

Summary Sheet for Terminal Evaluation

| | |
|---|--|
| 1. Outline of the project | |
| Country: Socialist Republic of Vietnam | Project Title: The Project for Strengthening Community-based Management Capacity of Bidoup-Nui Ba National Park |
| Sector: Natural Environment Conservation | Type of assistance: Technical cooperation |
| Division in charge: Forestry and Nature Conservation Division 1, Forestry and Nature Conservation Group, Global Environment Department | Total Cost: Approximately 263million Japanese Yen (at the time of evaluation) |
| Period of cooperation | (R/D): September 24, 2009 (for four years) |
| | (Extension): None |
| | (F/U): None |
| | Country Partner Implementing Organization: Lam Dong Province People's Committee, Bidup-Nui Ba National Park Management Board (BNBNPMB) |
| | Supporting organization in Japan: Ministry of the Environment |
| | Other related supporting organizations: None |
| 1-1 Background and outline of the cooperation | |
| <p>In the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (hereinafter referred to as “Vietnam”) that holds rich biodiversity among countries of the world, improvement of management capabilities in national parks as core nature reserves is an essential challenge to preserving its valuable biodiversity. The Government of Vietnam is carrying out specific measures for biodiversity conservation mainly in national parks, including the formulation of the “Management Strategy for a Protected Area System in Vietnam to 2010” to show approaches to the protected area management in 2003. However, it cannot be said to have led to the realization of appropriate park management due to the lack of technical assistance or funds. Consequently, the biodiversity of national parks has been degraded by various activities of people living inside or around there.</p> <p>The Bidoup-Nui Ba National Park (BNBNP) is one of the foremost large protected areas in the country with the total area of 70,038 ha, located in the northeastern part of Lamb Don Province in Vietnam. After being designated as the nature reserve in 1986, the area was promoted to the national park in 2004. The national park holds typical forest ecosystems of subtropical alpine climate, including tropical evergreen mountain rainforests, mixed broad-leaved and needle-leaved forest zones, alpine dwarf shrubs, subtropical coniferous low-mountain forests, and mixed forests with bamboos and broad-leaved trees, where 1,933 plant species including 96 endemic species and 422 animal species including 32 endangered species inhabit. Approximately 5,000 households (about 26,000 persons) of inhabitants are living inside and around, many of whom belong to ethnic minorities and make their livelihoods by traditional agriculture. The poverty rate of the local population is said to exceed 29%, as their agricultural land per household is small and furthermore their agricultural productivity is low. In the background of this poverty, conversion of forests into agricultural land (inhabitants' encroachment on forests in the said national park for expanding coffee</p> | |

cultivation), hunting of wild animals, illegal logging, forest fires caused by slash-and-burn farming, and other events are still going on at present, posing threats to the biodiversity of the park. In order to address these challenges, the Government of Vietnam requested technical cooperation from the Government of Japan. In response to this, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) conducted a survey to draw up a detailed plan in December 2008, and then signed the Record of Discussion (R/D) for implementing the “Project for Strengthening Community-based Management Capacity of Bidoup-Nui Ba National Park” with the Government of Vietnam in Hanoi on 24 September 2009, based on results of the survey. This project was initiated with both the Provincial People’s Committee (PPC) and the Bidoup-Nui Ba National Park Management Board (BNBNPMB) as the counterpart (C/P) agencies.

1-2 Content of cooperation

(1) Period of implementation

5 January 2010 - 4 January 2014 (48 months)

(2) Target area

Five villages adjacent to the boundary of BNBNP

(3) Target group

BNBNPMB, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) in Lam Dong Province, five target villages

Overall Goal:

BNBNPMB can manage natural resources in part of the national park with the target community groups in a collaborative manner.

Project Purpose:

The capacity of BNBNPMB to manage natural resources in the national park is enhanced through development of a collaborative management model at the target villages.

Outputs:

1. Implementation structure for the two components to be introduced by the Project (community-based ecotourism and ecologically-friendly livelihood options) is established.
2. Basic principles/ rules in management of natural resources in the national park are developed and agreed on by the target.
3. A trial run of community-based ecotourism (hereinafter referred to as "CBET") is carried out at the selected sites.
4. The ecologically-friendly livelihood options (hereinafter referred to as "EFLO") that can be accepted by the target community groups are developed and ready for dissemination among the communities.

5. Issues to be addressed and actions to be taken are made clear so that the target community groups will be able to continuously operate a community-based ecotourism and/or practice the ecologically-friendly livelihood options introduced by the Project.

1-3 Inputs (at the time of terminal evaluation)

- Japanese side: Total amount of input 263 million yen

Dispatch of experts: Total four persons (three long-term experts and one short-term expert. Areas of their responsibility include Chief Advisor/ Collaborative management (CM), rural development/project coordinator, ecotourism/project coordinator, and ecotourism)

Provision of equipment: About 157 thousand U.S. dollars (about 15.7 million yen)

Cost for strengthening overseas operation (local cost assistance) Approximately 1,176 thousand U.S. dollars (about 117.8 million yen)

Acceptance of trainees: 8 persons

- The partner country's (Vietnamese) side:

Assignment of C/P: 27 persons (17 persons out of them are engaged in project services at the time of evaluation)

Project office in Da Lat City, etc.

Local cost borne: 3,983 million Vietnam dong

2. Summary of the Evaluation Team

| Mission | Japanese members | | |
|---------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Members | Name | In Charge | Position and Organization/Title |
| | Motohiro Hasegawa | Team Leader | Senior Advisor, JICA |
| | Eiji Tanaka | Park Administration | Director, Wildlife Division, Kyushu Regional Environment Office, Ministry of the Environment, the Government of Japan |
| | Tomoko Taira | Cooperation Planning/Aid Strategy | Advisor, Forestry and Nature Conservation Division 1, Forestry and Nature Conservation Group, Global Environment Department, JICA |
| | Shinichiro Tsuji | Evaluation Analysis | Senior Consultant, Environmental Science and Engineering Department, Nippon Koei Co. Ltd. |
| | Vietnamese members | | |
| | Name | In Charge | Organization/title |
| | Dr. Ngo Tien Dung | Team Leader | Vice Director of Nature Conservation Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development |
| | Dr. Bui Viet Hai | EFLO | Senior Lecturer of Forestry Department, Nong Lam University |
| | Dr. Le Quang Thong | CBET | Senior Lecturer of Economics Department, Nong Lam University |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Period of evaluation survey | 12 - 28 June 2013 (from 18 June to 28 June for government team members) | Type of evaluation: Terminal Evaluation |
| 3. Summary of evaluation results | | |
| <p data-bbox="170 349 544 383">3-1 Verification of performances</p> <p data-bbox="170 398 1394 521">Project activities were carried out smoothly in general without significant deviations from inputs and main project activity schedules described in the initial plans [the Project Design Matrix (PDM) and the Plan of Operation (PO)].</p> <p data-bbox="201 539 432 573">Output 1: Achieved.</p> <p data-bbox="231 589 1283 622">1-1. Working groups are formulated within 3 months after the Commencement of the Project.</p> <p data-bbox="231 638 1385 716">1-2. The capacities of working groups members are enhanced through a series of training courses organized by the project as compared with those before the project.</p> <p data-bbox="201 732 1394 855">For the above indicators, three working groups (WGs) required for building an implementation system were established in mid-March 2010, that is within three months from the start of the project, and it could be verified through interviews that capabilities of concerned parties were enhanced.</p> <p data-bbox="201 920 432 954">Output 2: Achieved.</p> <p data-bbox="231 969 1394 1093">2-1. Basic information of the target villages, including present resource map of the village, is gathered and prepared in a participatory manner within 9 months after the commencement of the Project.</p> <p data-bbox="231 1108 1394 1232">2-2. Rules and principles on natural resource use in the park are developed in a participatory manner within 15 months after the commencement of the Project and are enforced by villagers themselves</p> <p data-bbox="201 1247 1394 1572">Various basic surveys and participatory rural appraisals (PRA) were carried out by making effective use of local subcontracting and others within 7 months after the start of the project (by July 2010), whose results were utilized for elaborating and implementing project activity plans. In addition, village rules (VRs) on natural resource management developed through community participation at the five target villages were completed in March 2011 (the 15th month of the project), and then approved by the District People's Committee (DPC) in November 2011. These rules were translated into the Koho language as the local language, and thus their enforcement system and monitoring were strengthened.</p> <p data-bbox="201 1637 683 1671">Output 3: Expected to be largely achieved.</p> <p data-bbox="231 1686 1394 1765">3-1. Implementation plans of CBET at the selected sites are prepared within 16 month after the commencement of the Project.</p> <p data-bbox="231 1780 1394 1859">3-2. More than 5% of the households in the target villages take part in the CBET component with some earnings from CBET activities.</p> <p data-bbox="231 1874 1394 1953">3-3. More than 15 tour operators which have signed minutes of agreement with BNBPNMB participate in CBET activities.</p> <p data-bbox="231 1968 1394 2002">3-4. Institutional and infrastructure set-ups are developed for implementation of a trial</p> | | |

run of CBET model within 18 months and 28 months respectively after the commencement of the Project.

3-5. More than 50% of visitors/ guests are satisfied with the contents of the CBET model offered by the component.

3-6. Lessons learned and recommendations based on the evaluation of the trial run are shared with the relevant stakeholders.

- (1) CBET implementation plans were developed with the assistance of local consultants hired by the project at the target villages, and announced by representatives of these target villages in May 2011 as the 17th month after the start of the project. In addition, a plan for infrastructures improvement to develop CBET in target areas was prepared in June the following year (Indicator 3-1).
- (2) During the project, 47 households (about 7 %) of the total 667 households at the target villages participated in CBET activities, gaining some income. However, the situation is that they participate in CBET while gaining small income, because there are still few tourists that visit the national park and thus few opportunities for local people to gain income (Indicator 3-2).
- (3) With regard to building relationships with tour operators, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was exchanged between 17 tour operators (TOs) and the Center for Ecotourism and Environmental Education (CEEE) with the efforts of CEEE and other related organizations, and they participated in CBET activities in terms of marketing (Indicator 3-3).
- (4) As an organization for pilot implementation of CBET model, CEEE was established with the approval of the Provincial People's Committee (PPC) in April 2011 (the 16th month), and the project supported the capacity building of the staff of CEEE. It was verified during the terminal evaluation that the project performed the development and strengthening of organizations required for promoting CBET such as CBET-WG, CEEE and community organizations, by which the capabilities of CEEE were enhanced. The project also supported the preparation of a manual for operating CEEE, which was approved officially by BNBNPMB in July 2012. As the basic infrastructure required for evolving eco-tourism activities, construction of a visitor center and development of the Tien Thai and Lan Bien trails were completed within 24 months of the project. Further development of three nature trails (preparation of toilets, suspension bridges, stairs, signs, etc.) will be completed by September 2013 (Indicator 3-4).
- (5) According to the questionnaire survey with national park visitors that were conducted in 2012, 87% of the tourists were satisfied with the content of pilot implementation of CBET (Indicator 3-5).
- (6) It is expected that CEEE will be supported for elaborating a comprehensive business plan through the assistance by a Japanese expert in August 2013, based on the review of the pilot implementation of CBET. The project is scheduled to carry out an evaluation workshop before the end of the project, from which lessons useful for continuous development of CBET in target areas will be drawn (Indicator 3-6).

For the development of village ecotourism resources, training was conducted for the target community members on the traditional Gong music performance and dance as well as their fabrics, and they were organized into groups after receiving training on guides and nature interpreter as well. Tourists' reaction is generally good. The concept of CBET is fresh at this site and further time and inputs will be required to develop CBET products on a full scale, whereas there is the potential for "educational tourism" targeted at schools and agro-tourism as emerging tourism products. Currently, the number of tourists is limited, and so local people have yet to gain sufficient income from CBET activities. However, it can be said that the initial objective of such a trial is "expected to be largely accomplished," because it has contributed to the capacity building of the target community members and the government side.

In CBET, a visitor center was put in place together with its exhibition facilities, dining rooms, nature trails etc. as the basic infrastructure required for promoting the ecotourism, after an environmental impact assessment (EIA) was conducted. Also in the administration sector, capacity building was carried out for the staff of CEEE that was created as one of the functions of national park offices, along with the support for introducing a new system to strengthen the financing, including the collection of national park entrance fees in addition to elaborating a manual and various plans.

Output 4 : Expected to be achieved.

- 4-1. More than 70% of the members of the community groups adopt at least one of the ecologically-friendly livelihood options introduced in the component, and more than 50% of the participants of EFLO raise production or value of crops they are cultivating.
- 4-2. Lessons learned and recommendations based on the evaluation of the trial run are shared with the relevant stakeholders.
- 4-3. An/ A extension plan and promotion plan to disseminate the same options to other villagers, as well as other villages is prepared
 - (1) According to the survey that was conducted under the project in December 2012, 82% of the community groups participating in EFLO adopted the advanced agricultural technologies and over half of the participants successfully increased their coffee production despite the bad weather in that year. The volume of coffee production by farmers participating in EFLO was about 10 percent higher than that by non-participant farmers (Indicator 4-1).
 - (2) The farmer field school (FFS) manual for coffee production and the document compiling lessons learned from FFS implementation were shared during the workshop "Toward the Establishment of Collaborative Management in BNNBNP" that were held in Hanoi in 2013. In addition, a workshop is scheduled to be held locally to evaluate EFLO before the completion of the project, in which additional lessons and recommendations are expected to be shared among local stakeholders (Indicator 4-2).

- (3) FFS manual for coffee production was developed in the project, including facilitation techniques, agricultural technologies and farming technologies. Furthermore, the farmer-to-farmer extension (FFE) method was adopted in order to disseminate the technologies from the trained farmers to others in the target villages. It should be noted that an EFLO dissemination plan assuming the diffusion to other villages is also planned to be elaborated by the end of the project (Indicator 4-3).

Based on prior detailed analysis of survey results and intensive discussions with stakeholders, coffee cultivation with low environmental impacts (low-pesticide cultivation) was selected as a trial for the main purpose of EFLO. Coffee-growing farmers interested in the project were organized into groups, and intensive training was carried out for more than 300 households, using methods such as FFS and FFE. More than 80% of them began to practice low-pesticide cultivation, successful in a more than 10 % increase of the product as a whole in spite of unfavorable weather conditions in 2012. The targeted members expected that benefits for farmers' participating in EFLO would be improved as a result of strengthening the benefit sharing mechanism (BSM) and the Village Development Fund (VDF), and thus the number of participating farmers in EFLO increased steadily.

Because these support activities were carried out mainly by C/Ps, the Provincial Agricultural Extension Center (AEC), the District Agricultural Center (AC) and others in the project, the capabilities of the government side were also improved. As FFS manual was prepared and shared during the workshop, it is highly likely to be institutionalized and mainstreamed for agricultural extension services in the future. In order that such a trial will lead to the improvement of farmers' livelihoods in a full-fledged manner, it is necessary to improve not only production technologies but also techniques for financing, processing/storage, certification, distribution, and marketing, and a dissemination and promotion plan for these purposes is to be formulated by the end of the project.

Output 5: Expected to be achieved.

- 5-1. Issues to be addressed and necessary actions/ interventions to be taken are reported by the project management in Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) by the end of the Project.
- 5-2. An action plan with recommendations to the relevant organizations is approved by JCC by the end of the Project.
 - (1) JCC has been held four times up to now, in which progresses, important issues, and plans related to the project were discussed. After the project was initiated, DPC and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DONRE), and the Watershed Management Board (WMB) were added to JCC under the agreement among JCC members. JCC became a platform where important stakeholders gathered, playing a significant role in collaborative management of the buffer zone. It is planned that outcomes and countermeasures of the project to date will be compiled in a shared and shared at JCC by the end of the project (Indicator 5-1).
 - (2) As seen in Indicators 3-6 and 4-3, an action plan is scheduled to be prepared for further development of CBET, EFLO, and CM before the completion of the project, incorporating lessons

learned, strategies, plans, and recommendations. These plans will be submitted to JCC/policy makers for approval (Indicator 5-2).

Assisted by the project, VDF was established through joint purchasing of fertilizers, in which a community organization responsible for its management and a BSM was established and strengthened. BSM organization is responsible for not only securing the target people's benefits but also ensuring the obligation of natural resources preservation, which represents a concept for fulfilling CM for natural resources through the participation of the public administration (National Park Management Board and local governments) therein. The concept of CM was presented as a methodology of national park management in the project. It is likely before the completion of the project that a statement of mutual agreement will be concluded between communities and the administrative side, and that an action plan incorporating recommendations will be prepared and approved. It is noteworthy that the project has implemented practical processes and means of CM and it is expected that this experience will be shared during national-level workshops, exchange programs, and other events for the application and reflection in national policies.

Project goal: Expected to be achieved.

1. Consensus on collaborative management is built between the target community groups and BNBPNMB, then draft agreements on management of natural resources in part of the national park are prepared by the end of the project.
2. Policy recommendations to provincial government for ensuring continuous implementation of collaborative management including activities of components of village regulations, CBET and EFLO are produced.
3. More than 70% of the BNBPN staff who participate in the Project understands how to implement the model of collaborative management of natural resources in the national park.

(1) A consultation has begun on a draft agreement on natural resource management (a statement of mutual agreement on collaborative management), involving communities, BNBPNMB, and the Commune People's Committee (CPC). A local consultant has already been hired for this activity, and the preparation of the preliminary draft is expected to be completed by October 2013 (Indicator 1).

(2) A workshop entitled "Toward the Establishment of Collaborative Management in BNBPN" was conducted in Hanoi in March 2013, in which the concept of and experience in BSM and the CM introduced in the project was presented. The significance of participatory preparation and monitoring of VRs and the foundation of BSM and VDF as well as their challenges was discussed during the workshop. In addition, a project workshop is scheduled to be held on utilizing some of the funds for the "Payment for Forest Ecosystem Services (PFES)" to further increase capitals for VDF by the end of the project, and it is planned that a proposal will be compiled in accordance

with the results of the workshop in Hanoi as well (Indicator 2).

- (3) Over 75 % of BNBPNP staff who participated in the project as project staff or WG members were engaged in project activities related to the collaborative management after understanding how to perform CM model. It was verified from the result of the interview conducted during the period of the terminal evaluation survey that the level of BNBPNP staff's understanding of the collaborative management has been improved (Indicator 3).

Based on the above results, it is expected that the project goal will be achieved after outputs are generally achieved.

The concept and methodology of CM has already gotten to be widespread among target community members through activities such as elaboration and monitoring of VRs and introduction of BSM through community participation, and benefits of natural resource management by the CM are also being recognized through the activities of CBET and EFLO.

A need is recognized for broad discussions on evolving the concept of CM currently discussed through the project from the community-level collaboration as was originally assumed to a wider approach, involving provincial and district level stakeholders including major stakeholders such as PPC, DARD (e.g. AEC, district forestry offices, etc.), DONRE, the Department of Culture, Sport, and Tourism (DOCST), DPC (e.g. AC, Da Nhim WMB), and private organizations and enterprises.

3-2 Summary of evaluation results

(1) Relevance

The relevance of the project is **high**. There have been no major changes in policies and priorities of the Government of Vietnam since the mid-term review in 2011, and there are no changes in the Japan's assistance program for Vietnam. The project deals with the strengthening of national park management and the improvement of livelihoods of forest-dependent communities, mainly ethnic minorities and other socially disadvantaged groups, and thus meets local needs.

(2) Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the project is **high**. CBET is a new concept in the area, and BNBPNP was not previously experienced in promoting it. As it was anticipated from the planning stage of the project that the implementation and promotion of CBET would face the difficulty, its goals were originally set to an achievable level, and indicators for it were set to be realistic. Consequently, it can be determined that set goals (indicators) were largely achieved, and thus there is a high expectation for the project to accomplish its goals. FFS and FFE that were introduced as a part of EFLO contributed to accomplishing goals by means of building capacities of stakeholders effectively, C/Ps in particular. The productivity of target farmers was improved gradually, and if the spread of advanced technologies go on as it is, its long-term effect is expected to come out. It is planned that the concept of CM in national parks will be evolved and consolidated through a variety of project activities and discussions, documented and compiled in policy recommendations and others through more workshops or discussions until the end of

the project. There is the possibility that the statement of mutual agreement on CM may be signed between the communities, BNBNPMB and CPC before the completion of the project, gaining a momentum of making achievements for overall-goal indicators in addition to project goals during the project period. It is expected that the enforcement and monitoring of VRs related to natural resource management will also be enhanced in the future.

Moreover, Output 1 “Development of project implementation system” was a prerequisite for Output 2 to Output 4, and Output 2 “Basic principles and rules on natural resource management in the national park” was the basis for harmonizing Output 3 “Implementation of CBET” and Output 4 “Implementation of EFLO activities” with the conservation of natural resources. And Output 5 “Future challenges and required measures” plans to be clarified and compiled into policy recommendations, based on results of outputs 2, 3, and 4.

It is expected that the capability of BNBNPMB will be improved by attaining these outputs. From the above discussions, the relationship among the five outputs and their causal relationship with the project goals were clear, and thus it is expected that the effectiveness of this project is high.

(3) Efficiency

The efficiency of the project is **high**. Appropriate inputs (dispatch of experts, assignment of C/P staff, budgets for implementing activities, etc.) were provided for the project from both the Vietnamese and Japanese sides in a timely manner, and hence project activities were carried out almost on schedule. It was verified through site visits and others during the terminal evaluation that these inputs were utilized appropriately as a whole, and that granted vehicles, equipment, and facilities have also been maintained and managed properly, all of which have yielded an overall effect. It was confirmed that eight C/P staff participated in the training in Japan, learning related skills and knowledge and utilizing them in their daily services effectively. The use of local experts on ecotourism was initially anticipated in this project, but facing the difficulty in securing them, a third-country expert was introduced by international procurement and then a Japanese short-term expert was dispatched. The efficiency was improved by making effective use of local consultants due to the limited introduction of Japanese experts with regard to the budget.

(4) Impact

No negative impacts were detected in a comprehensive manner, and positive impacts are **moderate**. It is because livelihood improvement activities such as CBET, EFLO, and CM tested in the project need to be further evolved from viable concepts or methodologies to be recognized as a model for continuing activities, after it is demonstrated that resources necessary and sufficient for conservation as well as improvement of people's livelihoods can actually be created from collaborative natural resource management with a view to achieving the overall goal shown in the PDM.

It was determined that the likelihood of achieving the overall goal was moderate at this moment. With regard to Indicator 1 of the overall goal “An agreement is concluded between target community

groups and BNBPNMB on natural resource management in a part of the national park within three years after the completion of the project,” it is likely to be signed ever within the project period ahead of schedule, if its preparation is advanced as currently planned by end of the project.

As for Indicator 2, the situation in which related agencies and communities cooperate with each other effectively and efficiently has been consolidated through introducing the concept of CM, and methodologies and approaches that were developed in the project are expected to be adopted or referred to in other projects. For example, approaches to FFS and FFE are likely to be employed for agricultural extension services of provincial governments. As a result of sharing project experiences in BSM and others with MARD, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), and other national park management boards through the workshop that was held in Hanoi in March 2013 and other exchange programs, outcomes of this project on CM, BSM, VDF, VR, etc. have been applied to the protection of special-use forests and the management, utilization and development of buffer zones in other national parks, and the possibility of referring to them in elaborating national policies is also being discussed.

Concerning the continuity of activities for Indicator 3, moreover, the establishment and strengthening of VDF was supported with the approach of turning granted fertilizers into revolving funds, because other mechanisms such as VDF, etc. are required to temporarily accumulate and evenly distribute benefits and resources to inhabitants through the mechanism of BSM. It is expected that the activities introduced by the project will be continued at the target villages, if sufficient benefits are generated for inhabitants through CBET, EFLO, etc., in the future.

It should be noted that EIA was conducted against the plan for implementing CBET including the construction of facilities to verify that they have few negative impacts on the environment, and its operation was started after obtaining an environmental permit by MONRE. It is expected that there were no significantly negative environmental impacts, as the actual construction of the facilities was carried out as planned substantially. As a result of adopting low-pesticide farming methods as part of EFLO by the project, leading to a positive impact on the environment, people’s awareness of environmental protection has been improved. For example, some of them initiated garbage collection along nature trails on a voluntary basis. Apart from it, no short-term negative economic impacts were detected through the introduction of low-pesticide farming methods, but the biodiversity of coffee plantation area and their overall impacts on the environment are unknown.

(5) Sustainability

The sustainability of the project is **high**.

1) Policy and institutional aspects: The system for collecting national park entrance fees was put into force, following the recommendation by the project, and some of the collected fees are to be allocated to maintenance costs of granted materials, equipment, and facilities in the project, which is expected to contribute to the sustainability of project outcomes. A master plan for developing ecotourism for BNBPNP is being developed with the assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and it has

already been approved by related authorities at the provincial level, after reflecting outcomes of and lessons from the project. A budgetary measure for implementing the master plan can be expected in addition to the availability of CEEE staff that was trained in the project, it can be predicted that project outcomes related to CBET will be evolved continuously after its completion. It is expected that CM mechanism for natural resources will be sustained and evolved institutionally on the basis of the statement of mutual agreement even after the completion of the project.

- 2) Organizational and financial aspects: Organizational capabilities of C/Ps were also improved through providing materials and equipment as well as preparing facilities. CEEE was established as a division of BNNBP, and CEEE operation manual was also developed with the support of the project, which shows a guideline for benefit sharing with inhabitants participating in CBET activities and VDF. A long-term business plan of CEEE is also scheduled to be elaborated through technical assistance by a Japanese expert before the completion of the project, including its marketing strategies. On the other hand, CBET tourism products will have to be further developed in order that more tourists visit the target villages through marketing and tourism promotion. More time and inputs are required to develop a full-scale CBET model at this site.

Introduction of FFS and FFE methods contributed greatly to improving capabilities of inhabitants, WG members and project staff (mostly the staff that have obtained long-term leave of absence from the National Park Management Board with reinstatement to their former position after the project is completed), making a contribution to ensuring the sustainability of project outcomes.

With a view to ensuring the sustainability in terms of budgets, VDF and BSM were introduced to the target villages. It can be said that the sustainability of their mechanisms and funds is high irrespective of the fact that their evolution is not yet certain, as discussed in the item “Impact,” and thus that continuing efforts are required for their further development.

- 3) Technical aspect: The capabilities of the C/P staff were enhanced with the assistance of Japanese experts and local consultants. Furthermore, it is believed that the low-pesticide farming methods introduced in the project will be sustainable environmentally.

3-3 Factors that have contributed to the emergence of effects

- (1) Matters related to planning:

Seeing that the former headquarters of BNNBPMB had been installed in Da Lat City outside the park at the beginning of the project, construction of the new headquarters of BNNBPMB and its related facilities by the Government of Vietnam in the Da Nhim Watershed Area inside the park shortened their distance from the target villages of the project, which created an environment easy to advance project activities.

- (2) Matters related to the implementation process:

The target villages of this project are the villages located in the buffer zone outside the national park, where land ownership rights belonged to WMB, but BNNBPMB could implement activities of CBET

and EFLO directly for the target villages, because there was a legal basis for which BNBPNPMB could provide their administrative services not only inside the national park (in the core zone) but also outside there (in the buffer zone).

In addition, the implementation process of the project as a whole was generally appropriate, in which JCC was functioning properly, playing its role in coordination among related agencies. The project was implemented by proper communications among related parties including the Japanese experts on a regular basis and attaining their understanding of community participation adequately.

3-4 Factors that induced problems and issues

(1) Matters related to planning:

WMB (owning land use rights in the buffer zone) under PPC and the Tourism, Trade and Investment Promotion Center (TIPC) were not positioned as C/P agencies in the official document (R/D), and so their commitment was not sufficient to the project, but efforts were made to mitigate negative impacts not to become significant by inviting them to meetings with project staff or other stakeholders and sharing information with them.

(2) Matters related to the implementation process: None specifically.

3-5 Conclusions

This project is generally expected to achieve its goals set by their indicators, contributing significantly to improving the capacities of the target villages and related agencies for implementing CM in the national park through training programs, study tours, workshops, and expert guidance. The project has introduced the advanced CBET, agricultural extension techniques (FFS/FFE), CM mechanism for natural resources, BSM, VDF, etc., compiling viable concepts and methodologies while making trials and errors at the field level. Infrastructure development and provision of materials and equipment also contributed to improving the organizational capacity of BNBPNPMB.

These outcomes were attained through the proper implementation process and organizational structure/system, in which experts, C/Ps, and other stakeholders worked together by facilitating communications with the help of mechanisms such as WGs and the Joint Coordinating Committee. Community participation was emphasized, and implementation of project activities and decision making were performed by involving related agencies and authorities.

As seen in the above summary of evaluation results, the project was highly praised for all of the five items of evaluation except for the impact, and the project goal was largely achieved, and thus it was decided that the project would be terminated as scheduled.

3-6 Recommendations (specific measures, proposals, and advice relating to the project)

Recommendations are made as follows, based on the evaluation results in 3-1 through 3-4 described above.

[For the Vietnam side (after the completion of the project)]

- 1) CEEE will have to further develop tourism products for the ecotourism through communities' active participation and more involvement of tour operators after the completion of the project. In parallel, BNBPNMB should continue the capacity building of CBET groups and CEEE staff during the development of management methods for CBET activities at the villages. It is necessary to involve tour operators in product development to enhance the marketing and promotion. Given that the potential for cultural and natural tourism is limited at the target villages, CBET should be promoted through the development of agro-tourism and "educational tourism" intended for schools.
- 2) The National Park Management Board should continue the strengthening of the benefit sharing mechanism network (BSMNV) and its management team as well as VDF after the completion of the project. Based on this reinforced mechanism, EFLO groups at the villages should be developed as bodies such as cooperatives in order to achieve the following items 1) to 6): 1) Improvement of the quantity and quality of agricultural products; 2) diversification of products; 3) Avoidance of risk (purchase of agricultural insurance products); 4) joint marketing; 5) certification; and 6) value addition. These will allow the introduction of more funds by BSM and VDF as a whole system.
- 3) The National Park Management Board should reflect lessons and recommendations from the project in the national park management plans as well as plans and strategies related to the tourism for the next fiscal years.
- 4) Only the small portion of present beneficiaries of EFLO own farmland granted the formal land use right (so-called the *Red Book*). As for the present land that is already under cultivation, land tenure rights and resource use rights of inhabitants who do not have the *Red Book* are guaranteed by VRs, but the authority of land management belongs to WMB. Development of specific management rules will be required for cultivated land without the *Red Book* in order to ensure the sustainability of EFLO activities utilizing such land.

[For the Japanese side]

- 1) JICA should continue to monitor the further evolution of project outcomes by the experts (forest program advisors) and maintain dialogues with Vietnamese authorities on the improvement of BNBPN and other national parks as well as further assistance.

3-7 Lessons learned (matters that will be helpful for exploration/formation, implementation and operational management of other similar projects, derived from the project)

- 1) CM is a new approach to natural resource management in Vietnam. VR and BSM are essential elements to support CM. Establishment of VDF and BSM network is important to support communities for performing CM. Considering that natural resource management involves a wide range and a large number of stakeholders, it is necessary to create and reinforce a mechanism of natural resource management through the collaboration among a broader range of related organizations, not only the

cooperation between national park offices and communities. It is preferable to identify stakeholders/participants of such mechanisms/platforms carefully from the planning stage.

- 2) This kind of platform of collaboration requires institutional and policy-level backstopping by the state. Also in order to functionalize a platform among related organizations, the following steps would be desirable: 1) First clarify objectives of the platform; 2) share it with related organizations; and 3) indicate that the platform actually generates benefits (creates incentives).
- 3) When livelihood improvement programs are planned, it is significant to set achievable goals in view of given periods and resources for them. When CBET is a new concept at project sites, for example, a lot of time will be required to develop it. In addition, it is vital to put an appropriate project implementation system in place to bring out communities' independence, and it would be preferable to ensure sufficient time, budgets and experts at the planning stage.