


## Integrated solutions for resilient forests, land, and biodiversity

**NIRAS International Consulting works at the intersection of ecosystems and societies, ensuring forests, landscapes, and biodiversity remain productive for generations to come. Our holistic approach links conservation and governance with livelihoods and climate goals, enabling inclusive and sustainable land use. With in-house specialists across four continents and a global network of experts, we deliver cutting-edge support in forestry, agroforestry, biodiversity conservation, GIS and earth observation, and innovative fund management – turning local priorities into lasting global impact.**

A large, semi-transparent, dark red watermark of the NIRAS logo is positioned diagonally across the bottom half of the page, behind the text.



# Our Offering

For the past 50 years, NIRAS has been committed to protecting and promoting the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems. We have implemented over **500** projects focused on forests, land use planning, biodiversity monitoring, and rural development.

We view people as a central element of landscapes, and we design and implement forestry and natural resource management programmes to ensure that ecosystems are productive for future generations. Our services balance environmental, social, and economic benefits. We are experts in participatory integrated landscape management approaches engaging stakeholders to realise climate, biodiversity and livelihood goals.

The services we offer span the forestry, land management, biodiversity conservation and GIS and remote sensing sectors.

Our in-house team comprises more than 30 specialists in the forestry, land and biodiversity sector located across our offices and hubs in Africa, Asia, Europe and South America. We have a wider network of over 5,000 natural resource management specialists, giving us a truly global geographical reach.



**30** *specialists in the forestry, land and biodiversity sector located across our offices and hubs in Africa, Asia, Europe and South America*

**5,000** *natural resource management specialists*



**NIRAS takes a holistic approach to land management, forests, and biodiversity—supporting environmental goals, local people's rights, and national priorities such as heritage and economic development.**



# Forestry



NIRAS has decades of accumulated experience developing sustainable forest management, agroforestry, and landscape resilience in communal, private and state-owned forests. We have worked in collaboration with communities, governments, international agencies, and non-governmental organisations. Our approach integrates environmental sustainability with socio-economic development, ensuring that forestry practices contribute to broader goals such as poverty reduction, carbon sequestration and climate resilience.

We offer a comprehensive range of services to support forest management, including community management of natural forests, value chain development, law enforcement systems, production forest management practices and landscape-level interventions, including land cover, land use, and land use change assessments. We specialise in supporting policy and institutional strengthening and sustainable commodity trade, helping both public and private sector actors to achieve their land management goals.

## Sustainable Forest Management

NIRAS' technical assistance and programme management services include:

- Forest restoration, afforestation and conservation;
- Plantation establishment and management, including support to smallholder woodlots;
- Protected Area (PA) management;
- Forest resource assessments;
- Forest management planning and implementation, including community-based management frameworks;
- Value chain and market development for sustainable forest products;
- Design and implementation of conservation incentives, payment for ecosystem services (PES) schemes and supporting access to voluntary carbon markets.



## Territorios Forestales Sostenibles (TEFOS)



**FUNDER**  
FCDO



**DURATION**  
2024-2026



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 11.8M

In Colombia, we are implementing TEFOS, a UK FCDO flagship programme to reduce pressure in deforestation hotspots through the development of conservation incentives and sustainable economic activities for rural communities. The objectives are to strengthen communities' capacities and knowledge on sustainable forest management while promoting improved market access for sustainable forest products and developing conservation incentives in areas with land-use restrictions. By combining scientific research, community engagement, and policy support, NIRAS ensures that forest conservation efforts are both inclusive and sustainable.

[Learn more here](#)



*With an investment of **£64 million**, TEFOS seeks to support the Colombian Government in its efforts to address deforestation and climate change between 2020 and 2026.*



## Mobilising Finance for Forests (MFF)



**FUNDER**  
DESNZ & FMO



**DURATION**  
2022-2026



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 5.9M

NIRAS is managing the MFF technical assistance facility (TA Facility) to help agro and forestry companies grow and expand, while reducing deforestation in vulnerable tropical forests in Africa, Asia and Latin America. MFF invests in private companies whose activities have a high degree of impact on at-risk tropical forests and helps them reorient their activities or grow their businesses away from deforestation and towards deforestation-free practices while producing a financial return for the companies. NIRAS – in a consortium with the Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) and Form International – manages the TA Facility for MFF investees, providing world-class expertise, specifically tailored to their needs.

[Learn more here](#)



*MFF can be considered an impact investor – a growing space which looks promising as a way to meet the enormous SDG financing gap. MFF is global in scope, targeting developing countries with vulnerable tropical forest areas.*

## Forest Management for Sustainable Production in the Amazon programme



**FUNDER**  
KfW



**DURATION**  
2014-2025



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 6.7M

NIRAS was contracted to deliver this programme to promote the management of public forests for sustainable production in Brazil. NIRAS is working in partnership with Detzel Consulting to support the Brazilian Forestry Service (SFB) and the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio) in the implementation of the project since 2014. In reducing deforestation and promoting the sustainable economic use of forests, the project aims to conserve resources for generations to come. As part of these efforts, the NIRAS consortium is providing support to demarcate and manage 24 national forests, *Floresta Nacional*, protected areas where no logging can take place unless governed by a concession. Through strengthened national forest management, implementation of forest concessions, and providing training on sustainable forest practices, the project is supporting sustainable forest production and improved institutional protection of natural forests. The project has so far supported the creation of 1,500 jobs through businesses supplying goods and services to the forest sector.

[Learn more here](#)



The NIRAS consortium is providing support to demarcate and manage

## 24 national forests in Brazil

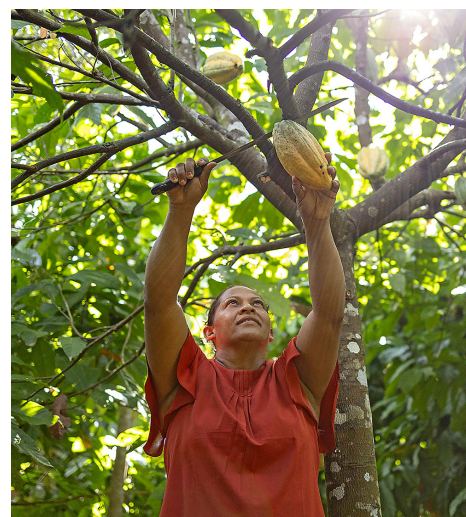
The project has so far supported the creation of

## 1,500 jobs



# Agroforestry

NIRAS has extensive experience in agroforestry systems, with an understanding of their role and potential in reversing deforestation and degradation scenarios and in generating improvements for agricultural production. We have experience in establishing mixed agroforestry systems, including systems combining trees, crops and livestock. We are also experienced in promoting incentives for farmers to invest in agroforestry to ensure their long-term investment. NIRAS has been at the forefront of agroforestry solutions that restore degraded lands, bolster community livelihoods, and mitigate climate impacts. By implementing nature-based solutions worldwide, NIRAS has helped plant over a million trees and supported thousands of smallholder farmers in creating sustainable, diverse agroforestry systems.



## Service Provider for Promotion of Agroforestry Systems in Zambezia Province, Mozambique



**FUNDER**  
World Bank



**DURATION**  
2019-2022



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 2M

NIRAS was the **Service Provider for the Promotion of Agroforestry Systems** in Zambezia Province, Mozambique for the World Bank. The project achieved the establishment of over 1000 ha of agroforestry to address domestic and market requirements related to biomass energy, wood, fruit, and other non-timber products and provided direct benefits to over 1,500 smallholder households. The results were encouraging as previously agroforestry systems had hardly been applied in Zambezia. Agroforestry models were achieved by applying strong extension service support and a participatory methodology, as well as developing models to showcase the economic viability of nitrogen-fixing trees. Through training, market linkage support, and participatory planning, NIRAS helped ensure the agroforestry solutions were locally owned and globally impactful.



*In Mozambique, established over **1000 ha** of agroforestry to address domestic and market requirements related to biomass energy, wood, fruit, and other non-timber products and provided direct benefits to over **1,500** smallholder households.*





# Forest Economies and Livelihoods

NIRAS works across a full range of forestry-related economic activities, including timber, wood processing, non-timber forest products, carbon trading and low deforestation commodities. We are specialists in supporting land managers to identify and develop economic opportunities that can build sustainable businesses, support community livelihoods and meet ecosystem, biodiversity and climate goals. In many of our programmes, we have showcased effective approaches to protect the rights and livelihoods of indigenous people and local communities and support gender equality and social inclusion. We recognise the importance of local private sector firms, civil society organisations and research institutions in supporting forest entrepreneurs, and we often partner with them to enhance efficient service delivery.

Key services include:

- Development of private forestry, including producer's associations;
- Forest products market and value chain analysis;
- Forest-based value chain development of timber, processed wood and non-timber forest products;
- Support to the sustainable development of forestry enterprises, business and investments including inclusive business models and job creation;
- Land use planning integrating sustainable livelihoods, carbon and conservation goals.



## Participatory Plantation Forestry Programme PFP (Phase 2)



### FUNDER

Ministry for Foreign  
Affairs of Finland



### DURATION

2019-2024



### CONTRACT VALUE

EUR 10.8M

The PFP was the second phase of a long-term partnership between the Governments of Tanzania and Finland. PFP supported sustainable and inclusive private plantation forestry and strengthening of wood industries in the southern highlands of Tanzania to foster sustainable forest economies and enhance livelihoods in forest-dependent communities. Partnering with Indufor, NIRAS provided national experts and project support staff and technical backstopping to support tree-growing smallholders and related SMEs with training and capacity building, access to finance and sustainable production along the value chain. PFP made significant strides in strengthening over 80 tree growers' associations by developing guidelines, establishing leadership structures, and providing access to financing. The project also developed over 1,800 woodlot management plans, trained over 55,000 villagers and 7,000 tree growers, and issued over 800 certificates of Customary Right of Occupancy, enhancing tenure security for tree growers.



*The Participatory Plantation Forestry Programme developed over **1,800** woodlot management plans, trained over **55,000** villagers and **7,000** tree growers, and issued over **800** certificates of Customary Right of Occupancy, enhancing tenure security for tree growers.*

[Learn more here](#)



## Green Economic Growth (GEG) for Papua Provinces Programme



**FUNDER**  
FCDO



**DURATION**  
2018-2023



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 11.6M

The GEG programme worked to promote sustainable economic development in the private sector and build the capacity of local authorities to manage this development and attract investors to Papua. NIRAS' role was to provide technical assistance to Papuan smallholder farmers as well as micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to increase their productivity and the quality of their commodities while protecting the area's vulnerable forests. GEG focused on agricultural commodities (sago, cacao, coffee, virgin coconut oil, seaweed and nutmeg) and the value-added, downstream products that can be developed from those commodities. The project delivered about £93 million in wealth for the Papuan economy in one year (2021-2022), contributed to 31,414 hectares of land under improved natural resource management (22% directly related to GEG intervention), and improved the livelihoods of 44,513 forest-dependent people, with a significant focus on women and youth.

[Learn more here](#)



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**£93 million**

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## Forestry, Land Use, and Value Chains Development in Tanzania (FORLAND) Project



**FUNDER**  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland



**DURATION**  
2025-2029



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 20M

FORLAND aims to promote sustainable forestry practices, improve livelihoods, and strengthen Tanzania's economic growth. This initiative, supported by the Governments of Finland and Tanzania, focuses on enhancing community-based forest management (CBFM), plantation forestry, and value chain development. By empowering smallholder tree growers and their organisations with effective plantation management techniques, the project aims to optimise yields and ensure sustainable practices. Additionally, FORLAND promotes sustainable management of Miombo natural forests through CBFM, enabling communities to take an active role in conserving their forest resources. By supporting CBFM communities, tree growers, and small and medium-sized enterprises to improve their production and business skills, the project facilitates value-added production and marketing, thereby increasing their income and enhancing their livelihoods. To create a conducive environment for these activities, the project also focuses on strengthening institutions, particularly in forest education.

[Learn more here](#)



FORLAND promotes sustainable management of Miombo natural forests through **community-based forest management**, enabling communities to take an active role in conserving their forest resources.



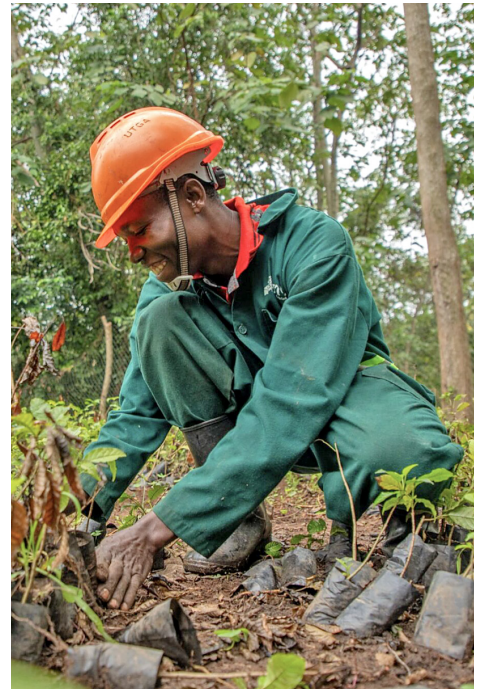
# Forest Governance

NIRAS assists in the development and reform of forestry policies and institutions to support sustainable forestry. Our approach builds strong legal, institutional and regulatory frameworks, effective cross-sectoral coordination, transparent decision making and effective law enforcement to combat deforestation and support the sustainable management of forests.

Key services include:

- Advice and technical assistance to develop forest strategy and policy;
- Support to institution building and governance at national and sub-national levels;
- Support to the formulation of national forest plans, European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan (FLEGT) and forest reform processes;
- Land use planning, stakeholder engagement and capacity development for landscape governance.

Recently, NIRAS has helped countries align forest governance with international climate and biodiversity commitments. For instance, we facilitated a review and revision of **Uganda's Forestry Policy and National Forest Plan** between 2021–2022 and managed the UK's contribution to the **UK-China Cooperation in International Forest Investment and Trade (InFIT)** programme. Additionally, NIRAS has supported the **Kenya Forest Service** to strengthen policy and institutional arrangements to serve the needs of communities, private sector, government and civil society.



## Mobilisation of Facilitation Units for Voluntary Partnership Agreements on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade



**FUNDER**  
AFD

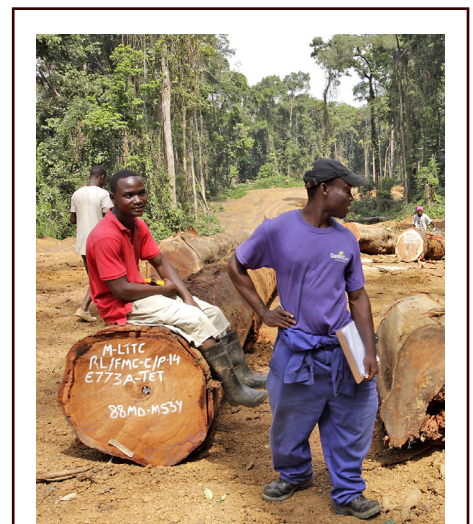


**DURATION**  
2023-2027



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 7.2M

The EU champions legal timber trade via Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) with timber-producing nations. Recognising the need for multi-stakeholder involvement, NIRAS has been contracted to support the establishment of Facilitation Units in several target countries to help stakeholders achieve VPA compliance. The VPA Facilitation Units drive a deliberative process, furnishing crucial information and inputs to support local ownership and advance VPA implementation. Anticipated outcomes encompass supporting joint VPA structures, providing information on VPA implementation progress, documenting VPA lessons learned, documenting progress on improved forest governance and management, and communicating information on VPA implementation plan milestones. NIRAS has established Facilitation Units in the Republic of Congo and Liberia, and there are plans for expansion into Guyana, Cameroon, Ghana, and the Central African Republic.



*NIRAS has established Facilitation Units to help stakeholders achieve Voluntary Partnership Agreements compliance in the Republic of **Congo** and **Liberia**, with plans for expansion into **Guyana, Cameroon, Ghana**, and the **Central African Republic**.*

[Learn more here](#)



# Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade



**FUNDER**  
KfW/BMZ



**DURATION**  
2022-2027



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 4.1M

This project in Lao PDR aims to benefit forest ecosystems and populations dependent on forests and their products from the implementation of selected elements of the Timber Legality Assurance System (TLAS) and a legality certificate for timber in Laos. Furthermore, technical and financial support will be given to the Lao wood sector (timber processors and producers under a supply chain perspective). The FLEGT-FC will contribute to the development of a nation-wide Lao TLAS to facilitate the exportation of legal timber and wood products within the region. In the long-term, Laos hopefully will also benefit from timber-exports to the EU. NIRAS supports managerial and operational capacity of the project, including monitoring and evaluation.



*The **Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade** project in Lao PDR aims to benefit forest ecosystems and populations dependent on forests and their products from the implementation of selected elements of the TLAS and a legality certificate for timber in Laos.*





# Land



NIRAS offers an extensive range of services aimed at fostering effective land tenure regimes, sustainable land management, and effective governance. We support governments in the development of cost-effective land administration systems that meet national objectives and conform to international standards. These systems are adjusted to local conditions and developed within the capabilities of the country's national administration.

With our public, private, and civil society partners, NIRAS aims to ensure that land tenure and management contribute to reducing poverty, enhancing livelihoods, strengthening investment opportunities, guaranteeing sound environmental management, contributing to social inclusion and justice, empowering women and reducing conflict.

## Land Governance and Institutional Capacity Building

NIRAS assists governments in revising and updating land policies and laws. Effective land governance enables investment, economic growth and social stability. NIRAS also strengthens institutional frameworks, enhances administrative capabilities, and improves governance within the land sector. Supporting reform, improving institutional structures, and enhancing human resource development enables an efficient and transparent land management system to meet the needs of citizens. NIRAS also supports the development of education systems that enhance knowledge and skills in land management. Our initiatives include the creation of curricula, training programmes, and educational materials that build local capacity and expertise.



## Responsible Investment and Governance in Land (RGIL)



**FUNDER**  
GIZ



**DURATION**  
2020-2023



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 1.3M

As part of its Global Programme Responsible Land Policy, GIZ contracted NIRAS to deliver services to support the RGIL project, which aimed to contribute to increased agricultural productivity and development in Ethiopia, Lao PDR and Uganda. NIRAS' role in the project was to strengthen the capacities of: (1) government authorities to administer and guide investments in land in accordance with established legislation and recognised principles such as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of national food security as well as responsible agricultural investment; (2) investors to comply with internationally recognised principles for responsible investments in land; and (3) local land users, especially smallholders and vulnerable groups to defend their legitimate rights to land and advocate for their needs in land investment processes.



[Learn more here](#)



# Land Rights and Registration

Land conflicts can hinder development and disrupt social harmony. NIRAS ensures that the legitimate tenure rights of women and men are recognised on an equal basis and that tenure rights of the most vulnerable populations are respected. Gender and social inclusion are integral to our approach. We ensure that land policies, laws, and practices are inclusive, promoting the rights and participation of women, indigenous peoples, and other marginalised groups in land governance. Our services include the assessment of investment impacts and the implementation of safeguards to protect community rights and natural resources.



## Responsible and Innovative Land Administration in Ethiopia (REILA I, II, III)



### FUNDER

Ministry for Foreign  
Affairs Finland



### DURATION

2011-2028



### CONTRACT VALUE

EUR 30.8M

For over 25 years, NIRAS has been centrally involved in developing Ethiopia's land administration system. Since 2011, NIRAS has managed the three phases of the Finnish-funded REILA project, which has succeeded in establishing an efficient, transparent, and equitable system for land registration for Ethiopia. The REILA project's first phase improved land administration in Amhara and Benishangul-Gumuz, leading to the government adopting REILA's system nationwide for registering over 50 million rural land parcels. The project also saw massive gains in terms of IT infrastructure in the form of the National Land Administration Information System (NRLAIS), which stores official land holding data, handles systematic land registration and manages continuous land transactions. REILA has offered on-the-job training and technical training to various government employees in the land administration sector and over 1,400 government employees have been trained in the use and administration of NRLAIS. Part of the equitable distribution of land involves ensuring that parcels are registered to women as well as men, preventing discrimination and ensuring women's full and effective participation in the process. Of the approximately 1.2 million land parcels registered during REILA phase II, 77% were registered to women, either jointly within marriage or to female-headed households. This development represents a significant distribution of wealth to those women, which in turn offers them a huge improvement in their livelihoods and their families' welfare.



[Learn more here](#)

# 1400

government employees have been trained in the use and administration of the National Land Administration Information System

# 1.2 million

land parcels registered during REILA phase II

# 77%

were registered to women



# Participatory Mapping and Planning (PMaP) 4 and 8



## FUNDER

Millennium Challenge Account



## DURATION

2016-2018



## CONTRACT VALUE

EUR 9.6M

Under the Green Prosperity Project in Indonesia, NIRAS implemented PMaP 4 and 8 to improve land use security and increase adherence to spatial plans by investors, governments and communities. PMaP 4 built the capacity of government agencies in spatial planning, enforcement, and management of land use information in spatially enabled databases. In PMaP 8, the team mapped the boundaries of 82 villages in Riau Province in a very short span of 10.5 months. Attention was given to the participation of women and disadvantaged groups. In addition to generating spatial data, the process also resolved land conflicts and demarcated agricultural areas and land required for natural resource management. Our support enabled (1) increased efficiency of the permit and licensing process; (2) reduced conflicts between and among adjacent villages; and (3) enhanced public perception of transparency and fairness in the permit and licensing processes.

[Learn more here](#)



**PMaP 4** built the capacity of government agencies in spatial planning, enforcement, and management of land use information in spatially-enabled databases. In **PMaP 8**, the team mapped the boundaries of **82 villages** in Riau Province in a very short span of **10.5 months**. Attention was given to the participation of women and disadvantaged groups.





# Development of Land Information Systems

Land conflicts can hinder development and disrupt social harmony. NIRAS ensures that the legitimate tenure rights of women and men are recognised on an equal basis and that tenure rights of the most vulnerable populations are respected. Gender and social inclusion are integral to our approach. We ensure that land policies, laws, and practices are inclusive, promoting the rights and participation of women, indigenous peoples, and other marginalised groups in land governance. Our services include the assessment of investment impacts and the implementation of safeguards to protect community rights and natural resources.



## A Common Mapping Platform and Methodology for Local Land Use Planning in Cameroon



**FUNDER**  
European Forest  
Institute (EFI)

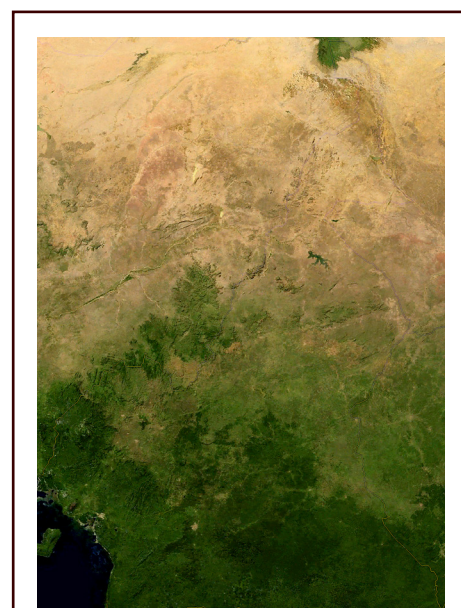


**DURATION**  
2017-2018

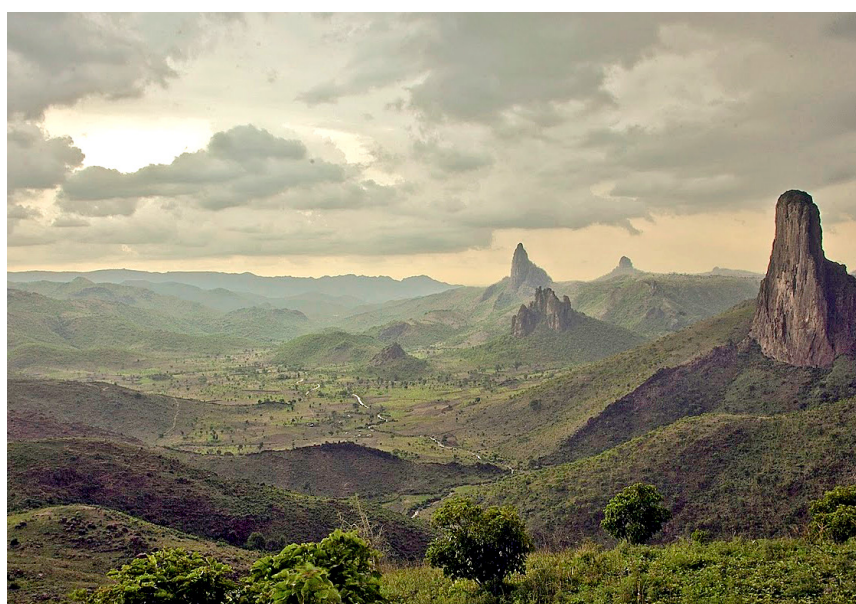


**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 224K

EFI contracted NIRAS to design, build and test a common mapping platform to improve the transparency of spatial planning in Cameroon, focussing on providing information and tools that can support the participatory preparation of local land use and sustainable development plans at the municipal level. The online information system made available various types of topographical and land use information to those who need it during multi-stakeholder land use planning and fostered a common understanding between relevant ministries, regional delegations, civil society and private sector organisations around the data required, methodology and decision-support tools to prepare local land use plans.



*NIRAS designed, built and tested a common mapping platform to improve the transparency of spatial planning in Cameroon, focussing on providing information and tools that can support the participatory preparation of **Local Land Use** and **Sustainable Development Plans** at the municipal level.*



# Biodiversity Conservation



NIRAS has over 30 years' of experience in biodiversity conservation, supporting donors, governments, NGOs and the private sector at global, national, and landscape levels.

We offer extensive in-house expertise focused on conservation in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. We provide services such as grant administration, technical

assistance for protected area management, spatial analysis of ecosystems, valuation of ecosystem services, biodiversity monitoring, and high-quality desk- and field-based research. NIRAS also supports policymakers and practitioners to develop their capacity to manage and enhance natural capital and monitor and evaluate the impact of their work.

## Conservation with Communities and Protected Areas

NIRAS' biodiversity conservation services include developing management and investment plans for terrestrial and aquatic protected areas, strengthening government and non-government institutional capacity, supporting restoration of degraded ecosystems and implementation of community-based conservation interventions. We rely on a suite of tools enabling us to value ecosystem services, identify incentives, facilitate investment and support carbon and bundled Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes. NIRAS works closely with indigenous peoples and local communities to create sustainable livelihood opportunities alleviating pressure on biodiversity and forest resources.



## Sustainable Forest and Biodiversity Management in Borneo



### FUNDER

Asian Development Bank/  
Government of Indonesia



### DURATION

2016-2019



### CONTRACT VALUE

EUR 3M

NIRAS provided technical assistance to the Government of Indonesia to enhance sustainable forest and biodiversity management in the "Heart of Borneo" region which holds 6% of global biodiversity and provides ecosystem services for 12 million local and indigenous people. We provided technical assistance to strengthen government capacity in relation to sustainable forest and biodiversity management planning and implementation and piloted REDD+ and PES models. The NIRAS team worked closely with the Directorate of Environmental Services and Conservation Areas of the Ministry of Forestry to achieve the overall project goal of improvement in both community wellbeing and sustainable forest and biodiversity management in the selected districts. Key outcomes of the project included: (1) building forestry protection capacity across the 4 provinces and 17 districts of Kalimantan; (2) conducting biodiversity and socioeconomic surveys for Betung Kerihun and Kayang Mentarang National Parks to provide data for management of key ecosystems and effective models of cooperation with communities in and around the parks; and (3) developing two REDD+ pilot projects to provide alternative livelihood options to local communities.



NIRAS provided technical assistance in the "Heart of Borneo" region which holds

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## Conservation and Sustainable Use of Selva Maya in Central America Phase 1 & 2



**FUNDER**  
GIZ



**DURATION**  
2013-2019



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 1.2M

NIRAS implemented the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Selva Maya in Central America Phase 1 & 2 project in Belize, Guatemala, and Mexico for GIZ to promote socio-economic development, ensuring a balanced approach to the preservation of this vital ecosystem. Strengthened control mechanisms were put in place to combat forest fires, reallocate land, curb illegal logging, and prevent the illicit trade of endangered species. NIRAS also supported environmental protection authorities and civil society organisations to devise and implement innovative pilot projects focused on generating income from timber and non-timber forest products and eco-tourism. By providing alternative sources of livelihood, these initiatives not only supported conservation efforts but also promoted economic development within local communities.



## The Agrobiodiversity Initiative (TABI) in Lao PDR, Phase I–III



**FUNDER**  
SDC



**DURATION**  
2009-2021



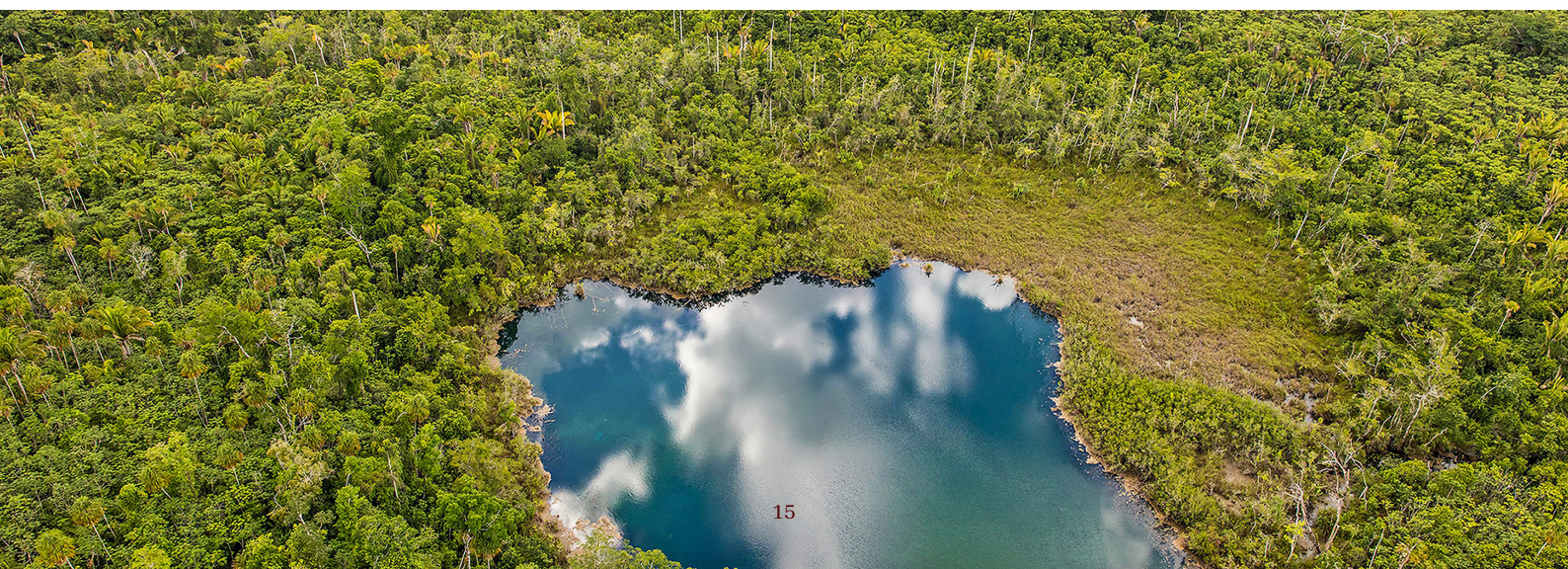
**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 15.5m

The overall goal of TABI was to contribute to poverty alleviation and improved livelihoods of upland communities through sustainable management and use of Lao PDR agrobiodiversity in multi-functional landscapes. NIRAS worked on three phases of TABI starting in 2009. We identified, tested, and disseminated numerous agrobiodiversity-based livelihood models with a positive impact on income, nutrition and ecosystem services, bringing 700,000 ha of land under improved planning. NIRAS also supported the development of a popular participative approach for forest and land use planning and management (pFALUPAM), which is based on the specific agroecological zones and land-use of each target village.



*NIRAS worked on three phases of TABI from 2009 and identified, tested, and disseminated numerous agrobiodiversity-based livelihood models with a positive impact on income, nutrition and ecosystem services, bringing **700,000 ha** of land under improved planning.*

[Learn more here](#)





# Biodiversity and Ecosystem Monitoring

NIRAS has extensive experience in developing monitoring frameworks and systems to improve biodiversity and habitat knowledge bases. Using both remote assessment and field studies, NIRAS conducts baseline assessments of social, economic, and ecological drivers of ecosystem degradation, surveys of key natural habitats and biodiversity using satellite data, and modelling of biodiversity hotspots and biodiversity risk mapping. These essential tools support land managers to assess and manage ecosystems, enable dialogue with land users and improve policy and investment decision-making.

Key services include:

- Detailed biodiversity surveys;
- Biodiversity risk mapping;
- Mapping drivers of habitat loss;
- Biodiversity hotspot modelling;
- Ecosystem valuation.

## Spatial analysis to inform ecosystem decision-making:

NIRAS creates, manages, shares, and displays spatial and remotely sensed information for multiple purposes that helps users make informed and timely decisions. We use software such as MapInfo, ESRI ArcGIS and open-source GIS (QGIS, ArcGIS, and GRASS) to deliver data capture and cleansing services and high quality outputs, monitoring and analysing project impacts on forest cover.

## Development of a Biophysical and Ecological Monitoring System (BEMS) in Malawi



### FUNDER

World Bank/Ministry of  
Water and Sanitation Malawi



### DURATION

2022-2025



### CONTRACT VALUE

EUR 224K

Under the Malawi Watershed Services Improvement Project (MWASIP), NIRAS is leading the development and operationalisation of a BEMS to track and report on progress in the nation's sustainable land management-related policies, strategies and investment plans. The BEMS is giving stakeholders and the Malawi Government insights into the effectiveness of restoration efforts and enables to better coordinate restoration-related programmes and meet requirements from funding institutions. NIRAS is also focusing on building capacity on the utilisation and management of the BEMS, building adaptive capacity, supporting funding institutions in making more informed investment decisions, better planning and targeting, and mobilising additional finance.

[Learn more here](#)





# Digitalisation, GIS & Earth Observation Systems



NIRAS has the capability to use a wide range of digital solutions – like forest information systems, earth observation technologies and artificial intelligence – to support improved governance and inclusive decision-making of natural resources. NIRAS collaborates with institutional partners to build capacity and enabling the collection, analysis and use of high-quality data. We use remotely sensed data to develop land use change

analysis, explore options and scenarios, carry out ecosystem services valuation assessments and inform forest information systems (FIS). Our Earth observation and GIS competencies encompass cartography, mapping and visualisation, spatial analysis, digitising and modelling, data management and analysis, as well as the calibration and validation of satellite-derived data.

NIRAS delivers a wide range of specialised digitalisation services in the forestry and land sectors, including:

- Automating real-time monitoring of biodiversity and forest-related metrics, including land use change and socioeconomic metrics, using wide range of technologies (e.g. remote sensing, geographical information systems, drones, ground-based sensors);
- Digital solutions for forest-based value chain development of timber and non-timber forest products;
- Application of frontier technologies for automating processes and decision making (e.g. artificial intelligence, block-chain, sensors and internet-of-things);
- Forest and biodiversity information systems, development of bespoke systems supporting real-time decision-making using cloud-based technologies for data storage and sharing;
- Advanced data science analysis skills to automate the processing and analysis of new large environmental and social data sources;
- Mapping and optimising conservation planning for terrestrial and aquatic environments using GIS and optimisation algorithms respectively;
- Digital solutions for enhancing environmental education, training, capacity building and awareness raising; and
- Platforms to strengthen business models for conservation, linking buyers and sellers (e.g. payment for ecosystem services, REDD+).

Read about NIRAS' Digitalisation capabilities for the development sector in the link below.

[Learn more here](#)





## Management Information System for the Forestry Sector in Vietnam (FORMIS)



### FUNDER

MFA Finland and  
Government of Vietnam



### DURATION

Phase I: 2009-2013;  
Phase II: 2013-2018



### CONTRACT VALUE

EUR 9.7M

In the FORMIS project, NIRAS established a management information system for Vietnam's forestry sector, supporting sector-wide forest governance and decision-making. The system integrated all forest-related Earth observation and attributed data previously scattered in various organisations in a centralised platform through cloud technology and service-oriented architecture, including agroforestry and forest conversion due to agricultural activities. Users can generate informed forest resource monitoring reports based on emerging needs as the technology allows for real-time data. Through the two phases of the project, activities were scaled up to provide up-to-date forest resource data which can now be used for effective forest management and supporting the reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) as well as forest law enforcement, governance, and trade (FLEGT) activities. The use of the system is now written into national policy and is being used by over 750 forest administration agencies in 60 provinces of Vietnam.



*FORMIS integrated all forest-related Earth observation and attributed data previously scattered in various organisations in a **centralised platform** through cloud technology and service - oriented architecture, including agro-forestry and forest conversion due to agricultural activities.*

[Learn more here](#)

## Satellite Monitoring for Forest Management (SMFM)



### FUNDER

World Bank



### DURATION

2016-2020



### CONTRACT VALUE

EUR 981K

The SMFM project aimed to improve global knowledge and capabilities for forest degradation assessment and monitoring dry forest landscapes by building upon and complimenting existing international programmes. Funded by the World Bank and the European Space Agency, SMFM supported selected countries in developing their Earth observation capacity. NIRAS tested new or improved methods to process and analyse new satellite Earth observation datasets, with assessments of Earth observation processing methods completed through practical implementation in Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia. SMFM developed methods and open access tools for monitoring of dry forests with Earth observation data, including data pre-processing and compositing, biomass and biomass change mapping, time series analysis, and mapping drivers of deforestation. The project provided technical assistance to national government staff through remote support, training materials, and provision of capacity building workshops.



[Learn more here](#)



# Fund management



NIRAS has extensive experience in the management of grant projects for the forestry, land and biodiversity sectors. NIRAS' current competed grants portfolio includes ten ongoing funds with the collective value of over €400 million, for which we manage application calls

and process thousands of applications in parallel. NIRAS has a built-in network of experienced funding facility managers and an innovative platform to refine grant management procedures and tools to design, manage, monitor and evaluate grant programmes.

## Forest Governance Markets and Climate (FGMC) Phase 2 - Programme Management and Support Team



**FUNDER**  
FCDO



**DURATION**  
2025-2030



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 17.4M  
(EUR 102.4M including grants)

The FGMC programme is a flagship UK Government initiative aimed at tackling the drivers of illegal deforestation and promoting sustainable forest governance and land use across key tropical forest regions. Its second phase, FGMC2 (2025–2030), seeks to consolidate previous achievements while adapting to evolving global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and human rights concerns. Central to the implementation of FGMC2 is the Programme Management, Support and Services Team (PMSST), which is tasked with managing and administering the programme's extensive grant portfolio – valued at up to £73 million and spread across approximately 20–25 accountable grants. The PMSST will provide technical, strategic, financial, and operational support to FCDO and manage the full grant lifecycle, from early scoping and due diligence through to disbursement, monitoring, and evaluation. In doing so, the PMSST aims to foster coherent, evidence-informed delivery that strengthens rights, promotes legal and sustainable trade in forest products, and supports climate and biodiversity goals across FGMC partner countries.



Programme Management, Support and Services Team (PMSST) is tasked with managing and administering the programme's extensive grant portfolio – valued at up to

**£73 million**  
and spread across approximately  
**20 to 25**  
accountable grants.

[Learn more here](#)





## Biodiversity Challenge Funds (BCF) Administration Manager



**FUNDER**  
Defra



**DURATION**  
2003-2025



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 15.1M

NIRAS are the fund administrators for the UK Government's BCF, comprising the Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Fund, and Darwin Plus Initiative. We administer all three competitive grant funds, including more than ten different grant schemes, working to safeguard biodiversity and the environment worldwide. The fund provides £20 million a year to partnership projects between UK institutions and low- and middle-income countries, Overseas Territories, and transitional economy countries, providing support to biodiversity-rich yet financially poor countries to meet their national policy commitments and fulfil obligations under key environmental treaties. NIRAS manages the entire grant fund process (applications, financial administration, communications and project management including secretariat functions) for over 300 projects across 8 workstreams, as well as the M&E programme. As of August 2023, the Darwin Initiative has allocated £230 million across more than 1,270 projects in 159 countries, the IWT Challenge Fund has granted over £50 million for 157 projects, and Darwin Plus has granted over £45 million across over 240 projects.

[Learn more here](#)

## Ocean Community Empowerment and Nature (OCEAN) Grants Programme



**FUNDER**  
Defra



**DURATION**  
2023-2027



**CONTRACT VALUE**  
EUR 3.98M

NIRAS manages the OCEAN programme, a competitive grants scheme that supports locally led projects to deliver lasting change to the marine environment and coastal communities. Part of the Blue Planet Fund – the UK's ground-breaking £500 million initiative dedicated to supporting developing countries in protecting the marine environment and reducing poverty – OCEAN offers two types of grants: (1) community grants of up to £250,000 for small-scale, local, in-country organisations and (2) partnership grants of up to £3 million for organisations who partner with locally led organisations to deliver solutions at scale. NIRAS is the Grant Administrator for this £60-million fund. We operate OCEAN with a strong focus on developing an understanding of – and promoting – gender, equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) amongst applicants in their proposals and successful grantees through the implementation of their projects. We manage the programme adaptively, with continual performance assessment and regular updating of all fund approaches and documents to respond to feedback from previous rounds and evolving policy priorities. Due diligence is conducted on every delivery partner, and risk management is an integral part of the Fund's decision-making process and is incorporated within all strategic and operational planning.

[Learn more here](#)



*Darwin Initiative has allocated **£230 million** across more than **1,270 projects** in **159 countries**.*

*The IWT Challenge Fund has granted over **£50 million** for **157 projects**.*

*Darwin Plus has granted over **£45 million** across over **240 projects**.*



NIRAS is the Grant Administrator  
for the OCEAN

**£60 million**

fund, which runs from 2023 to 2029.



# References

	Location	Funder	Timeframe	Value (EUR)
<b>Biodiversity Conservation</b>				
Landscape-level Appraisal and Political Economy Analysis of Community-Based Conservation Interventions in Uganda	Uganda	PWC/ UK FCDO	2024-2025	136K
Technical Assistance to the Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected areas in ASEAN	Philippines	EU	2019-2023	1.6M
The Agrobiodiversity Initiative (TABI) Phase I, II and III	Lao PDR	SDC	2009-2021	15.5M
Sustainable Forest and Biodiversity Management in Borneo	Indonesia	ADB	2016-2019	3.1M
Protection and Sustainable Use of Selva Maya, Phase I and II	Belize	GIZ	2015-2019	1.2M
Planning for Resilience in East Africa through Policy, Adaptation, Research, and Economic Development (PREPARED) – Component 2: Biodiversity Conservation (Information Management Systems)	East Africa	USAID	2013-2018	1.6M
The Core Environment Program (CEP) & Biodiversity Conservation Corridors Initiative II	Myanmar/ Cambodia	ADB	2016-2018	1.8M
<b>Forestry</b>				
Forestry, Land Use, and Value Chains Development in Tanzania (FORLAND) Project	Tanzania	MFA Finland	2025-2029	20M
Mobilisation of Facilitation Units for Voluntary Partnership Agreements on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade	Global	AFD	2023-2027	5.9M
Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade	Lao PDR	KFW	2022-2027	4.1M
Support for the Valorization of Non-Timber Forest Products	Chad	SDC	2022-2027	6.7M
Territorios Forestales Sostenibles (TEFOS)	Colombia	UK FCDO	2024-2026	11.8M
Support to Preservation, Restoration and Regeneration of Malawi's Natural Resource Base and Diverse Ecosystem Base	Malawi	EC	2023-2026	915K
Mobilising Finance for Forests Technical Assistance Facility	Global	FMO	2022-2026	6.4M
Village Forest Management Project	Laos	KFW	2019-2026	2.6M
Forest Management for Sustainable Production in the Amazon	Brazil	KFW	2014-2025	6.7M
Participatory Plantation Forestry Programme (Phase I and II)	Tanzania	MFA Finland	2013-2024	29.9M
Green Economic Growth Programme for Papua Provinces in Indonesia	Indonesia	UK FCDO	2017-2023	11.2M
China-UK Collaboration on International Forest Investment and Trade Programme (Phase I and II)	China	UK FCDO	2014-2023	10.2M
Implementation of the Mozambique Planted Forests Grant Scheme in Zambézia	Mozambique	World Bank	2019-2022	3.4M
Service Provider for Promotion of Agroforestry Systems in Zambezia Province (MozFIP SAF)	Mozambique	World Bank	2019-2022	2M
National Incubator and Accelerator Facility for Wood Sector	Rwanda	GIZ, ICON- INSTITUTE Lead	2020-2021	1.2M (40% profit share)
Miti Mingi, Maisha Bora - Support to Forest Sector Reform in Kenya	Kenya	MFA Finland	2007-2017	18.7M
Business Development Support to Productivity and Growth for the Forest Sector	Jamaica	EU	2019-2023	850K



Land				
Responsible and Innovative Land Administration in Ethiopia (Phase 1, 2 and 3)	Ethiopia	MFA Finland	2011-2028	30.8M
Responsible Investment and Governance in Land	Ethiopia, Lao PDR. and Uganda	GIZ	2020-2023	1.3M
Institutional support for the rural land department - sector-based reform contract	Côte d'Ivoire	EU	2017-2021	3.5M
Further Development of a Common Mapping Platform and Methodology for Local Land Use Planning	Cameroon	EFI	2017-2019	224K
Land Investment for Transformation (LIFT)	Ethiopia	UK DFID (DAI lead)	2013-2019	69.4M
Participatory Mapping and Planning (PMap 4 and 8)	Indonesia	Millenium Challenge Account	2016-2018	9.6M
Sustainable Management of Land and Environment (SMOLE I and II)	Zanzibar	MFA Finland	2005-2015	13.3M
GIS and Earth Observation Systems				
Development of a Biophysical and Ecological Monitoring System in Malawi	Malawi	World Bank	2022-2025	2.7M
Satellite Monitoring for Forest Management	Multi	World Bank	2016-2020	981K
Development of the Management Information System for the Forestry Sector in Vietnam (Phase I and II)	Vietnam	MFA Finland	2009-2018	9.7M
Fund Management				
Forest Governance Markets and Climate (FGMC) Phase 2 - Programme Management and Support Team (PMSST)	Global	UK FCDO	2025-2030	17.4M (102.4M including grants)
Ocean Community Empowerment and Nature (OCEAN) Grants Programme	Global	UK Defra	2023-2027	3.9M
Biodiversity Challenge Funds: Darwin Initiative, Darwin Plus Challenge Fund, and Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund	Global	UK Defra	2003-2025	15.1M





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