

Terms of Reference for Project Verification

For evaluation against the Plan Vivo Standard (v. 12/2013)

Tahiry Honko Mangrove Carbon Project Verification Report

V3

10/02/2025

Team :

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Fact sheet for quality control

- Name of the project : Tahiry Honko Mangrove Carbon Project
- Title of the report : Verification Report – V3

■ Insuco

- Coordination Unit/Office : Insuco Madagascar
- Stakeholders and their role in the project :
 - Project Director : Clément Beaudouin
 - Expert : Andrianina Lydia RAKOTOSOA

■ Quality

Role	Name	Post
Proofreader	Adrian Levrel	Insuco Country Director
Proofreader 2	Clément Beaudouin	Insuco Project Manager

Name of Verifier(s)	Date of Review
PV Approval	Elena Llorente July 2024 to February 2025
Audit Team Member(s)	Andrianina Lydia RAKOTOSOA 22 July 2024 to 26 July 2024 (field visit)
Internal Verification Code	Microscale process with an Independent Expert
Standard Version	Plan Vivo Standard 2013
Plan Vivo Certificates (PVC) issued (ex-ante)	0
• Of which have been converted to ex-post	
Buffer Certificates	0

Project Description

The Tahiry Honko Carbon project is a community-led mangrove carbon focused on a mangrove ecosystem, coordinated by Blue Ventures (BV) on behalf of the Velondriake Association (VA). The project site encompasses ten villages located in Baie des Assassins (BdA) in Madagascar. It lies in the southern part of the Velondriake Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA)¹ which is an officially gazetted protected area², co-managed by both BV and the VA. Four³ of the seven endemic species of mangrove to the BdA are found in the project area. It also homes sea grasses and coral reefs, which constitute important habitats for a variety of marine species. In addition, mangroves provide nursery habitat for fish, shrimp, crab and other species that are harvested for food and sale as well as wood for people.

The population in the project area is estimated at approximately 4,000 residents with 895 households in 2018, with about 60% of the population are fishermen. According to the Project Design Document (PDD), main threats include harvest of mangrove wood for lime production, building and construction of fences. In addition, the unsustainable harvest of mangroves is exacerbated by the lack of effective management and alternative livelihoods.

To address these drivers of mangrove forest loss and degradation, project activities include the protection of 257ha and the sustainable land use of 973ha of mangrove forest, the restoration of 163ha of deforested land over a period of 16 years (including 2 years prior to project start), the promotion of alternative wood plantations as well as training and support for alternative livelihoods including beekeeping, seaweed farming and sea cucumber ranching.

¹ Velondriake LMMA has 63,985 ha of surface area.

² A Category V protected area under the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classification.

³ *Cerriops tagal*, *Rhizophora mucronata*, *Avicennia marina* and *Bruguiera gymnorrhiza*.

Total carbon sequestered from these activities is estimated to be over 1,300 tons of CO₂e per year throughout the 20-years crediting period (from 2018 to 2037).

Description of field visits (including list of sites visited and individuals/groups interviewed)

The on-site visit verification is part of the Plan Vivo verification process, which aims to evaluate that the project continues to conform to the Plan vivo Standard (2013) and continues to deliver emission reductions, and other expected benefits to local ecosystems and livelihoods. It confirmed eligibility criteria, additionality and project boundaries; (ii) validated/verified that the project's physical site description and governance structure is as described in the PDD and technical specification(s) and; (iii) identified objective evidence of conformance with each of the requirements in the Plan Vivo Standard 4.0, through stakeholders' consultation, field observation and remeasurement of carbon plots. It also aimed at verifying specific issues that have been raised through the desk- based review (0).

For that, the Independent Expert (IE) has conducted a five-day on-site visit which took place from 22 July 2024 to 26 July 2024. Different methods were used for field data collection which include:

- *Interviews* with project participants (21) including members of Blue ventures (BV) team and Velondriaka Association (VA), as well as members of Patrols team (CSE), Dina enforcement committee (KMD), Local monitors team and Local authorities in 03 sampled villages (See Attendance sheets in Appendix 2). Interviews with the local representative of the Regional direction of forest (CEF) and the representative of the National REDD+ coordination were conducted remotely.
- Remeasurement of carbon plots (03), by the BV agents and local monitors.
- Observation of the implementation of various technical specifications : (i) physical site and forest conditions in sampled plots and surroundings, (ii) the visibility of the demarcation signs, (iii) the adoption of alternative livelihoods, (iv) the use of mangroves or wood alternatives for fences in the villages, (v) the evolution of lime' use and production in the villages.
- Cross-checks of documents and database (see Appendix 3).

In addition, the availability of relevant documents and database were checked and, video and photographs were taken.

All visits were joined by the BV team, comprised by Cicelin Rakotomahazo (Mr) - National Technical Lead Community-based Mangrove Management, Esther Ngure (Mrs) -Technical Advisor/Blue Carbon Ecosystems and Aina Celestin (Mr) - Community Liaison Officer. Patrick Ramiandrisoa (Mr)- Community Liaison Officer has supported carbon plots measurements with local monitors. Besides, Sana Velomana (Mr)- President of the Southern vondrona and board of VA has also joined all the field work.

Date	Location	Activities during the field visit
22/07/24	Andavadoaka	<u>Interviews with BV team:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cicelin Rakotomahazo (Mr) - National Technical Lead Community-based Mangrove Management - Bien Aimé (Mr)- Field program Officier

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aina Celestin (Mr) Community Liaison Officer <u>Interview with VA member's board:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gaëtan Valerio Huard (Mr)- Executive Secretary - Lorosa Germain Prosper (Mr)- Southern Vondrona⁴ Committee and board - Sana Velomana (Mr)- President of the Southern vondrona and board - Godefrey ZOZIME (Mr) – Advisor executive committee - Romaine (Mrs)- Advisor executive committee - Irène Ignès (Mrs) – Treasurer
23/07/24	Ankindranoke	<u>Meeting with VA members (05):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Velotina (Mr) – Chief of village B. Baranda Merla (Mr) – CSE team member C. Tsihaligno Fandroko (Mr) –household of fisher performing beekeeping (VA member) D. Josepha (Mr) - Dina⁵ enforcement committee (KMD) member E. Ramarolahy (Mr)- Local monitor <u>Visit</u> of beekeeping and planted terrestrial trees, count of houses coated with lime, observation of the planted terrestrial and fruit trees, the use of mangrove fences and wood alternatives in the village.
	Vatoavo	<u>Visit</u> of reforestation site and demarcation signs
24/07/24	Tampolove	<u>Meeting with VA' members (05):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> F. Porosy (Mr) –Chief of villages G. Mbiro (Mrs)- household of farmer performing seaweed farming H. Fariera (Mr)- Dina enforcement committee (KMD) member I. Tsihala (Mr) - household of fisher performing sea cucumber ranching (VA member) J. Jean Noël (Mr) - CSE team member <u>Re-measuring of 01 carbon plot (OC_26)</u> with verification of the physical site conditions and observation of forest conditions and demarcation signs.
	Agnolignoly	<u>Meeting with VA' members (05):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> K. Bruno Bessemin (Mr)- household of fisher active on planted terrestrial trees and performing seaweed farming L. Tsivelonkery (Mr) - household of fisher and lime producer

⁴ The VA is divided into three sub-groups responsible for sub- areas of the LMMA, or *vondrona*. Representatives are elected from each village within the LMMA to form village management committees who represent their villages at the *vondrona* level.

⁵ *Dina* is a local convention composed by rules, established collectively by local communities in order to govern the management and use of natural resources. The VA has established a dina for the whole LMMA, including for the project area.

		<p>M. Sabine Clarisse (Mrs)- VA committee – household performing seaweed farming</p> <p>N. Voahangy (Mrs) - household of fisher/farmer performing seaweed farming</p> <p>O. Sana Velomana (Mr) – CSE and local monitor team member</p> <p>P. Jean Bosco (Mr) - household of fisher and performing seaweed farming</p> <p><u>Re-measuring of 01 carbon plot (DEF_02)</u> with verification of the physical site condition and observation of forest conditions</p> <p><u>Count</u> of houses coated with lime, observation of planted terrestrial and fruit trees and the use of mangrove fences,</p>	
25/07/24	Lamboara	<p><u>Meeting with VA' members (05):</u></p> <p>Q. Jean Tovo (Mr) - household of fisher and lime producer</p> <p>R. Lipo Tovondrainy (Mr)- household of farmer performing beekeeping</p> <p>S. Kristy (Mr)- CSE team member</p> <p>T. Joseph Rabesolo (Mr)- Chief of the Village</p> <p>U. François Joela (Mr)- <i>Dina</i> enforcement member: 10mn`</p> <p><u>Re-measuring of 01 carbon plot (CC_21)</u> with verification of the physical site conditions and observation of forest conditions.</p> <p><u>Observation</u> of the use of mangrove fences, planted terrestrial and fruit trees,</p>	
30/07/24	Remote	<p><u>Call with:</u></p> <p>Xavier Diamana (Mr)- <u>Local</u> representative of the Regional Direction of the Ministry of Environment</p>	

Table 1. Summary of major and minor Corrective Actions (Insert CAR Text)

Theme	Major CARs	Minor CARs	NIRs	Observations	FARs
Project's Eligibility				<i>The State's failure to issue management delegation agreements to protected area managers is a widespread challenge, not unique to the Velondriake Protected Area (PA). However, BV and VA should continue their lobbying efforts to fully secure their management rights for the area and inform the Plan Vivo Foundation (PVF) on the progress.</i>	
Ecosystem Benefits	<i>Although the new methodology was improved, the assessment of the current status of the four indicators species identified in 2018 should be done to assess the project impact. If not, please justify that the assessment is not yet relevant.</i>	<i>Survey should be repeated every 5 years according to the project' Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Biodiversity Monitoring. However, the survey was done only this year, which means after six years of implementation. Please explain the delay of the assessment.</i>	<i>Please provide evidence that terrestrial tree species used are native or naturalised species to meet the Plan Vivo requirements.</i>		<i>The survey for Biodiversity Monitoring was not carried out every 5 years according to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). This issue should be followed up for the next verification.</i>

<p>Project Coordination and Management</p>		<p><i>Annual reports should present remaining issues, and changes on project' technical specifications. These aspects should be interpreted to inform on project effectivity in order to propose strategies for improvement or alternative solutions or to update the PDD in a timely manner. For example, the flow of production on sea cucumber, seaweed and beekeeping should be indicated for comparison in order to define contingency measures in case of decrease and the non-effectivity of planted terrestrial trees should be reported to define alternative solutions in a timely manner.</i></p> <p><i>The mechanism and procedures for the receipt, holding and disbursement of</i></p>	<p><i>Please provide evidence that the "Velondriake Tahiry Honko" account intended for PES payments is earmarked for that sole purpose, separate to the project coordinator's general operational finances.</i></p>		<p><i>The mechanism and procedures for the receipt, holding and disbursement of PES fund should be documented. It will be check during the next verification</i></p>
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		<i>Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) fund should be documented.</i>			
Participatory design	<i>A grievance mechanism should be established in consultation with stakeholders to ensure it is tailored to the local context. Additionally, the coordinator must ensure that a complaints register is maintained and available for the next verification.</i>			<i>The stakeholders engagement Plan for the project's implementation should be clearly described in the PDD or in a separate document and regularly updated, especially when evidence shows new stakeholders likely to be included. This will ensure that smallholders or communities are not being excluded from participating in the project or enhance their involvement, which could improve the project outcomes.</i>	
Quantifying and Monitoring Ecosystem Services	<p><i>The assumption for the estimation of carbon sequestered in reforested mangrove ecosystems should be reviewed, to consider the number of propagules planted per hectare.</i></p> <p><i>Please explain the reason why no patrols were conducted in</i></p>	<i>Given the presence of cut stumps in the conservation zones, please provide evidence that the assumption regarding that no vegetation carbon will be lost in these areas over the</i>	<p><i>Please provide to the IE a SOP or equivalent for remote sensing analysis. it should be available as required by the PV standard.</i></p> <p><i>As no patrols are made in</i></p>	<i>As lime production was identified as one of the main causes of deforestation in the area, this should be assessed each five years during the socioeconomic surveys. The SOP for socioeconomic surveys should be updated accordingly.</i>	<i>Regular patrols should be undertaken in sustainable use zones to discourage overcutting and the PDD should be updated accordingly. In the next verification, the frequency of patrols in the sustainable use zones should be followed up in</i>

	<p><i>the sustainable zones since 2019.</i></p>	<p><i>project quantification period is accurate.</i></p>	<p><i>sustainable use zones since 2019, please provide additional evidence to demonstrate the accuracy of the methodology used to estimate harvests in these zones to ensure the sustainable management of these areas,</i></p> <p><i>Please provide data recording infractions of Dina and Dina charges for 2018 and 2020.</i></p> <p><i>Please provide to the IE the audit report prepared by the CSE supervisor regarding the accuracy of CSE work</i></p> <p><i>Please provide evidence that the results of the remote sensing</i></p>	<p><i>The SOP for mangrove reforestation should be updated to specify the minimum number of propagules to be planted per hectare.`</i></p>	<p><i>accordance with the updated PDD.</i></p>
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			<p><i>analysis confirm the results of ABM and there is a high level of correlation between the two monitoring methods. Please justify in case any discrepancy.</i></p> <p><i>Please share if you have any records (video, pictures) of attendance for the dissemination of results with local communities</i></p> <p><i>Please provide to the IE with the database that clearly indicated the number of patrols performed per month per vilalge, as well as the number of cut stumps counted, for the entire five-year period included in the</i></p>		
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			<p>verification process</p> <p>Please clarify why the number of patrols varies across villages. There are concerns about the lack of regular patrols in many villages each month and the potential impact this inconsistency may have on resource management.</p>		
<p>Risk Management</p>	<p>The PDD should be updated to consider the unsuccessful planting of terrestrial trees and of the use of stones and, to propose strategies for improvement or suggest alternative solutions.</p>	<p>There are concerns about the accuracy of risk estimates and management due to the current challenges with alternative livelihoods aimed at easing pressure on mangroves. Since sea cucumber farming, sea weed ranching and beekiping are highly valued by local communities, the PDD should be updated to propose</p>	<p>Please provide evidence that regular patrols are conducted in the northern part of the LMMA and results are considered to inform the management of project' leakage. In addition, please provide evidence that community consultations on</p>		<p>The PDD should be updated with the following issues :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Propose strategies for improvement or suggest alternative solutions for unsuccessful planting of terrestrial trees and of the use of stones. - Propose strategies to adress issues or suggest alternative solutions, in order to ensure project's sustainability for the cucumber farming,see

		<p><i>strategies to address issues or suggest alternative solutions, in order to ensure project's sustainability.</i></p> <p><i>The PDD should be updated to consider potential leakage in the dry forest nearby and also the impact of the expansion of Mikea protected areas to the project. Collaboration with MNP should be done for their respective monitoring in order to propose contingency measure, in a timely manner. It should be monitored and will be evaluated for the next verification.</i></p> <p><i>The PDD should be revised to consider the population growth and its associated risks, as it is influencing the level of pressure on mangroves. Additionally, the SOP</i></p>	<p><i>the importance of maintaining mangrove ecosystems were hold and opportunities for alternative livelihoods for residents of the northern zone were explored.</i></p> <p><i>Please provide more evidence from remote sensing analysis to monitor potential leakage in the northern part of Velondriake LMMA. The focus of the analysis should be made in this area.</i></p>		<p><i>weed ranching and beekiping</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- Consider potential leakage in the dry forest nearby and also the impact of the expansion of Mikea protected areas to the project.</i> <i>- The PDD should be revised to consider the population growth and its associated risks, as it is influencing the level of pressure on mangroves.</i>
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		<p><i>for socioeconomic monitoring should incorporate population growth considerations.</i></p> <p><i>Considering that local communities are significantly affected by restrictions on their customary rights to use wood due to government regulations banning mangrove harvesting, BV and VA should continue lobbying the government.</i></p> <p><i>The restrictions increase leakage and may, in the mid and long-term, conduct to unsustainable use of natural resources as people could be demotivated to support the project. Efforts made in terms of lobbying to alleviate or delete these restrictions should be reported in the future annual reports.</i></p>			
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Livelihoods Impacts				-	
PES Agreement				<p><i>Procedures for entering into a PES Agreement with participants should be defined when the Emission Reduction Purchase Agreement (ERPA) is signed by the Minister.</i></p> <p><i>Benefit sharing mechanism should be re-discussed with local communities when ERPA is signed</i></p>	

Table 2 - Report Conformance (Delete Yes/No as appropriate)

Theme	Conformance of Draft Report	Conformance of Final Report
Project's Eligibility	Yes	Yes
Ecosystem Benefits	No	Yes
Project Coordination and Management	No	Yes
Participatory design	No	Yes
Quantifying and Monitoring Ecosystem Services	No	Yes
Risk Management	No	Yes
Livelihoods impacts	Yes	Yes
PES Agreement	Yes	Yes

PROJECT'S ELIGIBILITY	
Requirement: Project directly engage and benefit community groups	
Verification Question: 1 and 2	
<p>1.1 Project interventions are still taking on land where smallholders and/or community groups have clear land tenure (1.1)</p> <p>1.2 Land that is not owned by or subject to use rights has included in the project area because (1.2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It represents less than a third of the project areas at all times • No part of the area was acquired by a third party from smallholders or community groups for the purpose of inclusion in the project • Its inclusion will have clear benefits to the project by creating landscape level ecosystem benefits such as biodiversity corridors. • There is an executed agreement between owners/managers of such land and participants regarding the management of the area consistent with these requirements 	
A. Findings (describe)	<p><i>The project area is part of the Velondriake LMMA, a protected area established by Decree No. 2015-752. According to this decree, the area is classified as part of the state's private domain, with the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Fisheries designated as official co-managers. However, these ministries can delegate management responsibilities to public or private entities through a management delegation agreement.</i></p> <p><i>Despite this provision, the Ministry of Environment (MEDD) has not issued any management delegation agreements to protected area managers across the country, except for Madagascar National Parks, due to political and governance</i></p>

	<p><i>challenges. Such an agreement would grant BV and VA the official right to manage the project area, ensuring the protection of biodiversity, cultural heritage, and ecological services, while also promoting the sustainable use of natural resources.</i></p> <p><i>However, Decree No. 2021-1113, which regulates access to the forest carbon market, stipulates that project promoters and local communities involved in REDD+ activities are entitled to carbon benefits (Art. 28). The homologation letter No. 15/2023-H/MEDD/SG/BNCCREDD+ dated April 17, 2023, issued by BNCCREDD, confirms that the project is entitled to claim carbon benefits from the marketing of emission reductions generated, in accordance with an established Benefit Sharing Plan. These documents secure the community's rights and access to carbon benefits associated with the project.</i></p>		
B. Conformance	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
C. Corrective Actions (describe)	<p><i>Observation: The State's failure to issue management delegation agreements to protected area managers is a widespread challenge, not unique to the Velondriake PA. However, BV and VA should continue their lobbying efforts to fully secure their management rights for the area and inform the PVF on the progress.</i></p>		
D. (Insert Project Coordinator's Name) Response	<p><i>(To be filled out by the Project Coordinator)</i></p>		
E. Status	<p><i>CLOSED</i></p>		

ECOSYSTEM BENEFITS	
Requirement: Project generates ecosystem service benefits and maintains or enhances biodiversity.	
Verification Questions: 1, 3 and 5	
<p>2.1 Project interventions are maintaining or enhancing biodiversity (2.2)</p> <p>2.2 Project interventions have not led to any negative environmental impacts (2.3)</p> <p>2.3 Any trees being planted to generate ecosystem services are native or naturalised species and are not invasive (2.4)</p>	
A. Findings (describe)	<p><i>According to the PDD, project activities include conservation, sustainable harvesting and restoration of mangroves as well as plantation of terrestrial trees.</i></p> <p><i>Overall, the forest appears to be in good health, as observed both across the landscape and in specific sampled plots during the on-site visit. Most interviewees reported that mangrove biodiversity remains stable, while in Lamboara and Tapolove villages, people noted the return of shrimp to certain areas since 2021 and the increased of birds 'population respectively.</i></p>

	<p><i>The mid-term mangroves biodiversity evaluation conducted in 2024 (see Appendix 3, row 5) reveals an increase in the number of species recorded compared to the baseline biodiversity surveys completed in 2018, particularly among mammals, reptiles, fish, and mollusks.</i></p> <p><i>However, it's important to note that the methodology used in 2024 differed from those used in 2018, making direct comparisons challenging. The 2024 methods were enhanced and simplified to ensure they could be effectively used by local communities, who will be responsible for future assessments. In addition, the 2024 report did not include an assessment of the four key species (Pteropus rufus, Geckolepis typica, Vanga curvirostris, and Coua verreauxi) that indicate the health of the ecosystem identified in the 2018 report and which are likely to be impacted by the project.</i></p> <p><i>Local communities have noted an increase in biodiversity within the sea cucumber farming zone, which is designated as a No Take Zone (NTZ) according to the agreement signed with IOT and VA (See Appendix 3, row 11). Additionally, villagers have reported an abundance of shish products in the seaweed zones.</i></p> <p><i>Finally, according to annual reports, five terrestrial tree species were promoted to provide an alternative source of wood for fuel and building materials to supply the community's needs and prevent leakage. Fruit trees also were planted. However, interviews with local communities revealed that some planted terrestrial tree species are unknown and are not chosen in consultation with them. That 'why they don't grow up and adapt to the local climate and soil. Observation during the field work indicates that survival rate is very low.</i></p>		
B. Conformance	Yes <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
C. Corrective Actions (describe)	<p>CAR:</p> <p><i>A. Although the new methodology was improved, the assessment of the current status of the four indicators species identified in 2018 should be done to assess the project impact. If not, please justify that the assessment is not yet relevant.</i></p> <p><i>B. Survey should be repeated every 5 years according to the project' Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Biodiversity Monitoring. However, the survey was done only this year, which means after six years of implementation. Please explain the delay of the assessment.</i></p> <p>NIR</p> <p><i>C. Please provide evidence that terrestrial tree species used are native or naturalised species to meet the Plan Vivo requirements.</i></p>		
D. (Insert Project Coordinator's Name) Response	<p>CAR</p> <p><i>A. The mammal species Pteropus rufus has been reported in the biodiversity assessment report. Another species, Phelsuma mutabilis from the Gekkonidae family, was also recorded, but not Geckolepis typica. The bird species Vanga curvirostris and Coua verreauxi inhabit the adjacent terrestrial forests and occasionally use the mangroves</i></p>		

	<p><i>for activities such as singing or foraging. The new method used during this assessment was primarily focused on the mangrove forest rather than the terrestrial forests, which may explain the absence of these species during the fieldwork. To address this, we could include the monitoring of these species in the Plan Vivo 2024. The CSE will be trained to monitor these four species using the new method.</i></p> <p><i>B. We generally adhered to the planned monitoring period. The assessment was initially scheduled for December 2023, but it was delayed for two reasons: First, recruiting consultants for the assessment took longer than expected because the two individuals we initially hired resigned, requiring us to repeat the hiring process. Second, from a technical perspective, conducting biodiversity assessments during the rainy season (January to March in Madagascar) gives better results, as there is a higher likelihood of encountering all species that use and inhabit the mangroves, including migratory species. This is why the assessment was conducted from February to March 2024.</i></p> <p><i>NIR</i></p> <p><i>C. At the start of this activity, in line with the Plan Vivo requirements, we inventoried all plant species that grow in the project area and are used by the local communities. The choice of species for plantation was based on this list. Naturally, most of these species are slow-growing and require a high level of technical expertise to plant. The first five years have been a learning experience, allowing us to adapt and select the right species to grow, prioritizing those that are fast-growing and native to the region. Our next step for the coming year is to focus on these identified species and to further explore their characteristics.</i></p>
A. IE round 2 findings	<p><i>CAR</i></p> <p><i>A. Do you believe that the four species are no longer indicator species? If so, please provide evidence supporting that they no longer serve this role, making their assessment irrelevant. If not, they will require continued monitoring and assessment.</i></p> <p><i>B. Closed</i></p> <p><i>NIR</i></p> <p><i>C. Please provide the bibliographic reference of the document with the inventories results</i></p>
B. Status	<i>CLOSED</i>
C. Forward Actions(describe, if applicable)	The survey for Biodiversity Monitoring was not carried out every 5 years according to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). This issue should be followed up for the next verification.

PROJECT COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT	
Requirement: Project is managed with transparency and accountability, engagement of relevant stakeholders and in compliance with the law of the Host Country.	
Verification Questions: 1, 2 and 6	
<p>3.1 The project coordinator still has the capacity to support participants in the design of the project interventions, select appropriate participants for inclusion in the project, and develop effective participatory relationships including providing on-going support to sustain the project (3.4)</p> <p>3.2 The project coordinator still has the legal and administrative capacity to enter into PES Agreements with participants and to manage the disbursement of payments for ecosystem services (3.5)</p> <p>3.3 A transparent mechanism and procedures for the receipt, holding and disbursement of PES funds is applied, with funds intended for PES earmarked and managed through an account established for this sole purpose, separate to the project coordinator's operational finances. (3.9)</p> <p>3.4 The project coordinator has accurately described the progress, achievements and problems encountered by the project in the Annual Reports. The Annual Reports transparently report sales figures and demonstrate resource allocation in the interest of target groups (3.10; 3.11)</p>	
A. Findings (describe)	<p><i>According to the on-site visit, BV has provided support to participants in the design of projects interventions through the organization of different committee' meetings at different levels (See Appendix 4 of annual reports), exchange visit and technical trainings. Periodic election of VA' governance structures by local communities and their regular meetings as well as the general assembly are also supported by BV.</i></p> <p><i>The homologation act of the Tahiry Honko carbon project delivered by the BNCREDD (See Appendix 3, row 3) provides to BV and VA who are the REDD+ project promoters, the legal and administrative capacity to enter into PES Agreements with participants and to manage the disbursement of payments for ecosystem services.</i></p> <p><i>A dedicated fund called "Velondriake Tahiry honko" was established and is managed through a special account to receive the advance payment made by BV. However, it is unclear if this account is separate to the project coordinator's general operational finances.</i></p> <p><i>Although no sales have been made so far, the fund has received advance payments from BV to support scholarships for primary school children, as agreed upon in executive committee meetings. While the procedures for receiving, holding, and disbursing PES funds are clear and transparent, they have not yet been formally documented.</i></p> <p><i>Overall, annual reports (Part A.) has accurately describe the progress and achievements. However, the problems encountered by the project are not effectively described. For instance, (i) the challenges with sea cucumber and seaweed production and the related risks for the project sustainability, (ii) the non-effectivity of planted terrestrial trees and the use of stone as alternative building materials or (iii) the risk of leakage, due to unresolved bans on</i></p>

	<p><i>mangrove harvesting, were not properly reported. As a result, no strategies for improvement or alternative solutions were proposed in a timely manner.</i></p> <p><i>Annual reports transparently report sales figures (Part D) even though no sales have been so far due to legal issues⁶. The advance allocations from BV, known locally as “bourse”, are vital, as they are the main motivation for local communities to continue supporting the project, according to interviews. PV meetings regarding resources allocation are available, (See Appendix 4 of annual reports).</i></p>		
B. Conformance	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
C. Corrective Actions (describe)	<p><i>NIR</i></p> <p><i>A. Please provide evidence that the “Velondriake Tahiry Honko” account intended for PES payments is earmarked for that sole purpose, separate to the project coordinator's general operational finances.</i></p> <p><i>CAR</i></p> <p><i>B. Annual reports should present remaining issues, and changes on project’ technical specifications. These aspects should be interpreted to inform on project effectivity in order to propose strategies for improvement or alternative solutions or to update the PDD in a timely manner. For example, the evolution of production of sea cucumber, seaweed and beekeeping should be indicated for comparaison in order to define contegency measures in case of decrease. Low survival rate of planted terrestrial trees should be reported for alternative solutions.</i></p> <p><i>C. The mechanism and procedures for the receipt, holding and disbursment of PES fund should be documented. It will be check during the next verification</i></p>		
D. (Insert Project Coordinator’s Name) Response	<p><i>NIR</i></p> <p><i>A. To receive money from the sale of Carbon credits under the Tahiry Honko project, Velondriake Association opened a sub-account (number 17946430041) in which the money is dropped. Money dropped in this account is only specified for Tahiry Honko related activities. This was done to facilitate audit and verification. Velondriake Association has its general account for another activities related to Management. Some supporting document is here</i></p> <p><i>CAR</i></p> <p><i>B. The issue with sea cucumbers did not occur during this verification period; it happened in November 2023. We will report this in the 2024 annual report, along with potential alternative solutions. The seaweed problem is not considered serious, as the disease has been present since the start of the activity in the area, and both the</i></p>		

⁶ Details regarding legal issues related to carbon sales are described in the section “PES agreement and benefit sharing”

	<p>company and local communities have been able to manage it effectively. Regarding beekeeping, production was low in 2023, and to address this, we decided to hand over the responsibility to the Velondriake Association to ensure sustainability and resolve related challenges. A similar approach may be taken with terrestrial trees. Our next step is to discuss all these issues with the Velondriake Association and collaboratively define solutions with them. We mentioned these challenges in each annual report.</p> <p>C. We are waiting for the ERPA to be signed and for all project-related mechanisms to be established as per the national decree. This will enable us, in collaboration with the Velondriake Association, to implement a strict process for the use of funds.</p>
E. IE round 2 findings	<p>NIR</p> <p>A. Conformance. ✓</p> <p>CAR</p> <p>B. Conformance ✓</p> <p>C. Conformance. ✓</p>
F. Status	CLOSED
G. Forward Actions(describe, if applicable)	FAR- The mechanism and procedures for the receipt, holding and disbursement of PES fund should be documented. It will be checked during the next verification.

PARTICIPATORY DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN VIVO	
Requirement: the project has demonstrated community ownership: communities participate meaningfully through the design and implementation of plan vivos that address local needs and priorities.	
Verification Questions: 1, 2 and 6	
<p>4.1 A voluntary and participatory planning that address local needs and inform the development of technical specification is taking place (4.1; 4.6; 7.1.). Barriers to participation are being identified and measures taken to encourage participation (4.3)</p> <p>4.2 Smallholders or communities are not being excluded from participation in the project on the basis of gender, age, income or social status, ethnicity or religion, or any other discriminatory basis (4.2)</p> <p>4.3 The project is not undermining the livelihood needs and priorities or reduce the food security of the participants (4.7; 7.1; 7.5)</p> <p>4.4 There exist a system for accurately recording and verifying location, boundary and size of each plan vivo (4.8). Participants have access to their <i>plan vivos</i> in an appropriate language and format (4.9)</p> <p>4.5 Participants are being provided with a forum to periodically discuss the design and running of the project with other participants and raise any issuance or grievances with the project coordinator (4.12). A robust grievance redressal system is in place (4.14)</p>	
A. Findings (describe)	<p>Interviews shows that the planning process is open and allows stakeholders to participate willingly without compulsion. Stakeholders, particularly local communities, can easily communicate their needs and concerns directly to the project's decision-makers which are discussed during the project governance structures' regular meetings organized at different level and, action plan are developed accordingly. After each strategic meeting, feed-back meetings with local</p>

	<p><i>communities are organized by the representatives to inform them on decision made and action plan.</i></p> <p><i>The IE found no evidence that smallholders or communities are being excluded from participating in the project on the basis of gender, age, income or social status, ethnicity or religion, or any other discriminatory basis. Although, the project doesn't have a gender action plan, women and youth both are part of project decision-makers and participate actively on projects activities. For instance, they are dominant on reforestation activities, patrols and alternative livelihoods.</i></p> <p><i>However, participation should be improved to ensure all stakeholder are fully considered, including immigrants. For example, Mikea people, who have recently settled in the villages of Lamboara and Ankindranoke, take part in reforestation activities as they benefit from the scholarship provided to primary school children, but they only attend village meetings when specifically invited and are not effectively engaged in the project's alternative livelihoods activities. In addition, interviewees in Lamboara noted that Mikea people have valuable expertise in areas like beekeeping and could be interested in collaborating with the project and help to address technical issues related to beekeeping. BV has a document outlining its gender equity strategy, but this has not been applied in the Velondriake association.</i></p> <p><i>The PDD (Part E) mostly describes the community participation during the design of the project, but not clearly define the stakeholder engagement Plan for the project implementation.</i></p> <p><i>The IE found no evidence that participants livelihoods and/or food security was negatively affected. In addition the socioeconomic assesement (Appendix 3, row 6) provides evidence that the project improves participants livelihoods, compared to the baseline.</i></p> <p><i>The projet has effective system for accurately recording and verifying location, boundary and size of the project. All documentation have been translated into accessible formats, inlcuding the local language and dialects, to ensure it is easily understood by local communities.</i></p> <p><i>According to the project team, a grievance mechanism involving a letter box was established at the beginning of the project, but no grievances have been received, as this approach is not well-suited to the local context. Interviewees noted that, in case of complaints, they currently can easily approach the village chief, who then reports to the VA's board members. In addition to local communities, it should be noted that there are other stakeholders who can raise issuance or grievances and need the availability of a grievance redress mechanism. However, there is no formal register in place to document any complaints received. Complaints maily refers to the ban of the mangroves harvest right by the government.</i></p>
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B. Conformance	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
C. Corrective Actions (describe)	<p>CAR</p> <p>A. A grievance mechanism should be established in consultation with stakeholders to ensure it is tailored to the local context. Additionally, the coordinator must ensure that a complaints register is maintained and available for the next verification.</p> <p>Observation</p> <p>B. The stakeholders engagement Plan for the project's implementation should be clearly described in the PDD or in a separate document and regularly updated, especially when evidence shows new stakeholders likely to be included. This will ensure that smallholders or communities are not being excluded from participating in the project or enhance their involvement, which could improve the project outcomes.</p>		
D. (Insert Project Coordinator's Name) Response	<p>CAR</p> <p>A. The grievance mechanism and the related structure to manage the process are already in place. However, according to the audit results, most community members are not familiar with submitting written complaints, despite the presence of complaint boxes in each village. We are unsure if this is the primary reason for the absence of reported complaints. Our next step is to have further discussions with the Velondriake Association and the local communities in each village to update the existing mechanism. We will also ensure that complaint registers are available in each village to record any complaints.</p> <p>Observation</p> <p>B. Our stakeholder engagement plan was simplified through the creation of a conservation contract between the beneficiaries (Velondriake Association, local communities) and Blue Ventures. We recognize the need for a clear document outlining this agreement. We kindly request the auditor to provide us with a simple template that we can use to formalize it.</p>		
E. IE round 2 findings	<p>CAR</p> <p>A. Conformance. ✓ with the following provision: Please provide an approximate date by which you will be able to establish a functioning redress and grievance mechanism</p> <p>Observation</p> <p>A. Conformance. ✓ with the following provision: Please provide an approximate date by which you will be able to develop a PES as appendix of the PDD. >> example of SEP template as requested (source: https://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/909361530209278896/ESF-Template-ESS10-SEP-June-2018.pdf)</p>		
F. Status	CLOSED		

QUANTIFYING AND MONITORING ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

Requirement: project generates real and additional ecosystem service benefits that are demonstrated with credible quantification and monitoring

Verification Questions: 2, 3 and 4

- Sources of data used to quantify ecosystem services, including all assumptions and default factors, have been specified and updated, when possible, with a justification why they are appropriate **(5.1; 5.2)**
- The project coordinator has been conducting ground-truthing activities in order to collect real data and field measurements from the project sites that have been or will be used to update the project's PDD and technical specifications, including the quantification of climate benefits **(5.3)**
- A clear and consistent Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), or equivalent, for remote sensing analysis has been elaborated by the project coordinator.
- The results of the remote sensing analysis are not in stark conflict with the results of Activity-Based Monitoring and there is a high level of correlation between the two monitoring methods. Reasons for any discrepancy have been accurately justified.
- Ecosystem services forming the basis of the Plan Vivo project are still additional **(5.4)**.
- To avoid double counting of ecosystem services, the project interventions are not being used for any other project or initiative **(5.14)**
- A monitoring plan has been correctly implemented and a system for checking its robustness is in place, where **(5.9; 7.2.; 7.3)**:
 - The Activity-Based Monitoring indicators and performance targets directly or indirectly linked to the delivery of ecosystem services. ABM provides sufficient evidence that the project is on track to deliver the expected impacts and to reduce the drivers of deforestation.
 - Corrections and contingency plans are described when performance targets have not been met
 - The validity and assumptions of the technical specifications have been correctly tested
 - Communities have been actively participating in monitoring activities
 - Monitoring has been regularly shared and discussed it with the participants

A. Findings (describe)

Sources of data used to quantify ecosystem services, including all assumptions and default factors, have been specified in the PDD and annual reports.

No SOP or equivalent for remote sensing analysis has been provided to the IE. In addition, with the information provided regarding the results from the monitoring sensing analysis, it is difficult to assess the correlation between these results and those from the ABM.

The IE found that ecosystem services forming the basis of the Plan Vivo project are still additional as the area do not have other sources to implement the project activities.

No evidence that the project interventions are being used for any other project or initiative is found.

Overall, a monitoring plan has been correctly implemented and a system for checking its robustness is in place. The Activity-Based Monitoring indicators and performance targets directly or indirectly linked to the delivery of ecosystem services. Communities, through the CSE, KMD, local monitors as well as VA's project board have been actively participating in monitoring activities. Monitoring has been regularly shared and discussed it with the participants. BV annually produced videos and organized a session in each village to disseminate results from the project (Appendix 3, row 9), with all information provided in an appropriate language and format. During these sessions, BV and VA discuss successes and challenges with local communities

	<p><i>and inform communities on 'Tahiry Honko' project's threshold (Appendix 3, row 8).</i></p> <p><i>The on-site visit shows that lime production for sale has significantly decreased and now primarily relies on deadwood. Although people continue to use lime for personal building purposes, it is considered sustainable because houses coated with lime can last for 30 years or more, reducing the need for wood in construction over the medium and long term. However, due to current challenges with alternative livelihoods, lime production could increase in the future.</i></p> <p><i>Demarcation for each zone is in place and people seem to be aware on the limitation of each zone.</i></p> <p><i>CSE is responsible for conducting regular patrols of cut stumps across the entire project area. In 2018, these patrols were carried out in both the conservation zones ("Tahiry Honko") and the sustainable use zones ("quota"). However, in subsequent years, patrols were limited to the conservation zone only, as confirmed by annual reports and an on-site visit. A database exists for monitoring cut stumps in conservation zones (Appendix A, row 12), but the number of patrols recorded in the database does not match those reported in the annual reports. The database format varies from year to year, sometimes listing the number of cut stumps identified and other times the number of patrol conducted, making it difficult to interpret. In case of infractions, Dina enforcement was applied.</i></p> <p><i>According to annual reports, the maximum number of patrols carried out per month is lower than the target of 16 patrols per month. And the project plans to update the indicator in the five-yearly review of the PDD. It should be noted that the number of patrols conducted are not the same per village. Many villages do not conduct any patrols in a month however many conducted a lot.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, patrol frequency varies by village: some village conduct many patrols while others conduct none. Although the presence of cut stumps is documented, their specific locations are not recorded. However, locations are important to inform the management of resources.</i></p> <p><i>While overall harvesting estimates in sustainable zones remain below the quota, many sampled carbon plots reveal a significant decrease in stump density, indicating a potential shift toward unsustainable use if timely measures are not implemented.</i></p> <p><i>The on-site visit confirmed that mangrove restoration is meeting the target of one hectare per village per year, with survival rates likely matching those reported in the annual reports. A comprehensive database is available, detailing reforestation sites, the area planted (ha), the number of propagules</i></p>
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	<p><i>planted, and survival rates (Appendix 3, row 13). However, many plots are not being surveyed regularly at the 3-month (M3), 6-month (M6), 9-month (M9), 12-month (M12), and 24-month (M24) intervals as outlined in the SOP for mangrove plantation monitoring (Appendix 3, row 1), which may compromise the accuracy of the reported survival rates. Additionally, analysis of the database reveals that some areas have a low number of propagules planted per hectare, potentially affecting the accuracy of carbon sequestration estimates for reforested mangrove ecosystems.</i></p> <p><i>A database recording infractions to dina and Dina charged is available (Appendix 3, row 14), but data for 2018 and 2020 is missing.</i></p> <p><i>According to the annual reports, the maximum number of patrols per month is therefore 12, which is lower than the initial 16 patrols per month agreed. The project plans to update the indicator in the five-yearly review of the PDD.</i></p> <p><i>The results from the remeasurement of the 03 sample plots indicates anormal trends regarding the number of stumps density as following: During the on-site visit, remeasurements were carried out by local monitors, with support from BV technicians. It shows that some local monitors need assistance from BV technicians to accurately measure carbon plots. Results how that stump density measurements in 2020 for CC_21 and in 2019 for OC_26 are significantly higher compared to baseline results and remeasurement data, which may suggest issues with measurement accuracy. Additionally, no measurements of the reforestation zone were reported in the annual reports.</i></p> <p><i>Regarding the monitoring of institutional indicators, the on-site visit found evidence that VA has sufficient capacity to implement the project. The number of meetings per year is achieved with the meeting minuts available.</i></p> <p><i>The on-site visit as well as the database of patrols indicate provide evidence that patrols are well-performed. However, the audit report for the evaluation of CSE work by supervisor was not made available to the IE.</i></p>		
B. Conformance	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
C. Corrective Actions (describe)	<p>CAR</p> <p>A. Given the presence of cut stumps in the conservation zones, please provide evidence that the assumption regarding that no vegetation carbon will be lost in these areas over the project quantification period is accurate.</p> <p>B. The assumption for the estimation of carbon sequestrated in reforested mangrove ecosystems should be reviewed, to consider the number of propagules planted per hectare.</p> <p>C. Please explain the reason why no patrols were conducted in the sustainable zones since 2019.</p>		

	<p><i>NIR:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>D. Please provide to the IE a SOP or equivalent for remote sensing analysis. it should be available as required by the PV standard.</i> <i>E. As no patrols are made in sustainable use zones since 2019, please provide additional evidence to demonstrate the accuracy of the methodology used to estimate harvests in these zones to ensure the sustainable management of these areas,</i> <i>F. Please provide data recording infractions of Dina and Dina charges for 2018 and 2020.</i> <i>G. Please provide to the IE the audit report prepared by the CSE supervisor regarding the accuracy of CSE work</i> <i>H. Please provide evidence that the results of the remote sensing analysis confirm the results of ABM and there is a high level of correlation between the two monitoring methods. Please justify in case any discrepancy.</i> <i>I. Please share if you have any records (video, pictures) of attendance for the dissemination of results with local communities</i> <i>J. Please provide to the IE with the database that clearly indicated the number of patrols performed per month per vilalge, as well as the number of cut stumps counted, for the entire five-year period included in the verification process</i> <i>K. Please clarify why the number of patrols varies across villages. There are concerns about the lack of regular patrols in many villages each month and the potential impact this inconsistency may have on resource management.</i> <p><i>Observations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>L. As lime production was identified as one of the main causes of deforestation in the area, this should be assessed each five years during the socioeconomic surveys. The SOP for socioeconomic surveys should be updated accordingly</i> <i>M. The SOP for mangrove reforestation should be updated to specify the minimum number of propagules to be planted per hectare.`</i> <p><i>CAR:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>N. Regular patrols should be undertaken in sustainable use zones to discourage overcutting and the PDD should be updated accordinly. In this case, please provide suitable frequencies of patrols in the sustainable use zones, according to project's financial capacity.</i> <i>O. The PDD should be updated regarding the number of patrols to be performed per year both in conservation and in sustainable use zones.</i> <i>P. Training for local monitors should be performed to improve the accuracy of results.</i> <i>Q. The database format for patrols and accounting of cut stumps should be improved to clearly indicated per village and per month the name of patrollers, the number of patrols performed, the number of cut stumps identified, the location of infractions.</i>
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<p>D. (Insert Project Coordinator's Name) Response</p>	<p>CAR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <i>It is important to note that the carbon model is focused on avoided deforestation, not degradation. Thus, on the condition there is no conversion from 'forest' to 'non-forest' within the project area, the assumptions in the technical specification remain correct.</i> B. <i>The metric established for patrollers to verify during their patrols in this area was the cut permit issued by the representative of the Ministry of Environment at the district level or by the president of the Association if mangrove management has been transferred to them.</i> C. <i>The metric established for patrollers to verify during their patrols in this area was the cut permit issued by the representative of the Ministry of Environment at the district level or by the president of the Association if mangrove management has been transferred to them. However, since the law banning the use of mangroves is still in place and has not been amended, the verification of cut permits is not applicable as no permits can be issued under the current regulations. Consequently, we have decided to suspend patrols in the area.</i> <p>NIR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> D. <i>Provided</i> E. <i>Provided</i> F. <i>We have a database that records infractions in the area. In 2018, the monitoring of cutting activities by the CSE did not cover the entire year, as the CSE was only established at the end of 2017, and several adjustments were needed to enhance their operations. Between 2019 and 2020, no Dina regulations were enforced for infractions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which restricted community meetings.</i> G. <i>Provided</i> H. <i>Provided</i> I. <i>We have these and we can share</i> J. <i>We will provide this database at the end of September this year</i> K. <i>This varies across villages due to the size of the areas being patrolled. Some villages have larger areas than others. While the number of CSE members is the same for each village, the number of patrol days differs because of the varying sizes of the areas.</i> <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> L. <i>Since we established a baseline for the number of houses made of lime in 2019, we will conduct annual counts of lime-built houses in the project villages to assess their trends. Additionally, we will ensure that questions related to lime production are included in the next five-year socioeconomic impact assessment.</i> M. <i>In 2023, we conducted a five-year assessment of mangrove reforestation in the project area. This included evaluating the participation of men and women in reforestation efforts, the contributions made by each village in terms of area covered and seedlings planted, adherence to the plantation protocol, and the survival rate of the seedlings. As result of this, we produced a video</i>
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	<p><i>to educate people on how to plant mangroves. Over the next five years, we will continue to build local capacity for effective mangrove restoration.</i></p> <p>CAR:</p> <p>N. <i>Over the next five years, once the national order regarding mangrove use is amended, patrols within the sustainable use zones will be conducted. The frequency of these patrols will be determined based on the availability of funding and patrollers' time. The Project Design Document (PDD) will be updated accordingly.</i></p> <p>O. <i>This is part of our priority for this upcoming five years.</i></p> <p>P. <i>Trainings will be conducted regularly starting in 2024. We will also compare the monitoring results obtained by Blue Ventures technicians at the start of the project with those conducted by the CSE to identify any differences. This comparison will help us identify gaps and areas for improvement..</i></p> <p>Q. <i>We have all the data available. This will be addressed.</i></p>
E. IE round 2 findings	<p>CAR</p> <p>A. <i>Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p>B. <i>Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p>C. <i>If so, please update the PDD accordingly and also provide evidence that stopping the control does not affect the assumption for the carbon calculations in the area</i></p> <p>NIR:</p> <p>D. <i>Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p>E. <i>Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p>F. <i>Conformance. ✓. with the following provision: please provide to the IE the database</i></p> <p>G. <i>Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p>H. <i>Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p>I. <i>Conformance. ✓ with the following provision: please provide to the IE the records</i></p> <p>J. <i>Conformance. ✓. BUT please provide to the IE the database</i></p> <p>K. <i>Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p>Observations:</p> <p>L. <i>Conformance. ✓ with the following provision: the SOP for socioeconomic surveys should be updated accordingly and please provide an approximate date by which it will be done</i></p> <p>M. <i>Thank you for the clarification. However, the concern here relates to the low number of propagules planted per hectare at some sites. For that, the SOP for reforestation should be updated to specify a minimum required number of propagules to be planted per hectare and please provide an approximate date by which you will be able to update the SOP</i></p> <p>FAR:</p>

	<p>N. <i>I understand that cutting mangroves is currently prohibited and we don't know when this issue will be solved. However, the lack of patrols in the sustainable use zone may jeopardize its long-term sustainability. Overall, forest patrols aim not only to detect illegal activities but also to prevent overexploitation by discouraging people from engaging in such activities and by increasing community involvement. As Protected Area managers, both VA and VA are responsible for ensuring that all zones are protected from illegal activities/overexploitation.</i></p> <p><i>To maintain/ ensure the project's carbon performance, a regular patrols should be conducted in sustainable use zone, with the frequency to be determined based on the project's financial capacity..</i></p> <p>O. <i>Conformance. ✓ with the following provision please provide an approximate date by which you will be able to update it should be provided..</i></p> <p>P. <i>Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p>Q. <i>Conformance. ✓</i></p>
A. Status	CLOSED
B. Forward Actions (describe, if applicable)	<i>FAR Regular patrols should be undertaken in sustainable use zones to discourage overcutting and the PDD should be updated accordingly. In the next verification, the frequency of patrols in the sustainable use zones should be followed up in accordance with the updated PDD.</i>

RISK MANAGEMENT	
Requirement: The project manages risks effectively throughout its design and implementation.	
Verification Questions: 2 and 4	
<p>6.1 Where leakage is likely to be significant, i.e. likely to reduce climate services by more than 5%, an approved approach has been used to monitor leakage and subtract actual leakage from climate services claimed, or as a minimum, a conservative estimation of likely leakage has been made and subsequently deducted from the climate services claimed (6.1; 6.2)</p> <p>6.2 The level of risk buffer that has been determined using an approved approach is adequate and is a minimum of 10% of climate services expected (6.3)</p> <p>6.3 Does the project maintain a buffer account and is the cumulative total of credits deposited in the account equal to the total reported in the latest annual report? (6.3)</p>	
A. Findings (describe)	<i>According to the PDD, VA is supposed to support establishment of regular forest patrols, hold community consultations on the importance of maintaining mangrove ecosystems and explore opportunities for alternative livelihoods for residents of the northern zone of mangroves, in collaboration with Asisty which manages the area. A remote sensing mangrove dynamics analysis is supposed to be repeated in year 5 of the project, including the mangroves in the north of the Velondriake LMMA as leakage could occurred in</i>

	<p><i>this place as result of restriction use of in the project. An assumption of 2.5% leakage reduction was set which should be reviewed in year 5 of the project using the remote sensing results. Additional mitigation measures to forestall leakage are also to promote alternative building materials for housing and fencing, with the promotion of living fences to replace mangrove pole wood.</i></p> <p><i>The on-site visit reveals that the use of mangroves wood in the project area decreased to respect the rules.</i></p> <p><i>However:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Patrollers mentioned that they neither conduct patrols nor carry out community awareness activities in the northern zone of the Velondriake. In addition, results from remote sensing are not clear to evaluate the level of leakage in this area.</i> - <i>Because of the continued ban on mangroves harvest (Decree 32100-2014), leakage in the Mikea dryforest nearby, managed by MNP, is likely high as people currently source woods for buidling and fences from this area. And since 2021, MNP has expanded its protection zone to include areas where people used to collect wood, increasing the restrictions. Besides, some Mikea's people have also left the MNP' area and started to settle in the project area.</i> - <i>Interviews also revealed a significant increase in the number of local population, which has led to the overexploitation of fishing products (fish and invertebrates) in recent years. The demand of wod is also expected to rise, sicne the project's inception and in the coming years. For example, in Lamboara, the population grew up from 315 in 2018 to 1490 at the time of the site visit.</i> - <i>The mitigation measures to prevent leakage from housing and fencing are facing applicability challenges. Fieldwork observations show that people are motivated to plant terrestrial trees but only a small number of people have managed to grow them successfully. the survival rates is very low due to the planted species struggling to adapt to the local climate and soil. Moreover, using stone as an alternative for building and fencing is preferred but challenging, as it is expensive by requiring cement.</i> - <i>The support for alternative livelihood is supposed to reduce pressure on fisheries and mangrove harvest, by providing alternative sources of income⁷. According to interviews, these activities are very appreciated and provide a significant incomes to beneficiaries. However, sea cucumber farming was stopped in 2022 due to the increasing frequency of product theft by outsiders. Besides, seaweed</i>
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⁷ According to the PDD, a partnership agreement between VA and the Indian Ocena Trépangs (IOT) society was signed in late 2009 for sea cucumber ranching (See Appendix 3, row 11). In addition, village-based seaweed farming was also initiated, in partnership with Ocean Farmers in 2011.

	<p><i>farming, which occurs in seven villages, has been plagued by disease in recent years, leading to a decline on production.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Beekeeping efforts are experiencing fluctuations due to technical challenges, and the yield remains low. However, many people remain highly interested in pursuing it. Residents of Lamboara have reported that the Mikea people have expertise in beekeeping, which should be explored to address technical issues and improve practices.</i> - <i>The summary executive of the remote sensing analysis results (Appendix 3, row 2) was provided to the IE, but it doesn't allow to effectively monitor potential leakage in the northern part of the Velondriake LMMA.</i> 		
B. Conformance	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
C. Corrective Actions (describe)	<p>CAR</p> <p>A. <i>The PDD should be updated to consider the unsuccessful planting of terrestrial trees and of the use of stones and, to propose strategies for improvement or suggest alternative solutions.</i></p> <p>NIR:</p> <p>B. <i>Please provide evidence that regular patrols are conducted in the northern part of the LMMA and results are considered to inform the management of project' leakage. In addition, please provide evidence that community consultations on the importance of maintaining mangrove ecosystems were hold and opportunities for alternative livelihoods for residents of the northern zone were explored.</i></p> <p>C. <i>Please provide more evidence from remote sensing analysis to monitor pontential leakage in the northern part of Velondriake LMMA. The focus of the analysis should be made in this area.</i></p> <p>CAR:</p> <p>D. <i>There are concerns about the accuracy of risk estimates and management due to the current challenges with alternative livelihoods aimed at easing pressure on mangroves. Since sea cucumber farming, seaweed ranching and beekiping are highly valued by local communities, the PDD should be updated to propose strategies to adress issues or suggest alternative solutions, in order to ensure project's sustainability.</i></p> <p>E. <i>The PDD should be updated to consider potential leakage in the dry forest nearby and also the impact of the expension of Mikea protected areas to the project. Collaboration with MNP should be done for their respective monitoring in order to propose contegency measure, in a</i></p>		

	<p><i>timely manner. It should be monitored and will be evaluated for the next verification.</i></p> <p><i>F. The PDD should be revised to consider the population growth and its associated risks, as it is influencing the level of pressure on mangroves. Additionally, the SOP for socioeconomic monitoring should incorporate population growth considerations.</i></p> <p><i>G. Considering that local communities are significantly affected by restrictions on their customary rights to use wood due to government regulations banning mangrove harvesting, BV and VA should continue lobbying the government and report efforts made in the future annual reports. The restrictions increase leakage and could conduct to unsustainable use of natural resources as people could be demotivated to support the project. Efforts made in terms of lobbying should be reported in annual reports.</i></p> <p><i>H. The restrictions increase leakage and may, in the mid and long-term, conduct to unsustainable use of natural resources as people could be demotivated to support the project. Efforts made in terms of lobbying to alleviate or delete these restrictions should be reported in the future annual reports.</i></p>
D. (Insert Project Coordinator's Name) Response	<p>CAR</p> <p><i>A. Alternative solutions to address this issue will be discussed with the Velondriake Association in October 2024, and the PDD will be updated accordingly..</i></p> <p>NIR:</p> <p><i>B. The Velondriake Association has patrollers who operate across the villages within the Velondriake LMMA. They conduct regular patrols every three months; however, no infractions in the mangroves have been reported in the north. In October, we will meet with the Velondriake Association to ensure that mangrove areas in there are regularly patrolled. Regarding alternative livelihoods, most villages in the northern part of the LMMA have access to seaweed farming. This year (2024), we will provide a list of villages with access to seaweed farming. Additionally, we will conduct community consultations to assess their needs in terms of mangrove management and alternative livelihoods..</i></p> <p><i>C. Provided</i></p> <p>CAR:</p> <p><i>D. As mentioned above, our next step is to discuss all these issues with the Velondriake Association and collaboratively define solutions with them. We will update the PDD accordingly.</i></p> <p><i>E. We will conduct internal discussions to determine the best approach for monitoring leakage in the nearby dry forest. Additionally, we will</i></p>

	<p><i>meet with MNP to understand their methods for monitoring and patrolling these dry forests and explore possibilities for data-sharing collaboration. The PDD will be updated accordingly.</i></p> <p><i>F. Over the next five years, we will ensure that population growth is taken into account. We will provide each village chief in the project area with a spreadsheet to record newcomers and track the number of residents.</i></p> <p><i>G. Advocating for the use rights of mangrove wood for local communities is a key priority for Blue Ventures and the Velondriake Association over the next three years. Progress on this initiative will be included in the upcoming Plan Vivo reports.</i></p> <p><i>H. Advocating for the use rights of mangrove wood for local communities is a key priority for Blue Ventures and the Velondriake Association over the next three years. Progress on this initiative will be included in the upcoming Plan Vivo reports.</i></p>
E. IE round 2 findings	<p>CAR</p> <p><i>A. Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p><i>B. Conformance. ✓with the following provision: Please provide the database with the results of monitoring in the northern part of the LMMA..</i></p> <p><i>C. Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p>CAR:</p> <p><i>D. Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p><i>E. Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p><i>F. Conformance. ✓ with the following provision: the SOP for socioeconomic surveys should be updated to incorporate population growth considerations. and give an approximate date by which you will be able to update it.</i></p> <p><i>G. Conformance. ✓</i></p> <p><i>H. Conformance. ✓</i></p>
I. Status	CLOSED
J. Forward Actions(describe, if applicable)	<p><i>FAR :The PDD should be updated with the following issues :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- Propose strategies for improvement or suggest alternative solutions for unsuccessful planting of terrestrial trees and of the use of stones.</i> <i>- Propose strategies to adress issues or suggest alternative solutions, in order to ensure project's sustainability for the cucumber farming,see weed ranching and beekiping</i> <i>- Consider potential leakage in the dry forest nearby and also the impact of the expansion of Mikea protected areas to the project.</i> <i>- The PDD should be revised to consider the population growth and its associated risks, as it is influencing the level of pressure on mangroves.</i>

PES AGREEMENT AND BENEFIT SHARING	
Requirement: project shares benefits equitably and transact ecosystem services benefits through clear PES Agreements with performance-based incentives.	
Verification Questions: 1, 2 and 6	
<p>7.1. Procedures for entering into a PES Agreement with participants are being applied correctly (8.2)</p> <p>7.2. Participants are entering into PES agreement voluntarily and according to the principle of free, prior, informed consent, in an appropriate language and format (8.3)</p> <p>7.3. PES Agreements are not removing, diminishing or threatening participant's land tenure (8.4)</p> <p>7.4. A fair and equitable benefit-sharing mechanism is in place and has been agreed with the participation of communities involved, identifying how PES funding will be distributed among participants (8.8; 8.9; 8.10)</p> <p>7.5. The project has committed to deliver at least 60% on average of the proceeds of the sales of Plan Vivo Certificates. Where less than 60% has been delivered, the project has justified why this was not possible (8.12)</p>	
A. Findings (describe)	<p><i>As noted in the last annual report (2022), no sales have occurred due to legal challenges, and the government's special account for receiving carbon revenue, known as the "Compte d'Affectation Special au Trésor (CAST)," was not operational during the verification period. Additionally, the Emission Reduction Purchase Agreement (ERPA), submitted to the Ministry of Environment (MEDD) in late 2021, is still awaiting the Minister's signature. Since only primary school scholarships were funded from the advance payment provided by BV, no formal procedures were established. However, meeting minutes regarding resource allocation decisions were recorded, and a database documenting the scholarship payment App since 2020 is available (See Appendix 3, row 4). According to the project coordinator, formal procedures for entering into a PES Agreement with participants will be define when the ERPA is signed.</i></p> <p><i>As mentioned earlier, carbon revenue is the primary motivation for local communities to support the project, and they are eagerly awaiting full payment. The on-site visit revealed that participants are voluntarily entering into PES agreements, with the advance payment, and they are well-informed, with all information provided in an appropriate language and format.</i></p> <p><i>Activities were prioritised in the benefit sharing Plan (BSP) established in 2017, through multiple rounds of consultations with local communities (Appendix 3, row 7). These activities comprise the construction of essential infrastructure currently lacking in villages such as wells, schools, meeting halls, clinics and marketplaces as well as scholarships for primary school children. Considering the limited advance payment, scholarship was prioritized and validated by the project's governance structures. However, during the on-site, residents in some villages with larger mangroves areas expressed concerns that benefit sharing is not equitable. They hope to receive more compensation than those in areas with smaller mangrove coverage. According to BV team, this concern was raised in 2017 but the project general assembly has decided to adopt the applied mechanism. BV entered into a PES</i></p>

	<p><i>agreement with VA, where the advance payment is exclusively allocated for scholarships. The IE found no evidence that PES Agreements are removing, diminishing or threatening participant's land tenure.</i></p> <p><i>During the consultations in 2017, it was agreed with local communities that 73% of sales will be provided to local communities for project activities and social development. This is mentioned in the PDD and aligned with the proposition of the Decree n°2021-1 113.</i></p>		
B. Conformance	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
C. Corrective Actions (describe)	<p><i>NIR:</i></p> <p><i>A. Please provide a signed agreement document between BV and VA regarding the advance payment.</i></p> <p><i>B. Please provide a signed document of the agreement made between VA, parents and schools for the scholarships</i></p> <p><i>CAR:</i></p> <p><i>C. Procedures for entering into a PES Agreement with participants should be defined when the ERPA is signed by the Minister.</i></p> <p><i>D. Benefit sharing mechanism should be re-discussed with local communities when ERPA is signed</i></p>		
D. (Insert Project Coordinator's Name) Response	<p><i>NIR:</i></p> <p><i>A. This will be provided</i></p> <p><i>B. This will be provided</i></p> <p><i>CAR:</i></p> <p><i>C. This will be defined and signed with the Ministry once the ERPA is signed</i></p> <p><i>D. This will be defined all stakeholders once the ERPA is signed</i></p>		
E. IE round 2 findings	<p><i>NIR:</i></p> <p><i>A. Conformance. ✓ with the following provision: Please give an approximate date by which you will be able to provide it.</i></p> <p><i>B. Conformance. ✓ with the following provision: Please give an approximate date by which you will be able to provide it.</i></p> <p><i>CAR:</i></p> <p><i>C. Conformance. ✓</i></p>		

	<i>D. Conformance. ✓</i>
F. Status	<i>CLOSED</i>

The Verifier: (Name in Capital Letters)

Signature: Andrianina Rakotosoa

Date: 10/02/2025

1.1. APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Specific issues raised from desk-based review

Annual Report	Reporting period	Desk based review	Any open issues / comments from the desk based review
2019 AR	January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019	See attached document: 2019_Annual Report Feedback_Tahiry Honko	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project to update the indicators to 12 patrols/month, as part of the 5-yearly PDD update prior to verification.
2020 AR	January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020	See attached document: 2020_Annual Report Feedback_Tahiry Honko	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project to update the indicator for planting area to 9-10 hectares per year, as part of the 5-yearly PDD update prior to verification - Project to update the indicators to 12 patrols/month, as part of the 5-yearly PDD update prior to verification. - Number of patrols not reached: some not occurred within the four villages including Ampasimara, Befandefa, Ankindranoke and Agnolignoly. - it appears there is a higher stump density count in Lamboara, possibly due to more illegal harvesting.
2021 AR	January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021	See attached document: 2021_Annual Report Feedback_Tahiry Honko	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To note for the site visit/sampling plan: it appears there is a higher stump density count in Ankilimalinike, possibly due to more illegal harvesting.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently no threshold for the strict conservation area - project to look into incorporating thresholds during the next 5-year verification.
2022_AR	January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022	See attached document: 2022_Annual Report Feedback_Tahiry Honko	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It appears there is a higher stump density count in Vatoavo, possibly due to more illegal harvesting

Appendix 2: Attendance Sheets during the on-site visit

blue ventures
beyond conservation

FICHE DE PRESENCE

OBJET : Verification audit (Blue ventures team & Gendin)

DATE : 22/07/2024

LIEU : Andavaboaba

N°	ANARANA	L	V	ASA/ANDRAIKITRA	TANA NIAVIA	SONIA
1	BIEN AIME	X		Field Program officer	Andava	
2	Gendin Rakotomahazo	X		National Lead Mangroves	Toliara	
3	FINA Celestin	X		CEO Velondriake	Andava	
4						
5						
6						

blue ventures
beyond conservation

VELONDRIAKE


FICHE DE PRESENCE

ANTONY : Verification Audit (VA member's board)

DATE : 22/07/2024

TOERANA : Andavaboaba

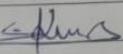
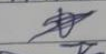
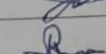
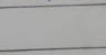
N°	ANRANA SY FANAMPINY	LAHY/VAVY	ANDRAIKITRA	SONIA
1	VALERIO HUARD Graftan	L	S.E Velondriake	
2	PROSPER Lorosa Germain	L	Komity Vondrona ATSMO (VDR)	
3	VELDMANA Sama	L	President Vondrona	
4	ZOZINE GODEFREY	L	Komity	
5	Romaine	V	Komity	
6	Irene Agnès	V	Komity VDR	
7				
8				
9				

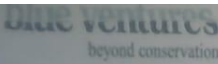
 **FICHE DE PRESENCE**

OBJET : Verification Audit

DATE : 23/07/2014

LIEU : ANKINDRANOKE

N°	ANARANA	L	V	ASA/ANDRAIKITRA	SONIA
1	VELONTINA ^{Iliso}	L		- Chy Fokontany	
2	MERLA baranda	L		CSE	MERELA
3	FANDROKO ^{Tsihaligao}	L		mpifany Tontely	
4	JOSEPHA	L		KMD	
5	RAMAROLAHY	L		Mpandriany Carbone	
6					
7					

 **FICHE DE PRESENCE**

(FANAMARIHAM-PAHATONGAVANA)

Antony : Verification Audit

Daty : 26/07/2014

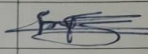


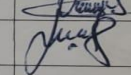
Toerana : Andriankitray

Fikambanana :

Isan'ny lahy (L):

Isan'ny vavy (V): Andriankitray

Fitambarany:

N°	Anarana sy fanampiny	Lahy	Vavy	Numéro Téléphone	Sonia
1	BRUNO Besswein	L		Lomotse	
2	Isivelonkery	L		Sonkatse	T. H.
3	Sabine clourisse		V	komutse, LM	
4	Voahangy		V	Lomotse	
5	Velomana sana	L		CSE	
6	JEAN BOSCO	L		Prod Vondrona	
				Lomotse	
				Mpanjono	
7					
8					
9					
10					

blue ventures
beyond conservation

VELONDRIAKE

FICHE DE PRESENCE
(FANAMARIHAM-PAHATONGAVANA)

Antony: Verification Audit
Daty: 24.01.24 Toerana: Tampolove Fikambanana:
Isan'ny lahy (L): Isan'ny vavy (V): Andraizite/ Fitambarany:

N°	Anarana sy fanampiny	Lahy	Vavy	Tanania Vice chef Fokontany Tampolove Mombelomotsy Tampolove	Numéro Téléphone	Sonia
1	POROSY	X			032 44 607 75	
2	MBIRO		X			
3	FARIERA	X		K. M. D		
4	TSIALALA	X		mpihary Zanga		
5	Jean Noël	X		C. S. E		
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						

blue ventures
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VELONDRIAKE

FICHE DE PRESENCE
(FANAMARIHAM-PAHATONGAVANA)

Antony: Verification Audit
Daty: 25.01.24 Toerana: Lambara Fikambanana:
Isan'ny lahy (L): Isan'ny vavy (V): Dsa/Andraizite Fitambarany:

N°	Anarana sy fanampiny	Lahy	Vavy	Tanania Président M.N.A. sefo FKI Selay Tantely CSE	Numéro Téléphone	Sonia
1	JOEL FRAUDAS	L.			032 51 149 85	
2	Rabotelo Joseph	L.			032 53 223 49	
3	Tovo. Jean	L.			032 60 919 36	
4	Toondraingy Lipo	L.				
5	Kristy	L.			032 52 871 68	
6						
7						
8						

Appendix 3: Cross-check of documents and database

N.	Items	Year	Details	Availability
1	SOP for socioeconomic monitoring, mangrove reforestation, mangrove plantation monitoring, forest patrols and infractions, CSE monitoring, carbon plot monitoring, biodiversity monitoring, establishing terrestrial plantations	2019		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	GEM Mapping Velondriake 2017-2023	2024	A PowerPoint presentation of the executive summary from remote sensing analysis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Homologation act of the Tahiry Honko carbon project	2023	Provided by the BNCCCREDD, the act recognizes legally the project as a REDD+ project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Special account created for Velondriake, Tahiry Honko and benefit sharing sheets	2024	Surveys of terrestrial biodiversity in the whole Velondriake forest	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Andrianaivo and Jivan (2024). Evaluation à mi-parcours de la biodiversité des mangroves dans la zone du projet Tahiry Honko, Baie des Assassins, Sud-Ouest de Madagascar	2024	Evaluation of the impact of the project on biodiversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Dashboard data of socioeconomic surveys TH_Landscape (2024)	2024	Evaluation of the socioeconomic impacts of the project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	BV (2017). Summary of village consultation' rounds for the benefit sharing	2017	List of top priority for use of money earned from the carbon sale were defined	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Community's information on 'Tahiry Honko' project's threshold and attendance sheet	2018		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Example of video of results' dissemination	2018	BV and VA present annual results of the project to local communities in each village, including awareness raising regarding the project's threshold	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

10	Register of complaints for the grievance mechanism			<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Convention between VA and IOT regarding the implementation of alternative livelihoods	2009	The promotion of alternative livelihoods is part of project technical specifications. The BV works with private sector IOT for the implementation of such activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Database of the monitoring of cut stumps in conservation zones, reported by CSE per village	2018-2023	Count the number of cut stumps in conservation zones per village	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13	Database of mangroves restoration	2014-2024	Reforestation made per village, including hectares of area restored, species and survival rate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14	Database recording infractions to <i>Dina</i> and <i>Dina</i> charged	2021-2020		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
15	Database of carbon plots monitoring	2018-2022	10 carbon plots are measured randomly each year for the annual report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16	Results for carbon plots remeasurement	2024	Results from the site visite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 4: Photographs during the on-site visit

Meeting with participants



VA members board



coordinator and technical team

BV





Ankindranoke



Agnolignoly





Tampolove



Lamboara



Remeasurement of carbon plots



Visit of reforestation zones



Observation of alternative livelihoods



Seaweed farming in Tampolove



Beekeeping in Ankindranoke



Lime's production and use



Tampolove



House coated with lime in Angolignoly



Demarcation of zones



Other observations



Terrestrial planted trees



Fences built with dry forest wood

