

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Title: International Consultant for consultancy services to support development of guidance on methodology and application for NCA with special emphasis on Ocean accounting and development of a set of indicators for monitoring the blue economy

Expected starting date	:	May 2026
Direct Supervisor	:	National Project Director
Location	:	Ha Noi and Quang Ninh
Number of Consultants	:	01 International consultant, 75 days
Project Title	:	Mainstreaming Marine and Coastal Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting into Viet Nam's Development Planning for Blue Economic Growth of Key Sectors
Duration and timing	:	4 months

1. Background

Institute of Strategy and Policy on Agriculture and Environment (ISPAE) is implementing a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project entitled “*Mainstreaming Marine and Coastal Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting into Viet Nam’s Development Planning for Blue Economic Growth of Key Sectors*” (NCA) over a period from 2024 to 2026. The overall project objective is to “*integrate natural capital values and protection of coastal and marine ecosystems in development planning and improved landscape management as part of the national blue economic growth policy in Viet Nam*”. Three outcomes and eleven outputs are identified in the project:

Component 1: Setting up the national institutional system, data and monitoring for application of natural capital accounting (NCA) for a sustainable blue economy in Viet Nam.

Component 2: Integration of marine and coastal natural capital accounting into provincial and local development planning and operations in Quang Ninh Province.

Component 3: Outreach and knowledge management for national uptake.

Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) is an essential tool for understanding the value of natural resources and ecosystem services, enabling policymakers to incorporate environmental assets into national accounts and planning frameworks. It supports evidence-based policy making for sustainable development by recognizing the value of natural capital. Ocean accounting, a specialized component of NCA, applies the UN System of Environmental-Economic Accounting – Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA) and SEEA Central Framework (CF) to marine and coastal ecosystems, aiming to track the condition, services, and economic contributions of ocean assets.

In Viet Nam, growing attention has been paid to the blue economy and the sustainable management of marine resources. Initiatives led by the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) have laid the groundwork for advancing NCA and ocean accounting. The recently issued Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting (GOAP, 2021) and SEEA guidelines provide methodological frameworks that can be contextualized for Viet Nam's national circumstances and data systems.

In the implementation of Component 1, the Institute of Strategy and Policy on Agriculture and Environment (ISPAE) seeks to build on these efforts by developing national guidance on

methodology and application for NCA, with a particular emphasis on ocean accounting, to support integration into planning and policy development.

2. Objective of the Assignment

The main objective of this assignment is to support the development of technical guidance on methodology and application for Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) in Viet Nam and development of a set of indicators for monitoring the blue economy which will be in line with international standards (SEEA, GOAP) and tailored to the national context and ongoing initiatives.

3. Scope of Work

The International consultant will work with national consultant teams to perform the following tasks:

1. *Support development of guidance on methodology and application for NCA with special emphasis on Ocean accounting*

- Review relevant international guidelines including the SEEA CF, SEEA EA, and GOAP's Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting.
- In consultation with national consultant, develop the outline of the methodological guidance tailored to Viet Nam's context for conducting NCA, focusing on:
 - o Ecosystem extent and condition accounting for marine and coastal systems
 - o Ecosystem services valuation
 - o Integration of NCA into national accounts and planning processes
- Outline application procedures, data requirements, institutional roles, and use cases.
- Develop the Draft Guidance on NCA
- Finalize the Guidance taking in to account inputs from different stakeholders

2. *Development of a set of indicators for monitoring the blue economy*

- Examine international and regional best practices (i.e. OECD, WB, Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP), etc.) on developing statistical indicators related to the blue economy and their use in SDG monitoring.
- Analyze the structure, scope, and methodologies used in Viet Nam's national accounting system and assess its capacity to reflect SDG-related data, particularly for natural resources and environmental sustainability.
- Work with the national consultant to develop a set of recommended indicators (including disaggregated ones, if appropriate) to monitor progress towards SDGs, with a focus on those reflecting the blue economy and sustainable development priorities.
- Develop the report on set of indicators for monitoring the blue economy

Participate in stakeholder engagement activities (e.g., workshops, seminars, multimedia sessions).

4. Deliverables

The Consultant will deliver the following outputs:

Deliverable	Description	Timeline
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Inception Report	Work plan and preliminary literature/stakeholder review	May 2026
Draft Guidance Document methodology and application for NCA with special emphasis on Ocean accounting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidance Document of NCA methodology and application guidance with a focus on ocean accounting, focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ecosystem extent and condition accounting for marine and coastal systems o Ecosystem services valuation o Integration of NCA into national accounts and planning processes 	July 2026
Draft report on set of indicators for monitoring the blue economy	<p>Draft report with main contents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International experiences with Blue Economy indicators - Review of Viet Nam's accounting and statistical systems and SDG indicators - List and explanation of recommended indicators and integration approach 	July 2026
Stakeholder Consultation Report	Summary of stakeholder inputs and revisions made	August 2026
Final Guidance Document	Finalized guidance document, incorporating feedback	September 2026
Presentation and Training Materials	Summary slide deck and materials for briefing or capacity building	September 2026

5. Qualifications and Experience

- Advanced degree in environmental economics, marine science, natural resource management, or related field.
- At least 7 years of experience in leadership and technical coordination in the fields of environmental-economic accounting, ecosystem services assessment, or natural resource management.
- Strong understanding of SEEA and/or ocean accounting frameworks.
- Experience/knowledge on environmental indicators
- Experience working with government agencies or international organizations in Viet Nam is desirable.
- Excellent skills in strategic thinking, writing, and facilitation skills.

6. Scoring criteria

No.	Criteria	Weighted score	Point				
			Excellent	Good	Decent	Qualified	Unqualified
1	Academic level	20	20	18	15	10	0
	Master's degree (or higher) in Environmental Economics, Marine Science, or Natural Resource Management		Doctoral degree (or higher) in Environmental Economics, Marine Science, or Natural Resource Management	Master's degree in Environmental Economics, Marine Science, or Natural Resource Management	Master's degree in Economics or Environmental fields.	Master's degree in a related field	Below a Master's degree or a Master's degree in an unrelated field
	<i>Score</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>0</i>
2	Work experience	60	60	50	30	20	10
	At least 07 years of relevant professional experience in leading and coordinating technical work in the fields of environmental-economic accounting, ecosystem service assessment, or marine resource management.		Master's degree with 10+ years of relevant experience / PhD with at least 5 years of experience	Master's degree with 8+ years of relevant experience / PhD with at least 3 years of experience	Master's degree with 5+ years of relevant experience / PhD with at least 2 years of experience	Master's degree with 3+ years of relevant experience / PhD with at least 1 year of experience	Master's degree with 2 years of experience or less
	<i>Score</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>10</i>
3	Other experience	20	20	15	10	5	0

	Strong understanding of the SEEA framework and/or ocean accounting, along with experience or knowledge of environmental indicators, and prior experience working with government agencies or international organizations in Vietnam, will be considered an advantage		<5 studies/research projects on topics related to marine economy, the Natural Capital Accounting framework, environmental indicators, or similar systems conducted by government agencies.	4-5 studies/research projects on topics related to marine economy, the Natural Capital Accounting framework, environmental indicators, or similar systems conducted by government agencies.	3 studies/research projects on topics related to marine economy, the Natural Capital Accounting framework, environmental indicators, or similar systems conducted by government agencies.	1-2 studies/research projects on topics related to marine economy, the Natural Capital Accounting framework, environmental indicators, or similar systems conducted by government agencies.	No experience
	<i>Score</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0</i>
4	Kết quả	100	100	83	55	35	10
5	Kết luận						

- Minimum score to meet the criteria: ≥ 70 point.
- Note: Consultants with at least 01 month but less than 01 year of experience will have their experience rounded up to 01 year. Consultants with remaining months of experience of 06 months or more will have an additional year counted, while remaining months of less than 6 months will not be counted as an additional year of experience.