

IUCN Viet Nam Strategic Framework 2007-2010

Finding the balance in a changing world



The World Conservation Union in Viet Nam

Governance, Environmental Planning, Environmental Services and Climate Change

IUCN Viet Nam
Strategic Framework 2007-2010
Finding the balance in a changing world

The designation of geographical entities in this document, and the presentation of the material, do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IUCN concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Published by: The World Conservation Union (IUCN), Viet Nam Country Office



Copyright: © 2007 International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources

Cover photograph: Ashley Brooks

Edited by: IUCN Viet Nam

Printed by: Meteor Corp. www.meteorcorp.com

Available from: The World Conservation Union (IUCN)
Viet Nam Country Office
Villa 44/4, Van Bao Street
Hanoi, Viet Nam
Tel: ++84 4 7261575/6
Fax: ++84 4 7261561
www.iucn.org.vn

Forewords

Dr. Pham Khoi Nguyen

Vice Minister
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

IUCN has a long association with the Government of Viet Nam. This began in the early 1980's when IUCN provided technical assistance in the preparation for the first National Conservation Strategy (NCS) in 1984-1985. Since then, IUCN Viet Nam has been making significant contributions to the environmental protection and nature conservation of Viet Nam, especially with respect to the development of policy and law. The important documents which IUCN Viet Nam has supported in the past or presently include the National Biodiversity Action Plan (issued in 1995), the National Plan for Environment and Sustainable Development (NPESD) for the period 1991-2000, and the Biodiversity Law.

Apart from supporting developing countries in establishing national law and policy related to natural management and environmental protection, IUCN also has strong experience in conservation work in the field. IUCN is a highly respected global organization which has a close relationship with Government and NGO's, a wide network of members, and reliable global knowledge and technical expertise.

On behalf of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), the focal point agency for the environment of Viet Nam, I would like to congratulate IUCN Viet Nam for this Strategic Framework 2007-2010. *Finding the Balance in a Changing World*, which defines the focus of the assistance they will provide in natural resources protection and management in Viet Nam. In this Strategic Framework, IUCN explains new approaches and orientations. This document reflects an in-depth understanding of the current situation in Viet Nam and highlights the need to address climate change and mainstream environmental factors into social and economic development to harmonize development and conservation.

I am confident that this Strategic Framework will guide IUCN Viet Nam to further success for the coming years.

Once again, congratulations!



Dr. Pham Khoi Nguyen

Katherine Warner, Ph.D.

Country Group Head - 1
Viet Nam, Lao PDR and Cambodia

Viet Nam is a very beautiful country, made up of mountains, forests, lush river deltas and wide expanses of coasts and beaches. But what of the future? With one of the fastest growing economies in the world, Viet Nam is undergoing major changes. The Viet Nam of the future will be very different from that of today, not only because of its rapid economic growth, but also due to the high vulnerability of its river deltas and coastlines to climate change.

It is in response to these challenges that IUCN Viet Nam has prepared its Strategic Framework 2007-2010: *Finding the balance in a changing world*. IUCN welcomes the opportunity to continue to work in partnership with the Government and people of Viet Nam in identifying new approaches that will assist in meeting the opportunities and challenges of the future. Utilising a collaborative process of consultations with Government, national institutions, members and international organisations, its *Strategic Framework* reflects IUCN's commitment to the conservation of Viet Nam's natural resources for future generations while bringing benefits to those in poverty today and addressing its emerging economic and environmental pressures.

I am very pleased with IUCN Viet Nam's Strategic Framework and believe that it will provide its programme with the correct path in *Finding the balance* in Viet Nam's changing world.



Katherine Warner, Ph.D.

Table of contents

The World Conservation Union (IUCN) in Viet Nam	5
Abbreviations and acronyms	7
1. Introduction	9
2. IUCN Viet Nam's Strategic Framework 2007-2010: <i>Finding the balance in a changing world</i>	11
2.1. IUCN Viet Nam: Finding the balance in a changing world	12
2.2. New directions and approaches	13
3 The 2007 - 2010 Thematic Programme for IUCN Viet Nam	15
4 Governance	17
4.1. Why Governance? - Improving environmental management, sustaining biodiversity and empowering stakeholders	17
4.2. Governance in Viet Nam	18
4.3. IUCN Viet Nam and Governance	18
4.4. Governance objectives and strategic directions	19
4.5. Principle Partners: Governance	19
5 Integrating environmental planning into economic growth	21
5.1. Why integrate environmental planning into economic growth? - Harmonizing development and conservation	21
5.2. Viet Nam and environmental planning for economic growth	22
5.3. IUCN Viet Nam and environmental planning for economic growth	23
5.4. Environmental planning for economic growth: objectives and strategic directions	23
5.5. Principle partners: Environmental planning for economic growth	24
6 Environmental services - maintaining ecosystem and biodiversity values	25
6.1. Why Environmental services? - Maintaining ecosystem and biodiversity values	25
6.2. Viet Nam and Environmental services	26
6.3. IUCN Viet Nam and Environmental services	26
6.4. Environmental services: objectives and strategic directions	27
6.5. Principle partners: Environmental services	27
7 Climate change - an adaptive approach	29
7.1. Why Climate change? - "An inconvenient truth"	29
7.2. Viet Nam and Climate change	30
7.3. IUCN Viet Nam and Climate change	31
7.4. Climate change objectives and strategic directions	32
7.5. Principle partners: Climate change	32
Annex 1. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) in Asia	33
Annex 2: Stakeholders consultation process	34
References and documents consulted	36

The World Conservation Union (IUCN) in Viet Nam

The World Conservation Union (IUCN) is a unique organisation. It is an intergovernmental organisation that brings together 82 states, 112 government organisations, over 800 NGOs, almost 40 affiliates, and some 10,000 scientists and experts from 181 countries.

One of the largest international non-profit environmental organisations in the world, it was founded in 1948 under the aegis of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Since 2000, IUCN has had observer status at the UN General Assembly. IUCN also has observer status at the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) as well as other UN technical agencies.

As a Union with both government and non-government members, and a vast network of experts and scientists, IUCN is well positioned to effectively lead, convene and facilitate environmental efforts in Viet Nam. IUCN Viet Nam is part of the IUCN Asia Region.

IUCN Viet Nam dates back to the early 1980s, when IUCN started providing technical assistance to the Government of Viet Nam in preparation of the first National Conservation Strategy (NCS) in 1984 -1985 and in the development of the first National Plan for Environmental and Sustainable Development (NPESD) for 1991-2000.

In 1993, Viet Nam became a state member of the IUCN and the IUCN Viet Nam Country Office was established in Hanoi in the same year. Since then, IUCN Viet Nam has been making significant contribution to the environment protection and nature conservation of Viet Nam. At present, the Viet Nam Country Office has 41 staff.

IUCN has two NGO members in Viet Nam, namely the Institute of Ecological Economy (ECO-ECO) and the Centre for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (CRES). However, IUCN works with many partners on a variety of initiatives. These include government agencies, local and international NGOs, donors and research institutions.

The IUCN Viet Nam Country Programme has focused on the following areas: biodiversity conservation, environmental awareness, environmental economics, forest conservation, marine and coastal ecosystems, protected areas, sustainable use of natural resources, wetlands and water resources and integrated environmental planning.

IUCN Viet Nam recognises the support of its many donors over many years. These include a range of agencies from Governments of Australia, Denmark, the European Union, Finland, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. The support of international agencies, including ADB, Ford Foundation, GEF, UNDP, and the World Bank, is also recognised.

Since 2004 the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) has supported IUCN Viet Nam's efforts in achieving our mission through a Country Programme Support Agreement (CPSA). The Strategic Framework planning process for IUCN Viet Nam was funded under this agreement.

Abbreviations and acronyms

ABS	Access and Benefit Sharing
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BBP	Business and Biodiversity Programme
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CC	Climate Change
CITES	Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species
CPRGS	Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy
CPSA	Country Programme Support Agreement (Sida)
CRES	Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies
Danida	Danish International Development Agency
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DEX	Direct Execution
DONRE	Department of Natural Resources and Environment
DOE	Department of Environment, MONRE
DOF	Department of Forestry, MARD
ECO-ECO	Institute of Ecological Economy
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FDS	Forestry Development Strategy
FFI	Fauna and Flora International
FPD	Forest Protection Department, MARD
FSSP	Forestry Sector Support Partnership
GDP	Gross Domestic Products
GEF	Global Environmental Fund
GoV	Government of Viet Nam
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HRD	Human Resource Development
ICD	International Cooperation Department
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IUCN	The World Conservation Union

JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KEG	Knowledge, Empowerment and Governance
KP	Kyoto Protocol
KRAs	Key Result Areas
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MEAs	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFI	Ministry of Fisheries
MOI	Ministry of Industry
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MOST	Ministry of Science and Technology
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MRC	Mekong River Commission
NCS	National Conservation Strategy
NEA	National Environment Agency
NEAP	National Environmental Action Plan
NEX	National Execution
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NP	National Park
NPESD	National Plan for Environment and Sustainable Development
NSEP	National Strategy for Environment Protection
NTFP	Non-timber Forest Products
NTFPRC	Non-timber Forest Product Research Centre
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PA	Protected Area
PARC	Protected Area for Resources Conservation
RAMSAR	RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands
SBPRP	Safeguarding Biodiversity for Poverty Reduction Project
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation
SEA	Strategic Environment Assessment
UCAR	University Corporation for Atmospheric Research
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
VCCI	Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry
VEPA	Viet Nam Environment Protection Agency, MONRE
VFEJ	Viet Nam Forum of Environmental Journalists
VNFS	Viet Nam National Forest Strategy
WB	World Bank
WHS	World Heritage Site
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature

1. Introduction

Viet Nam is situated along the southeast margin of the Indochina peninsula and is bordered by China, Lao PDR, and Cambodia. Three-quarters of Viet Nam consists of mountains and hills with a dense network of rivers and creeks. Viet Nam is endowed with diverse natural resources, including land, forest, water, mineral, energy, and biological resources. It is one of the world's most biologically diverse countries, in terms of global biodiversity, with 10 % of the world's mammal, bird and fish species. It is estimated that over 40 % of local plant species are believed to exist only in Viet Nam.

Viet Nam has had a 7 % annual economic growth rate over the last decade and it is projected to be as high as 8.4 % for 2007, thus Viet Nam is considered as one of the fastest growing economies in the world. This rapid economic growth is continuing to have a significant impact on the environment. Urbanisation, industrialisation, and infrastructure development, especially the building of dams and highways, are changing the landscape of Viet Nam, endangering its rich biodiversity and degrading its natural resources, especially its coasts, wetlands, and forests. WTO accession is bringing additional challenges to Viet Nam. The long-term challenge for Viet Nam is to recognise its natural resources and biodiversity as assets, and to *balance* development with conservation.

Environmental management mechanisms and policies have not been able to keep pace with Viet Nam's economic growth. While Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is specified in the Law on Environmental Protection (2005) implementation has been limited due to the lack of capacity and appropriate mechanisms. Similarly, the Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) of development projects are being conducted, but their effectiveness remains low due to a lack of enforcement mechanisms and incentives for compliance. The proposed state budget allocation for environmental protection currently stands at 1 % of total

expenditure - a positive step - however wise investment, coupled with voluntary compliance to environmental regulations by the private sector remain critical.

The rapid economic growth of the last two decades has had a significant impact on reducing poverty across Viet Nam. According to the UNDP, poverty rates in Viet Nam dropped from 58% in 1993, to 20 % in 2004. Despite these gains, economic growth has been associated with a widening urban-rural divide - 90% of people in poverty reside in rural areas. It is the rural poor who are the most dependent on natural resources and are the most vulnerable to environmental degradation. The continuing destruction of natural resources will therefore have a greater impact on the rural poor and widen even further the gap between urban and rural households. Initiatives are needed that enable rural communities to capture emerging economic opportunities that will also support improving biodiversity conservation rather than degrading the environment.

Climate change will be the issue driving the development and environmental agenda in Viet Nam this century. It will require a "whole of country" response. Viet Nam is one of the most susceptible countries to the impact of climate change. A projected increase in sea-level of 0.56 metres over the next 50 years (IPCC estimates) will have a significant impact on the economic activities of Viet Nam and will impact on the rural poor in its river deltas. In the deltas, infrastructure will need to be re-planned, with provision made for internal migration and physical measures adopted. Adaptation to climate change will need to be integrated into all sectoral plans and policies.

IUCN Viet Nam's Strategic Framework 2007-2010 has been developed within the context of Viet Nam's sustained economic growth and the emerging awareness of the potential impact of climate change on Viet Nam's environment. In building on its past and looking to the

future, IUCN Viet Nam has been critically considering the new directions of its programme while reflecting on those of the nation. This Strategic Framework is the result of a review of IUCN Viet Nam's past works, consultation with present, and potential, partners and members, and the consideration of IUCN's comparative advantage as an organisation that includes government and non-government members and networks that link national, regional and global bodies.

This Strategic Framework 2007-2010 has not been developed as an operation plan. It aims to align IUCN Viet Nam programmes with the plans of the GoV and other donors for the period 2006-2010. Yes, it is ambitious! However, the strategic approaches outlined in this plan are not only a framework for the development of the programmes of IUCN Viet Nam, but seek to provide guidance for our partners seeking to support sustainable development in Viet Nam.

Essentially, this Strategic Framework is a guidance document for IUCN Viet Nam and our national partners. IUCN, as a global organization, has a formal planning process, whereby all IUCN Global Programmes; Commissions; Regions and countries contribute to the IUCN Intersessional Plan. This Strategic Framework 2007-2010 reflects the aims and priorities established in the IUCN Viet Nam's 2005-2008 Intersessional Plan and will provide a solid foundation to the IUCN Viet Nam's 2009-2012 Intersessional Plan in the process of development.

The IUCN Viet Nam Country Office within IUCN Country Group 1, a coordination unit of the World Conservation Union in Southeast Asia that is managed from Hanoi, under the umbrella of the global World Conservation Union (IUCN) headquartered in Gland, Switzerland and the Asia Regional Office in Bangkok, Thailand.

The Government of Viet Nam (GoV) through its IUCN member, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), has expressed strong support for IUCN Viet Nam's new Strategic Framework. The aim of this document to provide a framework for discussion and implementation with partners, members, and key stakeholders (including the private sector) and to serve as a guide for collaborative partnerships and activities over the coming four years. It will also serve as a guide for setting new directions for IUCN Viet Nam that reflect the dynamic situation of Viet Nam and the region and assist in planning and monitoring activities in the country.

2. IUCN Viet Nam's Strategic Framework 2007-2010: *Finding the balance in a changing world*

IUCN's global mission is:

To influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that the use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

IUCN Viet Nam's new Strategic Framework indicates its commitment to its **mission**:

To influence, encourage, and assist Viet Nam's biodiversity conservation and equitable sustainable use of natural resources for improving its people's quality of life.

IUCN Viet Nam's **vision** is:

To become the leading knowledge-based conservation and environmental organisation working in partnership with the Government of Viet Nam, civil society and the private sector - to promote best practice for sustainable development; maintain environmental integrity; and support sustainable livelihoods for its people.

IUCN Viet Nam's vision is reflected in its Strategic Framework, which demonstrates a commitment to a better future in which Viet Nam's natural resources are valued and well managed for the livelihoods of its people. The IUCN Strategic Framework is aligned with the GoV plans and strategies for the period 2006 - 2010 which in turn reflect the Government's commitment to poverty reduction within the high economic growth context anticipated for this period. There is an urgent need for improving environmental planning and management for maintaining sustainable ecosystem and environmental services for both current and future development. The Strategic Framework also reflects the spirit of the Hanoi Core Statement to support Government ownership, alignment with national priorities, harmonisation of approaches, and to assist improved coordination to achieve measurable results and outcomes by 2010.

While this Framework provides strategic directions for IUCN Viet Nam, it is a living document with the flexibility to accommodate developments throughout implementation. It confirms that IUCN Viet Nam will serve as a convener in supporting the Government in addressing national priorities through continuing to work in close partnership with key stakeholders and supporting strategic initiatives. It will provide the guidance to support the Government to address critical emerging areas such as climate change adaptation and areas of on-going programmes such as environmental governance. In addition, IUCN Viet Nam will strengthen and expand its partnership with other government agencies such as the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), the Ministry of Finance (MOF), the Ministry of Industry (MOI), the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and the private sector in ecosystem conservation and environmental protection. In working with its partners, IUCN Viet Nam will further promote IUCN membership among Vietnamese organisations. This aligns with IUCN's traditional role of acting as an organisation whose network of members is committed to best practice in environmental management.

2.1. IUCN Viet Nam: Finding the balance in a changing world

IUCN Viet Nam's long term objectives:

1. Ecosystems, habitats and species are conserved and rehabilitated, as a basic need for the present generation and as a basic right for future generations.
2. Natural resources are managed and used on an equitable and sustainable basis and contribute to poverty alleviation, especially of women and the most vulnerable, and improve human wellbeing.
3. Sound environmental management principles and practices are incorporated into the policies and plans for social and economic growth.

2.2. New directions and approaches

IUCN Viet Nam's approach for the coming 2007 - 2010 period is founded on six basic operational principles:

1. *Strategic partnership with government, donors and key stakeholders, including the private sector.* IUCN Viet Nam will work with the GoV to identify its needs and priorities and provide support in the design and/or formulation of sectoral programmes. IUCN Viet Nam will continue and further strengthen its support to the GoV in developing law, regulations and enforcement mechanisms for the management of natural resources and the environment. Special attention will be paid to building of capacity related to multi-lateral environmental agreements. Donor relations, partnerships within IUCN and with its members, NGOs and other partners will be further strengthened; new partnerships with the private sector will be formed.

2. *Knowledge, Empowerment and Governance (KEG) for conservation and sustainable use.* This is a core strategy for IUCN's global programme and is based on the assumption that when knowledge is available and people and institutions are empowered to use this knowledge, they can participate more effectively in decision-making to improve laws, policies, instruments and institutions. In Viet Nam, this is especially relevant in the introduction of new and innovative approaches such as agro-biodiversity, business and biodiversity partnerships, payments for environmental services and integrated natural resource management.

3. *Innovation and Leadership.* IUCN Viet Nam will work innovatively and actively towards the needs of Viet Nam. In response to the dynamic changes that Viet Nam is currently experiencing and will continue to experience in the future, IUCN Viet Nam will work proactively with its partners to address the country's needs and develop a better understanding of the current status of natural resources and environment, especially those most vulnerable to climate change (coastal zones and riverine areas). IUCN Viet Nam will consider development trends, promote new concepts and approaches, and pilot new initiatives. In essence, IUCN Viet Nam will lead the convening of IUCN members and NGOs to address Government priorities as well as to dialogue on other priority issues.

4. *Excellence in technical assistance.* IUCN Viet Nam commits to continuing to provide quality technical assistance in the environment sector to its partners. In response to overseas development assistance mechanisms increasingly taking the NEX (nationally executed) model, IUCN Viet Nam will focus on providing high-quality technical assistance. As an organisation that has not only national staff, but also has a global network of experts, IUCN Viet Nam can provide excellent technical assistance, especially in new and emerging areas. One particular area where IUCN Viet Nam will assist is in the benchmarking studies of vulnerable ecosystems.

5. *Focussed and flexible programme delivery.* IUCN Viet Nam will continue to work with its existing programmes focussing on biodiversity, marine and coastal areas, forests, protected areas, wetlands and water resources to deliver the objectives laid out within this Strategic Framework. In addition, to addressing specific issues, teams and working groups will be established within the IUCN Viet Nam programme and with partners to meet programme objectives.

6. *Communication outreach.* Building awareness on new and critical environmental issues, and proactively disseminating the results of programme activities, are cornerstone principles for IUCN Viet Nam's Strategic Framework 2007-2010. In a rapidly changing world, IUCN Viet Nam will provide information in the appropriate form to a range of target audiences and work with its partners and members to capture lessons learnt and to provide success stories from effective programmes and activities. Future leaders will be a particular focus of these initiatives.

3. The 2007 - 2010 Thematic Programme for IUCN Viet Nam

This Strategic Framework outlines a set of thematic programmes and introduces areas of cooperation with partners. The process of stakeholder consultation is summarised in Annex 2.

IUCN Viet Nam's programme seeks to reflect the challenges for Viet Nam in the coming years: how to find a balance between rapid economic development and maintaining environmental services within a world undergoing climate change.

IUCN Viet Nam, together with key partners, has developed an integrated programme of four thematic areas of work, namely *Governance, Environmental Planning, Environmental Services, and Climate Change*.

The **rationale** for these thematic areas is outlined below:

Governance lies at the centre of the 2007-2010 Strategic Framework and is central to each of the other three thematic programmes areas of the Framework (see diagram, next page). Governance is also structured as a distinct area of programmatic activity and reflects IUCN Viet Nam's commitment to strengthening overall governance within key sectors in Viet Nam and to supporting a multi-stakeholder approach in which those who are dependent on natural resources, especially the rural communities and disadvantaged groups, also have a voice in its management.

Environmental planning addresses the issue of "greening" the development agenda and mainstreaming the environment into relevant plans and policies. This builds upon the existing efforts of IUCN Viet Nam to harmonize development and conservation as well as to support the effective use of available resources. The integration of environmental planning tools into the development process is a critical part of this approach.

Environmental services thematic area aims to help maintain the benefits that ecosystems and the environment can provide to the people of Viet Nam. This has been one of the traditional areas of IUCN Viet Nam's past efforts. Working with the technical expertise found within IUCN's global networks, IUCN Viet Nam will promote global best practice in habitat and species conservation.

Climate change will emerge over the next four years as a critical element of all aspects of the government's policies, plans and actions. Impacts of climate change will be felt in both rural communities and in cities; coastal communities are already reporting impacts. IUCN will work together with the government and communities to promote the development of adaptation strategies to respond to a changing climate.

IUCN Viet Nam's programmatic themes and objectives are summarised below:

Governance

- Promote sustainable development that is measured by clear environmental indicators of the impacts economic growth has on Viet Nam's environment;
- Develop incentive mechanisms that encourage sustainable management and use of natural resources and build capacity and commitment to enforcement of existing environmental laws and regulations;
- Enhance and sustain coordination among government agencies on key policy and implementation issues;
- Support meaningful participation of civil society and the private sector in the development of environmental laws and policies and in decision making which impacts the environment;
- Promote policy processes that build upon lessons learnt and contribute to the development and integration of best practice; and
- Support transparent integrated implementation of key Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and regional cooperation.

Environmental planning

- Integrate environmental concerns into the Social Economic Development Plan and other economic development and poverty strategies;
- Provide guidance in the orientation and development of National Plans and Strategies;
- Demonstrate and build capacity in the use of integrated planning tools; and
- Promote private sector engagement in adopting best practices for sustainable business.

Environmental services

Management of ecosystem and protected areas for the provision of environmental services through:

- Development of species conservation and management programmes;
- Identify co-management approaches to address poverty alleviation for communities living in and around protected areas to achieve livelihood and biodiversity conservation; and
- Financial and incentive mechanisms to support provision of ecosystem services.

Climate change

- Identify potential impacts and promote local initiatives to identify adaptation strategies;
- Integrate climate change considerations into existing planning mechanisms and tools; and
- Bring knowledge, understanding and best information on the potential impact of climate change.

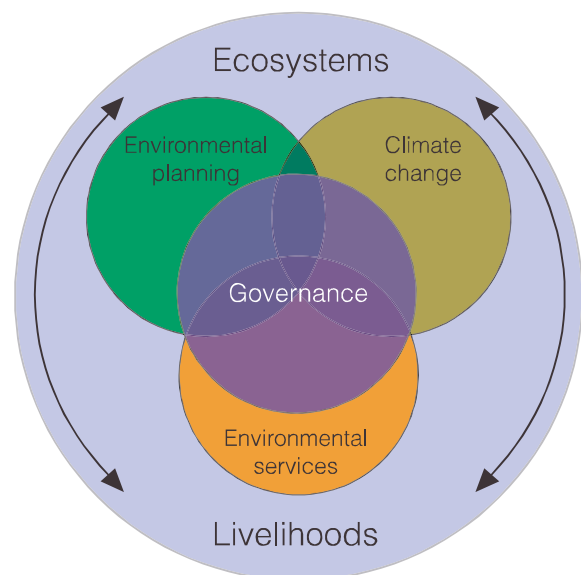
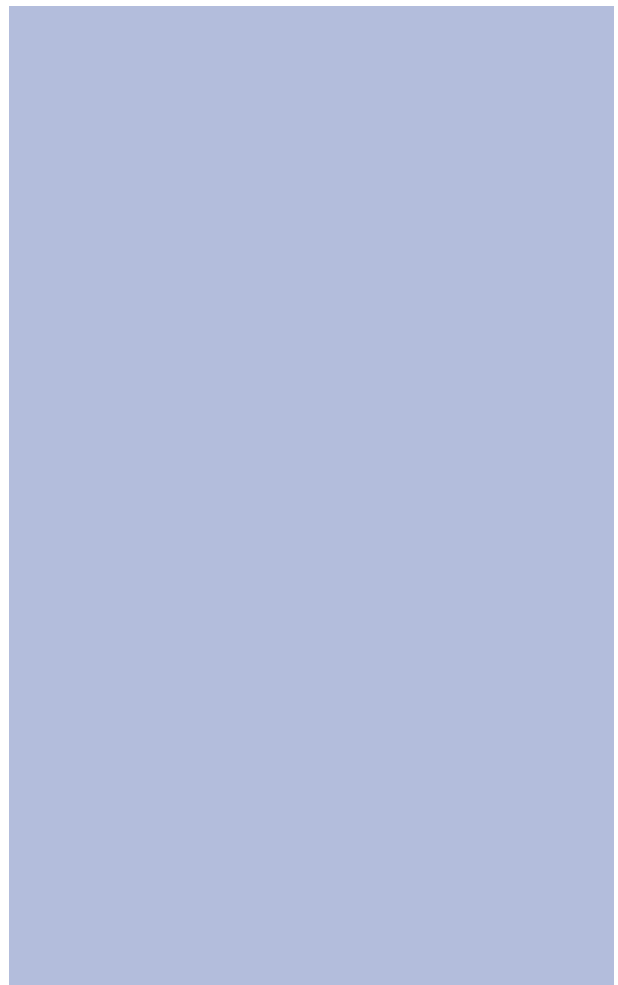


Diagram of strategic approach

4. Governance

Governance is about more than government. It is about relationships between citizens, leaders and public institutions. (DFID White Paper 2006)

Governance covers a wide range of activities, including the development of legal frameworks, building capacity for government authorities and civil society, strengthening institutional arrangements, improving enforcement, and developing incentive mechanisms for environmental protection and natural resources management.

4.1. Why Governance? - Improving environmental management, sustaining biodiversity and empowering stakeholders

The Governance thematic programme incorporates all work related to strengthening institutional capacity to effectively manage natural resources. Governments, development agencies and the private sector widely recognise the importance of good governance to both long and short term management goals.

That sound natural resource management is linked to poverty reduction is also well recognised, but the question of how to ensure that natural resource management policies and practices support poverty reduction and do not result in creating further hardship on the rural poor remains a challenge. There is relatively little national analysis of the role that natural resources such as forest-derived resources play - or have the potential to play - in rural livelihoods; nor has there been much analysis of what measures are required to capture such potential. Of special importance in a country with a fast growing economy such as Viet Nam, is firstly the recognition in the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS) of the vulnerability of natural resource systems to degradation from macroeconomic policy shifts, and secondly the recognition of the potential impacts such degradation will have on the livelihoods of the rural poor. Ecosystem health and biodiversity maintenance are also indicators of effective governance.

With the recognition that some problems are too big to be solved by governments alone, multi-stakeholder approaches that integrate contributions from government, civil society, the private sector, and other agencies are becoming more prevalent. Climate change has, for example, created the need for a global multinational, multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder response. Addressing problems

such as illegal logging is an important and specific multi-sectoral entry point where work can be done towards achieving sustainable forest management, improved livelihoods, and benefits for many stakeholders.

4.2. Governance in Viet Nam

The Government of Viet Nam is advancing across many policy and legislative fronts including the Five Year Plan for Natural Resources and Environment Sector 2006-2010, the National Forest Strategy, and laws on environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, water resource management, mineral exploitation and land allocation.

The Government is investing more resources than in the past on natural resources and environment management, with 1% of state budget expenditure allocated to spending on environmental protection. However, the mechanisms for disbursement of these funds need to be established with clear natural resource management and biodiversity targets and clear action plans. It is also vital that the funding will actually address the problem of overlapping functions among related agencies - for such an allocation would almost certainly result in improved natural resource management/protection. This will assist in the definition of clear roles, responsibilities, and priorities. There is also a need to go beyond policy and regulations to actual enforcement. Capacities for environmental governance urgently need strengthening at the provincial level. Furthermore, piloting of models of effective community-based management for the environment can demonstrate participatory governance in Viet Nam.

There is greater acceptance of the role of the private sector, especially with Viet Nam's recent accession to the WTO. Therefore, raising awareness, developing cooperation mechanisms, seeking compliance with environmental regulations and promoting best practice in the private sector will be increasingly important. Incentive mechanisms need to be developed that encourage environmentally-friendly enterprises and compliance with environmental regulations.

Public participation is a vital component of environmental management. The Grassroots Democracy Decree calls for participation with respect to issues such as land use planning. The revised Law on Environmental Protection (LEP) goes some way towards defining popular rights relating to monitoring environmental quality. However, the specification of rights relating to public participation in monitoring pollution, and in the formulation and development of these monitoring programmes (such as programmes that monitor the environmental impact of industrial development) may need to be included in legislation that is not exclusively environmental. Concrete

channels to enable the public to hold polluters accountable under the law are needed. In general, information needs to become more accessible to the public (a sentiment also articulated in the revised LEP).

4.3. IUCN Viet Nam and Governance

Governance is an area in which IUCN Viet Nam can make a difference. Since the early 1980s, IUCN has been working on governance issues in Viet Nam, supporting the formulation of laws, strategies and action plans including: the National Conservation Strategy (NCS) in 1984 -1985; the National Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) developed by the National Environment Agency (NEA) (1993 -1996); the National Plan for Environment and Sustainable Development (NPESD) for the period 1991-2000; and the five-year National Environmental Action Plan (2001-2005). Currently IUCN Viet Nam is providing technical assistance in the formulation of the Biodiversity Law. In addition, efforts on Forest Law and Environmental Governance (FLEG) are strengthening approaches to forest management.

Building on its long-term experience and engagement with the government, and on the growing recognition of the magnitude of current and future environmental challenges, IUCN Viet Nam will promote effective multi-stakeholder approaches and partnerships to maintain and/or improve management of natural resources. A special concern is to ensure that those who are dependent on natural resources to meet their daily livelihood needs are given a stronger voice in natural resource management, especially so that they receive due rights and benefits. IUCN Viet Nam will promote environmental governance that is sensitive to the needs of the poor, especially women and minorities, on natural resources, and will seek to provide opportunities for improving livelihoods.

Around the world, many initiatives are introducing new models of sustainable conservation. Thanks to the global IUCN network of experts, IUCN Viet Nam can adapt and introduce these approaches to current and emerging environmental issues in Viet Nam, in some cases working closely with other country programmes. IUCN Viet Nam's long-standing partnerships with a number of Government agencies and close working relationships with IUCN members and NGOs will also mobilise national expertise and extensive experience towards strengthening environmental governance in Viet Nam.

4.4. Governance objectives and strategic directions

IUCN Viet Nam will work to build capacity towards recognising the importance of *accountability* and *responsiveness* of public policies and institutions to the diverse needs of its citizens. It will:

1. Promote sustainable development that is measured by clear environmental indicators of the impacts that economic growth has on Viet Nam's environment:

- Assist in the development of standard national environmental indicators able to measure impact of development on the environment, natural resource and biodiversity.

2. Develop incentive mechanisms that encourage sustainable management and use of natural resources and build capacity and commitment to enforcement of existing environmental laws and regulations

- Provide technical assistance for the development of laws and regulations (e.g. Biodiversity Law, the Second BAP and Biodiversity Corridors Decree, the Law on Wetlands, and the National Action Plan on Climate Change);
- Provide technical assistance on law and the enforcement of regulations; and
- Support development of incentive mechanisms - such as Payment for Environmental Services (PES) or benefit sharing, - which encourage environmental protection.

3. Enhance and sustain coordination among government agencies on key policy and implementation issues

- Convene multi-sectoral dialogues and working groups and support the development of other mechanisms for collaboration around specific issues such as water resource management and natural resource management; and
- Support efforts to institutionalise integrated multi-sectoral planning and decision-making.

4. Support meaningful participation of civil society and the private sector in the development of environmental laws and policies and in decision-making that impacts the environment

- Promote tri-partite dialogues between the Government, the private sector and civil society on issues such as the impact of forest policies on management; and
- Raise awareness on environment issues such as climate change, trans-boundary illegal logging and wildlife trade.

5. Promote policy processes that build upon lessons learnt and contribute to the development and integration of best practices

- Promote participatory review of environmental management laws; and

- Develop case studies from national to grass-root levels on the status and impact of current policy that focus on policy adoption, enforcement, delineation of responsibilities, potential for synergies and conflict resolution.

6. Support transparent integrated implementation of key Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and regional cooperation;

- Support the Government in the development of national policies and action plans to meet obligations of MEAs (e.g. initially the CBD, UNCCD, Ramsar Convention, and UNCCC);
- In wildlife trade issues, work in close collaboration with TRAFFIC where CITES matters are concerned;
- Recognise the GoV and its emerging influence on the world affairs in multi-lateral dialogues; and
- Support the meaningful participation of appropriate stakeholders in regional and global forums.

4.5. Principle partners: Governance

IUCN Viet Nam will maintain and strengthen cooperation with key concerned partners in the country as well as in within the governance framework. In particular, IUCN Viet Nam will:

- Continue to work closely with relevant Government bodies in respective fields to strengthen environmental governance. These include MARD, MONRE, MOFi, MPI and provincial PPCs;
- Coordinate with and support TRAFFIC's work with regards to strengthening wildlife trade laws and policies;
- Provide support to the Department of Environment, MONRE and the National Assembly in the development of the Law on Biodiversity and the development of regulations, by-laws and decisions that provide guidance on implementation of the Law;
- Build capacity of agencies responsible for MEAs, with a focus on agencies relevant to the CBD, UNCCD, UNCCC and the Ramsar Convention;
- Support and draw linkages to, and building upon, the work TRAFFIC is undertaking with regards to building capacity to implement CITES;
- Assist the MPI and the VCCI to promote "best practice" in the private sector; and
- Promote the engagement and participation of civil society, NGOs, the media and local communities in governance to ensure the transparency and accountability of policy and decision-making processes.

5. Integrating environmental planning into economic growth

Viet Nam's economic development is remarkable:

"This progress has been achieved as a result of sustained reform efforts that started 20 years ago. It is the expectation that GDP per capita will reach US\$1,100 by the end of the SEDP 2006-2010 period, putting Viet Nam on the path to become an industrialized country by 2020. Challenges remain..... Ensuring sustainable development is also a challenge..."

Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung (Consultative Group meeting - Hanoi, 15/12/2006)

However, this growth has resulted in a significant impact on its environment as landscapes have been transformed and natural resources degraded. The future sustainable development of Viet Nam will require the integration of the maintenance of environmental services into economic development planning process.

5.1. Why integrate environmental planning into economic growth? - Harmonizing development and conservation

The Social Economic Development Plan (SEDP) 2006-2010 promotes the development and expansion of the industrial, agro-forestry, fishing and tourism sectors. Industrial development relies upon the water supply, power supply, and other natural resources and services. As a result, demand on natural resources will continue to increase during the industrialisation and modernisation process. A growing population and urban development is also placing additional stress on the environment. Poor wastewater disposal is polluting rivers and water systems and creating challenges in the management of waste.

Often, it is the poor that are more affected by environmental degradation. Seventy percent of Vietnamese people are in rural areas, with many earning their living from the land, making them directly dependent on the quality and availability of natural resources. Forest management policies must take into account the livelihoods of forest workers, local people who depend on 'non-timber forest products', crop farmers and cattle herders. Conservation should not come at the expense of these people, many of whom are extremely poor. Local people need improved access to forests of various types, to sloping land for agriculture and to terraced land. Women and ethnic minorities in particular require more secure land tenure and better access to extension services and capital for livelihood development.

Some natural resources have been exploited to such a point that they cannot be restored. Utilisation of natural resources for economic development is often wasteful and destructive of the environment, with the cost of environmental improvement set aside to be addressed at a later stage in the development cycle. One of the primary reasons for environmental degradation is a lack of proper planning, monitoring and management of natural resources during economic development.

Viet Nam is prone to natural disasters, including river floods, cyclones, and drought. More than one million people require emergency relief each year. Global climate change is likely to result in more erratic incidence and intensity of cyclones, rain and drought. Plans must be developed to address these issues.

The social and economic elements of sustainable development are closely linked to the health of the environment. However, the consequences of development on the environment are often ignored. Over recent years, the environment has gained additional attention; the creation of the National Council on Sustainable Development has been an important part of this process. The continued integration of the environment into development planning is essential for such a fast-growing country as Viet Nam.

5.2. Viet Nam and environmental planning for economic growth

The Government's focus areas in relation to natural resources and the environment have been set out in the SEDP 2006-2010. These include the development of:

- Law on Biodiversity and revised Biodiversity Law; revision of the Law on Water Resources;
- Decree providing guidance on solving issues related to the issuing of specific land-use-rights certificates; on land reclamation; and, on procedures of land compensation and resettlement support when land is taken for use by the State;
- Master plan for a baseline survey of natural resources and natural minerals;
- Master plan for water resources and river basins and inventory and assessment of water resources;
- Master plan for a monitoring system for natural resources and the environment;
- Master plan for solid waste collection and treatment;
- Mechanisms and policies to support and implement Agenda 21 at ministerial, sectoral and local levels;
- Programmes and projects for pollution prevention, environmental protection and sustainable development; and
- Mechanisms and policies to encourage investment in natural resources and environment protection.

In addition, there are a number of sectoral plans being undertaken by sectoral agencies. These include:

- **Marine and coastal:** The Government's coastal and marine priorities include: the development of a network of 15 MPAs; the development of an ICM framework providing guidance at both the national and the local level; reduction of poverty in local communities living in and around protected areas; ecosystem-based aquaculture management; and growth in the marine economy.

- **Water resources management:** Successful management will coordinate the development, allocation and use of the water resources, will outline clear institutional arrangements, and will provide adequate and river basin plans. However, challenges remain, including a lack of accurate information and data and a lack of suitable models of integrated river basin management. Therefore, priorities of the Government include strengthening protection, management and development of water resources, the mitigation of adverse impacts caused by water and the improvement of institutional arrangements.

- **Wetland management:** Clear institutional arrangements are needed. Therefore, priorities of the Government include the development of a mechanism for collaboration among sectors and consensus on common objectives for sustainable wetlands management. Public awareness on wetlands should be further raised. Financial and incentive mechanisms should be developed for wetlands management.

- **Forest management:** The Forestry sector is regarded by the Vietnamese Government as a sector that plays a very important role in the protection of the environment, in biodiversity conservation, and in poverty reduction, which contributes to social stability, national defence and security. The priorities for the period 2006 - 2020 are outlined in the 2007 Viet Nam National Forest Strategy (VNFS). The main priorities are (i) to sustainably establish, manage, protect and use 16.24 million ha of land planned for forestry; (ii) to increase the forest cover up to 43% by the year 2010 and 47% by 2020; (iii) to ensure wider participation from various economic sectors and social organisation in forest development and protection especially environmental services supply. There are 21 priority programmes proposed for 2007 - 2010 in the VNFS including forest governance, environmental services, consolidation of the forested protected area system and NTFP development and conservation. In addition, the national NTFP strategy sub-sector strategy has been developed.

5.3. IUCN Viet Nam and environmental planning for economic growth

Since the 1980's, IUCN has been providing assistance in the development of a variety of policies and plans in Viet Nam. These have included National Environmental Action Plans, a Biodiversity Action Plan, and a range of other initiatives. This will remain an important focal area of IUCN Viet Nam's country programme.

IUCN Viet Nam has also provided assistance in the development of approaches to aspects of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) through its partnership efforts with NOAA and the Ministry of Fisheries over the past eight years. It is proposed that this approach is integrated with MONRE's efforts for ICZM and comprehensive technical support is provided to address the key challenges in the coastal environment.

Additionally, IUCN Viet Nam has been promoting the use of an integrated water resources management (IWRM) strategy to address the issues of water management and to ensure that the concepts of environmental flows are incorporated into the planning process for water resource management. The concept of E-flows (environmental flows) will be critical for ensuring that rivers and wetlands maintain their ecological function and services.

IUCN Viet Nam participated in the process of development of the Viet Nam National Forest Strategy and provided technical support to the development of the National NTFP Sub-sector Strategy. IUCN Viet Nam will continue to support the implementation of the VNFS.

To date the IUCN Viet Nam Programme has focused on working with the public sector and local communities. However, there is recognition that the private sector is playing an increasingly important role in the development of Viet Nam. Similarly important, the private sector will play a critical role in environmental protection and conservation. In the period 2007-2010, the IUCN Viet Nam Strategic Framework will seek to engage the private sector in a range of initiatives, including the promotion of best practices.

IUCN Viet Nam worked closely with the Government of Viet Nam and the subsequent work on the establishment of National Council for Sustainable Development and the implementation of Agenda 21. IUCN efforts have focussed on identifying the issues associated with poverty and the environment. It will seek to build upon these initiatives to attempt to identify approaches whereby environmental concerns can be integrated into the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS) and the Social Economic Development Plan (SEDP).

5.4. Environmental planning for economic growth: objectives and strategic directions

In line with Government priorities and in order to address future needs of the country, IUCN Viet Nam's strategic approaches are as follows:

1. Integrate environmental concerns into the Social Economic Development Plan and other economic development and poverty strategies

- In partnership with the Government and civil society, identify environmental indicators and indicators of ecosystem health;
- Assist in the development of environmental baselines for important ecosystems and habitats and monitoring the impacts of the development process;
- Promote successful approaches and draw experience from less successful approaches;
- Assist in integrating obligations under Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) into the national development planning processes; and
- Mainstream best practices into policy.

2. Provide guidance in the orientation and development of National Plans and Strategies

- Provide technical advice in the development of plans and strategies such as the Biodiversity Action Plan;
- Provide technical advice and review of the development plans for the period 2011-2015 for relevant sectors to ensure comprehensive integration of key environmental concerns;
- Develop a strong communities and livelihoods programme through pilot sites and working with partners, with a view to mainstreaming successful approaches into the development planning process;
- Promote livelihoods-linked initiatives/ benefit sharing mechanisms;
- Convene efforts from IUCN members and NGOs for participation in the planning process; and
- Disseminate lessons learnt and global experience.

3. Demonstrate and build capacity in the use of integrated planning tools

- Promote the development of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) as a model of an approach for integrating the provision of ecosystem services into the planning process;
- Promote the development of river basin management through the establishment of River Basin Organisations as a method to balance water use;
- Ensure that environmental flows (E-flows) are integrated into the planning process;
- Develop and demonstrate partnership models for integrated water resources management (IWRM);

- Convene dialogue and cooperation between government and national and international organisations, NGOs and civil society on EIAs and SEA;
- Assist in the development and implementation of suitable approaches to Strategic Environmental Assessment in Viet Nam to ensure SEA is implemented in a comprehensive manner; and
- Continue to provide support in the review and refinement of the Protected Area System in Viet Nam to ensure that it achieves objectives and becomes a key tool in the conservation of biodiversity in Viet Nam.

4. Promote private sector engagement in adopting best practices for sustainable business

- Promote private sector participation in planning to develop best practice in environmental management;
- Develop incentive mechanisms for compliance with existing legislation to minimise impacts on the environment; and
- Promote dialogue between government and private sector on environmental issues.

5.5. Principle partners: Environmental planning for economic growth

IUCN Viet Nam has been working with a range of agencies to develop a strategy to promote environmental planning for economic growth. IUCN Viet Nam will maintain partnerships with related departments of the respective ministries including:

- MONRE (relevant to the Biodiversity Law, Integrated Coastal Zone Management, water management, and the National Wetlands Support Programme);
- MARD (relevant to the implementation of the VNFS, the development of the NTFP Sub-Sector Support Programme, to forest fire management and the management of Special Use Forests, and to the Water for Food and Ecosystems Programme)
- MOFI (relevant to the Marine Turtle Conservation National Action Plan, the National MPA system and the promotion of ICZM);
- Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) (relevant to Agenda 21 and to the integration of environmental concerns into development planning and sustainable development);
- Continue to work with provinces to promote provincial level environmental planning for field activities. Provinces include Quang Ninh, Hai Phong, Ha Tinh, Kien Giang, Thua Thien - Hue, Long An, Hai Phong, Dong Nai, and Dong Thap and Khanh Hoa. New partnerships will also be explored;
- Expand IUCN Viet Nam's partnership to include other agencies and organisations such as the VCCI and the private sector; and
- Build a stronger membership base of IUCN members in Viet Nam while continuing to work with current national and international NGO members.

6. Environmental services - maintaining ecosystem and biodiversity values

We all benefit from a multitude of resources and processes that are supplied by natural ecosystems. Collectively, these benefits are known as ecosystem services and include products like clean drinking water, clean air and waste processing. Ecosystem services are distinct from other ecosystem products and functions because there is human demand for these natural assets. Services can be subdivided into five categories: provisioning such as the production of food and water; regulating, such as the control of climate and disease; supporting, such as biodiversity, nutrient cycles and crop pollination; cultural benefits including spiritual and recreational ones; and preserving, which includes guarding against uncertainty through the maintenance of diversity.

Rapid economic growth has been demonstrated to result in the significant loss of the ability of the environment to maintain these services. The loss of these services is a loss of natural capital for the country, a loss that urgently needs to be addressed. In Viet Nam the current period of development is critical and attention must be paid to the maintenance of functioning ecosystems.

6.1. Why Environmental services? - Maintaining ecosystem and biodiversity values

Viet Nam houses an immense diversity of **coastal and marine ecosystems**, including mangrove forests, coral reefs and sea grass meadows. These three habitats are of high biological productivity, high biodiversity value, and are of critical ecological importance. In addition, the coastal habitats play an important role in buffering the impacts of natural disasters on local livelihoods and income security through protection from storm surge, winds during typhoons, and are very relevant in the face of climate change. However, the ability of these habitats to continue to provide services is diminishing. Recent initiatives to create a national system of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are welcomed. Therefore, increased efforts are needed to identify critical habitats, afford protection to the areas and develop plans for longer-term management.

Over the past 50 years, the once vast **wetlands of Viet Nam** and its deltas have been converted to other uses. The remaining natural wetlands comprise mangrove swamps and tidal mudflats, and seasonally inundated plains. The wetlands of Viet Nam play a very important role in the national economic development as a high proportion of the country's rice, fish, shrimp and other food production is derived from the wetland regions, particularly the Red River Delta in the North and the Mekong Delta in the South. In addition, the wetlands provide a range of ecosystem services, including ground water recharge, flood control and water purification. Wetlands are critically important as storehouses for globally endangered biodiversity.

Viet Nam had a total **forest** area of about 12.62 million ha (or 37% forest cover) in 2005. By use, forests in Viet Nam are classified as Production Forests (35.6% of the total forested area), Protection Forests (49.2%) and Special-Use Forests (15.3%). Forests provide tangible products

such as wood and NTFPs to support rural community livelihoods and contribute to local and national economies. Forests also provide environmental services through prevention of soil erosion, watershed protection, landscape beauty and wildlife for tourism, as well as serve as a carbon sink and a store of biodiversity.

6.2. Viet Nam and Environmental services

Viet Nam is undergoing a period of extremely rapid economic development. This development is characterised by infrastructure development, conversion of natural environments to other uses and the increase in pollution in all forms. This is having a significant impact on the environment by degrading many of the services it provides including clean air provision, removal of nutrients from water and the ability to protect biodiversity. As a result, biodiversity in Viet Nam is at severe risk. Urgent attention needs to be paid to protecting species and plans and actions developed for their protection. The establishment of effective enforcement is part of this process.

Viet Nam has a number of options for approaches to take for maintaining these important ecosystem services:

- While the **Protected Areas system** is being reformed, and an integrated approach is being developed between the wetland, terrestrial and marine ecosystems, it is important that a comprehensive PA system is established to ensure that all representative ecosystems and the services they provide are recognised;
- **Habitat and protected area management plans** for natural and recovering ecosystems provide the opportunity to enhance the long-term benefits to be gained for future generations. This will contribute to the maintenance of genetic diversity to provide benefits to the wider community and poor dependent rural populations;
- **Species management plans** will foster stewardship and pro-active management for key species that are threatened or endangered. In promoting landscape level approaches to conservation, these plans also will serve to focus local, national and regional cooperation on achieving win-win solutions; and
- Incentives need to be created to maintain the values provided by a healthy ecosystem. This may include the provision of **payments for environmental services (PES)** to protect the catchments of dams from erosion, or the payment of incentive to resource users to maintain or use private land for provision of environmental services. PES is an example of one of the innovative financial mechanisms currently being used to promote the provision of environmental services.

6.3. IUCN Viet Nam and Environmental services

The IUCN Viet Nam has been working over many years to assist Viet Nam to recognise and effectively manage environmental services provided by the various eco-systems in the country. This has been principally in the following areas:

Eco-system and protected area site management: IUCN has assisted in the development of the first comprehensive Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Nha Trang Bay; provided technical assistance in the development of strategies for management of mangroves and other critical habitats; demonstrated a multidisciplinary approach to wetland habitat restoration plans for the grass-lands of the Tram Chim National Park in the Mekong Delta; and supported the establishment of an effective Marine Protected Areas network to share information and collate best practices in management.

Species conservation programmes and species action plans: A range of species and habitats have been targeted in past activities of IUCN Viet Nam. These include the development of the National Marine Turtle Action Plan, and habitat restoration initiatives in the Plain of Reeds that helped ensure the return to the area of the critically endangered Sarus Crane. In addition, IUCN Viet Nam seeks to provide linkages between specialists in Viet Nam and IUCN Commissions and Specialist Groups.

Poverty reduction through co-management and sustainable use practices in and around protected areas: IUCN Viet Nam has been working with a range of partners to support efforts to understand the linkages between environment, poverty and sustainable livelihood development. Recently this has included developing comprehensive baselines of community reliance on marine and coastal resources and on the development and implementation of credit schemes which contribute to local livelihood development. IUCN Viet Nam has established and demonstrated community involvement in resource and protected area management (Nha Trang Bay, Plain of Reeds, Thua Thien Hue and Song Thanh Nature Reserve - Quang Nam).

Financial mechanisms for the provision of environmental services: IUCN Viet Nam has assisted the development of such approaches by undertaking economic studies on innovative financial mechanisms for protected area management (case studies conducted in Ba Be and Yok Don NPs, Nha Trang Bay MPA, and Na Hang Nature Reserve); by providing training for key stakeholders on the concept of *Payments for Environmental Services* in conjunction with Asian Regional Biodiversity Conservation Program (ARBCP); and by supporting the economic valuation of key environmental services provided by the environment (as studied in Tam Giang - Cau Hai Lagoon).

6.4. Environmental services: objectives and strategic directions

IUCN Viet Nam is committed to working with its partners to provide high quality advice to promote recognition of the importance of environmental and eco-system services in the development plans for Viet Nam. In addition, IUCN Viet Nam will continue to contribute to approaches for promoting ecosystem and species management through providing support to the PA system and strengthening ecosystem and species management. This will be achieved through the following objectives and strategic directions for 2007-2010:

1. Management of ecosystem and protected areas for the provision of environmental services through:

- Building capacity of relevant government agencies for national benchmarking of the status and health of various ecosystems, habitats and biodiversity (such as wetlands, seagrass, coral reefs, and forests) in Viet Nam to provide a basis for monitoring the health of ecosystems in Viet Nam and development of strategies for critical, endangered and fragile ecosystems;
- Demonstrating initiatives at site-level to enhance learning and better integrate a multidisciplinary approach;
- Supporting the maintenance of an effective Protected Areas network to share information and collate best practices in the management to ensure PAs continue to provide ecosystem services; and
- Demonstrating cross-sectoral approaches for integrating environmental concerns into sectors such as agriculture and water through initiatives that address issues of the sustainable development, poverty reduction and food security. One such project is the "Water for Food and Ecosystems" - Viet Nam-Netherlands Water Partnership.

2. Development of species conservation and management programmes

- Continue support for the National Marine Turtle Action Plan;
- Support programme development and dissemination of education materials for species conservation and management programmes;
- Provide linkages between specialists in Viet Nam and IUCN Commissions and Specialist Groups for capacity development and the development of specific plans; and
- Mainstream species conservation into the national and provincial planning processes.

3. Identification of co-management approaches to addressing poverty alleviation in communities living in and around protected areas in order to achieve better livelihoods and biodiversity conservation

- Develop and demonstrate poverty alleviation through co-management of resources within and around protected areas to achieve both poverty alleviation and environmental goals; and
- Develop innovative financial mechanisms for environmental services in which communities can receive payment for protecting and/or improving watersheds.

4. Development of financial and incentive mechanisms to support provision of ecosystem services

- Promote wider and active participation of the economic sector and social organisations in forest protection and development to support the socialisation policy of the Viet Nam Government;
- Develop and pilot approaches and train relevant authorities in developing financial mechanisms for provision of environmental services such as payment for environmental services. Such approaches seek to create incentives for improved environmental management through a "user pays" model that assists in off-setting the protecting of the environment for resource use;
- Pilot initiatives to test approaches to innovative financial mechanisms for protected area management which reduce the financial burden on the central government for PA funding while engaging other partners - for example, new partners in the private sector partnerships to collaborate with in the development of tourism and non-tourism related income opportunities;
- Undertake a series of studies on the valuation of key environmental services provided by the environment; and
- Support benefit-sharing mechanisms in forest management, infrastructure development and indigenous knowledge.

6.5. Principle partners: Environmental services

IUCN Viet Nam has a number of traditional partners in the area of environmental services. The country programme will strengthen its cooperation with these key partners and seek new partners as required to meet the outputs. In particular, IUCN Viet Nam will continue to contribute to existing partnerships including the Viet Nam Water Partnership, the National Wetlands Support Programme, and the Forest Sector Support Partnership (FSSP) as well as support other programmes such as the Gulf of Tonkin Initiative and the Asian Regional Biodiversity Conservation Programme (ARBCP).

7. Climate change - an adaptive approach

Whatever happens to future greenhouse gas emissions, we are now locked into inevitable changes to climate patterns. Adaptation to climate change is therefore no longer a secondary and long-term response option only to be used as a last resort. It is now prevalent and imperative, and for those communities already vulnerable to the impacts of present day climate hazards, an urgent imperative.

A Conceptual Framework Paper Prepared by the Task Force on Climate Change, Vulnerable Communities and Adaptation, 2006

7.1. Why Climate change? - "An inconvenient truth"

The evidence of warming of the climate system is unequivocal. The climate appears to be changing with 11 of the last 12 years (1995-2006) measured as among the 12 warmest years on record (IPCC 2007). Patterns of seasons, widespread melting of snow and ice, and a rising global average sea level (IPCC 2007) are just a few of the changes that have already been observed. The most severe impacts of climate change are limited to a relatively small number of countries. It is unfortunate that Viet Nam is one of those countries.

Over the last 10 years, the sea level is estimated to have risen 3.1 mm per year (IPCC 2007). Continued growth of greenhouse gas emissions and associated global warming could well promote a sea level rise of up to 1m-3m in this century, and an unexpectedly rapid breakup of the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets might produce a 5m SLR. Any rise in sea level will have severe impacts on the Mekong and Red River Deltas of Viet Nam.

The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam has been committed to addressing climate change through international agreements such as the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC). Viet Nam was one of the original countries to sign this agreement in June 1992. The Kyoto Protocol (KP) is an agreement made under the UNFCCC, launched at the Third Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in Kyoto, Japan in December 1997. Viet Nam signed the KP on 3 December 1998, ratified it on 25 September 2002 and this came into force on 16 February 2005. The KP proposes mechanisms to help developed countries achieve the objective of restricting greenhouse gas emissions through International Emission Trading (IET) and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

7.2. Viet Nam and Climate change

Viet Nam, with a coastline of 3,260km and two of the largest low-lying deltas in the world, is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change.

A minimal 1 metre rise in sea level would potentially impact on the livelihoods of 10.8 % of Viet Nam's population - especially in these deltas. If, as some of the long term projections for the next century (see Figures 1 and 2 below) suggest, sea level rises by 5 metres, Viet Nam may lose 16 % of its land area. About 35 % of the population and 35 % of GDP may be affected (WB 2007). This is a critical issue for Viet Nam both over the medium and the long term.

East Asia: Population impacted

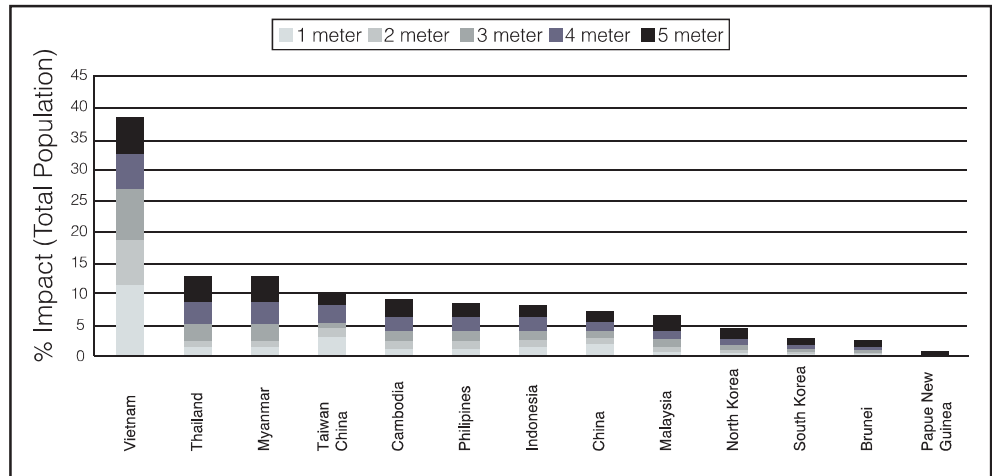


Figure 1: Projection of percentage population by Sea level rise (Source: World Bank 2007: "The impact of sea level rise on developing countries: a comparative analysis**")

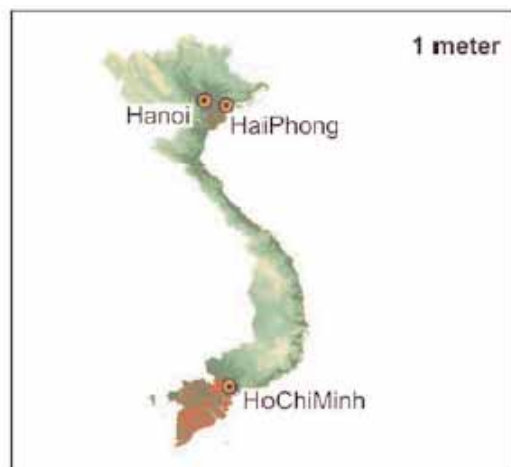


Figure 2: Areas in Viet Nam below one metre above current sea level (coloured in red) (Source: World Bank 2007: "The impact of sea level rise on developing countries: a comparative analysis**")

In Viet Nam the impacts of climate change will initially be realised through changes in the seasonal climate in different areas of the country. Rainfall and seasonal patterns will change, perhaps with longer annual drier periods in some places. . While this may provide benefits in some areas, other areas may suffer from water shortages resulting in loss of crops. This may in turn lead to changes in the ability of rural communities to meet the needs for their livelihoods.

Climate change will also impact on the biodiversity of Viet Nam. The ecosystems of Viet Nam and the protected area system are housing species that are adapted to a specific seasonal pattern. Changes in the seasonal pattern will affect the ability for plant and animal species to cope and will change the habitats within particular ecosystems. The small areas of individual protected areas will make it difficult for biodiversity to adjust to these changes in home range and species will be lost. It may have a more specific and detrimental impact on wetlands, coral reefs and other critical ecosystems.

The greatest challenge will, however, come from the rise in sea level. This will first be seen as an increase in floods and temporary inundation during storms and typhoons with storm surges challenging coastal barriers, water bodies and low-lying rice fields. As water level increases, inundation from the ocean may occur more frequently until permanent inundation occurs. However, it is also recognised that physical barriers may be developed to protect valuable farmland from inundation. This will also have severe implications on the ecology of the coastal areas.

Over recent years, climate change initiatives have been developed in Viet Nam with many focused on disaster preparedness. Additionally, some government agencies have been charged with the responsibility to coordinate climate change related initiatives. Dialogues are beginning to be initiated. However, the full gravity of the situation is yet to be recognised.

7.3. IUCN Viet Nam and Climate change

The processes of adaptation in the face of climate change will be a major focus of IUCN Viet Nam. It will be integrated into all programmes and activities of the country programme and will also be the focus of specific efforts. This will build upon the work that IUCN Viet Nam has undertaken with the GoV over the last 20 years in the development of various plans and strategies, and specific studies.

At the global level, IUCN will continue to develop leading edge knowledge on the potential impacts of climate change with a particular focus on both biodiversity and the links to poverty. Often it is those with the least resources who are least able to adapt in the face of change.

IUCN Viet Nam will continue its efforts to support the transfer of knowledge generated by the global scientific community to all levels of government and the wider community. It will seek to identify areas of vulnerability to climate change and to support the development of strategies and policies that enable adaptation. IUCN Viet Nam will also draw on the whole IUCN network to bring relevant experiences gained all over the world to incorporate into the national initiatives.

IUCN Viet Nam will work with rural communities, potentially affected by climate change, to identify solutions to local issues and problems. Experiences garnered through this process will be fed into provincial, regional and national policy and planning processes, providing opportunities for local voices to be heard in the adaptation process.

7.4. Climate change objectives and strategic directions

IUCN Viet Nam's strategy for the 2007-2010 will focus on strategies for adaptation to the potential impacts of climate change. IUCN Viet Nam will work with a range of government partners to initially understand the potential impact of climate change and to develop response strategies in line with GoV priorities that address the future needs of the country. IUCN Viet Nam will:

1. Identify potential impacts and promote local initiatives to identify adaptation strategies

- In collaboration with the government and other partners, identify the potential impacts of climate change in Viet Nam in coastal and mountainous areas, together with rural communities, with a particular focus on disadvantaged and marginalised groups;
- Maintain existing partnerships and develop new partnerships with agencies dealing with climate change to identify mechanisms to address key adaptation issues; and
- Establish baselines for particular ecosystems that can be used to identify potential impacts of climate change.

2. Integrate climate change considerations into existing planning mechanisms and tools

- Integrate climate change into approaches for ICZM and assist in ensuring that appropriate information reaches decision makers at all levels;
- Promote the integration of climate change considerations into water resource use and planning for environmental flows to ensure a comprehensive approach to water allocation; and
- Promote the harmonisation of climate change adaptation with the Social Economic Development Plan of the Government.

3. Bring knowledge, understanding and best information on the potential impact of climate change

- Convene on issues related to climate change with relevant agencies, NGOs, and the private sector. Conduct communication outreach to a wide audience on climate change, including environmental journalists and educators; and
- Draw on IUCN's international networks and knowledge generated with IUCN as a global knowledge organisation to provide knowledge on the impacts of climate change.

7.5. Principle partners: Climate change

IUCN Viet Nam will maintain and strengthen cooperation with key concerned partners in the country and seek to assist in accelerating the climate change adaptation process. IUCN Viet Nam will:

- Cooperate closely with government ministries such as MONRE, MARD, and MOFI and other related ministries such as Ministry for Transport & Communication, MOF, and the Viet Nam Administration of Tourism in building capacity to address climate change adaptation; and
- Assist donors in the delivery of appropriate, sound, and reasonable approaches to addressing climate change adaptation issues.

In the region, IUCN Viet Nam will:

- Collaborate on climate change issues with regional multilateral institutions and initiatives including ADB-GMS, Mekong River Commission (MRC), the Southeast Asia Fisheries Development Centre (SEAFDEC), UNDP, UNEP, GEF, FAO and other key organisations; and
- Facilitate cooperation and knowledge exchange with the IUCN commissions and IUCN Global and Asian Regional Office programmes.

Annex 1. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) in Asia

Overview

Asia is the largest regional programme of the World Conservation Union and hosts some 12% of the global membership.

The Secretariat of the Union operates seven Country Offices, two regional Ecosystems and Livelihoods groups based in Colombo and Bangkok, and the Asia Regional Office in Bangkok, Thailand. In the region, IUCN is implementing more than 130 projects with some 500 staff. The Union has 157 members, government and non-government agencies, in 19 of the 23 countries from South to East Asia and National Committees in Pakistan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Japan and South Korea.

The seven Country Programmes and two Ecosystems and Livelihood Groups within the IUCN Asia region have operated towards the following objectives:

- Knowledge about natural systems in Asia, and the social and economic aspects related to their conservation and sustainable use, is improved;
- Participation of Asian stakeholders in international arrangements and processes that promote and support effective, efficient and equitable biodiversity conservation is enhanced;
- Ecosystem uses in Asia are increasingly sustainable and managed to reconcile social, economic and environmental aims; and
- The IUCN Programme and Policy in Asia is effectively and efficiently delivered.

Strategy

The Asia Regional Programme of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) is implemented through a strategy of Knowledge, Empowerment, Governance and Operations, wherein IUCN integrates, manages and disseminates conservation knowledge, enhances the capacity of people and institutions to plan, manage, conserve and use nature and natural resources in a sustainable and equitable manner while empowering them to participate in effective environmental governance at global, regional, national and local levels.

Annex 2: Stakeholder consultation process

The development of this strategic framework was undertaken over a period of 10 months. It involved consultations, discussions, international and external reviews, and internal reflection. The process is briefly outlined below:

- November 2006 - January 2007: Internal discussions held to identify our strengths and weaknesses as well as to identify opportunities and challenges
- January - March 2007: Government Partners consulted to review past cooperation, understand current initiatives and identify potential areas of cooperation
- January - April 2007: IUCN Global Donor Survey (2006) reviewed with a special focus on specific feedback on the IUCN Viet Nam Programme
- January - April 2007: Agencies providing support to the development sector in Viet Nam consulted, enabling a review of the current priorities and strategies of donor and multi-lateral development agencies and also providing a greater understanding of the sector-wide approaches being adopted by many agencies
- April - May 2007: Draft developed for circulation to participants in the above process
- May 2007: IUCN Viet Nam Strategic Framework finalised

This process revealed the following perceptions of IUCN Viet Nam.

- *Strengths* included: (i) good partnership with government; (ii) unique role as a Union; (iii) strengths in the field of legal and policy advice; (iv) access to a strong network of technical expertise; (v) enthusiastic, dedicated and well respected staff; and (vi) solid framework for programmes development.
- *Weaknesses* included: (i) limited visibility and perceived unclear role; (ii) being reactive, rather than pro-active, to the needs of Government; (iii) not meeting expectations in the provision of leadership in the conservation and environmental management sector; (iv) project dependent financing; (v) gaps in programme technical expertise; (vi) traditional direct execution (DEX), (vii) project-based approaches.

- *Opportunities* include developing programmes in environmental governance, focussing on development-conservation-link programmes, trans-boundary and regional initiatives, emerging areas such as agro-biodiversity, PES, and Business and Biodiversity Partnerships. Other opportunities included bringing new approaches into the environment and development dialogue through coordinating and convening with IUCN members, NGOs and other agencies in Viet Nam.
- *Threats* included shifting of IUCN's traditional niches, changes in donor funding approaches, present reliance on project funds, growing competition, limited partnerships with the private sector, and the need to build the technical capacity of the programmes.

In summary, there were over 50 separate internal and external interviews, meetings and discussions with various stakeholders in this process. IUCN would like to thank all those who participated and provided support. These agencies include:

- Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- AusAid
- Birdlife International
- Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (CRES)
- Danish International Development Agency (Danida)
- Department for International Development (DFID), British Embassy
- Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)
- Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)
- Department of Environment, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)
- Development Cooperation Section, Irish Embassy
- Department of Environment (DOE), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)
- Department of Forestry (DOF), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)

- European Union (EU)
- Fauna and Flora International (FFI)
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- Forest Protection Department (FPD), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)
- Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
- Institute of Ecological Economy (Eco-Eco)
- Ministry of Fishery (MoFI)
- Scientific Cooperation Section, French Embassy
- Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)
- The Netherlands Development Organization (SNV)
- TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- Viet Nam Environment Protection Agency (VEPA)
- Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)
- Winrock International
- World Bank (WB)
- World Wide Fund (WWF)

References and documents consulted

Agenda 21 of Viet Nam. August, 2004.

Aid and Environment: Building Resilience; Sustaining Growth. A Framework for An Environmental Strategy for Australian Aid. April, 2007.

Country Partnership Strategy 2007-2011. World Bank. January, 2007.

Annual Report. IUCN Asia. 2005.

Country Strategy for Development Cooperation 2004-2008. SIDA Viet Nam.

Eliminating World Poverty: Making Governance Work for the Poor. DFID White Paper. July, 2006.

From Plan to Action: ACHIEVING SEDP TARGETS. Viet Nam Partnership Report 2006. An Informal Report Prepared for the Consultative Group Meeting for Viet Nam. December, 2006.

Guidelines for Preparing IUCN Programme 2009-2012. October, 2006.

Ha Noi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness. June, 2005.

IPCC Summary Report for Policy Making, 2007.

IPCC Global Climate Projection, 2007.

IUCN Asia Donors and Partners Survey Report. 2006.

IUCN Laos Strategic Framework 2007-2010. Conservation for Sustainable Livelihoods in Laos PDR - Refreshed Thinking. 2007.

MDGs and Viet Nam's Socio-Economic Development Plan 2006-2010. United Nations Country Team Viet Nam. November, 2005.

National Forest Development Strategy 2006-2020. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. May, 2006.

National Resources and Environment Agenda 21. Second Draft. March, 2007.

National Capacity Self-Assessment Resource Kit. GEF. September, 2005.

NCSA Thematic Report on United Nations Convention on Biodiversity and Cartagena Protocol. MONRE. September, 2005.

NCSA Thematic Report on United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and Kyoto Protocol. MONRE. September, 2005.

NCSA Thematic Report on the Implementation of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. MONRE. September, 2005.

Strategic Plan 2004-2009. USAID. August, 2003.

The Five-Year Social Economic Development Plan 2006-2010 of Viet Nam. July, 2006.

The Reshaping of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) Charter. November, 2004.

USAID White Paper. January, 2004.

Viet Nam - European Community Strategy Paper for Period 2007 to 2013. EC. April, 2007.

White Paper on Irish Aid. Government of Ireland. September 2005.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and Kyoto Protocol. MONRE. September, 2005.

NCSA Thematic Report on the Implementation of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. MONRE. September, 2005.

Strategic Plan 2004-2009. USAID. August, 2003.

The Five-Year Social Economic Development Plan 2006-2010 of Viet Nam. July, 2006.

The Reshaping of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) Charter. November, 2004.

USAID White Paper. January, 2004.

Viet Nam - European Community Strategy Paper for Period 2007 to 2013. EC. April, 2007.

White Paper on Irish Aid. Government of Ireland. September 2005.

The World Conservation Union (IUCN)
Viet Nam Country Office
Villa 44/4, Van Bao Street
Hanoi, Viet Nam
Tel: ++84 4 7261575/6
Fax: ++84 4 7261561
www.iucn.org.vn