Country Name	Project for Strengthening Community-based Management Capacity of
	Bidoup-Nui Ba National Park

I. Project Outline

Background	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 Lam Dong Province in Viet Nam. Having been designated as a national park in 2004, BNBNP holds typical forest ecosystems of subtropical alpine climate, inhabited by 1,933 plant species including 96 endemic species and 422 animal species including 32 endangered species. Approximately 5,000 households (about 26,000 persons) of inhabitants were living inside and around, many of whom belonged to ethnic minorities and make their livelihoods by traditional agriculture. In the background of poverty, conversion of forests into agricultural land, hunting of wild animals, illegal logging, forest fires caused by slash-and-bum farming, and other events were still going on, posing threats to the biodiversity of the park (figures are all as of the ex-ante evaluation).				
Objectives of the Project	 This project aimed at capacity development of the Bidoup-Nui Ba National Park Management Board (BNBNPMB) (as the Project Purpose) through the development of a model for collaborative management (CM) in the natural resources of a national park by the local government and the residents living in the buffer zones outside the national park, centering on two components, the community-based ecotourism (CBET) and the ecologically-friendly livelihood options (EFLO), by means of the activities such as implementing model projects, providing agricultural extension/training, drafting agreements and other related official documents, and making policy recommendation. Then, this project expected that BNBNPMB would become able to implement CM in BNBNP (as Overall Goal). The project objectives set forth are as follows: 1. Overall Goal: BNBNPMB can manage natural resources in part of the national park with the target community groups in a collaborative manner. 2. Project Purpose: The capacity of BNBNPMB to manage natural resources in the national park is 				
Activities of the project	 enhanced through development of a collaborative management model at the target villages. Project site: Five villages (B'No B, Bon Dung I, Da Tro, Da Ra Hoa, and Da Blah) located in the buffer zones of Bidoup-Nui Ba National Park (BNBNP) in Lam Dong Province Main activities: (1) formulation of working groups within the project team and training of the working group members; (2) surveys and development of basic principles/rules in utilization of natural resources jointly with the local residents of the target villages; (3) development of the implementation system of the CBET model projects, capacity development of community groups, implementation of the model projects on a pilot basis, and evaluation of the model projects; (4) identification of EFLO, on the job training on EFLO, development of demonstration farms, evaluation of the attributes, and development of an EFLO dissemination and promotion plan; (5) discussions on draft agreements on CM between BNBNPMB and the community groups of the target villages regarding natural resources of the park and draft of a provincial document regarding continuous support to CM, etc. Inputs (to carry out above activities) Japanese Side Experts: 4 persons Staff allocated: 27 persons Trainees received: 8 persons Project office (Da Lat City, GPS, binoculars, farming tools for the communities, etc. Local cost Overseas activities cost (surveys, pilot implementation of CBET model projects, development and dissemination of EFLO, construction of the visitor's center, etc.) 				
Ex-Ante Evaluation	2009	Project Period	January 2010 – January 2014	Project Cost	(ex-ante) 310 million yen (actual) 306 million yen
Implementing Agency	Bidoup-Nui Ba National Park Management Board (BNBNPMB)				
Cooperation Agency in Japan	Ministry of the Environment				

II. Result of the Evaluation

1 Relevance <Consistency with the Development Policy of Viet Nam at the time of ex-ante evaluation and project completion> This project was consistent with the Viet Nam's development policies such as "strengthening natural resource management and biodiversity conservation", one of the strategic objectives of "the Management Strategy for a Protected Area System in Vietnam to 2010" (2003) (to be realized through development of models for sustainable socio-economic development in buffer zones or by other means) at the time of the ex-ante evaluation, and "participatory management, utilization and protection of protected areas", one of the strategic objectives of "the National Strategy for Protected Area Management in Vietnam to 2020, Vision to 2030" (the draft was being finalized at the time of the project completion).

<Consistency with the Development Needs of Viet Nam at the time of ex-ante evaluation and project completion >

At the time of the ex-ante evaluation, protection of biodiversity in BNBNP was highly needed as mentioned in "Background" above. Also, natural resource management of the park involving the communities was important as many of the residents of the target villages of this project had been farming within the park. At the time of the project completion, as well, the residents in the buffer zones suffered from low agricultural productivity, and thus both livelihood improvement and national park protection had to be realized such as through CM of the park. In this way, this project was consistent with the needs of the target areas. <Consistency with Japan's ODA Policy at the time of ex-ante evaluation>

"The Country Assistance Program for Viet Nam (2009)" states "improvements in livelihoods of residents in forest regions", "forest preservation and sustainable forest management including countermeasures against illegal deforestation", and "biodiversity preservation and other measures" in the section "Environmental Conservation", one of its four priority areas. Therefore, this project was consistent with Japan's ODA policy at the time of the ex-ante evaluation.

<Evaluation Result>

In light of the above, the relevance of the project is high.

2 Effectiveness/Impact

<Status of Achievement for the Project Purpose at the time of Project Completion>

The Project Purpose was achieved by the time of the project completion. As an implementation system of the CM model, the village regulation (VR) for natural resource management and the VR implementation system were developed through community participation and approved by the District People's Committee (DPC). At the village level, CM Networks (CMNWs) and CM Management Teams (CMMTs) were formed. As activities related to CBET, support for establishment of the Center for Ecotourism and Environmental Education (CEEE) under BNBNPMB, development of facilities including the visitor center and nature trails, and training for the communities on eco-tour guides and traditional dance performance (Gong), etc. were implemented. In relation to EFLO, farmers training in organic (eco-friendly) coffee production and other activities were implemented. In addition, Village Development Funds (VDFs) were established and strengthened as a benefit sharing mechanism (BSM)¹.

As a result, all of the indicators for the Project Purpose were achieved, namely, preparation of a draft of the CM Agreement (CMA) on natural resources of BNBNP (Indicator 1; effectuated in December 2013 with signing by the community groups, BNBNPMB and Commune People's Committees (CPCs)), preparation of policy recommendations to the provincial government based on the results of the project activities (Indicator 2), and deepening understanding of the CM model among BNBNPMB staff (Indicator 3).

<Continuation Status of Project Effects at the time of Ex-post Evaluation>

The effects achieved as the Project Purpose have continued. The CMA is continuously effective at the time of the ex-post evaluation. Based on the interviews with BNBNPMB staff members, it was confirmed that they keep understanding how to implement the CM model (i.e., they could appropriately explain it to the evaluation team), and are actually engaged in the continuous implementation of the CM model with the assignment of the staff who received technical transfer to relevant sections and the continuous use of the manuals developed under this project. There has not been staff transfer until the time of the ex-post evaluation. It can be added that the Sustainable Natural Resource Management Project (2015-2020), the successor project of this project, has also contributed to such a continuation of the project effects in terms of support for policy formulation and budget allocation for sustainable forest management.

<Status of Achievement for Overall Goal at the time of Ex-post Evaluation>

The Overall Goal is judged as partially achieved, as reflection of the above-mentioned policy recommendations to provincial government documents (Indicator 2) has not been realized yet due to the prolonged coordination process among related organizations. At the time of the ex-post evaluation, BNBNPMB had been having discussions with each relevant organization to institutionalize the CM model and reflect the policy recommendations on official documents. The other indicators are judged to have been achieved, based on the findings that the CMA have already gone into effect as mentioned above (Indicator 1) and most of the CM activities introduced under this project have been conducted continuously with the initiative of CMMTs in the five target villages (Indicator 3).

BNBNPMB has exercised its skills on CM activities particularly in CBET and training. For example, BNBNPMB has provided training to CEEE staff and community CBET groups for strengthening management of CBET activities, and developed new products including tourism education development in collaboration with CEEE, tourist agents and the communities. Also, BNBNPMB formulated the CBET Master Plan (2015-2020) based on the lessons learned and recommendations from this project. Further, BNBNPMB is engaged in capacity development of community members in such topics as CMA, dissemination of VR, agricultural technology/fund management and ecotourism. On the other hand, BNBNPMB is rather passive in organizing EFLO groups into cooperatives or the like, i.e., BNBNPMB takes actions only in response to requests or proposals from the community².

¹ The VDFs were established for pooling benefits and resources and distributing them to community members equally. The fertilizer provided under this project was used as the source for revolving fund. The total balance of the VDF increased year by year with incomes related to CBET and EFLO as main sources. The fund is utilized by villagers mainly for agricultural inputs.

² By being transformed to a cooperative, an EFLO group becomes capable of collective processing/direct selling of coffee and collective purchase/direct purchase of fertilizer. Direct purchase of fertilizer was actually observed in some groups. However, even though a community wants a cooperative, the organization process was not in progress so much due to lack of an actor that plays a leading role and insufficient

<Other Impacts at the time of Ex-post Evaluation>

In planning CBET including construction of facilities, the project conducted an environmental impact assessment (EIA) that confirmed there would be no negative impact on the environment, and it obtained an approval from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) before starting the activities. At the time of the project completion, noticeable negative environmental impact was not observed. According to BNBNPMB, there is no negative impact by the time of the ex-post evaluation either.

As another impact, CBET activities were extended to two other villages near BNBNP. <Evaluation Result>

In light of the above, through the project, the Project Purpose was achieved at the time of the project completion, and the positive effects remain at the time of the ex-post evaluation. Although the degree of achievement of the Overall Goal is judged as partial due to indicator 2 that has not been achieved yet, the overall status is that CM of the natural resource in a part of BNBNP by BNBNPMB and the community, under the system and the practice introduced by the project, continues to be in place in coordination with local governments and tourist agencies. Therefore, the effectiveness/impact of the project is high.

Aim		Populta
	Indicators	Results
	1. Consensus on collaborative	Status of the achievement: achieved (continued)
· ·	management is built between the target	(Project Completion) As a result of a series of village meetings with the
	community groups and BNBNPB, then	community group in each target village, the CMA on natural resource
	draft agreements of natural resources in	management of BNBNP was drafted under this project and approved by
national park is enhanced	part of the national park are prepared by	the Lam Dong Provincial People's Committee (PPC). With signing by the
through development of a	the end of the project.	community groups, BNBNPMB and CPCs, the CMA went into effect on
collaborative		December 16, 2013.
management model at the		(Ex-post Evaluation) The CMA is continuously effective and there have
target villages.		been no revisions.
	2. Policy recommendations to provincial	Status of the achievement: achieved (continued)
	government for ensuring continuous	(Project completion) Based on workshops and discussions with relevant
	implementation of collaborative	organizations, draft policy recommendation on sustainable
	management including activities of	implementation of CM were prepared under this project, and they were
	components of village regulations, CBET	approved at the Joint Coordinating Committee of this project in
	and EFLO are produced.	November 2013.
	and Dr Do are produced.	(Ex-post Evaluation) Based on interviews with the PPC, it was confirmed
		that the PPC understands the contents of the policy recommendations that
		consist of (1) budget allocation and (2) CMA dissemination. Regarding
		(1), budget was continuously allocated by the PPC from its own sources
		during the period between the completion of this project and the
		commencement of the Sustainable Natural Resource Management Project
		(2015-2020), the successor project. Regarding (2) as well, the PPC
-		expressed its will to engage in forest management through the CM model.
	3. More than 70% of the BNBNP staff	Status of the achievement: achieved (continued)
	who participate in the project understands	(Project completion) According to a study of the terminal evaluation,
1	how to implement the model of	more than 75% of the staff members of BNBNPMB who participated in
(collaborative management of natural	this project (total 160 respondents) were involved in project activities
	resources in the national park.	related to CM with an understanding of how to implement the CM model.
		The result of interviews in the terminal evaluation also confirmed the
		deepened understanding of CM among BNBNPMB staff.
		(Ex-post Evaluation) BNBNPMB staff can appropriately explain how to
		implement the CM model. They continue to engage in the implementation
		of the CM model with the assignment of the staff who received technical
		transfer to relevant sections and the continuous use of the manuals
		developed under this project. There has been no staff transfer.
(Overall goal)	1. Agreements between the target	(Ex-post Evaluation) achieved
	community groups and BNBNPMB on	See the above section on the Project Purpose Indicator 1.
-	management of natural resources in part	
-		
<u>^</u>	of the national park are concluded within	
	three years after the end of the project.	(Ex. post Evaluation) not achieved
	2. Policy recommendations are reflected	(Ex-post Evaluation) not achieved The PPC has put a part of the policy recommendations into practice (as
	in provincial government documents such	shown in the above section on the Project Purpose Indicator 2), while the
	as decisions, guidelines, and plans,	policy recommendations have not been reflected on official provincial
	necessary for the community groups and	documents yet. At the time of the ex-post evaluation, nevertheless,
	BNBNPMB for collaborative management	institutionalization of the CM model is being discussed by BNBNPMB,
	Bridbrid hilb for Condoordant Chinanagement	the provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Achievement of project purpose and overall goal

ark.	(DARD), the provincial Department on Natural Resource and Environment (DONRE), the provincial Department of Planning and Investment (DPI), and the provincial Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism (DOCST) at the CM Platform (meetings among relevant organizations and sections on CM) established on the initiative of the PPC.
e activities introduced by the project.	(Ex-post Evaluation) achieved Part of CBET activities have slowed down due to the stagnant tourism demand and the existence of active CBET undertakings by a group not related to this project in one of the villages (Bon Dung I). Nonetheless, the groups established under this project still carry out activities in all villages. Considering that the activities were expanded (e.g., new tours and trails were introduced), income from CBET increased and the VDF balance increased, overall, it can be concluded that the CM activities have been mostly continued or developing. See the table below for details.

Sources: Documents provided by JICA; Terminal Evaluation Report; questionnaire and interviews with BNBNPMB; interviews with CMMTs of the target villages.

3 Efficiency

While the project cost was within the plan (99% of the plan), the project period slightly exceeded the plan (102% of the plan). Therefore, the efficiency of the project is fair.

4 Sustainability

<Policy Aspect>

"The National Strategy for Protected Area Management in Vietnam to 2020, Vision to 2030" mentioned in "Relevance" above went into effect in February 2014, and it continues to be effective at the time of the ex-post evaluation. Revision is planned on some relevant laws and regulations, namely, "the Forest Protection and Development Law" and "the Government Decree on Organization and Management of the Special-use Forest System (2010)". This revision is to provide a direction toward strengthening policies and systems of community-based management, use and protection of protection forests.

At the implementing agency level, the International Center for Tropical Highland Ecosystems Research (ICTHER) of BNBNPMB is responsible for tasks related to CM, BSM and EFLO, and CEEE is responsible for CBET, as envisaged during the project implementation period. The numbers of staff of both organizations (i.e., eight persons each) are in accordance with the regulation and are sufficient considering the fact that both organizations perform their tasks with that personnel allocation. Also, a cooperation mechanism across the organization is in place within BNBNPMB. For example, rangers undertake instructions and dissemination of VR that regulates CM, and administration divisions of BNBNPMB such as the accounting division are engaged in administrative tasks of CM, BSM and EFLO.

At the village level, CMMTs, composed of core CMMT members and community group leaders in individual villages, coordinate community members participating in CM, promote VR and manage VDF in a continuous manner. <Technical Aspect>

As mentioned in "Effectiveness/Impact" above, there has been no staff transfer till the time of the ex-post evaluation, and the manuals developed under this project are still utilized. According to BNBNPMB, they will cope with future transfer of staff in such a way that they will instruct the staff to hand over thoroughly the knowledge and know-hows of the CM model to his/her successor before the transfer.

BNBNPMB also continues training for the community on CM management and agriculture-related subjects. The techniques related to VR/VDF management, CBET and EFLO are mostly sustained too. On the other hand, opportunity to use some techniques such as weaving, composting and husking coffee beans is limited mainly due to the lack of demand for the product/service and economic conditions of community members. For example, many coffee producers rely on middlemen for procurement of agricultural inputs, and make repayment of high interest debts owed to middlemen in unhusked beans that are cheaper than husked beans. This project tried to improve such situation by equipping farmers with coffee husking techniques. However, many farmers did not begin husking due to only a small amount of beans remained in their hand for husking (and then for profit) after repayment of debts to middlemen in unhusked beans. In other words, with the negotiation transaction with middlemen as mentioned above, each farmer can supply only a small amount of beans to market, and husking a small amount of beans incurs high husking cost. It is expected that a more systematic process from production to processing by community members will reduce the husking cost and increase the unit sales price of beans³, which will eventually contribute to higher income from coffee in the whole target area. However, action such as organization of cooperatives has not been progressing.

The facilities and EFLO equipment constructed/provided under this project are mostly in good conditions at the time of the ex-post evaluation, but weeders were out of order in all target villages. The weeders were effectively utilized during the project implementation period. After the project completion, farmers purchased new models with larger engines and with lower fuel consumption and continue weeding.

<Financial Aspect>

At the implementing agency level, the Sustainable Natural Resource Management Project (2015-2020), the successor project of this project is being implemented, and funds for CM activities can be allocated from that project. However, it is uncertain whether budget will be secured in a sustainable manner after the completion of the successor project (in fact, the cost for CM activities

³ It is expected that the establishment of cooperatives may lead to reduction of husking cost by processing a large amount of beans collected from producers and increase the unit price of unhusked beans through price negotiations.

during the two-year period from completion of this project to the commencement of the successor project was funded from the PPC's own sources). BNBNPMB explained that in order to secure its own budget, natural resource management using the CM model should be institutionalized. As mentioned above, institutionalization of the CM model is currently being discussed among government organizations at the CM Platform.

At the village level, while the budget of CMMTs⁴ in the target villages is increasing, the amount is not sufficient to overcome the above-mentioned issue of farmers' dependency on middlemen and to fully utilize the techniques introduced under this project, considering the limited opportunity to participate in CBET and obtain revenues from it. BNBNPMB is considering fund increase for CM activities by means of establishing a VDF financing mechanism in cooperation with other undertakings such as Payments for Forest Environmental Services (PFES) and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+), and by means of promoting CBET activities such as through development of new tourism products.

In light of the above, problems have been observed in terms of the technical and financial aspects of the implementing agency. Therefore, the sustainability of the effectiveness through the project is fair.

5 Summary of the Evaluation

The project attained capacity development of BNBNPMB as planned for the Project Purpose through establishing a system of collaborative management (CM) of natural resources by BNBNPMB and the target communities. Regarding the Overall Goal, while institutionalization of the CM system has not been achieved yet, CM activities have been continued on the ground. For sustainability, some problems are found in the technical and financial aspects such as the unclear future prospect of BNBNPMB securing sufficient budget and the limited village-level budget, which have made some transferred techniques difficult to practice. As for efficiency, the project period was longer than planned.

Considering all of the above points, this project is evaluated to be satisfactory.

III. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations for Implementing agency:

• BNBNPMB is recommended to make further efforts to secure budget in a sustainable manner for continuing its protection activities. To do so, BNBNPMB is recommended to give shape to the CM system of natural resources using the CM model and then to seek for budget sources for the continuation of the effects through the Sustainable Natural Resource Management Project, the successor project, during its implementation period.

• BNBNPMB is recommended to support activities to transform EFLO groups to cooperative organizations. Since promotion of making a cooperative may not only bring livelihood improvement of the community but also contribute to conserve national parks, it is important that BNBNPMB increase awareness of advantages and significance of having a cooperative among the EFLO group and provide guidance on necessary administrative procedures for organizational development in each target village.

• In order to further activate EFLO by promoting the sharing of know-how and experience, CEEE is recommended to share information and cooperate with a Gong and ecotourism group that carries out activities independently from the activities organized by this project in Bond Dung I Village.

Lessons learned for JICA:

• When planning a project that involves introduction of machinery and techniques for livelihood improvement in target groups, JICA and the implementing agency should examine other inhibiting factors for livelihood improvement such as dependence on middle men and insufficient market strategy, in addition to the training on specific machinery and techniques. JICA and the implementing agency should extend a comprehensive assistance including measures to resolve those inhibiting factors. In case of this project, it turned out during the project implementation that insufficient amount of beans for husking due to the negotiation transaction with middlemen on most of the harvest was a bottleneck of production of husked coffee beans. The project took measures such as the introduction of VDF, which however could not solve the problem. Necessary countermeasures may include collective husking of coffee beans by farmers and price negotiations with middlemen, and establishment of cooperatives is necessary for that. If this problem had been well recognized in the project planning stage, the project could have provided support for transforming EFLO groups to cooperatives alongside the introduction of husking techniques and tools, and those techniques might have better applied and utilized.

• When the weeders provided under this project broke down, farmers purchased new models with larger engines and with lower fuel consumption instead of repairing the broken down ones. When purchasing equipment to provide under a project, its performance and quality should be fully examined so that the users could keep using it.

• The Project Purpose and the Overall Goal of a project should be set in a way that they clearly show the logical sequence of how the project will realize the expected effects and then to contribute to the concerned development issue. In case of this project, setting the development of a CM model as the Project Purpose and the continuous use of that model as the Overall Goal could have been more logical and clear.

⁴ In 2015, the average income of a CMMT (per village) was 217 million dong, including 26 million dong of income from CM activities such as membership fee, interests from VDF lending and sales from ecotourism. Most of the rest of the income was the balance carried from the previous year including VDF. The average expenditure of a CMMT was approximately 4 million dong including travel cost, meeting cost and remuneration.

Implementation status of CM activities in the target villages (Overall Goal Indicator 3)

r		s in the target villages (Overall Goal Indicator 3)
Activities	At project completion	At ex-post evaluation
	<667 households in five villages>	<883 households in five villages>
Community	CMNW was set up in each village.	CMNW exists in every village.
organization	(Note: CMNW was formerly BSM	Membership ratio: 39% of households on average per village.
(participation in	Network (BSMNW) until it was	(Note: the implementing agency explained that since a SMNW is not a
CMNW)	reorganized to CMNW in December	rigid organization, the number of member households varies from time to
	2013.)	time.)
	Membership ratio: around 60% of all	Major activities: lending VDF loans and sharing agriculture techniques.
	households.	
Management of	CMMT was set up in each village.	CMMT exists in every village.
community	(Note: CMMT was formerly BSM	Number of members: 9 persons on average.
organization (CMMT	Management Team until it was	Major activities: coordinating CMNW members, operating and managing
management)	reorganized to CMMT in December	VDF and explaning VR.
	2013.)	
VR observation	Community members who had a will to	The VR is observed in every village.
	commit to VR observation were organized	Since the introduction of the VR, there has been no case of illegal logging
	into CMNW/CMMT.	and incursion into BNBNP. However, as non-CMNW members do not fully
		understand the VR, CMMT explains and provides guidance on it.
VDF (management of	The total balance was 160 million dong in	VDF is operated in each village.
the fund))	December 2013.	Number of users: 62 persons on average per village.
,	Establishment of a VDF in each village	Balance: total 1 billion dong or 200 million dong on average per village
	was necessary.	(approx. 930 thousand yen).
		Type of income transferred to the fund: VDF membership fee, interests of
		VDF loans. Repayment ratio of loans: 90% on average.
		Use of loans: seeds, fertilizers and pesticides (additionally, food and
		medical cost in some villages).
Ecotourism (CBET)	Total 47 households from four villages	Total 16 households from four villages participated.
	participated.	In Bong Dung I Village, another group that is independent from the CBET
	After training, the groups carried out	group organized by the project is active.
	CBET activities such as eco tour guiding,	Major activities: eco tour guiding, nature interpretation, Gong dance and
	nature interpretation, Gong dance and	traditional weaving (as demand for weaving is not high, it is continued at a
	traditional weaving.	limited scale).
	6	Income from CBET activities: 66 million dong in 2014; 75 million dong in
		2015 (total of the four villages).
		After the project completion, new eco tours in cooperation with tourist
		agents, development of new trails and team building activities for groups
		such as schools and firms, etc., are carried out.
Livelihood	More than 300 households received	Organic (eco-friendly) coffee is cultivated in every village.
improvement	training on organic coffee farming. More	Number of farmers engaged: total 167 households or 33 households on
(EFLO)		average per village.
	learned into practice.	Production of organic coffee increased in all villages (no data available).
	r	The growers teach the techniques to other farmers in all villages. Training
		is conducted, too. However, opportunity to use some part of the techniques
		(such as composting and husking) is limited to farmers who own cow or
		who have capacity to sell husked beans to the market.
L		the nure capacity to sen nusked beans to the market.



CMMT member and coffee field in a target village



Visitor center in BNBNP