



POLICY BRIEF

Building Viet Nam's Protected Areas System

Policy and institutional innovations
required for progress



List of acronyms

BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FFI	Fauna & Flora International
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MASPAS	Management Strategy for a Protected Area System
MOFI	Ministry of Fisheries
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
PARC	Creating Protected Areas for Resource Conservation using Landscape Ecology
SUF	Special Use Forest
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature

Building Viet Nam's Protected Areas System

Policy and institutional innovations required for progress

Urgent action is needed to safeguard the values of protected areas for national development

Viet Nam is at a critical stage in the establishment of its protected areas system. Much has been achieved over the past two decades and there is greater understanding about the fundamental role national parks, nature reserves and other protected areas play in national and local development. There are now 128 forested protected areas throughout the country. Also, 68 wetlands of national importance and 15 marine protected areas have been identified. In fulfilling their conservation functions, protected areas yield essential goods and services which provide support to Viet Nam's growing hydropower energy sector, to fisheries and agriculture, to expanding tourism and to industry and urban development. They also have irreplaceable values for recreation, education, historical and natural heritage, and quality of life for present and future generations. Protected areas are an essential part of Viet Nam's strategy for national development.



Yet, there are serious obstacles which are hindering further progress in developing the national protected areas system that need to be overcome. A leap forward in policy and institutional arrangements is required if the benefits of past gains are to be realised. Further progress in safeguarding the nation's heritage and the quality of its development depends on these initiatives.

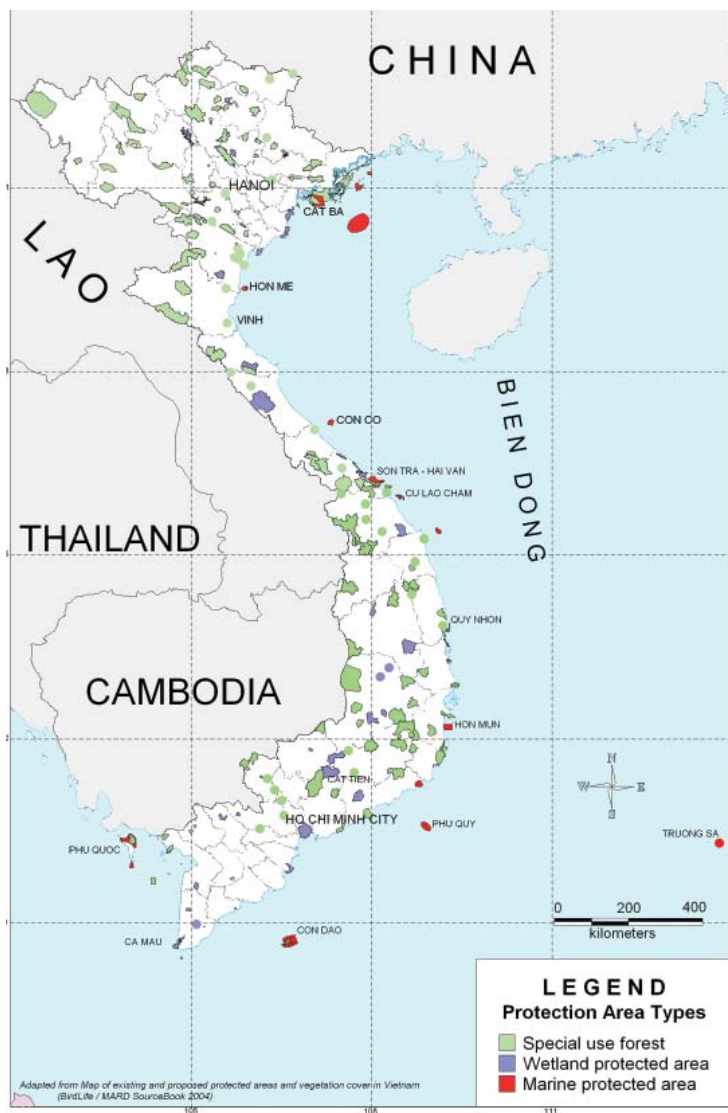
The foundation stones of Viet Nam’s protected areas system are in place but significant gaps remain

Viet Nam’s protected areas system expanded rapidly over 30 years with the addition of some 70 national parks, reserves and landscape conservation areas during the 1980s. It is now fairly evenly spread across one of the most biologically diverse countries in the world¹. There has been a significant increase in the number of sites with management structures in place.

There are three main types of protected areas in Viet Nam: Special Use Forests (Terrestrial Protected Areas), Marine Protected Areas and Wetlands, but there is considerable overlap between them and significant gaps remain (Map 1).

Over 300 species in Viet Nam are threatened with global extinction. Forty-nine of these globally threatened species are assessed as Critical, meaning that they face an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future. Lowland rivers and coastal wetlands are significantly under-represented within the current protected areas system, as are lowland evergreen forests and marine areas².

The Party and State recognised further development of the protected areas system was needed and directed government to “expand the areas for conservation of wildlife, national parks and protecting biodiversity”³.



Map 1: Viet Nam’s Protected Areas System

¹ The UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre assesses Viet Nam as one of the 16 most diverse countries – WCMC, 1992, Development of a national biodiversity index: A discussion paper. Cambridge, UK.

² Viet Nam Environmental Monitor on Biodiversity, World Bank and MONRE, 2005

³ Directive 36/CT-TW of 25/6/1998

Forest protected areas are currently the backbone of the national protected areas system

MARD has State management responsibility for forest protected areas or “Special Use Forests”. To 2005, 128 SUFs have been formally established by the central and provincial levels. SUFs cover 2.4 million ha or 7% of Viet Nam’s land area. Yet, many decreed SUFs have not been demarcated on the ground and about 40 percent of them have no management boards, thus are not under active and efficient conservation management.



Coastal and marine systems are still to be conserved

MOFI has State management responsibility for Marine Protected Areas (MPA) at the central level. In 2001, a pilot MPA was established by the Khanh Hoa PPC at Nha Trang Bay⁴. Four years later in 2005 a second MPA was established by Quang Nam Province at Cu Lao Cham. A further 13 sites are proposed for formal establishment and recognition as MPAs by 2010. There are also important marine areas in some SUFs such as Cat Ba and Con Dao National Parks but their forests have been the main focus of conservation.

A National MPA System Plan being prepared by an inter-sectoral task force led by MOFI is to be submitted for endorsement in 2006.

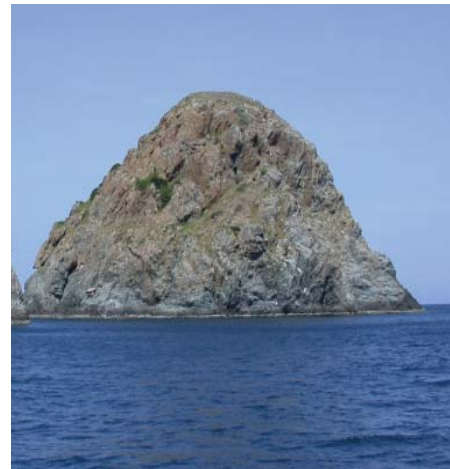


Photo: IUCN

Important wetlands are found in forest and marine areas

Sixty eight wetlands are now recognised to be of national importance. More than half have already been listed as either SUFs or MPAs - 23 as SUFs, 14 proposed as SUFs and a further seven are proposed as MPAs. MoNRE has responsibility for a National Wetlands Program including identifying a national system of ‘wetland conservation areas’ to be submitted to the Prime Minister in 2006⁵.



⁴ The Marine Protected Area Pilot Project supported by the World Bank/ Global Environment Facility, the World Conservation Union, and the Danish International Development Agency.

⁵ Environment Protection Law 2005.

Five priority fields for action

Viet Nam has a comprehensive strategy for protected areas which requires concerted implementation by all Ministries and levels of Government

In September 2003, the Prime Minister approved the national *Management Strategy for a Protected Area System in Viet Nam to 2010* (MASPAS)⁶. The primary objective of the Strategy is to establish, organise and manage effectively an integrated protected area system covering terrestrial, wetland and marine ecosystems.

MASPAS highlights five fields where urgent action is required to develop and safeguard Viet Nam's protected areas system:

- 1. landscape management;**
- 2. local community participation;**
- 3. development control;**
- 4. financial innovation; and**
- 5. institutional reform.**



⁶ Decision No. 192/2003/QĐ-TTg.

Landscape management

The situation:

- *Viet Nam's population density is one of the highest in the world;*
- *Existing protected areas are small and isolated and unable to effectively conserve the nation's biodiversity;*
- *Critical natural systems are under-represented in the PA system;*
- *Much of the biodiversity of international importance in Viet Nam lies outside protected areas;*
- *Inter-provincial planning and inter-sectoral planning rarely occurs.*

Viet Nam's narrow width – in parts less than 80 km from west to east, and from mountains to sea – and small size relative to population, makes managing protected areas as integrated networks in a national system especially important. Also, the small size of many protected areas limits their usefulness for biodiversity conservation, especially for large mammals. Of Viet Nam's 63 sites of international importance for the conservation of biodiversity, 29 are wholly or partly included within decreed protected areas, while the remaining 34, or more than 50 per cent, are not officially protected⁷.

Conservation outside protected areas will safeguard biodiversity within them

Conservation management of natural resource and habitat linkages between groups of protected areas holds the key to maintaining biodiversity and its contribution to national and local development. Achieving conservation

over large landscapes with networks of protected areas is a world wide trend. It involves management approaches such as conservation corridors, buffer zones and bioregional planning.

Different terms are used for the landscapes, for example "ecoregions" and "bioregions". The meanings are the same – they are areas defined on the basis of natural characteristics for the purposes of integrating conservation with development through effective planning and management.

The concept of protected area buffer zones is well known in Viet Nam. Whether as a part of the MPA or not included in the SUF, buffer zones are one important tool in promoting conservation across landscapes beyond and within PA boundaries. In existing and draft policies relating to SUFs (Decision 08), MPAs (draft regulations) and wetlands (Decree 109) the purpose of buffer zones is clear – to prevent negative impacts of people on protected areas through collaboration regarding natural system management and development between PA management boards, local Peoples Committees and the users of the buffer zone.

Existing regulations do not provide adequate guidance for buffer zone definition, planning and management.

Buffer zones do not have agreed frameworks for conservation management, which hampers collaborative action. The role and obligations of relevant stakeholders, e.g. local communities, State Forest Enterprises and forest protection boards in buffer zone conservation is not well defined. As a result, buffer zones do not fulfil their conservation functions as required by law.

The way conservation is planned and managed across the landscapes where protected areas are located will determine how effectively biodiversity values will be safeguarded.

⁷ BirdLife International (2004) Important Bird Areas in Asia: key sites for conservation. Cambridge, UK: BirdLife International.

Biodiversity action planning at provincial and sector level needs to provide a consistent context for the more focused buffer zone planning. **Four immediate innovations are needed.**

1. Prepare buffer zone conservation guidelines as the basis for joint action and investment

The government needs to ensure that the buffer zone conservation is an essential component of socio-economic planning for the area. PA management boards should also be given the authority and capacity to engage with local stakeholders in the planning process. Guidelines need to be developed and agreed by villages and communes in buffer zones which bring a consistent and collaborative approach to the conservation and maintenance of biodiversity and natural systems in the area.

Agreed buffer zone conservation guidelines would promote improved socio-economic conditions of residents in an ecologically sustainable way, ensuring that they have incentives (and enforced regulations) to reduce their exploitation of natural resources in protected areas, and assisting them to plan for and manage natural resources in a sustainable manner.

2. Provide the legislative basis for a system of biodiversity action planning

Biodiversity action planning is a structured approach to identifying priorities and mapping significant areas for biodiversity conservation. As populations grow and development pressures increase, biodiversity action planning for areas and sectors becomes an essential tool for the effective management of specific protected areas and of the national PA system as a whole. The geographic hierarchy in biodiversity action planning is:

1. national (and sectoral);
2. regions (i.e. extending into more than one province);
3. provincial; and
4. specific buffer zones in and around PAs.

All are needed if the conservation and development values of protected areas are to be recognised and conserved. These systems should be defined and promoted in the Biodiversity Law. They should be given more detailed treatment in the proposed Decree on Protected Areas. Already, Viet Nam prepares a National Biodiversity Action Plan on a regular basis and a growing number of provinces have adopted BAPs.



3. Require all Ministries to prepare Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs)

All Ministries should prepare BAPs to guide implementation of the National BAP within their own sector paying special attention to their role in maintaining protected areas.

The national Biodiversity Action Plan, reinforced by a Resolution of the Polit-Buro and the National Agenda 21⁸, requires sectors to safeguard the environment when carrying out their mandate. The Prime Minister's decision adopting the 1995 BAP requires all sectors to implement the Plan and report to MPI annually on progress. The BAP for Viet Nam until 2015 and vision toward 2020, and a covering Decision need to provide for sector action plans and mechanisms for reporting on implementation progress.



Photo: FFI / Le Khac Ouyet

4. Define and map bioregions⁹, then support the process of preparing plans for each bioregion and for each province

The bioregional planning process needs to:

1. include a special role for protected area management boards;
2. identify appropriate mechanisms to ensure cooperation and coordination;
3. promote the inclusion of biodiversity goals and principles in local government planning processes and plans;
4. promote sympathetic and coordinated management of biodiversity for land and sea areas adjoining protected areas;
5. improve protection and management of biodiversity in areas outside PAs including closely settled areas and the coastal zone, with particular attention being paid to conservation corridors and remnant areas; and
6. promote the involvement of communities and stakeholders who use and benefit from biodiversity, making use of existing community networks and organisations.

⁸ The National Agenda 21 was supported by UNDP, the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) and the Danish International Development Agency (DANINA)

⁹ Bioregions or biodiversity regions are also be referred to as "ecoregions" or "conservation landscapes". There is a strong practical argument for Viet Nam to adopt the existing seven economic regions as the basis for conservation planning (i.e. as bioregions). They have a natural system origin, respect administrative boundaries and are used by MPI for socio-economic planning.

Local community participation

The situation:

- *More than 80 per cent of protected areas have people living inside them, and populations are increasing;*
- *Populations in PA buffer zones are increasing;*
- *Most poor families still rely on natural resources for their livelihoods;*
- *Existing legislation provides only limited opportunity for sustainable use within SUFs;*
- *Participatory management of protected areas is slow to develop.*

Many millions of poor families living inside and outside protected areas are dependent on natural resources and systems for their livelihoods. Approaches need to be considered which encourage participatory management and sustainable use of resources in specified areas.

Many households living inside protected areas are involved in illegal activities such as logging and hunting for subsistence and commercial purposes, often promoted by third parties. Resettlement programs have had mixed results due to poor planning, follow up and support. Existing policies relating to communities inside protected areas lack clarity and precision, leading to inconsistent and uncertain implementation. The situation is becoming more serious and requires open and comprehensive review and direction from the highest level.

Two priority issues need to be addressed through policy and procedural innovation.



Photo: IUCN

1. Introduce national policies for communities living within protected areas and provision of adequate alternative livelihood and adjustment programs for relocated peoples

The issue of people living within protected areas requires concerted and clear policy guidance and leadership. The current vagueness in conservation regulations prevents protected area managers from making plans and to deal with issues related to local communities living inside the protected areas adequately. When people are allowed to remain within PAs, guidelines must be provided for spatial planning of the settlements and providing socio-economic development assistance. As important, when households are required to resettle, precise regulations are needed to guide decisions on resettlement time and arrangements such as alternative livelihoods, the standards for effective compensation and adjustment programs for resettled households and to define management responsibilities of relevant stakeholders such as local authorities, people and protected area management boards. In addition, clear regulations are required to prevent and halt migration into the protected areas.



2. Clarify the purpose of community participation, set minimum standards and prescribe measures for implementation

Measures needed to determine the nature and scope of local community participation include:

- a thorough 'participatory' assessment of the socio-economic development needs and aspirations of local communities within and surrounding the proposed/ existing PA;
- representatives of concerned communities in planning of PA boundaries and zonation, including buffer zones and possible multiple purpose-use areas;
- some level of community representation within the protected area management authority or advisory committee; and
- involvement of representatives of villages within the PA, and from relevant villages in the buffer area, in PA management planning and annual operational planning sessions concerning areas used by local communities.

Ensuring local participation should help determine collaborative management possibilities, and other measures to promote stronger local support for conservation.

Development control to conserve biodiversity

The situation:

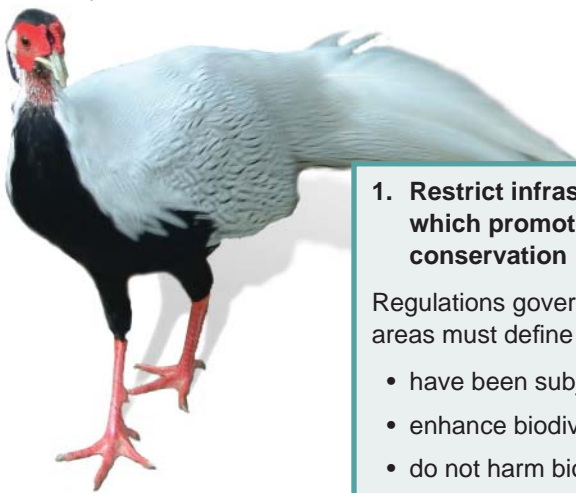
- Viet Nam's biodiversity wealth continues to diminish within and outside protected areas;
- Infrastructure development, e.g. roads and dams proceeds without adequate mitigation of negative impacts on biodiversity;
- Some tourism development in PAs has destroyed the natural values tourists come to experience;
- Existing regulations against illegal activities are not adequate or well enforced.

Infrastructure development is an increasing threat. EIA procedures and requirements are not consistently applied, and have little influence in shaping development so that it is more supportive of conservation objectives. With some notable exceptions, the EIA system is not working to safeguard protected areas.

Legal disincentives and fines are not sufficient to control the increasing consumption of wildlife or to fully control illegal logging. Effective law enforcement is vital. Exploitation of timber within protected areas has reduced, but continues to degrade forests. Over-exploitation of non timber products for subsistence and commercial purposes is also depleting the conservation value of most protected areas. Invasive exotic species in and adjacent to PAs are a growing problem, requiring a more detailed regulatory response.

Five major actions are needed to better conserve biodiversity in protected areas. They relate to:

1. procedures to control infrastructure development;
2. regulations on poaching and encroachment;
3. monitoring and reporting on biodiversity status;
4. control of invasive exotic species; and
5. ecologically-based rehabilitation of degraded habitats.



1. Restrict infrastructure development inside PAs to that which promotes, facilitates, and enhances biodiversity conservation

Regulations governing infrastructure development in protected areas must define prohibited development and ensure projects:

- have been subject to thorough environmental assessment;
- enhance biodiversity conservation measures;
- do not harm biodiversity or obstruct ecological processes;
- proceed only following adequate environmental assessment; and
- include mitigation measures and adequate monitoring and follow up to ensure compliance.



2. Define stronger and enforceable measures to penalize poaching and encroachment inside protected areas

Stronger law enforcement, control and disincentive measures to deter poaching and encroachment into protected areas are needed. Fines for transgressions, for example, need to be higher than the economic benefits secured from poaching. Fines and imprisonment terms commensurate with the value of poached resources should be applied.

3. Introduce an effective national system for regular monitoring and reporting on biodiversity status and impacts

The current systems for monitoring and reporting on biodiversity within MARD, MOFI and MONRE need to be reviewed as a first step in building a stronger program linked to conservation management decisions and plans. The obligation to monitor and report regularly at national and local levels needs to be made mandatory through the Biodiversity Law and linked regulations on PAs.

4. Strengthen controls on invasive exotic species in and adjacent to protected areas

Measures are needed to strengthen the enforcement of regulations already in place to address the issue of invasive exotic species within protected areas as well as in buffer zones. Once there are clear definitions of what constitutes an invasive exotic species, there is a need to review and elaborate on regulations and the procedures for enforcing prohibitions and other management strategies. This will require strengthening of regulations, preparing site and species action plans and guidelines for eradication procedures.

5. Define rehabilitation procedures for Strictly Protected Zones and Rehabilitation Zones

Although procedures for the rehabilitation of protected areas are provided within existing regulations, practices in the field are not entirely based on ecological parameters. Forest rehabilitation takes place through enrichment planting without considering the ecological structure and composition of the original forest.

Specific regulations and procedures are needed to guide and strengthen compliance with forest rehabilitation prescriptions, for example, defining the conditions for assisted natural regeneration under special circumstances, such as the existence of barren lands after natural disasters, former plantations or in areas previously held by local communities which have been relocated. In all cases, provisions are required on measures to be followed when assisted natural regeneration is desirable.

Protected areas financing

The situation:

- *Most individual protected areas, especially at the provincial level, remain chronically under-funded, and rely on a narrow and uncertain funding base;*
- *More than 60% of PA budgets go to infrastructure development with little available for conservation activities;*
- *There are serious delays in budget release and spending.*

PA managers do not have an adequate funding horizon on which to plan conservation action. While government allocated budgets are low for all but a few centrally managed protected areas, there

are few incentives and opportunities for funds to be raised, retained and allocated at site level. Very few opportunities exist for protected area managers to raise funds for conservation, aside from annual state budgets. As a result of these factors, protected areas managers lack the financial security required for taking a medium or long term planning horizon in setting and addressing their conservation priorities.

Underlying all other priorities for improved protected area management is the need for more efficient and diverse financial management which extends the certainty of planning and expands the resources of funding for its implementation.

Three priority actions are needed:



1. Adopt PA medium-term rolling financial plans

A rolling three-year financial planning process should be adopted for all protected areas, consistent with government financial planning procedures. This would build on the initial investment plan, and include the specification of annual funding requirements over the plan's period. Both business and conservation planning concerns would be reflected in the development of the protected area financial plan. As a rolling plan, it would be updated on an annual basis. In this way protected area management boards would always have a certain budget approved for at least a three year period.

2. Extend and improve existing user charges and fees for protected area goods and services

Extending the currently allowable fees and charges that can be raised by protected areas (which are currently restricted to tourism services) can help to increase funding. In particular, opportunities exist to institute charges and fees for a much greater range of protected area goods and services (for example payment for the hydrological benefits and other environmental protection services provided by PAs). At the same time, rationalising and updating existing charge and fee levels to improve the extent to which they reflect the real benefit and value of PA goods and services can assist in increasing revenue and income streams.

3. Provide fiscal and budget incentives for protected area managers to raise and retain funds

Allowing some level of decentralisation and financial autonomy for PA management boards to set, collect, retain and allocate at least a portion of their revenues would provide incentives for them to mobilise funding and could be used to increase their accountability and responsibility in financial management. Also, various fiscal instruments that are currently used in other sectors of the economy to provide incentives for investment and cost-effectiveness (such as tax exemption, preferential loans and credit) could successfully be applied to PAs in order to stimulate investment and better financial management.

Institutional reform

The situation:

- *Institutional arrangements for protected areas are complex, overlapping and inconsistent. Intersectoral coordination is weak;*
- *Local authorities do not have the resources and capacities to effectively take on their role as PA caretakers;*
- *PA Management Boards are not given the authority and support required to effectively carry out their duties;*
- *There is no adequate process for management planning according to conservation priorities.*

There are three Ministries with protected areas mandates - MARD, MOFI and MONRE. Relevant provinces and around 15 agencies at the local level also have protected area management responsibilities. There is no focal point among these multiple institutions, agencies and levels. This situation inhibits effective decision making and management, and is one of the key causes for the degradation of Viet Nam's biodiversity.

The decentralisation policy has been followed in protected areas management. Provincial People's Committees are

the main protected area managers through their various line departments¹⁰. The legal and institutional framework is inconsistent across the terrestrial, wetland and marine ecosystems and there is limited capacity in protected areas management, particularly at local level. Consequently, local development agendas and short term priorities tend to dominate the underlying purpose of protected areas – to safeguard natural systems over generations for optimal national benefit.

Further, protected areas management boards have not always been established, and even when they are in place their authority and responsibility are unclear and there is no guidance on board structure. Most difficult for boards are the multiple institutions operating in protected areas under many different sets of regulations, on different budgets, with different reporting lines, and sometimes with different management approaches and goals.

Four highest priority actions are required:



Photo: IUCN



Photo: BirdLife International / Fang Woei-hong

¹⁰ PPCs are responsible for the management of the majority of SUFs as regulated by the Forest Protection and Development Law 2004 and the Decision 8/2001/QĐ-TTg of 11/1/2001

1. Establish protected areas focal agencies within MARD and MOFI

The Prime Minister directed government to “study and propose a suitable organisation structure and to organise a national focal agency to manage PAs”¹¹. The Decision called for the establishment of a national focal agency for protected areas within a consistent legal framework to bring greater clarity and certainty to the system, to support and promote more effective decentralisation, and to bring greater and better defined authority to PA staff within their territory and responsibilities. As an initial step towards that goal, MARD and MOFI should establish PA agencies which draw together key units within their existing structure of departments and institutes. The Ministries should ensure that the new agencies have the necessary staff resources, authority and funding to effectively carry out their duties and to build close working linkages. At local level, similar changes are also required.

2. Prepare a Government Decree on Protected Areas

In 2006, following the preparation of a new national biodiversity action plan, MONRE plans to begin a process of drafting and consultation for a biodiversity law through inter-sectoral effort. A comprehensive legal framework for the whole protected area system is needed as part of the biodiversity law. In addition, a Government Decree on Protected Areas is needed. A range of policy and institutional issues will need to be sorted out either as part of this legislative drafting process and/or by the Joint Working Group on Protected Areas. In the short term much work needs to be done in bringing consistency within the regulations of the three ministries – MARD, MOFI and MONRE. The Joint Working Group should participate in the formulation process of the Decree on PAs actively.

3. Provide guidelines on the function and content of PA management plans

The management plan is a document that guides and controls the management of protected area resources, institutional arrangements, the uses of the area and the development of facilities or resources needed to support its implementation. It is prepared to cover a stated period of time after which a new plan is prepared. Fewer than 10% of SUFs and no protection forests have management plans in place. Where SUF management plans have been prepared, they are not formally linked to annual planning and budgeting processes and therefore their impact on day-to-day management is constrained. Clear legal requirements and guidance on management planning is needed.

4. Review the system of incentives for PA staff

The entire framework of conditions and incentives for protected areas staff needs to be reviewed and consideration given to introducing the following elements:

1. Protected areas staff defined as a distinct staff category with its own norms;
2. Enhanced salary norms and systems for advancement and training;
3. Specific policies for PA staff - especially rangers;
4. The introduction of staff career development programs which provide a variety of experience and postings;
5. The establishment of a special national protected area training institute and/or PA faculties in universities.

¹¹ Decision No. 192/2003/QĐ-TTg

Immediate next steps for implementation

Two immediate steps need to be taken to begin addressing the priority actions set out in this policy brief. First a joint working group on the national PA system should be established to facilitate and

carry out the required reforms. Second a ten year national program on PAs with a distinct and adequate budget should be mounted.

1. Establish a national joint working group on the protected areas system

A joint working group of MARD, MONRE, MOFI, and other relevant ministries is needed with a mandate to advise on the next steps concerning (1) a consistent and integrated system of PA categories and management procedures, (2) a consistent legal framework, and (3) the required institutional reforms, including the issue of establishing a focal PA agency. The working group would oversee a national PA systems review and define the ways to bring clarity and certainty to the system, to support and promote more effective decentralisation, and to bring greater and better defined authority to PA management boards and their staff within the PA and buffer zones. Critical issues relate to the process of decentralisation and a clearer definition of those activities to be managed and funded directly by the centre, even as a transitional strategy while local capacity is built.

The establishment of the joint working group and the national program are essential steps in consolidating and maintaining Viet Nam's PA system as an essential strategy in national development. The working group will bring the collaboration and integration of effort

2. Establish a national program on protected areas and their buffer zones

A transition period is a period needed to build and strengthen capacity at central and local levels to carry out the decentralisation process of protected area management responsibilities successfully. To support the transitional period a ten year national program on protected areas should be established with a distinct goals and state budget allocation. The program would be jointly managed and monitored by MARD, MOFI and MONRE through the Joint Working Group. The program would provide special national financing arrangements for protected areas for the transitional ten year period to maintain Viet Nam's essential biodiversity wealth while the building blocks and capacities to manage it effectively are put in place. The program would help implement the priorities set out in this policy brief and the linked technical report.

needed between the key ministries and levels of government. The national program will bring the political commitment, priorities and budget to give the reform process certainty and direction. It also provides a framework for coordinated and integrated international support. ■

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and the PARC Project website:
www.undp.org.vn/projects/parc

Further reading: Protected areas policy study: Technical report
Also available from the PARC Project website

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PARC Project

Creating Protected Areas for Resource Conservation using Landscape Ecology

PARC was an Integrated Conservation and Development Project of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. From 1999 to 2004, the project piloted a landscape ecology approach for conserving Viet Nam's diverse biological heritage. This approach integrated conservation and development by using resource use planning as a basis for project activities at three sites: Yok Don National Park, Ba Be National Park and Na Hang Nature Reserve.

The project was co-financed by the Global Environmental Facility and the United Nations Development Programme. It was implemented by the Forest Protection Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the United Office for Project Services. IUCN - The World Conservation Union provided technical assistance at the national level and Scott Wilson Asia - Pacific Ltd. provided technical assistance at the site level.

PARC Project policy briefs

This Policy Brief is based on a year long Protected Areas Policy Study undertaken by a cross sectoral team from MARD, MONRE, MOFI and other concerned Ministries supported by UNDP, IUCN and their international partners – Birdlife International, WWF and FFI. It led to a technical report providing a comprehensive picture of the study findings, lessons, achievements and remaining challenges in protected area policy innovation and uptake, and a series of case studies of experience in 12 protected areas.

This policy brief completes a series of policy briefs that describe the planning approaches taken by PARC Project as part of its framework of integrating biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development. The series should serve to strengthen policy for protected area management in Viet Nam by sharing the experiences gained from the project. The other four policy briefs are:

1. Covering the costs of Viet Nam's protected areas
2. Biodiversity conservation through landscape ecology
3. Integrating conservation and development through participatory resource use planning
4. Management planning for protected areas in Viet Nam