

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Sustainable forest management certification assessment following FSC FM standard for NTFP and SLIMF to the identified natural forest areas in Nam Dong WPFMB, Nam Dong district, Thua Thien Hue province. The main FSC certified product taken from forest is commercial Rattan species (wood species not included).

Project name:	Strengthening and scaling up responsible sourcing and production of Acacia, Rattan, Bamboo and Acacia by small-scale producers_WWF- Greater Mekong.
Project code:	VCO1-9S077305
Donor code:	6328
Job title:	Sustainable forest management certification assessment following FSC FM standard for NTFP and SLIMF to the identified natural forest areas in Nam Dong WPFMB, Nam Dong district, Thua Thien Hue province. The main FSC certified product taken from forest is commercial Rattan species (wood species not included).
Venue:	Nam Dong Watershed Protection Forest Management Board (WPFMB), Nam Dong district, Thua Thien Hue province, Vietnam.
Expected audit date:	June-July 2017
Key partners:	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Thua Thien Hue Province.
Report to:	WWF's Sustainable Bamboo, Acacia and Rattan Project Manager, R&B component. WWF-Vietnam
Supervision:	Yes

I. Background

1. WWF-Greater Mekong (WWF-GM)

WWF Greater Mekong (WWF-GM) has a long established and well-respected presence here and currently has country offices in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam, along with a Regional team spread across the five countries. In the next five years, WWF-GM will continue leveraging these strong local and regional foundations, while significantly strengthening its partnerships and advocacy efforts. Internal and external partnerships will be crucial across all conservation areas.

WWF-Vietnam, part of WWF-Greater Mekong, is working to conserve the region's biodiversity and build a secure and sustainable future for its people. From 2011 onward, as part of WWF-Greater Mekong, WWF-Vietnam is implementing the following strategies (1) securing landscape integrity and climate change resilience; (2) ensuring sustainable hydropower development; (3) strengthening law enforcement and protected area management; and (4) securing sufficient sustainable and leveraged financing for conservation. To enable these strategic activities, WWF-Vietnam is working across three priority landscapes namely the Southern Annamites, the Mekong Delta and the Central Annamites.

2. WWF-GM Project “Strengthening and scaling up responsible sourcing and production of Acacia, Rattan and Bamboo by small-scale producers” – hereafter called – WWF's Sustainable Bamboo, Acacia and Rattan Project (SBARP).

The SBARP aims at supporting Bamboo, Acacia and Rattan processing sectors in the Greater Mekong Region (Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia) in sustainable development, environmental

improvement as well as contributing to poverty reduction and increasing economic benefit. To achieve its target, SBARP has developed five strategic areas for intervention in 3 years (September 2014 to August 2017), including (1) Improved land use planning practices in the public and private sector; (2) Improved enabling environment for responsible forest management; (3) Improved quality of forest certification systems; (4) Increased area of credible certified or well managed forest; and (5) Strengthened market chain for credible and/or certified forest products.

Under WWF's Sustainable Bamboo, Acacia and Rattan Project (SBARP) work plan, a target of 6,000 ha of natural Rattan forest in the project areas are FSC certified by 2017. This target contributes to the project strategy of improving quality of forest certification systems. Based on project records, results from land use mapping and potential Rattan areas in project provinces, as well as in consultation with functional departments, the natural Rattan forest areas of 6,343.75 ha in Nam Dong WPFMB, Nam Dong district, Thua Thien Hue province has been selected to follow up with project's intervention for this target.

Nam Dong WPFMB is one of the forest owners of which villagers living around its forest are dependent on rattan harvest for local livelihood. The current rattan management practice and harvest does not provide incentive to contribute to better forest protection and conservation. Up to date, the project has provided technical support and capacity building to Nam Dong WPFMB staff & rattan harvest dependent villagers with the followings:

1. Rattan inventory and growth rate study of commercial rattan species
2. Nam Dong WPFMB Sustainable Forest Management Plan (2017-2025) and sustainable rattan harvest plan
3. Rattan harvesters are organised in group and trained on sustainable harvest skills, forest protection and monitoring (FIAT, HCVFs)
4. Rattan stores have been established, store management handbook and legal verification compliance have been trained to harvesters to improve quality and better track rattan getting out of the forest (CoC) based on harvest plan.
5. Biodiversity assessment, Environment Impact assessment, Social Impact assessment, and HCVF assessment.
6. MoU for co-management between harvest group & WPFMB has been consensusly agreed upon e.g. NTPF/rattan volume to be harvest, patrolling mechanism and HCVF monitoring
7. Technical and Administrative Management Handbook, SOPs (Standards Operation Procedures)
8. FSC internal/pre- audit was conducted and gaps have been closed.

An action plan for implementing sustainable forest management certification following FSC FM standard for NTFP and SLIMF to the identified natural forest areas in Nam Dong, in which the main certified product taken from forest is commercial Rattan species (wood species not included) - has been developed and well received the support from local authority of Nam Dong District People's Committee and Thua Thien Hue Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. It is now ready for FSC FM certification assessment.

3. Information for the assignment

- a) Certificate holder entity: Nam Dong Watershed Protection Forest Management Board.
- b) Type of certification: Sustainable forest management certification following FSC FM standard for NTFP and SLIMF for natural forest.

- c) FSC FM certified areas: 6,343.75 ha.
- d) Short description and situation of the forest (localisation, forest type, main stands)
 - See Annex 1: Nam Dong WPFMB's general information.
- e) The main wood species of the forest(s):
 - The main FSC certified product taken from forest is commercial Rattan species (wood species not included).
- f) Number of employees are working for the concerned forest(s)/ forest(s) manager:
 - Currently, total 55 employees are working for Nam Dong WPFMB, including 19 official staffs and 36 contracted employees.
- g) Number of independent and non-divided forest(s):
 - Total 11,302.71 ha forests and forest land of Nam Dong WPFMB are distributed in 12 forest sub-compartments of 378, 379, 392, 393, 394, 396, 399, 400, 401, 403, 407 and 408, **in which the five forest sub-compartments of 379, 392, 393, 394, 396 (6,343.75 ha) are being processed to FSC FM certification with the main FSC certified product taken from forest is commercial Rattan species (wood species not included).**

II. Objective

In contribution to the long term objective of co-forest management linking sustainable local livelihood and conservation, maintaining of wildlife habitat; the assignment will follow FSC FM standard for NTFP and SLIMF to do certification assessment for sustainable forest management of Nam Dong WPFMB's identified natural forest areas. The main FSC certified product taken from forest is commercial Rattan species (wood species not included).

III. Scope of work

The Certification Body (which is accredited by ASI):

- a) Performs the assessment following FSC FM standard for NTFP and SLIMF for identified forest areas of **6,343.75 ha**.
- b) Issues FSC FM certificate which has 5 years valid and upload assessment report as well as certificate holder information on FSC website
- c) Performs surveillance audits every 12 months during 5 years valid of certificate.

IV. Responsibility, required deliverable, and tentative work plan for the recruited Certification Body:

Certification Body proposes for details of work plan, auditing time and FSC audit reports.

V. Minimum qualification & competency requirements

- The Certification Body which is accredited by ASI.

VI. Application

- Interesting CBs submit applications to Mr. Le Van Dong via email: dong.levan@wwfgreatermekong.org and Cc to Mr. Dang Van Viet Phuong via email: phuong.dangvanviet@wwfgreatermekong.org **no later than May 20th, 2017**.

- Applications should include:
 - (i) Proposal includes CVs of team members, copy of business registration.
 - (ii) A concise technical and financial proposal.
 - (iii) A tentative work plan with indicative budget.
- Please kindly be noted that consultant fee, transportation, accommodation and logistics in field required by this first audit will be arranged and covered by project.
- Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any more questions.
- Only short-listed candidates would be contacted. /.

Annex 1: Nam Dong WPFMB's general information

Nam Dong WPFMB was merged from Nam Dong Forest Enterprise and Khe Tre Forest Enterprise in accordance with Decision 2160/ QD-UBND dated 23rd September 2008 of Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee and Department of Agriculture & Rural Development issued Decision No. 825/QĐ-NNPTNT dated 29th October 2008 on defining functions, tasks, powers and organizational structure of Nam Dong WPFMB.

The major functions and tasks of Nam Dong WPFMB are to manage the protection and development of forest capital, exploit non-timber forest products with additional assignments as below:

- To receive investment capital from the State, programs and projects for organizing the implementation of contracting with organizations, households and individuals for protection and development of protection forests.
- Organize production and business on the production forest areas intermingled in the protection forest according to the regulation on management of production forests and to combine business from agricultural and forestry production, exploitation of products from natural and plantation forests and other agricultural and forestry products.
- Organizing the production of seedlings for afforestation and providing seedlings, providing technical support services, linking with economic sectors in the area to protect and develop forests; development of social forestry, exploit and use of forests in accordance with State's regulations.
- To allocate sub-chiefs for forest management according to their sub-zones and organize full-time forest protection forces according to the State's regulations.
- Propagate and educate people in the area to participate in the protection and development of protection forests. To report periodically to the higher level on the status of management, protection, and development of protection forests.

Nam Dong WPFMB main office is located in Khe Tre Town, Nam Dong district, Thua Thien Hue province. Nam Dong WPFMB currently manages 11,302.71 ha of natural forest and forest land, including 4,686.89 ha of production forests (41.5%), 6,517.21 ha of protection forests (57.6%) and 98.61 ha of others (0.9%). This structure is relatively suitable for biodiversity conservation, ecological environmental protection, and forest capacity in providing forest products to local forestry activities in Nam Dong.

The forest areas of Nam Dong WPFMB are located in geographic coordinates between 556,500 to 572,000 North latitude and 1,777,300 to 1,793,000 East longitudes in Nam Dong district. It is in Central Annamites Landscape -where known as Truong Son mountain range in Vietnam, one of the areas that has the highest level of biodiversity both regionally and globally - and close to the Sao La Nature Reserves and Bach Ma National Park in the central of Vietnam (see Annex 2: Nam Dong WPFMB map).

The 11,302.71 ha forests and forest land of Nam Dong WPFMB are distributed in 12 forest sub-compartments, in which the two forest sub-compartments of 378 and 379 (2,577.32 ha) have administrative boundaries with Huong Son commune; the eight forest sub-compartments of 392, 393, 394, 396, 399, 400, 401, and 403 (7,696.71 ha) have administrative boundaries with Thuong Quang commune; and the two forest sub-compartments of 407 and 408 (1,028.68 ha) have administrative boundaries with Thuong Long commune, Nam Dong district.

The 6,517.21 ha of protection forests are distributed in the eight forest sub-compartments of 378, 379, 392, 393, 394, 396, 401, 403 in which the five forest sub-compartments of 379, 392, 393, 394, 396 (6,343.75 ha) are being processed to FSC FM certification with the main FSC certified product taken from forest is commercial Rattan species (wood species not included).

Table 1: Forest land status, forest resources distributed by sub-compartments in 3 types of forest.

Sub-compartment ents	Total areas (ha)	Forest areas (ha)							Open forest land planned for forestry
		Total forest areas	Natural wood forest					Plantat ion	
			Rich forest	Average forest	Poor forest	Restorati on forest	Mixed forest bamboo, wood		
1. Protection forest									
378	1,011.32	1,005.07		4.54	69.74	645.84	181.66	103.29	6.25
379	883.95	882.15		22.72	29.11	683.42	146.90		1.80
392	432.17	413.72		115.05	0.93	244.49	53.25		18.45
393	614.01	574.51			526.67	47.84			39.50
394	1,545.19	1,541.49		716.68	12.84	792.55	19.42		3.70
396	1,750.54	1,545.19	181.11	82.92	697.56	583.6			205.35
401	151.73	149.32		81.67		14.08	53.57		2.41
403	128.30	125.58		87.85	36.17	1.29	0.27		2.72
Sub. total:	6,517.21	6,237.03	181.11	1,111.43	1,373.02	3,013.11	455.07	103.29	280.18
2. Production forest									
378	343.42	285.91			35.03	108.38	114.69	27.81	57.51
379	312.52	245.60		0.12	35.54	89.01	74.15	46.78	66.92
393	805.03	805.03		242.81	520.22	42			
399	929.35	929.35	129.46	596.67	203.22				
400	1,077.01	1,077.01		563.36	513.65				
401	191.01	186.36		27.56	54.78	18.41	84.73	0.88	4.65
407	602.35	508.19		301.59	54.95	126.56	20.69	4.4	94.16
408	426.20	412.51	2.85	345.68	11.73	39.61	6.48	6.16	13.69
Sub. total:	4,686.89	4,449.96	132.31	2,077.79	1,429.12	423.97	300.74	86.03	236.93
3. Other	98.61	97.90			0.14	1.98	95.62	0.13	0.74
Total:	11,302.71	10,784.89	313.42	3,189.22	2,802.28	3,439.06	851.43	189.45	517.85

(Source: National forest inventory 2016)

These protection forest sub-compartments play important roles in maintaining water source for surrounding communities and city dwellers of Hue city, central Vietnam. In addition, the recent assessment of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) in Nam Dong WPFMB recognizes its high importance in providing natural services and wildlife habitat.

Total population in the 3 buffer zone communes of Nam Dong WPFMB is 6,219 people in which ethnic minorities account for 84% with relatively low living standard condition, living on forest resources, and high poverty rate. (see Table 2).

Under Sustainable Forest Management Plan 2017-2025 of Nam Dong WPFMB which is approved in accordance with Decision 130/QĐ-SNNPTNT dated March 15th, 2017 of Thua Thien Hue DARD, the key forestry activities to be focused by Nam Dong WPFMB during 2017-2025 such as forest protection, natural forest regeneration, forest enrichment with native species, Sustainable NTPF/Rattan harvesting, Rattan enrichment, PFES, Infrastructure for production and livelihood, etc.

Table 2: Social economic condition of communities living around Nam Dong WPFMB

Commune	Number of households	Population			Labour			Average cultivated land per household (ha/hh)			Average income (1,000 VND/hh)			Forest product demand in year (m ³ /hh; ton/hh)		
		Total	Kinh	Others	Total	Male	Female	Total	Agriculture	Forestry	Total	Agriculture	Forestry	Timber	Firewood	Others
Huong Son	340	1,430	-	1,430	1,430	707	723	1.7	0.5	1.2	47.5	35	12.5	1.6	4	0.54
Thuong Long	629	2,685	91	2,594	1,862	929	933	1.3	0.7	0.6	53.3	46	7.3	1.0	5	0.6
Thuong Quang	510	2,104	933	1,171	1,021	506	515	4.21	1.41	2.8	21.2	15.5	5.7	1.3	5	0.5
TOTAL:	1,479	6,219	1,024	5,195	4,313	2,142	2,171									

In addition, under Sustainable Forest Management Plan 2017-2025 and Rattan FSC FM certification preparation implementation in Nam Dong, Nam Dong WPFMB currently initiates the model of co-management with local Rattan harvesters for sustainable forest management in linking with wise livelihood improvement. This approach has been discussed with provincial, district and local authorities during implementation process. Meetings with local commune people committee (CPCs), village heads, forest rangers and local Rattan harvesters have been made to select the pilot groups of local Rattan harvesters to contract with Nam Dong WPFMB for forest protection and Rattan harvesting followed sustainable Rattan harvest plan which is approved by Thua Thien Hue DARD. Two pilot forest protection and Rattan harvest groups in two communes of Huong Son and Thuong Quang (buffer zone of Nam Dong WPFMB) have been formed under local authorization. Following criteria for group member selection and consultation with local village's heads, and CPCs, there are 10 Rattan harvesters have been selected to form into one pilot group; these are local villagers who are living dependently on Rattan harvesting activities and volunteer to join the group. Accordingly, two formal groups in 2 communes of Huong Son and Thuong Quang have signed contract with Nam Dong WPFMB on forest protection and Rattan harvesting. Within this contract, one clear and detail mechanism of benefit sharing between Nam Dong WPFMB and the two groups has been discussed, agreed and signed by relevant parties. As noted in the signed contract and benefit mechanism, groups get benefits from harvesting Rattan and other NTFPs followed sustainable management, monthly allowance from government payment on forest environment service. On the other hand, they take responsibility of Rattan harvesting under sustainable approach as trained, support Nam Dong WPFMB in forest patrolling and monitor forest changes by using simple tools (forest integrity assessment tool (FIAT) that trained from WWF project as well as monitoring high conservation value forest (HCVFs) in defined project areas.

Annex 2: Nam Dong WPFMB map

