VIET NAM

OECMs IN MARINE AND COASTAL AREAS

Understanding and Accelerating Actions on OECMs in the Marine and Coastal Areas of East Asian Seas

Iloilo City, The Philippines
14 - 16 August, 2025

UN environment programme
COBSEA
COORDINATING BODY ON THE SEAS OF EAST ASIA
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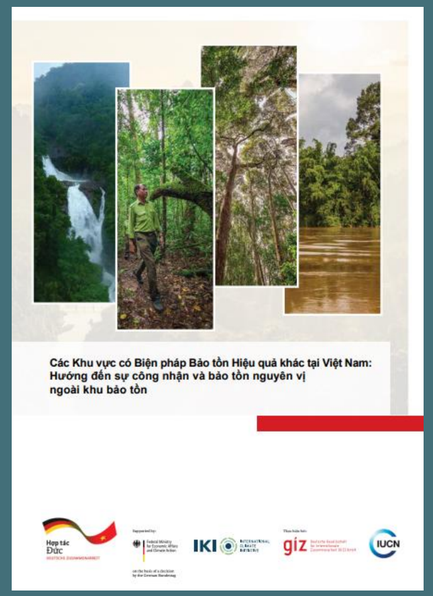


NATIONAL/LOCALIZED DEFINITION & CRITERIA AND EXISTING/INITIALLY IDENTIFIED/REPORTED OECMS IN THE M&C AREAS

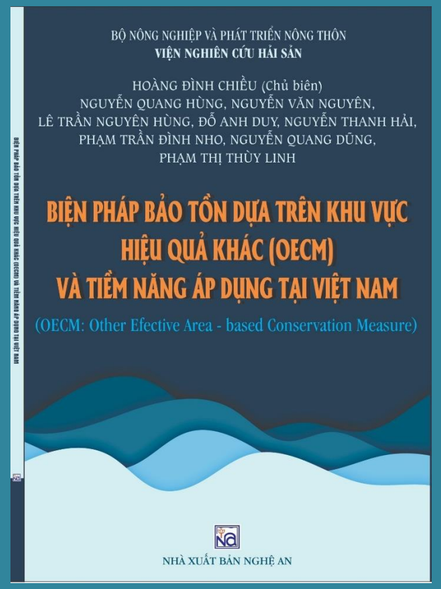
- **Definition:** In Vietnam, OECMs are understood as other effective area-based conservation measures, which are outside the formal protected area system but still contribute actively to biodiversity conservation.
- **Criteria:** Vietnam does not have official criteria, but can refer to international guidelines (IUCN, CBD, which include 4 groups of criteria) to identify areas with clear boundaries, effective management, and sustainable conservation outcomes.
- **Potential OECMs in marine and coastal areas:** Community-managed areas, fishery resource protection zones, seasonal no-take zones, artificial reef zones, and sustainable aquaculture areas.

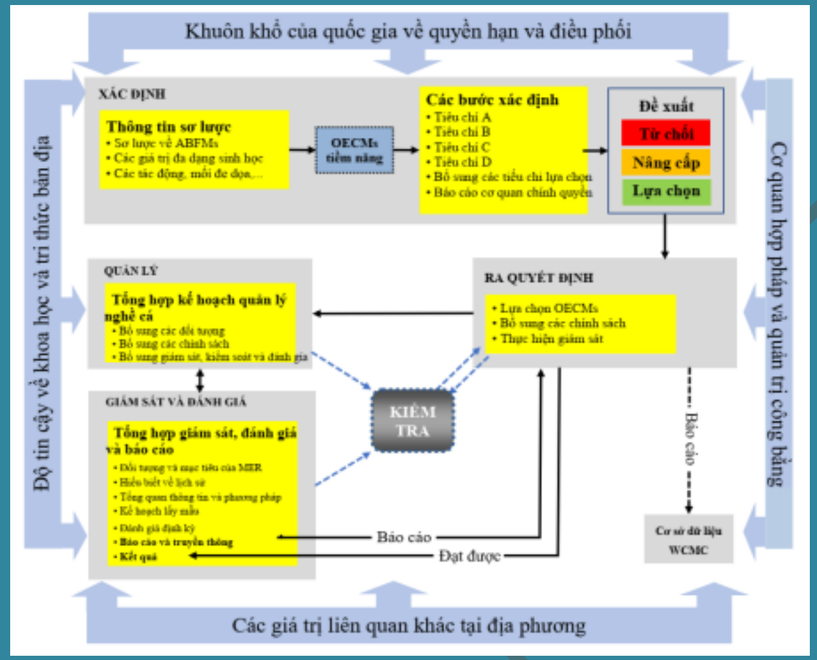
INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS & GOVERNANCE CONCERNS: WHICH AGENCIES ARE WORKING ON OECMS? ARE THE ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY, AND FISHERIES OFFICES WORKING TOGETHER? AT THE SITE LEVEL, WHAT KIND OF MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS ARE IN PLACE?

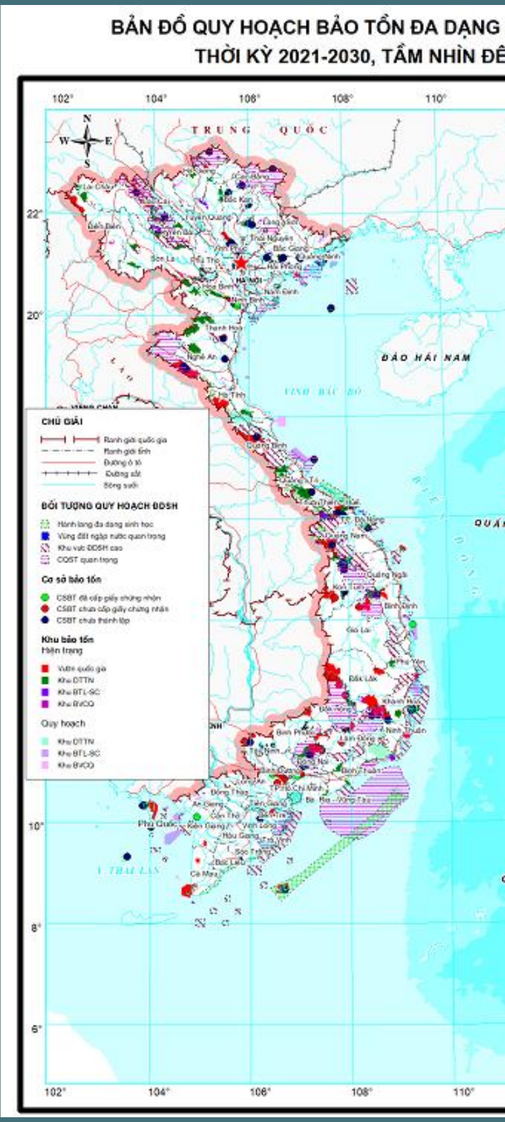
- **Implementing Agencies:** Before March 2025, general conservation and biodiversity management was assigned to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, while specialized management of marine conservation, forest animal and plant conservation was assigned to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Currently, the management of protected areas and biodiversity has been centralized under the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment and decentralized to local agencies.
- **Coordination:** Previously, coordination between agencies was limited. Now, with environment, biodiversity, marine and island, fisheries, and forestry management all under the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, coordination has become more integrated.
- **Site-level Management:** Similar to the central level, at the provincial level, general management is assigned to the Department of Agriculture and Environment. At the commune level, management is primarily community-based with the participation of local authorities.

NATIONAL STRATEGY AND/OR PROCESS FOR RECOGNIZING OECMS

- **National Strategy:** A draft National Strategy on OECMs for Vietnam has been developed but has not been officially issued yet.
- **Recognition Process:** There is no official recognition process in place. However, several guiding documents have been issued that include a recognition process.



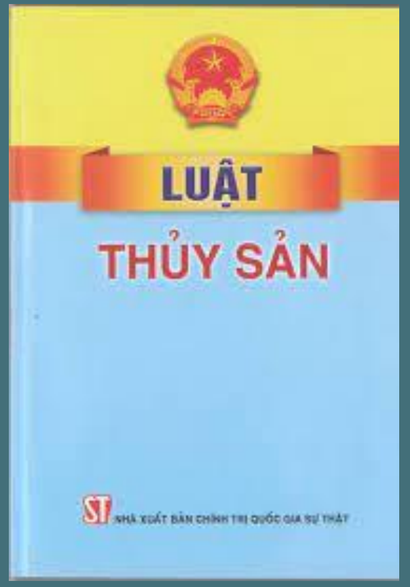


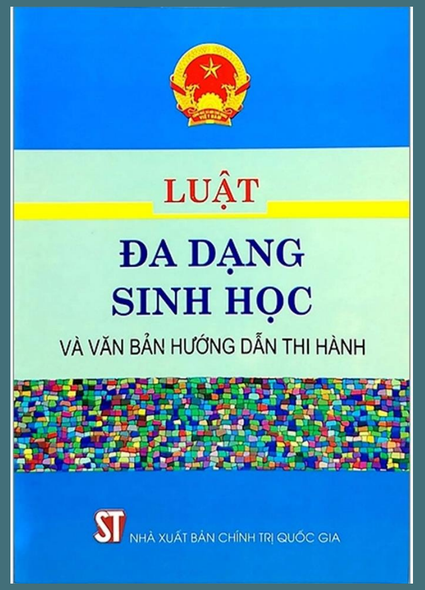


LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK (EXISTING/PLANNED, GENERAL/DEDICATED), INCLUSION/INTEGRATION WITH THE NBSAP, IF

- **Legal Framework:** There is no dedicated legal document on OECMs in marine and coastal areas. Relevant regulations for potential OECM areas are scattered across the Biodiversity Law and the Fisheries Law. Currently, the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment has planned to amend and supplement regulations in these laws, including provisions on OECMs.
- **Integration:** OECM orientations are integrated into:

- The National Biodiversity Strategy to 2030, vision to 2050 (Decision 149/QD-TTg dated 28/1/2022).
- The scheme to expand the area of marine protected areas to ensure they reach 6% of Vietnam's marine area (Decision 1539/QD-TTg dated 10/12/2024).





KEY ACTIVITIES RELATING TO OECMS IN THE MARINE AND COASTAL AREAS IN THE PAST 3-5 YEARS, IF ANY

Surveying and assessing fishery resources, biodiversity, and ecosystems to plan for the protection and exploitation of fishery resources, which includes identifying potential areas for effective conservation.

Promoting co-management models for protecting fishery resources in various localities. Currently, there are 71 co-management organizations in 14 out of 34 provinces and cities. Some localities with effective co-management models include Ha Tinh, Quang Tri, and Binh Thuan (Dak Lak).

Organizing workshops to provide feedback on the National Strategy, discuss the potential for forming OECMs in Vietnam, and provide training on the criteria and recognition process for OECMs according to international guidelines.

- Developing a guiding document on how to identify, manage, and report on OECMs according to international standards (IUCN).
- The "Mekong Delta Coastal Ecosystems Protection" (MDC) project (IUCN and DFISH).

KEY ACTIVITIES RELATING TO OECMS IN THE MARINE AND COASTAL AREAS IN THE PAST 3-5 YEARS, IF ANY

Issuing the National Biodiversity Plan (2021-2030), which includes marine and coastal areas, specifically: 3 biodiversity corridors; 10 important ecological landscapes, 8 high-biodiversity areas, 3 important ecological landscape areas; 2 nationally important wetlands. These areas all have great potential to be recognized as OECMs.

Issuing the Scheme to expand the area of marine protected areas to ensure they reach 6% of Vietnam's marine area (Decision 1539/QD-TTg dated 10/12/2024), which includes the goal of “Establishing OECM areas to reach about 1.534% of Vietnam's natural marine area.”

Issuing the Plan for the Protection and Exploitation of Fishery Resources for the 2021-2030 period, which identifies 27 marine protected areas, 59 fishery resource protection zones in marine areas, 63 seasonal no-take zones in marine and coastal areas, and 27 artificial reef zones. These are all potential areas to be identified as OECMs.

PROSPECTS AND FUTURE PLANS

PROSPECTS

Fulfilling International Commitments: Recognizing OECMs will help Vietnam achieve the goals of the Global Biodiversity Framework, especially the target of conserving 30% of land and marine areas by 2030 (the 30x30 target).

Enhancing Community Role: OECMs create opportunities for local communities to play a more active role in conservation, bringing economic and social benefits.

Expanding the Conservation Network: This helps expand the conservation area beyond formal protected areas, covering more important ecosystems.

PROSPECTS AND FUTURE PLANS

FUTURE PLANS

- Develop dedicated legal documents and policies on OECMs.
- Establish clear national criteria and a recognition process for OECMs.
- Develop a National Strategy on OECMs and integrate them into the socio-economic development strategies and plans of various sectors and localities.
- Continue implementing pilot models to synthesize lessons learned and scale them up nationwide.
- Continue implementing the Scheme to expand the area of marine protected areas to ensure they reach 6% of Vietnam's marine area, to realize the OECM proportion already included in the target.

THANK YOU

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