

Terminal Evaluation of the Project

“Capacity Building for the Ratification and Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing in Viet Nam ABS”

UNDP PIMS#	5303
GEF project ID#	5653
Timeframe:	February –June, 2021
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Region and countries included in the project	Viet Nam
GEF Operational Focal Area/Strategic Program	Biodiversity
Implementing Agency and other project partners	Implementing Agency: Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment (MONRE)
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The evaluators would like to acknowledge the information and feedback provided by the interviewed project stakeholders including the MONRE, project site Local Responsible Partners, and project manager and staff. Special thanks are also extended to the UNDP Country Office staff. Without the on-ground efforts of the MONRE this evaluation report would not have been possible.

i. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Access and Benefit Sharing
BCA	Biodiversity Conservation Agency
CBD	Convention on Biodiversity Conservation
CHM	Clearing House Mechanism
GEF	Global Environment Facility
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MAT	Mutually Agreed Terms
MoNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MoST	Ministry of Science and Technology
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NIMM	National Institute of Medicinal Materials
PA	Protected Areas
PGC	Plant Genetic Center
PIC	Prior Informed Consent
PMU	Project Management Unit
ProDoc	Project Document
REDD+	Reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation
RCU	Regional Coordinating Unit
SEPS	Social and Environmental Screening Procedure
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TK	Traditional Knowledge
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Table 1 Project Information Table			
Project Title	Capacity Building for the Ratification and Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing in Viet Nam	PIF Approval Date:	March 06, 2014
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):	5303	CEO Endorsement Date (FSP) / Approval date (MSP):	September 01, 2015
GEF Project ID:	5653	ProDoc Signature Date:	October 10, 2016
UNDP Atlas Business Unit, Award ID, Project ID:	Project ID: 00091409 Atlas Award ID: 00082536.	Date Project Manager hired:	March 01, 2017
Country/Countries:	Viet Nam	Inception Workshop Date:	February 2016
Region:	Asia & Pacific	Mid-Term Review Completion Date:	Not applicable
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	Revised Expected Terminal Evaluation completion date	June 2021
GEF Operational Programme or Strategic Priorities/ Objectives:	BD-4: Build capacity on access to genetic resources and benefit sharing.	Planned Operational Closure Date:	Original planned: October 2020; First extension: June 2021
Trust Fund:	GEF Trust Fund		
Implementing Partner:	Ministry of Environment & Natural Resources of Viet Nam (MONRE)		
NGOs/CBOs involvement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) • Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development • Ministry of Health 		
Private sector involvement:	SapaNapro company as one of the beneficiaries		
Geospatial coordinates of project sites:	22 ° 23'58 " N 103 ° 50'15 " E		
PDF/PPG		at approval (US\$M)	at PDF/PPG completion (US\$M)
GEF PDF/PPG grants for project preparation		84,315	84,315
Co-financing for project preparation			
Project		at CEO Endorsement (US\$M)	at TE (US\$M)
[1] UNDP contribution:		500,000	500,000
[2] Government:		9,000,000	9,680,000
[3] Other multi-/bi-laterals:			
[4] Private Sector:		200,000	200,000
[5] NGOs:		150,000	210,000
[6] Total co-financing [1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5]:		9,850,000	10,590,000
[7] Total GEF funding:		2,000,000	2,000,000
[8] Total Project Funding [6 + 7]		11,850,000	12,590,000

Project Description

1. The traditional knowledge of local communities that is associated with genetic resources is disappearing rapidly. A large volume of traditional knowledge, such as medicinal use of biological resources, is being replaced by modern technology. Bio-prospecting as well as the access and benefit-sharing (ABS) national regime were limited because the country did not have a fully functional regulatory and institutional framework for ABS, nor the institutional and technical capacity to develop and manage ABS schemes that are compliant with Nagoya Protocol.
2. The project is intended to strengthen national capacities on access and benefit sharing of genetic resources to facilitate the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing. The above objective would be achieved through four components, namely: (i) Creating an enabling national policy, legal and institutional framework for ABS; (ii) Developing administrative measures for implementation of national ABS legal framework; (iii) Increasing awareness and capacity of all relevant stakeholders for implementation of national ABS framework; and (iv) Demonstrating private-public-community partnerships on access and benefit sharing.

Evaluation Rating Table

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating
M&E design at entry	4 (MS)
M&E Plan Implementation	4 (MS)
Overall Quality of M&E	4 (MS)
Implementation & Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	5 (S)
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	5 (S)
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	5 (S)
Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	5 (S)
Effectiveness	5 (S)
Efficiency	5 (S)
Overall Project Outcome Rating	5 (S)
Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	3 (ML)
Socio-political/economic	3 (ML)
Institutional framework and governance	4 (L)
Environmental	3 (ML)
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	3 (ML)

Ratings

Outcomes, Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, I&E Execution	Sustainability	Impact
6: Highly Satisfactory (HS): no shortcomings 5: Satisfactory (S): minor shortcomings 4: Moderately Satisfactory (MS) 3: Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): significant shortcomings 2: Unsatisfactory (U): major problems 1: Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe problems	4: Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability 3: Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks 2: Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks 1: Unlikely (U): severe risks	3: Significant (S) 2: Minimal (M) 1: Negligible (N)

Concise summary of findings

1. **The project design** overall shows a clear and consistent construction of project outcomes, outputs, and objectives. However, design was ambitious, underestimating the time and effort needed to achieve outputs on a broad range of aspects involving a complex web of stakeholders. Major weakness found was the formulation of indicators.
2. In terms of **implementation**, the project is on track to achieve most of the original goals and objectives. The original GEF budget equals USD 2 million, by the first quarter 2021 the project has disbursed 82%. The project was supposed to end in October 2020, but it was granted an 8 months extension due to COVID-19.
3. The project has followed an adaptive management approach, showing flexibility to face the different challenges found. Under the leadership of MoNRE, the project maintained adequate levels of stakeholder participation, both at the operative level as well as its governance through the Steering Committee.
4. In terms of the **implementation and oversight**, UNDP played an enhanced role in supporting in-country implementation. Under MoNRE's leadership the project played a crucial role facilitating high level participation and engagement from different state and provincial agencies, as well as ensuring co-financing commitments from MARD, MOH and MOST.
5. The four project Outcomes have made significant progress. Outcome 1 has achieved the target of 3 indicators, and one is on track to achieve it. Outcome 2 has met 100 per cent of its 2 indicators. On the side of Outcome 3 has met an indicator at 100%, one partially and one has the risk of non-compliance. Finally, Outcome 4 has met two of its indicators and two are on track to reach their target.
6. **The project is highly relevant** for Vietnam, it reflects national priorities to implement the Nagoya Protocol on access and benefit sharing of genetic resources. The project

presents clear global environmental benefits and opportunities for replication and scaling up.

7. The project was able to generate the necessary capacities and enabling environment to implement ABS in Vietnam. Its impact has been acknowledged in overcoming key barriers such as weak regulatory and institutional framework, limited capacities and lack of practical experience implementing ABS.
8. The project demonstrates social and political support resulting into high level engagement and institutional sustainability.

Recommendations Summary Table

Rec #	TE Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Time frame
A	Category 1: For future project design		
A.1	The results obtained by the project as well as the challenges and opportunities ahead, open the overall expectation for a second phase, to scale up and replicate, it is recommended to map donors and projects in the design phase. Thus, a second phase can be assumed by a new donor, or outcomes or activities of the current project can be included in other projects being designed.	UNDP; MoNRE	Medium Term
A.2	The project offers methodological, legal and institutional tools which could be capitalized to support other countries in the region to implement Nagoya Protocol on ABS. To the extent possible, it is recommended identifying knowledge and approaches that can be applied in other parts of the country, the conditions in which they are or are not applicable, challenges / barriers, lessons (technical and operational), the information should be synthesized in a format that is easy to read to the different audiences.	UNDP; MoNRE	Medium Term
B	Category 2: Follow up strategy		
B.1	Several things need to happen before the project can be formally closed. In this sense, the TE recommends to draft an exit strategy involving all major stakeholders, to generate the engagement needed to fill the existing gaps, as well as to replicate and scale up the results achieved. (MoNRE).	MoNRE	
B.2	The ABS Clearing House Mechanism (CHM) platform would be a good way to continue sharing the information/knowledge on ABS. The tools and cases might be included in a post-project dissemination strategy with all the knowledge products and tools.	UNDP; GEF	Short Time
C	Category 3: Complementing critical outstanding deliverables		
C.1	While the project produced a series of training materials, case studies, and tools, it is fundamental that these get officially approved by respective institutions to ensure that these could be widely shared and used by targeted audiences.	MoNRE	Short Time

1 INTRODUCTION

1. The Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the Project is carried out as part of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework established in the ProDoc, which establishes that an independent TE must be carried out three months before the final meeting of the Project Board. TE is undertaken following with UNDP and GEF guidance. It is expected that this evaluation will allow evidence of the progress of the results originally planned by the project, its impact, sustainability, as well as recommendations for monitoring activities.

1.1 Purpose and objective of the TE

1.1.1 Purpose

1. The Terminal Evaluation will assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The TE promotes accountability and transparency and assesses the extent of project accomplishments. The evaluation is aimed at critically assessing the stages of the Project and its results through participatory approaches, measuring to what extent the objective/outcomes/outputs/activities have been achieved against the results and resources framework, and identifying factors that have hindered or facilitated the success of the Project. Also, the lessons learned section, part of the report, is aimed at capturing key lessons to assess what capacity-building approaches/measures were effective, which can be useful for future projects with similar characteristics.
2. The TE of ABS Project is expected to inform the review of Five-year Country Programme (2017-2021), and formulation of the next Country Programme (2022-2026), in the context of Viet Nam's Social Economic Development Strategy (2021-2030) and Plan (2021-2025), the new One UN Cooperation Framework (2022-2026) that are under formulation. Moreover, the Management Response Plan derived from the TE is likely to support post-project decision making and actions.
3. Also, according to the Guidance for Conducting Terminal Reviews of UNDP-Supported GEF-Financed Projects (2020), the TE considers to what extent the project design and implementation took into account key cross-cutting issues, such as gender equality, rights-based approach, capacity development, poverty alleviation, climate change mitigation and adaptation. These cross-cutting issues build on the synergies of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and address critical gaps in their delivery.

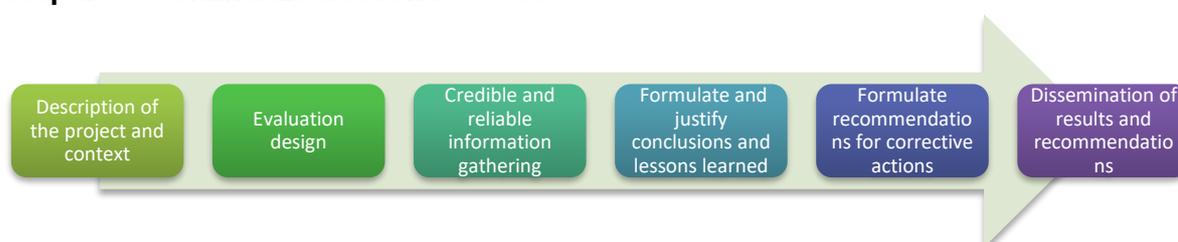
1.1.2 Evaluation Objectives

1. The evaluation objective is to assess all categories of project progress to judge whether the expected results and implementation plan have indeed been accomplished, considering the following areas of analysis:
 - Assess the project’s implementation strategy.
 - Assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of the interventions.
 - Assess the project’s processes, including budgetary efficiency.
 - Assess the extent to which planned activities and outputs have been achieved.
 - Identify the main achievements, impacts of the programmed activities and opportunities for replication.
 - Identify the underlying causes and issues of non-achievement of some targets.
 - Document lessons learned.
 - Make recommendations for the design of future projects.

1.2 Scope and Methodology

1. The Terminal Evaluation was guided by the Guidance for conducting terminal evaluations of UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects (2020). Under the guide and the context of the project, the following tools were followed: a) documentation reviews; b) Stakeholder interviews; c) Field visits; d) Questionnaires. During the process, there was an active interaction between the team evaluator, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE), Biodiversity Conservation Agency (BCA), UNDP, the project management unit (PMU), and other interested parties.
2. Two consultants have been contracted by the UNDP Country Office in Viet Nam to undertake the Terminal Evaluation of the project: Mr. José Galindo —International Evaluator and Ms. Le Ha Thanh —National Evaluator.
3. In general, the evaluation was developed in 6 large steps that seek to meet the 4 objectives of the Terminal Evaluation:

Graphic 1 Terminal Evaluation Process



Source: Guidance for conducting terminal evaluations of UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects, 2020

1.2.1 Data Collection and Analysis

1. The evaluation team, under the Guide, evaluated the results and impacts of the project through the evaluation matrix (Annex 2) that identified the key questions, related to the evaluation criteria and cross-cutting issues, and the methods selected (desk review, interviews, and field visits).

1.2.1.1 Secondary Information – Desk Review

1. The evaluation team reviewed the project documentation provided by the PMU and the implementing partners. Following the Guidance for conducting terminal evaluations of UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects (2020), 27 documents were considered key for this evaluation, such as the Project Identification Form, project implementation reports, GEF tracking tools, etc. The detailed list of documents and their delivery status is presented in Annex 3.
2. Based on this review, the evaluation team carried out a detailed description of the project covering the identified problem, established objectives, and their respective activities. This provided a measure of the baseline situation before project implementation, as well as its perceived contribution or impact.

1.2.1.2 Interviews with Stakeholders and Evaluation Mission

1. As suggested by the Guidance for conducting terminal evaluations of UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects (2020), the evaluation followed a consultative approach that includes field mission and conducting interviews. This activity sought to enrich the vision of the context through direct contact with the most representative actors in the implementation of the project, thus receiving first-hand testimonies about the progress and barriers encountered so far.
2. In the context of COVID-19, the field mission was limited and necessary to maintain a coordinated and organized work between the international and national evaluators to carried out the interviews. Also, it was proposed that together with the PMU a universe of potential interviewees be identified (public institutions, private parties, NGOs, and beneficiaries), who have participated in the different phases of the project (design, execution, and closure). Subsequently, a prioritization of actors was carried out, evaluating their availability and representativeness in the project.
3. For the different interviews, a questionnaire was used focused on the participation of the different actors according to their role in the implementation of the project (Annex 6.6). The questionnaire considered several questions related to Gender equality and women's empowerment for the different actors of the project, and several specific

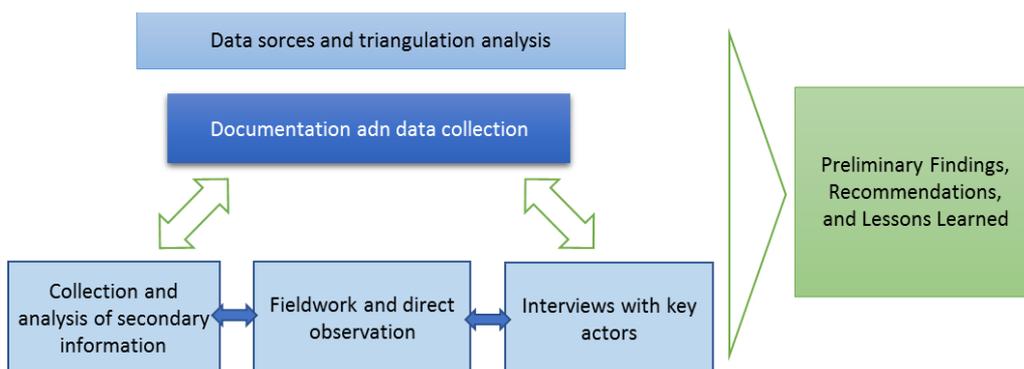
questions for the beneficiaries of the project. Also, as the Guidance for conducting terminal evaluations of UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects (2020) suggests, to preserve independence as well as confidentiality, UNDP staff, Project Team members, and Implementing Partner representatives didn't participate in stakeholder or beneficiary meetings or interviews.

4. A total of 20 people were interviewed (4 individual and 8 group interviews) listed in Annex 6.3 were conducted with authorities, organizations linked to the project, implementing partners, other related projects, and relevant actors participating in the project intervention framework.
5. In total, 11 interviewers were women (55%), in terms of gender participation 4 group interviews were mixed male – female groups, 2 groups were only female and 2 groups only male. The participants consulted, especially minority women, were open and did not feel difficult to answer the questions of TE team.
6. Besides the virtual interviews, only the national evaluator visited the sites in which the project has been executed, Lao Cai province, to verify the field actions implemented and for complemented the collection of information. The mission itinerary is detailed in Annex 6.2.

1.2.1.3 Evaluation Report

1. Based on the information gathered the evaluation team formulated a draft document that proposes recommendations that have technical and practical nature, reflecting a realistic understanding of the project's achievements, and help identify the influential factors and the possibilities of developing activities correctives measures that will lead to a better performance of the project and to comply with the objectives and results established in the logical framework. For the preparation of the draft evaluation report and to reinforce the credibility and validity of the findings, judgments, and conclusions that were obtained, the evaluation team used triangulation techniques to ensure technical quality. Triangulation involved double- or triple-checking the results from the data analysis by cross-comparing the information obtained via each data collection method (desk study and individual interviews) (Graphic 2).

Graphic 2 Information Analysis Diagram



Source: José Galindo, 2021

2. The evaluation is strictly governed by the standards of good evaluations of utility, feasibility, accuracy, and neutrality. The final evaluation of the project was applied to the design, implementation, and results of the project for each of its components.
3. Planning: project formulation including the logical framework, assumptions, risks, indicators, budget, country context, national ownership, stakeholder participation in design, replicability, among others.
4. Project implementation: implementation approach, stakeholder participation, quality of execution by each institution involved and in general, financial planning, monitoring, and evaluation during implementation
5. Results: Effects, impacts, the catalytic effect of the results obtained, their integration with other UNDP priorities, such as poverty reduction, better governance, prevention and recovery from natural disasters and gender, as well as their sustainability in terms of resources financial, socio-political, institutional framework, and governance.
6. The final evaluation followed 5 criteria (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Results, Sustainability) each will be used to assess project relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the quality of M&E systems and Outcomes. It is important to note that the rating scales differ for different criteria (Annex 5). The Final Report will consider all comments to the draft report, including clarifications or modifications. At all times the consultant will respect the consistency with the evidence gathered through direct observations or triangulation of documentation and interviews.

1.3 Ethics

1. The evaluation was conducted by with the principles outlined in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations' and GEF and UNDP policies on monitoring and evaluation. As needed, measures have been applied to protect the rights and confidentiality of persons interviewed. The TE team evaluators have signed a Code of Conduct form, which is attached here as Annex B

1.4 Cross-cutting issues

1. To evaluate to what extent the project design and implementation took into account key cross-cutting issues such as the SDG's, during data collection and analysis, the evaluation team the project looked for evidence about how these issues were addressed, aiming to identify what specific measures or strategies were taken, and to what extent it was possible to mainstream these issues across project interventions. The principal findings are detailed in section 3.3.9.
2. From an inclusive approach, the TE evaluated how the integration was facilitated by the project to minority groups and if these processes contributed to the empowerment exercise of their rights. The two groups identified previously and included in the ProDoc were Ta Chai village in Ta Phin commune.
3. Beyond the review of key project documents and reports, the assessment includes specific questions to address cross-cutting issues (Annex 6.6). The assessment also analyzed to what extent the project monitoring and evaluation address its impact on gender and intercultural relations, considering the participation of stakeholders and the benefits derived from it.

1.5 Limitations to the evaluation

1. Due to travel restrictions related to COVID-19, the international evaluator was not able to travel to Viet Nam to undertake the evaluation in person. To mitigate this limitation, a national consultant was included in the TE team, facilitating interaction with national stakeholders and undertaking the field mission to verify the activities carried out at the implementation sites. The national consultant was key to overcome language barriers in few cases where interviewees did not speak English.
2. Other limitations related to the COVID-19 pandemic, included availability of interviewees and access to quality internet connection. As most interviews had to be conducted in a virtual way, some difficulties were found to arrange interviews as in some cases they had to be rescheduled.
3. For the evaluation to be viable, credible, and useful, special care was taken with the different methods applied to reduce information gaps. Existing limitations did not affect the quality of findings and conclusions, thanks to the extensive experience of the international consultant which was adequately complemented by the knowledge and understanding of the Vietnamize context from the national consultant.
4. Most of the information package required for the evaluation was made available, however, some key information such as co-financing and GEF tracking tools took longer than expected.

1.6 Structure of the TE report

1. The Terminal Evaluation report is structured in three levels, beginning with this introductory chapter to the evaluation and its methodological process. A second level, covering chapters 2, 3, and 4, presents the evaluation results for each stage of the project life cycle. The main findings and analysis are summarized in the final chapter, presenting conclusions, lessons, and recommendations.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Project start and duration, including milestones

1. The project started on October the 10th 2016, it was originally supposed to end by October 2020. Due to COVID-19, by year 2020 many project activities were in significant delay, reason behind an 8 months extension was granted. The new operational and financial closures date will be June 2021. The key dates and project milestones are detailed in the Project Information Table presented in the Executive Summary.

2.2 Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope

2. Viet Nam is situated in the east of the Indochina Peninsula, in a tropical region near the equator. Its territory stretches over 1,650 km. The total inland land area is around 329,241 km² with three-fourth of the land area being uplands. The marine territory is expansive and covers about 3,260 km of coastline and includes thousands of islands. The climate of the country is characterized by tropical monsoon weather that combines both sub-tropical and temperate montane climates. The inland area has three climate types and ten eco-regions. The diversity of terrain, soil types, landscapes, and climate result in a rich and unique diversity of ecosystems, species, and genetic resources.
3. Because of the country's specific geographical location and due to its long history and complicated topographical, ecological, and social features, Viet Nam is recognized as one of the world's most prosperous, rich and diverse countries in regards to plant genetic resources. The country is one of the world's sixteen most biologically diverse in the world. It contains about 10% of the world's species though covering less than 1 % of the global land area. Viet Nam hosts a diversity of marine, coastal, wetlands, forests and mountain ecosystems. In the country's terrestrial

ecosystems there are more than 11,400 plant species and 2,400 species of non-vascular plants (mosses and fungus), 310 species of mammals, 840 species of birds, 296 species of reptiles, 162 species of amphibians, 1,000 species of freshwater fish, and 7,750 species of insects. The tropical marine ecosystem is also home to more than 11,000 sea creatures that include 2,500 species of fish, 21 species of reptiles, 25 species of mammals, 650 species of algae and over 7,000 species of non-skeletal fauna. There are also around 94 species of mangrove plants. Viet Nam's biodiversity is relatively unique as over 40% of the local plant species are endemic and believed to be found nowhere else in the world. Many livestock species have been domesticated and selected for thousands of years.

4. In Viet Nam, ecosystems and biological resources are a part of the country's economy and culture, reflected by their key values in environmental protection (ecological function value); direct use (economic value); and socio-culture. Biodiversity, therefore, makes a significant contribution to the national economy by ensuring food security, maintaining gene resources of livestock and plants, and providing materials for fuel, medicine, and construction.
5. As Viet Nam's rich biological diversity and ecological security have been under increasing pressures, the traditional knowledge of local communities that are associated with genetic resources is disappearing rapidly, due to the change of traditional lifestyles. A large volume of traditional knowledge, such as the medicinal use of biological resources, is being replaced by modern technology. As part of the Government's efforts to protect the country's rich biodiversity, Law on Biodiversity was enacted in 2008 together with various policies and strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources for socio-economic development. Under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Nagoya Protocol, and international practices, the Law on Biodiversity also aimed at paving the way for a functional regulatory and institutional framework for Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS). Nevertheless, such a legal and institutional framework was not yet fully functional. The country lacked adequately institutional and personnel capacity to carry out bio-prospecting beyond the basic level and develop and manage ABS schemes that are compliant with Nagoya Protocol.

2.3 Problems that the project sought to address, threats and barriers targeted

1. The project's objective seeks to address the following key barriers:
 - a) Weak National Regulatory and Institutional Framework on ABS;
 - b) Limited Institutional and Technical Capacities and Awareness for ABS;

- c) Lack of practical experience in developing and implementing ABS agreements and documentation and registration of traditional knowledge.

2.4 Immediate and development objectives of the project

1. The project's goal is to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of globally significant biodiversity in Viet Nam. The project's development objective is to develop and implement a national Access and Benefit Sharing framework, build national capacities and support an ABS Agreement based on Traditional Knowledge and Public-Private Partnership.
2. The project is consistent with the Nagoya Protocol and supports the Government of Viet Nam to revise and develop national regulations and institutional framework for ABS and improve the capacity and skills of key agencies, promote bio-prospecting, bio-products discovery and technology transfer with prior informed consents and on mutually agreed terms. In addition, the project facilitates private sector engagement and target investments in in-situ conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources.

2.5 Expected results

Outcome 1: Strengthening the National Policy, Legal, and Institutional Framework on ABS.

- Output 1.1: A National Decree on ABS developed, based on the Nagoya Protocol;
- Output 1.2: Establishment of a system for the protection of traditional knowledge (TK), including guidelines for a traditional knowledge registry (piloted under Component 4), Prior Informed Consent / Mutually Agreed Terms (PIC/MAT) procedures and Community Protocols;
- Output 1.3: A Financial Mechanism (e.g., trust fund) developed to channel and reinvest Proceeds from ABS Agreements towards the Conservation of Biological Diversity and Sustainable Use of its Components.

Outcome 2: Developing administrative measures on ABS

- Output 2.1: An administrative permitting system and check-points are established enabling implementation of the national ABS law, providing legal certainty, clarity and transparency for commercial and research purposes;
- Output 2.2 Improved coordination amongst National Competent Authorities and National Focal Point for implementation of ABS legal framework.

Outcome 3: Increasing awareness and capacity building of all relevant stakeholders on the National ABS Framework

- Output 3.1: National Action Plan on Capacity-Building for Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-Sharing developed and implemented;
- Output 3.2 Development of a National ABS Clearing House Mechanism;
- Output 3.3 Awareness raising campaign implemented targeted to different ABS stakeholders (user, providers, research institutions, etc.).

Outcome 4: Demonstrating Private-Public Community Partnerships on Access and Benefit Sharing

- Output 4.1 Negotiating and Implementing ABS Agreements;
 - o Output 4.1(a) The Establishment of an ABS Agreement for Access and Benefit Sharing between the Ta Phin Community and SapaNapro Company;
 - o Output 4.1(b) Establishment a Collaborative Framework for Potential Identification of Genetic Resources for Future Commercialization and for the Development of ABS Partnerships;
- Output 4.2 Traditional Knowledge Documentation and Bio-community Protocols;
 - o Output 4.2(a) Preparation of a bio-community protocol at the pilot site;
 - o Output 4.2(b) Development of Traditional Knowledge Registry at Pilot site;
 - o Output 4.2 (c) Compilation of list of traditional knowledge in Sa Pa district;
- Output 4.3 In-situ conservation measures to ensure the security of the concerned biological resources are integrated into the pilot project;
- Output 4.4 Best practices and lessons of ABS from pilots documented and disseminated.

2.6 Main stakeholders

Table 2 Main stakeholders' roles and responsibilities

Actor	Roles and responsibilities
Biodiversity Conservation Agency (BCA) under VEA/MoNRE	BCA is the implementing agency for this Project within MONRE and the NCA for ABS of species of national priority. Its main role is the development and implementation of new ABS regulations in the light of the Nagoya Protocol. BCA is responsible for organizing and overseeing the pilot site activities in accordance with the implementation plan and on quarterly basis reporting to MONRE and UNDP on the progress as well as financial status of the project.
Provincial People's Committee of Lao Cai (Lao Cai PPC)	Provincial People's Committee of Lao Cai is the highest administrative authority in Lao Cai Province, with the right to grant PIC on access to genetic resources as the national competent authority for ABS on GR in Lao Cai territory. The provincial authorities are involved in enhancing the management and mechanism to institutionalize the ABS framework. The Lao Cai PPC is involved in capacity development and awareness raising activities at the pilot site. The Lao Cai PPC is also responsible for establishing a collaborative Framework with a research institution for identification
People's Committee of Sa Pa district	People's Committee of Sa Pa district is the highest administrative authority in district. The Economic Department is responsible as district authority for the monitoring the implementing of MAT and PIC agreement at Sapa community level. In addition of being the legal entity which unites the local beneficiaries (producers, harvesters, regional contractors), it is an important political actor in the validation of benefit-sharing schemes for access to genetic resources and will also contribute in the process of registration of ABS- related knowledge. It supported the awareness campaigns, capacity building activities, etc..
Ta Phin Commune Committee	In the project, the People's Committee of Ta Phin community is responsible for motivating and mobilizing local community members to participate in Pilot

	activities within its area of competence. It is responsible for the certification of the ABS contracts in accordance to article 58.2 of the Biodiversity Law.
Related communes /communities (including in particular ethnic minorities)	The local communities were directly involved in the pilot activities as providers of genetic resources and as parties to the ABS contracts. In addition, the Red Dao ethnic minority group was directly involved in the process of developing bio-cultural community protocol (Output 4.2b) to define the means of participation of stakeholders in the pilot site activities, free and open consultation, PIC as well as governance system of the group for access and use of genetic resources and their associated traditional knowledge, the conservation of genetic resources and biodiversity conservation and on sustainable use, the conditions for granting access and MAT requirements as well as the potential terms for any future ABS agreements
Related institutes and universities	Hanoi University of Pharmacy (HUP) in general and its Botanical Department, in particular, have a long history in the study on medicine plants. The Botanical Department has conducted extensive research on the medicinal plants of the Dao, Thai, H'mong, Tay, Muong, Cao Lan ethnic minorities in the mountains. The Department has also supported SapaNapro (a private company) in creating new bathing products. VNUA in general and industry and medicinal faculty, in particular have a mandate to study medicinal plant propagation and cultivation in mountainous areas. The researchers have supported the TaPhin famers to propagate some medicinal plants. Plant Resources Center (PRC) is focal point agency of the National Network on Plant Genetic Resources conservation. PRC is responsible for the national task of Conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources of Vietnam. National Institute of Medicinal Material (NIMM) is the main organization for the conservation and use of medicinal plants. With a long history of collaboration with the local communities in implementing conservation, research and development and sustainable use of medicinal genetic resources.
National Agencies	1) MOST has central role in coordination of genetic resources conservation activities that are conducted by relevant government agencies and research institutions. The work conducted by MOST is very relevant to provide baseline information on on-going development and cooperation with relation to genetic resources. MOST is also responsible for coordination of with relevant agencies in guiding registration of TK and copyright related issues on genetic resources 2) MARD is responsible for management of genetic resources related to agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry and will play an important role in enforcement of ABS agreements and contracts. 3) MOH is the focal point for national plan for development of medicinal plants to 2020 and vision toward 2030. They are responsible for development of medicinal plants toward commodity production to meet market demand
Sa Pa Napro company	SapaNapro is a community-based company established with support of HUP and VNUA in 2007 for the sustainable use of forest products in the Sapa district. Its stock structure, as per the statutes of the company and the informal agreements is already in place amongst stakeholders, aims for the final owners to be Bathing techniques and local producers, in equal proportions per group. Profits from the sale of the Bathing products and Bath services are shared equally for the Bath product production group and the bathing medicinal material supply. SapaNapro participates in the awareness raising campaigns capacity building activities, research and development in access to genetic resources. Is responsible for the registration, commercialization and sales of the products and will be directly involved in pilot benefit-sharing agreements.
Civil Society Organizations	CSO's are active at the national and provincial level to raise awareness with regard to ABS economic opportunities and positive social impacts.

3 FINDINGS

3.1 Project Design / Formulation

3.1.1 Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators

1. The project is highly relevant for Vietnam, as it reflects national priorities and a pioneering nature to support national capacities on access and benefit-sharing of genetic resources to facilitate the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS. Interviews confirm an adequate level of participation of different public institutions during project design, which led to clear country appropriation and institutional engagement.
2. Interviewees acknowledge that the design has achieved a balanced project, which encompasses national and local interventions, building awareness, technical and institutional capacities, but also practical experience implementing ABS agreements. The project design is considered clear and is not short on details, complying with GEF requirements, thus providing relevant and necessary guidance for a comprehensive intervention.
3. The project design overall shows a clear and consistent construction of project outcomes, outputs, and objectives. The project's four outcomes are logically linked to the project objective and their achievement would indeed lead to more effective management capabilities and an enabling environment for sustainable use of genetic resources in Viet Nam. The project's 12 outputs are also logically linked to their outcomes, and the theory of change behind the project intervention reflects the causal effect.
4. Most interviewees agree that the project design was ambitious, underestimating the time and effort needed to achieve outputs on a broad range of aspects involving a complex web of stakeholders. Respondent's concurred that ABS concept was new and difficult to understand, the project involved learning about highly new and complicated technical content on ABS, while simultaneously piloting private-public-community partnerships on ABS. Moreover, strengthening National Policy, Legal, and Institutional Framework involves complex technical and political decision-making processes usually out of the range and control of a project's PMU. In this context, some interviewees remark that the project design was not realistic considering the limited timeframe and resources available.
5. The project design includes three impact indicators to measure the achievement of the overall project objective. These indicators do not meet all the SMART criteria. While indicators are specific, achievable, and relevant, they lack measurable and

time-bound criteria. However, through the description of the target, it is possible to identify the time and how the progress of each indicator will be measured.

6. In addition, none of the 13 performance indicators meet all the SMART criteria fully (Table 3). It has been verified that 11 indicators meet the criteria partially in terms of being specific, achievable, and relevant, but they are not measurable and do not specify the time-bound. The following 2 indicators, do not meet any of the SMART criteria:

- *Indicator 2.2. Facilitation of coordination for the operationalization of the ABS permitting system among the different national authorities involved on ABS;*
- *Indicator 3.2. Percentage of the population of researchers, local communities and relevant private sector targeted by the awareness campaign of the legal framework.*

3.1.2 Assumptions and Risks

1. The ProDoc identifies 5 potential risks and their respective mitigation measures, logically articulated with the PIF and ProDoc, at least at three different levels. First at the Strategic Results Framework assessing risks and assumptions for each project indicator; Second through a specific chapter describing major risks and mitigation measures; Finally, assumptions and risks were considered as part of the project's M&E.
2. In general terms the analysis was logical and coherent, however, the description of risks and assumptions was vague, lacking details and explanations to connect with the interventions. On the other hand, risk mitigation measures were more robust and detailed, presenting a path to guide outputs such as awareness-raising campaigns.
3. Climate change has been acknowledged as a low-level risk, but no other external political or economic considerations were identified during project design.

3.1.3 Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design

1. Interviewees acknowledge the pioneering nature of the project, leading to limited previous experiences offering lessons applied to genetic resources, TK, and access for benefit sharing in Viet Nam. On the other hand, the ProDoc does not explicitly mention or reference any other relevant projects nationally or internationally that were used to strengthen or adjust project design.
2. However, interviews confirm that the project design was based on the large experience gained from the implementation of a number of GEF and international

supported projects in Viet Nam. The respondents acknowledged that project design capitalized on decades of field expertise from individual and institutional stakeholders in biodiversity conservation, and highlight the following lessons incorporated from previous experience:

- Management and institutional arrangements at national and site level, considering administrative and procurement constraints from state agencies;
- Stakeholders identification and involvement in project design and implementation; Sequencing of activities for the effective and efficient delivery;
- Synergies among different projects or sources of funding supporting the implementing agencies achieve improved effectiveness and enhance the sustainability of achieved results and long-term development goals.

3.1.4 Planned stakeholder participation

1. Project design followed a participative approach and was careful to incorporate the key institutional stakeholders and potential beneficiaries throughout the consultation process. During the PPG, a thorough local level socio-economic assessment and consultation was conducted to obtain the consent of the ethnic minorities to participate in the project pilot.
2. During the PPG, a thorough local level socio-economic assessment and consultation was conducted to obtain the consent of the ethnic minorities to participate in the project pilot. Full environmental and Social Screening was also conducted during the project preparation phase.
3. The Stakeholder Involvement Plan within the ProDoc describes the different interactions and specific roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder. The Plan proposed 4 mechanisms that should be implemented, with the purpose of promoting and ensuring that all the relevant shareholders receive and share information and provide technical advice on the project implementation: a) regular meetings and conference calls; b) face to face meetings; c) exchange of reports; d) the contractual arrangement negotiated with the private companies should also set coordination mechanisms.
4. With regards to the partnership arrangements negotiated before project approval, UNDP would be the executing agency and MoNRE the implementing partner, which in turn would assign VEA / BCA as the main project manager and work with various departments, offices, and institutes in MoNRE, relevant ministries and other stakeholders. In addition, the design foresaw that MARD and MoST would be involved throughout the implementation of the project as key partners. For which the project proposed an implementation structure that consisted of:

- Project Steering Committee: Chaired by the Vice Minister of MONRE, with BCA as Secretariat; members were senior representatives from MARD, MOST, MOH, PPC, and UNDP.
- Project Management Unit. which would be designated by Executive Decree and would be made up of a National Project Director, National Deputy Project Director, Project Coordinator, Project Technical Officer all of them would be part-time and would be a contribution in kind from the Government. On the other hand, the design proposed hiring full-time and for 48 months to the profiles of Project Manager, Project accountant and Project assistant cum translator.

3.1.5 Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector

1. The ProDoc identifies potential linkages and presents the intention to coordinate planned activities with other programs and projects, although specific coordination mechanisms were not described. The following projects were listed as complementary interventions, most of which are financed by the GEF:
 - UNDP-GEF Removing Barriers Hindering Protected Areas Management Effectiveness in Viet Nam project.
 - World Bank – GEF Wildlife Consumption: Reforming Policies and Practices to Strengthen Biodiversity Conservation project.
 - UNDP-GEF Conservation of Critical Wetland PAs and Linked Landscapes project
 - ADB-Biodiversity Conservation Corridors Conservation Project
 - ADB-GEF Integrating Conservation, Climate Resilience and Sustainable Forest Management in the Central Annamite Landscapes project

3.1.6 Gender responsiveness of project design

1. The project sought to incorporate gender concerns; a gender analysis was undertaken during the preparation phase. The project does not have a specific Gender Plan, possibly because it was only mandatory for GEF financed projects approved after July 1, 2018. As a result, no specific activities, targets, budget, and timeline were planned to ensure gender equality. There is also no mention or evidence of alignment with national gender policies or strategies.
2. The ProDoc recognizes the historical role of women as the guardians of traditional knowledge and the main providers, collectors, and managers of natural and genetic resources. The environmental benefits of the project will have a greater impact on women, especially those activities that are implemented by the pilot sites, because

they will provide new opportunities for employment and income stability for the community of ethnic minorities and women in particular.

3. The project logical framework makes an effort to include gender considerations, specifically in terms of two indicators stating that at least 30% of the people trained are women. While it could be considered a representative percentage, it does not ensure woman empowerment and gender equality in project interventions. The ProDoc also provides for the equal participation of women in training processes, working groups established by the project, implementation of pilots, and on local level committees and groups related to PIC negotiations, community co-management, training, and awareness activities.
4. The project was categorized under the UNDP Gender Market as GEN-1, which means “some contribution to gender equality”. However, according to the information presented in the same ProDoc, the rating that should have received is GEN-2 “Significant contributions to gender equality”.

3.1.7 Social and Environmental Safeguards

1. The ProDoc mentions that the project has conducted the Full Environmental and Social Screening during the PPG phase, which should have been attached as Annex 5, however, this attachment is not in the ProDoc. According to the project coordinator, the Full Environmental and Social Screening was not performed because it was not a requirement for medium size project. This was confirmed and reported in PIR - 2018 "the project was prepared before the Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) was required so that the SESP will be conducted before 2019".
2. This is how in 2019 the project develops the SESP following the 2012 UNDP methodology and staffing, which consists of 5 questions related to the project activities and their potential impact and vulnerability to environmental and social change for the areas of biodiversity and natural resources; pollution; climate change; social equity and equity; demography; culture; health and safety; socio-economic. The screening did not identify risks associated with the project for the aforementioned areas, so it can be concluded that it complies with UNDP Social and Environmental Standards.
3. The SESP classified to the projects as Type 1, that is, no more environmental and social reviews were required, and therefore no further action is needed. It is important to mention, that although the SESP was carried out, it was not presented to the PSC.

3.2 Project Implementation

3.2.1 Adaptive management

1. With regards to adaptive management, it is relevant to mention that there was a delay in project approval¹, which was considered within the normal parameters for this kind of projects. The project was supposed to end in October 2020, but it was granted an 8 months extension due to COVID-19, because it was not possible to undertake certain activities such as field trips. However, COVID -19 did not affect the project significantly, considering it occurred almost by the end of project implementation where most activities were already on track for completion.
2. In general terms, interviews confirm the project has followed an adaptive management approach, showing flexibility and the capacity to face the different challenges found. However, the Inception Report proposed to change/modify 6 indicators (two indicators per outcome 1, 3, and 4), these changes were never incorporated into the project implementation. It has been commented that a mid-term evaluation which is not required for small-size projects, could have allowed to reflect on design issues and make a course correction.
3. The project has not modified the Outcomes and Outputs originally proposed, interviews confirm that there was no need since there was no challenge or requirement to change. Despite this, the project kept the original targets unchanged, and successfully achieved these targets.
4. It is important to note that the Mid Term Review (MTR) was not undertaken, since it was not mandatory for medium-size GEF funded projects. In the opinion of the interviewees, the absence of an MTR did not allow an additional space and opportunity to reflect strategically and improve the path towards project closure. However, the MTR is not the only way to rectify and bring changes, the project implementation reviews could also have brought the need for adjustments to the project board.
5. The project demonstrated adaptation capacity in terms of the implementation arrangements. In the year 2020, a shift from NIM to CO-support- implementation was reported, as a consequence, several activities were procured directly through UNDP, instead of the original arrangement through PMU.

¹ The project approval procedures within GoV have taken a long time and have led to a significant delay of the start of the project. The final Project Document was signed by UNDP and VEA on 10 October 2016. Inception Workshop was held on 15 December 2016.

Table 3 Changes to the project results framework

PO/Outcome	Indicator		Targets End of Project		
	Original on the ProDoc	Modification	Original on the ProDoc	Inception Report	Modification
Outcome 1 Strengthening national policy, legal and institutional framework for ABS	Community protocol supported in the ABS decree and developed for regulation of access and benefit sharing from genetic resources and traditional knowledge held by local communities ²	No changes	PIC, MAT and other related provisions for community protocol included in the new ABS decree	Guidelines and manuals to support TK protection and development of community protocol in place	Remains the same as stated in the ProDoc
	Financial mechanism designed to reinvest revenues for ABS agreement to support biodiversity conservation	No changes	At least one set of provisions for financial mechanism created and financial mechanisms effectively created supporting conservation and sustainable use of biological resources	Guidelines support the implementation of financial mechanism for reinvestment of proceeds from ABS agreements towards conservation issued.	Remains the same as stated in the ProDoc
Outcome 3 Increasing awareness and capacity of all relevant stakeholders for implementation of national ABS framework	Number of national and provincial competent authorities trained in ABS to facilitate the implementation of the national ABS framework	No changes	At least 100 staff trained, of which at least 30% would be women. Training/awareness raising manuals developed and endorsed by the national	Training/awareness raising manuals developed and used by agencies,	Remains the same as stated in the ProDoc

²The development of the bio-community protocol will be supported by the legislation and be part of the pilot project considered under Outcome 4.

			authorities and used by agencies, research institutions and other stakeholders.	research institutions and other stakeholders	
	Percentage of the population of researchers, local communities and relevant private sector targeted by the awareness campaign of the legal framework	No changes	At least 60 percent of targeted population of researchers, local communities, and relevant private sector staff, of which at least 30% would be women aware of key provisions of ABS legal framework	At least 60 percent of targeted population of researchers, local communities at project site, and relevant private sector staff engaging in Bio Trade, of which at least 30% would be women aware of key provisions of ABS legal framework	Remains the same as stated in the ProDoc
Outcome 4 Demonstrating private-public-community partnerships on access and benefit sharing	In situ conservation measures to ensure the security of the concerned biological resources are integrated into the pilot project.	No changes	At least one Approved Management Plan for in-situ conservation and measures being implemented	Management Plan for in-situ conservation in pilot site developed and being implemented.	Remains the same as stated in the ProDoc
	Number of best practices and lessons of ABS from pilots documented and disseminated	No changes	At least three policy briefs developed from best practices and lessons from the project.	A policy brief which covers different aspects of best practices and lessons learned from the project and disseminated	Remains the same as stated in the ProDoc

3.2.2 Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements

1. The mechanisms under the Stakeholder Involvement Plan were instrumental to maintain relevant participation in project management and decision making. At the local level, the contractual arrangement with the private company will also set coordination mechanisms for the future. In general terms, the project followed these mechanisms achieving important levels of stakeholder participation.
2. The project maintained adequate levels stakeholder participation, both at the operative level in different intervention scales, as well as its governance through the Steering Committee. Early engagement of stakeholders since project design is acknowledged as a critical factor facilitating partnerships and overall participation.
3. National government stakeholders were actively involved, the project mobilized the participation of the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Science and Technology. These agencies are not only closely related to genetic resources but are also key institutions for the country's development agenda.
4. About to the Steering Committee meetings, these were held on an annual basis and were, basically, developed to show progress and implementation to date. The activities planned for the following year were presented in this same space. The Steering Committee provided feedback on the planned activities and comments on how these should be coupled with the Government's guidelines on ABS in Vietnam. PSC gives guidance on the annual work-plans and oversees the project implementation and progress to ensure that the project's resources made available and the outputs produced meet the requirement of beneficiaries and the Government.
5. One of the most interesting findings of the TE is related to the political support received by different Ministries, which was critical to move forward some project activities that included institutional, and legal decision-making processes. It has been mentioned that these were achieved because of three key factors: 1) MoNRE has extensive experience drafting legal documentation, decrees and secondary laws; 2) The cooperation of the Ministry of Justice to follow up on MoNRE step by step in the development of the proposals; 3) The key factor was that the MARD, MoNRE and the Ministry of Justice held previous and informal meetings to discuss and follow up on the new decrees or laws, before presenting them formally. This allowed the three ministries to remain informed and engaged in the process.
6. The results achieved in terms of participation in different awareness and capacity-building events demonstrate there is vesting interest from national stakeholders to

- understand and learn about genetic resources and ABS. However, stakeholders recognize it is a complex issue and not easy to understand for the public in general.
7. Interviewees point out that there are working links with other initiatives, for example, Lao Cai operated the UN-REDD+ programme. In this sense, both the program and the project worked to ensure the participation of local communities in forest conservation and the sustainable use of forest resources. An example of this synergy is that the + Viet Nam Phase 2 programme, Provincial REDD+ action plan for Lao Cai has been approved. The REDD+ action plan is an important step for the province in protecting the ecological environment and combating climate change, while ensuring the community's interests in the local economy and society. In order to implement the REDD+ action plan, Lao Cai's authorities will strengthen capacity in forest fire prevention and control and limit deforestation and forest degradation due to forest exploitation, and cardamom cultivation, and conserve and enhance forest carbon stocks through selection and breeding of forest trees to plant them on the local forest land. The province will also promote mobilization and attraction of more investment capital to afforestation, protection of ecological systems and procession of forestry products, contributing to creating more jobs for local people as well as improve the incomes and lives of people through developing the market and partnerships for natural forest-based economic models. Under ABS project, public-private partnerships are being piloted between provincial governments, ethnic minority communities and businesses selling traditional medicines, such as ABS agreements between the local community of Ta Phin commune and Sapa Napro, which are managed and harvested with respect to indigenous knowledge and practices.
 8. The project also links with the UNDP-GEF Conservation of Critical Wetland PAs and Linked Landscapes project, because both projects aim to create an enabling environment to implement innovative financing to Pas and the financial mechanisms to reinvest revenues for ABS agreement to support biodiversity conservation.
 9. Concerning gender participation, the project does not have a Gender Plan. Moreover, during the design of the project, there is no evidence that women's groups have been properly conducted and involved in this process. Ideally, this differentiation would have been key because of the role of women, especially in implementation sites.
 10. To ensure the participation of women, during the implementation of the pilots, special attention was paid to the groups of local women and girls, particularly those who are part of the processes of growing and harvesting plants, product development, and marketing. Efforts were also made to ensure the active

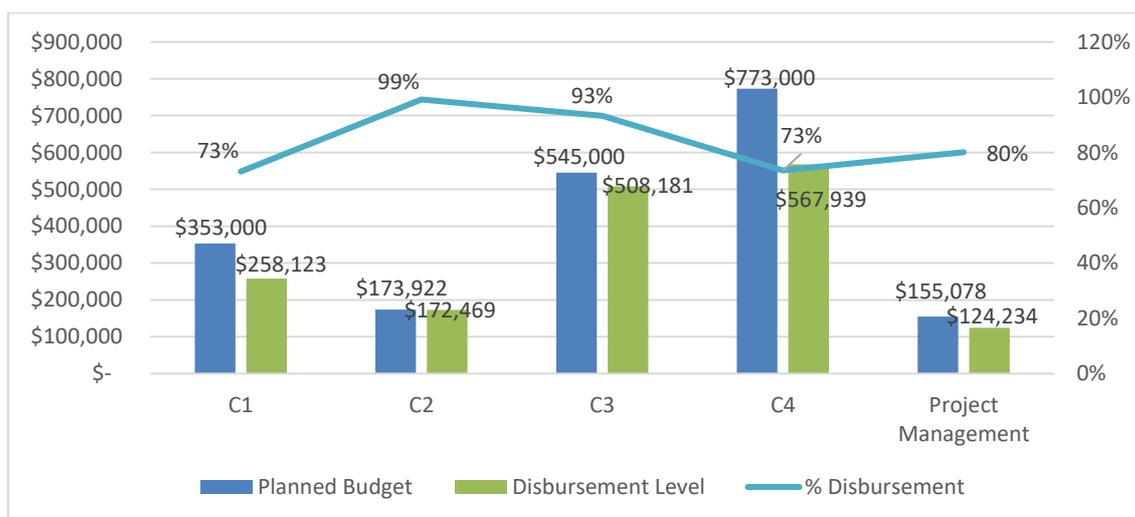
participation of women through community protocols for the protection of traditional knowledge. As part of Outcome 3, conducted a series of training and awareness-raising workshops, although no exclusive sessions were held for women, the condition that 30% of participants be women was addressed.

11. The project, from its design, identified the women of the Red Dao ethnic group and rightly sought to keep this group linked and participate in the different activities related to the conservation of traditional knowledge.

3.2.3 Project Finance and Co-finance

1. The original project budget equals USD 2 million from the GEF for the implementation period. Until the *first quarter of 2021* the project disbursed USD 1.63 million, that is, 82% of the total available budget. Component 2 reports had the highest execution (99%), followed by Component 3 (93%). On the other end, with only a few months before the project ends, Components 1 and 4 report a low execution with 73% and 80% respectively, as shown in the following figure.

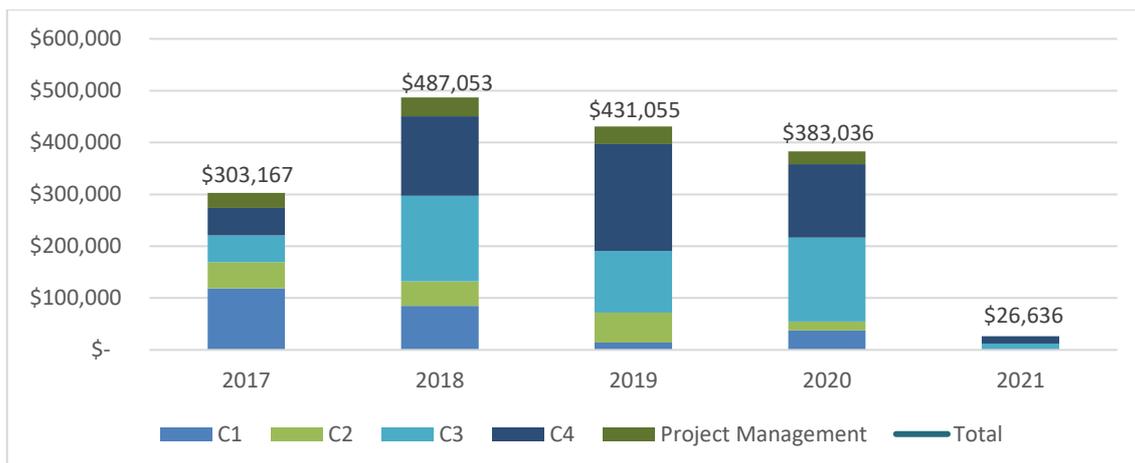
Figure 1 Component Budget vs Disbursement



Source: Annual Progress Report, 2017 – 2021

2. During 2017 execution has been relatively low, which has been noted as something somehow common for GEF projects, considering the normal start-up challenges, learning curve, and the necessary adaptation time. The GEF funds were mostly executed during 2018 and 2019, since 2020 there is a decrease influenced by COVID- 19 as well as the fact that the project is nearing completion in 2021.

Figure 2 Budgetary Execution by Component



Source: Annual Progress Report, 2017 – 2020

3. In addition to the GEF funding, the project benefitted from co-financing commitments totaling USD 10.53 million VEA, Genetic Fund Program, Plant Resource Center, Helvetas, The SapaNapro Company, Lao Cai Provincial People’s Committee, and UNDP.
4. As part of the financial control, the project prepared quarterly progress reports, which included the planned budget and disbursement level for the different activities planned for each Outcome. The planned and disbursed values of the report are presented in Vietnamese Dong and dollars.
5. Also, as part of the PIRs, the project presented the implementation progress report, the information shown corresponded to the comparison of its cumulative progress with the budget approved in ProDoc, in the Atlas system, and the general ledger expenditure.
6. The above-mentioned tools, due to the quality and frequency of information, allowed the coordination of the project to be kept constantly informed of progress. The reports do not show that any relevant management problems have arisen.
7. Besides, and in compliance with the M&E Workplan of ProDoc, the project contracted 4 external audits, whose results were satisfactory. Audit conclusions indicate that no significant issues were reported on changes or inconsistencies in the management and internal controls of the implementing agency; the audit also confirms the existence of a single account to receive project resources. On the other hand, few observations were found on the spending procedures:
 - a. Audit 2018:
 - i. The VAT was not found, that is, the controls on the invoices were not carefully taken.

- ii. For a contract settlement not executed in a timely manner the project did not comply with the terms set out in the contract.
- b.** Audit 2019:
 - i.* Timing of appraisal and approving of some bidding packages was non-compliant with the provisions of the Bidding Laws;
 - ii.* Information on the Bid dossiers was not responding with requirements in the Bid invitation documents.
- 8. During the implementation no changes were identified with regards to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions.
- 9. About co-financing, the project produced a final report (Table 4), initially, the project expected a co-financing of USD 10.53 million, the final amount mobilized was slightly higher USD 10.59 million, due to an additional USD 60.000 contribution from HELVETAS. Sources of co-financing present a diversified portfolio of donors (Table 5).
- 10. Several project partners made in-kind contributions because some of them participated in project activities and contributed to the project in various ways. For example, these partners provided the time and dedication of technicians from their respective institutions, actively attended workshops and meetings and commented on project documents and reports.
- 11. Besides, the participation of officials allowed to strengthen and build capacities of co-financing institutions, thus generating specific experience related to ABS, which contributes to the sustainability of the project results.

Table 4 Co-financing

Type/Source	Expected cofinancing (USD)				Actual cofinancing (USD)				Total (USD)	
	In cash	Loans/ Concessions	In-kind Support	Others	In cash	Loans /Concessions	In-kind Support	Others	Planned	Actual
Vietnam Environment Administration	200,000		800,000		100,000		900,000		1,000,000	1,000,000
Ministry of Science and Technology - Genetic Fund Program	1,500,000		1,500,000				3,000,000		3,000,000	3,000,000
Plant Resource Center, MARD	5,000,000						5,000,000		5,000,000	5,000,000
Helvetas	150,000						210,000		150,000	210,000
The SapaNapro Company	200,000						200,000		200,000	200,000
Lao Cai Provincial People's Committee							680,000		-	680,000
UNDP	500,000						500,000		500,000	500,000
Total	7,550,000		2,300,000		100,000		10,490,000		9,850,000	10,590,000

Source: Cofinance Report, 2021

Table 5 Confirmed Sources of Co-Financing at TE Stage

Sources of Co-Financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (US\$)
Recipient Country Gov't	Vietnam Environment Administration	In kind	Recurrent expenditures	100,000
		In cash	Recurrent expenditures	900,000
Recipient Country Gov't	Genetic Fund Program	In kind	Recurrent expenditures	3,000,000
Recipient Country Gov't	Plant Resource Center	In kind	Recurrent expenditures	5,000,000
Non-Government Organization	Helvetas	In kind	Recurrent expenditures	210,000
Private Sector	The SapaNapro Company	In kind	Recurrent expenditures	200,000
Beneficiaries	Lao Cai Provincial People's Committee	In kind	Recurrent expenditures	680,000
Donor Agency	UNDP	In kind	Recurrent expenditures	500,000

3.2.4 Monitoring & Evaluation

<i>Overall quality of monitoring and evaluation</i>	<i>4 (MS)</i>
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M&E Design at entry

<i>M&E design at the beginning of the project</i>	<i>4 (MS)</i>
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1. In general terms, the M&E Workplan and budget were well-conceived and follows the general guidelines and procedures for GEF UNDP projects. M&E design at entry includes the project Inception Workshop to be held within the first 2 months of project implementation, Quarterly Reports, Annual Project Review (APR) and Project Implementation Reports (PIR), Mid Term Evaluation, Final Evaluation, annual audits, and visits to field sites.
2. However, a project-specific M&E plan was not designed, including a complete baseline and data analysis systems supporting SMART indicators, nor evaluation studies at specific times to assess results. There is also no evidence that any further adjustments or improvements were made during project inception.
3. Besides the ProDoc establishes that the UNDP CO and the UNDP - Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) would conduct visits to project sites based on the agreed schedule in the APR/PIR, as part of the visit, a field visit report would be prepared by the CO and UNDP RCU. No evidence was found to support reports of field visits by UNDP CO and UNDP RCU.
4. Finally, the ProDoc establishes that the project would carry out independent Mid-term and Final Evaluation, in both cases relevant GEF Focal Area Tracking Tool and shall be completed before the field visits. For the M&E Workplan indicative budget the sum of USD 107,000 was proposed, which could be considered reasonable giving the size of the project.

M&E: Implementation

<i>Implementation of the M&E Plan</i>	<i>4 (MS)</i>
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5. M&E implementation was led by the National Coordinator with support from the team. It has been mentioned that project design underestimated the time and effort needed to comply with complex and time-consuming M&E-related tasks. According to the PMU, in general terms the M&E plan was adequately funded, allowing the project to comply with most of the M&E Plan as stated in the ProDoc.
6. Monitoring of the progress of activities, as well as budget execution, was presented regularly through quarterly reports and the annual PIRs. These reports were facilitated

because project planning was mainly guided by Quarterly and Annual Work Plans, these setting out specific tasks assigned to each activity, so progress monitoring could be carried out weekly or daily by the National Coordinator.

7. The project has complied with the conduction of annual audits, the presentation of the Quarterly and Annual Reports, as well in the presentation of PIRs. The monitoring of co-financing was mostly carried out by the MoNRE (Focal Point). The GEF OFP was kept informed of the M&E project activities.
8. Mid-term monitoring activities were not implemented as originally planned, for example, the GEF Biodiversity Tracking Tool was not updated, and the MTR was not undertaken because the new GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy established that there is no obligatory for medium-sized projects. Also, no means of verification were found with regards to Field Visit Report/BTOR to project implementation sites by the UNDP CO or the RCU.
9. Evidence suggests M&E information was discussed with project staff and presented to project stakeholders, specially, to the Steering Committee. Although it was recognized that it was used to improve overall adaptive capacity, however, no significant changes to the original project design and intervention strategy are reported, as well as no evidence that a Theory of Change was ever developed or revised based on the M&E information.
10. The project created technical and institutional capacities to ensure that key information will be collected after the end of the project. The ABS clearing house mechanisms provide an official platform to access data.
11. No particular monitoring of environmental and social risks was included in the M&E plan because the screening was not done as part of ProDoc, as it was not a requirement for medium size projects.

3.2.5 UNDP implementation/oversight (*) and Implementing Partner execution (*), overall project implementation/execution (*), coordination, and operational issues

<i>Overall quality of Implementation/Execution</i>	5 (S)
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UNDP implementation/oversight

<i>Implementing Agency</i>	5 (S)
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1. UNDP played a leading role as implementing agency throughout the project lifecycle. According to interviewees, UNDP has provided adequate quality support since the project was first conceived as an idea, supporting the preparation of the

project proposal, following up on the project appraisal, and later accompanying on the start-up, oversight, and implementation supervision.

2. In general terms, testimonies consider UNDP provided quality support to the implementing partner and the PMU. Despite being a National Implementation Modality (NIM) project, in practice, UNDP played an enhanced role in supporting in-country implementation. Interviews confirm that UNDP played an active role in coordinating with other projects, its portfolio approach maintains coherence and consistency with national policies as well as synchronize with the emerging trends and priorities from the UN conventions, in this case particularly keen on the Nagoya Protocol. UNDP’s staff participated in different seminars, meetings, and events organized by the project; its added value was acknowledged through the holistic approach that integrates a wide range of different development challenges.
3. MoNRE also recognizes the support received from UNDP to comply with the GEF operative and administrative standards, demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness. Due to the lengthy governmental procurement process, at the beginning of 2020 CO support to NIM modality was requested by the PMU, to accelerate several procurement processes.
4. However, interviewees report that certain administrative procedures for example to revise/approve the year plan, involved time-consuming procedures both at national and regional UNDP levels. All annual workplans for 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 were revised at least one time and the current work plan for 2021 is still under revision (Decisions No. 2963; No.3726; No.2306; No.969/QD-BTNMT).
5. It was also mentioned that there were occasional challenges in harmonizing the views of UNDP and the Government about the planning and revision of documents and that the PMU did important work to meet the goals of the Project, bringing together both perspectives.
6. On the other hand, UNDP was in charge of the update and oversight of risk management and responsible for updating them in the annual PIRs. It is evident that these were updated annually without showing any changes in terms of risk. Only, in 2020 UNDP CO and UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser reported delays due to restrictions by COVID-19 as an operational risk, aware that this would delay the execution of the final evaluation. Besides COVID-19 in the year 2020, the project did not report any other major risks affecting implementation.

National Implementing Partner (MoNRE)

<i>Executing Agency</i>	5 (S)
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7. The project is implemented under the UNDP NIM, which means that the national execution of the Project was led by MONRE. The project received high level support allowing MoNRE to play a crucial role facilitating participation and engagement from different state and provincial agencies, as well as ensuring co-financing commitments from MARD, MOH and MOST.
8. Interviews confirmed that MoNRE provided the necessary leadership and support for the implementation of the Project, providing appropriate focus on results and timelines. Based on its previous experience implementing other projects related to biodiversity conservation and genetic resources, they were able to maintain stakeholders aware about the Nagoya Protocol and the implications of the ABS.
9. The project benefited from an experienced PMU, formed by authorities and technical staff from MONRE and three profiles hired by UNDP (coordinator, assistant and accountant). MONRE's previous experience with GEF funded projects, facilitated an adequate risk management as well as the appropriate use of funds and the capacity to procure goods and services.
10. On the other hand, three different coordinators were reported during project implementation. Interviews argue that staff rotation, both within the team and among the different stakeholders involved in project implementation may have affected PMU performance, considering the learning curve needed to catch up with a complex project.

3.2.6 Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

1. Risks identified during project design were adequate to further describe the project context and the challenges ahead, however, the five risks identified were described vaguely and very limited detail was provided to characterize their potential impact to project implementation.
2. The project reported to the Project Steering Committee on critical risk management in all its PRIs. The 2018 and 2019 reports report that the project did not encounter any critical risk during its implementation. Out of the three existing Project Implementation Reviews, the only year risks were reported was 2020 due to COVID-19, stating that travel restrictions and social distancing measures had negatively impacted the project operations. The project has shifted some of the activities to online modalities (e.g. meetings, online photo competition, etc.). In spite of the above, in general, in all PIRs the risk rating was always low.

3. There is also no evidence that these original risks were systematically assessed or analyzed during project implementation, or discussed during the project steering committee meetings, as the overall risk rating (low) hasn't been reviewed, changed or updated until 2020 due to COVID 19. Evidence confirms the board was informed about the new risk derived from COVID19. In relation to the SESP, this was only done in 2019 and was not presented to the PSC.
4. In December 2020, efforts were made to organize two national workshops in the south and middle of Viet Nam, however, because of the risk of COVID-19 in the south of the country, the activity was halted and the invitation was not sent; subsequently, the date was changed and the workshop was moved to January 2021.

3.3 Project Results and Impacts

3.3.1 Progress towards objective and expected outcomes

3.3.1.1 Outcome 1: Strengthening national policy, legal and institutional framework for ABS

1. Outcome 1 supported the full stocktaking of relevant national legal and administrative measures related to ABS and supported the establishment of a sound regulatory and institutional framework necessary to support the successful implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in Viet Nam. In particular, this outcome supported the development of a national ABS decree and supporting guidelines for access and benefit sharing in Viet Nam.

Table 6 Progress towards results Outcome 1

Indicator	Targets End of Project	Terminal Evaluation Findings
New Decree approved for ABS in full compliance with the Nagoya Protocol	One national new decree for ABS and regulations, circulars and guidelines for its implementation approved by the Government	Achieved. The project has directly and indirectly supported the development the following policies: i) Decree No.59/2017/ND-CP dated 12 May 2017 on Management and Access to genetic resources and benefit sharing arising from their utilization; ii) Circular No.15/2019/TT-BTNMT on organization and operation of the Appraisal Committee to access genetic resources for commercial research or commercial product development purposes; iii) Circular No.07/2020/TT-BNNPTNT on organization and operation of the Appraisal Committee access genetic resources for commercial research or commercial product development purposes under the MARD; iv) Circular No.10/2020/TT-BTNMT on reporting of access to genetic resources and benefit sharing from the use of genetic resources; v) Decision No.4397/QD-BNN-KHCN the Minister of MARD on approving the framework project of tasks of conserving genetic resources in agriculture and

		forestry and fisheries at ministerial level in the period of 2021-2025;
Conservation, use and equitable benefit sharing from traditional knowledge incorporated into ABS Decree	Several provisions incorporated into ABS decree for protection of TK	<p>Achieved. Provisions for protection of TK were incorporated into Part 1 of Article 26 of Decree No.59/2017/ND-CP. It is stated that MoNRE is responsible for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Carrying out the tasks as specified herein; Developing national databases on genetic resources, traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources and the benefit sharing arising from their utilization; Creating and running a website, registration and report system through the website about genetic resources, access and the benefit sharing their utilization; Providing detailed guidance on access to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources; Cooperating with relevant ministries in providing guidelines for benefit sharing arising from utilization and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources. <p>Overall, the project has done a good job in mainstreaming TK protection in ABS Decree No.59/2017/ND-CP. However, a clear and further guidance on TK protection should be developed.</p>
Community protocol supported in the ABS decree and developed for regulation of access and benefit sharing from genetic resources and traditional knowledge held by local communities ³	PIC, MAT and other related provisions for community protocol included in the new ABS decree	<p>On-Track. MAT is incorporated in Decree No.59/2017/ND-CP as explained under the Indicator of Outcome 2. Provision on PIC is also directly captured in ABS decree (Chapter II on Issuance, extension and revocation of permits). It is stated that prior to the application for granting permit, applicant should negotiate and conclude the MAT with the provider and have the MAT certified by the People's Committee of the commune. No evidence of community protocol provision was found in ABS decree. This is yet to be achieved; however, it is worth noting that in Vietnam development of civil society and community protocol is regulated by specific law namely the Civil Code and Forestry Law. This issue hardly to be covered by ABS Decree.</p>
Financial mechanism designed to reinvest revenues for ABS agreement to support biodiversity conservation	At least one set of provisions for financial mechanism created and a financial mechanism effectively created supporting conservation and sustainable use of biological resources	<p>Achieved. Generally good; Decree No.59/2017/ND-CP provides rules for managing access to genetic resources and benefit sharing arising from their utilization, which states that: "The benefit sharing arising from the utilization of genetic resources shall be fair and equitable among relevant parties and shall contribute to the effective management of biological resources, promote the scientific research and the commercialization of genetic resources and focus on the role of indigenous and local communities in conservation and sustainable utilization of genetic resources" (Article 4). The ABS Decree also has one</p>

³The development of the bio-community protocol will be supported by the legislation and be part of the pilot project considered under Outcome 4.

		chapter (Chapter III) on Sharing of benefit arising from utilization of genetic resources with Article 21 on Benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and Article 22 on Rules for sharing of monetary benefits ⁴ . The provision for financial benefits to channel into State budgets is also captured in the ABS Decree. However, financial regulations guiding the ABS implementation including mechanisms to reinvest ABS monetary benefits in biodiversity conservation, cost for appraisal ABS application, salary for Appraisal Committee etc. are still lacking, which create many difficulties in ABS implementation in practice. The participation of financial officers and private sector in project implementation is limited.
National ABS clearing house mechanism operational	An ABS Clearing House system integrated into the National Biodiversity and genetic resources databases and sharing information and used as an ABS network for information sharing including between the ABS practice community	Achieved. A preliminary national database (template for data inputting and extracting) has been established to support the national ABS Clearing House Mechanism. The project supported DoNRE Lao Cai to establish a genetic resources and TK Database System for Lao Cai province and Chu Yang Sin National Park to collect information on genetic resources. The CHM design has been completed, and the CHM is in operation since 2017 with address: https://vietnamabs.gov.vn/ . ABS CHM serves as platform to provide official information on ABS management in Vietnam to stakeholders.

Green = Achieved	Yellow = On track to be achieved until project closure	Red = there is a risk of not being achieved until the project is closed
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3.3.1.2 Outcome 2: Developing administrative measures for implementation of national ABS legal framework

1. Outcome 2 focused on putting in place administrative mechanisms to implement the ABS legal system, through two differentiated Outputs. The project supported number of activities aimed at institutionalize permits, access, benefit sharing, contract negotiation, compliance and monitoring of ABS-related issues. The project

⁴The main elements of financial mechanism include:

1. The monetary benefit for each product developed from utilization of genetic resources shall be at least 1% of the total annual revenue earned from such product.

2. The monetary benefit paid to the Provider for transfer of genetic resources and derivatives thereof; use of intellectual property rights to each achievement in utilization of genetic resources shall be at least 2% of the total value of the transfer or the total amount of money collected from the use of intellectual property rights.

3. Total monetary benefits arising from access and utilization of genetic resources shall be shared as follows:

- a) The Provider that is a People's Committee of commune, a management board of a conservation zone, an owner of a facility of storing and preserving genetic resources under State management, a biodiversity conservation facility, or a scientific and technological research institution under State management shall receive 30% of monetary benefits as defined in Clause 1 and Clause 2 this Article; the remaining amount (70% of monetary benefits) shall be transferred to the State budget for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use;

- b) The Provider that is an organization, household or individual responsible for managing genetic resources shall receive 50% of monetary benefits as stated in Clause 1 and Clause 2 this Article; the remaining amount of monetary benefits shall be transferred to the State budget for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

also undertook activities to develop tool-kits, manuals circulars, guidelines and other instruments for facilitating the establishment of the ABS permitting system.

2. The project provided support to concrete mechanisms to increase coordination and exchange of information among the different national competent authorities, facilitating the establishment of networks and communities using the CHM.

Table 7 Progress towards results Outcome 2

Indicator	Targets End of Project	Terminal Evaluation Findings
Guidelines for the permitting system for ABS developed and approved and piloted	Set of guidelines, manual and circulars approved and in use, including models and standardized clauses for MAT, and are implemented in at least one case.	Achieved. The project was able to introduce guidelines and circulars aligned with activities reported under Outcome 1. It is important to note that up to now, two ABS licenses for commercial purpose, one ABS license for non-commercial purpose and over 50 decisions for transfer genetic resources abroad were granted. An ABS Agreement between a community company and local households at pilot site has been developed and signed at the demonstration site.
Facilitation of coordination for the operationalization of the ABS permitting system among the different national authorities involved on ABS	<p>Clear instructions available (through guidelines, circulars and manuals) for coordination and information sharing between FP and NCAs, and amongst the NCAs. Network of NCA with the involvement of the NFP fully functional using inter alia, electronic communication mechanisms</p> <p>Supporting mechanism for ABS monitoring and tracking in place, such as a technical advisory committee or a similar body</p> <p>Formally establish network/partnership between provider/user/managers and researchers using the CHM or other tools</p>	Achieved. Project has supported for the development of administrative measures for implementation of national ABS legal framework. Instructions for coordination and information sharing between FP and NCAs are captured in Decree No.59/2017/ND-CP (Article 5 on NFP, Article 6 on NCAs, Article 24 on disclosure of IRCC, Article 26 on Responsibilities of MoNRE and MARD and other agencies). Functional departments under NFPs (Decision No.1913/QD-BTNMT dated 08 August 2017 of MoNRE and Decision No. 2586/QD-BNN-KHCN dated 02 July 2018 of MARD) have been assigned to operate ABS systems with clear tasks and authorities. A set of ABS guidelines and manual have been developed, including but not limited to Guidance document for the implementation of Decree No.59/2017/ND-CP, Questions and Answers on ABS, ABS handbook, Factsheets on ABS for main actors, including policy makers, researchers, national and international companies Circular No.10/2020/TT-BTNMT dated 29 September 2020 on reporting of access to genetic resources and benefit sharing from the use of genetic resources. Coordination between MoNRE and MARD, MoH, MoST has been also strengthened through information exchange, technical meetings on related issues. An ABS network with 150 participants has been established, achieving the target of a formal network between providers, users, managers and researchers. A preliminary database has been established to support the national ABS Clearing House Mechanism. The project supported DoNRE Lao Cai to establish a genetic resources and TK Database System

		for Lao Cai province, specifically in creating the template and indicators for inputting the data and getting the database of the province. The CHM design has been completed, and the CHM is in operation since 2017 with address: https://vietnamabs.gov.vn/ .
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Green = Achieved	Yellow = On track to be achieved until project closure	Red = there is a risk of not being achieved until the project is closed
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3.3.1.3 Outcome 3: Increasing awareness and capacity of all relevant stakeholders for implementation of national ABS framework

1. Outcome 3 focused on building the institutional and staff capacity of the BCA and key national and provincial partner agencies for bio-prospecting and managing ABS agreements in compliance with the approved ABS Decree and Nagoya Protocol.
2. Information provided by the project allows a quantitative assessment, confirming that the project target has been not only achieved but surpassed, in terms of national and provincial authorities trained. However, there is no qualitative indication about the results of the training received, the percentage of gaps filled or the usability of the training generated. Moreover, the project still needs to secure the official approval of material and training manuals developed.
3. With regards to the awareness raising campaign targeted to different ABS stakeholders, the results described above under this outcome are significant, but it appears that capacity building and awareness activities were carried out in an ad hoc manner and not as part of a coordinated strategy or campaign. Overall progress towards this target is unclear as neither data is not fully provided nor data is not sufficient for the evaluation.

Table 8 Progress towards results Outcome 3

Indicator	Targets End of Project	Terminal Evaluation Findings
Number of national and provincial competent authorities trained in ABS to facilitate the implementation of the national ABS framework	<p>At least 100 staff trained, of which at least 30% would be women.</p> <p>Training/awareness raising manuals developed and endorsed by the national authorities and used by agencies, research institutions and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Achieved. Based on a gap analysis and training needs assessment, the project organized five training courses/workshops to strengthen the capacity on management of ABS in 2018 and 2019 with more than 300 participants, out of which 155 are staffs from national and provincial competent authorities. Among the staff trained 45 are women accounting for 29%.</p> <p>On-Track. A set of training materials including but not limited to ABS Question and Answer, ABS handbook, Factsheets on ABS for policy makers, researchers, international and national companies have been developed. The members of above-mentioned ABS network have been provided ABS materials, regularly updated about ABS information and are</p>

		trainees of the project' trainings. However, there is no evidence that the training documents developed by project were approved/endorsed by the national authorities and used by agencies, research institutions and other stakeholders. Project should secure the approval of the training manuals developed, because once these are approved, they will be disseminated to stakeholders.
Percentage of the population of researchers, local communities and relevant private sector targeted by the awareness campaign of the legal framework	At least 60 percent of targeted population of researchers local communities, and relevant private sector staff, of which at least 30% would be women aware of key provisions of ABS legal framework	On Track. As reported in PIRs, so far, there are more than 200 people from universities, institutes, enterprises were trained on ABS. Apart from this, 80% of institutes, research associations, universities and major companies who have research on genetic resources have been attended and trained on NP, Decree No.59/2017/ND-CP through capacity building and awareness raising activities such as the Dialogue on policy of ABS management, Workshop on ABS legal framework and its implementation in practice with the attendance of ABS international and national experts, guest speakers from national and foreign agencies, targeted project audience, or events in celebration of Biodiversity Day, ABS website with regularly updated information, art drawing contest for pupils in Lao Cai province, or other ABS raising awareness activities for local people through communication channel at pilot site, etc. Overall progress towards this target is unclear as the indicator is ambiguous.
National ABS clearing house mechanism operational	An ABS Clearing House system integrated into the National Biodiversity and genetic resources databases and sharing information and used as an ABS network for information sharing including between the ABS practice community (user, providers, research institutions, etc.)	Achieved. A preliminary national database (template for data inputting and extracting) has been established to support the national ABS Clearing House Mechanism. The project supported DoNRE Lao Cai to establish a genetic resources and TK Database System for Lao Cai province and Chu Yang Sin National Park to collect information on genetic resources. The CHM design has been completed, and the CHM is in operation since 2017 with address: https://vietnamabs.gov.vn/ . ABS CHM serves as platform to provide official information on ABS management in Vietnam to stakeholders.

Green = Achieved	Yellow = On track to be achieved until project closure	Red = there is a risk of not being achieved until the project is closed
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3.3.1.4 Outcome 4: Demonstrating private-public-community partnerships on access and benefit sharing

1. Outcome 4 focused on addressing the barrier of limited capacity and practical experience with the negotiation and implementation of ABS Agreements, as well as the lack of practical experiences with the development of bio-cultural community protocols and the documentation of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources. This output aimed at supporting the Lao Cai Province stakeholders,

including users and providers (communities) to negotiate and implement ABS agreements for access and benefit sharing.

2. The project is significantly behind schedule in developing and disseminating best practices and lessons of ABS from pilots. Little significant progress on developing policy briefs and disseminating the lessons from the project has been observed despite the fact that the project did implement general trainings and awareness activities in 2018, 2019 with manual and guidelines as shown in Output 3.3.

Table 9 Progress towards results Outcome 4

Indicator	Targets End of Project	Terminal Evaluation Findings
Number of ABS pilot agreements negotiated and implemented enabling equitable sharing of benefits between users and providers	Local communities enter into at least one ABS agreement approved in accordance with the legal framework to provide access to genetic resources and commercialization of at least one product	Achieved. The project has supported the community of Ta Phin to complete at least one ABS agreement. It has developed two contracts (i) Access on genetic resources and benefit sharing on their utilization, was certified by Ta Phin PPC to complete the ABS registration procedure; (ii) Access to Traditional Knowledge and benefit sharing on its utilization have been identified. Project supported the local community of Ta Phin to register the community trademark for The Red Dao Herbal Bath. The proposal for collective trademark has been approved by the competent authority (NOIP).
Number of community documents ⁵ developed and implemented at the local level enabling the conservation, future use and equitable sharing derived from TK	At least one TK registry proposal developed Compilation of TKs associated with genetic resources surveyed and documented in the demonstration district At least one community protocol ⁶ developed for regulation of ABS (including PIC and MAT) from genetic resources and associated TK	Achieved. At the end of January 2021, Sapa Napro company and Red Dao Ethnic Community signed the Contract on access to Traditional Knowledge and benefit sharing on its utilization. The project worked with national experts to carry out a survey and to set up a database of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge in Lao Cai province since 2018. The database is now finalized. The project also collaborated with a group of Red Dao traditional healers and scientists from the Hanoi University of Agriculture and the University of Pharmacy on local traditional medicine, TK for conservation and commercial purpose. A community protocol was developed and approved by PC of Ta Phin in July 2020 for regulation of ABS from genetic resources and associated TK.

⁵A TK community register is a mechanism for the recording and documentation of TK at the community level. This registers may have different objectives, characteristics and legal implications

⁶A community protocol is a written instrument which regulates, and among others how Prior and Informed Consent can be granted and how mutually agreed terms can be established including benefit sharing provisions between the community provider and the user of the genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge

In situ conservation measures to ensure the security of the concerned biological resources are integrated into the pilot project.	At least one Approved Management Plan for in-situ conservation and measures being implemented	Achieved. The Project obtained consensus of local authorities for the in-situ conservation plan. The project has supported the PC of Ta Phin commune to develop a community protocol on biodiversity conservation. Community protocol has been approved by PC of Sapa district under the Decision No.1375/2020/UBND dated 29 July 2020 and has been implemented in Ta Phin commune. The project also assisted local community of Ta Phin in managing and exploiting the area of 65 ha genetic plants forest.
Number of best practices and lessons of ABS from pilots documented and disseminated	At least three policy briefs developed from best practices and lessons from the project.	On-Track. The project has not made significant progress on developing policy briefs and disseminating the lessons from the project. The project has developed a video on lessons learned at demonstration site, which included information on ABS agreement and activities in Ta Phin commune, but this is not directly addressing the indicator target. In the remaining time, the project intends to develop three policy briefs commissioned with the donors. This is yet to be achieved; however, it is reasonable to expect that the project will achieve this target by the closure date.

Green = Achieved	Yellow = On track to be achieved until project closure	Red = there is a risk of not being achieved until the project is closed
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3.3.2 Relevance

Relevance	5 (S)
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1. The project is highly relevant for Vietnam, as it reflects national priorities and a pioneering nature to support national capacities to facilitate the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS. The project is also relevant from an international perspective, considering Vietnam is one of few countries using its GEF allocation to build and strengthen its ABS framework.
2. The project is highly relevant for Vietnam, as it reflects national priorities and a pioneering nature to support national capacities to facilitate the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS. The project is aligned and supports the objectives of several policy and regulatory instruments, including the Law on Biodiversity and the Law on Forest Protection and Development, as well as the National Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, vision to 2030. Also, the project has directly and indirectly supported the development of a number of important policies and regulations to facilitate the ABS management in Viet Nam. At local level, the project supports the objectives and action plan on management and conservation biodiversity of Lao Cai province for the period of 2018-2020

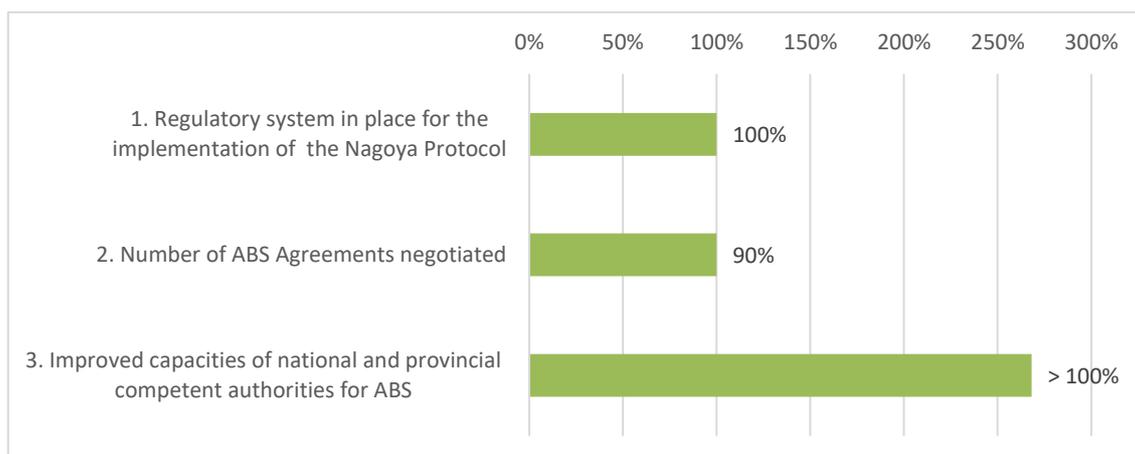
3. The project is also aligned with the development priorities and conservation objectives of the Ta Phin commune as expressed in its Decision No.1375/2020/UBND on Commune conservation plan and forest protection plan of Ta Phin commune.
4. The project contributes to the UNDP Country Program Document (CPD) for Viet Nam 2017-2021, which is the 3rd generation of the UN Development Assistance Framework, focusing on SDG implementation and representing the programmatic and operational framework for delivering UN support in Viet Nam.
5. The project strategy is in line with the GEF-5 biodiversity focal area goal on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the maintenance of ecosystem goods and services. Specifically, the project's outcomes correspond to the activities foreseen as support for GEF 5, BD4 Focal Area objective – Build capacity on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing. Moreover, giving Vietnam's rich biodiversity, the project presents clear global environmental benefits and opportunities for replication and scaling up.
6. The project was formulated according to the needs and interests of major stakeholders, leading to enthusiastic and proactive participation across different project activities, as well as those specifically designed for stakeholder engagement.

3.3.3 Effectiveness

Effectiveness	5 (S)
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1. Evidence suggests that the project contributes to the UNDP Strategic Plan and Development Assistance Framework. This project contributes explicitly to the following three SDG targets: i) SDG 1 on ending poverty; ii) SDG 5 Gender Equality; iii) SDG 15. Life of terrestrial ecosystems.
2. To determine the effectiveness of the project, reference has been made to its impact indicators. From this perspective, it can be observed that, months before the project ends, the PIR compliance performance report suggests the project is on track to achieve its 3 impact indicators.
3. The major constraint is found with regards to the number of ABS agreements negotiated, considering the existing contract is still under approval process. The greatest achievement is found in the case of indicator 3, the project was able to surpass the goal, jumping from a baseline score of 17/75 to the current 59/75 confirmed during the past application of the respective tracking tool in March 2021 (Graphic 3).

Graphic 3 Progress of impact indicators



Source: Annual Progress Report, 2017 – 2020

4. Considering the complexity associated with the project and the achievements reported, in general terms, both interviews and secondary sources of information suggest the project has been implemented in an effective manner.

3.3.4 Efficiency

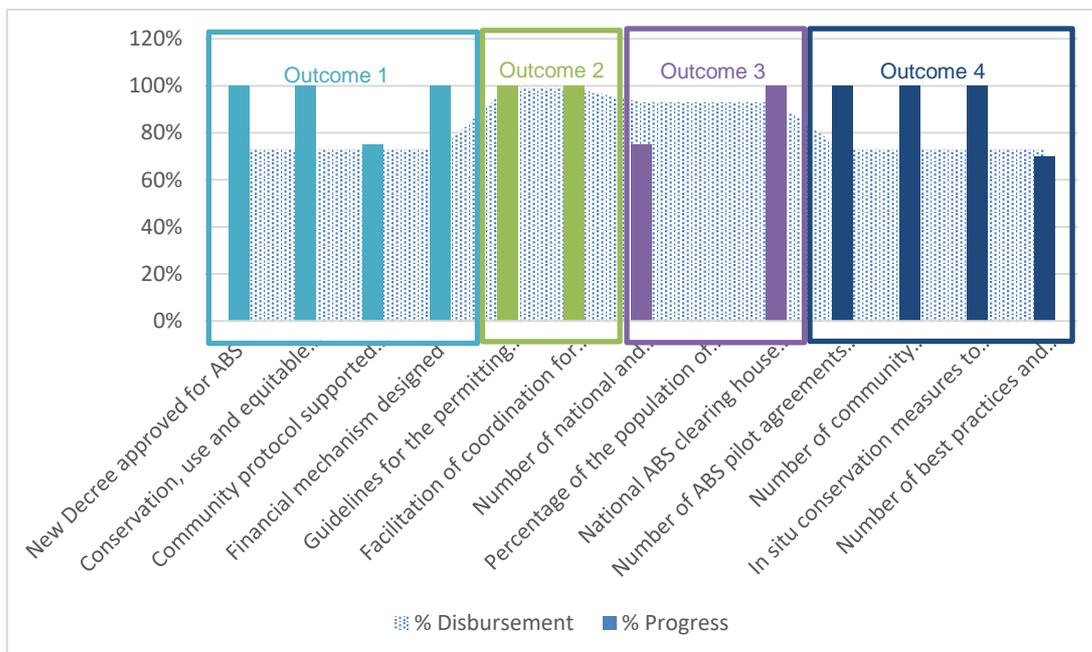
Efficiency	5 (S)
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1. Evidence gathered suggests project implementation has followed an efficient use of resources, ensuring quality delivery of goods and services. The PMU structure and the operational arrangements respond to previous institutional experience implementing GEF-funded projects. Annual audits confirm that no changes were identified with regards to fund allocations and that financial management is followed and efficient.
2. Minor shortcomings were reported with regards to implementation timelines, due to delays in certain procurement processes and especially because the project has been awarded a no-cost extension until June 2021 due to COVID-19. Considering the effect on overall operations, the requested extension could not have been avoided.
3. In terms of efficiency, the project has achieved almost 100% of its central objective, in this sense, the progress of Outcomes 1 and 2 have been key to ensure this performance. Both outcomes show significant percentages of progress having executed more than 90% of the GEF resources.
4. The analysis shows that Outcome 2 is the most efficient in terms of achieving the targets set in its indicators with 99% of the economic resources allocated. On the other hand, Outcome 3 has executed 93% of the allocated budget but only was able

to complete one out of the 3 indicators, while the other is on track and one cannot be properly reported since the baseline to measure its progress has not been defined.

- Certain Outcomes may not reach 100% implementation despite investing 100% of resources. The following Figure compares actual investments with progress in achieving indicators at output levels.

Graphic 4 % Disbursement vs % Outcome Indicators Advance



Source: Annual Progress Report, 2017 – 2021

- Although the project did not assign a specific budget to ensure adequate gender equality, important contributions were made that improved the involvement of women from the Red Dao ethnic group. However, a larger budget would have yielded greater benefits in terms of the number of beneficiaries and the improvement of their income.

3.3.5 Overall Outcome

Overall Project Outcome Rating	5 (S)
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3.3.6 Sustainability

Overall likelihood	3 (ML)
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Financial sustainability	3 (ML)
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- The project was careful to incorporate the financial sustainability perspective within Decree 59/2017, stipulating that not less than 1% of the monetary benefits generated

from the utilization of GRs shall be used for biodiversity conservation. Also, the share of monetary benefits for the Provider shall be not less than 2% of the total transfer value or total revenue generated from the utilization of intellectual property rights. These allocations are expected to complement MoNRE’s budget to attend to the emerging responsibilities and competencies provided by the ABS legal and institutional framework recently approved with support from the project.

2. However, it is important to notice that there are still important gaps in terms of specific financial regulations guiding the ABS implementation, such as mechanisms to reinvest ABS monetary benefits in biodiversity conservation, the cost for appraisal ABS application, salary for Appraisal Committee, which are currently barriers to put ABS implementation in practice.
3. On the other hand, interviews confirm there is no planned project or initiative in the short and mid-term that will follow up, scale up or replicate the project in other regions or for different products. Additionally, the participation of financial officers and the private sector in project implementation was difficult and limited, consequently posing important challenges to the financial sustainability of ABS implementation shortly.

<i>Socio-economic sustainability</i>	3 (ML)
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4. Post COVID-19 recovery and its expected impact on the national economy may arise as the most outstanding risk with the potential to undermine the project’s long-term objectives. It could pose challenges in terms of transferring capacities and awareness to appropriate parties to ensure scale-up, replication, and follow-up.
5. Testimonies from interviewees, the reported level of participation in different activities and evidence gathered during the field visit, confirm the project has received adequate social and political support and that the different stakeholder’s value and endorse the long-term objectives of the project. This means that the project has been aligned to national and local priorities and therefore selected communities and participating stakeholders were engaged to mobilize high-level support.
6. The protection of TK, improved conditions to access markets, and the benefits derived from the pilot ABS agreements are expected to improve household socioeconomically, and therefore provide a biodiversity-based economic alternative for rural communities to advance in the SDG. Gender results achieved will have an impact in the mid and long-term as the negotiated contracts will start yielding benefits.
7. The project invested in capacity building and awareness-raising campaigns which were instrumental to ensure stakeholders informed participation. However, these cannot be considered sufficient in terms of supporting scaling up, replication, and other long-term objectives of the project.

<i>Institutional framework and governance</i>	4 (L)
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8. The project successfully shaped the legal and institutional system of ABS in the country through decrees and regulations, this provides institutional sustainability and engagement towards the overall intervention. However, there is currently no plan or exit strategy engaging the participating stakeholders towards the follow-up and sustainability of project activities.
9. The project has strengthened capacities in the management of access to genetic resources, which plays an important role for the ABS system to be sustained to implement new ABS agreements or to continue with other activities initiated by the project such as the Clearing House Mechanism. However, these efforts should be further institutionalized.
10. There is no evidence suggesting the project actively anticipated future risks or challenges, however, elements of the legal and financial framework will still depend on other projects and interventions to further refine the necessary enabling environment for implementing the Nagoya Protocol and ABS.
11. An important commitment has been generated to continue the legacy of the project through the Decrees and Guidelines so that ministries, such as MARD, MoNRE, MoST, continue to implement the ABS system in the future. However, there is still a great challenge ahead in terms of systematically addressing gender inequality and human rights concerns.

<i>Environmental sustainability</i>	3 (ML)
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12. With the issuance and entry into force of Decree 59/2017 which regulates the management of activities involving access to genetic resources for utilization and the sharing of benefits, the project has laid the groundwork for regulating the use of genetic resources and indigenous knowledge. Although their application is relatively new and their operation is currently small, there is great potential for harmonizing their conservation and sustainable use in the future.
13. On the other hand, the project facilitated the consensus of local authorities for the in-situ conservation plan and supported the PC of Ta Phin commune to develop and implement a community protocol on biodiversity conservation. The project also assisted local community of Ta Phin in managing and exploiting the area of 65 ha genetic plants forest

3.3.7 Country ownership

1. Viet Nam is one of the 16 most biodiverse countries in the world and has significant levels of endemic genetic resources, ecosystems and biological resources are an important component of the economy of the country. Viet Nam is a party to international treaties related to access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing (ABS), such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) since 1994, the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants Convention (UPOV) since 2006, and, Nagoya Protocol on ABS — since 2014. With this regard, the country has made significant human and financial efforts to fulfill its commitments and obligations, developing the Biodiversity Law (2008), Vietnam National Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, vision to 2030.
2. A key indicator of country-ownership is that the government has approved policies and modified regulatory frameworks in line with the project's objectives, as Decree No. 65/2010/ND-CP on Detailed Regulations and Guidelines for Implementation of Articles of the Law on Biodiversity; Decree No. 59/2017/ND-CP on the Management of Access to Genetic Resources and the Sharing of Benefits Arising From their Utilization. Both have contributed to strengthening the ABS system in the country.
3. It is also important to recognize the high levels of participation of the different ministries in the implementation of the project, considering that the issue of ABS is transversal to several sectors. While it was the PMU who facilitated the coordination between them, there are significant levels of leadership from MoNRE and active participation from the MARD and MoST, the three ministries were represented in the Steering Committee.

3.3.8 Gender equality and women's empowerment

1. Related to the effective of the project in gender equality and women's empowerment shows a good balance. The project was well addressed in capacity building and advocacy activities by involving an equal number of males and females from all target groups. According to the PIRs (2020), at the local level, females from the Dao ethnic minority people were greatly involved in all activities under the support of this project with over 80% of beneficiaries being female from ethnic minorities.
2. The work carried out by the project will continue to have environmental benefits to the sustainable use of genetic resources, however, the activities developed in the pilot sites could have a greater impact on minority groups of women. This because the project allowed them to improve and strengthen knowledge of

management and sustainable use of resources since they learned about techniques and methods of growing and harvesting plants, development and marketing of products, monitoring and evaluation of MAT provisions and community TK protection protocols.

3. It is likely that the results achieved, especially in the activities at the implementation sites, will have long-term benefits since, by tradition, women are the guardians of traditional knowledge. In particular, the work carried out with the women of the Red Dao ethnic group, since the new apprenticeships can be used in the future as they will continue to play this key role, once the project is completed. Also, because the project developed a Community protocol for regulation of access and benefit sharing from genetic resources and traditional knowledge held by local communities, it is possible that, with women being an important actor in traditional knowledge, through this protocol they can have a greater presence and benefit from the results of the future project.
4. The project has contributed to the following results: i) Contributing to closing gender gaps in access to and control over resources, significant participation of women's groups in consultation, advocacy and capacity building, the project organized five training courses/workshops to strengthen the capacity on management of ABS with more than 300 participants, out of which 45 are women; ii) Improving the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance; the project targets both female and male beneficiaries; iii) Targeting socio-economic benefits and services for women, the project activities focused on sustainable ABS mechanism that provides new opportunities for employment and income stability for the local community, and women and indigenous people in particular, and contributes to improving the quality of life of the local communities. Among the group of 9 Red Dao traditional healers signing the TK contract, five are women.
5. Woman's participation in the project management and governance has also been relevant, both the PMU's Vice Director and Project Manager were women and senior officials of the BCA. And in fact, most of the officials and stakeholders interviewed (11 people out of 20 interviewed) for this evaluation report were women.
6. Positively, the gender marker rating had been upgraded to GEN-2, which means that the project has a "significant contribution to gender equality". This change in the category may be because the project has indeed generated significant achievements at the gender level. Also, this means that the project becomes a national benchmark for future ABS-related projects. For that, the project impacts

on gender mainstreaming should be highlighted in project best practices and knowledge products as far as possible.

3.3.9 Cross-cutting Issues

1. The project has generated positive effects on the local populations, generally, the activities implemented have sought to ensure that they can access equitably and take advantage of natural resources. The biggest contribution of ABS project is to concretize verbal agreements between the company and the local ethnic people into official documents (ABS contract) and take actions to further conserve and value the benefits of TK (TK contract).
2. At the pilot site level, the project has helped local communities improve their lives by developing medicinal products based on their traditional knowledge, promoting their sustainable and stable harvest of herb plants, and ensuring the equitable distribution of benefits to local communities from the use of the genetic resources and TK. A group of Red Dao traditional healers and scientists from VNUA and HUF are working together on local traditional medicine for conservation and commercial purpose. These traditional healers are given a grant/salary based on their contribution in TK documentation and verification. Once the TK is verified and commercialized, each healer can get a salary of VND2 mill. per month along the contract time.
3. In addition, the project, in agreement with the local authorities, developed the long-term forestry contracting plan, allowing the local population to cultivate and exploit their medicinal plants in the protected forest in the commune of TaPhin in a stable manner. These can then be marketed, generating resources for the community.
4. The objectives of the project are in line with the priorities agreed in the UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) to the extent that the project has contributed to Outcome 1: Poverty eradication and greater socioeconomic equity. ensuring more inclusive and equitable growth by providing new opportunities for employment and income stability for the community of ethnic minorities. The project is also in line with Outcome 2: Low-carbon, resilient, and environmentally sustainable development, the project contributes to strengthen institutional capacity and coordination, emphasizing partnerships with all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society, to scale up solutions in biodiversity conservation, environmental protection and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.
5. The project implementation provided new opportunities for employment and income stability for the community of ethnic minority including women and girls. The designed activities in pilot sites contribute to improving the quality of life of the indigenous

communities. In this way, the project not only included marginalized groups but its conservation and sustainable development activities contribute to poverty reduction and livelihood sustainability.

6. The project contributed to a human rights-based approach, especially, to ethnic groups, the implementation was respectful and mindful of local cultures, ensuring the different outputs and results were sensitive and interpret their knowledge, traditions, and aspirations. In the opinion of interviewees, the Project implementation was careful not to rush, pressure, or stress ethnic groups or local communities. Evidence suggests the project placed special emphasis on managing the environmental and social safeguards throughout the interventions.

3.3.10 GEF Additionality

1. Viet Nam signed the Nagoya Protocol on ABS in 2014, without the project, national efforts would have continued to move ABS forward, however, restrictions in budgetary allocations for biodiversity and the lack of an institutional and legal framework would delay national response. In this sense, GEF funding was instrumental to overcome key barriers and accelerate the practical implementation of ABS in Viet Nam.
2. The project's incremental reasoning builds on existing and functional state institutions, whose mandate and competencies are needed to ensure a comprehensive implementation of ABS. In this context the project was lead and nested within MoNRE, its investments did not replace or duplicate but complement state budget allocations. The GEF facilitated investments that otherwise would not have been possible to realize from other governmental or non-governmental sources.

3.3.11 Catalytic/Replication Effect

1. The project is the first in Vietnam and one of the few within the regional UNDP portfolio, offering a comprehensive case of supporting a country to implement the Nagoya Protocol on ABS, therefore it offers valuable lessons as the ones presented in chapter 4.4 that could eventually be applied to other countries in the region.
2. The project investments in knowledge/information management system on genetic resources and traditional knowledge, as well as the institutional and technical capacity placed at the central and provincial levels, suggest there is a potential to scale up ABS to other regions and genetic resources in Viet Nam.
3. The project generated and strengthened coordination between MoNRE and MARD, MOH, MOSC this was achieved through the exchange of information, technical meetings on related topics. In addition, the project created a database containing

information on the country's genetic resources. Finally, an ABS network was established with members from related agencies, research institutes, and protected area management boards, etc. Everything mentioned above leaves an important potential for it to be disseminated, strengthened and replicated.

3.3.12 Progress to Impact

1. At the level of environmental change, the project contributed to the conservation of biodiversity or the sustainable use of its components in 68 ha (directly: 3 ha and indirectly: 68 ha). This area is covered by the community protocol which was developed with the support of the Project. This area is also included in the area of neighboring protection forest is managed by the Sapa District Protection Forest Management Board.
2. In addition, the project contributed significantly to strengthening the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in ABS. Thus, the score obtained in the Tracking Tool, at the end of the project, is 31 points, while at the beginning of the project it was 7 points; that is, there is an improvement of 24 points.
3. Evidence confirms the project was able to generate the necessary capacities and enabling environment to implement ABS in Vietnam. Its impact has been acknowledged in overcoming key barriers such as weak regulatory and institutional framework, limited capacities and lack of practical experience implementing ABS.
4. Interviews with stakeholders revealed general agreement that the project has fulfilled its main objective, which was to develop and implement a national Access and Benefit Sharing framework, build national capacities and support an ABS Agreement based on Traditional Knowledge and Public-Private Partnership.
5. An indirect impact of the project was that, for the formulation of Decree 59/2017, the Environmental Law 2008 was thoroughly revised, in which several gaps were found, so the project prepared a proposal for improvement, which was shared to the Government to review of the Act.
6. The overall outcome is therefore positive, considering this was a pioneering initiative. However, as presented in the table below, there are still challenges and gaps that would need to be addressed in the future.

Table 10 Impact Indicators

Indicator	Targets End of Project	Terminal Evaluation Findings
Regulatory system in place for the implementation	A national decree and supporting guidelines and circulars	Achieved. The project succeeded in securing the enactment of various legal instruments of national or local scope that enabled ABS implementation. However, financial regulations guiding the ABS implementation including mechanisms to reinvest ABS monetary benefits

of the Nagoya Protocol	approved in line with the Nagoya Protocol	in biodiversity conservation, cost for appraisal ABS application, salary for Appraisal Committee etc. are still lacking, which create many difficulties in ABS implementation in practice. The participation of financial officers and private sector should be essential for project, but the actual involvement is limited.
Number of ABS Agreements negotiated	At least one ABS Agreement successfully concluded	Achieved. A private-public-community partnership on accessing genetic resources and benefit sharing has been developed by securing an ABS agreement between Sapa Napro, a community company, and local households. In January 2021, Sapa Napro and Red Dao Ethnic Community signed two contracts: (i) Contract on access on genetic resources and benefit sharing on their utilization; (ii) Contract on access to Traditional Knowledge and benefit sharing on its utilization. The first Contract has been certified by Ta Phin PPC in the coming time waiting for further instruction and guidance from Ministry of Justice ⁷ . This is yet to be achieved; however, it is reasonable to expect that the project will achieve this target by the revised operational closure date.
Improved capacities of national and provincial competent authorities for ABS implementation as shown by an increase in UNDP ABS capacity development scorecard	At least 30% increase in national and provincial capacity as measured by UNDP ABS scorecard Number of training and awareness raising manuals, and programs being actively used	Achieved. The project exceeded the original targets in terms of the capacity building scorecard. The project mobilized more than 300 participants through five training courses and workshops to strengthen the capacity on management of ABS, raise awareness in the Northern regions (Hanoi, August 2018), the Central (Da Nang, May 2018 and Nghe An, June 2018), the Central Highlands and the South (Lam Dong and Ho Chi Minh city, July 2018). ABS expert networks were provided with information, material and training skills on ABS and shared domestic and international experience in applying ABS. There are still challenges to ensure these activities are not carried out in an ad hoc manner, but ideally incorporated formally into coordinated strategies and campaigns.

Green = Achieved	Yellow = On track to be achieved until project closure	Red = there is a risk of not being achieved until the project is closed
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4 MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS

4.1 Main Findings

Project Design

1. The project design capitalized on decades of field expertise from individual and institutional stakeholders, it shows a clear and consistent construction of project

⁷The Article 11 on Certification of the MAT/ABS contract of Decree No.59/2017/ND-CP stated: "The MAT shall be acknowledged by the People's Committee of commune where natural genetic resources located or the headquarters' address of the provider was registered". It is important to note that "wording shall be acknowledged" is actually confused as the right word should be "certify". The list of documents certified by PC of commune is regulated under Decree No.23/2015/ND-CP dated 16 February 2015 on grant of duplicates from master registers, certification of copies from originals, certification of signatures and certification of contracts and transactions.

outcomes, outputs, and objectives, but was weak in terms of formulating SMART indicators. The design was ambitious, underestimating the time and effort needed to achieve outputs on a broad range of aspects involving a complex web of stakeholders.

Project Implementation

2. The project has followed an adaptive management approach, showing flexibility and the capacity to face the different challenges found.
3. Travel restrictions and social distancing due to COVID-19 had negatively impacted the project operations, so an extension was granted until June 2021.
4. Evidence confirms the project maintained adequate levels of stakeholder participation, both at the operative level in different intervention scales, as well as its governance through the Steering Committee.
5. One of the most interesting findings of the TE is related to the political support received by different Ministries, which was critical to move forward some project activities that included institutional, and legal decision-making processes.
6. Both UNDP as implementing agency and MoNRE as implementing partner played an adequate role in terms of project oversight, coordination, and implementation, facilitating the technical and political support from different Ministries.
7. Until the fourth quarter of the 2021 the project executed 82% of the total available GEF funding, it also reports the mobilization of co-financing worth USD 10.59 million.

Project Results and Impacts

8. The project demonstrates effectiveness is achieving two impact indicators, while the third is on track as the ABS agreement should be finalized before the project ends.
9. On average, the four project Outcomes have made significant progress. Outcome 1 has achieved 3 *out of 4* indicators and is on track to achieve the final one, while Outcome 2 has also achieved 100% of its 2 indicators. Outcome 3 reports one indicator achieved at 100%, one partially achieved, and one with the risk of non-compliance. Finally, Outcome 4 has met two of its indicators and two are on track to reach their target.
10. One of the outcomes in which the project made important contributions was the one related to capacity building. This generated important training documents and inputs, moreover, the project still needs to secure the official approval of material developed.
11. The project is highly relevant for Vietnam, as it reflects national priorities and a pioneering nature to support national capacities on access and benefit-sharing of genetic resources to facilitate the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS.

12. In relation to the sustainability of the project, among the legacies is that the project has strengthened capacities in the management of access to genetic resources, which plays an important role for the ABS system to be sustained to implement new ABS agreements or to continue with other activities initiated by the project such as the Clearing House Mechanism.
13. The project demonstrates social and political support for the outputs, outcomes, and benefits generated, resulting in high-level engagement and institutional buying. However, there is currently no plan or exit strategy engaging the participating stakeholders towards the follow-up and sustainability of project activities.
14. The project has contributed to cross-cutting issues such as gender equity and women's empowerment, this is especially evident in the implementation sites, the work carried out with the women of the Red Dao ethnic group, since the new apprenticeships can be used in the future as they will continue to play this key role, once the project is completed. In general, the work carried out by the project allowed that its gender marker rating had been upgraded from GEN-1 to GEN-2, which means that the project has a "significant contribution to gender equality".
15. The intervention with rural communities was challenging because these key actors have different positions and points of view, so good cooperation and communication were key. The project was successful in involving experienced professionals, as they managed to make important links with local rural communities.
16. The project was able to generate the necessary capacities and enabling the environment to implement ABS in Vietnam. Its impact has been acknowledged in overcoming key barriers such as weak regulatory and institutional framework, limited capacities, and lack of practical experience implementing ABS.

4.2 Conclusions

1. Project design shows coherence among its different components and presents a comprehensive approach towards creating the enabling national policy, legal and institutional framework for ABS implementation. Major weakness found resides in the formulation of indicators, not all of them follow the SMART criteria.
2. Stakeholders acknowledge that project implementation demonstrated adaptive capacity and flexibility. However, no major changes were made to project indicators as suggested during the inception; in general terms, it has been said that both the amount of work as well as the absence of a midterm evaluation did not allow sufficient time to reflect on design issues and make a course correction.

3. The project executed 82% of GEF budget and mobilized 100% of the co-finance commitments. Overall, the project has been successful in meeting its end-of-project objectives and outcomes with some minor delays and shortcomings. Some indicators are yet to be achieved, but it is reasonable to expect that the project will achieve most targets by the closure date.
4. With regards to UNDP and MoNRE’s implementation performance, the TE concludes that both institutions demonstrated a longstanding experience and capacity to implement GEF-funded projects, providing the necessary leadership and guidance.
5. The project has made an important contribution to enable a legal framework for ABS management, as well as to strengthen organizational and individual capacities. The project has led to some very important outcomes and impacts on ABS management in Viet Nam such as the passage of new regulations supporting ABS implementation.
6. The project achieved a balanced impact, not only generating the national enabling capacities to operate ABS but also at the local level, through demonstration of private-public-community partnerships on access and benefit-sharing at the targeted commune of Ta Phin.
7. Although awareness on ABS and biodiversity conservation of stakeholders has increased, the efforts to systematically strengthen knowledge could have been more effective than generic or non-targeted awareness raising campaigns.
8. The project has had a greater impact than expected in terms of gender equity and women’s empowerment. Its impact is most evident in the field activities, as mostly and by tradition women are the guardians of traditional knowledge. As a result, there was greater participation of women in the project.
9. The operation of the ABS mechanism, provides new opportunities for employment and income stability for the local community, and women and indigenous people in particular, and contributes to improving the quality of life of the local communities.
10. Project outcomes are likely to be sustainable from a financial and institutional point of view. However, continued support to consolidate the results achieved in this project is needed. The results obtained so far would not be lost if this project would come to an end at this stage, however, after the project ends the existing rhythm and volume of activities will certainly slow down.

4.3 Recommendations

Rec #	TE Recommendation	Entity Responsible	Time frame
A	Category 1: For future project design		
A.1	The results obtained by the project as well as the challenges and opportunities ahead,	UNDP; MoNRE	Medium Term

	open the overall expectation for a second phase, to scale up and replicate, it is recommended to map donors and projects in the design phase. Thus, a second phase can be assumed by a new donor, or outcomes or activities of the current project can be included in other projects being designed.		
A.2	The design of the new biodiversity projects for the GEF as well as for the UNDP portfolio should consider including outcomes or components aiming to increase the number and variety of private-public-community partnerships on access and benefit-sharing.	UNDP, MoNRE	GEF, Medium Term
A.3	The project offers methodological, legal and institutional tools which could be capitalized to support other countries in the region to implement Nagoya Protocol on ABS. To the extent possible, it is recommended that the most relevant information be systematized and synthesized in a format that is easy to read and aimed at the general public.	UNDP; MoNRE	Medium Term
B	Category 2: Follow up strategy		
B.1	Several things need to happen before the project can be formally closed. In this sense, the TE considers it important for the project to draft an exit strategy involving all major stakeholders, generate the engagement needed to fill the existing gaps, and replicate and scale up the results achieved.	MoNRE	
B.2	The ABS CHM platform would be a good way to continue sharing the information/knowledge on ABS. The tools and cases might be included in a post-project dissemination strategy with all the knowledge products and tools. Therefore, special attention should be placed in terms of dissemination, knowledge management, and learning opportunities derived from the project's intervention model.	UNDP; GEF	Short Time
C	Category 3: Complementing critical outstanding deliverables		
C.1	While the project produced a series of training materials, case studies, and tools, it is fundamental that these get officially approved by respective institutions to ensure that these could be widely shared and used by targeted audiences.	MoNRE	Short Time
D	Category 4: Facilitating outcomes sustainability		
D.1	The project has strengthened capacities in the management of access to genetic resources, which plays an important role	MoNRE	Short Time

	for the ABS system to be sustained so that new ABS agreements are implemented or continue with some that were initiated by the project such as the Clearing House Mechanism. However, these efforts should be further institutionalized since there is no evidence suggesting there is a clear course of action on project activities committing key stakeholders after the end of the project.		
D.2	It is important to envision the project's objectives over the mid and long term, ensuring continued support to fill existing ABS gaps, as well as to develop new initiatives that facilitate synergies with other projects or sources of funding to enhance the sustainability of achieved results and long-term development goals.	MoNRE	Short Time
D.3	The project has identified opportunities for diversification of livelihood incomes through ABS product development. A roadmap should be drafted to adequately integrate ABS into Vietnam's COVID-19 recovery plan, as it could offer potential for project's sustainability, replication and scale up.	MoNRE	Short Time

4.4 Lessons Learned

1. While it was fundamental to involve different key actors and sectors, the project managed to find formal and informal channels to ensure its effective participation since the project design phase. This was instrumental in maintaining strong integration and in operationalizing institutional arrangements, thus ensuring the sustainability of the investments.
2. The project managed to be an effective facilitator between the needs of emerging markets and companies, the government with their legal and institutional boundaries and the needs and expectations from participating rural communities. Beyond the specific ABS knowledge, a PMU requires experienced technical support and profiles with the sensitivity to connect different stakeholder's expectations.
3. Formulation of medium-term goals makes it possible to project a time horizon for the intervention and is a tool that helps to make decisions on time. It is recommended that projects make the effort to formulate medium-term goals even if it is not requested by the donor.
4. It is essential that during the start-up phase, specific effort is made to revise, update and clearly define and interpret the project indicators as defined by the Manual for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Results for UNDP Projects.

Indicators monitoring and follow-up require specifying their interpretation and baseline, proposing their measurement methodology, timing, means of verification and the responsible person or institution.

5. The concept and issues arising from ABS implementation were relatively new for Viet Nam, leading to difficulties to find the expertise and technical support needed. UNDP played a key role in supporting MoNRE to find and recruit experts with extensive experience in ABS around the world. Although they have called it "luck" it is rather a result of the global network, systems, and procurement capacities in place.
6. Bridging the gap between financial markets and sustainable use of genetic resources species conservation, demand an entirely new set of intermediaries which are generally outside of the traditional conservation sphere. The private sector should be involved in the project design to ensure it is relevant and attractive to motivate active participation.
7. GEF-funded projects until before the sixth replenishment did not require a gender action plan, however, the project managed to include these issues, and its impact on women and girls has been noticeable. It was a great success to include Red Dao's because they are holders of knowledge, and, instead of starting from scratch, they enhanced the existing conditions, taking advantage of spaces and resources.
8. The involvement of different actors, including communities, NGOs and the academic sector gave important results. However, it is essential to strengthen coordination with the private sector within the framework of post-pandemic productive reactivation initiatives.

5 ANNEXES

5.1 TE ToR (excluding ToR annexes)



Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR) Template for UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects one International Consultant (Team Leader) and one National Consultant (Team member)

Template 1 - formatted for attachment to the [UNDP Procurement website](#)

1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full- and medium-sized UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects are required to undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE) at the end of the project. This Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the expectations for the TE of the *full-sized* project titled *Capacity Building for the Ratification and Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing in Vietnam ABS (PIMS 5303)* implemented through the *Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment/Viet Nam Environment Administration (ABS Project)*. The project started on the *10 October 2016* and is in its *final* year of implementation. The TE process must follow the guidance outlined in the document 'Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects' ([insert hyperlink](#)).

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

As Viet Nam's rich biological diversity and ecological security has been under increasing pressures, the traditional knowledge of local communities that is associated with genetic resources is disappearing rapidly, due to the change of traditional lifestyles. A large volume of traditional knowledge, such as medicinal use of biological resources, is being replaced by modern technology. As part of the Government's efforts to protect the country's rich biodiversity, Law on Biodiversity was enacted in 2008 together with various policies and strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources for socio-economic development. In accordance to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Nagoya Protocol and international practices, the Law on Biodiversity also aimed at paving the way for a functional regulatory and institutional framework for Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS). Nevertheless, such legal and institutional framework was not yet fully functional. The country lacked adequately institutional and personnel capacity to carry out bio-prospecting beyond basic level and develop and manage ABS schemes that are compliant with Nagoya Protocol. The project is intended to strengthen national capacities on access and benefit sharing of genetic resources to facilitate the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing. The above objective would be achieved through four components, namely: (i) Creating an enabling national policy, legal and institutional framework for ABS; (ii) Developing administrative measures for implementation of national ABS legal framework; (iii) Increasing awareness and capacity of all relevant stakeholders for implementation of national ABS framework; and (iv) Demonstrating private-public-community

partnerships on access and benefit sharing. The field activities under Component iv) have been piloted in Lao Cai province which would take on the cross-cutting aspects such as gender lens during the design and implementation to ensure women are empowered to participate fully and also benefit from the use of genetic resources.

As indicated in the ProDoc, the project implementation has been aligned with UNDP Strategic Plan Environment and Sustainable Development Primary Outcome: Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded. It aimed to contribute to the expected CP Outcome(s): ONE UN PLAN: Outcome 1.4: By 2016, key national and sub-national Agencies, in partnership with the private sector and communities, implement and monitor laws, policies and programmes for more efficient use of natural resources and environmental management, and implement commitments under international conventions, and the Expected CPAP Output: A set of coherent policies and plans are prepared or updated to strengthen (1) management of protected areas and biodiversity conservation, and (2) environment management at national and community levels.

Project Summary Table:

GEF Project ID:	PIMS #5303		<i>At endorsement (Million US\$)</i>	<i>At completion (Million US\$)</i>
UNDP Project ID:	00091409	GEF financing:	2,000,000	
Country:	Viet Nam	IA/EA own:		
Region:	Asia and the Pacific	Government:	9,850,000	
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	Other:		
FA Objectives, OP/SP:	SP 1. Integrating biodiversity and ecosystem management into development planning and production sectors activities	Total co-financing:		
Executing Agency:	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)	Total project cost:	11,850,000	
Other Partners involved:	Viet Nam Environment Administration/Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency (BCA)/VEA	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		10 October 2016
		(Operational) Closing Date:		10 June 2021

In the complicated context of COVID-19 outbreak in the world, Vietnam Government have implemented strict measures of social distancing. Using public vehicle as well as face-to-face meetings have been limited. The Government called for everyone to stay home for health security. Accordingly, during the first two quarters of 2020, there have been pending implementation of activities of the Project. Many Project's workshops, meetings as well as events required large participants, have not been organized. Besides, consultants could not conduct surveys to collect data and information for their consultancy, and submit reports as scheduled, particularly project implementation activities at pilot site. The Project's workplans for 2020 was also late approved until Quarter II/2020 due to social distancing which led to the significant delay of most activities planned this year.

3. TE PURPOSE

The TE report will assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved, and draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The TE report promotes accountability and transparency, and assesses the extent of project accomplishments.

The TE focuses on determining the relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UNDP work in order to make adjustments and improve contributions to development. The TE of ABS Project is expected to inform the review of Five-year Country Programme (2017-2021), and formulation of the next Country Programme (2022-2026), in the context of Viet Nam's Social Economic Development Strategy (2021-2030) and Plan (2021-2025), the new One UN Cooperation Framework (2022-2026) that are under formulation processes.

4. TE APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The TE report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful.

The TE team will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP) the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based evaluation. The TE team will review the baseline and midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at the CEO endorsement and midterm stages and the terminal Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the TE field mission begins.

The TE team is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), Implementing Partners, the UNDP Country Office(s), the Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful TE. Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to:

- *Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency (BCA)/Viet Nam Environment Administration (VEA)/MONRE;*
- *Key senior officials and task team/component leaders, Project Board;*
- *Representatives of Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST);*
- *Representatives of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD);*
- *Representatives of Ministry of Health (MOH);*
- *Representatives of DONRE of Lao Cai province;*
- *Representatives of People Committees of Sa Pa district and Ta Phin commune;*
- *Representatives of Sa Pa Napro company*
- *Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources (IEBR)*

Additionally, the TE team may require conducting field missions to *Lao Cai province*, including the following project sites:

- *Offices of DONRE*
- *Offices of Sa Pa district and Ta Phin commune*
- *Sa Pa Napro Company*

The specific design and methodology for the TE should emerge from consultations between the TE team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the TE purpose and

objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The TE team must use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the TE report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation must be clearly outlined in the TE Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the TE team.

The final report must describe the full TE approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the evaluation.

As of 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic as the new coronavirus rapidly spread to all regions of the world. Travel to the country has been restricted since 1 April, 2020 and travel in the country is also restricted. If it is not possible to travel to or within the country for the TE mission then the TE team should develop a methodology that takes this into account the conduct of the TE virtually and remotely, including the use of remote interview methods and extended desk reviews, data analysis, surveys and evaluation questionnaires. This should be detailed in the TE Inception Report and agreed with the Commissioning Unit.

If all or part of the TE is to be carried out virtually then consideration should be taken for stakeholder availability, ability or willingness to be interviewed remotely. In addition, their accessibility to the internet/computer may be an issue as many government and national counterparts may be working from home. These limitations must be reflected in the final TE report.

5. DETAILED SCOPE OF THE TE

The TE will assess project performance against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework (see ToR Annex A). The TE will assess results according to the criteria outlined in the Guidance for TEs of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects (http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/GEF/TE_GuidanceforUNDP-supportedGEF-financedProjects.pdf).

The Findings section of the TE report will cover the topics listed below as minimum. A full outline of the TE report's content is provided in ToR Annex C.

The asterisk "*" indicates criteria for which a rating is required.

Findings

i. Project Design/Formulation

- National priorities and country driven-ness
- Theory of Change
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)
- Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators
- Assumptions and Risks

- Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design
- Planned stakeholder participation

- Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
- Management arrangements

ii. Project Implementation

- Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
- Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements
- Project Finance and Co-finance
- Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), and overall assessment of M&E (*)
- Implementing Agency (UNDP) (*) and Executing Agency (*), overall project oversight/implementation and execution (*)
- Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

iii. Project Results

- Assess the achievement of outcomes against indicators by reporting on the level of progress for each objective and outcome indicator at the time of the TE and noting final achievements
- Relevance (*), Effectiveness (*), Efficiency (*) and overall project outcome (*)
- Sustainability: financial (*), socio-political (*), institutional framework and governance (*), environmental (*), overall likelihood of sustainability (*)
- Country ownership
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Cross-cutting issues (poverty alleviation, improved governance, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster prevention and recovery, human rights, capacity development, South-South cooperation, knowledge management, volunteerism, etc., as relevant)
- GEF Additionality
- Catalytic Role / Replication Effect
- Progress to impact

Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- The TE team will include a summary of the main findings of the TE report. Findings should be presented as statements of fact that are based on analysis of the data.
- The section on conclusions will be written in light of the findings. Conclusions should be comprehensive and balanced statements that are well substantiated by evidence and logically connected to the TE findings. They should highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project, respond to key evaluation questions and provide insights into the identification of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to project beneficiaries, UNDP and the GEF, including issues in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Recommendations should provide concrete, practical, feasible and targeted recommendations directed to the intended users of the evaluation about what actions to take and decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation.
- The TE report should also include lessons that can be taken from the evaluation, including best practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success that can provide knowledge gained from the particular circumstance (programmatic and evaluation methods used, partnerships, financial leveraging, etc.) that are applicable to other GEF and UNDP interventions.

When possible, the TE team should include examples of good practices in project design and implementation.

- It is important for the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned of the TE report to incorporate gender equality and empowerment of women.

The TE report will include an Evaluation Ratings Table, as shown below:

ToR Table 2: Evaluation Ratings Table for *(project title)*

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating¹
M&E design at entry	
M&E Plan Implementation	
Overall Quality of M&E	
Implementation & Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	
Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	
Effectiveness	
Efficiency	
Overall Project Outcome Rating	
Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	
Socio-political/economic	
Institutional framework and governance	
Environmental	
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	

6. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the TE will be approximately *(25 working days for International team leader; and 30 working days for national team member)* over a time period of *(10 weeks)* starting on *(21 December 2020)*.

The tentative TE timeframe is as follows:

Timeframe	Activity	Tentative task division (# of days)	
		Team leader (25 days)	Team member (30 days)
<i>10/12/2020</i>	Application closes		
<i>15/12/2020</i>	Selection of TE team		
<i>22/12/2020</i>	Preparation period for TE team (handover of documentation)		
<i>28/12/2020</i>	Document review and preparation of TE Inception Report	3	4
<i>5/1/2021</i>	Finalization and Validation of TE Inception Report;	2	3

¹ Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight & Execution, Relevance are rated on a 6-point scale: 6=Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5=Satisfactory (S), 4=Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3=Moderately

Unsatisfactory (MU), 2=Unsatisfactory (U), 1=Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability is rated on a 4-point scale: 4=Likely (L), 3=Moderately Likely (ML), 2=Moderately Unlikely (MU), 1=Unlikely (U)

	latest start of TE mission		
20/01/2021-29/01/2021	TE mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits, etc.	8	4
30/01/2021	Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings; earliest end of TE mission	1	1
31/01/2021 - 9/02/2021	Preparation of draft TE report	4	8
10/02/2021	Circulation of draft TE report for comments		
25/02/2021	Incorporation of comments on draft TE report into Audit Trail & finalization of TE report	4	5
28/02/2021	Preparation and Issuance of Management Response	3	5
10/3/2021	Expected date of full TE completion		

Options for site visits should be provided in the TE Inception Report.

7. TE DELIVERABLES

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	TE Inception Report	TE team clarifies objectives, methodology and timing of the TE	No later than 2 weeks before the TE mission: (5 January 2021)	TE team submits Inception Report to Commissioning Unit and project management
2	Presentation	Initial Findings	End of TE mission: (30 January 2021)	TE team presents to Commissioning Unit and project management
3	Draft TE Report	Full draft report (using guidelines on report content in ToR Annex C) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of end of TE mission: (10 February 2021)	TE team submits to Commissioning Unit; reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFF
5	Final TE Report* + Audit Trail	Revised final report and TE Audit trail in which the TE details how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final TE report (See template in ToR Annex H)	Within 1 week of receiving comments on draft report: (10 March 2021)	TE team submits both documents to the Commissioning Unit

*All final TE reports will be quality assessed by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). Details of the IEO's quality assessment of decentralized evaluations can be found in Section 6 of the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines.²

8. TE ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing the TE resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's TE is UNDP Viet Nam Country Office.

The Commissioning Unit will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the TE team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the TE team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

9. TE TEAM COMPOSITION

A team of two independent evaluators will conduct the TE – one team leader with experience in biodiversity and exposure to projects and evaluations in Asia Pacific region, and one national team expert. The team leader will be responsible for the overall design and writing of the TE report. The national team expert will assess emerging trends with respect to regulatory frameworks, budget allocations, capacity building, work with the Project Team in developing the TE itinerary. The National Consultant will also act as a focal point for coordinating and working with relevant stakeholders in Vietnam. In the case of international travel restriction and the mission is not possible, the MTR team will use alternative means of interviewing stakeholders and data collection (i.e. Skype interview, mobile questionnaires, etc.) including the field visit by the National Consultant under the International Consultant's guidance.

The evaluator(s) cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation and/or implementation (including the writing of the project document), must not have conducted this project's Mid-Term Review and should not have a conflict of interest with the project's related activities.

The selection of evaluators will be aimed at maximizing the overall "team" qualities in the following areas: The qualifications for the team leader include natural or environment science background with global/international perspectives and experience and the team expert with national experience in the field biodiversity and environmental management.

Qualifications for Team Leader

Education

- Master's degree or higher in *Natural Resource Management, Biodiversity Conservation, or environmental sciences* other closely related field;

Experience

- Relevant experience with results-based management evaluation methodologies for at least 10 years;
- Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to Biodiversity Focal Area, particularly experience with access and benefit-sharing of genetic/biological resources;
- Experience in evaluating projects;
- Experience working in South-East Asian or Asia Pacific Region;
- Experience in relevant technical knowledge in access and benefit-sharing of genetic/biological resources for at least 10 years;
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and Biodiversity related projects; experience in gender responsive evaluation and analysis;
- Excellent communication skills;
- Demonstrable analytical skills;
- Project evaluation/review experience within United Nations system will be considered an asset.
- Experience with implementing evaluations remotely will be considered an asset

Language

- Fluency in written and spoken English.

SELECTION CRITERIA

INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANT		
No.	Criteria	Score
1	Minimum 10 years of experience with results-based management evaluation methodologies;	100
2	Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;	100
3	Competence in adaptive management, as applied to Biodiversity Focal Area, particularly experience with access and benefit-sharing of genetic/biological resources;	50
4	Experience in evaluating projects;	200
5	Experience working in South-East Asian or Asia Pacific Region;	50
6	Experience in relevant technical knowledge in access and benefit-sharing of genetic/biological resources for at least 10 years	200
7	Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and Biodiversity related projects; experience in gender responsive evaluation and analysis;	100
8	Demonstrable analytical and report-writing skills (at least two reports in English relevant to technical areas must be provided)	100
9	Master's degree or higher in Natural Resource Management, Biodiversity Conservation, or environmental sciences other closely related field;	100
Total		1000

Qualifications for the team member:

Education

- Master's degree or higher in Natural Resource Management, Biodiversity Conservation, environmental sciences or other closely related field;

Experience

- Relevant experience with results-based management evaluation methodologies;
- Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to Biodiversity related projects;
- Experience in evaluating projects;
- Experience in relevant technical areas of biodiversity and environmental management for at least 5 years;
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and Biodiversity related projects; experience in gender responsive evaluation and analysis;
- Excellent communication skills;
- Demonstrable analytical skills;
- Project evaluation/review experience within United Nations system will be considered an asset.

Language

- Fluency in written and spoken Vietnamese and English.

NATIONAL CONSULTANT		
No.	Criteria	Score
1	Minimum 5 years of experience with results-based management evaluation methodologies;	100

2	Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;	100
3	Competence in adaptive management, as applied to Biodiversity Focal Area, particularly experience with access and benefit-sharing of genetic/biological resources;	100
4	Experience in evaluating projects;	200
5	Experience in relevant technical knowledge in access and benefit-sharing of genetic/biological resources for at least 10 years	200
6	Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and Biodiversity related projects; experience in gender responsive evaluation and analysis;	100
7	Demonstrable analytical and report-writing skills (at least two reports in English relevant to technical areas must be provided)	100
8	Master's degree or higher in Natural Resource Management, Biodiversity Conservation, or environmental sciences other closely related field;	100
Total		1000

10. EVALUATOR ETHICS

The TE team will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment. This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The evaluator must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The evaluator must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

11. PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- 20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final TE Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the draft TE report to the Commissioning Unit
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final TE report and approval by the Commissioning Unit and RTA (via signatures on the TE Report Clearance Form) and delivery of completed TE Audit Trail

Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%³:

- The final TE report includes all requirements outlined in the TE TOR and is in accordance with the TE guidance.
- The final TE report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other TE reports).
- The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

³ The Commissioning Unit is obligated to issue payments to the TE team as soon as the terms under the ToR are fulfilled. If there is an ongoing discussion regarding the quality and completeness of the final deliverables that cannot be resolved between the Commissioning Unit and the TE team, the Regional M&E Advisor and Vertical Fund Directorate will be consulted. If needed, the Commissioning Unit's senior management, Procurement Services Unit and Legal Support Office will be notified as well so that a decision can be made about whether or not to withhold payment of any amounts that may be due to the evaluator(s), suspend or terminate the contract and/or remove the individual contractor from any applicable rosters. See the UNDP Individual Contract Policy for further details: https://poppp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/PSU_Individual%20Contract_Individual%20Contract%20Policy.docx&action=default

12. DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT, DUTY STATION AND EXPECTED PLACES OF TRAVEL

The assignment may require one field mission to Lao Cai province including one site visit to Sa Pa district (Ta Phin commune) and Sa Pa Napro Company. This field mission is scheduled for 4 days for the national consultant; and 8 days for the international consultant in Hanoi and Lao Cai province.

If a data collection/field mission for international team leader is not possible due to COVID-19 pandemic then remote interviews may be undertaken through telephone or online (skype, zoom etc.). International consultants can work remotely with national evaluator support in the field if it is safe for them to operate and travel. A short validation mission may be considered if it is confirmed to be safe for staff, consultants, stakeholders and if such a mission is possible within the TE schedule. However, travel costs and per diem shall be included in the contracts, which are subject to amendments due to travel restriction.

13. APPLICATION PROCESS⁴

Recommended Presentation of Proposal:

- a) Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability using the [template](#)⁵ provided by UNDP;
- b) CV
- c) Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
- d) Financial Proposal that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the [Letter of Confirmation of Interest template](#). If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

14. TOR ANNEXES

- ToR Annex A: Project Logical/Results Framework
- ToR Annex B: Project Information Package to be reviewed by TE team
- ToR plna C: Content of the TE report
- ToR Annex D: Evaluation Criteria Matrix template
- ToR Annex E: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators
- ToR Annex F: TE Rating Scales
- ToR Annex G: TE Report Clearance Form
- ToR Annex H: TE Audit Trail
- Annex in a separate file: Relevant TE tracking tools (list)
- Annex in a separate file: GEF Co-financing template (categorizing co-financing amounts by source as 'investment mobilized' or 'recurrent expenditure')

⁴ Engagement of evaluators should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the POPP

<https://popp.undp.org/SitePages/POPPRoot.aspx>

⁵<https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/psa/Support%20documents%20on%20C%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx>

5.2 TE Mission itinerary, including summary of field visits

Date	Time	Activity	Participants
Mon, 18 Jan 2021	9:00 - 10:00	Opening meeting to discuss planning for the Terminal Evaluation @ zoom meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Nguyen Trung Thong - UNDP Hanoi Ms. Ta Thi Kieu Anh - PMU Project manager Mr. Jose Galindo - International consultant Ms. Le Ha Thanh - National consultant
Wed, 27 Jan 2021		Travel from Hanoi to Ta Phin, Sapa	
	16:00 - 17:30	Meeting with local community of Ta Phin @ Group 2, Ta Chai commune, Ta Phin village, Sapa District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Tan Phu Quan - Member of local team, participating in forest conservation, provision and documentation of TK Ms. Phan Ta May - Member of local trading team Mrs. Cheo Su May - Member of local team, participating in forest conservation, provision and documentation of TK Ms. Le Ha Thanh - National consultant
	17:30 - 18:30	Meeting with Sapa Napro Company @ Group 2, Ta Chai commune, Ta Phin village, Sapa District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Nguyen Ba Nhung -Sapa Napro expert and project site coordinator Ms. Le Ha Thanh - National consultant
Thu, 28 Jan 2021	8:30 - 9:30	Meeting with PC of Ta Phin commune @Ta Phin PC office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Do Minh Tri - General secretary of CP of Ta Phin Commune, member of project implementation team Mr. Ly Lao Lo - Chairman of PC of Ta Phin commune, member of project implementation team Ms. Le Ha Thanh - National consultant
	13.30 - 14:30	Meeting Lao Cai DONRE @ Lao Cai DONRE office, Lao Cai Province	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Ngo Thi Lien Anh - Vice director of Division of environmental protection, Lao Cai DONRE Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong - Staff of Division of environmental protection, Lao Cai DONRE, Site Coordinator Ms. Le Ha Thanh - National consultant
		Travel to Hanoi	
Fri, Feb 2021	5 10.30 - 11.30	Meeting with Department of Science and Technology of MARD @Zoom meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Nguyen Thi Hong Thanh - MARD Officer Ms. Le Ha Thanh - National consultant
Tue, Mar 2021	9 8:30 - 10:30	Meeting with PMU @ Zoom meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Hoang Thi Thanh Nhan - PMU vice director Ms. Ta Thi Kieu Anh - PMU Project manager Mr. Jose Gadinlo - International consultant Ms. Le Ha Thanh - National consultant
Wed, Mar 2021	10 9:00 - 10:30	Meeting with UNDP @ Zoom meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Dao Xuan Lai - UNDP, CCE Unit head Mr. Nguyen Trung Thong - UNDP Hanoi Mr. Jose Gadinlo - International consultant Ms. Le Ha Thanh - National consultant

Thu, 11 Mar 2021	14:00 - 15:00	Meeting with National Institute of Medicinal Materials of MOH @ NIMM's office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Pham Thanh Huyen - Dean, Faculty of Medicinal resources • Ms. Le Ha Thanh - National consultant
Fri, 12 Mar	15:00 - 16:00	Meeting with Helvetats @ Zoom meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Nguyen Dieu Chi - Manager of BioTrade/Seco • Mr. Nguyen Tung - Helvetats officer • Ms. Le Ha Thanh - National consultant
Tue, 30 Mar 2021	9:00 - 10:10	Meeting with GEF focal point Vietnam @ Zoom meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Nguyen Duc Thuan - GEF Operational Focal Point • Mr. Le Quang Linh - GEF office in Vietnam • Ms. Le Nam Phuong - GEF office in Vietnam • Mr. Jose Gadinlo - International consultant • Ms. Le Ha Thanh - National consultant
Wed, 8 Apr 2021	9:00 - 10:30	Meeting with MOST @ NIMM's office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Truong Hong Van • Ms. Le Ha Thanh - National consultant

5.3 List of persons interviewed

#	Name	Position
1	Mr. Dao Xuan Lai	UNDP Hanoi, CCE Unit head
2	Mr. Nguyen Trung Thong	UNDP Hanoi
3	Ms. Hoang Thi Thanh Nhan	PMU Vice director
4	Ms. Ta Thi Kieu Anh	PMU Project manager
5	Mr. Nguyen Ba Nhung	Sapa Napro expert and project site coordinator
6	Mrs. Cheo Su May	Member of local team, participating in forest conservation, participating in forest conservation, provision and documentation of TK
7	Mr. Tan Phu Quan	Member of local team, participating in forest conservation, provision and documentation of TK
8	Ms. Phan Ta May	Member of local trading team
9	Mr. Do Minh Tri	General secretary of CP of Ta Phin Commune, member of project implementation team
10	Mr. Ly Lao Lo	Chairman of PC of Ta Phin commune, member of project implementation team
11	Ms. Ngo Thi Lien Anh	Vice director of Division of environmental protection, Lao Cai DONRE
12	Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong	Staff of Division of environmental protection, Lao Cai DONRE, Site Coordinator
13	Ms. Nguyen Thi Hong Thanh	Officer, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
14	Ms. Pham Thanh Huyen	Dean, Faculty of Medicinal resources, National Institute of Medicinal Materials, Ministry of Health
15	Ms. Nguyen Dieu Chi	Manager of BioTrade/Seco, Helvetats
16	Mr. Nguyen Tung	Helvetats officer
17	Mr. Nguyen Duc Thuan	GEF Operational Focal Point Viet Nam
18	Mr. Le Quang Linh	GEF office in Viet Nam
19	Ms. Le Nam Phuong	GEF office in Viet Nam
20	Ms. Truong Hong Van	Officer, Ministry of Science and Technology

5.4 List of documents reviewed

List of project documents sent to the Terminal evaluation team for desk review.

#	Item (electronic versions preferred if available)	Status
1	Project Identification Form (PIF)	Provided
2	UNDP Initiation Plan	Provided
3	Final UNDP-GEF Project Document with all annexes	Provided
4	CEO Endorsement Request	Provided
5	UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) and associated management plans (if any)	UNDP provided
6	Inception Workshop Report	Provided
7	Mid-Term Review report and management response to MTR recommendations	Not required
8	All Project Implementation Reports (PIRs)	Provided
9	Progress reports (Quarterly, Semi-annual or Annual, with associated workplans and financial reports)	Provided
10	Oversight mission reports	
11	Minutes of Project Board Meetings and of other meetings (i.e. Project Appraisal Committee meetings)	Provided
12	GEF Tracking Tools (from CEO Endorsement, midterm and terminal stages)	
13	GEF/LDCF/SCCF Core Indicators (from PIF, CEO Endorsement, midterm and terminal stages); for GEF-6 and GEF-7 projects only	Pls refer to latest PIR for indicators
14	Financial data, including actual expenditures by project outcome, including management costs, and including documentation of any significant budget revisions	Provided in the progress reports
15	Co-financing data with expected and actual contributions broken down by type of co-financing, source, and whether the contribution is considered as investment mobilized or recurring expenditures	Provided
16	Audit reports	Provided in Vietnamese
17	Electronic copies of project outputs (booklets, manuals, technical reports, articles, etc.)	Partly provided in Vietnamese
18	Sample of project communications materials	Partly provided (Pls refer to publication)
19	Summary list of formal meetings, workshops, etc. held, with date, location, topic, and number of participants	Provided
20	Any relevant socio-economic monitoring data, such as average incomes / employment levels of stakeholders in the target area, change in revenue related to project activities	PMU did not collect such data
21	List of contracts and procurement items over ~US\$5,000 (i.e. organizations or companies contracted for project outputs, etc., except in cases of confidential information)	Provide – list of major contracts
22	List of related projects/initiatives contributing to project objectives approved/started after GEF project approval (i.e. any leveraged or “catalytic” results)	Pls refer to the co-financing table for related projects/initiatives
23	Data on relevant project website activity – e.g. number of unique visitors per month, number of page views, etc. over relevant time period, if available	https://vietnamabs.gov.vn/en/about-abs/ PMU does not count the number of visitors
24	UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD)	UNDP should provide it
25	List/map of project sites, highlighting suggested visits	Provided. The project has only 01 pilot sites in Ta Phin, Sapa, Lao Cai (that the National Consultant visited in January)
26	List and contact details for project staff, key project stakeholders, including Project Board members, RTA,	Provided

	Project Team members, and other partners to be consulted	
27	Project deliverables that provide documentary evidence of achievement towards project outcomes	Please refer to the latest updated PIR for this information
	<i>Additional documents, as required</i>	

5.5 Evaluation Question Matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology)

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance			
Does the project's objective align with the priorities of the local government and local communities?	Level of coherence between project objective and stated priorities of local stakeholders	- Local stakeholders - Document review of local development strategies, environmental policies, etc.	- Local level field visit interviews - Desk review
Does the project's objective fit within the national environment and development priorities?	Level of coherence between project objective and national policy priorities and strategies, as stated in official documents	National policy documents, such as National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, National Capacity Self-Assessment, etc.	- Desk review - National level interviews
Did the project concept originate from local or national stakeholders, and/or were relevant stakeholders sufficiently involved in project development?	Level of involvement of local and national stakeholders in project origination and development (number of meetings held, project development processes incorporating stakeholder input, etc.)	- Project staff - Local and national stakeholders - Project documents	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Does the project objective fit GEF strategic priorities?	Level of coherence between project objective and GEF strategic priorities (including alignment of relevant focal area indicators)	- GEF strategic priority documents for period when project was approved - Current GEF strategic priority documents	- Desk review
Was the project linked with and in-line with UNDP priorities and strategies for the country?	Level of coherence between project objective and design with UNDAF, CPD	- UNDP strategic priority documents	- Desk review
Does the project's objective support implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity?	Linkages between project objective and elements of the CBD, such as key articles and programs of work	- CBD website - National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan	- Desk review

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
How relevant and effective has this project's strategy and architecture been? Is it relevant? Has it been effective? Does it need to change?	- Links to international commitments and national policy documents, relationships established, level of coherence between project design and implementation approach.	- Project documents - National policies or strategies, websites, project staff, project partners - Data collected throughout the mission	- Desk study - Interview with project staff - Observation - Focus groups
What are the decision-making processes -project governance oversight and accountabilities?	- Roles and Responsibilities of stakeholders in project implementation. - Partnership arrangements.	- Project documents - National policies or strategies, websites, project staff, project partners - Data collected throughout the mission	- Desk study - Interview with project staff - Observation - Focus groups
What extent does the project contribute towards the progress and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)?	Project alignment with the SDGs	- Project documents	- Desk study
What extent does the Government support (or not support) the Project, understand its responsibility and fulfill its obligations?	Meetings of the Project Board, Technical Team, Consultation Groups	- Minutes - Project documents	- Desk study
Effectiveness			
Are the project objectives likely to be met? To what extent are they likely to be met?	Level of progress toward project indicator targets relative to expected level at current point of implementation	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
What are the key factors contributing to project success or underachievement?	Level of documentation of and preparation for project risks, assumptions and impact drivers	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
What are the key risks and barriers that remain to achieve the project objective and generate Global Environmental Benefits?	Presence, assessment of, and preparation for expected risks, assumptions and impact drivers	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Are the key assumptions and impact drivers relevant to the achievement of Global Environmental Benefits likely to be met?	Actions undertaken to address key assumptions and target impact drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field visit interviews - Desk review
What has been (to date) this projects progress towards the expected results and log frame indicators? How do the key stakeholders feel this project has progressed towards the outcome level results (as stated in the original documents- inception report)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress toward impact achievements - Results of Outputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field visit interviews - Desk review - Consultation with Project Board Members - PMU - Field Observation and discussion with beneficiaries
What has been the progress to date and how has it led to, or could in the future catalyze beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment, improved governance etc...). How cross cutting areas been included in the project are results framework and monitored on an annual basis?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholder involvement effectiveness - Gender gap - Plans and policies incorporating initiatives - Record of comments and response of stakeholders - Positive or negative effects of the project on local populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field visit interviews - Desk review - Consultation with Project Board Members - PMU - Field Observation and discussion with beneficiaries
What does the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline indicate when compared with the one completed right before the Terminal Review.	- GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline indicate when compared with the one completed right before the Terminal Review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review
What are the remaining barriers to achieving the expected results as	- Number of barriers in the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field visit interviews - Desk review

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
told by stakeholders interviewed?			
What aspects of this project s implementation approach (pilots) (enabling activities) has been particularly successful or negative (as told by consults) and how might the project stakeholders further expand or correct these benefits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of project achievements - Progress toward impact achievements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field visit interviews - Desk review
Do the results framework indicators have a SMART focus?	Results framework indicators	M&E reports	- Desk review
Are the mid-term and end-of-project goals achievable?	% of results and results achieved: Progress towards the results framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - M&E reports - ProDoc 	- Desk review
Efficiency			
Is the project cost-effective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality and adequacy of financial management procedures (in line with UNDP, UNOPS, and national policies, legislation, and procedures) - Financial delivery rate vs. expected rate - Management costs as a percentage of total costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff 	- Desk review
Are expenditures in line with international standards and norms?	Cost of project inputs and outputs relative to norms and standards for donor projects in the country or region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Interviews with project staff - Desk review
Is the project implementation approach efficient for delivering the planned project results?	- Adequacy of implementation structure and mechanisms for coordination and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - National and local stakeholders - Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review - Interviews with project staff - Interviews with national and local stakeholders

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planned and actual level of human resources available - Extent and quality of engagement with relevant partners / partnerships - Quality and adequacy of project monitoring mechanisms (oversight bodies' input, quality and timeliness of reporting, etc.) 		
Is the project implementation delayed? If so, has that affected cost-effectiveness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project milestones in time - Planned results affected by delays - Required project adaptive management measures related to delays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review - Interviews with project staff
What is the contribution of cash and in-kind co-financing to project implementation?	Level of cash and in-kind co-financing relative to expected level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review - Interviews with project staff
To what extent is the project leveraging additional resources?	Amount of resources leveraged relative to project budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review - Interviews with project staff
What is project related progress in the following 'implementation' categories?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of project achievements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review - Interviews with project staff
Management Arrangements and Implementation Approach (including any evidence of Adaptive management and project coordination and km with pilots)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project management and coordination effectiveness - Number of project achievements in pilots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review - Interviews with project staff
How has the finances been managed, delivered and spent per outputs per year?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of expenditures in proportion with the results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk review

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
What percentage is delivered to date? Is it low?	- Financial Systems and effectiveness transparency		
Results			
Have the planned outputs been produced? Have they contributed to the project outcomes and objectives?	- Level of project implementation progress relative to expected level at current stage of implementation - Existence of logical linkages between project outputs and outcomes/impacts	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Are the anticipated outcomes likely to be achieved? Are the outcomes likely to contribute to the achievement of the project objective?	Existence of logical linkages between project outcomes and impacts	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Are impact level results likely to be achieved? Are the likely to be at the scale sufficient to be considered Global Environmental Benefits?	- Environmental indicators - Level of progress through the project's Theory of Change	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Sustainability			
To what extent are project results likely to be dependent on continued financial support? What is the likelihood that any required financial resources will be available to sustain the project results once the GEF assistance ends?	- Financial requirements for maintenance of project benefits - Level of expected financial resources available to support maintenance of project benefits - Potential for additional financial resources to support maintenance of project benefits	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Do relevant stakeholders have or are likely to achieve an adequate level of "ownership" of results, to have the interest in ensuring that project	Level of initiative and engagement of relevant stakeholders in project activities and results	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
benefits are maintained?			
Do relevant stakeholders have the necessary technical capacity to ensure that project benefits are maintained?	Level of technical capacity of relevant stakeholders relative to level required to sustain project benefits	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
To what extent are the project results dependent on socio-political factors?	Existence of socio-political risks to project benefits	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
To what extent are the project results dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance?	Existence of institutional and governance risks to project benefits	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Are there any environmental risks that can undermine the future flow of project impacts and Global Environmental Benefits?	Existence of environmental risks to project benefits	- Project documents	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
What are the financial risks to sustainability?	Financial risks;	- Project documents	- Desk review
What are the Socio-economic risks to sustainability?	Socio-economic risks and environmental threats.	- Project documents	- Desk review
Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability?	- Institutional and individual capacities	- Project documents	- Desk review
Gender equality and women's empowerment			
How did the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment?	Level of progress of gender action plan and gender indicators in results framework	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
In what ways did the project's gender results advance or contribute to the project's biodiversity outcomes?	Existence of logical linkages between gender results and project outcomes and impacts	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Were women's groups, NGOs, civil society orgs and	Existence of logical linkages between gender results and	- Project documents - Project staff	- Field visit interviews - Desk review

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
women's ministries adequately consulted and involved in project design? If not, should they have been?	project outcomes and impacts	- Project stakeholders	
Were stakeholder engagement exercises gender responsive?	Existence of logical linkages between gender results and project outcomes and impacts	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
For any stakeholder workshops, were women-only sessions held, if appropriate, and/or were other considerations made to ensure women's meaningful participation?	Existence of logical linkages between gender results and project outcomes and impacts	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Cross-cutting and UNDP Mainstreaming Issues			
How were effects on local populations considered in project design and implementation?	Positive or negative effects of the project on local populations.	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Extent to which the allocation of resources to targeted groups takes into account the need to prioritize those most marginalized.	Positive or negative effects of the project on local populations.	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Positive or negative effects of the project on local populations (e.g. income generation/job creation, improved natural resource management arrangements with local groups, improvement in policy frameworks for resource allocation and distribution, regeneration of natural resources	Positive or negative effects of the project on local populations.	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
for long term sustainability).			
Extent to which the project objectives conform to agreed priorities in the UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) and other country programmed documents.	Links between the project and the priorities of the UNDP Country Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field visit interviews - Desk review
Whether project outcomes have contributed to better preparations to cope with disasters or mitigate risk	Risk mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field visit interviews - Desk review
Extent to which poor, indigenous, persons with disabilities, women and other disadvantaged or marginalized groups benefited from the project	Positive or negative effects of the project on local populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field visit interviews - Desk review
The poverty-environment nexus: how the environmental conservation activities of the project contributed to poverty reduction	Positive or negative effects of the project on local populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field visit interviews - Desk review

5.6 Questionnaire used and summary of results

Questions to PMU and project board members and other stakeholders

Relevance

1. Does the project's objective align with the priorities of the local government and local communities?
2. Does the project's objective fit within the national environment and development priorities?
3. Did the project concept originate from local or national stakeholders, and/or were relevant stakeholders sufficiently involved in project development?
4. How relevant and effective has this project's strategy and architecture been? Is it relevant? Has it been effective? Does it need to change?
5. What are the decision-making processes -project governance oversight and accountabilities?

Effectiveness

6. Are the project objectives likely to be met? To what extent are they likely to be met?
7. What are the key factors contributing to project success or underachievement?
8. What are the key risks and barriers that remain to achieve the project objective and generate Global Environmental Benefits?
9. Are the key assumptions and impact drivers relevant to the achievement of Global Environmental Benefits likely to be met?
10. How do the key stakeholders feel this project has progressed towards the outcome level results (as stated in the original documents- inception report)?
11. How cross cutting areas been included in the project are results framework and monitored on an annual basis?
12. What are the remaining barriers to achieving the expected results as told by stakeholders interviewed?

Efficiency

13. Are expenditures in line with international standards and norms?
14. Is the project implementation approach efficient for delivering the planned project results?
15. Is the project implementation delayed? If so, has that affected cost-effectiveness?

16. What is the contribution of cash and in-kind co-financing to project implementation?
17. To what extent is the project leveraging additional resources?
18. What is project related progress in the following 'implementation' categories?

Results

19. Have the planned outputs been produced? Have they contributed to the project outcomes and objectives?
20. Are the anticipated outcomes likely to be achieved? Are the outcomes likely to contribute to the achievement of the project objective?
21. Are impact level results likely to be achieved? Are they likely to be at the scale sufficient to be considered Global Environmental Benefits?

Sustainability

22. To what extent are project results likely to be dependent on continued financial support? What is the likelihood that any required financial resources will be available to sustain the project results once the GEF assistance ends?
23. Do relevant stakeholders have or are likely to achieve an adequate level of "ownership" of results, to have the interest in ensuring that project benefits are maintained?
24. Do relevant stakeholders have the necessary technical capacity to ensure that project benefits are maintained?
25. To what extent are the project results dependent on socio-political factors or on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance or environmental?

Gender equality and women's empowerment

26. How did the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment?
27. In what ways did the project's gender results advance or contribute to the project's biodiversity outcomes?

Cross-cutting and UNDP Mainstreaming Issues

28. How were effects on local populations considered in project design and implementation?

Questions to organization and local authorities in Lao Cai

The same above questions

Extension: organization and local authorities in Lao Cai

Please rate the project success regarding activities at project site in your province/district.

1. High rating: What changes on the ground demonstrate this success? E.g. more capacities, less illegal trading cases, increase in number of contracts, better cash flows etc. (only prompt if no answer)
2. Low rating: What should have the project done to perform better? Was the project aligned with the needs of the localities here?

Questions to community representative/ community leaders/ assemblies in Ta Phin

3. Do you know about the project? What activities have you been involved in?
4. What did you do?
5. Institutional assessment:
 - a. What are the most important village/district/national organizations/institutions for your community under the project?
 - b. Did your village/organization have the financial/ human/ technical means to implement the demanded project activities? e.g. Did your organization possess/ was your organization provided with the necessary tools for the implementation of the project?
 - c. Is there any similar project in your village?
6. Assessment of change:
 - a. How life in the community has changed in the last 5 years, what have been the important events, what is different now, or is changing under the project?
 - b. How have things improved for men? For women? For marginalized groups? Were stakeholder engagement exercises gender responsive (Has the project put more attention to the woman?)
 - c. How have the capacities of people and institutions been strengthened and are they working more effectively?
 - d. In what ways would government officials and regular citizens behave differently with the implementation of project?
7. Vision for the future:
 - a. How do you see your community in the next five years?
 - b. Will you continue the project's activities in the future? Have you got resources and capacity to do it?
 - c. Are you willing to help other to do the same thing like what the project has done?

5.7 Co-financing tables (if not include in body of report)

5.8 TE Rating scales

Evaluation rating table

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating
M&E design at entry	
M&E Plan Implementation	
Overall Quality of M&E	
Implementation & Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	
Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	
Effectiveness	
Efficiency	
Overall Project Outcome Rating	
Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	
Socio-political/economic	
Institutional framework and governance	
Environmental	
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	

Rating scale used:

Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, I&E Execution	Sustainability ratings	Relevance ratings	Impact Ratings
<p>6: Highly Satisfactory (HS): no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency</p> <p>5: Satisfactory (S): minor shortcomings</p> <p>4: Moderately Satisfactory (MS): there were moderate shortcomings</p> <p>3. Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): the project had significant shortcomings</p> <p>2. Unsatisfactory (U): there were major shortcomings in the achievement of project objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency</p> <p>1. Highly Unsatisfactory (HU):The project had severe shortcomings</p> <p><i>Additional ratings where relevant:</i> Not Applicable (N/A) Unable to Assess (U/A)</p>	<p>4: Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability</p> <p>3: Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks</p> <p>2: Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks</p> <p>1: Unlikely (U): severe risks</p>	<p>2: Relevant (R)</p> <p>1: Not relevant (NR)</p>	<p>3: Significant (S)</p> <p>2: Minimal (M)</p> <p>1: Negligible (N)</p>

5.9 Signed Evaluation Consultant Agreement form

Evaluators:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant: José Fernando Galindo Zapata

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at Quito Ecuador on 20/01/2021



Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant: Le Ha Thanh

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at Hanoi, Vietnam on 20/01/2021



5.10 Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

5.11 Signed TE Report Clearance form

5.12 *Annexed in a separate file:* TE Audit Trail

5.13 *Annexed in a separate file:* relevant terminal GEF/LDCF/SCCF Core Indicators or Tracking Tools, as applicable

TE Report Clearance Form

Terminal Evaluation Report for UNDP PIMS 5303: VIETNAM ACCESS AND BENEFIT SHARING ABS Reviewed and Cleared By:

Commissioning Unit (M&E Focal Point)

Name: Nguyen Thi Ngoc Han

Signature:  _____

Date: 5 July 2021

Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)

Name: Bipin Pokharel

Signature:  _____

Date: 9 July 2021