



PEOPLE AND NATURE RECONCILIATION

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Project document

5000 seedlings for ethnic women to restore forests

Deforestation and forest degradation in the mountainous areas of Northwest Vietnam are increasing at an alarming rate due to illegal logging, overexploitation of forests as well as impacts from climate change. This leads to negative effects especially on the lives and livelihoods of ethnic minority women living in these areas.

Van Ho district (Son La province) has large areas of natural forest rich in biodiversity, especially in Xuan Nha Nature Reserve (XNNR). The area is home of Thai, H'Mong and Muong ethnic minorities whose livelihood traditionally bases on forest resources. The increasing population and outdated slash and burn practices lead to considerable forest degradation and turned many forests into bare land. Therefore, restoration of natural forests in the area is important for the conservation of both, nature and livelihoods. Due to deforestation and forest degradation it is more and more hard for the women to find firewood which they need for cooking or medicinal plants they use when family members get sick. Forest products supplementing their meals are more difficult to find as well as fodder for their animals. The forest supplies them with clean water, allows farming, protects the steep slopes from erosion and regulates the micro climate of the region. All these important functions are at stake!

We believe that a bottom-up movement coming from the villagers is needed to effectively tackle this problem. We want to enable these ethnic minority women to replant the lost forests around their villages which will have a sustainable positive impact on their living environment. Women in ethnic communities are vulnerable to the impacts of deforestation, but they can also be the main change agent for improving the situation. Based on local peoples' knowledge on land, trees and forests, we want to support ethnic minority women in Xuan Nha Commune, Van Ho district, Son La province of Vietnam, to replant destroyed forest around their villages. In a tested approach the women will learn how to collect seeds from indigenous trees from natural forest and produce seedlings in a local nursery. Further they will be taught how to plant the multipurpose trees and take care of the newly established forest.

Apart from restoring the environment around the villages we also expect that after less than a decade the women will profit from their new forests in collecting non-timber forest products (NTFP). We also intend to replicate this small-scale model to form a local forest restoration movement as well as to provide a best practice example for other degraded forest areas. Lessons learnt will not only be shared and examined with local stakeholders but also with Tay Bac University in Son La, with which we have a long-standing cooperation and who can further spread the model.

Since 2010 PanNature has implemented biodiversity conservation and community development projects in Van Ho and Moc Chau (Son La province). At present PanNature maintains a field office and a plant nursery in Van Ho district from which research activities for promoting local forest genetic resources are implemented.

Activities and expected results

No.	Activity	Expected result
1	Seedling production Together with Xuan Nha women's union members, seedlings from natural forest are collected and propagated for forest restoration	About 1700 seedlings of indigenous multipurpose trees and 3300 seedlings of NTFP plants are produced which will be designed for 3 ha forest plantation.
2	Training women on forest restoration Train the ethnic women on nursery techniques, forest plantation and restoration	Group of 10 women trained in the subjects
3	Establishment of restoration forest Planting multipurpose trees and NTFP plants on bare forest land for restoration	3 ha of forest planted by using trees and NTFP plants. Survival rate more than 90%.
4	Management and protection of planted forest Regular care and protection of planted forest	3 ha of forest protected and grow for the first year

Estimated Budget

No.	Description	Amount [USD]
1	Seedling preparation	1.000
2	Training on nursery and forest restoration	850
3	Establishment of restoration forest	1.800
4	Tending and protection of restoration forest for the first year	850
5	Project management costs	500
	TOTAL	5.000