihoods, increase PA revenue generation, improve tourism management, and reduce threats in PAs from poaching, illegal activities and related impacts as indicated by:</p> <p><i>-Improved management effectiveness of two Protected Areas covering 146,984 hectares of terrestrial area and 7,352 hectares of</i></p>	<p>2.1 Provincial multi-sectoral nature-based tourism platform established to support coordinated actions and investment across government and private sector for promotion of nature-based tourism development in Quang Binh and Ninh Thuan provinces.</p> <p>2.2 Integrated nature-based tourism programs designed in Nui Chua and Phong Nha-Ke Bang national parks to guide tourism activities, improve local employment and incomes and mitigate harmful tourism practices (e.g. market demand for wild products, habitat degradation and pollution) through (i) development/ revision of nature-based tourism plans, tourism business planning and management regulations to minimize threats: (ii) identification of innovative and culturally sensitive community-led nature-based tourism products and services; and (iii) identification of public-private partnerships in support of conservation.</p> <p>2.3 Improved monitoring of status of key biodiversity resources to assess effectiveness of PA management, illegal wildlife threat management and conservation outcomes of nature-based tourism</p> <p>2.4 Institutional capacity for improving conservation and management of PAs and effective monitoring, surveillance and prevention of illegal wildlife activities</p>	GET	3,317,000.00	18,000,000.00
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marine area as measured by METT[1]

- Approximately 77,000 ha of commune managed lands in the buffer zone of the two PAs better integrate tourism development and biodiversity conservation to reduce threats and market demand for wildlife and wildlife products (to be finalized at PPG stage)

-Multi-indicator biodiversity health assessment at tourism sites covering: key species status in terrestrial and coastal sites; and coral cover and diversity, fish diversity etc. in marine sites (to be finalized at PPG stage with baseline and target)

- % increase in tourism revenue channeled to conservation

2.5 Implementation of community conservation and benefit sharing programs from nature-based tourism and related products and services that provide new and innovative income generation activities.

2.6 Demonstration of PMES mechanism that channels revenues from tourism in Nui Chua national park and surrounding landscape in support of conservation outcomes; and better targeting of the existing PFES mechanism in Phong Nha-Ke Bang national park to ensure that PFES resources lead to ecosystem quality improvements.

*activities in the
two protected
areas (baseline
and target to be
finalized at PPG)*

*-Number of
households
benefiting from
PMES and related
economic
activities in Nui
Chua national
park and
surrounding
landscape
(baseline and
target to be
finalized at PPG)*

*- At least 3,000
new and/or
recovered/stable
'green'
employment
and/or
community-based
livelihood
opportunities
created in the 2
PAs (baseline and
target to be
finalized at PPG)*

*- % reduction in
incidents of
reported
poaching, illegal
activities and
habitat
destruction at the
two project PAs*

(baseline and
target to be
finalized at PPG)

[1] In particular to
assess
effectiveness of
threat reduction
from tourism
related activities
and illegal
exploitations of
wildlife and
wildlife products

Component 3: Capacity building and behavior change for acceptance of value of nature- based tourism and wildlife and biodiversity protection	Technical Assistance	<p>Outcome 3: Change in social norms and behavior promote society's acceptance of a more sustainable approach to nature-based tourism that protects wildlife, as indicated by:</p> <p>- <i>Number of hotels and tourist operations functioning in accordance with biodiversity- friendly best</i></p>	<p>3.1 Advocacy with tourism sector to encourage promotion of nature-based tourism, through: (i) best practice guidelines and codes of conduct for tourist products and services and (ii) 'green tourism' network to promote uptake of responsible travel practices and create networking and marketing opportunities for nature-based tourism.</p> <p>3.2. Targeted social and behavioral change communications and initiatives for domestic and international tourists aiming to influence the purchase, use and trafficking of illegal wildlife products and promote more positive attitudes towards wildlife and nature conservation.</p> <p>3.3 Community outreach at the two PAs and buffer zones to shift attitudes and create social pressures to deter involvement in poaching and trafficking of wildlife, and</p>	GET	1,200,000.00	7,000,000.00
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practice (baseline and target to be finalized at PPG)

increased awareness of the benefits of nature-based tourism, and payment for environmental services.

- Green tourism network operational with X members by project close (baseline and target to be finalized at PPG)

3.4. Tourism and related enterprises integrate biodiversity-friendly practices to enhance biodiversity protection, improve visitor experiences and participation in actions that protect biodiversity at the two PAs.

- Improved attitudes and awareness of tourists (domestic and international) and communities towards wildlife and its protection, measured by KAP (Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices) survey.

Component 4. Marketing, knowledge management and M&E	Technical Assistance	Outcome 4: Upscaling and replication of nature-based tourism in Vietnam is supported by effective marketing, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation of results, as indicated by:	<p>4.1 Marketing strategies and informational materials for promoting the quality and diversity of nature-based tourism at demonstration PAs developed and disseminated across tourism platforms.</p> <p>4.2 Knowledge exchange platform developed for sharing of experiences for replication of nature-based tourism planning and management model in other high tourism areas through (a) improving dialogue with other provincial authorities; (b) strengthening awareness and improving capacity; and (c) developing best practice manuals and handbooks</p>	GET	592,524.00	3,375,000.00
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Integration of nature-based tourism within Vietnam tourism websites and tour packages/ itineraries (baseline and target to be finalized at PPG)

Six project best practices and lessons learned developed, disseminated and used, including on gender mainstreaming and socio-cultural benefits of nature-based tourism (baseline and target to be finalized at PPG)

Replication strategy developed and disseminated based on lessons from the project

4.3 M&E system, incorporating gender mainstreaming and social and environmental safeguards, developed and implemented for adaptive project management.

Sub Total (\$)	6,809,524.00	36,875,000.00
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Project Management Cost (PMC)

GET	340,476.00	3,325,000.00
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	Sub Total(\$)	340,476.00	3,325,000.00
	Total Project Cost(\$)	7,150,000.00	40,200,000.00

C. Indicative 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(\$)
Recipient Country Government	MONRE	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	MONRE	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,500,000.00
Recipient Country Government	MARD	Grant	Investment mobilized	2,400,000.00
Recipient Country Government	MOCST	Grant	Investment mobilized	2,400,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Provincial Administration – DARD, Quang Binh	Grant	Investment mobilized	11,200,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Provincial Administration – DARD, Ninh Thuan	Grant	Investment mobilized	13,200,000.00
Private Sector	Private tour operators, companies (TBC)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2,800,000.00
Donor Agency	USAID	Grant	Investment mobilized	5,000,000.00
GEF Agency	UNDP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	200,000.00
Total Project Cost(\$)				40,200,000.00

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

Investment mobilized has been identified at PIF stage as projects and investments that fall outside of recurrent budgets and that are expected to materialize during the years of project implementation (funding amounts have been spread pro-rata across years of implementation). This includes the following estimated investment mobilized from the Government of Viet Nam and relevant provincial authorities, other donors, private sector, GEF agency, etc. The estimated government component of Investment Mobilized represents the anticipated allocation from the state budget allocated to Ministries and provinces participating in the project. A more accurate estimate of co-financing, including the details of specific co-financers, will be confirmed during the PPG phase when co-financing letters are obtained. MONRE co-financing relating to Government-financed projects on biodiversity conservation planning at national level, annual tasks on biodiversity-related laws and policy revisions/formulation on rare and endangered categories of species identification, conservation and management; policies on natural landscape management, as well as co-financing from use of existing assets (project office, field offices and other physical and communication assets). MARD co-financing from Forest Sector Modernization and Coastal Resilience Enhancement project in support of (i) modernizing coastal forest planning (spatial planning) in terms of transferring technical capacity to DARD and district and commune level sector entities. It will also help broaden PES for coastal forests in

obtaining market-based financing for management of these forests through improved business partnerships in particular for services related to aquaculture, spawning and carbon sequestration. These activities are specifically relevant to Nui Chua national park, although the lessons from PFES will also help strengthen its application in Phong Nha-Ke Bang national park as well. Additionally, the MARD/WB-FCPF Carbon fund applies to the Quang Binh province. MOCST will be complementary investments from its Greater Mekong Tourism (Quang Binh sub-project) project (2019-2023) to improve tourism destination connectivity to promote inclusive growth. Provincial Administration DARD investment in Quang Binh Province (2021-2030). Provincial resources are being provided through the Project for development of Special Use Forests and Forest protection (2021-2025). Provincial Administration DARD investment in Quang Binh Province (2021-2030). The following activities through the 5-year period of the project that are being considered as co-financing focus on community forest protection, forest biodiversity conservation, community services, development of PFES, information and awareness promotion and forest and biodiversity monitoring. In addition, Provincial resources are being provided also for development of community ecotourism at Nui Chua NP (2019-2022) to support community-based enterprises, and regulate norms of tourism investments. Additionally, the proposal is to develop Nui Chua as high tourism destination in consonance with environmental and social objectives. Private sector co-financing will entail support for promotion of nature-based tourism standards and practices, improving staff and visitor awareness of biodiversity and management of tourism impacts, investment in improved tour operations, PPP for nature-based activities, support for conservation, etc. (Detailed co-financing amounts would be worked out during PPG stage) USAID co-financing through its Sustainable Forest Management Project, Biodiversity Conservation project and Forests and Delta Program, the latter supporting promotion of PFES system to serve as an effective tool in accomplishing the country's environmental and socio-economic goals. In particular, the PFES activities are intended to correct the current PFES cash-based system that is inefficient and creates security risks as significant amounts of cash are transported to rural areas for distribution. This will provide lessons for strengthening existing PFES at Phong Nha-Ke Bang national parks and introduction of PMES at Nui Chua.

D. Indicative 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(\$)
UNDP	GET	Viet Nam	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	7,150,000	679,250	7,829,250.00
Total GEF Resources(\$)					7,150,000.00	679,250.00	7,829,250.00

E. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)
PPG Required **true**

PPG Amount (\$)				PPG Agency Fee (\$)			
155,936				14,814			
Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNDP	GET	Viet Nam	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	155,936	14,814	170,750.00
Total Project Costs(\$)					155,936.00	14,814.00	170,750.00

Core Indicators

Indicator 1 Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
146,984.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

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

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
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Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
146,984.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
Nui Chua National Park	303041	National Park	23,658.00						
Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park	10345	National Park	123,326.00						

Indicator 2 Marine protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use

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

7,352.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
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Indicator 2.1 Marine Protected Areas Newly created

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

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
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Indicator 2.2 Marine Protected Areas Under improved management effectiveness

Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
7,352.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
Nui Chua National Park	303041	National Park	7,352.00						



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)
77000.00	0.00	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)
77,000.00			

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes that meets national or international third party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations (hectares)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
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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)
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Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) loss avoided

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
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Documents (Please upload document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Submitted

Indicator 11 Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	1,500			
Male	1,500			
Total	3000	0	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

Notes to Table F: Core Indicator 1.2 and 2.2: The two PAs to be supported by the project are: Nui Chua National Park in Ninh Thuan province and Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park in Quang Binh province, covering an estimated 146,984 ha of terrestrial area (23,658 ha in Nui Chua and 123,326 ha in Phong Nha-Ke Bang) and 7,352 ha of marine area (in Nui Chua). Core Indicator 4.1: The project will also support better integration of tourism development with biodiversity conservation in buffer areas immediately outside the two PAs. Responsible tourism will be supported in the around 77,000 ha of buffer zone outside the two PAs through improved coordination with the Commune Peoples Committees to reduce threats on natural resources (e.g., habitat disturbance), reduce market demand of wildlife related products (e.g., behavior change – hence reducing poaching/illegal fishing), and mobilization of sustainable financing mechanisms (e.g., private sector engagement/PMES). The total area to be covered is around 77,000 hectares (excluding PAs) as follows: (i) 33,174 ha of commune managed lands in the buffer zone of the proposed Nui Chua Biosphere Reserve and (ii) approximately 20% of the commune managed areas in the 219,855-ha buffer zone of the Phong Nha-Ke Bang NP = 43,826 ha. The exact location and exact area of the buffer at Phong Nha-Ke Bang to be covered under Core Indicator 4.1 would be defined at PPG based on operation of tourism facilities and services. Core Indicator 11: The estimate of direct beneficiaries is 3,000 (indicative at this stage), based on a conservative estimate of potential opportunities for generation of new and/or stabilization/maintenance of ‘green’ employment and community tourism-based livelihood operations (provision of services related to nature-based tourism). The breakdown would be around 2,500 direct beneficiaries at Phong Nha-Ka bang national park and 500 direct beneficiaries at Nui Chua national park and its surrounding landscape. All core indicator target contributions will be confirmed during the PPG phase.

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

1a. *Project Description.*

1) THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS, ROOT CAUSES AND BARRIERS

1.1) The organic relationship between biodiversity and tourism development:

The unique value of Vietnam's biodiversity is a special advantage for tourism development. Vietnam is located in the global Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot, which is considered to be extremely rich in biodiversity, playing an important role for nature and human life not only in the national scope but also in the region. Vietnam is one of the world's most biologically diverse countries. It is ranked 16th globally in terms of species diversity; contains about ten percent of the world's species while covering less than one percent of its land area, 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. Vietnam's 3,260 km coastline hosts a variety of coastal ecosystems. 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 planktons. Vietnam's biodiversity is recognized internationally, with it having nine Biosphere Reserves, two World Heritage Sites, eight Ramsar Sites, and 6 ASEAN Heritage Gardens. Other touristic attractions include lagoon ecosystems, sandy beaches, mangrove forests, limestone ecosystems and fruit gardens.

In Vietnam, tourism plays an important role for economic development and environmental protection. Tourism creates jobs, promotes foreign investment and contributes to the GDP. The total contribution of Tourism and Tourism to GDP of Vietnam is US \$ 32 billion in 2019^[1]. As noted in a World Bank report^[2] that takes stock of the recent economic developments of Viet Nam (special focus on tourism), by 2017, tourism directly accounted for 8 percent of Vietnam's GDP (with additional contributions via indirect multiplier effects), and was the country's single largest services export. Due to its tendency to employ high shares of low-skilled, rural, and youth workers, tourism has also had high pass-through effects on poverty reduction in Vietnam. In the process, it also appears to have facilitated some redistribution of income from richer to poorer localities in Vietnam. As such, the sector's continued growth is viewed by the government as a strategic priority and an important contributor to Vietnam's socio-economic development. According to the National Institute of Tourism Development Research, the National Parks and Protected Areas in Vietnam attract more than 30% of tourist visits every year. However, at present, some high-biodiversity tourism sites are being affected by the pressure of massive tourism infrastructure development, improper ecotourism development that has created negative impacts for wildlife and natural landscape environment, leading to conflict between tourism planning and conservation objectives. Sustainable tourism activities have potential to contribute to preserving the value of ecosystem services, protecting people's living environment and ensuring harmony of living environment for animals and plants. At the same time, sustainable tourism contributes effectively to the economic development process, bringing socio-economic benefits, great services to the local community, creating jobs and contributing to poverty reduction. If properly channeled, sustainable tourism development helps exploit natural resources in a scientific way, raising the awareness of preserving biodiversity and the environment.

The tourism strategy for Vietnam by 2030 that was recently approved by the Government aims to turn Vietnam into a renowned tourism destination, ranking among three leading countries in terms of tourism development in Southeast Asia and among the top 50 nations with the highest tourism competitiveness in the world. Tourism revenues are expected to reach US\$77-US\$80 billion, contributing 12%-14% to the country's gross domestic product and creating about 5.5-6 million jobs in the future. By 2025, the country expects to be visited by at least 35 million international tourists and 120 million domestic holidaymakers. This will be an enormous jump compared to 2019 where total international arrivals to the country reached 18 million. The strategy has 5 "viewpoints" as follows: 1. Tourism development has really become a key economic sector, creating a driving force for the development of other industries and fields, making an important contribution to forming a modern economic structure; 2. Sustainable and inclusive tourism development, on the basis of green growth, maximizing tourism's contribution to the United Nations sustainable development goals; effectively manage and use natural resources, protect the environment and biodiversity, actively adapt to climate change and ensure national defense and security; 3. Focusing on developing cultural tourism, associating tourism development with preserving and promoting the values of heritage and national cultural identity; 4. Developing tourism in the direction of professionalism, quality and efficiency; promote application of achievements of Industry 4.0 and focus on developing high quality human resources; 5. Simultaneously developing international tourism and domestic tourism; promote on-the-spot exports through tourism; strengthen links in order to promote the advantages of natural and cultural resources; diversify tourism products, expand markets and enhance the competitiveness of Vietnam's tourism. Most of the key national tourism regions have high biodiversity value that can help in developing sustainable ecotourism products. For example, in the north central and south central coast regions such as Thua Thien Hue and Da Nang, there is immense potential associated with sightseeing tours, ecosystem studies, marine tourism and leisure, and includes sites such as Lang Co natural landscape - Canh Duong, Hai Van - Son Tra etc. As part of the National Strategy of Tourism Development, Vietnam has targeted protected areas across the country for developing tourism, particularly ecotourism. The tourism strategy also recognizes the need to adopt policies to support resources for people involved in community-based tourism development; associating the development of cultural tourism with the experience of community life to improve economic and cultural life, contributing to hunger eradication and poverty alleviation for people, especially in deep-lying, remote, border and island areas.

The new tourism law that was validated from January 1, 2018 recognizes the promotion of ecotourism, which is defined as "one form of tourism based on nature, associated with local culture, with the participation of communities, combining education on environmental protection". However, the law does not provide clear direction on how ecotourism should be operated or principles to manage this new type of tourism. The project therefore provides an opportunity for: (i) making optimal use of the country's natural resources for promotion of nature-based tourism, while ensuring that essential ecological processes are nurtured to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity; (ii) ensuring respect for social-culture values of communities that are associated with these natural endowments, so as to conserve their cultural heritage and traditional values and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance; and (iii) ensure viable and sustainable, long-term socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, through employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to communities, so as to uplift their living standards.

This is particularly relevant as the country recovers from the impact of Covid-19. The government has recognized the need for taking an integrated approach to support green recovery, including promotion of nature-based tourism to achieve desired ecological and economic benefits from sustainable tourism recovery. The pandemic has generated new challenges but also opportunities for innovations. International tourist arrivals to Viet Nam declined by 79% between January to December 2020^[3]. According to UNDP and World Bank studies, Viet Nam's tourism sector lost 40-60% of jobs in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. There is an opportunity to contribute to green job recovery by promoting domestic travelers to natural destinations nationwide. In the context of Covid-19, MOCST has led a national campaign in 2020 on "Vietnamese travel Viet Nam" that encourages domestic travel to open-spaced and natural destinations that has considerably contributed to tourism green recovery.

Overall, if properly managed, the tourism sector is expected to bring significant opportunities for economic development, including the opportunities for women and youth, local rural and ethnic minorities. It has also significant potential to incentivize the conservation of environmental resources and cultural assets. Researchers indicate that the sustainable tourism market is willing to pay more to visit a destination that demonstrates responsible practices, so the combination of sustainable behavior and potential higher spending provides evidence of a market segment that can be beneficial to destinations where environmental or cultural assets may be at risk from low-yielding mass tourism.

However, the potential of biodiversity assets for tourism has not been evaluated and managed properly in the country. Rapid increase in tourism can exacerbate pressure on, and result in the decline of biodiversity. This can be as result of unregulated and rapid infrastructure development near protected areas or environmental pollution and illegal consumption of wild species. In addition, the currently incomplete assessment of Vietnam's biodiversity value results in there being inadequate development and management of nature/ecosystem-based tourism, as well as inappropriate nature-based tourism and an insufficient contribution to the conservation of biodiversity, threat reduction and local economies.

1.2) Tourism and related threats to biodiversity and protected areas

Degradation of biodiversity-rich terrestrial and coastal areas caused by tourism development has occurred in most high-density tourism zones. Tourism development and high concentrations of human settlements in beach and coastal areas, as well as near high biodiversity areas can produce significant impacts on natural and cultural areas, and comprise the principal threats to biodiversity and the ecosystem services they provide. Specifically, tourism-related degradation has affected the functionality of terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems: forests, dunes, mangrove forests, sea grass, wetlands and coral reefs. Tourism, both directly through infrastructure development and indirectly through expansion of tourism-related activities and increased population pressure, has caused loss of vegetative cover, associated biodiversity and compromised the ecological integrity and functionality of ecosystems and hydrological systems. Also, the use and type of materials for the construction of tourism-related infrastructure, which is largely based on conventional engineering approaches do not integrate biodiversity and climate adaptation considerations. This results in a loss of habitat and nesting grounds for rare, endemic and migratory species. Furthermore, the loss of vegetative cover has contributed to soil erosion and generated heavy sediment loads, which in turn have degraded the coral reefs. The loss of mangroves and coastal vegetation has also diminished the productivity of fish populations, affecting food security for local communities and increasing the risk of natural disasters. Wetlands have been drained and filled, decreasing their functionality. The loss of vegetative cover has also reduced the capacity of sensitive terrestrial and coastal ecosystems to retain carbon and has increased vulnerability to climate change including more damage from severe weather events.

Uncontrolled tourism development. While nature tourism has emerged as one of the fastest-growing segments of the tourism industry, these have produced challenges and opportunities. In terms of challenges, infrastructure related developments in sensitive habitats could have disastrous related impacts on biodiversity and the very resources on which the tourism depends. Physical construction of tourism facilities in high biodiversity area, riparian areas, mangrove and other coastal forest lands can have a direct impact on biodiversity through clearance of natural vegetation, 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. Additionally, the indirect spin-off developments from tourism, such as supportive housing for hotel staff, tourist homes and other service provisions can have impacts on biodiversity, increase forest and coastal vegetation clearance, and increase waste loads on sensitive ecosystems. Poor compliance of regulation has led to the conversion of 8.44 ha of critical conservation forests in Hoang Lien National Park, and in Phu Quoc national park 98 ha of the park's critical forestland was destroyed to build a safari facility without compliance of legislative procedures. Additionally, over-visitation and uncontrolled access to sensitive ecological sites (high conservation value forests, coastal mangrove ecosystems, coral reefs and migratory corridors) can have a lasting impact on species and biodiversity. This coupled with indirect influences on economic policies and strategies that relate to tourism development and promotion can bring about drastic changes in traditional practices as a result from transition to tourism-oriented activities that can increase the foot-print on these sensitive habitats, with long-term impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems

The destruction and disturbance of habitats and species on account of unsustainable tourism operations. Recreation activities, including plant collection and trampling, poorly controlled trekking and climbing, sports fishing, snorkeling, scuba diving, boat anchoring and fast power activities (cable cars, jet skiing, off-road vehicles, etc.) pose a direct threat to biodiversity. These activities may cause significant and irreversible damage, including soil and water disruptions, ecosystem degradation and habitat loss. The lack of regulations and control of tourism, even if it is nature-based can lead to destruction of habitats and interfere with the reproduction behavior of some species (e.g., sea turtle, birds, etc.). While, it is clear that uncontrolled tourism activities can cause destruction of habitats and species, there is limited availability of information from Vietnam, with the exception of few locations. In the Nha Trang Bay, it is reported that the hard coral cover in Hon Mieu islands has decreased from 27% to 3% in 2015[4]. The dramatic decline of the limestone coral framework has almost fully depleted coral fish communities.

Pollution, solid waste accumulation and effluent discharge. Environmental pollution such as noise and air pollution from tourist transportation, solid waste disposal, littering, sewage discharges from tourist activities, oil and chemicals from recreational vehicles and other activities threatened biodiversity, wildlife habitat and public health. Sediment and effluent discharges into coastal and marine areas have an adverse effect on coral reefs and associated fish species. It is reported that tourism activities in the Nha Trang Bay contributed to approximately 5,700 tons of waste and 780 million liters of sewage in 2014, much of which was dumped into the sea without proper treatment and removal of toxic substances[5]. This has caused nutrient enrichment, which favored certain species (algae in particular), at the expense of corals. In addition, tour boats cause significant petroleum hydrocarbon pollution, especially when oil and fuel spills occur. Tour boats also produce a considerable amount of sewage and waste, which is likely directly discharged into the sea. It is estimated that 500 tons of solid wastes is generated in Phong Nha-Ke Bang national park on an annual basis, most of which either end up in landfills or are burned. Tourism in Can Gio Biosphere Reserve shows some negative impact on the environment and the community. With the number of visitors increasing rapidly, beach pollution from food refuse from tourist shops is a problem due to the limited knowledge of shop owners of ecotourism and business practices[6]. In terms of marine plastic pollution, Vietnam is ranked the 4th largest generator of marine plastic (0.28-0.73 tons/year), affecting marine biodiversity and ecosystems that have implications for promotion of healthy marine tourism[7].

Unsustainable fishing and marine product harvest practices. About 1/5 of the country's population depend on fishery resources for their lives. Fishing contributes a great part to meet domestic consumption and exportation. However, the increase in consumption together with unsustainable fishing management have led to overexploitation of aquatic products in many regions. Many valuable marine species are decreasing seriously, such as lobster (*Panulirus spp.*), abalone (*Haliotes spp.*), *Chlamys spp.*, etc. Destructive fishing techniques such as using explosive, poison and electricity are popularly used in both inland and coastal areas, and considered a severe threat to more than 80% of coral reefs in Vietnam. In the tourism areas, over-fishing is a further threat, in particular to meet the tourist demand for sport and consumption. These might include illegal fishing practices, selective removal of species from reef communities and the use of damaging fishing gear and techniques, such as undersized nets and practices of dynamite fishing practices that have wide-ranging ecological consequences

Unsustainable exploitation of forest products. Many communities in Vietnam, depend on forest for their survival. Local communities, including in particular ethnic minorities collect forest products, fuels, and construction materials and do hunting for food. The influx of tourists to these remote locations has increased the demand for illegal meat, timber for construction of tourist facilities and other wildlife products, the latter particular for medicinal purposes. Wildlife is being commonly traded for making traditional medicine, such as bears, monkeys, civets, turtles, lizards, pangolins, pythons and snakes. Many bird species are also trapped for selling out as pets. Although Vietnam has adopted its national action plan to control wildlife trade, this has not reached the expected results because the market is getting bigger with increasing profits. Action is needed to enhance and improve collaboration between protected area and law enforcement staff to contain poaching of wildlife.

Limited economic benefits of tourism accruing to local communities. While nature-based tourism has potential to bring substantial economic benefits to the local community, there are often limited benefits that are actually derived by the local communities. Tourism development that does not actively enable the participation of local communities, can pose an indirect threat to biodiversity. Often, the weak and fragmented participation of local people in the tourism economy can lead to social conflicts within the tourism sector and the lack of incentives to conserve important natural resources. However, there are a number of examples from Vietnam that shows that the active participation of local communities in ecotourism-related activities has led to reduced pressure on marine resource exploitation of local coral reefs and sea grass beds in Cham Islands and consequential increased economic benefits to local communities.

Climate change exacerbate threats on PAs, in particular on marine and coastal ecosystems: Vietnam is seen as being particularly sensitive to global climate change, and predicted as one among ten countries that will soon be seriously affected by climate change. Fragmented ecosystems might be weak to respond to those changes, and might not avoid a mass loss of species at high speed. Increased temperature would facilitate forest fire, especially in peat swamp forests, dipterocarpus forests, and pine forests. Climate change together with the decrease of watershed forests and irrational water use might increasingly result in more inundation, flash floods, landslide with severe impacts on the environment and human livelihoods. The increase of average temperature will change geographic distribution and population structure of many ecosystems and exacerbate tourism-related threats, in particular on coastal and marine ecosystems.

1.3) Barriers for biodiversity conservation and sustainable tourism development:

Barriers to establishing sustainable tourism development centered on nature-based tourism in Vietnam are:

(a) Incomplete policy and legal framework to harmonize tourism development with biodiversity conservation and its enforcement.

Biodiversity values are important for sustainable development and are a favorable condition for the development of the tourism industry to become a key industry for national economic development. The strategy and master plan for tourism development in Vietnam to 2020 with a vision to 2030 specifies that sustainable tourism development must be associated with environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, and preservation of indigenous cultural values. In order to develop nature-based tourism, wild species, especially indicator species that is the characteristics of their ecosystems and natural habitats must be protected, because the presence of these species is an important factor to attract tourists. In addition, local people coexisting with wild species and living around their natural habitats should benefit from nature-based tourism, for example, bird watching, taking photos, stars watching, camping, hiking and visiting, enjoying the natural landscape etc. However, nature-based tourism is still a relatively new economic activity in Vietnam, so there are no specific provisions in legal documents or guidelines for development of the nature-based tourism in linking and harmonizing tourism activities and biodiversity conservation, and protection of the environment and natural landscapes. Although the Government has also focused on the planning and development of national tourist areas, and has also issued a number of related policies on ecotourism management and development such as the Law on Biodiversity in 2008, Tourism Law in 2017, Vietnam Tourism Development Strategy to 2020 with a vision to 2030, Prime Minister's Decision No. 24/2012 / QD-TTg on development investment policies on special-use forests in the period of 2011-2020, which regulate the development of eco-tourism, the reality of implementation still faces many difficulties, shortcomings and challenges. There is also a lack of specific policies and regulations to encourage businesses and communities to participate in nature-based tourism and benefit sharing mechanisms among the parties, as well as managing tourism activities to ensure that they do not create negative impact on conservation and contribute to effective conservation. Similarly, there is limited standardized guidance on biodiversity conservation in tourism development and operations and for assessing the environmental and social impacts of tourism and minimizing the impacts on wildlife, habitats and local culture. There remains a need for a clear agreed definition on what nature-based tourism means in Vietnam and what standards are required to achieve it. In addition, the lack of specific policy and guidance on sharing financial benefits from tourism for biodiversity/PA conservation and national policy and regulations for promotion of payment of ecosystem services from tourism, in particular from wetlands and marine ecosystems is not well developed.

(b) Lack of private sector participation and financial mechanisms to support conservation

The participation and support of the private sector and community for nature-based tourism and ecotourism is limited. The private sector has not fully integrated conservation policies in the principles of business operation and its participation in conservation activities is very limited. Although the Government also has issued policies and regulations to encourage the participation of businesses and communities in ecotourism activities such as encouraging economic sectors to invest in developing eco-tourism in Special-use forests (Article 10. Clause 1 Decision No. 24/2012 / QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister on policies for investment and development of special-use forests in the 2011-2020 period) and Decree No. 63/2018/NĐ-CP approved by the Government on investment in the form of public-private partnerships, but practical implementation is not effective. Organizations and individuals doing ecotourism business in national parks and protected area (including natural reserves, species and habitat conservation zones, landscape protection forests, scientific research and experimental forests) are still facing difficulty and unable to link conservation and ecotourism, resulting in fragmented and unsustainable tourism development, revenue from ecotourism has not yet been mobilized effectively for conservation activities. Therefore, the research, piloting, strengthening of models of collaborative management, business in the form of public private partnerships (PPP business models) on the development of nature-based tourism, community-based tourism associated with sustainable landscape protection and conservation of biodiversity and indicator species is necessary to engage multiple stakeholders and assess the effectiveness of PPP mechanisms for sustainable and responsible nature-based tourism development.

While, Vietnam has realized a number of significant achievements in the application of PES in terrestrial situations through models and demonstration sites with satisfactory results, there is limited application of the concept of marine PES to Vietnam. This concept is still quite new, requiring thorough research to be able to apply in practice to the management of marine resources and environment in Vietnam. In promotion of marine PES, some of the following policy issues in management need to be considered:

- The Biodiversity Law mentions PES revenues. The Prime Minister has also issued Decree 99/2010-NĐ-CP and Decree 147/2016-NĐ-CP changing Decree 99/2010 / NĐ-CP on payment for forest environmental services policy (PFES). In addition to forest ecosystems, the potential for PMES in Vietnam has not mentioned marine and coastal ecosystems such as corals, mangroves and sea grass. There is a need for a national framework on PMES as well as detailed instructions and guideline to ensure coordination and avoid conflicts.
- At localities/provinces in the country, it is necessary to identify ecological zones with PMES potential, and quantify economic value of marine ecosystems. At the same time creating a PES exchange market with the identification of service providers and users of marine ecosystems.
- It is necessary to promote the development of integrated coastal zone management models as the coastal zone is the region with the most dynamic and rapid economic and social activities. The tools of integrated coastal management will help to reconcile multidisciplinary interests, contribute to the effective use of position resources, marine space, marine ecosystems, environmental protection and services; marine ecosystems, at the same time, contribute to sustainable development of coastal livelihoods, step by step approach a green and environmentally friendly economy.
- There is a need for a clear distinction between public / private ownership of the use of marine space, thereby creating a legal basis for building a healthy PMES exchange market. For areas with unidentified resource owners or with complex interdisciplinary exploitation of resources, the state should be responsible for paying PES to communities living around the area. Through the adjustment of tax policies, creating alternative livelihoods increase income for people in the affected areas.
- Need initial supports from the state for project implementation, research and application of PES. Help civil organizations improve their capacity, diversify funding sources and technical support from home/domestic and abroad.
- The Prime Minister approved the system of 16 national marine protected areas in 2010 as one of the conditions for the implementation of marine PMES in Vietnam. However, not all nature reserves can rely on the funds collected from ecotourism activities to partially guarantee conservation activities. In this case, it is necessary to understand PES in a broader sense, through other forms such as improving learning opportunities for people, diversifying livelihoods, technical training, fuel subsidies to sea trips, from state or other partners.

- PES policy development must ensure that opportunity costs are covered and provide benefits to the entire community and build confidence in them to deliver long-term services. Encourage socialization of nature conservation in provincial protected areas in order to involve communities in PES. Gradually raise people's income, and contribute to local socio-economic development. In addition, funding from PES should be prioritized for community development activities as this is the group of people most affected by marine biodiversity conservation policies. Therefore, it is necessary to promote propaganda for people to understand about PES, bring people to participate in PES activities. Participation of local people is key to success in any conservation activity.

In summary, the potentials and opportunities to apply PES tools in the management of marine protected areas in Vietnam are highly feasible. Based on lessons learned from countries around the world, through PES, direct financial investment from the state can be significantly reduced while management efficiency will be enhanced. However, effective implementation of PES requires legalizing the extent to which PES can be applied. The interdisciplinary approach to the integrated coastal management model has been evaluated to be highly feasible under Vietnamese conditions.

(c) Limited awareness, information and capacity of government to ensure sustainable nature-based tourism.

Institutional management and implementation capacity, and awareness of government agencies on nature-based tourism is still limited. Government agencies have limited understanding of the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services and the importance of their preservation for maintaining tourism values. Additionally, key institutions responsible for environmental protection, natural resources management and tourism have their own mandates and priorities making it difficult to cooperate across sector lines to bring about a balanced approach to tourism development. Similarly, there is a lack of adequate skills to assess the carrying capacity of tourism destinations as well as technical skills to recognize and address environmental issues. While, nature-based tourism provides great opportunities for sustainable economic development, there is a lack of required skills to develop and operate nature-based tourism to meet required standards and ensure conservation objectives are realized. Similarly, government agencies do not have sufficient capacity and mechanisms for inter-agency coordination to oversee and mainstream biodiversity conservation in the tourism sector.

While, unsustainable tourist behaviors are prohibited in PAs and high biodiversity tourist destinations, there is concern regarding the involvement of tourists in undesirable activities that endanger wildlife and critical ecosystems (such as coral reefs and other sensitive habitats) and in the consumption of illegal wildlife products[8]. The PA authorities have limited capacity and staff to fully manage this impact on their own. In addition, the private sector (hotel and travel companies) has limited knowledge and awareness of the impacts of tourist behavior and for the application of applied environmental or biodiversity friendly standards with respect to services provided. Similarly, there is a lack of monitoring to decipher the impacts of tourism on biodiversity, which could provide a guide for management and mitigation of tourism-related impacts on biodiversity. PA managers and tourism agencies also do not have access to necessary information for decision-making on appropriate measures for management of biodiversity and ecosystems, including establishing visitor controls and restrictions and maintain tourism within sustainable limits. Similarly, there is a limited enforcement regarding biodiversity regulations within the tourism sector.

(d) Limited local capacity to develop sustainable local tourism enterprises.

The capacity and awareness of local stakeholders and communities on the benefits of nature-based tourism is not fully recognized, in particular its contribution to the local economy and in promotion of 'green' employment. As a consequence, local communities have not fully capitalized on the potentials and strengths of diverse values of biodiversity for tourism activities and the need to effectively preserve these values from negative impacts from tourism activities. Most local community members lack capacity to plan and manage successful green tourism operations, as well as have limited knowledge of potential alternatives that are available to them to capitalize on the tourism potentials. Local tourism businesses have limited incentives and penalties that necessitate them to adhere to sustainable standards and policies. Similarly, there are limited controls placed by local authorities to ensure that particular standards are met and complied with.

(e) Impact of Covid-19 related tourism restrictions

Vietnam's tourism industry was hit hard in 2020 as the country restricted foreign entry and allowed arrival on a case-by-case basis, leading to a sharp drop in number of international arrivals by up to 78.7% against 2019. As a consequence, it is anticipated that Vietnam may lose up to USD 23 billion in revenue in 2020, one of the key sectors that spearheads Vietnam's economy. The disruption and reduction in tourism demand has put pressure on many businesses to stop operations and lay off workers, which might have an impact on natural resources like forest products, fishing and illegal exploitation to enable people to survive. As a consequence, Vietnam's tourism and hospitality services would require diversifying the business, focusing on domestic tourism demand and upgrading tourism products for Vietnamese travelers in the long-term because of improving people's living standards. The diversification is necessary to resuscitate tourism during the Covid-19 induced travel restrictions around the world. This will require a rethink of the business strategy, raising of awareness of reshaping supply chains and promoting innovation activities, enhancing digital transformation for reaching sustainability goals and building resilient business[9].

The Directive 05/CT-TTg dated January 28, 2021 on urgent measures to prevent and control Covid-19 pandemic, recommends that travel agencies and tourism management units throughout the country to take immediate measures, including frequently updating information and guidance on infection prevention and control during the coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak. Additionally, all localities in the country have to strictly implement the document No. 165/BVHTTDL-TCDL dated January 15, 2021 issued by the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism of Covid-19 preventive measures in culture, sport, and tourism activities during Tet holidays. It also proposes that travel firms require employees and visitors to comply with safety and health standards and regulations; and preventive measures to limit the spread of the virus.

In relation to these barriers referenced above, the project will provide support to improve the weak policy and regulatory framework, for example, revision of the biodiversity law and tourism policy to integrated nature-based tourism and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and develop payment for wetland and marine ecosystem services policy under the intervention of component 1 and test and adopt these at project sites (component 2), including capacity building and awareness raising for relevant stakeholders (component 3), and then document and sharing lessons-learned for up scaling and replication (component 4). An indicative **conceptual model of the** interacting web of factors that threaten globally significant biodiversity and ecosystems in high biodiversity tourism destinations in Vietnam is illustrated in Figure 1. The main elements of the proposed strategies are summarized in the Theory of Change diagram in Figure 2. The conceptual model and the theory of change will be comprehensively analyzed during the PPG phase using [guidance from STAP](#) and validated through discussions with stakeholders.

[1] <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1077310/vietnam-annual-revenue-of-tourism-sector/>

[2] TAKING STOCK: Recent Economic Developments of Vietnam, Special Focus: Vietnam's Tourism Developments: Stepping Back from the Tipping Point-Vietnam'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-Vietnam-Special-Focus-Vietnams-Tourism-Developments-Stepping-Back-from-the-Tipping-Point-Vietnams-Tourism-Trends-Challenges-and-Policy-Priorities.pdf>)

[3] Data available at <https://www.unwto.org/international-tourism-and-covid-19>. Accessed 12 April 2021

[4] Thi My Trinh Nguyen and Kwong Fai Andrew Lo (2017). Tourism development impacts and amelioration along coastal areas in Vietnam. International Journal of Development Research Vol. 07, Issue 11

[5] Thi My Trinh Nguyen and Kwong Fai Andrew Lo (2017). Tourism development impacts and amelioration along coastal areas in Vietnam. International Journal of Development Research Vol. 07, Issue 11

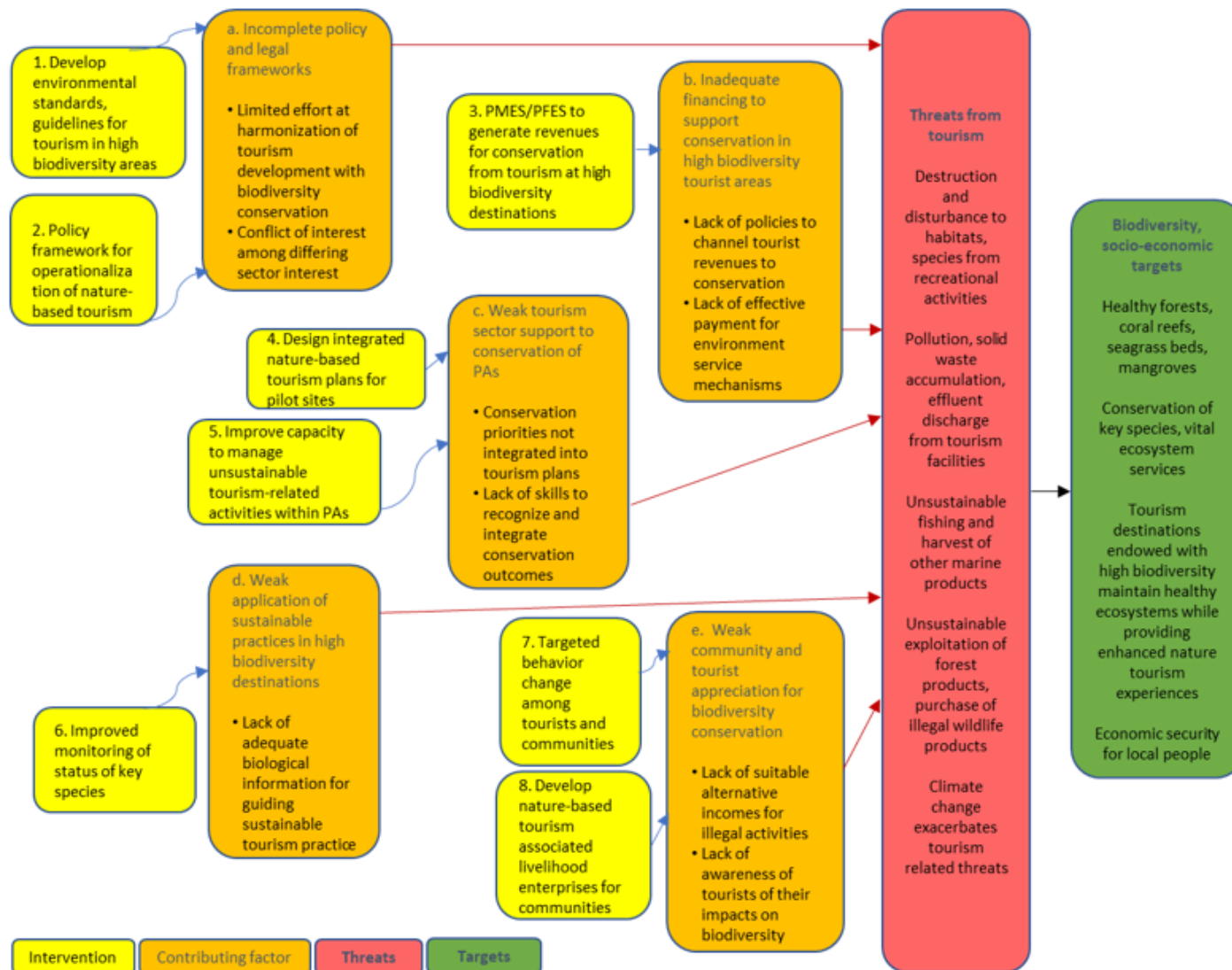
[6] Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia. Ecotourism in Vietnam: Potential and Reality (Issue 28)

[7] Ta Dinh Thi (2018). Sixth GEF Assembly Meeting, Da Nang, Vietnam

[8] TRAFFIC research has identified illegal wildlife products on offer at tourist hotspots in Viet Nam, particularly those catering to Chinese tour groups (<https://www.traffic.org/news/traffic-partners-with-local-tourism-organisation/>). Detailed information and an understanding of the impact of tourists on wildlife exploitation at the two project sites will be collected during the PPG.

[9] Binh Dao Thanh, Barysheva G.A. and Ngoc Tran Thi Bich (2020). The Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on Socio-Economic Development: A case Study of Tourism Services, Textile and Garment Industry in Vietnam. Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, Volume 486. Atlantis Press

Figure 1. Conceptual model



1.4) Project Geographical Focus:

During the early project identification (PIF) phase, a number of sites were initially identified and these were evaluated against the following criteria, such as high biodiversity tourism destinations, opportunities for promotion of nature-based tourism, potential to demonstrate nature-based tourism within ecological limits, potential for promotion of community engagement in nature-based tourism operations, manageable land-use conflicts, application of PMES and payment for marine ecosystem services (PMES) and provincial priority and support for nature-based tourism. Based on these criteria, the two most feasible

sites were identified for promotion of sustainable nature-based tourism. The two sites proposed are Nui Chua National Park in Ninh Thuan province, and Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park in Quang Binh province. The project will invest in nature-based tourism promotion activities in these two sites, while ensuring that lessons and best practices are disseminated widely to promote opportunities for the mobilization of funding for replication in other PAs in the country.

Proposed Pilot Sites

(A) Nui Chua National Park - Ninh Thuan Province:

Nui Chua National Park is located in Ninh Hai district, Ninh Thuan province, bordering Khanh Hoa province, in the easternmost position of the south central coast, which is contiguous with the Southeast and South Central regions. The coordinates range from 11 ° 35'25 "to 11 ° 48'38" north latitude and 109 ° 4'5 "to 109 ° 14'15 "east longitude, the northern limit is the border with Khanh Hoa province. Nui Chua area has three sides bordering the sea. To the north is the lower part of Cam Ranh Bay in Cam Lap commune, Cam Ranh city, Khanh Hoa province, to the east and south is the East Sea with the communes of Vinh Hai and Nhon Hai in Ninh Hai district. The south is Nai lagoon, the west is limited by Highway 1A.

Established in 2003, Nui Chua National Park is a famous conservation and ecotourism area. The park covers an area of 31,010 hectares, of which 7,352 hectares of marine area and the rest are terrestrial and coastal forests (23,658 ha). Forests are considered as the standard sample of the most unique and arid forest in Vietnam. The marine seascape has high biodiversity. There is currently a submission to UNESCO to upgrade the park area and its surroundings into a Biosphere Reserve, comprising a core zone, buffer zone and transition zone. The Biosphere Reserve will include a buffer zone comprising of a core area of 15,752 ha (15,170 ha of terrestrial area and 582 ha of marine area), a buffer zone of 48,761 ha (comprising 15,587 ha of the park area that comprises 8,818 ha of terrestrial area and 6,770 ha of marine area and the balance area of 33,174 ha being commune managed terrestrial area) and a transition zone of 42,132 ha. The project will focus on the management of the national park area of 31,010 ha and extend sustainable practices within the 33,174 ha in the buffer zone that is community managed.

With a hot and dry climate, the lowest average annual rainfall in the country, Nui Chua National Park, Ninh Thuan province has a unique rare forest-marine ecosystem, an extremely diverse fauna and flora and ecosystem that is unique to Vietnam, but also to Southeast Asia. In addition to the rich flora and fauna, the special topography also gives the Nui Chua a magnificent beauty with diverse habitats. It consists of forests, desert and the adjacent marine seascape. WWF has confirmed that the forest ecosystems of Nui Chua National Park belong to the Greater Annamites ecoregion area (SA4 region), as one of 200 important global ecological zones and selected as one of the highest conservation priority areas of all major habitat types on Earth; and the waters of Nui Chua National Park are located in the area affected by the upwelling effect, with a high biological productivity.

This area is currently the habitat of more than 1,600 plant species, of which more than 1,500 species of higher plants, among which are many rare species. So far, 330 species of vertebrates, 163 bird species, 83 reptile species (46 of which are listed in the Red Book, such as *Pygathrix nigripes* and *Tragulus versicolor*) have been discovered in Nui Chua National Park. The marine seascape has a coral reef system with 350 different species, of which 1 new variety (Scapophyllia) was recorded for the West East Sea region and 11 species (*Acropora convexa*, *Acropora retusa*, *Astreopora expansa*, *Astreopora macrostoma*, *Montipora samarensis*, *Montipora taiwanensis*, *Goniastrea minuta*, *Podabacia motuporensis*, *Hydnophora bonsai*, *Scapophyllia cylindrica* and *Acanthastrea regularis*) were first recorded for Vietnam.

There is a population of around 75,000 living in the buffer zone of the national park, within 7 communes and 32 villages. Around 30% of this population belongs to ethnic minorities (Cham and Raglai) that live in 17 villages within 4 of the 7 communes. The park consists of stone blocks of varying shapes that is a tourist attraction, and along with the rare dry forest ecosystems and relatively intact landscape, there is great potential for promotion of nature-based tourism. Domestic tourists have increased rapidly, accounting for about 90% of the total number of tourists visiting Nui Chua National Park. The main domestic market comes from Ho Chi Minh City, the Southeast provinces (accounting for over 50% of the total domestic tourists). It is anticipated, that tourist

visitation will increase substantially in the post-Covid period. The park consists of 18 beaches with very unique and wild landscapes. The marine seascape has the potential to generate income that can be ploughed back to conservation and improve the livelihoods of local people. There is also interest among the private sector to invest in ecotourism related activities. However, there is a lack of effective implementation of guidelines for law of fisheries (Decree 26/2019/ND-CP).

Challenges and barriers to biodiversity conservation and nature-based tourism at Nui Chua National Park are the following: (i) ensuring that tourism development is commensurate with protection of the pristine and relatively unexploited landscapes and seascapes; (ii) the relatively dry climate in the area is not favorable for agriculture, often resulting in communities moving into the upland forests for slash-and-burn agriculture, poaching and forest fires; (iii) lack of sustainable and alternative livelihood initiatives; and (iv) weak understanding among the community and local officials on the importance for conservation of biodiversity and the natural environment. Therefore, the project provides opportunities to help strengthen local institutions, local policies and legislation to harmonize tourism development with nature conservation, to build partnerships in nature-based tourism that benefits communities, protects wildlife, their habitats, and the landscape ecology; and facilitates capacity building for nature-based tourism and wildlife protection and biodiversity.

(B) Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park - Quang Binh Province:

Phong Nha Ke Bang National Park that is located in Quang Binh province, borders the Lao People's Democratic Republic, with a total area of 123,326 ha. The park is surrounded by a buffer zone of 219,855 ha of commune-managed lands belonging to 13 communes. The park is of important global significance for biodiversity conservation. The National Park is listed in the 2nd World Heritage List of 2015 on account of its high diversity of flora and fauna, with many endemic species and some globally threatened species such as Saola, Bear, Gaur, Red-shanked Douc (*Pygathrix nemaeus*), Siki Gibbon (*Nomascus siki*), Large muntjac (*Muntiacus vuquangensis*), Crested argus (*Rheinardia ocellata*), and Central tree frog (*Rhacophorus annamensis*). Notably, the primates, which are the key groups in the Phong Nha - Ke Bang karst area, includes 10 of the 24 primate species found in the country. Seven of the primate species found in the park are considered as globally threatened species. The Phong Nha - Ke Bang National Park is also one of the 200 priority global biodiversity hotspots in Southeast Asia. Major threats to biodiversity and wildlife of the Park include animal trapping, logging, encroachment of forestland, invasive species, natural disasters, etc. Animal trapping is one of the biggest threats to the biological integrity of Phong Nha - Ke Bang National Park. From 2016-2018, there were 35 recorded violations of poaching of endangered species, of which 31 administrative violations of trapping and transporting and 4 criminal cases relating to violation of regulations on management and protection of endangered species prioritized for conservation.

In terms of social aspects, it is estimated around 70,000 people live in the core and buffer zones of the park, consisting of 13 communes in around 170 villages. Population density in the core zone of the PA is very low (1-4 persons/km²) with around 16 villages (in 4 communes) comprising around 9,700 persons belonging to 2,125 households. Population density is much higher in the buffer zones (20 persons/km²). The PA and surrounding buffer zones are home to some of the least populated ethnic minorities in Vietnam, namely Chut and Bru-Van Kieu. However, in the buffer zones where most of the ethnic minority population lives, they are found living in isolated villages along main rivers (Chay, Son) and valleys in the east and northern-east of the park. The ethnic minorities, Kinh or Vietnamese, accounts for 83.1% of population in the buffer zones. The ethnic minority strongly retains native customs and beliefs, highlighted by their interaction with land and forest through hunting, harvesting and cultivation practices, beliefs in religious spirits, language, costumes and folklore practices. Typical cultural values are regarded as resources for cultural and community tourism development, especially Chut people with their livelihoods as primary culture, or Bru-Van Kieu with traditional festive activities and traditional architectures.

With support from the state budget through the National Target Program on Sustainable Forest Development (2016-2020) and Investment Program for Sustainable Development of Special Use Forests (2011-2020), 33 village communities in the buffer zone were contracted by the national park to protect around 65,000 hectares of special use forests and 1,400 hectares of protection forests to carry out collaborative forest protection based by village forest protection teams. In addition, these programs supported community development activities (such as improving small-scale irrigation facilities, clean water

supply, livestock rearing and other livelihood support activities) that were directly linked to the responsibilities of forest protection (likely source of co-financing). In addition, with support from German Development Bank (KfW)/Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and Center for Indigenous Knowledge Research and Development (CIRD) facilitation (2015-2016) 21 village conservation groups from 9 buffer zone communes were established to monitor and protect biodiversity at hotspots from illegal logging and hunting within the protected area. These community members were trained in SMART technologies with assistance from law enforcement agencies. These programs can be further expanded to other communities in the buffer zone under the GEF project to enhance efforts to monitor and protect wildlife from illegal activities.

The Phong Nha - Ke Bang National Park is also developing tourism, especially large-scale tourism, which potentially can significantly affect the biodiversity and resources of the Park if these are not controlled and well managed. The National Park has great potential for cave and discovery tourism. In 2018, Phong Nha - Ke Bang National Park received 865,594 tourists (an increase of 14.03% compared to 2017), of which, domestic tourists were 697,604 (increase of 10.78%) and international visitors of 167,990 arrivals (increase of 29.87%). The total revenue generated from visitation in 2018 was VDN 269.4 billion or USD 11.6 million (increase of 24.41% from 2017). The visitation to the park is expected to substantially increase in the post-Covid period. However, the impact of mass tourism and infrastructure development on the biodiversity and environment has to be carefully considered and evaluated. The cave tourism activities are likely to cause permanent damage, if these are not carefully monitored. Travel equipment installed in caves and excessive visitation during the summer months can have serious negative impacts on the characteristics of caves and the rare endangered cave animals. The level of awareness of local people and businesses about sustainable nature-based tourism is still limited and the effective policies have not been issued to encourage tourism businesses and local people to build safeguard the environment as well as promote community-based ecotourism products. Recognizing the impacts of unsustainable tourism, Quang Binh province is promoting some of the following main solutions:

To develop and implement the master plan on tourism development for Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Tourism Development Plan toward 2030;

Prioritize tourism investment projects in the buffer zone and administrative sub-divisions of the Park in terms of taxes, capital resources and infrastructure investment. Encourage all economic sectors to participate in sustainable tourism activities in the national park. Socialize investment and prioritize investment in the creation of unique tourism products and services;

Promote the propaganda of PN-KB World Natural Heritage on the internet, travel books, maps, DVDs, participate in tourism fairs and promotion conferences and promote nature-based tourism at home and abroad;

Concentrate on synchronous implementation of solutions to develop sustainable tourism in PN-KB NP areas, such as: training human resources, improving tourism service quality; protection of natural resources and environment; develop low-impact infrastructure and tourism support services; promote research and application of science and technology for tourism development; enhance effectiveness of state management in nature-based tourism and strengthen linkages and cooperation in nature-based tourism development with local communities.

2) THE BASELINE SCENARIO AND ANY ASSOCIATED BASELINE PROJECTS

The Government of Vietnam has focused on the planning and development of national tourist areas, and has issued a number of policies on ecotourism management and development such as the Law on Biodiversity in 2008, Tourism Law in 2017, and Prime Minister's Decision No. 24/2012/QĐ-TTg on development investment policies on special-use forests in the period of 2011-2020, which regulate the development of ecotourism. Resolution 08-NQ/2017/TW, dated January 16, 2017, on developing tourism into a spearhead economic sector and the Law on Tourism 09/2017/QH14, dated 19 June 2017 (effective January 1, 2018), identifies sustainable tourism as the rule for tourism development. The law also states that ecotourism is a form of tourism that is based on nature, connected with the local cultural identity and based on the participation of the local communities in combination with environmental

education and stipulates that community tourism is a special tourism product based on promoting local culture as well as participation and management of the community. The State Budget Law 83/2015/QH13, approved by the National Assembly in 2015 (effective January 1, 2017) allows PAs to use the revenue generated from service provision, along with government budgets, to cover operation costs, including employee bonus increase. These instruments provide the legal basis to ensure feasibility of ecotourism in PAs.

While the concept of ecotourism has been known in Vietnam for perhaps 20 years now, it has not yet been developed to its full potential. Vietnam's nature reserves and national parks hosted more than 2 million tourists in 2017, representing a 178% increase on tourists in 2016. In 2019, Vietnam recorded approximately 32.75 billion U.S. dollars in tourism revenue^[1], and nature-based tourism is emerging as a sector with great potential for development. Nevertheless, nature-based tourism (or ecotourism) is often misinterpreted at site level, leading to damaging developments within PAs such as hotel and road construction under the auspices of ecotourism.

Vietnam's Master Plan for Tourism Development in Vietnam to 2020 and Vision to 2030 develop seven national tourism zones in association with typical regional tourism products on ecotourism, marine tourism and cultural tourism. For example, in the Cuu Long River Delta provinces are associated with wetland ecotourism, and in the north central and south central coast regions such as Da Nang are associated with sightseeing tours, ecosystem studies and marine tourism. Further, the master plan specifies that sustainable tourism development must be associated with environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, and preservation of indigenous cultural values. The national tourism strategy retains the strong theme of ecotourism and nature-based tourism. These policies provide a strong foundation on which the proposed project will build.

There have also been several donor-funded efforts in the recent past to strengthen ecotourism. These include the Danish International Development Agency-funded efforts through WWF on ecotourism development in and around PAs in Vietnam (2009-2014), several small-scale ecotourism or community-based tourism pilots in PAs, a GEF-4-financed, UNDP-supported project 'Removing Barriers Hindering PA Management Effectiveness in Vietnam' that demonstrated viable PA revenue generation mechanisms (e.g., provincial authorizations for PAs to increase revenue through concessions, PES, and entrance fees), and past efforts of a GIZ-funded project with the Quang Binh People's Committee on integrated nature conservation and sustainable management of natural resources in Phong Nha Ke Bang National Park (2007-2016).

In the business-as-usual scenario over the next few years, there are likely to be some additional donor-funded efforts addressing aspects of sustainable tourism as described below. However, there is unlikely to be an overarching government national framework to support responsible tourism in high biodiversity destinations nor help use nature-based tourism to secure long-term revenue for PA management. This proposed GEF project will look to build on this foundation to strengthen the national enabling environment and strategic direction for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into tourism, and to minimize the negative impacts of tourism development while simultaneously maximizing its positive contribution to nature conservation and quality of life of the local people through nature-based tourism. The baseline projects are described below. The proposed GEF project will coordinate closely with these initiatives and the specific coordination potential is discussed under Section 6 on Coordination.

The GEF-financed project “Mainstreaming Natural Resource Management and Biodiversity Conservation Objectives into Socio-Economic Development Planning and Management of Biosphere Reserve in Viet Nam which is executed by MONRE and supported by UNDP will be implemented from 2020-2025. This project aims to mainstream biodiversity conservation and natural resources management objectives into governance, planning and management of socio-economic development and tourism in biosphere reserves. In particular, this project will support the establishment of functional governance and coordination mechanisms to support dialogue, information flow and decision-making between provinces and national levels to facilitate integrated planning and management of biosphere reserves that will be of relevance, as well as guidelines for management of high conservation value forests, technical standards for mainstreaming biodiversity in different sectors (including tourism), guidelines for biodiversity impact assessment and tools for environmental-friendly tourism business planning and strategic planning for ecotourism development within protected areas (including financial and revenue sharing mechanisms and benefit sharing with local communities). The project also supports multi-stakeholder and multi-sector coordination at the provincial level (for the individual biosphere reserves) to support integrated planning and management, including strengthening of Forest and PA Management Boards, improved operations within these areas and effective monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, the learning of which would help guide operations in the GEF 7 project. The biosphere project also supports other activities that are extremely relevant to the GEF 7 project, namely the zoning of the reserves for biodiversity conservation, natural resource use, tourism and livelihood activities, application of biodiversity impact monitoring, improved management effectiveness of PAs, law enforcement to address hunting and poaching and enforcement of infringements in the PA areas, etc. The project is also relevant in that it promotes small grant mechanisms to local communities for livelihood-based enterprise development, that would be beneficial for promotion of community-based ecotourism ventures, establishment of community-based revolving funds as a basis for ensuring sustainability and the promotion of responsible tourism through design of tourism certification programs, voluntary certification for hotels, guesthouses and tourism facilities and promotion of selected ecotourism products and services.

Covered under the umbrella of USAID for the period on 2020-2025 are the (i) Sustainable Forest Management Project (US\$ 36.3 million) that aims to reduce carbon emissions from forest conversion; increase carbon sequestration through better management of plantation forests and improve quality, diversity and productivity of natural production forests and (ii) Biodiversity Conservation project (US\$ 38 million) from 2020-2025 to maintain and increase forest quality and to protect and stabilize wildlife populations in national parks and nature reserves in high conservation value provinces. In addition, the USAID Forests and Delta Program – Phase II (2018-2021) focuses on supporting the Government of Vietnam to ensure that the payment of forest environmental services (PFES) system will serve as an effective tool in accomplishing the country’s environmental and socio-economic goals. In particular, the PFES activities are intended to correct the current PFES cash-based system that is inefficient and creates security risks as significant amounts of cash are transported to rural areas for distribution. VFD and local partners are developing more efficient, secure, and transparent electronic payment mechanisms that reduce transaction costs and streamline payment processes. Secondly, the project supports strengthening PFES monitoring and evaluation to determine whether PFES is meeting its goals, VFD and the Vietnam Forest Protection and Development Fund (VNFF) are developing a system to monitor PFES implementation and improve data management, analysis, and reporting. Thirdly, it is expanding payment for new forest services such as carbon sequestration. VFD, VNFF, and provincial partners are developing innovative carbon PFES pilots with local carbon-intensive companies. These large emitters will pay forest owners for the carbon sequestration and storage services provided by healthy forests. The mechanism will be scaled up to the national level to increase overall PFES revenues, protect more forests, and help Vietnam achieve its international climate change commitments. The USAID saving species project (2016-2021) focuses on reducing consumer demand for and consumption of illegal wildlife and wildlife products by targeting the behaviors, beliefs, norms, and cultural expectations of key populations that drive Vietnamese consumption of target wildlife and products, strengthening wildlife law enforcement and prosecution by building the

capacity of law enforcement and customs agents, institutionalizing police and customs countering wildlife trafficking training, and fighting corruption; and improve and harmonizing the legal framework for wildlife crime by addressing core rule of law and governance weaknesses, supporting trade compliance, and increasing clarity regarding overlapping jurisdictions, contradictory or unclear mandates, legal loopholes, and weak authorities.

The World Bank Strengthening Partnerships to Protect Endangered Wildlife in Vietnam of USD 3.30 million (2018-2023) to strengthen the legal and regulatory framework and implementation capacity for protection of threatened wildlife seeks to drafting amendments to key legislation for protection of prioritized species, monitoring of ex-situ wildlife conservation facilities, integration of protection of threatened species into tourism activities and incorporation of wildlife crime issues in the National Crime Prevention Strategy. It also intends to enhance capacity of field staff of law enforcement agencies and enforce policies and regulations related to wildlife protection and information sharing. This project is relevant in that it provides a legal and regulatory framework for protection of key species as well as integration into the tourism activities.

The European Union biodiversity protection and environmental sustainability (Euro 600,000) in Central Vietnam, focuses on the establishment and operation of a conservation foundation and finance for 21 biodiversity conservation initiatives. GreenViet and the Gustav-Stresemann Institute are jointly implementing “Establishing a funding foundation for biodiversity protection and environmental sustainability” project until the end of 2023. The project will help build capacity for raising awareness and co-operation among businesses and individuals to provide sustainable funding for conservation, communication and education, patrolling and monitoring to protect the red-shanked douc langurs, the endangered primates in Son Tra peninsula, given the threats faced by construction of hotels and resorts that has threatened and fragmented habitat of the red-shanked douc and other wildlife. The lessons from the EU project will be valuable for the GEF 7 project.

Helvitas, Vietnam is financing a Conservation-Friendly Enterprise Development project (2021-2025), in a consortium with WWF, IUCN and Fauna and Flora International (FFI), to maintain and increase forest quality as well as protect and stabilize wildlife population in five high conservation value provinces of Central Vietnam including Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue, Quang Nam and Lam Dong. Particularly relevant to the GEF 7 project are activities related to: (i) improving the benefits to communities from conservation-friendly value chain linkages; (ii) strengthening the management of special use and protection forests; (iii) supporting the increased functionality of law enforcement systems; and (iv) reducing local demand for wildlife through behavior change methodologies. In order to provide forest-dependent communities with incentives and opportunities to move toward diversified conservation-friendly income streams, the project will encourage growth of forest and biodiversity friendly value chains for NTFPs, high-value agriculture and products that have clear established and unmet demand. The project will also support the development and expansion of community-based ecotourism that encourages individuals, communities, and companies to value forests and biodiversity in new and sustainable ways, thereby incentivizing their preservation and internalizing environmental opportunity costs. Additional efforts will be made to transition professional hunters and loggers out of illegal trade into legal businesses and employment. The experiences from value-chain investments can be of great value for replication within the GEF 7 project.

Asian Development Bank, Second Greater Mekong Subregion Tourism Infrastructure for Inclusive Growth Project (2019-2023). The project will help transform the eastern economic corridor into economically inclusive, competitive tourism destinations by selectively financing climate-resilient rural roads, water transport infrastructure, seaside storm defenses, public green space improvements, and capacity building for better destination management, all of which is

needed to boost tourist arrivals and spending in secondary destinations, thus contributing to more balanced tourism growth and employment-intensive SME development in lagging areas. Of particular relevance of this projects is that it will positively affect ethnic people by creating culturally appropriate jobs, diversifying income, and strengthening their involvement in tourism management and decision making. Ethnic groups will equally benefit from improved access to economic opportunities and social services, better destination management, and capacity building. This project will provide lessons that are appropriate for the GEF 7 project.

Government of Vietnam support for Sustainable Forest Management Plan of Nui Chua National Park to 2030 (USD 18.4 million) aims to protect existing forests, conserve biodiversity and endemic, rare genetic resources and endangered species; restore resources and landscapes; prevent forest violations, improve ecosystem capacity, develop ecotourism, leisure and entertainment and forest lease based on comparative advantages about natural landscapes and forest/ marine biodiversity; create jobs and improve local livelihoods and socio-economic development, all of which provide opportunities for coordination, sharing lessons and knowledge management.

Government of Vietnam support for development of community tourism in Ninh Thuan province (USD 8.89 million) (2019-2022). The project is complementary in that it supports households, individuals and organizations in development of community tourism at 13 locations in the province, including 3 locations in/around the Nui Chua NP (or Ninh Hai district) and to regulate norms of investment and support for rural transport infrastructure, housing, hygiene, landscape rehabilitation, waste collection, training of tourism career, communication and marketing of tourism products, education and public awareness.

Theory of Change

The project's theory of change is that in order to promote biodiversity conservation and improved community livelihoods through nature-based tourism, there is a need to address the key barriers identified above through specific actions that can broadly be grouped as follows:

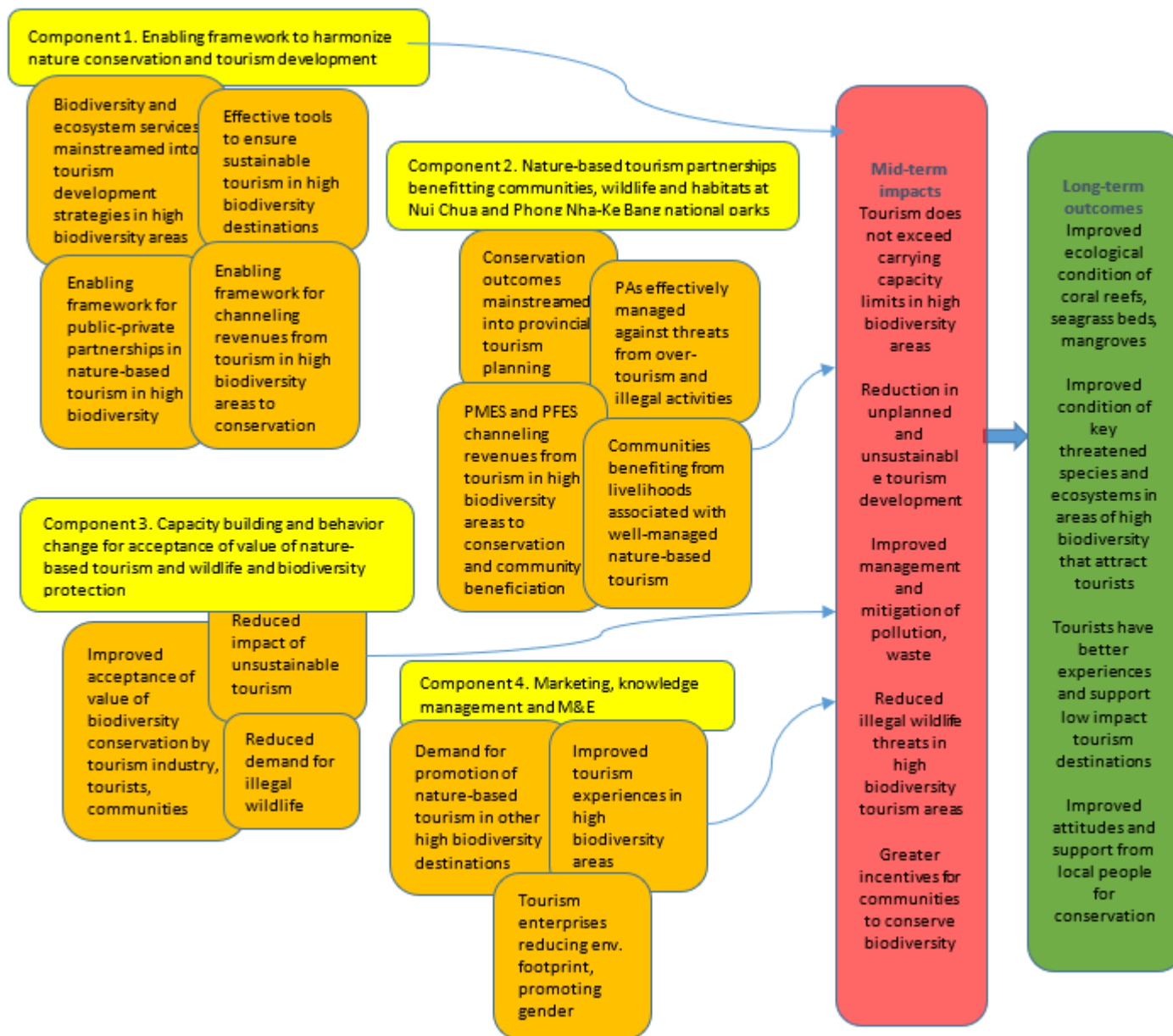
- Development of harmonized policy, regulatory and incentive framework to minimize the negative impacts of tourism development in high-biodiversity areas while simultaneously maximizing its positive contribution to nature conservation and quality of life of the local people through nature-based tourism products and experiences (see Components 1 and 2);
- Raising awareness, engagement and capacity of key government ministries and showing how tourism in high-biodiversity areas can be managed so that it not only does no harm to biodiversity but can contribute to conservation of the very asset base on which it depends (see Component 1, with Component 2 focusing on demonstration at the site level in two PAs);
- Engagement of the private sector and the adoption of more sustainable, biodiversity-friendly practices by tourism operators in high-biodiversity areas that rely on a healthy ecosystem (see Components 2, 3);
- Engagement of local communities and the provision of sustainable livelihood benefits through biodiversity-friendly nature-based tourism and other income generation activities that can provide additional income. This will further contribute to local level participation and beneficiation from sustainable management and conservation of these high biodiversity areas (see Components 2 and 3).

- Knowledge management and strategic communications aimed at increasing learning and uptake of the project's experiences to increase the adoption of sustainable tourism in other high-biodiversity destinations in the country, and to bring livelihood and green recovery benefits to other communities living in and around high biodiversity areas (see Component 4).

The project's approach is based on the assumption that demonstration of the positive impacts that healthy ecosystems can provide for tourism and the local economy in high biodiversity areas (such as through the development of viable economic opportunities for local communities through community-based nature-based tourism products), will help galvanize greater attention to ensuring not only that tourism in high-biodiversity areas is sustainably managed but also to channel financial contributions from tourism back into maintaining the asset base on which it depends, thus creating a positive feedback loop. It is by putting in place the policy changes, by developing capacities among the key stakeholders, and by demonstrating the model in two PA sites, that the project will be able to realize this. During the PPG, a comprehensive analysis of the theory of change will be developed based on guidance from STAP; an initial theory of change diagram is below.

[1] <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1077310/vietnam-annual-revenue-of-tourism-sector/>

Figure 2. Theory of Change diagram



3) THE PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE SCENARIO WITH A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT

The last few decades have seen an emergence of nature travel as one of the fastest-growing segments of the tourism industry. In this regard, Viet Nam is considered to have great potential for nature-based development because of its high biodiversity, with many rare and endemic wildlife species as well as many unique ecosystems and beautiful landscapes. It is estimated that high biodiversity areas such as national parks, other protected areas and natural landscapes in the country attracted 20% of tourist spending. In 2016, total tourist spending was USD 17.8 million, of which USD 3.6 million was spent in high biodiversity-value areas. This tourist spending benefitted many different service providers, not only protected areas and it is suggested that if provision of services are expanded such as tour guides, camping services, photography, videography, mountain climbing, scuba diving, rental of sightseeing equipment, the revenue collected from providing such services to tourists can be an important source of additional income for national parks and nature reserves in the future^[1].

This fast-expanding nature-based tourism provides an opportunity for conserving nature and managing threats, if it is done with the proper management safeguards. However, it must be also recognized that these natural areas are also home to large number of people, many who are living below the poverty level who eke out a meager living and most often do not benefit economically from the vast natural treasures that are at their doorsteps. The challenge to Vietnam at this juncture is how to preserve these last strongholds of biodiversity, while ensuring the economic well-being of the vast number of people who live and depend on these unique resources for their daily subsistence, and the demand for the ever-expanding tourism need. Thus, how tourism is developed and managed is of great consequence to the future of biodiversity conservation of these remaining sites in Vietnam, as well as to the local communities who live its growth will impact.

Consequently, there is an urgent necessity in Vietnam, which sees an increasing national and international demand for tourism to be able to minimize the negative impacts of tourism development (and current practices of poaching and illegal wildlife trade) and simultaneously maximize its positive contribution to nature conservation and quality of life of the local people. Hence, the project seeks to link nature-tourism with biodiversity conservation and the well-being of the local communities. To address the above-mentioned challenges and barriers the proposed project will help develop strategies that are aimed at conserving biodiversity and valuable ecosystems and as well, make a significant contribution to the local and regional economies. This will be achieved through project components that (1) builds an enabling policy environment for management of nature-based tourism that generates financing for conservation; (2) demonstrates nature-based tourism and public-private partnerships at project PAs to conserve biodiversity and promote life style improvements of local communities; (3) seek behavior change across target audiences including tourists, the travel sector and local communities in support of reduction of tourism-related and other illegal wildlife threats and improving conservation outcomes and (4) establish and strengthen marketing, networks, and knowledge management for nature-based tourism promotion. The above objectives will be achieved through four inter-related components.

Component 1: *Creation of an enabling framework to harmonize tourism development with nature conservation*: This will entail strengthening the institutional and policy framework to harmonize tourism development with biodiversity conservation and put in place an enhanced policy and regulatory framework to support sustainable nature-based tourism development and promotion.

Output 1.1: Inter-agency effective governance framework established for multi-level planning for tourism in high biodiversity areas and supporting implementation of the national biodiversity conservation and development strategy to 2030 and vision to 2050 and mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into the national tourism development strategy to 2030 and vision to 2050. First, the project will establish an inter-agency coordination mechanism on improving conservation outcomes in tourism policy and planning, especially as it applies to high biodiversity destinations, to ensure a coordinated effort across government and the alignment of sector strategies and policies; and provide a cross-government mechanism to support the development and adoption of biodiversity friendly economic development and nature-based tourism policies and approaches. The intent of this coordination platform is to bring together a range of key stakeholders and sectors to facilitate and support common dialogue and collaborative cross-sectoral decisions relating to socio-economic development, tourism development in high biodiversity areas, nature-based tourism as a means to increase community livelihoods. It will facilitate MONRE's efforts to strengthen cross-sectoral planning functions within the agency to enable more effective technical guidance for project implementation, advocacy for creation of awareness and support for biodiversity-friendly socio-economic and nature-based tourism development and define the roles and responsibilities of key sector institutions (MONRE, MARD, MOCST, Provincial governments and provincial agencies such as DONRE, DARD, DOCST, provincial and district governments, etc.) to ensure a coordinated approach to promotion of biodiversity conservation outcomes.

Output 1.2: Environmental standards, criteria and guidelines for sustainable tourism development, management and operations in high biodiversity areas developed and adopted, supported by a monitoring, verification and reporting system. The maintenance of tourism within ecological limits will be supported by the development of environmental standards, criteria and guidelines for ensuring sustainable tourism development, management and operations for high biodiversity areas to reduce tourism-related threats. This will enable assessment of tourism carrying capacity and load limits for high-visitation and high-biodiversity sites, providing information that would guide where tourism activities need to be subject to stricter controls and where nature-based tourism development is compatible with conservation objectives. A standardized national monitoring, verification and reporting system for tourism in high biodiversity areas to monitor compliance will be developed on the basis of the adopted standards and load limits (for demonstration at PAs under Component 2).

Output 1.3: National nature-based tourism guidelines developed for mainstreaming biodiversity into tourism policy, regulations and master planning for development of national tourism areas and integration in PA management policies. National nature-based tourism guidelines will be developed to provide a strategy and roadmap for ecologically sustainable nature-based tourism under the overall framework of Vietnam's forthcoming revised tourism development strategy to 2030 and vision to 2050. Adopted guidelines will also be integrated into revisions of the biodiversity policies, regulations and planning instruments, into key tourism policies and master plans, and tourism development plans at national tourism areas as well as integration of best practices into PA management policies.

Output 1.4: Policy framework for operationalizing nature-based tourism strengthened, in particular for promotion of: (i) public-private partnerships in nature-based tourism; and (ii) community participation and benefit sharing from nature-based tourism. This will involve supporting the development and adoption of policies to operationalize nature-based tourism, including policies for the development of public-private partnerships, and to mobilize community participation and ownership of nature-based tourism. The current policy framework and gaps will be reviewed during the PPG phase to identify key policy needs.

Output 1.5: Practical and standardized methodologies for ecological and social impact assessment developed for tourism in high biodiversity areas to minimize impacts on wildlife, habitats and local culture and lifestyles and standards to ensure compliance. Standards and guidelines developed will cover the use of SEA/EIA in tourism development planning, sustainable infrastructure design, specified forms of access and the operation of specific tourism activities to ensure that tourism development is compatible with biodiversity and ecosystem conservation outcomes and minimize harm on local cultural and social practices and norms.

Output 1.6: National policy and legal framework for promotion of payment for ecosystem services from wetlands and marine ecosystems (PMES) developed and approved. There is currently policy, legislation and extensive experience in the application of payment for forest environmental services (PFES), and some experience with PES from tourism related activities. However, while the wetland and marine ecosystems have substantial potential (from commercial fisheries and marine products, tourism and recreation, storm protection services from mangroves, etc.) for generating revenues for promoting conservation outcomes, these have not been developed as yet. The project will support the development of policies, legislation and protocols for promotion of payment for marine environmental services (PMES) that channels revenues from tourism in high biodiversity areas as a means to generate community support for conservation of the marine space, which will be trialed in Component 2.

Component 2: Nature-based tourism partnerships benefitting communities, wildlife and habitats at Nui Chua and Phong Nha-Ke Bang national parks. Under Component 2, the project will demonstrate at two PA sites and surrounding landscapes, public-private partnerships for sustainable and nature-based tourism. The demonstration sites are Nui Chua National Park in Ninh Thuan Province and Phong Nha Ke Bang National Park in Quang Binh province. The financial options for these three additional sites would be defined during the PPG phase. Component 2 will develop and establish an integrated approach to nature-based tourism built around effective partnerships between government, private sector and communities.

Output 2.1: Provincial multi-sectoral nature-based tourism platform established to support coordinated action and investment across government and private sector for promotion of nature-based tourism development in Quang Binh and Ninh Thuan provinces. It will establish a provincial multi-stakeholder platform for nature-based tourism with government and private sector participation, aiming to bring about coordinated action and investment in nature-based tourism development, built on a common definition of nature-based tourism in a Vietnamese context and what standards need to be met. The multi-sectoral coordination mechanism will support the implementation of national policy, regulations and guidelines for mainstreaming biodiversity in tourism planning and development, promoting public-private partnerships in nature-based tourism, promoting community participation in nature-based benefit sharing arrangements, overseeing EIA process in tourism development and investment and supporting policy and regulations at provincial level for promotion of PMES in promoting collaboration in Nui Chua National park and its surroundings in Ninh Thuan Province.

Output 2.2: Integrated nature-based tourism programs designed in Nui Chua and Phong Nha-Ke Bang national parks: Under this output the project will facilitate the development of nature-based tourism to guide tourism activities, improve local employment and incomes and mitigate harmful tourism practices (e.g., market demand for wild products, habitat degradation and pollution). This will entail: (i) development/revision of nature-based tourism plans, tourism business planning and management regulations in both PAs; (ii) identification and development of innovative and culturally sensitive community-based tourism products and services; and (iii) demonstration of public-private partnerships in support of conservation. Through close consultation with local

communities and tourism operators, nature-based tourism products will be identified that reflect the unique characteristics and local cultures of each region, and public-private partnerships and sustainable financing mechanisms demonstrated including the use of concessions. Exact mechanisms to be applied at each site will be determined based on feasibility assessments and the results of local consultations. As a long-term financing strategy to support conservation efforts in PAs, the project will seek opportunities for revenue generation and collaboration in conservation efforts. During the PPG stage, various options would be evaluated to assess their viability, including in particular, (i) identification and assessment of an array of potential investment opportunities for PAs (following for instance the BIOFIN catalogue of financing solutions); (ii) defining a time plan and sequencing of different revenue options; (iii) providing recommendations for best concessionary options, partnerships and investments for potential promotion and marketing; (iv) identifying and supporting feasibility studies and business plan development for best business opportunities; (v) developing safeguards and environmental actions for these businesses that integrate best practices; (vi) capacity building for enhancing co-management between communities and businesses and the effective enforcement and monitoring of business outcomes; and (vii) seed financing to support implementation of pilot business investment opportunities. In terms of private-public partnerships, this output will seek opportunities to engage the private sector in promotion of nature-based tourism and related services to enhance creation and recovery of jobs, and promote green responsible tourism standards and practices. The learning from Output 2.2 will support promotion of replication of these successful models (including use of PMES) to other high tourism destinations (including PAs) in the country through advocacy, sharing of best practices, exchange visits and capacity building that is covered under output 4.2.

Output 2.3: Improved monitoring of status of key biodiversity resources to assess effectiveness of PA management, illegal wildlife threat management and conservation outcomes of nature-based tourism: The monitoring, evaluation and reporting system developed under Component 1 will be demonstrated and standards applied to protected area management, illegal wildlife threat management and local tourism developments and operations to assess impacts on key biodiversity species and habitats. A compliance and enforcement mechanism will also be demonstrated. Based on the monitoring exercise, information will become available to enable the more effective zoning and management of specific areas within the PAs for improved conservation, effective threat management, sustainable tourism development and low-impact visitation, including changing of existing tourism practices.

Output 2.4: Institutional capacity for improving conservation and management of PAs and effective monitoring, surveillance and prevention of illegal wildlife activities. Under this Output, the project will help build capacity of protected area staff for improved protected area management. This will entail survey and mapping of hotspots for illegal wildlife activities to develop targeted responses for management such threats. Surveillance, monitoring and enforcement will be strengthened through improved SMART patrols, including collaboration with local communities for undertaking such patrols. It will also enhance PA staff capacity to integrate tourism development and management of the PA and generate revenues for management of services provided by the national parks. The Centers of Environmental Education^[2] that are public-oriented business units legally established by provincial authorities (Provincial Peoples Committee) that is operated under the guidance and management of the respective PA Management Boards will be strengthened to provide technical support and training to PA staff in support of ecotourism and PFES/PMES operations and conduct of non-business activities such as environmental education and extension to visitors and local ecotourism operations. The project will build and complement the lessons emanating from the World Bank GWP project, in that this output will help support capacity improvements for integration of protection of key species into the PA development activities at the two PAs, support enhancement of management capacity of PA staff, including collaboration with law enforcement to address illegal activities and community capacity development for information sharing on illegal activities. Through efforts at threat management, the intent is to maintain healthy and intact ecosystems within the PAs, with abundant wildlife and productive ecosystems so as to enhance the visitor experience to meet the global and national biodiversity benefits expected from the project.

Output 2.5: Implementation of community conservation and benefit sharing programs from nature-based tourism and related products and services that provide new and innovative income generation activities. At the two project sites, community participation and benefit sharing from nature-based tourism products and services will be supported, along with other income generation activities that can provide additional income. The intent of this output is to provide substantial economic benefits to local communities to replace incomes derived from current destructive activities such as hunting, poaching and land encroachment. Additional efforts will be needed to transition professional hunters and loggers out of illegal trade into legal businesses and employment. The project will also encourage communities to value forests and biodiversity in new and sustainable ways, thereby incentivizing their preservation and internalizing environmental opportunity costs. These efforts might include growth of forest and biodiversity friendly value chains for NTFPs, high-value agriculture and products that have clear established and unmet demand. There is also potential to support women's entrepreneurship initiatives that are complementary to the nature-based tourism activities, such as organic vegetable production, and small-scale businesses (local specialty products). Training can be provided on the one commune one product (OCOP) program procedures and business planning, linking products with access to marketing. Products, will vary depending on the location, but can include production of fruit juices (pineapple, passion fruit, etc.), macadamia nut, dried bamboo shoots, honey, medicinal plants, brocade weaving, handicrafts, musical instruments made of bamboo, cork, and rattan, ethnic cultures, etc. This will include training and support for establishing production groups, cooperatives, or interest groups managed by women, support for accessing affordable inputs, credit, technical support and extension services and trainings, and connecting these groups with traders, businessmen, cooperatives, and enterprises to help them improve market access.

Output 2.6: Demonstration of PMES in Nui Chua national park and surrounding landscape. Under this output, the project will support the trialing of relevant elements of the national policy and legal framework for promotion of a PMES mechanism in Nui Chua national park and the surroundings. This will entail the establishment of a technical advisory committee at the provincial level to guide and oversee the implementation of PMES. It will entail primary evidence gathering to identify those ecosystem services that can be conserved and restored/maintained in the marine space, resource management practices that can contribute to achieve this outcome, interest of the private sector (particularly tourism enterprises in this high biodiversity destination) to participate and contribute to the PMES, capacity and interest of the community to implement such measures, etc. Following the initial evidence gathering exercise, the planning and design of the PMES activities will require technical support for establishment of baselines, assessing market values and business and opportunity costs, enhancing technical and negotiating capacity of key partners, design and implementation of PMES agreements and measures for verification of PMES delivery and benefits. In terms of Phong Nha-Ke Bang national park, current PFES operations (channeling revenues from tourism) provide revenues to the Provincial Administration, part of which are channeled to PA management to maintain PA operations related to tourism, support ecotourism activities and forest conservation. The project would support assessments to improve the targeting of these PFES resources to ecosystem quality improvements and help strengthen and scale-up revenue generation in Phong Nha-Ke Bang national park.

Component 3 Capacity building and behavior change for acceptance of value of nature-based tourism and wildlife and biodiversity protection. This component will aim to facilitate the adoption of more sustainable behaviors and capacity building towards nature-based tourism and wildlife protection across the travel and tourism sector, including among tourists. In particular, this Component will focus on ensuring behavior change among tourists and tour operators to promote environmentally-friendly practices as well as address the demand for wildlife and wildlife products and the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources to meet the tourist demand covering PA network.

Output 3.1: Advocacy with travel and tourism sector to encourage promotion of nature-based tourism. This Output will seek to facilitate more sustainable behaviors and practices among tour operators, hotels and tour associations through advocacy for the adoption of responsible tourism practices (e.g. pledges and commitments to go 'illegal wildlife free') and adherence to Codes of Conduct. In this regard, it will promote responsible tourism best practice guidelines that will be developed with project support including for promotion of: (i) best practice guidelines and codes of conduct for ensuring sustainable tourist products and services and (ii) 'green tourism' network to promote uptake of responsible travel practices and create networking and marketing opportunities for nature-based tourism. The project will also demonstrate a 'green tourism' network approach to bring together tour operators at a provincial level to jointly adopt more responsible tour practices, share lessons, and create social norms and pressure that facilitates increasing adoption of responsible tourism practices.

Output 3.2. Targeted social and behavioral change communications and initiatives for domestic and international tourists aiming to influence the purchase, use and trafficking of illegal wildlife products and promote more positive attitudes towards wildlife and nature conservation. Tourist-facing social and behavioral change communications (SBCC) and initiatives will be developed to deter tourist engagement in destructive activities in sensitive sites (coral reefs, mangroves, endangered species habitats, etc.) as well as such as activities such as poaching, purchase, trade and consumption of endangered wildlife or wildlife parts as well as destruction of natural assets. A mix of approaches will be used including advocacy, social mobilization and behavior change communication. Target audiences will include domestic and international tourists, including Chinese citizens travelling for ivory purchase. The targeted efforts will include a number of educational and social media tools to promote changes in visitor attitudes, including production of leaflets, brochures, media campaigns, installation of sign boards in sensitive sites, promotion of awareness campaigns, training of tour operators in responsible behavior and development of guidelines for acceptable tourism behavior in different ecological habitats.

Output 3.3: Community outreach at the two PAs and buffer zones to shift attitudes and create social pressures for deterred involvement in poaching and trafficking of wildlife and increased awareness of the benefits of nature-based tourism, and payment for environmental services. This Output will promote behavioral shifts among communities through outreach by adopting SBCC principles that aim to prevent and deter participation in poaching, forest offences and trafficking of illegal wildlife and forest products, as well as consumption of endangered wildlife or wildlife parts as well as destruction of natural assets through inappropriate behavior. A mix of approaches will be used including advocacy, social mobilization and behavior change communication. Capacity building and awareness will be aimed at increasing awareness and acceptance of the benefits of application of nature-based tourism practices, ensuring implementation of acceptable tourism practices to protect natural assets and increasing community-level awareness of payment for environmental services from forest and marine resource conservation.

Output 3.4: Tourism and related enterprises integrate biodiversity-friendly practices to enhance biodiversity protection, improve visitor awareness and behavior change and participation in actions that protect biodiversity at the two PAs. As an extension to Output 3.1, the project will support targeted efforts at integrating biodiversity-friendly practices and activities in hotels and tourism enterprises to demonstrate a holistic and integrated approach to improving their overall environmental management. This would require these enterprises, particularly the hotels to grasp emerging opportunities based on biodiversity and ecosystem service (BES), securing cost effective management options, develop new and biodiversity-friendly products and services and help them integrate BES in their business strategy and actions, reduce demand for illegal wildlife products and unsustainable natural resources (fish, seafood, harvest practices,

forest products, etc.) as well as measures. It will promote programs to improve staff and service provider awareness and responsibility for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation through environmental courses for conduct of responsible diving/snorkelling/water sports to create awareness of the impact of tourism on the coral reef ecosystem and marine environment and easy practices that could be introduced to reduce their impacts. To complement this program, the project will support the development/strengthening of guidelines to integrate biodiversity considerations in tourism service activities, such as in hotel gardening (fertilizer and pesticide use indoors and outdoors), in landscaping and species choices to promote native vegetation, waste management and garbage disposal, beach clean-up, recycling, composting, shore management, etc. The project can provide supplementary materials and best practices that can be used by hotel management to make their staff aware of the need for environmental stewardship and to recognize the linkages between good environmental ethics and tourism benefits. In addition, workshops will be conducted to encourage hotels to recognize the benefits of sourcing from sustainable food producers. It will also promote improved guest and visitor awareness and experiences through development and promotion of education and awareness activities to inform them on behaviour and measures they can take to protect biodiversity and the natural environment around the tourist sites. Additionally, the project will seek possibility of introducing (either existing and new) 'green' tourism certification for hotels, guesthouses and tourism service providers, as well as opportunities for the private sector to participate directly in conservation action and/or support community programs of conservation and livelihood development.

Component 4: Marketing, knowledge management and M&E. Finally, Component 4 will strengthen marketing networks and knowledge exchange to help Vietnam become known for its nature-based tourism and support the replication and up scaling of project approaches and outputs.

Output 4.1: Marketing strategies and informational materials for promoting the quality and diversity of nature-based tourism at demonstration PAs developed and disseminated across tourism platforms. Marketing strategies and promotional materials will be developed to showcase nature-based tourism opportunities at demonstration PAs and disseminated across national, regional and international tourism platforms.

Output 4.2: Knowledge exchange platform developed for sharing of experiences for replication of nature-based tourism planning and management models. The project will establish processes to share knowledge and best practices between the project sites, and from the project sites with other national tourism areas with high biodiversity in Vietnam, as well as across other countries by focusing on platforms that allow for two-way dissemination from global-to-site level and vice versa, as part of the effort to promote replication of successful models. In particular, this Output will entail: (a) improving dialogue with other provincial authorities; (b) strengthening awareness and improving capacity; and (c) developing best practice manuals and handbooks. As part of the effort to promote replication, the project will provide training, site visits and technical support to survey potential other PAs for promotion of best practices and lessons emanating from the project. The potential for replication of the project approach by the government to other high biodiversity areas that attract tourists will be assessed during the PPG with government counterparts, and an associated plan will be developed^[3].

Output 4.3: M&E system incorporating gender mainstreaming and safeguards developed and implemented for adaptive project management. Implementation of project-based M&E including gender mainstreaming and social and environmental safeguards will ensure adaptive management and maximum project impact.

4) ALIGNMENT WITH GEF FOCAL AREA AND/OR IMPACT PROGRAM STRATEGIES

Through its efforts to mainstream biodiversity into the tourism sector in Vietnam and promote nature-based tourism, the proposed project is aligned to GEF-7 focal area objectives BD-1-1 Mainstream biodiversity across sectors as well as landscapes and seascapes through biodiversity mainstreaming in priority sectors. In terms of BD-2-7, the project will address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate. In terms of BD 1-1, the project will focus on mainstreaming biodiversity and habitat conservation in the tourism development sector across the two PA landscapes/seascapes. Based on the results from the monitoring exercise (Output 2.3), information will become available for informed decisions regarding zoning and management of specific areas within the PAs for improved conservation, sustainable tourism development and low-impact visitation, including changing of existing tourism practices, along with specific capacity building, training and incentives for tourism facilities and communities to change to nature-based activities, demonstrating the value of new business models that better integrate dimensions of environmental protection, human rights, gender mainstreaming and community engagement in the post-covid era. Without the GEF project, it is likely that there will be a loss of biodiversity and habitats. This will be achieved through (i) improved conservation-oriented tourism operations to protect high value habitats and species, including forests, mangroves, coral reefs and wetlands, that have an intrinsic value for tourism; (ii) reduce degradation of habitats through sustainable low impact tourism operations that can bring direct benefit to the protected areas and communities.

In terms of BD.2-7, the project will attempt to address the drivers of habitat and species loss, by focusing efforts at species and habitat protection by promoting the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation (and threat reduction) into tourism development sectors. As part of this effort, the project will focus on improving and changing tourism practices to be more biodiversity-friendly through capacity building, training and promotion of nature-based tourism products and services to change current mass tourism practices that degrade biodiversity and habitats. Without the GEF project, it is likely that there will be loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the protected areas that support tourism. The project will also establish community-private partnerships, thus, unlocking non-public sources of financing for nature-based tourism that benefit local communities, so as to provide alternative sources of incomes that replace illegal hunting and poaching, as well as act as an incentive for community engagement and stewardship for conservation. It will overall, strengthen policies for nature-based tourism development including viable livelihoods and job creation for local communities that will translate into individual and community incentives to protect wildlife, forests and PAs (in turn also providing a disincentive for unsustainable practices such as poaching, forest crime, or allowing unsustainable development in PAs). The outcome of the project would be to: (i) improve management of remaining high value habitats in tourist areas through improved incentives mechanisms that encourage private sector investments and support for their conservation; and (ii) reduce direct loss of critical biodiversity through more sustainable nature-based tourism activities that could provide financial benefit local communities and prevent destructive activities. It will also support a PMES mechanism channeling revenue from tourism that can benefit conservation and the local communities that act as stewards of the local ecosystem. It will further support sustainable low-impact tourism activities, so as to maintain the integrity of ecosystems, promote waste and effluent management, improve operations within hotels and tourism facilities to reduce impacts and enhance awareness and support from tourist, tourist enterprises and local communities. It will increase awareness-raising and social and behavioral change communications that will help achieve a shift in behaviors across key players in the travel and tourism sector in Vietnam, most notably by changing behaviors of domestic and international tourists that purchase and consume illegal wildlife products, helping reduce the amount of illegal wildlife consumption in Vietnam and putting disruptive pressures on illegal wildlife markets that operate for tourists. In turn, these actions will help support the conservation of global biodiversity in Vietnam along with improved livelihoods for local communities and enhanced socio-ecological resilience.

5) INCREMENTAL/ADDITIONAL COST REASONING AND EXPECTED CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE BASELINE, THE GEFTE, LDCE, SCCF, AND CO-FINANCING

The project will build off a baseline of private sector, government, academic, and NGO initiatives to strengthen and support scaling up of the sustainable nature-based tourism. This baseline is outlined in the below table:

Table 1: Incremental reasoning

Baseline	Alternative to be put in place	Project impact
<i>Tourism development</i>		
<p>A range of tourism experiences, from mass uncontrolled tourism to small-scale community-based ecotourism in place at PAs and tourism sites, although no national enabling policy and legal framework to guide them or put in place controls to minimize impacts and ensure benefits are shared with local communities.</p> <p>Impacts of tourism observed at sensitive sites but no clear understanding of ecological impacts of tourism or of the controls and restrictions needed to prevent them.</p> <p>Important biodiversity areas among sites identified as national tourism areas for accelerated tourism growth, putting at risk globally significant species.</p>	<p>Awareness of ecological limits and carrying capacities of high-biodiversity tourism sites, and integration of these into national policies and standards for sustainable tourism.</p> <p>Tourism operations increasingly adhere to standardized ecotourism monitoring, evaluation and reporting system, bringing tourism within sustainable limits and punishing non-compliance.</p> <p>A new pathway towards nature-based tourism development to strengthen local livelihoods and generate financing for biodiversity conservation is mainstreamed across government sectors and important tourism development plans, and at a site level through the identification and development of unique and high-quality nature-based tourism experiences.</p> <p>Provision of alternative livelihoods helps build a positive relationship between people and wildlife and deter local involvement in poaching of wildlife, while tourism campaigns also share positive messages about wildlife and deter participation of tourists in poaching, trading and purchasing illegal wildlife products.</p> <p>Shift towards more sustainable purchasing behaviors among tourists in parallel with reduced unsustainable tour offerings and products among travel sector reduces the potential for Vietnam to be a destination for unsustainable and illegal wildlife tourism.</p>	<p>Improved PA management effectiveness covering 146,984 hectares of terrestrial protected areas and 7,352 hectares of marine protected areas</p> <p>77,000 hectares of additionally important coastal and terrestrial high biodiversity areas (excluding protected areas) in buffer zone of the two PAs effectively integrating tourism development with biodiversity conservation, to reduce threats on natural resources (e.g., habitat disturbance), reduce market demand of wildlife related products (e.g., behavior change – hence reducing poaching/illegal activities), (to be confirmed at PPG stage)</p> <p>Population of key threatened species at PAs remain stable or improve (e.g. red-shanked douc langur)</p>

	Increased PPPs that provide opportunities to promote nature-based tourism and related services that enhance creation and recovery of jobs.	(EN), Sunda pangolin (CR), saola (CR), gaur (VU), southern white-cheeked gibbon (EN). (The final extent and list will be confirmed during the PPG stage).
Protected area financing		Reduced poaching impacts on globally significant species including red-shanked douc langur (EN), Sunda pangolin (CR), and many species of illegally traded freshwater turtles and sea tortoises.
Large, yet unfunded PA network managed by government and unable to effectively manage threats such as poaching, trapping and illegal wildlife trade. PAs will continue to be visitor attractions for many domestic and international tourists but a lack of entry fees or fee collection mechanisms means that the potential revenue opportunity for PA management will be lost. Lack of visitor facilities and interpretation will restrict visitation to PAs, particularly repeat visitation.	Positive incentives for private investment in protected areas, including tourism concessions. Demonstrated mechanisms and models for public-private partnership in PAs on nature-based tourism. Increased resources for conservation from PMES programs that generate revenues from tourism A portion of PA revenue is returned into PA management reducing ongoing management cost of PA estate to government, and strengthening management effectiveness and PA threat reduction. Increasing visitation at PAs helps raise awareness of biodiversity conservation and the threats Vietnam's unique wildlife faces.	Reduced demand for illegal and endangered wildlife products for local and tourism consumption in Vietnam. Increased opportunities for new nature-based employment and recovery of around 3,000 green jobs (to be defined at PPG stage) Scaling up and national impact and PMES for replication based on project lessons (to be defined at PPG stage)

6) GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS (GEFTF) AND/OR ADAPTATION BENEFITS (LDCF/SCCF)

The project demonstrations will support improved tourism management and revenue generation benefitting up to 146,984 ha of terrestrial PAs and 7,352 ha of marine PAs in Vietnam. This will in turn help reduce threats from uncontrolled tourism development, poaching and illegal trade to known threatened species including red-shanked douc langur (EN), Sunda pangolin (CR) and illegally-traded turtles. Vietnam is a hotspot for turtle diversity in Asia with 25 species of tortoise and freshwater turtles, including two endemic species. All are threatened by hunting and trade to meet local and regional demand. Other globally-significant species found at project sites and expected to benefit from improved tourism management and PA financing include saola (CR), gaur (VU), southern white-cheeked gibbon (EN), fishing cat (VU), and migratory birds, the Belgan Florican (CR), among others. Important globally-recognized landscapes such as the Karst landscape of World Heritage-listed Phong Nha Ke Bang National Park will also benefit from stricter controls on tourism operations. In parallel the project will support a shift in tourist purchasing preferences away from illegal wildlife and unsustainable and destructive tourism practices in Vietnam, supporting a corresponding demand for pristine and low impact tourism products and services.

7) INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND POTENTIAL FOR SCALING UP

7.i) Innovation: Although there are projects on ecotourism development in national parks and protected areas or special areas, this project will, for the first time, coordinate those interventions to address major causes for pressure on and degradation of biodiversity through the integration of biodiversity conservation in key national tourism sites, particularly reducing negative impacts from fast and unsustainable tourism development and creating “green” jobs and livelihoods, mobilizing participation of the private sector and contributing to biodiversity conservation. In addition, the project will specifically look at replacing the current destructive activities of poaching and trade in wildlife products by providing alternative and more socially acceptable community revenue generation opportunities through ecotourism ventures, the success of which depends on the change of community attitudes that favor the conservation of species and habitats.

Specific innovations being planned through the project are the following: first, the project will support the development of policy and regulations for Payment of Wetland and Marine Ecosystem Services (PMES) to generate revenues for biodiversity conservation and local communities based on the already successful Payment of Forest Ecosystem Services (PFES) and its trialing in the project. It will also explore opportunities at PPG stage for promoting public-private partnerships to realize the innovative potential in terms of recovering and enhancing opportunities for green job creation recognizing the key role and contribution of business and private sector to job creation. The Government of Vietnam has adopted various policies to promote PPP to enhance economic development, with high priority being given to “green” and nature-based sectors, such as tourism. The project will support and facilitate this process. Further, the project will work with the social impact business sector to create multi-stakeholder platforms to promote sustainable business models that benefit the environment and society. It will also explore potential opportunities offered by nature-based tourism for enhancing learning and coordination across the country, and the region.

7.ii) Sustainability: By managing and developing sustainable nature-based tourism, the proposed project will contribute to sustainable conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services in Vietnam. Vietnam's economy is built on the biodiversity and natural resources, thus ensuring sustainable development of biodiversity plays an important role for economic and social development. Reducing risks and threats to biodiversity of international importance also provides additional support for the sustainability of the global environment.

The project will strengthen and refine the legal and policy framework to harmonize conservation and tourism development objectives, enhancing the effectiveness of the legal system and specifying regulations to enable the development of public-private partnership for effective nature-based tourism at provincial level. The enhanced and improved legal and policy framework will provide a vehicle for promoting long-term and sustainable benefits to the environment and society, even when the project is finished. In addition, the coordination approach involving various agencies and stakeholders, especially businesses and communities, can help integrating biodiversity conservation in many areas, especially tourism field. The project design recognizes the empowerment of businesses and communities in biodiversity protection, which is very important for the long-term sustainability of controlling threats to biodiversity. The long-term sustainability of improved resource management through integration in nature-based tourism by the governments, local communities, private companies and other organizations will generate national interests and creating global environmental benefits.

The proposed engagement with the private sector and the focus on development of PPPs can help enhance financial sustainability, by bringing government, PA authorities and tour enterprises to agree on the most feasible mechanism that allow part of the revenues generated from tourism activities to be re-invested in conservation programs within the PAs. In terms of private-public partnerships, the project will seek opportunities to engage the private sector in promotion of nature-based tourism and related services to enhance creation and recovery of jobs. In addition, the project will also seek opportunities for mainstreaming conservation responsibilities of the private sector (hoteliers, tour operators, recreation providers, etc.) in agreements between government authorities and the private sector. The government of Vietnam has made strong commitments to conservation in PAs and high biodiversity tourist areas and continues to allocate state budget for environmental protection. The strengthen of the existing PFES mechanism in the Phong Nha-Ke Bang national park and promotion of PMES in Nui Chua national park in the tourism and related sectors will generate sustainable financing for biodiversity conservation.

7.iii) Scalability: The project will bring about the innovative interventions that can be implemented quickly and up scaled to other national tourism areas. Institutional, policy and coordination platforms will help promote the implementation of interventions and ensure that future interventions are more effective, speeded up, effective and avoiding mistakes. Specifically, activities such as training, capacity building, knowledge and education programs, training on nature-based tourism and sustainable eco-tourism can be expanded, strengthened, applied and exchanged through strengthening international cooperation and sharing lessons- learned. Policy and legal supports are important to enable public-private partnerships to be effectively implemented locally.

The project will also pilot and implement a number of specific initiatives with great potential to scale up in Vietnam, or replicate elsewhere. For example, the project will pilot a public-private partnership model on ecotourism management at the project's demonstration sites, which can be replicated nationwide if proven to be an effective tool to encourage the participation of local businesses and communities in biodiversity protection. Vietnam has become a middle-income country, therefore, it is necessary to develop a new mechanism to finance conservation and reduce dependence on ODA. Testing sustainable financial models for biodiversity through tourism is an important step in achieving this goal and to up-scale investment in conservation projects associated with development in Vietnam.

Additionally, under Component 4, the project will establish processes to share knowledge and best practices between project sites, with other national tourism areas in Vietnam. This will also entail specific efforts to promote scaling up such as improving dialogue with other provincial authorities and tourist locations and developing best practice manuals and handbooks. The project will facilitate efforts to initially promote development of proposals and opportunities for fund mobilization for replication of nature-based tourism in two additional PAs based on project generated lessons.

[1] UNDP (2019). Vietnam Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN). Mobilizing Resources for Biodiversity and Sustainable Development. Biodiversity Finance Plan

[2] The name varies by each national park/nature reserve (Center for Environmental Education / Tourism Center / Environmental Services).

[3] The current draft of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) aims at having 80% of PAs and natural heritage sites nationwide with ecotourism operations benefiting local communities.

1b. Project Map and Coordinates

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

Potential project sites are included: Nui Chua (Ninh Thuan Province: from 11° 35'25 "to 11° 48'38" north latitude and 109° 4'5" to 109° 14'15 "east longitude; and Phong Nha-Ke Bang (Quang Binh) (coordinates from 17° 21' to 17° 39 ' north latitude and from 105° 57' to 106° 24' east longitude). Maps of the two PA sites are presented in Annex A. They will be revised and completed during PPG.

2. Stakeholders

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

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Yes

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Private Sector Entities Yes

If none of the above, please explain why:

In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement

During the development of this PIF, initial consultations were undertaken by VEA in September 2020 with key provincial entities, local communities and ethnic minority groups in the two sites. These agencies and stakeholders confirmed their interest in the project. A preliminary assessment of project stakeholders that will be consulted during the PPG (including through targeted consultations, focus groups, and workshops) is provided in table 1. This will be further elaborated during the PPG when stakeholders, their potential interests in the project and potential roles are elaborated. The project will also ensure that representatives of relevant initiatives and projects are regularly consulted with to enhance effective and informed collaboration during the project development and implementation phases.

The project provides the opportunity for partnerships with a range of stakeholders, including key central Ministries with mandate for biodiversity conservation and nature-based tourism development (namely MONRE, MOCST and MARD), provincial administrations at demonstration sites, communities living in or near PAs, and the tourism sector including small-to-medium enterprises. Discussions with stakeholders at pilot sites have already commenced as part of the PIF development. During project PPG phase and implementation, a broad approach to stakeholder engagement will be continued, as strong partnerships across government and with the private sector and local communities are needed to achieve sustainable ecotourism growth benefitting nature conservation in Vietnam. Given the presence of ethnic minorities in the two PAs, the PPG phase will focus on consultations with these groups to secure FPIC. Specific outputs have been integrated into the project design to strengthen inter-agency coordination on nature-based tourism, and to build platforms for discussion and coordination between government and private sector. These have been identified as gaps during the development of the PIF. Individual stakeholder interests will be mapped as part of the project PPG phase, and potential roles in project implementation agreed as a part of detailed stakeholder consultations.

Table 2. List of potential key stakeholders and their possible roles in the proposed project

Stakeholder type	Stakeholder list	Possible contributions and roles in the project
Government ministries (at central level)	MONRE – Vietnam Environment Administration (VEA)/Biodiversity Conservation Agency (BCA)	As focal point for implementing the Biodiversity Law 2008 and 2018, Environmental Protection Law 2020, MONRE is responsible for collaborating with its ministerial partners to develop policy and guideline framework to realize the State policy on conservation and sustainable development of biodiversity

on conservation and sustainable development of biodiversity (Article 5), of which it regulates “development of eco-tourism linking with hunger eradication and poverty reduction, ensuring living stability of local households and individuals with legal residence in protected areas, enabling sustainable development in buffer zones of protected areas”

Supporting, building capacity and enabling PA management boards and local villagers to exercise their rights in doing and benefiting from business and/or venture in eco-tourism services with compliance to the existing regulations (as Decree 65);

Some options for GEF-7 management and implementation:

- + National coordination of project activities
- + Ministerial coordination of project component e.g., national standards for nature-based tourism
- + National facilitation to mainstream biodiversity conservation and nature-based tourism in relevant policies, plans and capacity building e.g., national planning of biodiversity conservation, forestry development, tourism system; provincial master plans 2021-2030

Coordinating and overseeing the development and implementation of nature-based tourism policies and guidelines in wetland and/marine protected areas

+ To implement the Vietnam National Strategy for Tourism Development to 2030 (as Prime Minister’s Decision 147/QĐ-TTg dated 22 January 2020, MONRE is responsible for steering and collaborating with MOCST to manage the utilization of tourism resources, environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, responses to climate change, and prevention of natural disasters; to propose policies and mechanisms for tourism

+ To implement the Vietnam National Strategy for Tourism Development to 2030 (as Prime Minister’s Decision 147/QĐ-TTg dated 22 January 2020, MONRE is responsible for steering

	<p>g and collaborating with MOCST to manage the utilization of tourism resources, environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, responses to climate change, and prevention of natural disasters; to propose policies and mechanisms for tourism development linking with protection of natural resources, environment and sustainable development, ensuring full implementation of SDGs;</p>
<p>MARD – Vietnam Forestry Administration (VNForest)/Department of Special Use Forest and Protection Forest Management (DOPAM) and Vietnam Forest Protection and Development Fund (VNFF)</p>	<p>Acting as the focal point for implementing the Forestry Law 2017, MARD is responsible for collaborating with ministerial partners to develop policies and guidelines in order to enable regulations on development, investment and management of ecotourism and PFES in protected areas and high conservation valued forests to be operationalized in and by Special Use Forests/PA management boards, investors, local households and other stakeholders (e.g., Articles 53, 56, 63, 75, 76, 78);</p> <p>Ensuring that ecotourism regulations to be institutionalized in details from the GoV decree on investment for development of special use forest and protection forest being drafted by MARD and their partners as well as mainstreamed in the national master plan and strategy of forestry development 2021-2030, and forestry contents in provincial planning 2021-2030</p> <p>Some options for GEF-7 participation and implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Ministerial coordination of project component operationalized in PAs as terrestrial SUF, or + National facilitation to build capacity for PA management boards, private sectors and local communities in ecotourism development to enable sustainable forest management plans <p>To implement the Vietnam National Strategy for Tourism Development to 2030 (as Prime Minister's Decision 147/QĐ-TTg dated 22 January 2020, MARD is responsible for steering and collaborating with MOCST to integrate contents of tourism development into the National Target Program on New Rural Development; developing agricultural products, clean agricult</p>

		<p>ural development models, high-tech agriculture linking with tourism development; and collaborating with MOCST and MO NRE to study and develop policies and mechanisms for development of ecotourism and community tourism at national parks and nature reserves</p>
	<p>Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (MOCST) – Vietnam Tourism Administration (VTA)/ Tourism Advisory Board (TAB)</p>	<p>Acting as the focal point for implementing the Tourism Law 2017 and Cultural Heritage Law 2001, MOCST is responsible for conducting and overseeing state management over the development of tourism sector in the country, including tourism products as ecotourism, community tourism, cultural tourism, and tourism environment, enabling multi-stakeholders for sustainable tourism development. The Vietnam Tourism Administration acts as a national executing authority for implementation of the National Strategy for Tourism Development to 2030, the Strategy for Development of Vietnam Tourism Brands to 2025, the Strategy for Development of Vietnam's Tourism Products to 2025, an Orientation to 2030 as well as regional tourism development master plans towards 2030;</p> <p>Engaging with GEF-7 that helps MOCST contribute to implement to realize a task setting for “institutional and policy improvement for tourism development” determined by the National Strategy for Vietnam Tourism Development to 2030: “Facilitating public-private collaboration and integrated governance models between public and private areas, between businesses and local communities in sustainable tourism development; enabling business environment with favorable conditions, encouraging innovations and start-ups, developing tourism enterprises with strong brands, supporting small and medium enterprises and small-holder in tourism business in access to advancing technologies, digital skills and finance” and “prioritizing resources for planning, capacity-building, market research, promotion and development of tourism products, development of community tourism linking with preservation of tourism resources and environment”</p> <p>Collaborating with partners to improve national legal, standards and procedure frameworks for tourism in general; developing a national master plan for tourism system development</p>

		<p>2021-2030, prioritizing on community tourism development with incentive policies supporting local people investing in community tourism linking with poverty reduction in remote, borderline, island areas; visioning post-2025 tourism development strategies;</p> <p>Some options for GEF-7 participation and implementation:</p> <p>+ Ministerial coordination of project component operationalized in development, branding and marketing of eco-tourism products, capacity building for tourism service provision, and policies on partnership and investment</p>
Provincial authorities	<p>Provincial People Councils</p> <p>Provincial People Committees and their executing departments:</p> <p>+ DONRE / Environmental Protection Division</p> <p>+ DARD, Biosphere Reserves, and Provincial VNFFs, Forest Protection Department</p> <p>+ DOCST / Provincial Center for Tourism Information and Promotion</p> <p>+ Committee for Ethnic Minority</p> <p>District authority (DPCs), including district forest rangers</p>	<p>Collaborating with UNDP, MONRE and involving ministries to steer, oversee and facilitate local stakeholder engagement (departments, districts, PAMBs, private investors) on development and implementation of project activities at their provinces respectively, ensuring that GEF-7 helps to realize and contribute to development and implementation of relevant master plans and tourism policies at the current and/or being developed; integrating nature-based tourism into provincial planning, conservation and development policies by 2025 or the period 2025-2030;</p> <p>Collaborating with GEF-7 to identify gaps in policies and practices to enable sustainable, inclusive and responsible nature-based tourism, supporting their alternative development and demonstrations, and contributing to national-level policy making respectively;</p> <p>Taking leadership to support the GEF-7 implementation to the extent of formulating and operating multi-stakeholder platforms in the province to promote nature-based tourism investment and development;</p> <p>Collaboration and supporting PA management boards to work with local authorities, communities and private sectors to enable nature-based tourism activities and demonstrations</p>
	PA/National Park Management Boards	Collaborating with GEF-7 executing bodies and UNDP Vietnam to identify, plan and jointly implement selective activities t

		<p>o enable capacity, stakeholder engagement, investment, demonstration towards developing nature-based tourism in and around protected areas;</p> <p>Ensuring their GEF-7 engagement will respect and contribute to achieve outcomes setting for their sustainable forest management plans, project proposal of ecotourism development and relevant national and provincial plans and strategies, focusing on enabling conditions for revenue generation from new ecotourism products, new mechanism of ecosystem service payment and/or benefit sharing, and better engagement of local communities and private sectors for wildlife conservation in place, including making adaptive planning for annual PA management an operation e.g. using nature-based ecotourism guidelines, standards;</p> <p>Collaborating with GEF-7 and local partners to monitor and verify progress/results and impacts from nature-based tourism demonstration and replication, generating lessons learnt as inputs for upscaling and making national policies</p>
Community-level stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communal authorities in pilot areas; - Buffer zone communities, including ethnic minorities and farmers, and women - Cooperatives 	<p>Local authorities, social organizations (youth unions, women unions, farmer associations) and school teachers benefited from awareness-raising and training on nature-based tourism development and management;</p> <p>Managers and staff of existing tourism services and investors in and around PAs participated in training about nature-based tourism, wildlife conservation, communication and interpretation skills</p> <p>Local villagers/households supported to participate in awareness, skill training and practices in nature-based tourism and livelihood development associated with wildlife conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, that could be ecotourism community business, service institution and capacity, nature-based tourism products and marketing, homestay services skills</p> <p>Ethnic minorities will benefit from improved conservation of their natural resources, participate in culturally appropriate nature-based activities, value chains in forest product development</p>

		nature-based activities, value chains in forest product development and marketing, etc.
Research institutes (national ones)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institute for Strategy and Policy of Natural Resources and Environment (ISPO NRE/MONRE) - Institute for Tourism Development Research (ITDR/MOCST) - Vietnam Institute of Seas and Islands (VISI/MONRE) - Institute of Tropical Biology 	Potential research partners to provide consultancy on development of nature-based tourism and community engagement, benefit-sharing, coastal wetland ecosystem service payment mechanism and policy recommendations; biodiversity survey and conservation
NGOs/CSOs	<p>0) National level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VNPPA – Vietnam Association of National Parks and Protected Areas <p>1) Phong Nha-Ke Bang NP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNESCO - GIZ - FFI - CEGORN/CIRD - CCD - PanNature - GAIA <p>2) Nui Chua NP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IUCN; WWF <p>Heron House / Sea turtle B</p>	<p>Provision of PA networking for consultation, learning and policy advocacy</p> <p>Provision of technical advices e.g., wildlife and wildlife trade survey and monitoring</p> <p>Skills training and facilitation for PA staff and villagers</p> <p>Community support e.g., collaborative management, communication and education, marketing</p> <p>Private engagement and mobilization</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HERO HOUSE (Sea-turtle R escue Station) - SIE – Southern Institute of Ecology; ITB – Institute of Tropical Biology - GreenVIET - MCD 	
Private Sector	<p>0) National level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vietnam Tourism Associ ation (VTA) - Vietnam Society of Trave l Agents (VISTA) - Vietnam Tour Guide Ass ociation (VTGA) - Vietnam Marketing <p>1) Phong Nha-Ke Bang NP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quang Binh Tourism Ass ociation (QBTA) - Phong Nha-Ke Bang Tour ism Center of PN-KB Natio nal Park - Center for Biological Res cue, Conservation and Dev elopment of PN-KB Nation al Park - Truong Thinh Tourism Co mpany - Oxalis Company (Project: Blue Diamond Retreat) - Moc Nam Company 	<p>May help finance bankable proposals towards responsible n ature-based tourism, and support local community efforts to protect forests and sustain livelihoods. Will be actively enga ged in identification and development of nature- based touris m products and experiences that are community-based and r eflect local cultures, as well as implement public-private part nership mechanism. At PPG stage, this list of private sector entities will be further consulted and clear responsibilities de fined for each of the participating entities.</p>

- Jungle Boss Company
- Viet Hung Company
- Phong Nha Heritage Company
- Phong Nha Green Travel Company
- Dat Xanh Trade and Service Company (Project: Green Mountain Homestay)
- Huyen Hau Trade and Service Company (Project: Len Chua resort)
- Agnew Phan Tourism, Trade Service Company (Project: Phong Nha lake resort)
- Vietnam Tour Company in Quang Binh (Project: Riverside Homestay)
- Hoa Binh Trade Promotion Company (Project: Sobi-Phong Nha Farmstay)
- IGS Investment Company (Project: Everland hotel)
- Doan Gia Investment Group (Project: Doan Gia Villas)
- Oxalis Holiday Company (Project: Chay Lap Riverside Lodge)
- Arem Tourism Company (Project: Arem Tourism Ar

ea)

- Vinh Hung Consultation and Construction Company (Project: Vinh Hung-Tram Me – Chay Lap resort)

- Son Hai Group Company (Project: U Bo Eco-tourism Resort)

- Phong Nha Construction Company (Project: Tiger Phong Nha Tourism Area)

- Huong Hai Group (Project: Cultural community Ecotourism Area)

- Van Hoa Tourism Investment and Development Company (Project: Phong Nha Ecotourism resort)

2) Nui Chua National Park

- Center for Environmental Education and Services of Nui Chua NP

- Amanoi Resort (Company)

- Tour services: Vietmark Company, The Trip Company, VietDive Company

- Ba Lap Asparagus Cooperative

- An Xuan-Ninh Thuan Asparagus Cooperative

- Thanh Hai Agricultural Service Cooperative

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seamaul Agricultural Service and Trade Cooperative - My Son Agricultural Service Cooperative - Back Phong Agricultural Service Cooperative - Phuoc Nam Agricultural Service Cooperative 	
Gender focused groups	Viet Nam Women's Union (VWU); provincial, district and communal women's unions	Will provide advice on securing true engagement of women in the project's efforts to promote sustainable tourism in high biodiversity areas, and to tap into community-based, nature-based tourism enterprises to advance gender empowerment.

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis).

The project will ensure that gender factors are considered to be an integral part of the proposed project. During the preparation phase of the project, a gender analysis will be conducted, in accordance with standard UNDP procedure, to identify the differences, needs, roles and priorities of women and men as it relates to the identification, development and operation of ecotourism products and experiences in a way that reflects locally-specific needs and contexts. Specific project activities will be proposed to support the engagement of women and the inclusion of ecotourism opportunities that support women's empowerment. The results of the gender analysis conducted during PPG will be integrated into project design to ensure that gender-based differences are built into project activities as appropriate, and gender-disaggregated targets will be developed as indicators of project's success.

In terms of gender equality, the gender marking system of UNDP will be applied to assess the appropriateness of project design and outputs regard gender aspect. For example, project design and output will include a brief analysis of the project plan to achieve environmental goals by showing the differences in the roles and needs of women and men. Currently, women's role in forestry and marine value chains in Viet Nam tend to be those associated with the well-being, and food and energy security of their rural households. However, women are often disadvantaged in terms of their access to, and control over, natural resources and in the availability of associated economic opportunities along those value chains (processing, marketing, etc.). While the Government of Viet Nam has developed a number of laws and policies to promote women's rights, women are still structurally disadvantaged in areas like access to credit, land and information. Within the remote parts of the country, women and men have different roles, rights, responsibilities, knowledge, management of and access to natural resources. Women's roles are linked to fulfilling subsistence needs for fuel wood, medicinal products, wild foods, fodder for livestock and selling small quantities of fuel wood and fish in local markets. In comparison, men's roles are more linked to timber, NTFP and fish harvesting for commercial purposes. The differing roles of men and women in use of natural resources mean that potential restrictions on access to protected areas could particularly increase women's labor and time demands

The ability of men and women to participate in and benefit from sustainable forest and marine resource management and biodiversity conservation is complex and gender-based inequalities persist for a range of cultural, socio-economic and institutional reasons. Women's time and energy are tied with agricultural and household work and they have greater responsibilities in family and household care, meaning that they have limited time to engage in training and skills development compared to men. Ethnic minority women are bound by existing customs and traditions that often restrict access to knowledge and participation in decision-making – and ethnic minority women's lack self-confidence on technical issues, in particular related to climate impacts and factors affecting the depletion of natural resources. There are clear barriers for the actual engagement and participation of women, such that simply presenting opportunities for engagement may not be adequate. Therefore, during the PPG phase, and specifically through the gender analysis and action plan, particular consideration will be given to identifying specific means/ measures that can be used to address these barriers and elicit real engagement of women. The project will not only engage with the VWU on issues of women's engagement, but also with women's unions at the provincial, district, and communal level. The project owner (MONRE), through its executing agency – BCA/VEA, will directly work with provincial authorities, Quang Binh and Ninh Thuan PPCs, to secure women engagement and gender empowerment in promotion of community-based, nature-based tourism in/around national parks by: (a) securing representation of provincial women's unions in the provincial project management boards/steering committees; (b) targeting representatives of district and communal women unions in the buffer zones (and extended/transition districts) for awareness, workshops and training organized by the project to promote

sustainable tourism, biodiversity conservation and livelihood development; (c) engaging women leaders/directors and managers from tourism business/companies in Quang Binh and Ninh Thuan and related eco-tourism value chains involving PNKB and Nui Chua NP in collaboration with the project as trainers/facilitators/advisors for local households and communities in eco-tourism activities and services; (d) support for local women (households) in the buffer zone to demonstrate ecotourism micro-enterprises and services (homestays, restaurants, guides, etc.).

The project will provide targeted support to empower women in the forest and marine sector, including support for women entrepreneurs, access to finance, etc. Women will be clearly targeted as project beneficiaries and a target for at least 50% women beneficiaries has been set. Specific gender mainstreaming opportunities that the project will explore include targeted nature-based tourism related development opportunities for women, enhanced in forest and fisheries dependent livelihoods, including the establishment of grassroots women's groups; the empowerment of women to participate in governance and decision-making bodies including the setting of mandatory gender participation targets; ensuring adequate engagement and participation of women in stakeholder consultations (including FPIC as needed) including separate consultation processes and meeting timing/location decisions that allows for women's engagement and provides a supportive environment for their inputs (e.g. separate consultations on technical issues where there awareness or self-confidence may be lower than men); targeted training, awareness-raising and/or capacity development for women including on biodiversity monitoring, planning of PFES and PMES (these opportunities will be extended to women's groups and relevant CSOs operating in the project landscape); community livelihood improvements and ensuring that the PMU and project partners receive gender mainstreaming awareness training.

These measures will be informed by the completion of a detailed gender analysis during the PPG. This will assess opportunities to enhance the status of women in respect to nature-based tourism and related activities, to address the gender gap in the sector and to help design project activities and indicators that will ensure women's full participation as beneficiaries of technical cooperation and knowledge building efforts. Consultation sessions will be held to obtain views and inputs of a wide range of local stakeholders, including women, to develop project activities and to inform a robust stakeholder involvement plan with full gender considerations. A corresponding gender mainstreaming plan for the project will be completed and submitted with the project document at time of CEO Endorsement. Gender-disaggregated targets and indicators will be included within the project results framework. Gender-responsive evaluation and adaptive learning will also be included.

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; Yes

improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or Yes

generating socio-economic benefits or services for women. Yes

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

Yes

4. Private sector engagement

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

Please briefly explain the rationale behind your answer.

Enterprises are important partners in project design and implementation. The objectives of the project components are designed to ensure that policies will encourage the development of public-private and private-community partnerships in nature-based tourism development and trading and this model will be piloted in protected areas of national key tourism areas.

The project will directly promote engagement with the private sector through focus on the tourism industry. There is already a great deal of experience working with the private sector and CSO, in particular through different financial instruments that have been identified as part of BIOFIN. The project will facilitate the establishment and functioning of PPP platforms at the two project areas to ensure a balance between achieving conservation and tourism development. During the PPG stage, various options would be evaluated to assess their viability of different means to engage the private sector, including in particular, (i) identification and assessment of an array of potential investment opportunities for PAs (following for instance the BIOFIN catalogue of financing solutions); (ii) providing recommendations for best concessionary options, partnerships and investments for potential promotion and marketing; (iii) identifying and supporting feasibility studies and business plan development for best business opportunities; (iv) developing safeguards and environmental actions for these businesses that integrates best practices; (v) capacity building for enhancing co-management practices with businesses and the effective enforcement and monitoring of business outcomes; and (vi) seed financing to support implementation of pilot business investment opportunities. In terms of private-public partnerships, this output will seek opportunities to engage the private sector in promotion of nature-based tourism and related services to enhance creation and recovery of jobs. Additionally, the project will support targeted efforts at integrating biodiversity-friendly practices and activities in a few hotels and tourism enterprises to demonstrate a holistic and integrated approach to improving their overall environmental management. This would require these enterprises, particularly the hotels to grasp emerging opportunities based on biodiversity and ecosystem service, securing cost effective management options, develop new and biodiversity-friendly products and services and help them integrate these conservation-friendly practices in their business strategy and actions.

Partnership arrangements and co-financing commitments will be finalized during the PPG stage, and UNDP due diligence processes conducted on potential private sector co-financiers. At PPG stage, efforts will be made to include activities that integrate biodiversity conservation practices into the design, planning development and management of tourism products and services and into supply chain management, with the recognition that the private sector realizes that minimization of their negative impacts and find ways to help promotion conservation and sustainable development will be in their long-term interests. To do so, the project will initially work with the tourism industry to promote and support for voluntary initiatives that include specific and measurable criteria for biodiversity conservation and local community socio-economic benefit. It will promote private sector-community partnerships to minimize impacts on sensitive ecosystems using new technologies and practices. The project will also work with the hoteliers and tour operators to include specific programs to educate staff and customers about the impacts of unsustainable tourism practices on biodiversity and local cultural and traditional values. The project will also ensure collaboration between PA managers and private sector that ensures specific management practices that are complementary with the conservation objectives of the protected areas.

5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the Project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the Project design (table format acceptable)

Social and environmental risks have been defined in the attached SESP pre-screening for the PIF. Key Risks, rating and mitigation measures are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 3: Key risks and mitigation measures

Risks	Rating	Mitigation Measures
OPERATIONAL, POLITICAL, STRATEGIC RISKS		
<u>Risk 1</u> : Delays in developing policy, guidelines and standards for nature-based tourism	Moderate	The Vietnamese Government' has a national campaign; led by MOCST on "Vietnamese travel Vietnam" to encourage open-spaced and natural destinations for tourism and contribution to tourism green recovery. Hence, this project will serve as a catalyst at the national level through provision of technical and consultative processes to help mainstreaming environmentally-friendly standards, guidelines and carrying capacity in tourism as well as provide a means to facilitate its piloting in the two PAs.
<u>Risk 2</u> : Limited capacity to carry out or sustain improvements in nature-based tourism	Moderate	This risk is common once funding is completed. This risk will be addressed through policy changes, planning regime change, more open governance, and through targeted capacity-building and effective training of personnel. Financial sustainability is promoted through the introduction of PMES in the marine and coastal areas and strengthening of existing PFES mechanisms in the terrestrial PAs.
<u>Risk 3</u> : Lack of interest and commitment for coordination across different agencies can constrain efforts to mainstream biodiversity aspects in the tourism sector	Moderate	This risk will be addressed by establishing an inter-agency governance framework at the national level to support multi-level planning for nature-based tourism and supporting implementation of the national tourism development strategy to 2030 and vision to 2050, that has already been approved by the government. At the provincial level a provincial multi-sector nature-based tourism coordination platform will be established to support coordinated action and invest

		ment across government and private sector for promotion of nature-based tourism in each PA.
<p><u>Risk 4:</u> Covid-19 and other potential zoonotic disease outbreaks could pose serious difficulties for the project, namely (i) effective project implementation and socio-economic hardships; (ii) disruptions to the international tourism market and to some extent the local market causing economic hardship and disruption of employment; (iii) could accelerate resource exploitation due to economic disruptions in other livelihoods as a result of reduced demand for certain products and services</p>	Substantial	<p>During the PPG stage, an assessment of the social and economic impacts of ongoing Covid-19 (particular if the infection rates that are currently low, do increase significantly) on vulnerable populations (including ethnic minorities) will be undertaken, hotspots will be mapped and plans for responding to and ensuring income recovery for affected vulnerable populations and target specific livelihood interventions to facilitate such recovery as well as improving awareness of risks of zoonotic diseases will be developed.</p> <p>Additionally, there is a possibility that there might be delays in project start-up on account of shift in government fiscal priorities. This can be further compounded by limited availability of remote means of communication at the project sites. This would necessitate some adjustment and innovative means of project management to adapt to changing situations.</p> <p>Specific recommendations for management of the Covid-19 situation will likely include the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the remote location of the PAs, in particular where ethnic minorities are predominant, these communities are not equipped with remote means of communication. The project will look at options to use local NGOs, local community mobilizers and local staff to carry out consultations, fieldwork and local level planning. If the Covid situation deteriorates to the extent that safety concerns prevail, this will entail application of national and local Covid-19 health protocols (in consultation with the Provincial governments) in outreach to the vulnerable groups, such as use of masks, hand sanitizer, and social distancing, giving the option to communities to decide if they are comfortable with participating. - In terms of tourism, an assessment will be made in relation to the potential for recovery of the tourism market and identify specific disease risk mitigation/prevention measures that are needed to promote post-Covid recovery. Of particular relevance is the effort to promote green job recovery, including in particular promoting domestic travelers to the

		<p>se destinations until the situation improves.</p> <p>The Covid pandemic presents the following opportunities that will get integrated into the project design, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of a focused approach to ensure more sustainable use of PA resources, coupled with alternative tourism based “green” opportunities, as well as promotion of value chains that are related to tourism that can increase livelihoods to reduce poaching and consumption of wild meat (that can be a risk for new zoonotic outbreaks). - Improving the ecological conditions and services provided by these tourist destinations, by promotion of sustainable fisheries, sustainable tourism, and others that can enhance the diversity of livelihoods and hence help vulnerable communities to better cope with future disease outbreaks. - Reduction of pollution, waste management, environmentally-friendly hotel and other tourist related enterprise actions can enhance the environmental quality and improve the general health of the biodiversity in these PAs and the tourist experiences. - The enhancement of participation of local communities in nature-based tourism activities that are linked to improved management of the natural environment, reduction of illegal harvest of wildlife and trade (by provision of alternative sources of income linked to nature-based tourism) can help build community institutional capacity and enhance their overall ability to promote a more sustainable approach to resource management, enhance local ownership and success and hence the inherent capacity of the community to better deal with crises. - Enhanced PPPs that can facilitate capacity building and a better understanding of the links between wildlife and zoonotic disease outbreaks
ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS (SEE SESP PRE-SCREENING FOR MORE DETAILS)		
<u>Risk 1</u> : Local communities, including ethnic minorities and vulnerable and marginalized groups, may not have the capacity to give informed consent (i.e., FPIC) for the develop	Substantial	Further consultations will be undertaken with communities and ethnic minorities to better understand their interaction and dependencies with the landscape (natural resources such as land, forests and marine resources), their rights and

<p>ment of local nature-based tourism products and experiences and participate during project design and the implementation phases resulting in violation of human rights.</p>	<p>interests, territories, traditional livelihoods and determine when FPIC applies in accordance with national contexts and preferences. During these consultations, efforts will be made to assess their understanding and capacity to give consent and identify community preferences for FPIC process.</p> <p>An Indigenous People/Ethnic Minorities Planning Framework (IPPF) with FPIC procedures will be defined during the PPG, following consultations. The framework will address issues such as appropriate nature-based tourism and livelihood activities that are culturally appropriate, how to ensure appropriate resource use and benefit sharing and recognize ethnic community rights to ecosystem-based forest, marine and land management, etc. A GRM will be developed during the PPG phase that would provide a mechanism to ensure that ethnic minority concerns are heard during project implementation and conflict is resolved. As per UNDP policy, guidelines and toolkit on SES, the IPPF and the GRM will be included in the ESMF.</p> <p>The development of a comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan at PPG stage that will identify culturally appropriate means of participation of stakeholders in project design, management and monitoring and ensure that such measures are inclusive, participatory and transparent.</p>
<p><u>Risk 2:</u> Project could lead to changes in current levels of tourism (e.g. reduction/cessation of unsustainable tourism; increase in tourism) which could lead to conflict within communities if there are differing opinions on tourism establishment, continuation, governance and/or benefit-sharing mechanisms, and/or conflict between communities and tourism operators (existing or future), and/or between local governments and tourism operators or communities depending on particular views and interests in tourism development.</p>	<p>Moderate</p> <p>Further assessment during PPG phase will be undertaken to assess existing or potential for exacerbation of conflict. Consultations will be held with affected communities, local governments and tourism operators at proposed demonstration sites to also seek views and inputs on tourism development/ management and appropriate conflict resolution mechanisms.</p> <p>At PPG stage an ESMF with FPIC procedures will be prepared and a decision made regarding the need and appropriate scope for an ESIA and SESA (the latter in relation to assess any upstream impacts on account of policies, guidelines and standards that might be developed under the project). The ESMF will lead to the preparation of an ESMP in early project implementation period to manage any potential environmental and social impacts, conflicts and measures of</p>

		<p>or addressing such conflicts.</p> <p>The ESMF will include a GRM to address and manage any conflict situations</p> <p>At the national level, the project will support preparation of standards and guidelines for community consultation, governance and benefit sharing for tourism within high biodiversity destinations during the project. Based on discussions and confirmations during the PPG phase, a SESA approach will likely be recommended to be applied to development of the standards and guidelines during project implementation.</p>
<p><u>Risk 3:</u> Nature-based tourism development might not fully incorporate or reflect views of women and girls and ensure equitable opportunities for their involvement and benefit as well in decision-making on resource use and management.</p>	Moderate	<p>A gender specialist will be recruited to undertake a gender analysis during the PPG stage. This analysis will include specific consultations with women and girls in the demonstration PAs.</p> <p>A gender mainstreaming action plan that will be prepared at PPG stage will identify specific measures to include gender mainstreaming within both national activities and demonstration activities to ensure nature-based tourism opportunities and economic benefits also flow to women and girls. Additionally, specific livelihood options would be identified for women. The gender action plan will include specific indicators to measure women's participation in decision-making, nature-based tourism activities and benefit sharing.</p> <p>The comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan will also include identification of women's engagement in project related activities.</p>
<p><u>Risk 4:</u> Impacts of changed amount/type of tourism and/or nature-based tourism and increasing demand for nature-based products on sensitive habitats or ecosystems (e.g., soil/vegetation erosion, waste, sewage, LAS spread) or threatened or harvested species</p>	Moderate	<p>At PPG, the existing standards, guidelines and procedures being applied to the tourism sector will be evaluated to assess their adequacy to manage impacts on critical ecosystems and identify measures to strengthen nature-based tourism guidelines and standards (for adherence to the UNDP SESA), and their application (i.e., the need for assessing capacity of PA staff to implement such guidelines and associated capacity strengthening measures). Project design will ensure that project activities are sequenced so that demonstration activities follow development of national guidelines/standards and adherence to them (and therefore the SE</p>

		<p>S). These assessments will be captured in the ESMF developed during the PPG phase, with guidance provided on the inclusion of appropriately scoped SESA, ESIA, and ESMP during project implementation.</p> <p>Under Component 1, national policies, guidelines and standards for nature-based tourism will be updated or new guidelines developed (fulfilling or exceeding SES requirements) to reflect use of EIA/ESIA for placement and management of nature-based tourism activities to avoid impacts on sensitive habitats, ensure such operations are within carrying capacity of habitats, and identify and manage social impacts of changed tourism (including potential restrictions). Project-developed standards for nature-based tourism development and operations will be designed to reflect best practices of nature-based tourism development to avoid, mitigate and manage the range of potential environmental impacts.</p>
<p><u>Risk 5:</u> The Project may involve the harvesting of NTFP from natural forests and marine resources for proposed livelihoods and small-scale community enterprises, which could inadvertently adversely affect critical habitats.</p>	Moderate	<p>During the PPG stage, an assessment will be made to understand what natural resources are likely to be used for livelihood and small-scale enterprise development, ascertain the status and availability of these resources and if these can be sustainably harvested for use, any concerns regarding use of these resources, measures needed to ensure sustainable use, monitoring protocols to ascertain the status of these species, needed management measures/safeguards, etc. Specific procedures (for fully screening, assessing and managing activities related to harvesting of NTFPs and marine resources during implementation) will be prepared during the PPG, as part of the ESMF.</p> <p>The ensuing ESMP that will be developed in early project implementation period will indicate measures and tools that would be used to manage and monitor sub-project activities that include harvest of natural resources and small-scale community enterprises that depend on these resources.</p>
<p><u>Risk 6:</u> Nature-based tourism development could result in damage to sacred sites and cultural sites, including through inappropriate tourist behavior (e.g., desecration of cult</p>	Moderate	<p>Initial assessment of ethnic minorities in project sites and potential impacts on their cultural sites/heritage, as well as start of FPIC processes to inform project design, and the preparation of an ESMF.</p>

<p>ural site), and/or could harm/change intangible cultural heritage (e.g., traditional knowledge) through its commercialization and use in ecotourism</p>		<p>National standards and guidelines for nature-based tourism to be developed by the project are expected to reflect use of SESA/ESIA for placement of ecotourism activities to avoid culturally significant sites. Demonstration of nature-based tourism activities to be sequenced to follow adoption of project-developed standards to ensure adherence to project-developed nature-based tourism standards for all demonstration activities supported by the project to avoid placement of tourism activities in culturally significant sites.</p> <p>In addition, component 3 of the project will include the design of specific measures to sensitize and change behavior of tourists to PA sites, as well as special programs supported by hotels and tour enterprises to bring about behavior change that can help mitigate this risk.</p>
<p><u>Risk 7</u>: on Development of nature-based tourism could change current access to PAs and their resources, including by unintentional restricting access to local communities</p>	Moderate	<p>Consultations with potential project-affected communities at PA sites during PPG will be undertaken to assess potential resource access impacts of shift to nature-based tourism on local communities and ethnic minorities.</p> <p>Communities will be engaged in all stages of project design and management at demonstration sites, including use of FPIC as needed (see Risk 1) to ensure that development has a positive impact and that any restriction on resource access and use will be managed and mitigated. The ESMF to be developed at PPG stage will identify measures to be instituted in case there is potential economic displacement, following consultation with affected groups, including the need for developing a Livelihoods Action Plan.</p>
<p><u>Risk 8</u>: Local communities, governments and tour operators may not have the capacity to manage and oversee tourism development and operations to adhere to established standards and benchmarks for sustainable tourism planning, development and operations and therefore impinge on human rights</p>	Moderate	<p>Capacity needs assessment will be undertaken at PPG stage.</p> <p>The ESMF will identify specific capacity constraints to enable key government agencies (PA staff, provincial agencies, etc.) and private tour operations to adhere to sustainable nature-based tourism guidelines and standards, and to oversee compliance and enforcement of them. The ensuing ESMF will identify specific capacity building and training programs and compliance monitoring and enforcement mechanisms for promoting the implementation of nature-based</p>

		tourism standards.
<u>Risk 9:</u> The operation of nature-based tourism adventure activities could pose safety risks to communities, local tourism operators and tourists during operation.	Moderate	<p>Assess potential safety risks due to tourism development at project sites during PPG as activities are defined in detail.</p> <p>Minimum standards for safety of relevant activities to be integrated into project design and development/management of operations at project sites. These will be further developed in the ESMP during early project implementation</p>
<u>Risk 10:</u> The nature-based tourism activities could potentially enhance release of pollutants and waste into natural ecosystems resulting in localized impacts	Moderate	<p>At PPG stage an assessment will be made of the current pollutants and wastes that are produced by nature-based tourism activities to assess what the potential impacts can be on natural ecosystem and species and assess options for management of these in a safe way. Based on this, an assessment of potential pollution risks due to tourism development at project sites will be made during PPG as part of ESMF as activities are defined in detail.</p> <p>An ESMF will be developed during the PPG stage to identify potential impacts from project activities, while the ESMP to be developed later at early project implementation will identify specific mitigation measures and plans to avoid, reduce, or mitigate such impacts. Component 1 will include the development of relevant tools for nature-based tourism activities and will include specific criteria and procedures that will be used to assess potential environmental impacts related to pollution, resource use, and the generation of waste.</p> <p>Additionally, project design includes an output that envisages working with hotels and tourism facilities to test appropriate measures for ensuring environmentally sustainable operations, including management of wastes and effluents, improving hotel staff capacity to address environmental concerns, etc.</p>
<u>Risk 11:</u> Tourism related threats might be exacerbated by climate change resulting in increased vulnerability of natural ecosystems, in particular coastal and marine ecosystems	Moderate	<p>Further assessments will be undertaken at PPG stage to consider climate change impacts on the short-term and longer-term in the PAs and to ensure that measures are reflected in project design to support climate proofing of tourism activities and strengthen resilience of project activities and impacts as much as possible.</p>

		<p>At PPG stage, as part of project design and preparation of ESMF, the institutional capacity and information needs to enhance PA management capability to address and manage potential climate change impacts would be assessed.</p> <p>At PPG phase, project activities will be screened using the climate-screening tool developed by the World Bank to identify activities that might be impacted or exacerbate climate impacts.</p> <p>Any identified climate change adaptation and mitigation actions for the proposed project's nature-based tourism activities will be incorporated in the project ESMF. It will identify the need for specific management measures in design of the recreational activities to ensure that activities are environmentally sustainable and supporting best practices managed for their climate risks and improving protection and management of critical watersheds, wetland and coastal and marine ecosystems to help to increase the overall resilience of the natural systems to climate risks in the areas compared to business as usual.</p> <p>This might include specific measures to zone PAs for various tourism and conservation activities, including protection of key biodiversity areas, fish breeding, spawning and migratory pathways, conservation of mangroves, riparian areas, location of tourism activities and community ecotourism and livelihood areas. The intent is to reduce impacts on sensitive ecosystems and enhance their resilience through conservation practices. Local communities and local staff will be trained in adaptive measures to plan for, and reduce climate impacts.</p>
<p><u>Risk 12:</u> Project support for site-based management effectiveness such as law enforcement or awareness-raising could bring safety risks for PA staff due to increased interaction with poachers</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Further assessment during PPG as part of the ESMF preparation will be undertaken to assess extent to which illegal activities are happening in the two PAs, and what the existing relationship is between PA staff and local communities. Assessment of PA staff capacity to address conflict will also be assessed</p> <p>As part of the ESMF development, the capacity needs of PA staff will be assessed to understand to what extent they have the skills to address conflict and potentially violent sit</p>

		<p>have the skills to address conflict and potentially violent situations. Establishment and implementation of a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for management of illegal activities, that will specifically include safety and security-related procedures will be defined as part of the ESMP during project implementation</p>
<p><u>Risk 13:</u> Unintended negative consequences from policy changes that result in changes to tourism development in Vietnam (for example new nature-based tourism standards and guidelines could lead to adverse impacts on cultural heritage, or could restrict access of local communities to PAs and the resources therein, or could increase visitation and hence increase pressure on sensitive habitats if social and environmental considerations are not taken into account in the development of these standards and guidelines) (upstream impacts)</p>	Moderate	<p>Further assessment of the proposed standards, guidelines and carrying capacity for nature-based tourism to be developed under the project will be undertaken at PPG stage to determine the potential upstream environmental and social impacts.</p> <p>Based on the assessment of social and environmental impacts of policy changes at PPG stage, recommendation to integrate a SESA approach as part of the development of these policies, guidelines and standards.</p>
<p><u>Risk 14:</u> Covid-19 and other potential zoonotic disease outbreaks that remain prevalent in the project sites could pose the risk of infection and exposure of persons involved in implementing project activities to these diseases</p>	Substantial	<p>During the PPG phase, the prevalence of Covid-19 in project sites will be assessed, as will the risks of exposure that may be associated with in-person project activities.</p> <p>In the remote location of the PAs, in particular where ethnic minorities are predominant, these communities are not equipped with remote means of communication. The project will look at options to use local NGOs, local community mobilizers and local staff to carry out consultations, fieldwork and local level planning. If the Covid situation deteriorates to the extent that safety concerns prevail, this will entail application of national and local Covid-19 health protocols (in consultation with the Provincial governments) in outreach to the vulnerable groups, such as use of masks, hand sanitizer, and social distancing, giving the option to communities to decide if they are comfortable with participating.</p>
<p><u>Risk 15:</u> Project activities related to nature-based tourism inadvertently support child labor and other violations of international labor standards.</p>	Moderate	<p>Further assessment will be undertaken during the PPG stage to assess to what extent child labor is an issue in the two target PAs.</p> <p>Any risk associated with child labor as revealed in the assessment</p>

		ssment will be documented and reflected in the ESMF and a standalone plan that will be prepared as part of the ESM P
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At PIF stage, the overall risk for the project is classified as '**Substantial**'. The identified risks will be revised based on further assessment and information during the project formulation. To meet the SES requirements, at the PPG stage, the following will be prepared: (i) ESMF prepared following the completion of SESP, and ESMP at implementation phase and a decision made at PPG regarding requirements for an ESIA and SESA; (ii) Stakeholder analysis and comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan; (iii) Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan; (iv) Indigenous People/ Ethnic Minorities Planning Framework (IPPF); (iv) KM and communication plan (v) project specific GRM; and (vi) design of incentives and other investments that support environmentally friendly nature-based tourism investments and measures to reduce illegal exploitation of wildlife and wildlife products; and (vii) design and implementation of the project in close collaboration private sector and local communities.

Climate risk screening:

Temperature and precipitation (historical): Viet Nam has seen mean annual temperature increase by 0.5-0.7°C since 1960, with the rate of increase more rapid in northern Vietnam. In the period 1971–2010 the rate of warming is estimated at 0.26°C per decade, this is reported as being almost twice the rate of global warming over the same period. The frequency of 'hot' days and nights has increased significantly since 1960 in every season, and the annual frequency of 'cold' days and nights has decreased significantly. Mean rainfall over Vietnam does not show any significant increase or decrease since 1960. The proportion of rainfall falling in heavy events has not changed significantly since 1960, nor has the maximum amount falling in 1-day or 5-day events. On a sub-national level some changes are significant: the general trend has been towards increased rainfall in central regions, and reduced rainfall in northern and southern regions.^[1]

Temperature and precipitation (projections): Vietnam is projected to experience an average temperature increase of 3.36°C by 2080–2100 under the highest emission pathway (RCP8.5). Across all emissions scenarios and future time periods, changes in annual maximum temperatures are greater than changes in average temperature. Temperature increases will be strongest in southern Vietnam, but uncertainty is high in subnational comparisons. In terms of precipitation, none of the end-of-century changes across the four emissions pathways are statistically significant. Some variation in extreme rainfall amounts is reported, with some increases in extreme rainfall projected in southern and central Vietnam, and slight reductions projected elsewhere. The intensity of sub-daily extreme rainfall events appears to be increasing with temperature, a finding supported by evidence from different regions of Asia.^[2]

Vulnerability: Vietnam faces high disaster risk levels, ranked 91 out of 191 countries by the 2019 [INFORM Risk Index](#), driven particularly by its exposure to hazards. Vietnam has extremely high exposure to flooding, ranked 1st with Bangladesh, including, riverine, flash, and coastal flooding. Vietnam also has high exposure to tropical cyclones and their associated hazards. Drought exposure is slightly lower but still significant as highlighted by the severe drought of 2015–2017. Vietnam's overall ranking on the INFORM Risk Index is somewhat mitigated by its better scores in terms of vulnerability and coping capacity. ^[3]

In Quang Binh province, river flood hazard is classified as high (potentially damaging and life-threatening river floods are expected to occur at least once in the next 10 years), coastal flood hazard is classified as high (potentially-damaging waves are expected to flood the coast at least once in the next 10 years), landslide susceptibility is classified as high (rainfall patterns, terrain slope, geology, soil, land cover and potentially earthquakes make localized landslides a frequent hazard phenomenon), cyclone hazard is classified as high (there is more than a 20% chance of potentially-damaging wind speeds in the next 10 years), extreme heat hazard is classified as high (prolonged exposure to extreme heat, resulting in heat stress, is expected to occur at least once in the next five years), wildfire hazard is classified as high (greater than a 50% chance of encountering weather that could support a significant wildfire that is likely to result in both life and property loss in any given year).^[4] Flashflood risk is high (especially in Tuyen Hoa, Minh Hoa and Quang Trach).

In Ninh Thuan province, coastal flood hazard is classified as high (potentially-damaging waves are expected to flood the coast at least once in the next 10 years), landslide susceptibility is classified as high (rainfall patterns, terrain slope, geology, soil, land cover and potentially earthquakes make localized landslides a frequent hazard phenomenon), cyclone hazard is classified as high (more than a 20% chance of potentially-damaging wind speeds in the next 10 years), wildfire hazard is classified as high (greater than a 50% chance of encountering weather that could support a significant wildfire that is likely to result in both life and property loss in any given year).^[5] In addition to coastal flood, river flood risk could also be high as the Dinh river has recently become a danger (after dam/dyke building).

During the PPG, a climate risk screening will be undertaken for the project to assess exposure in the geographical location targeted by the project, potential implications and impacts for the project, and the potential to modulate risks. The project design team could consider using the World Bank's online climate and disaster risks screening tool for natural resource projects. In addition, UNDP-Viet Nam has resources on climate risk by province that will be used during the PPG for additional screening (<http://eng.climaterisk.undp.org.vn/>)

[1] Data from <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/vietnam/climate-data-historical>

[2] Data from <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/vietnam/climate-data-projections>

[3] Data from <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/vietnam/vulnerability>

[4] Data from <https://thinkhazard.org/en/report/3371-vietnam-quang-binh/CF>

[5] Data from <https://thinkhazard.org/en/report/3368-vietnam-ninh-thuan>

6. Coordination

Outline the institutional structure of the project including monitoring and evaluation coordination at the project level. Describe possible coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) will be the line agency, which will be responsible to the Government and UNDP for the quality and efficiency of using the capital and outputs of the project. The line agency will designate the Vietnam Environment Administration (VEA) to be project owner which will be responsible for enhancing a coordinated cross-sectoral approach to promoting nature-based tourism, bringing together MONRE, the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (MOCST) and Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (MARD) at national level and the Provincial Administrations for promotion of public-private partnerships (PPP) at the local level, with participation of DONRE, DOCST and the private sector. MONRE will oversee project activities with all related parties and communicating with other agencies during the implementation process; answer all questions related to the progress of the Project implementation; prepare mid-term review and report, complete the project and assess project impacts on the global environment. Given the project's strong focus on tourism, MOCST will play an important role in the design and execution of the project. Notably, at the national level, the Institute for Tourism Development Research (ITDR)^[1] under Vietnam National Administration of Tourism/MOCST will be engaged in the project's design and execution. With its primary mandate on sustainable tourism development and research, ITDR's engagement will facilitate the integration of sustainable management of the use of tourism resources, protecting the environment, preserving biodiversity and coping with change of climate and disaster prevention into strategies, planning, policies in tourism sector development. At the provincial level, the project will closely work with provincial authorities (PPCs) to ensure their leadership, and directing active participation and engagement of DONRE and Departments of Culture, Sports and Tourism at the two project sites in both making, guiding and monitoring necessary policies and guidelines related to tourism in high biodiversity conservation areas and promoting nature-based tourism models, as well as enabling regular collaboration between NPs with DONRE, DOCST and local authorities (districts, communes) and private sector (resorts, hotels, tour services) to realize local implementation of sustainable tourism initiatives in and around NPs. All agencies responsible for implementing activities within the project will assign focal points to communicate closely with other relevant agencies and exchange relevant experiences. Coordination of project activities between the two sites/ provinces will be ensured through appropriate reporting lines within the project management structure. Detailed project management arrangements will be developed during the PPG.

[1] <http://itdr.org.vn/en/chuc-nang-nhiem-vu-en/>

The proposed project will coordinate closely with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives. 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. MONRE, MOCST, MARD, MONRE, Provincial Administrations, PA representatives, etc.) and serve as the key governance and decision-making body for the project (membership will be confirmed during the PPG); (b) a national technical advisory group to provide technical inputs on project approaches, 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.g. UNDP will help facilitate coordination between this project and the GEF-6 biosphere project and GEF 7 Ba River project, which could include opportunities for joint training/alignment of approaches etc.); (e) knowledge management activities. Particular attention will be paid to coordinate with the following projects and initiatives:

Table 4: Partnerships

Name of on-going and planned program/project, years of implementation and sites	Program/project objectives and targets	How the proposed UNDP/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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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 -Promotes small grant mechanisms to local communities for livelihood-based enterprise development -Design of tourism certification programs for hotels and tourist facilities 	-Both projects are managed by MONRE, so this will enable cross learning and sharing of information and best practices through regular meetings, workshops and study visits
USAID (i) Sustainable Forest Management Project (2020-2025); (ii) Biodiversity Conservation project; (iii) Forest and Delta Project (2018-2021) and (iv) Saving Species project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Maintain and increase forest cover, better management of plantation forests and improve diversity of natural production forests (ii) Maintain forest cover to protect and stabilize wildlife populations in PAs (iii) Promotion of PFES by enhancing current PFES cash-based system, strengthen PFES monitoring, expand PFES to new forest services, etc. (iv) Focus on reducing consumer demand for illegal wildlife and wildlife products by building capacity of law enforcement 	-Lessons and experiences will be shared through annual workshops conferences, sharing of documented best practices and regular dialogue
World Bank. Strengthening Partnerships to Protect Endangered Wildlife in Vietnam (2018-2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the legal and regulatory framework and implementation capacity for protection of threatened wildlife. Integration of protection of threatened species into tourism activities Enhance capacity of field staff of law enforcement agencies and enforce policy 	-Both projects are managed by MONRE, so this will enable effective cross learning and sharing of information and best practices through regular meetings, workshops and study visits

	<p>ies and regulations related to wildlife protection</p> <p>Information sharing on threatened species and crime</p>	s
European Union Biodiversity protection and Environmental Sustainability Project in Central Vietnam (up to 2023)	Establishment and operation of conservation foundation for biodiversity conservation, improve cooperation among businesses to promote sustainable financing for conservation and working with hotels and tourist enterprises to reduce tourism related impacts that are very relevant to the GEF 7 project	-Lessons and experiences will be shared through annual workshops conferences, sharing of documented best practices and regular dialogue
Helvitas, Vietnam Conservation-friendly Enterprise Development Project (2012-2025)	Focuses to improve benefits through conservation-friendly value chains, reducing demand for wildlife products	Synergize with project in terms of adopting successful value chain activities and modalities for linking with reduction of demand for wildlife products
Asian Development Bank Second Greater Mekong Subregion Tourism Infrastructure for Inclusive Growth (2019-2023)	Climate-resilient infrastructure and capacity building for better destination management to boost tourist arrivals and spending in secondary destinations. Of particular relevance of this projects is that it will positively affect ethnic people by creating culturally appropriate jobs, diversifying income, and strengthening their involvement in tourism management and decision making.	This project is with MOCST, who will be a Responsible Partner in the GEF 7 project that will enable coordination, synergies and sharing of lessons
Government of Vietnam support for Sustainable Forest Management Plan of Nui Chua National Park to 2030	Restore resources and landscapes; prevent forest violations, improve ecosystem capacity, develop ecotourism, leisure and entertainment; create jobs and improve local livelihoods, all of which provide opportunities for coordination, sharing lessons and knowledge management.	Work closely with the Ninh Thuan Province Administration to ensure complementarity and coordination between the two projects, to share lessons, synergize activities, etc.
Government of Vietnam support for development of community tourism in Ninh Thuan province (2019-2022)	Supports development of community tourism in the province, including Nui Chua NP and to regulate norms of investment and support for landscape rehabilitation, waste collection, training of tourism career, communication and marketing of tourism products that are relevant to GEF 7 project	Work closely with the Ninh Thuan Province Administration to ensure complementarity and coordination between the two projects, to share lessons, synergize activities, etc.

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Is the Project consistent with the National Strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?

Yes

If yes, which ones and how: NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)

CBD National Report

Others

This project will contribute to achieving Target # 12 of the Aichi Targets on Biodiversity of the Convention on Biological Diversity; In particular, Target # 2: "biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies", target # 3 "incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are developed and applied, consistent and in harmony with the Convention and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national socio economic conditions".

The proposed project would also contribute to multiple Sustainable Development Goals including key contributions to Goal 5 on achieving gender equality and empower all women and goals. Support in particular on the following target 5.5 to ensure that women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life. It will support Goal 14 to Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, in particular target 4.1 significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution and target 4.2 sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts including b strengthening the resilience and take action for the restoration in order to achieve health and productive oceans. Goal 15 on terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity. Support will focus in particular on SDG 15 on life on land including targets 15.1 conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems, including PA networks, 15.2 sustainable forest management, 15.3 reducing desertification, restoring degraded land, 15.5 reduced degradation of natural habitats, 15.7 end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products and 15.9 integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes and 15.a Mobilize and significantly increase financial resource from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems.

The Government has enacted many laws, decrees, regulations, and other legal instruments for conserving biodiversity, wildlife and ecotourism development such as the Biodiversity Law (2008) and Forestry Law (2017), Fisheries Law (2017), Tourism Law (2017). The proposed project will support the implementation of the Law on Biodiversity in 2008 and concretize the Tourism Law 2017, the Tourism Development Strategy to 2020, vision to 2030 and the Decree No. 63/2018 / ND-CP on public-private partnership.

The Government of Vietnam has approved a national action plan on biodiversity protection namely as "National Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, Vision to 2030" (approved under Decision No. 1250 / QD-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 is extinct and 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, 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. This project is in line with both of the mentioned important Decisions on biodiversity.

The above policies and plans have created a wide-range legal and policy framework to mobilize support, participation and integration of conservation and protection of highly endangered species and biodiversity in other sectors. However, as mentioned above, there are many gaps, overlaps, and issues within the policy framework at policy and decree level that need to be addressed.

8. Knowledge Management

Outline the knowledge management approach for the Project, including, if any, plans for the Project to learn from other relevant Projects and initiatives, to assess and document in a user-friendly form, and share these experiences and expertise with relevant stakeholders.

Application of lessons from past projects to project design: The lessons learned from on-going activities, particularly the UNDP-GEF Biosphere Reserves project in terms of working with PA and Forest Management Boards, the USAID SFM Project and Biodiversity Conservation project in terms of promotion of PFES, the World Bank's Strengthening Partnerships to Protect Endangered Wildlife in terms of integration of conservation outcomes in tourism development, and the EU Biodiversity Protection and Environment sustainability project in reducing tourism-related impacts will provide lessons for integration into the design of the project. During the PPG a review of key lessons will be undertaken to inform project design.

Processes to capture, access, and document information, lessons learned, best practice and expertise generated during implementation: Component 4 of the project focuses on knowledge management and exchange to help Vietnam become known for its approach to harmonizing tourism with biodiversity conservation and promoting nature-based tourism in support of conservation and local livelihoods. All project activities and initiatives will be clearly documented in the form of notices, press releases, newsletters, reports, etc. The project will also identify and analyze lessons learned that may be useful in designing and implementing similar projects in the future (Output 4.2). Identifying and analyzing lessons learned is an ongoing process, and such lessons need to be shared every year.

Tools and methods for knowledge exchange, learning and collaboration, including knowledge platforms and websites: Knowledge generated in the implementation phase of the project will be shared across a green tourism network. Within the country, this network will be an important tool to share information and resources from the project, and invite partners to attend regular meetings and workshops to discuss plans, lessons and project results on nature-based tourism management and organization (outputs 3.1, 4.2). Sharing of experiences between the two project sites will be ensured through site visits between individual sites. The project will also communicate the results, findings, lessons learned and key outputs to members of the National Steering Committee for Biodiversity Conservation (chaired by the Minister of MONRE). In addition, the project will participate in relevant global knowledge exchange networks such as the Global Wildlife Program (GWP). The project will share lessons and best practices and benefit from similar experiences in other countries through various mechanisms that have been instituted by the GWP. Sharing of lessons will be achieved through case studies, reports and publications that could be shared through the GWP platform. To the extent feasible, project staff will make an effort to participate in webinars and remote events organized by the GWP. Another global network that the project can tap into for knowledge exchange is the PANORAMA Solutions for a Healthy Planet platform.

Knowledge outputs to be produced and shared with stakeholders: The following types of knowledge capture activities will be considered: documentation and dissemination of case studies, best practices and lessons learned from the project; development of policy guidance notes that addresses current constraints and gaps in existing policies and legislation for mainstreaming of biodiversity into the tourism sector, financial instruments to support channeling of tourism revenues for conservation, community based small scale tourism related enterprise development, etc.; technical reports, publications and other knowledge management products (including popular versions for use by community groups in local languages and accessible to women and IPs) documented and disseminated via mass media.

Contribution of knowledge and learning to overall project impact and sustainability: On the basis of the knowledge management activities (knowledge gathering and knowledge sharing) mentioned above, the project will also aim to nurture learning and knowledge uptake to amplify the project’s overall impact and sustainability. Several means will be explored to have this wider impact such as: national and provincial level workshops to facilitate dissemination of field lessons and help inform legal and policy reform relevant to sustainable tourism practice; capacity building and technical support for dissemination and upscaling of project best practices to facilitate replication elsewhere in the country; preparation of a replication and scaling up strategy based on project experiences and best practices for promotion of sustainable tourism in high-biodiversity destinations; end of project national seminar on outcomes of sustainable tourism approaches in high-biodiversity destinations.

Plans for strategic communications: This will be further explored in the PPG phase with the project’s key stakeholders for inclusion in Output 4.1. For example, the project could promote inclusion of public engagement pages on national and provincial websites and social media platforms of project stakeholders that link to information about the project and its products.

9. 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
High or Substantial			

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

Provide preliminary information on the types and levels of risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and describe measures to address these risks during the project design.

Project Information	
1. Project Title	Promote Wildlife Conservation and Responsible Nature Based Tourism for Sustainable Development in Vietnam
2. Project Number (i.e., Atlas project ID, PIMS+ S+)	PIMS+ 6377
3. Location (Global/Region/Country)	Vietnam
4. Project stage (Design or Implementation)	PIF
5. Date	10 March 2021

Part A. Integrating Programming Principles to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability

<p>QUESTION 1: How Does the Project Integrate the Programming Principles in Order to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability?</p> <p><i>Briefly describe in the space below how the project mainstreams the human rights-based approach</i></p> <p>The project will uphold human rights principles, by ensuring inclusiveness and equitable distribution of development opportunities and benefits, including to women, ethnic minorities (EMs) and marginalized groups. The development of nature-based tourism ventures and public-private partnerships at protected areas will be built around greater participation and inclusion of local communities (including EMs) and aim to generate meaningful economic and 'green' employment benefits for them, in keeping with their traditional resource use, cultural and social values. The project's efforts to mainstream sustainable tourism standards across the government's tourism growth agenda will help mitigate environmental and social impacts from excessive tourism growth and conserve environmental resources on which tourism is based for the long-term benefit of local communities. Project design and implementation will be built around meaningful engagement, participation and inclusion of stakeholders, at national level and at project demonstration PA sites. The project will promote accountability and transparency and develop a grievance redress process to address any conflicts in resource use and benefit sharing. The project interventions would ultimately sustain the livelihoods of local communities that would result in poverty alleviation, improvement of living conditions of beneficiaries and sustainable development of natural resources through non-consumptive use. In this way it will improve the economic and social rights of the local communities and support retention of cultural values and practices.</p> <p>The project will bring into sharper focus the rights and responsibilities of the two groups of human rights stakeholders (i.e., primary duty bearers, and rights holders) that are major implementers of the project as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights holders, who are Vietnamese rural women and men. Amongst the population of women and men, a greater number belongs to the poor and marginalized sector such as ethnic minorities, rural women, farmers, and forest and marine resource dependents. This project will ensure that their rights are exercised by facilitating their own capacity to think, act, organize, and advocate these rights: and

give rise to increased by reinforcing their own capacity to identify, set, organize, and execute these rights, and

· **Primary duty-bearers**, which comprise the State, with all its agencies and instrumentalities. This project will ensure their mandate will respect, protect, promote and fulfill the rights of the poor and marginalized sectors/groups (such as ethnic minorities, rural women, farmers, and forest and marine resource dependents) in all spheres of life.

Across Components, demonstration activities of the project will be designed to include greater participation of local communities (particularly EMs, rural women, farmers' cooperatives, NGOs/CSOs, etc.) through various capacity building strategies related to policy, program, monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management on nature-based tourism and biodiversity conservation, human rights, gender equality, and EM's perspectives so that the provisions of the project are carried out and the intended results are achieved at the end of the project implementation period and beyond. A series of gender and biodiversity and nature-based tourism capacity building programs will be developed for local communities and EMs at all levels (with equal representation of women and men). An Indigenous People /Ethnic Minorities) Planning Framework (IPPF) to be developed at PPG stage will identify potential impacts on the EMs and help design components that are able to reduce and mitigate any such impacts, promote greater participation and benefit sharing for EMs, ensure that their cultural and traditional lifestyles are protected and these groups are represented in key decision-making bodies at the PA level and beyond.

Finally, principles of environmental governance, mutual accountability between rights holders and duty-bearers, rule of law are upheld through improved management of natural resources within the two PAs, wherein strengthening benefit-sharing arrangements, enhancing community decision-making, monitoring and enforcement to strengthen effectiveness will be developed.

Briefly describe in the space below how the project is likely to improve gender equality and women's empowerment

A gender specialist will be recruited to undertake a gender analysis at the PPG stage, in accordance with standard UNDP procedure, to identify the differences, needs, roles and priorities of women and men as they relate to engagement in activities in the nature-based tourism and related sectors. Specific project activities will be developed to support the engagement of women in project activities during the PPG phase. The results of the gender analysis conducted during the PPG will be integrated into the project design to ensure that gender-based differences are built into project activities as appropriate, and gender-disaggregated targets developed as indicators of project's success. An evaluation will be undertaken during the PPG in order to assess opportunities to enhance the status of women in respect to nature-based tourism, agriculture and land management and conservation activities, livelihood improvements, to address the gender gap in the nature-based tourism sector and to help design project activities and indicators that will ensure women's full participation as beneficiaries (and deliverers) of technical cooperation and knowledge building efforts. Consultation sessions will be held to obtain views and inputs of a wide range of local stakeholders, including women (including ethnic minority women) and vulnerable women, to develop project activities and to inform a robust stakeholder involvement plan with full gender considerations. A corresponding gender mainstreaming plan for the project will be completed and submitted with the project document at time of CEO Endorsement. Gender-disaggregated targets and indicators will be included within the project results framework.

Briefly describe in the space below how the project mainstreams sustainability and resilience

This project aims to address the adverse impacts of unsustainable tourism development practices by trying to establish and operationalize a comprehensive planning and management approach to tourism development that integrates sustainable management of natural resources and conservation of biodiversity in major high biodiversity tourism destinations. The project's intervention is to ensure that existing protected areas and high conservation value areas in tourism destinations are managed to support viable populations of globally threatened species and maintain natural ecosystems and processes and help maintain, improve and recovery of these natural systems, including the ability to adapt to potential external developments and climatic shocks.

During the PPG stage, further assessments will be undertaken to help design governance structures that promote a holistic, multi-sectoral and integrated approach to nature-based tourism that facilitates the maintenance of the ecological integrity of the high biodiversity tourism destinations. The design will also seek means to strengthen the role of communities (including EMs), local provincial and local government institutions, community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations in sustainable nature-based tourism management, climate risk management and biodiversity conservation.

At PPG stage, analysis will be undertaken to identify appropriate measures (guidelines, protocols and regulations) for establishing tourism carrying capacity, impact assessment, adaptive monitoring and enforcement of measures to deter illegal and unsustainable harvest and removal of forest and marine resources, and wildlife and wildlife products, along with activities that can help change behaviors of tourists and tour providers.

The ESMF to be developed at PPG stage will help identify potential environmental threats and measures to mitigate such threats. Project design will include establishing a monitoring framework to help measure the impacts of tourism related activities on key species and habitats (e.g., coral reefs, sea grass beds, mangroves and sensitive habitats) that could inform adaptive measures to resource management.

Briefly describe in the space below how the project strengthens accountability to stakeholders

At PPG stage consultation will be undertaken with communities, ethnic minorities and other stakeholders to better understand their interaction and dependencies with the landscape (natural resources such as land, forests and marine resources), their rights and interests, territories, traditional livelihoods and determine when FPIC applies in accordance with national contexts and preferences. This will lead to the development of a comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan at PPG stage that will identify culturally appropriate means of participation of stakeholders in project design, management and monitoring and ensure that such measures are inclusive, participatory and transparent. The project design will include identification of capacity needs of stakeholders to enhance their participation, decision-making and understanding of their rights and responsibilities. At PPG stage, a participatory framework will be developed to ensure that stakeholders (mainly communities, EMs, vulnerable groups and women) have free and fair access to information in a timely manner, can actively participate as equal partners in the design and implementation of activities, ensure transparency, inclusiveness and equity in resource and benefit sharing, and development of a grievance redressal systems to resolve and manage conflict.

Part B. Identifying and Managing Social and Environmental Risks

QUESTION 2: What are the Potential Social and Environmental Risks? <i>Note: Complete SESP Attachment 1 before responding to Question 2.</i>	QUESTION 3: What is the level of significance of the potential social and environmental risks? <i>Note: Respond to Questions 4 and 5 below before proceeding to Question 5</i>			QUESTION 6: Describe the assessment and management measures for each risk rated Moderate, Substantial or High
Risk Description <i>(broken down by event, cause, impact)</i>	Impact and Likelihood (1-5)	Significance (Low, Moderate Substantial, High)	Comments (optional)	Description of assessment and management measures for risks rated as Moderate, Substantial or High
<u>Risk 1:</u> Local communities, including	I = 4	Substantial	Ethnic minorities are present at	Assessment: Further consultations will be undertaken

<p><i>ethnic minorities and vulnerable and marginalized groups, may not have the capacity to give informed consent (i.e., FPIC) for the development of local nature-based tourism products and experiences and participate during project design and the implementation phases resulting in violation of human rights.</i></p> <p>Principle (Human Rights): P.3, P.4, P.5. Principle (Accountability): P.13 Standard 6: 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, and 6.7</p>	L = 3		<p>the two PA sites. Although consultations were carried out with some communities and ethnic minorities during the PIF phase, there has not yet been consent obtained from these communities on nature-based tourism development (and potential products and services). The two PA sites are already subject to tourism with tourism-related impacts emerging from unsustainable use. Communities might not be aware of the consent-giving process or be fully capacitated to give FPIC in accordance with international and national policies, as of yet.</p>	<p>ken with communities and ethnic minorities to better understand their interaction and dependencies with the landscape (natural resources such as land, forests and marine resources), their rights and interests, territories, traditional livelihoods and determine when FPIC applies in accordance with national contexts and preferences. During these consultations, efforts will be made to assess their understanding and capacity to give consent and identify community preferences for FPIC process.</p> <p>Management: An Indigenous People/Ethnic Minorities Planning Framework (IPPF) with FPIC procedures will be defined during the PPG, following consultations. The framework will address issues such as appropriate nature-based tourism and livelihood activities that are culturally appropriate, how to ensure appropriate resource use and benefit sharing and recognize ethnic community rights to ecosystem-based forest, marine and land management, etc. A GRM will be developed during the PPG phase that would provide a mechanism to ensure that ethnic minority concerns are heard during project implementation and conflict is resolved. As per UNDP policy, guidelines and toolkit on SES, the IPPF and the GRM will be included in the ESMF.</p> <p>The development of a comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan at PPG stage that will identify culturally appropriate means of participation of stakeholders in project design, management and monitoring and ensure that such measures are inclusive, participatory and transparent.</p>
<p><i><u>Risk 2:</u> Project could lead to changes in current levels of tourism (e.g. reduction/cessation of unsustainable tourism; increase in tourism) which could lead to conflict within communities if there are differing opinions on tourism</i></p>	<p>I = 3 L = 2</p>	Moderate	<p>Community members could have differing views on the development of nature-based tourism and their respective roles. Project-related policy changes could lead to new tourism activities a</p>	<p>Assessment: Further assessment during PPG phase will be undertaken to assess existing or potential for exacerbation of conflict. Consultations will be held with affected communities, local governments and tourism operators at proposed demonstration sites to also seek views and inputs on tourism dev</p>

<p><i>m establishment, continuation, governance and/or benefit-sharing mechanisms, and/or conflict between communities and tourism operators (existing or future), and/or between local governments and tourism operators or communities depending on particular views and interests in tourism development.</i></p> <p>Principle (Human Rights): P.7</p> <p>Principle (Accountability): P.14</p>			<p>nd potential cessation/reduction of existing operations. This could lead to conflict within communities if there are differing views and/or conflict between government that affects their current practices. There could also be conflicts across stakeholders including with PA staff on cessation of community activities, stricter rules and enforcement etc. Private sector interests in tourism development and operation might not align with those of community, etc. causing additional conflicts.</p>	<p>elopment/ management and appropriate conflict resolution mechanisms.</p> <p>Management: At PPG stage an ESMF with FPIC procedures will be prepared and a decision made regarding the need and appropriate scope for an ESIA and SESA (the latter in relation to assess any upstream impacts on account of policies, guidelines and standards that might be developed under the project). The ESMF will lead to the preparation of an ESMF in early project implementation period to manage any potential environmental and social impacts, conflicts and measures for addressing such conflicts.</p> <p>The ESMF will include a GRM to address and manage any conflict situations</p> <p>At the national level, the project will support preparation of standards and guidelines for community consultation, governance and benefit sharing for tourism within high biodiversity destinations during the project. Based on discussions and confirmations during the PPG phase, a SESA approach will likely be recommended to be applied to development of the standards and guidelines during project implementation.</p>
<p><i><u>Risk 3:</u> Nature-based tourism development might not fully incorporate or reflect views of women and girls and ensure equitable opportunities for their involvement and benefit as well in decision-making on resource use and management.</i></p> <p>Principle (Gender): P.8, P.9, P.10, P.11 and P.12</p>	<p>I = 3</p> <p>L = 2</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Compared to men, women have less access to, and control over the resources that they depend upon for food and income. Over 50% of poor and near-poor farmers in the project's target areas are women. There is also differing natural resource use roles for men and women and different potential economic opportunities linked to nature-based tourism development. Further, because of traditional family roles, most women have little time av</p>	<p>Assessment: A gender specialist will be recruited to undertake a gender analysis during the PPG stage. This analysis will include specific consultations with women and girls in the demonstration PAs.</p> <p>Management: A gender mainstreaming action plan that will be prepared at PPG stage will identify specific measures to include gender mainstreaming within both national activities and demonstration activities to ensure nature-based tourism opportunities and economic benefits also flow to women and girls. Additionally, specific livelihood options would be identified for women. The gender action plan will include specific indicators to measure women's participation in decision-making, nature-based tourism</p>

			<p>ailable to travel or attend meetings. In addition, the planning process at the local level does not fully recognize the role of women as agents of positive change. As a result, there might likely be less opportunities for women's participation.</p>	<p>activities and benefit sharing.</p> <p>The comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan will also include identification of women's engagement in project related activities.</p>
<p><i>Risk 4: Impacts of changed amount/type of tourism and/or nature-based tourism and increasing demand for nature-based products on sensitive habitats or ecosystems (e.g., soil/vegetation erosion, waste, sewage, IAS spread) or threatened or harvested species</i></p> <p>Standard 1: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.8, and 1.10</p>	<p>I = 3</p> <p>L = 2</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Proposed interventions on nature-based tourism products and livelihood improvements could have impacts on sensitive habitats/species if not carefully planned and executed. Additionally, poorly managed application of carrying capacity and standards could fail to stem tourism's environmental impacts or inadvertently increase them.</p>	<p>Assessment: At PPG, the existing standards, guidelines and procedures being applied to the tourism sector will be evaluated to assess their adequacy to manage impacts on critical ecosystems and identify measures to strengthen nature-based tourism guidelines and standards (for adherence to the UNDP SES), and their application (i.e., the need for assessing capacity of PA staff to implement such guidelines and associated capacity strengthening measures). Project design will ensure that project activities are sequenced so that demonstration activities follow development of national guidelines/standards and adherence to them (and therefore the SES). These assessments will be captured in the ESMF developed during the PPG phase, with guidance provided on the inclusion of appropriately scoped SESA, ESIA, and ESMP during project implementation.</p> <p>Management: Under Component 1, national policies, guidelines and standards for nature-based tourism will be updated or new guidelines developed (fulfilling or exceeding SES requirements) to reflect use of EIA/ESIA for placement and management of nature-based tourism activities to avoid impacts on sensitive habitats, ensure such operations are within carrying capacity of habitats, and identify and manage social impacts of changed tourism (including potential restrictions). Project-developed standards for nature-based tourism development and operations will be designed to reflect best practices of nature-based tourism development to avoid, mitigate and manage the range of potential environmental</p>

				... and manage the range of potential environmental impacts.
<p><i>Risk 5: The Project may involve the harvesting of NTFP from natural forests and marine resources for proposed livelihoods and small-scale community enterprises, which could inadvertently adversely affect critical habitats.</i></p> <p>Standard 1: 1.8</p>	<p>I = 3 L = 3</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>All the livelihood and community enterprises will need to be managed within permissible sustainable harvest limits to ensure that these activities do not inadvertently adversely affect critical habitats.</p>	<p>Assessment: During the PPG stage, an assessment will be made to understand what natural resources are likely to be used for livelihood and small-scale enterprise development, ascertain the status and availability of these resources and if these can be sustainably harvested for use, any concerns regarding use of these resources, measures needed to ensure sustainable use, monitoring protocols to ascertain the status of these species, needed management measures/safeguards, etc. Specific procedures (for fully screening, assessing and managing activities related to harvesting of NTFPs and marine resources during implementation) will be prepared during the PPG, as part of the ESMF.</p> <p>Management: The ensuing ESMP that will be developed in early project implementation period will indicate measures and tools that would be used to manage and monitor sub-project activities that include harvest of natural resources and small-scale community enterprises that depend on these resources.</p>
<p><i>Risk 6: Nature-based tourism development could result in damage to sacred sites and cultural sites, including through inappropriate tourist behavior (e.g., desecration of cultural site), and/or could harm/change intangible cultural heritage (e.g., traditional knowledge) through its commercialization and use in ecotourism</i></p> <p>Standard 4: 4.1, 4.3 and 4.5 Standard 6: 6.8, 6.9</p>	<p>I = 3 L = 2</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Most project sites are already subject to some level of tourism, although there is the chance that the project could develop new products or experiences that have inadvertent negative impacts on cultural sites or heritage, including culturally-inappropriate use or appropriation of traditional knowledge or practices of ethnic minorities, e.g., the caves at Phong Nha Ke Bang NP. There is possibility that the project could inadvertently encourage tourists that are culturally insen</p>	<p>Assessment: Initial assessment of ethnic minorities in project sites and potential impacts on their cultural sites/heritage, as well as start of FPIC processes to inform project design, and the preparation of an ESMF.</p> <p>Management: National standards and guidelines for nature-based tourism to be developed by the project are expected to reflect use of SESA/ESIA for placement of ecotourism activities to avoid culturally significant sites. Demonstration of nature-based tourism activities to be sequenced to follow adoption of project-developed standards to ensure adherence to project-developed nature-based tourism standards for all demonstration activities supported by the project to avoid placement of tourism activities i</p>

			<p>...sensitive sites are generally insensitive/likely to offend local ethnic minority communities, although this is generally not the type of tourist targeted by nature-based tourism.</p>	<p>...the project to avoid placement of tourism activities in culturally significant sites.</p> <p>In addition, component 3 of the project will include the design of specific measures to sensitize and change behavior of tourists to PA sites, as well as special programs supported by hotels and tour enterprises to bring about behavior change that can help mitigate this risk.</p>
<p><i>Risk 7: on Development of nature-based tourism could change current access to PAs and their resources, including by unintentional restricting access to local communities</i></p> <p>Principle (Human Rights): P.6</p> <p>Standard 5: 5.2 and 5.4;</p> <p>Standard 6: 6.6</p>	<p>I = 2</p> <p>L = 3</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>The project could change current access to natural resources at the PAs.</p>	<p>Assessment: Consultations with potential project-affected communities at PA sites during PPG will be undertaken to assess potential resource access impacts of shift to nature-based tourism on local communities and ethnic minorities.</p> <p>Management: Communities will be engaged in all stages of project design and management at demonstration sites, including use of FPIC as needed (see Risk 1) to ensure that development has a positive impact and that any restriction on resource access and use will be managed and mitigated. The ESMF to be developed at PPG stage will identify measures to be instituted in case there is potential economic displacement, following consultation with affected groups, including the need for developing a Livelihoods Action Plan.</p>
<p><i>Risk 8: Local communities, governments and tour operators may not have the capacity to manage and oversee tourism development and operations to adhere to established standards and benchmarks for sustainable tourism planning, development and operations and therefore impinge on human rights</i></p> <p>Principle (Human Rights): P.2, P.3</p>	<p>I = 3</p> <p>L = 3</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>The lack of capacity among key government staff (PA, and provincial sector entities) will likely prevent them from ensuring adequate mitigation of human rights concerns if they are unable to identify such potential triggers and how to effectively manage these problems. Similarly, local tour operators and institutions may not have the capacity to interpret and guide the adherence to these guidelines and standards or monitor and enforce compliance with them.</p>	<p>Assessment: Capacity needs assessment will be undertaken at PPG stage.</p> <p>Management: The ESMF will identify specific capacity constraints to enable key government agencies (PA staff, provincial agencies, etc.) and private tour operators to adhere to sustainable nature-based tourism guidelines and standards, and to oversee compliance and enforcement of them. The ensuing ESMP will identify specific capacity building and training programs and compliance monitoring and enforcement mechanisms for promoting the implementation of nature-based tourism standards.</p>

			<p>impairance with them.</p> <p>This risk exacerbates the probability of other identified risks such as environmental impacts of tourism and impacts to cultural sites/heritage</p>	
<p><i><u>Risk 9:</u> The operation of nature-based tourism adventure activities could pose safety risks to communities, local tourism operators and tourists during operation.</i></p> <p>Standard 3: 3.1 and 3.4; Standard 2: 2.2</p>	<p>I = 3 L = 2</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>One of the project sites is known for its cave complex and ecotourism built around caving. The project could support more caving-based tourism with associated safety risks or it could develop other adventurous nature-based tourism products at demonstration sites that do not pose a safety risk during their development or their operation.</p>	<p>Assessment: Assess potential safety risks due to tourism development at project sites during PPG as activities are defined in detail.</p> <p>Management: Minimum standards for safety of relevant activities to be integrated into project design and development/management of operations at project sites. These will be further developed in the ESMP during early project implementation</p>
<p><i><u>Risk 10:</u> The nature-based tourism activities could potentially enhance release of pollutants and waste into natural ecosystems resulting in localized impacts</i></p> <p>Standard 8: 8.1 and 8.2</p>	<p>I = 3 L = 2</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Unregulated pollution from tourism and associated activities can cause generation of waste that could have impacts on natural ecosystems, species and human health and well-being unless these wastes are safely disposed.</p>	<p>Assessment: At PPG stage an assessment will be made of the current pollutants and wastes that are produced by nature-based tourism activities to assess what the potential impacts can be on natural ecosystem and species and assess options for management of these in a safe way. Based on this, an assessment of potential pollution risks due to tourism development at project sites will be made during PPG as part of ESMF as activities are defined in detail.</p> <p>Management:</p> <p>An ESMF will be developed during the PPG stage to identify potential impacts from project activities, while the ESMP to be developed later at early project implementation will identify specific mitigation measures and plans to avoid, reduce, or mitigate such impacts. Component 1 will include the development of relevant tools for nature-based tourism activities and will include specific criteria and procedures that will be used to assess potential environmental impacts related to pollution, resource use, and</p>

				<p>the generation of waste.</p> <p>Additionally, project design includes an output that envisages working with hotels and tourism facilities to test appropriate measures for ensuring environmentally sustainable operations, including management of wastes and effluents, improving hotel staff capacity to address environmental concerns, etc.</p>
<p><i>Risk 11: Tourism related threats might be exacerbated by climate change resulting in increased vulnerability of natural ecosystems, in particular coastal and marine ecosystems</i></p> <p>Standard 2: 2.2 and 2.3</p> <p>Standard 3: 3.6</p>	<p>I = 3</p> <p>L = 2</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Unpredictable weather patterns could influence the long-term functioning of ecosystems, and the impact of this could be further exacerbated by unsustainable tourism activities, or conversely severe or more frequent weather events could negatively affect nature-based tourism experiences</p>	<p>Assessment: Further assessments will be undertaken at PPG stage to consider climate change impacts on the short-term and longer-term in the PAs and to ensure that measures are reflected in project design to support climate proofing of tourism activities and strengthen resilience of project activities and impacts as much as possible.</p> <p>At PPG stage, as part of project design and preparation of ESMF, the institutional capacity and information needs to enhance PA management capability to address and manage potential climate change impacts would be assessed.</p> <p>At PPG phase, project activities will be screened using the climate-screening tool developed by the World Bank to identify activities that might be impacted or exacerbate climate impacts.</p> <p>Management: Any identified climate change adaptation and mitigation actions for the proposed project's nature-based tourism activities will be incorporated in the project ESMF. It will identify the need for specific management measures in design of the recreational activities to ensure that activities are environmentally sustainable and supporting best practices managed for their climate risks and improving protection and management of critical watersheds, wetland and coastal and marine ecosystems to help to increase the overall resilience of the natural systems to climate risks in the areas compared to business as usual.</p> <p>This might include specific measures to zone PAs for various tourism and conservation activities, incl</p>

				uding protection of key biodiversity areas, fish breeding, spawning and migratory pathways, conservation of mangroves, riparian areas, location of tourism activities and community ecotourism and livelihood areas. The intent is to reduce impacts on sensitive ecosystems and enhance their resilience through conservation practices. Local communities and local staff will be trained in adaptive measures to plan for, and reduce climate impacts.
<p><i>Risk 12: Project support for site-based management effectiveness such as law enforcement or awareness-raising could bring safety risks for PA staff due to increased interaction with poachers</i></p> <p>Principle (Accountability): P.15</p>	<p>I = 4 L = 3</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>Project support to increase PA management effectiveness could include support to strengthen site-based law enforcement (e.g., capacity, equipment) and/or awareness raising and behavior change of local communities to reduce their engagement in poaching and trafficking of illegal wildlife products. These activities could bring PA staff into closer interaction with poachers, which could pose a safety risk for staff if they react violently. Activities to change the behaviors of illegal wildlife purchasers and users could also result in conflict, although the chance of this being a safety risk to PA staff is lower. Overall risk rating may decline during PPG based on more detailed assessments.</p>	<p>Assessment: Further assessment during PPG as part of the ESMF preparation will be undertaken to assess extent to which illegal activities are happening in the two PAs, and what the existing relationship is between PA staff and local communities. Assessment of PA staff capacity to address conflict will also be assessed</p> <p>Management: As part of the ESMF development, the capacity needs of PA staff will be assessed to understand to what extent they have the skills to address conflict and potentially violent situations. Establishment and implementation of a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for management of illegal activities, that will specifically include safety and security-related procedures will be defined as part of the ESMP during project implementation</p>
<p><i>Risk 13: Unintended negative consequences from policy changes that result in changes to tourism development in Vietnam (for example new nature-based tourism standards and guidelines could lead to adverse impacts on cultural heritage, or could restrict access to natural resources)</i></p>	<p>I = 3 L = 2</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>The project will develop national policies and standards, guidelines and protocols for managing tourism in Vietnam that may result in upstream environmental and social impacts. Potential impacts could include change in</p>	<p>Assessment: Further assessment of the proposed standards, guidelines and carrying capacity for nature-based tourism to be developed under the project will be undertaken at PPG stage to determine the potential upstream environmental and social impacts.</p> <p>Management: Based on the assessment of social</p>

<p>ss of local communities to PAs and the resources therein, or could increase visitation and hence increase pressure on sensitive habitats if social and environmental considerations are not taken into account in the development of these standards and guidelines) (upstream impacts)</p>			<p>current access to sites for tourism operators (increased access or restricted access) including community-based tourism operators, or change the level of tourism standards that need to be met to continue operation or set up a new tourist enterprise (making costs of establishing and maintaining tourism operations higher). These could have social impacts on current/potential tourism operators. Environmental impacts are likely to be positive although some impacts may occur if these leads to tourism development in new areas.</p>	<p>and environmental impacts of policy changes at PPG stage, recommendation to integrate a SESA approach as part of the development of these policies, guidelines and standards.</p>
<p><u>Risk 14: Covid-19 and other potential zoonotic disease outbreaks that remain prevalent in the project sites could pose the risk of infection and exposure of persons involved in implementing project activities to these diseases</u> Standard 3: 3.4</p>	<p>I = 4 L -3</p>	<p>Substantial</p>	<p>The infection rates are currently low, but will have to be monitored in case of an uptick in infection. The Covid situation has brought social and economic impacts on tour businesses, local communities and vulnerable populations (including ethnic minorities). However, in 2020 a national campaign was led by MOCST on “Vietnamese travel Vietnam” to encourage open-spaced and natural destinations for tourism and this has considerably contributed to tourism green recovery.</p>	<p>Assessment: During the PPG phase, the prevalence of Covid-19 in project sites will be assessed, as will the risks of exposure that may be associated with in-person project activities.</p> <p>Management: In the remote location of the PAs, in particular where ethnic minorities are predominant, these communities are not equipped with remote means of communication. The project will look at options to use local NGOs, local community mobilizers and local staff to carry out consultations, field work and local level planning. If the Covid situation deteriorates to the extent that safety concerns prevail, this will entail application of national and local Covid-19 health protocols (in consultation with the Provincial governments) in outreach to the vulnerable groups, such as use of masks, hand sanitizer, and social distancing, giving the option to communities to decide if they are comfortable with participating.</p>
<p><u>Risk 15: Project activities related to nature-based tourism inadvertently support child labor and other violations</u></p>	<p>I = 4 L=2</p>	<p>Moderate</p>		<p>Assessment: Further assessment will be undertaken during the PPG stage to assess to what extent child labor is an issue in the two target PAs</p>

<p>Support child labor and other violations of international labor standards.</p> <p>Standard 7: 7.3</p>			<p>Child labor is an issue in the two target FAS.</p> <p>Management: Any risk associated with child labor as revealed in the assessment will be documented and reflected in the ESMF and a standalone plan that will be prepared as part of the ESMP</p>
	QUESTION 4: What is the overall project risk categorization?		
	<i>Low Risk</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<i>Moderate Risk</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<i>Substantial Risk</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	<p>At PIF stage, the overall risk for the project is classified as 'Substantial'. The identified risks will be revised based on further assessment and information during the project formulation. To meet the SES requirements, at the PPG stage, the following will be prepared:</p> <p>(i) ESMF prepared following the completion of SES P, and ESMP at implementation phase and a decision made at PPG regarding requirements for an ESI A and SESA; (ii) Stakeholder analysis and comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan; (iii) Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan; (iv) Indigenous People/ Ethnic Minorities Planning Framework (IPPF); (v) KM and communication plan (vi) project specific GRM; and (vi) design of incentives and other investments that support environmentally friendly nature-based tourism investments and measures to reduce illegal exploitation of wildlife and wildlife products; and (vii) design and implementation of the project in close collaboration private sector and local communities</p>
	<i>High Risk</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	QUESTION 5: Based on the identified risks and risk categorization, what requirements of the SES are triggered? (check all that apply)		
	Question only required for Moderate, Substantial and High Risk projects		

<i>Is assessment required? (check if "yes")</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<i>Status? (completed, planned)</i>
<i>if yes, indicate overall type and status</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Targeted assessments: Gender Analysis , Climate and Disaster Risk Screening, Stakeholder analysis,Covid-19 Analysis	Planned at PPG
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ESIA (Environmental and Social Impact Assessment)	Planned at Implementation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SESA (Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment)	Planned at Implementation
<i>Are management plans required? (check if "yes")</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<i>If yes, indicate overall type</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Targeted management plans: Gender Action Plan, Stakeholder Engagement Plan	Planned at PPG
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ESMP (Environmental and Social Management Plan which may include range of targeted plans)	ESMP planned at implementation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ESMF (Environmental and Social Management Framework) with Covid-19 Action Framework, Indigenous People/ Ethnic Minorities Planning Framework	Planned at PPG
<i>Based on identified risks, which Principles/Project-level Standards triggered?</i>		Comments (not required)		
<i>Overarching Principle: Leave No One Behind</i>				
<i>Human Rights</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<i>Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<i>Accountability</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<i>1. Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable</i>				

	<i>1. Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	<i>2. Climate Change and Disaster Risks</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	<i>3. Community Health, Safety and Security</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	<i>4. Cultural Heritage</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	<i>5. Displacement and Resettlement</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	<i>6. Indigenous Peoples</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	<i>7. Labor and Working Conditions</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	<i>8. Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title

Submitted

6377_VietNam Nature Based Tourism PIF_SESP prescreening_23Feb2021

Part III: Approval/Endorsement By GEF Operational Focal Point(S) And GEF Agency(ies)

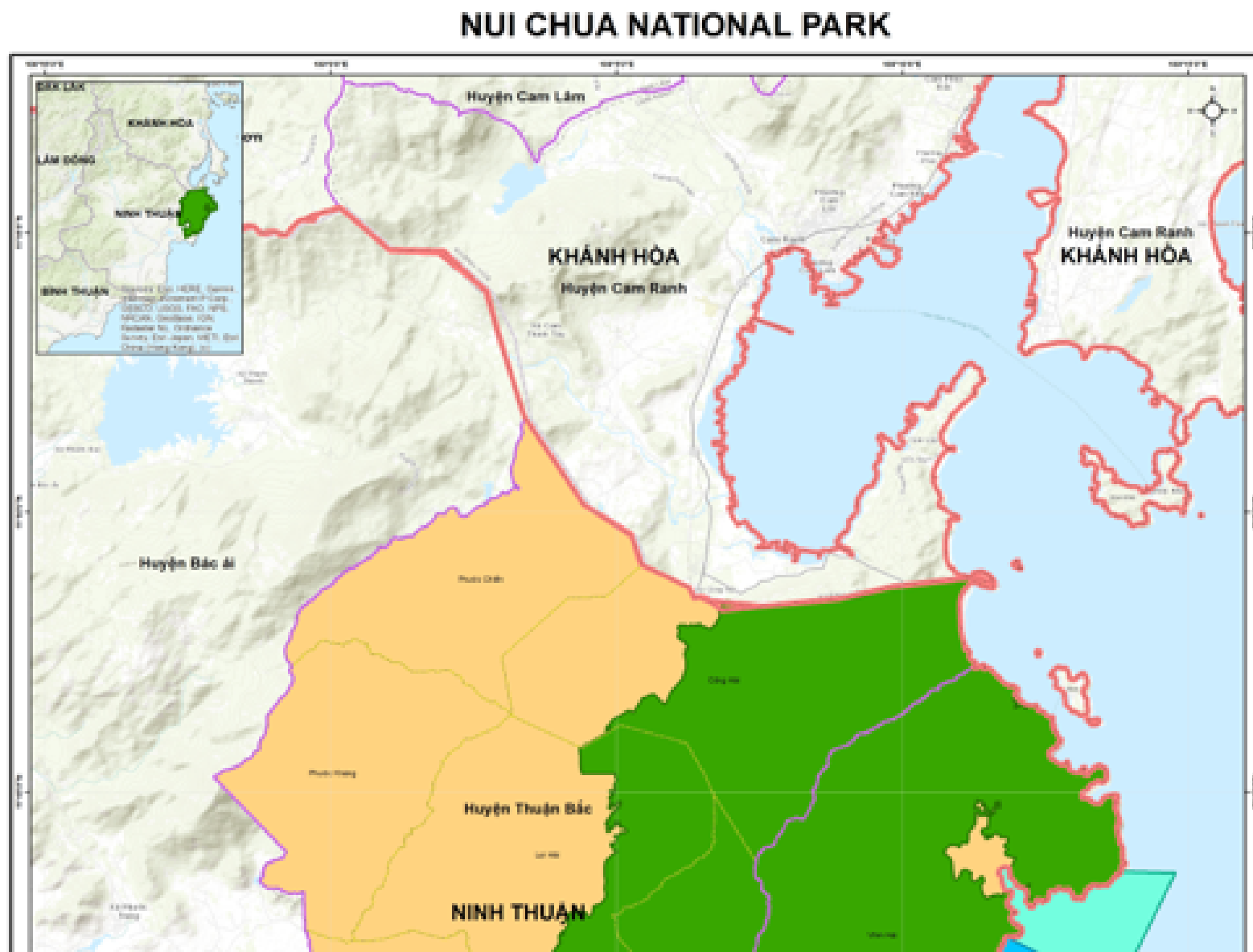
A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S): (Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter with this template).

Name	Position	Ministry	Date
Nguyen Duc Thuan	GEF Operational Focal Point for Vietnam Director, Vietnam Environment Protection Fund	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment	9/28/2020

ANNEX A: Project Map and Geographic Coordinates

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project intervention takes place

Núi Chúa (Ninh Thuận Province: from 11° 35'25 "to 11° 48'38" north latitude and 109° 4'5" to 109° 14'15 " east longitude





Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park, Quang Binh Province

Phong Nha-Ke Bang (Quang Binh) (coordinates from 17° 21' to 17° 39 ' north latitude and from 105° 57' to 106° 24' east longitude)

