

TRANSCEND Pilot Landscapes Selection

Transformative Actions for Climate and Ecological Protection and Development

I. Project Overview

Transformative Actions for Climate and Ecological Protection and Development (TRANSCEND) is a six-year project funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) through the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK). The project will be implemented through a consortium led by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) with the Climate Change Commission (CCC) as the main political partner. Through a whole-of-government approach, the project aims to pilot a transition process towards a climate-resilient, low-carbon, and biodiversity-friendly society through adaptation, mitigation, and biodiversity solutions in three landscapes in the Philippines.

The TRANSCEND project is the outcome of the IKI Country Call in 2018 that was based on the Philippine government's submission of concept, which aims at supporting the Philippine Government in achieving the NDC and post-2020 Biodiversity Framework targets. The project intends to work with the Philippines on the four IKI funding areas, namely mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate change impacts, conserving natural carbon sinks, and conserving biodiversity. The project will also address integrating gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches as means to accommodate context-specific gender relations. TRANSCEND will be implemented by a consortium of different organizations - Conservation International Philippines (CIPFI), RARE, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Clean Air Asia (CAA), International Council on Clean Transport (ICCT), Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC), Climate Analytics (CA), University of the Philippines – Center for Women's and Gender Studies (UP-CWG), and Wuppertal Institut für Klima, Umwelt, Energie gGmbH, with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) as the joint project coordinator.

Project Outputs

The draft outcome and outputs of TRANSCEND based on the 2018 Country Call are as follows:

Outcome			
Government agencies at all levels, with civil society organisations and the private sector, have improved the integrated, transparent, and accountable implementation of climate change and biodiversity policies.			
Outputs			
Natural resource management	Resilient communities and built environment	Climate smart industries and services and transport	Decision-making mechanisms for climate governance
IKI Interface function			

The output areas align with the strategic priorities of the National Climate Change Action Plan 2011-2028. The outcome and outputs presented are subject to review during the planning period (January – June 2023), in close consultation with different government agencies.

Landscape Approach

To fully achieve the intended outcomes of the project, TRANSCEND takes on an *integrated landscape management approach* to project conceptualization and implementation.

Landscapes are characterized by a set of physical, environmental, human, economic, institutional, and cultural resources that jointly constitute their assets and potential.¹ A landscape approach therefore allows for a more comprehensive way of addressing present and future challenges as well as opportunities within a single but multifaceted context. Integrated landscape management brings together multiple stakeholders, who collaborate to integrate policy and practice for their different land use objectives, with the purpose of achieving sustainable landscapes. It likewise recognizes the interconnectedness of a landscape's elements, from natural resources to settlements to sector-specific activities, and the impact one may have on the others. An integrated landscape approach also seeks to minimize conflicts between different land or water use objectives and ecosystems and support common and mutually beneficial goals towards sustainable development.

II. Considerations for Landscape Selection

With the understanding of landscape as the main platform upon which interventions are to be implemented, TRANSCEND has identified the following considerations for selecting focus areas in the country:

1. Geographic Distribution of Impact

To deliver results in scale and to ensure relevance of results towards national-level transformation, the project shall work across the three main island groups of the Philippines (Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao), reflecting the country's archipelagic nature and diversity of landscapes.

To further demonstrate the landscape approach, the project references the National Spatial Strategy (NSS). The NSS builds on the efficiencies and maximizes the benefits of scale and agglomeration economies, improving linkages across settlements to equalize opportunities while addressing socio-economic inequalities. The NSS was formulated to guide policy and investment towards natural resource management, sustainable land use, and urban management. It utilizes a network of settlements comprised of metropolitan, regional and subregional centers, highlighting the connections between established centers of development and emerging cities and growth areas. TRANSCEND aims to leverage on this and take cue from the anticipated settlements growth and development identified by government.

The combination of natural geographic characteristics and spatial development framework in the Philippines serves as a functional driver in the selection of pilot landscapes.

¹ FAO, Landscapes for Life, 2017

2. Natural Capital

Of primary consideration in the selection of landscapes is the presence and demonstrated richness of natural resources and biodiversity. As such, the project looks at terrestrial and marine key biodiversity areas, protected (NIPAS) areas, and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). It also looks at the potential for ecosystem services, and the level of influence of the natural ecosystem on socioeconomic activity and overall development.

3. Relevance to National Government Priorities

The Risk Resiliency Program (RRP) is the government's convergence program to strengthen and scale up coordinated province-based planning and budgeting of climate resilience investments across all national government agencies focusing on, but not limited to, the most vulnerable provinces and four major urban centers. RRP priority provinces are characterized by high poverty incidence, high susceptibility, or exposure to hazards (drought, strong winds, flooding, rain-induced landslide, storm surge), and situated in critical and degraded watersheds.² TRANSCEND seeks to respond to the government's call for wider climate resilience action across the country.

TRANSCEND shall also align its work with the goals under the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) and the country's National Determined Contributions (NDC), as well as the Philippine Biodiversity Action Plan (PBSAP).

The project is also mindful of existing interventions, both by government and its partners, and by members of the consortium in various areas in the Philippines. TRANSCEND views these as opportunities for complementation and shall endeavor actions in areas where impact can be greater and in accordance with government priorities.

4. Connectivity of results and impacts

Impact shall also be demonstrated through the integration of activities and results across the four Outputs. The relationships between natural resources, urban growth and development, infrastructure, and governance shall be clearly established within a landscape, as these will drive the project's targets and outputs, including biodiversity conservation, emission reduction and ecosystem-based adaptation. These linkages shall likewise exhibit how compounded and aggravated risks can be addressed using an integrated landscape approach.

III. Selected Landscapes

Given these considerations, the following landscapes have been proposed for the implementation of TRANSCEND:

- Luzon Landscape: Verde Island Passage (VIP) – Batangas, Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon
- Visayas Landscape: Iloilo-Panay-Concepcion River Basin (IPCRB) – Capiz, Iloilo, Aklan
- Mindanao Landscape: Metro Cagayan de Oro – Misamis Oriental, Camiguin, Bukidnon

² RRP Operations Manual

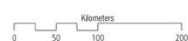
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Supported by:



on the basis of a decision
by the German Bundestag

TRANSCEND PROJECT Proposed Pilot Landscapes



Legend

Administrative Boundaries

Major River Basins

Pilot Sites

Island Verde Passage

Panay Island

Cagayan de Oro

Protected and Key Biodiversity Areas

Key Biodiversity Areas

NIPAS Areas

Hierarchy of Settlements

Metropolitan Center

Regional Center

Sub-Regional Center

DATA SOURCES

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB-BMB)

NIPAS and Key Biodiversity Areas

National Mapping and Resource Information Authority

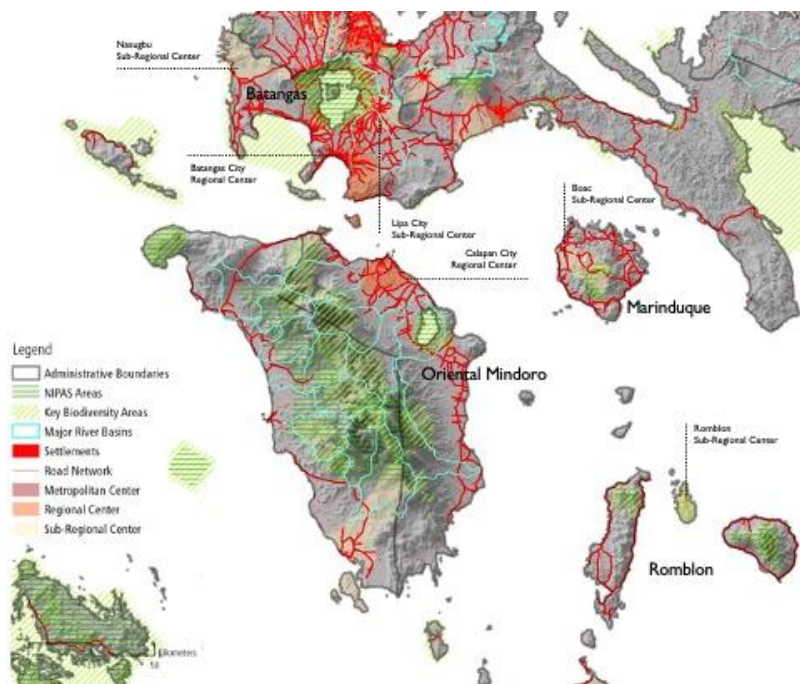
Administrative Boundaries

National Economic Development Authority

National Spatial Strategy, 2013 (draft unpublished)

1. Luzon Landscape: Verde Island Passage (VIP)

Located south of Metro Manila, the VIP covers areas of the Southern Tagalog Region, particularly the provinces of Batangas, Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, and Romblon. It has a direct linkage to the National Capital Region with the cities of Batangas and Calapan identified as regional centers in the National Spatial Strategy. Aside from this, the VIP is the main shipping route between the Port of Manila and the Visayas and Mindanao, making the passage as one of the busiest sea lanes in the country.



The VIP is a marine biodiversity cover within the Sulu-Suluwesi Marine Ecoregion. The VIP covers an approximate area of 4,947 km², providing home to critically endangered species of marine mammals and turtles and populations of pelagic and reef-associated fish species. The passage's importance was further amplified when Carpenter and Springer declared the Verde Island Passage to be, "the center of marine shorefish biodiversity³."

The provinces covered by VIP have a thriving tourism, fisheries, and agriculture industries. Due to deteriorating climate conditions through increase in temperatures and CO² concentration, leading to widespread coral bleaching and ocean acidification, among many impacts, the rich biodiversity, and the livelihoods dependent on the VIP are at high risk. The harsh impacts of habitat destruction, marine- and land-based pollution, unsustainable fishing, and climate change have allowed for the filing of a Senate Bill to declare the Verde Island Passage as a protected area under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS). where regional and sub-regional centers have also been identified in the NSS,

And while Batangas belongs to the region with fastest economic growth in the country, the MIMAROPA region to which Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque and Romblon belongs posed economic growth below the national level⁴, with Romblon also having highest poverty incidence (31%) in the region. This threatens to compromise the role of regional and subregional centers identified by the NSS in the region, and further puts pressure on available resources.

Working with the provinces in the VIP will allow TRANSCEND to introduce high-impact interventions within the rural-urban nexus and incorporate strategies to ensure equitable

³ Carpenter, K. E., & Springer, V. G. (2005). The center of the center of Marine Shore Fish Biodiversity: The philippine islands. *Environmental Biology of Fishes*, 72(4), 467–480. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10641-004-3154-4>

⁴ PSA, 2021

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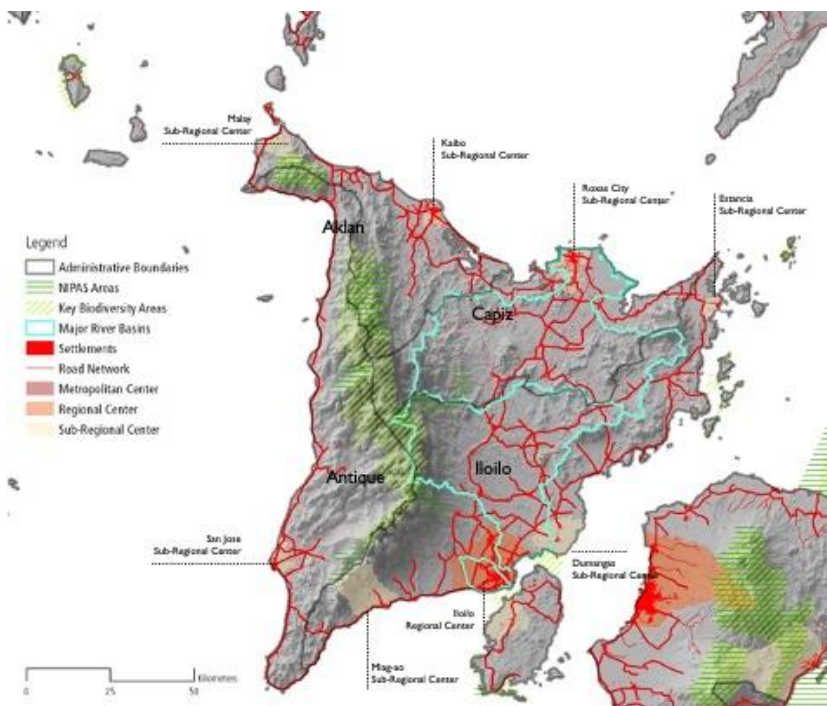
growth in a landscape context. These will likewise support the country's NDC priorities including sustainable industrial development and poverty eradication and demonstrate best practices in climate change adaptation through ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions.

2. Visayas Landscape: Iloilo City and Panay River Basin

Panay Island is one of the areas in the country with high urbanization rates, which have important implications on the demand for and conservation of natural resources. The northern part of Iloilo Province hosts marine protected areas like Anilao, Banate, Barotac Nuevo and Barotac Viejo. The Iloilo-Panay-Concepcion River Basin (IPCRB) area meanwhile encompasses the provinces of Capiz, Iloilo, and Aklan. The river basin covers an area of 2,712.92 km² with a total population of 3,929,952⁵. There are also several conservation areas within IPCRB which have ecological significance and priorities for conservation.

The National Spatial Strategy identified Iloilo City and adjacent peri-urban areas (Pavia, Oton Leganes, Santa Barbara and San Miguel) as a regional center. Of critical importance is that

Iloilo City is also one of the four urban centers included in the RRP's list of priority areas.



Apart from Iloilo City, the NSS has identified seven sub-regional centers in the area, the highest number among the three proposed landscapes. The region's economy has taken strides and enjoys economic growth above than the national average.⁶

The combination of intense economic growth, urbanization, and the breadth of protected areas signals the need to ensure

the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity. The project can contribute to achieving sustainability targets, in economic, social, environmental dimensions in an established rural-urban nexus. This landscape highlights the importance of looking at landscape as a convergence platform for rapid urban development and climate change, and the integrated measures necessary to address the risks within.

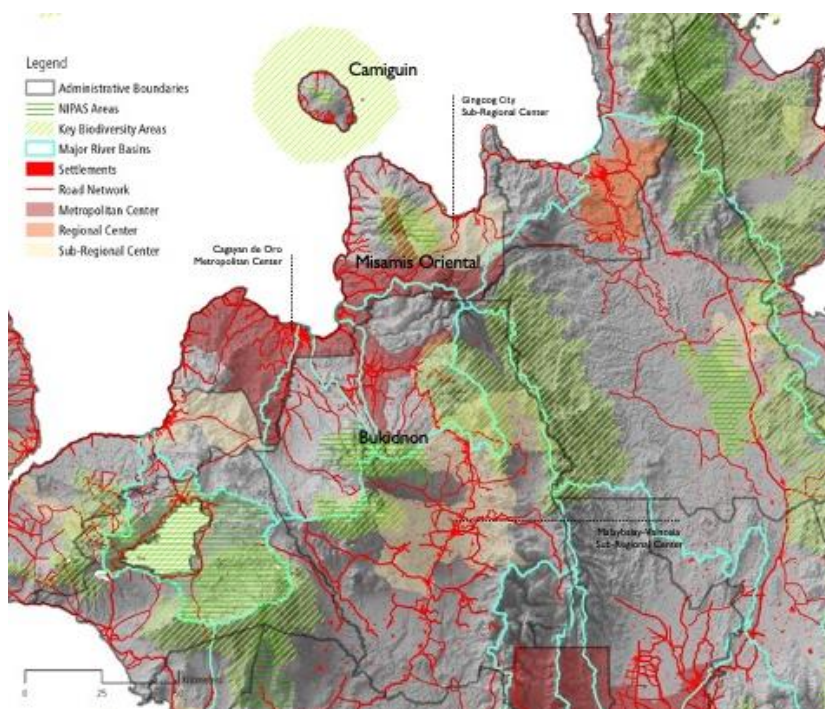
⁵ PSA, 2020

⁶ PSA, 2021

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3. Mindanao Landscape: Metro Cagayan de Oro - Misamis Oriental, Camiguin, and Bukidnon

The Mindanao Landscape covers the provinces of Bukidnon and Misamis Oriental, including the highly urbanized city of Cagayan de Oro (CDO), a metropolitan center identified in the NSS and the regional capital of Northern Mindanao. Serves as a major commercial, industrial, and political center, the rapid urbanization of Cagayan De Oro is borne largely of the scaling-up of technoparks, business process outsourcing, and manufacturing industries. Its metropolization will likely have increased impact on surrounding provinces, including transportation and mobility. Beyond CDO, the Mindanao Landscape has three sub-regional centers identified the NSS, indicating high potential for growth and necessitating the improvement of connectivity between established growth areas and peripheral areas, especially in the sectors of transport, energy, and food and agriculture.



Meanwhile, the province of Bukidnon has high ecological and economic significance. The province is characterized by mountains and plateaus, two of which are declared as protected areas—Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park (MKRNP) and the Mt. Kalatungan Range Natural Park (MKaRNP). With soils and climate highly suited to agriculture, the province has a progressive agriculture-based economy. However, Bukidnon is also identified as one of the most vulnerable provinces under

the RRP.

Climate change risk combined with biodiversity hotspots in a rapidly developing area further stresses the need to address risks and opportunities through a systems approach, which can support both socioeconomic growth and climate resilience.

IV. Considerations for Selection of Sites within Landscapes

Within the above selected landscapes, the project will identify specific areas of focus for implementation of project activities. Selection these areas will be done in dialogue on the ground with subnational and local governments, community representatives and other stakeholders. Considerations for specific site selection include demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, growth relevance and potential, local government interest or ambition, potential for transformative impact and replicability, cultural considerations, and existing projects or interventions that can be amplified. Other factors will be determined together with government partners.

