

WP2 - MISSION REPORT CTNP & BDNB

1 CAT TIEN

1.1 Feedback meeting on SFMP Draft CTNP

In this meeting, representatives from the UNIQUE team, SubFIPI and CTNP participated to discuss feedback and directions for finalization. The below points were discussed jointly:

General structure

- The plan is very complete and very detailed. However a bit hard to follow at times. It seems like topics are mixed and repeated under different sections. For instance, biodiversity monitoring is laid out under the HCV chapter, and later again under the monitoring chapter, but without getting more specific.
- It would be particularly good to cluster the existing information on biodiversity and forest types into “ecosystem or forest strata” and mention where which measures are important. There is a lot of information, but it is lacking a bit of systematization/visualization and cross-referencing at times. It would be helpful to use more graphs, tables and maps.
- In general, it is quite long and has too much text. Would be good to try to synthesize more and be more poignant on the most important goals and activities.
- Stronger mainstreaming of international PA Mgmt. practices and requirements for certification required (Greenlist, Ramsar & ASEAN Heritage parks)
 - Climate change impacts & approaches to reduce vulnerability/improve resilience
 - Key values of the park and main threats to these
 - Governance & participatory approaches

Participation

Several participatory approaches¹ are outlines but lacking details or concrete ideas for implementation:

- Budgeting and actual content/ modes of implementation of the models is still unclear – this feedback was also received from the community consultations.
- The current SFMP outlines a “co-management” approach rather prominently, while it’s content reads rather like forest protection contracts. In addition the proposal for a co-management approach disregards the critical discourse on national level about co-management (with a decree being stuck in approval since years due to national level concerns) and might hinder approval procedures

¹ As described in the chapter “Supporting services for communities”

- It was noted, that FIPI does not have the detailed knowledge & information for this, but needs more input from Cat Tien NP on their actual vision & expectations on implementing participatory approaches. Some discussed options include, but are not limited to:
 - Set-up of management board to manage village funds
 - Use agreements (grazing areas) by maximizing available bare lands and supporting usability (grass planting?)
 - Preservation of traditional knowledge (Facilitate/support market access for traditional textile)
- Under the Chapter of Forest Development and Protection, it is mentioned that the National Park coordinates an annual conference with stakeholders to review and update coordination regulations and summarize implementation results and lessons learned. It would be good to understand who these stakeholders are, and see if this can be supported to further deepen the participatory approach.

HCV

- Regarding HCV, the Chapter focuses solely on biodiversity, and does not really identify HCVs. A more detailed HCV approach was proposed to identify values that need special attention according to the 6 HCV criteria.
 - For instance, if there is already a particular species identified that is monitored, or a particular community that depends specifically on certain resource. In that case, the chapter could quickly identify these and layout the management to protect these. Lots of this information has been noted in other parts of the SFMP, and would simply need to be referenced in the HCV section according to the 6 HCV criteria – as an additional step this would help to better identify threats to the park, which have been not laid out prominently thus far
 - Initial feedback related to national level guidance, noting that HCV is not required for SUFs, hence this would only be addressed given available time and budget

Forest and biodiversity monitoring

- Some very specific monitoring approaches for biodiversity (a point-based system), and forest development (the establishment of 4-ha plots) are mentioned. However, it is not exactly clear which questions want to be clarified through monitoring e.g. On what basis are these specific measures planned on?
 - Furthermore the monitoring system stays rather unspecific in terms of implementation (i.e. size of proposed sample plots, locations, stratification, correlation to National Forest Inventory)

Finalization support

- Support/guidance to mainstream key issues of PA Mgmt. Certification:
 - Mainstreaming climate change aspects into the SFMP
 - Impacts of CC & relevance of proposed measures for adaptation/mitigation
 - Support to better point put theory of change
 - Better pointing out already identified main values & threats to these
 - Relevance of proposed measures to maintain/improve values and address threats
- Inputs for the integration of local knowledge (consultation feedback) and streamlining participatory approaches
- Propose a more detailed M&E approach for integration (*has been submitted by now*)
- Support in stakeholder consultations (23.11.2020)
 - SubFIPI will finalize the SFMP in the week after these consultations
- Note that our support does **not** end with FIPIs contractually agreed submission of a draft SFMP, but rather that further mainstreaming of the above points is relevant after FIPIs final draft submission
- Future support on setting up a data management/storage approach has been discussed, details to be followed up on and detailed during upcoming training

Other

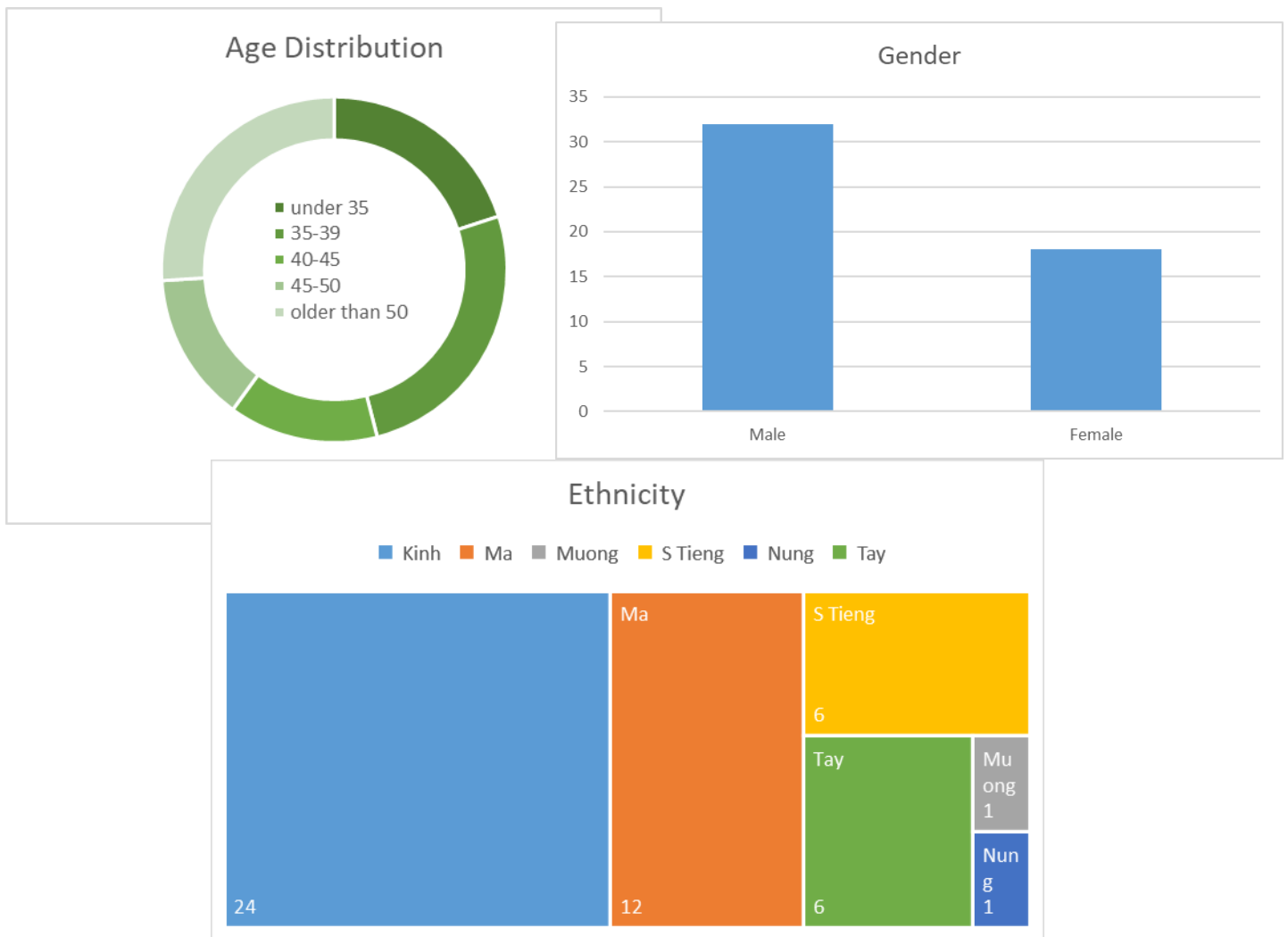
- Final approval of the SFMP through VNFOREST still uncertain, as:
 - This could depend on the (unclear) approval for area extension, which requires PM approval via integration into Forestry Master Plan
 - MARD unclear on approval process (provincial approval might be sufficient as land belongs to provinces) – informal agreement available. Remaining key issues in approval process:
 - Compensation required for 100+ ha community land – no one wants to create conflicts (level of compensation) and pay for it
 - SFC still owns 218ha in the center of the area (close to elephant breeding grounds) and refuses to give it up
 - If approval poses a challenge, extension area to be taken out of the SFMP
- Intense cooperation between FIPI & UNIQUE agreed for finalization
- Cat Tien to further revise SFMP after receiving final version from FIPI, UNIQUE/GIZ support to continue beyond FIPI contract
- Lack of ownership observed from Cat Tien
 - Inst. Stakeholder WS forgotten, now timing doesn't fit
 - Limited feedback on SFMP and guidance/inputs to FIPI
 - Lack of sharing vision or expected measures

1.2 Community Consultations CTNP

Overview

In total the consultations had 53 participants of 6 ethnic groups from 11 different communes of all three provinces of Cat Tien NP (visualization see below). In addition, 1 local forest ranger from each of the respective communes was present. Forest rangers received a half day introduction prior to the consultation event. During this half day, the following aspects were deepened:

- Introduction & approach to participatory mapping (carried out jointly with rangers)
- General approach towards community consultations
- Initial inputs and views on relevant topics from forest rangers.



Furthermore, representatives from Cat Tien NP and Sub-FIPI were present, the latter presenting community relevant aspects for the SFMP in order to receive feedback for further improvement.

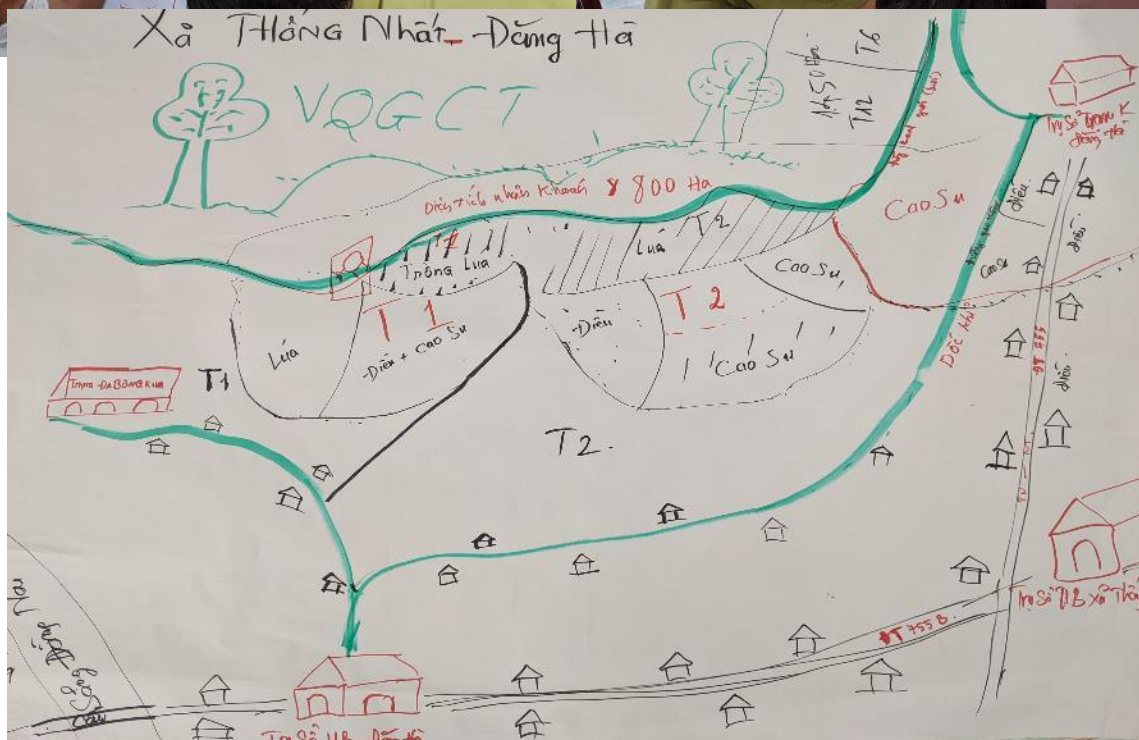
Key takeaways

- Connection of ES provision from the Park on livelihoods (particularly water for agriculture) can be improved
- Informal arrangements/agreements on use (& access) of NTFPs and sacred sites in CTNP
NTFP use seems to be mainly informal
 - Both communities & forest rangers agree that the current situation works, but could result in future issues
 - Both sides consider formalization of access in use agreements as a suitable option, noting that such agreements would need to be set up jointly in order to address potential issues
- Forest Protection (FP) Contracts
 - Feedback from communities was twofold:
 - FP Contracts are appreciated as additional income to existing livelihood, but it is noted that current limitations (rates/ha and max size/household) in return limit the financial benefits
 - Due to this, first households decline involvement in Forest Protection Contracts, as they consider the financial gains as limited compared to other income options (intensive agricultural practices, hired/factory labor where available)
 - CTNP intends to increase FP Contract coverage, feedback on this was limited as most households in the meeting already had the allotted maximum of 30ha/household
- Land allocation
 - Several community representatives noted, that with the establishment of Cat Tien NP, they lost areas of their traditionally used land without ever having received any compensation in terms of new land for use
 - Land Allocation of currently unused plots or neighboring areas without current ownership as a form of compensation for the loss of traditional areas was of high priority.
 - At the same time it was acknowledged that this is not within the ability of CTNP itself but the responsibility of the respective provincial authorities
- Use of local knowledge
 - In the frame of presenting proposed SFMP measures, community representatives fed back that certain approaches on forest restoration (planting), forest fire prevention and pest/invasive species control were not entirely appropriate in terms of timing of interventions or intervention approach (i.e. species selection)
 - It was jointly agreed that for the future implementation planning (and hotspot mapping) of such interventions, inputs from local knowledge should be better considered
- Human wildlife conflicts
 - Community representatives noted human/wildlife conflicts with mainly elephants and gaurs feeding on agricultural produce owned by communities. They have limited technical & financial capacities and are lacking legal grounds (due to the animals protection status) to address this appropriately.

Organization takeaways

- Consider that everyone has smartphones nowadays (observed use of google earth during village mapping)
- Point out rules even clearer (some trained facilitators simply shared their guiding questions with the group, rather than facilitating the mapping process)
- Don't ask, but rather request forest rangers to come without uniforms to keep the event more informal
- Consider reducing the role of local consultants input on SFMP measures
 - Too formal/inadequate presentation
 - More efficient on local consultants budgets if they only prepare key content presented by us, rather than traveling to the site and presenting as well
 - If participating in person, local consultant team would need to be stronger included in the organization of such events

Impressions



2 BIDOUP NUI BA

In Bidoup Nui Ba NP a half-day meeting was held with the parks' director and relevant staff involved in SFMP Development, summary of key discussion points as below:

Overall timeline

- BDNB has submitted SFMP Development outline 20.01.2019 for the first time
- While outline has been approved, budget approval is still pending (expected in Nov.)
 - Provincial level decisions pending on:
 - Responsibilities (as budget would be under Dpt. Of Finance rather than DARD)
 - Budget sources (use of PFES funds for all SFMPs in Lam Dong, but impacts on PFES distribution are unclear)
- Expected submission of SFMP to PPC for approval by June 2021

Key discussion points

- PPC assessing budget availability and refuses to allocate additional funds [as per interpretation/requirement of Circ. 28] to forest owners, but rather requests all forest owners to work with existing data and available budget + own staff
 - Hence, certain activities & information needs have not been budgeted.
- Budget
 - (likely) approved: 2.5bn VND
 - Additional budget required in order to fulfill every Circular 28 requirement: 3.6bn VND
- Our support can provide support (guidance & backstopping) to
 - Socio-Economic Survey / Social Impact Assessment
 - SFMP Feasibility Assessment of criteria
 - Environmental Impact Assessment
- Ecotourism development
 - BDNB ave already been approached by potential developers – need documentation (profile/information/advertisement, hence looking for additional support on this topic)
- General impression
 - The park has high (unrealistic) expectations or needs for additional support; while being seemingly intransparent about other ongoing support (i.e. upcoming USAID BioDiv project, the soon ending JICA project or discussions with USAID VFD on potential support)
 - The case for working with data gaps and available data (and identifying information priorities to be addressed during SFMP implementation) as heard but disregarded
 - An additional in-depth meeting will be required in order to advise further on SFMP development, the upcoming SFMP training should serve as a foundation for this, further strengthening an understanding on compromising data needs with budget constraints