



Ecosystem Services Certification Document (ESCD) for Quang Tri, Viet Nam

Introduction

FSC-STD-60-004 *International Generic Indicators* (IGI) specifies that when a certified forest management organization makes FSC claims regarding the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services, Annex C is followed regarding additional requirements, including the development of a publicly available Ecosystem Services Certification Document.

In the Ecosystem Services Certification Document, the certified forest management organization shall list the declared ecosystem service(s), state the desired ecosystem service(s) claim, and describe: the status and management of, and threats to, the declared ecosystem service(s); the methodology used to evaluate the impacts of management activities on the declared ecosystem service(s); the results of impact assessment; a list of those involved in activities related to the declared ecosystem service(s); and a summary of culturally appropriate engagement with Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

The Ecosystem Services Certification Document, along with FSC claims for the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services, can be used to improve market access to ecosystem service payments by increasing the confidence of potential buyers or investors.

The Ecosystem Services Certification Document is subject to assessment as part of a forest management evaluation by certification bodies.

Ecosystem Services Certification Document (ESCD) for Quang Tri, Viet Nam

Part 1: Information regarding the demonstration of impact

Declaration of the ecosystem services for which a claim is being or will be made
<p><i>Please state the ecosystem service(s) for which you are making or plan to make FSC claims for the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services. You can choose more than one option.</i></p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Carbon sequestration and storage <input type="checkbox"/> Watershed services <input type="checkbox"/> Biological diversity conservation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Soil conservation <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational services </p>

1. Core information regarding the demonstration of impact						
Declared ecosystem service (ES)	FSC ecosystem service claim (from Annex I of FSC-PRO-30-002 – ForCES field testing draft)	Associated impact indicator for the claim (from Annex I of FSC-PRO-30-002)	Baseline level of the impact indicator	Verifiable target for the impact indicator	Key management activities and strategies to reduce threats and maintain and/or enhance the ecosystem service	Results of impact assessment (see section 6)
Soil Conservation	Enhance soil (increase forest cover)	Area of natural forest cover	194 ha	Increased forest cover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established and maintaining <i>Acacia</i> plantations Enrichment planting of native species within and beside natural forest 	Forest cover increased from 194 ha to 1,136 ha between 1988 and 2015, of which

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree planting on sand dunes • Developed forest protection plan • Established forest protection and management groups, trained them in forest monitoring (including patrols to prevent illegal logging, harvesting, etc.) • Developed guidelines and trained communities in small and low-intensity managed forests (SLIMF) and certification requirements <p>Activities to mitigate threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the natural forest in the area • Enrichment planting within and beside natural forest • Patrols and forest protection to prevent illegal harvesting and hunting in the natural forest area • Developed guidelines and trained households on SLIMF and certification requirements • The titanium mining is outside of the control of the community. Within the community-managed area, permanence of the ES provision over time can be ensured by implementing sustainable harvesting practices and avoiding large-scale clear-felling 	<p>277 ha is new acacia plantation</p> <p>Note: The application for the ES 'soil conservation' is only for the group members located in Vinh Tu Commune (277 ha), not for the entire group</p>
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2. Management objectives related to maintenance and/or enhancement of declared ecosystem services

Prevent soil erosion, prevent sand flow

3. Description of the current condition of the declared ecosystem service(s), areas within and outside the management unit that contribute to the declared ecosystem service(s)

Total certified area is 278 ha managed by 136 households that belong to the following five groups/communities:

- Huynh Cong Tay, 43.2 ha, 36 households
- Thuy Tu 1, 24.1 ha, 13 households
- Thuy Tu 2, 39.7 ha, 24 households
- Thuy Tu Phuong, 93.2 ha, 37 households
- My Duyet, 78.5 ha, 26 households.

The groups also manage 360 ha of natural forest and have implemented enrichment planting to extend the natural forest area. The existing natural forest plays a very important role in coastal protection and regulates groundwater by protecting the agricultural land against sand blown from open sand areas by wind. With stable structure, diverse tree species, and high density, the natural forest provides better protection than the plantation. All the land belongs to the state. The management of the state forest at local levels, such as commune and district, is overseen by the Provincial Forestry Department.

The group started planting *Acacia* trees in 1999 to combat wind erosion that brought sand onto the agricultural fields. At that time, the area was completely devastated due to heavy damage caused by the America–Viet Nam war (before 1975: bombing, mines, use of napalm and other chemicals). A land-use management plan was set up in the 1990s by a KfW-funded project. Under the landuse management plan, the vacant land was transferred to local households to establish plantations. The land is allocated for household use for 50 years. A so-called ‘Red book’ is the ownership certificate.

The current landscape in the area is strongly influenced by human activities, mainly agriculture and tree plantations. There are 1,000 ha of forest in the area, of which 360 ha are natural forest and the rest is *Acacia* plantations; 277 ha of the plantations have been FSC certified since 2012. Due to a government ban, the natural forest has not been harvested during the past 10 years, whereas the plantations are harvested every 7–10 years. All the forest in the area is community managed and the local communities have good awareness on forest development and the benefits of the forest to their livelihoods. Planting and low-impact logging techniques are used to minimize the impact on the soil, to protect water resources for the agricultural area, to protect existing natural forest in the communes, and to improve the forest structure by natural regeneration of native tree species and enrichment planting.

The forests in the area play an important role in water retention and controlling soil erosion, i.e. preventing sand moving to agricultural fields.

4. Threats to the declared ecosystem service(s) within and outside of the management unit

- Forest fires (drought)
- Landuse change: forest conversion and titanium mining
- Unsuitable silvicultural techniques such as burning after harvesting
- Typhoons (cause land throw).

5. Description of the methodology used to demonstrate the impact for each selected claim (including more information on baseline if necessary)

Description of the baseline

The baseline for the claim of prevention or reduction of erosion is based on satellite image from 1988. The forest plantation and general reforestation/afforestation efforts started after 1988 in the area, so the baseline is: 194 ha of forest.

Prevention or reduction of erosion: Changes in the forest cover

Changes in the forest cover and open sand areas were analysed using satellite images (Savilaakso et al., unpublished data). Top of Atmosphere TOA-calibrated Landsat 5 and Landsat 8 data from 1988 to 2015 was used in the analyses. All Landsat 5 and 8 imagery available over the study area were filtered and only those with a cloud cover of less than 5% were considered for further analyses: 52 images met the cloud cover requirements and from those four scenes were selected. The selection was based on the best available imagery from before (1988) and after (2005 and 2015) the introduction of plantations to prevent soil loss.

6. Detailed results of impact assessment and monitoring

There was an increase of forest area in both the inland and dune zone between 1988 and 2005, but since then mining activities outside the plantation area have led to a decrease in the dune zone between 2011 and 2015, while the forest area in the inland zone continued to increase (Figure 1). Within the ForCES project area, the forest cover steadily increased between 1988 and 2015 from 194 ha to 1,136 ha.

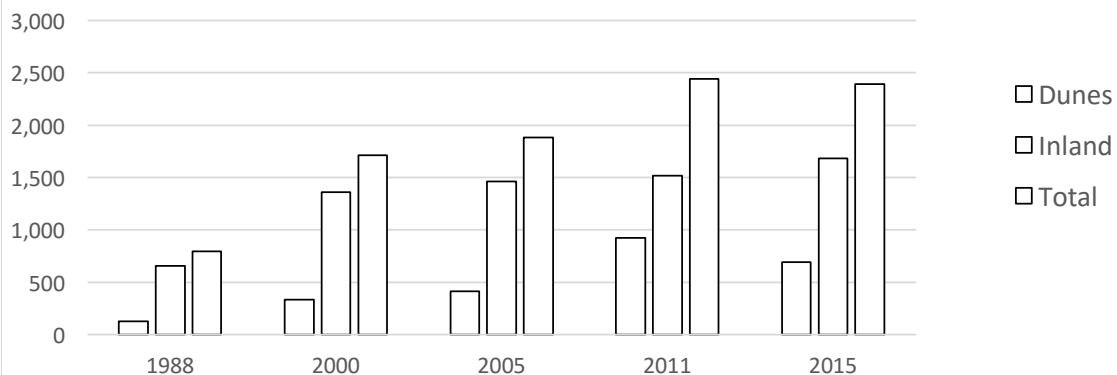


Figure 1. Forest cover change by zone in the Vinh Tu area (ha)

Part 2: Management information

1. Name of the Organization

Association of Quang Tri Smallholder Forest Certification Groups

2. Location of the management unit

Vinh Tu commune, Vinh Linh District, Quang Tri Province, Viet Nam

3. Type of certification

Please tick all the options that apply to the management unit:

Size:

Large scale Conventional SLIMF (small and low-intensity managed forest)

Type of organization certified:

Individual Private company Public organization Indigenous Peoples Local communities Management group

4. Characteristics of the certificate

Please give the following information:

Management unit area (in hectares): 277 certified (1,392.39 forest management unit total)

Number of members (if applicable): 136 pursuing ES claim (526 total)

FSC Certificate Code: GFA-FM/COC-002136

First issue date: 17 September 2010

Last issue date: 17 September 2015

Expiry date: 16 September 2020

5. Organization contact information

Please provide relevant contact information:

Email: doanhccln@gmail.com

Postal address: 63 Tran Hung Dao, Dong Ha City, Quang Tri Province, Viet Nam

Telephone number: +84 905215333

Contact name: Hoang Duc Doanh

6. Legal tenure to manage and/or use the forest, or other legal right to receive payments for declared ecosystem services

A landuse management plan was set up in the 1990s by a KfW-funded project. Under the landuse management plan, the vacant land was transferred to local households to establish plantations. The land is allocated for household use for 50 years. A so-called 'Red book' is the ownership certificate.

Ownership is given in the management plan. The Red book is provided by the responsible governmental institution to certify that they have utilization rights in their forest area. Every household needs to have a Red book when they want to join the certification group. The natural forest around the forest management units has also been allocated to the communities and commune to protect and manage.

There is no official law concerning payment for soil management, but also no prohibition.

The payment will be used for protecting the natural forest area and sustainably managing the *Acacia* plantation.

7. List of communities and other organizations involved in activities related to the declared ecosystem service(s)

Five communities – Thuy Tu 1, Thuy Tu 2, Thuy Tu Phuong, Huynh Cong Tay, and My Duyet – are directly involved in managing *Acacia* plantations and protecting the natural forest areas, which are allocated to their communities. All of the household members of the groups own both agricultural land (rice, peppers, other crops) and forestry land. Soil protection will directly benefit them through increasing agricultural yields and products. They also benefit from the harvesting of non-timber forest products (NTFPs), such as green biomass for fertilizer and fuel wood. The communities carry out impact monitoring in the field by observation and filling in the monitoring template.

VinhTu Commune Committee: is involved in managing the forest and forest land at the commune level.

Sub-Department of Forestry Quang Tri, Group Certification Association Quang Tri: manager of the group at provincial level. It is responsible for building capacity on forest management and protection, as well as making a link with the market and funding support to the group certification model.

Forest rangers, Forest Protection Department of Quang Tri: forest protection and fire control; also issues permits for harvesting of timber.

8. Summary of culturally appropriate engagement with Indigenous Peoples and local communities, related to the declared ecosystem service(s) – including ecosystem services access and use, and benefit sharing – consistent with FSC Principles 3 and 4

The rights holders are the communities. Their representative is the village head. The communities live next to the certified forest area.

The households that join the group have a Red book for their forest and there is no ownership conflict. They are directly involved in managing *Acacia* plantations and protecting the natural forest areas, which are located in their communities. No payment has been made so far, so a benefit-sharing system has not yet been designed.

To date, there have been few conflicts with national laws regarding implementing free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC). However, there are no Indigenous Peoples in Viet Nam as there is no law or definition of 'Indigenous Peoples'. But the term is used and is understood as 'ethnic minorities'.

The FPIC process carried out in Quang Tri followed these steps:

1. Establishing the management unit, including representative from Department of Forestry of Quang Tri Province, VinhTu's Commune People Committee, and villages' representative.
2. The management unit will make a plan for:
 - mapping resources (both natural forests and plantations)
 - integrating the activities of ForCES with FSC, environmental services, forest management, and livelihood development
 - preparing detailed working plan: work to be done, people in charge
 - assessing economic and social impacts, natural resources, and support from outside.
3. The working plan will be discussed with the management unit, communal people committee, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, etc.
4. Villagers will have time to discuss and agree the working plan: activities (details name, number of households, total area, etc.)
=> The final working plan will be submitted to Commune People Committee for approval and will then be a binding agreement between the parties.
5. Starting to work or implement at village level, assigning the work for the members of village group.

References

The following referenced documents are relevant for the application of this document. For references with specific version, only the edition cited applies. For other references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2 *FSC Principles and Criteria*

FSC-STD-01-002 *Glossary of Terms*

FSC-STD-50-001 *Requirements for use of the FSC Trademarks by Certificate Holders*

FSC-STD-60-004 *International Generic Indicators (IGI)*

FSC-PRO-30-002 *Demonstrating the Impact of Forest Stewardship on Ecosystem Services* (field testing draft)

FSC-PRO-60-006 *Development and Transfer of National Forest Stewardship Standards to the FSC Principles and Criteria Version 5-1*

Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this ESCD, the terms and definitions given in FSC-STD-01-002 *Glossary of Terms*, FSC-STD-01-001 *FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship*, and FSC-STD-60-004 *International Generic Indicators* are used.