

## TERM OF REFERENCE

<b>Name of assignment:</b>	Final Evaluation Mission for the “Pro-Poor Forestry (PPFP) in the Uplands of North Central Agro-ecological Zone (NCAEZ)””; 1 international and 2 national consultants)
<b>Duration:</b>	February / March 2010
<b>Location:</b>	Hanoi based with field trips to Thua Thien Hue, Quang Tri, Quang Binh and Nghe An.

### 1. Background

The PPFP was originally designed in 2004/2005 and officially launched on 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 2007. It is due to run for 4 years until 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 2011 in eight selected districts and sixteen communes in four provinces of North-Central Vietnam, namely Thua Thien Hue, Quang Tri, Quang Binh and Nghe An. The Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (FIPI) of MARD was implementing the Pro-Poor Forestry Project with the support of three technical advisory institutions, including Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV), Tropenbos International (TBI) and University of Queensland (UQ). The overall objective of the project aimed for: (a) Sustainable improvement of the livelihoods of poor forest dependent peoples in the NCAEZ; (b) Strengthening NCAEZ Provincial Forestry Organizations capacity to adopt a sector wide approach to forest management; (c) Increased and sustainable economic activity in the forest sector in the NCAEZ; and (d) Sustainable management of forest landscapes in the NCAEZ region.

The PPFP is currently funded by the TFF (Total TFF grant GA020/07 € 3,147,755.00) with financial contributions from SNV, TBI and UQ, namely €1,009,498.00 (SNV TA: €830,484; TBI co-financing €71,014.; UQ €105,600).

### 2. Objectives of the final Evaluation of PPFP

BOD meeting #9 on 12 November 2009 decided to stop providing fund to the PPFP project due to different constrains. The objective of the mission is therefore to prepare the final project evaluation and identify constrains which hindered and slowed down the project progress, draw lessons learned from all stakeholders and provide specific and realistic recommendations toward the decision makers and stakeholders to avoid likewise obstacles in future projects. The evaluation will also look into the future for any possibilities to develop another project based on still valid elements and lessons learnt.

The mission will assess the performance and effectiveness of PPFP against its objectives and expected results and identify constrains covering four areas:

- 1) Project design and framework
- 2) Project components:
  - a. Collaborative planning,
  - b. Forest and forest land allocation (Community Based Forestry) and Model Development,
  - c. Forest Enterprise Renovation Component and Capacity Building
- 3) Collaboration TA organizations and national institutions
- 4) Follow-up project and lessons learned

To fulfil the above mentioned objectives, the following specific issues should be focused on:

### **3. Performance of PFPF**

#### **a. PFPF project design and framework**

The main goal is to identify and analyze the institutional setup and highlight strengths and weaknesses in the project implementation with due reflection on the project framework terms of:

- The project's framework design and the adequacy to address the anticipated project objectives / results,
- Internal and external factors in regard to the framework which have influenced / hindered the ability to meet projected targets,
- Identify key constraints and key successes within the project management cycle and identify clear options for addressing the constraints,
- Review the developed instruments for implementation, operation and management,
- Review CPMU's annual planning, budgeting and reporting and review the operations, effectiveness and efficiency of CPMU / PMU,
- Assess the role and staffing (both TA and CPMU staff) of the PFPF with regard to the technical and financial management of the PFPF and TFF mechanism, results reporting and accountability,
- Review organizational setting, decision-making and governance structures of the PFPF including the extent to which all involved parties have worked in undertaking PFPF management functions
- Investigate if the project objectives and design were relevant given the political, economic and financial context.

#### **b. Evaluate the PFPF's Components**

The mission will review the achieved result and identify major constraints about the three components of the PFPF:

##### Component 1: Collaborative planning

- Review activities carried out in 2008 / 2009 related to the development of provincial and district forestry development plans and survey for reasons why most of the plans produced so far still in an early stage,
- Survey of major issues identified in prior evaluation missions which affected the effectiveness of the planning process; evaluate and recommend possible improvements,
- Assess the central and top-down decision procedures in which provinces gave instructions and imposed controls and appraise if the self-interest of the people it was taken into consideration,
- Identify the need and implementation of the Geographical Information System (GIS) for Land Use Planning (LUP) and review constraints for the lack of implementation of above mentioned system.

##### Component 2:

###### i) Forest and forest land allocation

- Review constraints regarding the progress of forest land allocation and issuance of Red Books and the strategy to allocate forest to ethnic minority communes engaged in shifting cultivation,

- Review the current land use planning processes, guidelines and norms at commune and NFPB-level,
- Review if the potential beneficiaries were fully aware of their full rights and if benefit-sharing arrangements were place,
- Assess issues related provision / creation of GIS maps that include information on biophysical, environmental, cultural and forest management and protection conditions.

ii) Model Development

- Review the developed agricultural and post-allocation reforestation demonstration models,
- Identify the stage of development of the agro-forestry and the reforestation models and identify the constraints of the models,
- Deliver a systematic review if there was any economic return, economic performances and environmental compliance and environmental conservation in accordance to local conditions (soil, slope, exposition, elevation, market and infrastructure constraints, etc.),
- Review the developed detailed strategic implementation plan for the years 2009 and 2010.

Component 3: Renovation of State Forest Enterprises and Capacity Building.

- Analyze the development of a market analysis to be carried out by districts and forest agencies and follow-up activities aimed at improving the livelihood of poor forest-dependant people and communities,
- Review the developed guidelines and institutional procedures that should facilitate the implementation of Forest Development and Protection Funds for the payment of environmental services at commune level,
- Review the transition of the pilot SFEs which were transferred into business enterprises and Forest Protection Management Boards, including allocation of select land areas to communities and households,
- Assesses of the identified training and capacity building needs pertinent to the strengthening of existing forest agencies (NFPBs and FCs) that should lead to the identification of training activities.

**c. TA organizations and national institutions**

Assess the TA's role and performance and evaluate the coordination between the three TA organizations and identify collaboration constraints between the different TA's itself as well as between the TA and national institutions and concentrate the review on:

- Identify weaknesses in cooperation especially on addressing the collaboration between TA and the national institutions, the CPMU and the provincial management boards,
- Analyze the agreements with PPMBs on how TA organizations would support implementation activities in communes, NPMBs and FCs and analyze the willingness and capacity of the provinces, districts, communes, NFPBs and FCs to collaborate and absorb TA recommendations,
- Work procedures regarding the informing of the PPMBs and decentralized provincial institutions and agencies and the approval process on TA integrated implementation strategies and on the reasons substantiating the TA organizations focal interests,
- Detailed certification guidelines and technical documents developed by the TA and the ability of TA organizations to ensure an active participation of all project stakeholders as well as the

transfer of ownership to all project stakeholders (i.e. not only hamlets, villages, communes, NFPBs and FCs, but also PPMBs),

- Field presence of the TA and compare it with the need of TA's support and technical advices of the Communes, NFPBs and FCs dramatically need and the support from TA organizations to field activities developed by communes, natural forest protection boards and forest companies,
- Cross-information gathering with and from other externally-financed projects operating in PFPF provinces.

**d. Assess the possibility of an follow-up project:**

The evaluation will also examine (based on the findings 3. a-c) how to increase the effectiveness and efficiency for a potentially newly drafted project with equal objectives which fits better the actual environment, identify lessons learned and provide recommendations for future operations to be financed by the TFF. The mission will further provide recommendations for the most appropriate institutional set up for the follow-up project, if any. This should especially include an assessment of different options for involved national institutions and international TA organizations.

The mission should concentrate on:

- Review the availability of an revised project, based on still valid elements and lessons learned from the PFPF,
- Identify and analyze the most appropriate mechanism and institutional setup for a follow-up project to perform effectively and reach its objectives in such new context, taking into account the strengths and weaknesses of the PFPF as identified and analyzed,
- Analyse the advantages and disadvantages of a follow-up project for the involved parties (TFF, FIPI, local minorities, other beneficiaries, social and economic impact etc.),
- Review TA and FA disbursement and review of disbursement projections,
- Provide concrete and practical recommendations to all related stakeholders on improving the performance of a future project regarding the mechanism, management, communication, operation, structure, decision making procedures and provide therefore very clear recommendations on the future direction of a follow-up project.

**4. Approach to the Evaluation**

The final evaluation is an independent and external exercise. The evaluation is seen as a participatory, open, transparent learning process for all stakeholders/ beneficiaries involved. It shall allow for achieving a common understanding of the institutional and working environment, the current status – achievements, pitfalls and constraints – as well as opportunities and challenges of a possible follow-up project. The evaluation team will gather information and generate analysis with representatives of all key partners and beneficiaries including the TFF funding donors.

**a) Preparation (desk) phase**

Review, as necessary, of archived material related to the PFPF, as well as background material used in project preparation, approved project documents, project monitoring documents, disbursement reports, progress reports, action plans, and other information available either in TFFMU, the TA, or CPMU. The TFF MU and all in PFPF involved partners will provide all necessary documentation related to PFPF to the team. The evaluation team will be expected to liaise closely with the TFF MU and the funding donors during the initial phase for the preparation of the work plan and scheduling

of meetings. It is expected that the Evaluation mission will undertake a review, among others, of key documents as follows:

- PFPF\_NCAEZ Project Proposal
- Log Frames
- TFFMU and MARD Review Report 2009
- Review of Implementation of VFDS
- Budget Planning's
- Models UQ
- 6-monts reports
- Technical reports
- NPMB Review Mission Report
- Model Development Program
- Vietnam Forest Development Strategy (2006-2020)
- TFF Memorandum of Understanding (both Old and New),
- TFF Regulations, TFF Operational Manual, TFF Project Implementation Manual

On the basis of the information collected the evaluation team should finalize the initial phase as follows:

- A systematic review of relevant available documents,
- Comment on the issues/evaluation questions or propose a set of evaluation questions together with explanation comments,
- Develop evaluation questions into provisional indicators, analysis strategy, sub-questions, and information sources,
- Propose a draft work plan (including an indicative list of people to be interviewed, surveys to be undertaken and dates of visits, itinerary and name of team members in charge) and a meeting time schedule for the remainder of the mission.

After the initial phase the evaluation team is requested to present the overall methodology which the team uses in their review and propose detail programme for the field work in the kick-off meeting.

#### **b) Field phase and interviews**

The evaluation team has to hold a kick-off meeting with participation of TFF donors, MARD, TFF MU, CPMU and the Provincial MU's (if necessary) in the first days of the field phase followed by in depth interviews, inspection, and field-analysis of the project activities. The evaluators will take necessary measures to ensure adequate contact and consultation with the different stakeholders. The evaluators will also work closely together with the TFF donors, the competent government authorities and agencies during their entire assignment and will use the most reliable and appropriate sources of information. The work plan has to be applied in a way that is flexible enough to accommodate for any last-minute difficulties in the field. If any significant deviation from the agreed work plan or schedule is perceived as creating a risk for the quality of the evaluation, these should be immediately discussed with the manager of the evaluation.

At the end of the field phase, the evaluation team has to summarise its field work, discuss the reliability and coverage of data collection, and present its preliminary findings in a wrap-up meeting in Hanoi with TFF donors, MARD, TFF MU, CPMU, the three TA organization and other involved stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting is to check the factual basis of the evaluation, and to discuss the draft findings, conclusions and recommendations. A short summary for about 25 pages of findings, conclusions and recommendations together with a Power Point presentation by the evaluation team will be submitted to TFF donors before the wrap-up meeting. The preliminary findings will be discussed with the TFF donors in the debriefing meeting at the end of the mission in Hanoi with the TFF donors at least 2 working days before the wrap-up meeting.

### **c) Synthesis phase**

Synthesis phase can be done at consultant's home office. This phase is mainly devoted to the preparation of the draft final report, which should incorporate comments received during the wrap-up meeting. Comments requesting methodological quality improvements should be taken into account, except where there is a demonstrated impossibility, in which case full justification should be provided by the evaluation team. Comments on the substance of the report may be either accepted or rejected. In the latter instance, the evaluation team is to motivate and explain the reasons in writing.

The report (as well as previous and further reports and notes) must match quality standards. The text of the report should be illustrated, as appropriate, with maps, graphs and tables. The consultants will make sure that their assessments are objective and balanced, affirmations accurate and verifiable, and recommendations realistic. When drafting the report, the consultants shall acknowledge clearly where changes in the desired direction are known to be already taking place, in order to avoid misleading readers and causing unnecessary irritation or offence.

The draft Evaluation report should be submitted to the TFFMU and donors. Both will provide consolidated comments based on the correction of factual data by MARD and TFF MU on the draft Evaluation report after reception.

### **d) Reports**

The consultant will submit the following reports in English and Vietnamese:

1. Inception report (of maximum 5 pages) to be submitted in paper and electronically to the TFFMU at the end of the desk phase to address the issues mentioned in section 4) a. The report shall briefly describe the first findings of the study, the progress in collecting and reviewing data, and encountered and/or foreseen difficulties.
2. Preliminary report (of maximum 5-10 pages, in English and Vietnamese to be submitted on paper and electronically to the TFFMU office at the end of the field phase. The preliminary report shall summaries the field work and presents the preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations. The preliminary findings will then be discussed about sufficiency with the TFF Donor.
3. Draft final report (of maximum 50 pages, in English and Vietnamese) taking due account of TFFMU and TFF Donor comments on the preliminary report. Besides answering the review questions, the draft final report should also synthesize all findings and conclusions into an overall impact

assessment of the project. The report should be submitted to the TFFMU before the evaluation team completes their tasks.

4. Final report with the same specifications as mentioned under 3 above, incorporating any comments received from the TFFMU and the donors on the draft final report, to be presented within 10 working days of the receipt of these comments. The final report in paper and electronic version will be sent to the TFFMU office. The TFF donors will provide the approval of the report within 10 working days after receiving the final version of Evaluation report.

**5. Team Composition**

The evaluation team will consist of 1 international and 2 national consultants with experience and sound understanding of the forest sector, Monitoring and Evaluation institutional and forest model development, monitoring and evaluation. The experts will work in one team.

All team members, both Vietnamese and international, will have strong communication skills and will be fluent in English.

The Evaluation Mission will decide upon its own internal division of responsibilities and work programme.

The evaluation team will be required with the following profiles and qualifications:

<b>Expert 1 (International)</b>	<b>Monitoring and Evaluation and Management Natural Resources’ specialist – Team Leader</b>
Education	- University level or post-graduate
General professional experience	- Senior monitoring and evaluation specialist with at least 15 years of experience in the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of development cooperation activities and institutional development (preferably in the forest sector).
Specific professional experience	- Extensive experience in socio-economic issues, poverty reduction and environment in the region (in Vietnam would be a strong advantage) - Good understanding of sector wide approaches and extensive experience in sector strategy, policy and institutional analysis, - Experience with social issues such as poverty reduction transformation of former state owned enterprises into Forest Protection Management boards / Private entities is considered an advantage, - Previous experience with government authorities, bilateral and international donor agencies is considered an advantage, - Experience in ODA project management including logical framework and project management cycle is considered an advance, - Experience in monitoring and evaluation of development projects in developing countries.
Responsibilities	- The team leader has the overall responsibility for the expected results of the final evaluation mission, - The team leader is responsible for organization of the review, with support from TFF MU and the funding donor for arranging all the meetings,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The team leader is responsible for internal decision of labour and work responsibilities in coordinating with other team members,</li> <li>- The team leader is responsible for the final version of the Evaluation report as well as writing the Evaluation reports with inputs from the national consultants.</li> </ul>
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<b>Expert 2 (National)</b>	<b>Monitoring and Evaluation specialist</b>
Education	- University level or higher
General professional experience	- Monitoring and evaluation and/ or Forestry specialist with at least 10 years of experience in Vietnam forestry, forestry policies and institution, on poverty reduction, gender and ethnic minority issues, and M&E.
Specific professional experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extensive experience in forestry in Vietnam.</li> <li>- Strong experience on current policies, laws and regulations in relation to the reformation of state forest enterprises.</li> <li>- Previous experience with government authorities, bilateral and international donor agencies is considered an advantage.</li> <li>- Experience in ODA project management including logical framework and project management cycle is considered an advance</li> <li>- Knowledge in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Land Use Planning would be a strong advantage.</li> </ul>
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support the international consultants on the field trips, meetings and interviews</li> <li>- Responsible for reviewing documents accessible only in Vietnamese language.</li> <li>- Interpreting for the international expert</li> <li>- Edit and finalize the report in Vietnamese language.</li> </ul>

<b>Expert 3 (National)</b>	<b>Forestry specialist</b>
Education	- University level or higher
General professional experience	- Forestry specialist with at least 10 years of experience in Vietnam forestry, forestry policies and institution
Specific professional experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extensive experience in forestry in Vietnam</li> <li>- Sound knowledge and experience on farming practices and food production at household level, notably by ethnic minority communities;</li> <li>- Experience in financing forestry or natural resource management finance and other social development sectors of Vietnam</li> <li>- Knowledge in implementation, establishment and operation of development of funds for forestry or natural resource management and/or social funds in Vietnam</li> <li>- Previous experience with government authorities, bilateral and international donor agencies is considered an advantage.</li> </ul>
Responsibilities	- Support the international consultants on the field trips, meetings and

	<p>interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Responsible for reviewing documents accessible only in Vietnamese language.</li> <li>- Interpreting for the international experts</li> <li>- Edit and finalize the report in Vietnamese language.</li> </ul>
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## 6. Expected results

- Kick-off meeting to be organized in Hanoi with all relevant.
- Oral debriefing(s) at the end of the mission in the visited province(s) for any specific issues of concern under PFP performance.
- An oral debriefing at the end of the mission in Hanoi for preliminary findings will be discussed with the TFF donors at least 2 working days before the wrap-up meeting.
- Wrap-up meeting will be organized in Hanoi with all relevant stakeholders including TFF donors, MARD, TFF MU, FIPI and CPMU
- Short summary of findings in a preliminary report, conclusions and recommendations, together with a PowerPoint presentation by the evaluation team will be submitted to TFF donors before wrap-up meeting.
- The End-mission evaluation report that is incorporated in English and Vietnamese (electronic copy) and will be submitted to TFFMU and the TFF donors.
- The final version of Evaluation report including executive summary will be submitted in English and Vietnamese in electronic format to the TFF donors and BOD's members. After the finalization of the report, the conclusions and recommendations will be discussed and actions agreed between TFFMU and the Donor.

## 7. Tentative time table and reporting

The final evaluation mission will tentatively take place from 22<sup>nd</sup> of February to 26<sup>th</sup> of March 2010. The kick-off meeting should be on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 2010 in Hanoi. The desk phase will tentatively be started from 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2010 and the field phase is tentatively 10 days from 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2010. The synthesis phase is in the second week of March and the first debriefing with the TFFMU and the donors in preparation of the wrap-up meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> of March. After the drafting of the presentation and the first draft of the report the wrap-up meeting should be hold latest on Friday, the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 2009. The final draft of the report should be send to the TFFMU and the donors latest on Monday, the 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2010. TFFMU and donor will provide comments to the team leader within 10 working days latest until the 19<sup>th</sup> of April. Afterwards the consultant will provide the final version of the report with the incorporated comments to TFFMU and donors until 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2010.

The review team will report to TFFMU and TFF donors, coordinated by Ms. My Lan, the Senior Program Coordinator in Embassy of Switzerland in Hanoi. TFF donors will coordinate and facilitate the review process with support of TFF MU.

The total number of working days is for each consultant is as follows:

	Team leader International 1	National expert 1	National expert 2
Preliminary analysis of key documents and agreement on working methodology and division of responsibility among team members	1,5	1,5	1,5
Travel to Vietnam (international consultants only)	1	0	0
Kick off meeting with TFFMU and Donor	0.5	0.5	0.5
Working in Hanoi (Preparation Phase)	3	3	3
Working in provinces incl. travel (Field Phase; Hanoi + Provinces)	12	12	12
Preparing wrap-up presentation & drafting report (Synthesis Phase)	1	1	1
Debriefing meeting with TFF donors	0.5	0.5	0.5
Update summary and presentations	1	1	1
Wrap-up meeting	0.5	0.5	0.5
Travel to home country (international consultants only)	1	0	0
Draft the final report and starting translating the report; send to TFFMU and Donor	5	5	2
Finalizing English report (international consultants only) integrating feedbacks received from Donor and TFFMU	2	0	0
Finalizing report in Vietnamese (national consultant only)	0	2	0
<b>Total working day</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>

## 8. Condition/resources

The Evaluation Consultants will receive a daily consultant fee, and plus travel, per diem and reimbursement for evaluation-related long-distance phone calls and materials