

Natural Forest Standard

Project Idea Note

Project Name:	
Location:	
Project Developer:	
Author:	
Date:	

Overview

The initial stage of registering a project with the Natural Forest Standard (NFS) is to submit a Project Idea Note (PIN). This document provides a concise summary of the proposed project, outlining its main features, objectives, participating entities, and intended activities.

A PIN is typically a short document of 5–10 pages, providing sufficient outline information in relation to the NFS Standard Requirements v1.2.1. The purpose of submitting a PIN is to confirm that the project concept is eligible and suitable for the Natural Forest Standard — specifically, that it meets the Standard’s eligibility criteria and demonstrates the feasibility of its proposed aims and activities.

In addition to the Standard Requirements, the NFS Guidance Document v1.4 provides essential insights to assist project developers in meeting the Standard’s normative requirements. This Guidance should be applied pragmatically and professionally, with a balanced approach that emphasises key aspects of project design, management, and implementation which contribute to effective forest conservation and restoration, while also ensuring tangible benefits for local and Indigenous communities.

Completed PIN documents should be submitted to:

info@naturalforeststandard.com and info@ecosystemcertification.org

Following submission, the ECO NFS Secretariat will review the PIN and provide feedback on whether the project is likely to qualify as a Natural Forest Standard project. Once accepted, the PIN will be listed in the Project Index section of the NFS website.

Please note that submission and publication of a PIN does not constitute project registration. It is a pre-registration step that confirms the project has met the initial eligibility requirements to proceed through the full NFS validation and registration process.

Purpose

The Project Idea Note (PIN) enables the Natural Forest Standard (NFS) to conduct an initial eligibility and suitability review of proposed projects. It should provide concise but sufficient information to assess alignment with the NFS Standard Requirements v1.2.1, including eligibility, governance, social, biodiversity, and carbon components.

All sections should be completed clearly, and relevant supporting maps, documentation, and references should be attached where applicable.

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Section 1: General Project Information

- **Project Title**
- **Country and Administrative Location**
- **Project Proponent(s)** (Legal name, registration, contact details)
- **Project Partners / Collaborators**
- **Point of Contact** (Name, position, email, phone)
- **Summary Description (max 300 words)** – Overview of aims, scope, and expected outcomes
- **Planned Project Activities** – (Avoided Deforestation / Avoided Degradation / Restoration / Mixed)
- **Approximate Project Size (ha)**
- **Estimated Project Start Date**
- **Anticipated Project Duration** (minimum 20 years per NFS Requirement 1.4.1)
- **Geographic Coordinates**
- **Maps and Spatial Data** – Attach shapefile, KML, or map showing project area and surroundings

Section 2: Eligibility Criteria

- Describe project activities to avoid deforestation/degradation or restore natural forest. Confirm exclusion of commercial timber extraction.
- Confirm project area $\geq 10,000$ ha and provide documentation (land registry, GIS evidence).
- Describe legal status of land and provide evidence of use rights and/or carbon rights.
- Confirm compliance with national laws and ratified treaties.
- Explain additionality relative to existing policy or law; include baseline deforestation drivers.
- Provide project timescale and permanence strategy.
- Describe jurisdictional collaboration with municipal/state authorities and coordination with existing REDD+ or land use programs.

Section 3: Governance, Social and Biodiversity Safeguards

- Describe Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process, including whether it has been initiated or completed.
- Outline benefit-sharing mechanisms for local people and support for sustainable ecosystem management.
- Describe communication channels and frequency of engagement with stakeholders.
- Outline dispute resolution mechanisms, including any independent arbitration processes.
- Describe biodiversity maintenance measures (e.g., habitat protection, species monitoring, restoration zones).

Section 4: Project Management and Implementation

- Summarize the Project Management Plan, governance structure, and implementing partners.
- Describe the Monitoring System for carbon, biodiversity, and social indicators (tools, datasets, frequency).
- Outline the Reporting Plan – how progress and results will be published, including Project Implementation Reports (PIR).

Section 5: Quantification of Carbon Benefits

- Describe the Baseline Scenario – land use trends and deforestation drivers in the absence of project activity.
- Indicate Methodological Approach – models or methods to be used for baseline and emissions quantification.
- Identify Carbon Pools Considered – above/below-ground biomass, soil carbon, dead wood, etc.
- Summarize Assumptions and Data Sources, including factors and evidence used.
- Outline Leakage Mitigation measures to minimise displacement of activities.
- Describe Non-Permanence Risk Management – risk identification and mitigation.
- Provide Estimated Emission Reductions (tCO₂e/year) and calculation basis, if available.

Section 6: Biodiversity Assessment

- Describe Baseline Biodiversity – major ecosystems, key species, conservation status.
- Summarize Expected Biodiversity Outcomes – how biodiversity will be maintained or enhanced.
- Identify Data Availability – sources for biodiversity assessment using the NFS Normative Biodiversity Metric.

Section 7: Stakeholder Context

- Describe Community and Land Use Context – population, settlements, forest use.
- Summarize Socio-Economic Conditions – livelihoods, forest dependence, potential impacts.
- Provide Stakeholder Mapping – key local, regional, and national stakeholders.
- Outline Engagement Plan – how stakeholders will participate in project decisions and implementation.

Section 8: Supporting Documentation

- ☐ Map(s) of project boundary (PDF/GIS)
- ☐ Land tenure or carbon rights evidence
- ☐ FPIC or stakeholder consultation records
- ☐ Letters of support from jurisdictional authorities
- ☐ Preliminary carbon data or remote-sensing analysis (if available)
- ☐ Biodiversity or species inventories (if available)
- ☐ Any other relevant documentation

Section 9: Declaration

We hereby declare that the information provided in this Project Idea Note is accurate to the best of our knowledge, and that the proposed project activities are consistent with the principles of the Natural Forest Standard.

Authorised Representative(s)

- 1.** Name: _____

 Title: _____

 Organisation: _____

 Signature: _____

 Date: _____

- 2.** Name: _____

 Title: _____

 Organisation: _____

 Signature: _____

 Date: _____

- 3.** Name: _____

 Title: _____

 Organisation: _____

 Signature: _____

 Date: _____