



STATUS REPORT ON THE 'HÒA LỘC' MANGO GI IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

February 2017

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Acknowledgements

The preparation of the present **Status Report regarding the Implementation Plan of the Hoà Lộc mango Geographical Indication (GI)** has been possible thanks to the efficient organization and committed involvement on the following stakeholders:

- The National Office of Intellectual Property of Vietnam (NOIP)
- The Provincial People's Committee (PPC) of the Tiền Giang province
- The Department of Science and Technology of the Tiền Giang province (DOST)
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative
- The Vietnam Bureau of Accreditation (BoA)

Thank you all for your committed cooperation providing us with the needed data, as well as for exchanging views with us during the visit to the Hoà Lộc cooperative in the Tiền Giang province. Your valuable input made possible the preparation of the present Status Report on the Implementation Plan for the Hoà Lộc mango GI.

Our gratitude also to the EU-MUTRAP project's team that efficiently organized and supervised the field visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI area as well as the implementation of the entire assignment: Thank you for your efficient support, key part for the success of our assignment.

I. Overall background

Since 1996 Viet Nam has developed the protection of GIs, counting at present with an increasing number of Vietnamese GIs registered by the competent authority, the National Office of Intellectual Property of Viet Nam (NOIP), the agency under the Ministry of Science and Technology, assuming the functions of exercising the State management and providing services in the field of Intellectual Property.

However, the GI route is a relatively new issue and still in the process of consolidation in Viet Nam. For this reason and since 2014, NOIP has been requesting yearly support from the European Trade Policy and Investment Support (EU-MUTRAP) project¹. This support has been mainly focused on assisting 4 Vietnamese localities to take the necessary steps for the consolidation and further development of their GIs. The products selected by NOIP to be supported by the EU-MUTRAP project are Lạng Sơn star aniseed GI, Buôn Ma Thuật coffee GI, Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI and Hoà Lộc mango GI.

The implementation of this support by the EU-MUTRAP project has been provided through the Activity EU-16, which consisted in assignments of international and local GI experts in 2014 and 2015 so far, with the following actions and outcomes:

- In 2014, the EU-MUTRAP project organized 2 workshops in different parts of the country (Lạng Sơn province and Dak Lak province) on the GIs registration conditions and procedures in the EU, providing *ad hoc* advice to local stakeholders regarding the documents needed to apply for the registration of each GI in the EU. As a result of this assignment, EU-MUTRAP GI experts assessed serious weaknesses in terms of GI management by GI holders as well as by territorial administrative agencies in charge of supporting the development of these products. Hence, they recommended further assistance to tackle these challenges.
- In 2015, the EU-MUTRAP project continued supporting the development of the 4 selected Vietnamese GIs, seeking to create organizational and institutional capacities to ensure that the multi-year process of developing GIs moves forward and evolves in an appropriate manner. To this end, the EU-MUTRAP project organized 4 workshops in the localities of the 4 GI products, providing technical and legal guidance to local stakeholders for improving their GI management, as well as for setting up traceability and control systems, in order to promote the development of their respective GIs. EU-MUTRAP GI experts gathered the necessary data and met with relevant stakeholders (producers, local authorities and

¹ The European Trade Policy and Investment Support Project (EU-MUTRAP) is an EU-funded project that is executed by the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (MOIT) in partnership with the European Commission. Succeeding to the three previous MUTRAP projects, the overall objective of EU-MUTRAP IV is to further Vietnam's integration into the global, regional (ASEAN) and sub-regional trading systems, and to enhance the EU-Vietnam trade and investment relations, as well as to maximize the benefits from the country's economic development for an inclusive growth and poverty reduction. The purpose of the Project is to support the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT) in facilitating sustainable international trade and investment through improved capacity for policy making, policy consultation, and the negotiation and implementation of related commitments, particularly vis-à-vis the European Union (EU). For further information, you may consult the project's website: www.mutrap.org.vn



representatives of the GI associations) in order to identify the weaknesses of the overall GI management as well as the challenges ahead to ensure their sustainability and further development. As a result, they prepared an assessment and implementation plan for the 4 selected Vietnamese GIs (one per GI), through which defining a road map to foster their consolidation and further development. The Implementation Plans were translated into Vietnamese and sent to all 4 localities between April and May 2016, for their implementation by all involved parties (producers / processors / traders, GI Association, local authorities and NOIP).

The assignment in 2016 constitutes the follow up on the previous work, intended to assess the progress made by local stakeholders on the Implementation Plans received by localities, as well as to continue guiding local stakeholders on the consolidation and further development of the 4 selected GIs.

II. Status Report

A. Purpose and Methodology

The present document is the **Status Report regarding the Implementation Plan for the development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.**

Such document constitutes the outcome in 2016 of the Activity EU-16 within the framework of the EU-MUTRAP Project, which overall objective is to support NOIP in improving the capacity of GIs owners to manage and promote 4 selected GIs, the Hoà Lộc mango GI among them.

The **purpose** of this Status Report is assessing the progress made by involved stakeholders as regards to the improvement of the GI management (the traceability system and control plan) as well as the sustainability and further development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, following the Implementation Plan prepared by EU-MUTRAP GI experts and provided to local stakeholders in May 2016.

The **main outcome of this report** will be **providing a selected number of priorities to be implemented by all related stakeholders within the framework of a provided timetable**, seeking to make tangible progress on the management as well as on the consolidation and development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI. Please note that the selected priorities are not the only actions to be implemented for the consolidation and development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI. On the contrary, with these priorities, EU-MUTRAP GI experts seek to provide a clear orientation to all involved stakeholders on the actions to be implemented first, which shall be followed by other to be defined after these first have been completed.

In order to elaborate the present Status Report, international and local GI experts of the EU-MUTRAP Project have used the following **methodology** and undertaken the following **actions**:

1) Planning:

- Prepare a **work plan** and a **timetable** for implementing the overall assignment.
- Gather and analyze the background report provided by government authorities (NOIP and Tiền Giang DOST)
- Hold **preparatory meetings** and dealing with **organizational arrangements** in Hanoi prior to the visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI area in the Tiền Giang province.
- Prepare a **check list** to be completed by all involved stakeholders on the status of performance of the Implementation Plan that was delivered to local stakeholders in May 2016.
- Hold a **meeting with representatives of the Bureau of Accreditation (BoA)** to discuss the progress made by localities on the accreditation of qualified bodies to control and certify the Hoà Lộc mango GI as well as to brainstorm on the steps to take for having a competent entity to control and certify the Hoà Lộc mango GI before being placed in the market.

2) Implementation:

- Travel to the Hoà Lộc mango GI area in the Tiền Giang province.
- Hold a **meeting with the representatives of the Hoà Lộc cooperative and a representative of the Tiền Giang DOST**, in charge of producing, packaging and trading the Hoà Lộc mango GI in the morning of 12 December 2016, to discuss the status, level of progress and involvement of the cooperative on the GI and its use.
- It is important to note that for the analysis of the state of progress regarding the Hoà Lộc mango GI, **the Tiền Giang DOST was not able to organize a Policy Networking Session with involved stakeholders**, to discuss the level of progress on the execution of the Implementation Plan provided to them in May 2016, due to problems of agenda. As a result, **it was not possible to exchange views with involved stakeholders or to provide them with guidance for solving the challenges to reach tangible results for the consolidation and further development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI**. However and for stakeholders to have the same information that was used in the other 3 localities, you may find the **presentations delivered by the International GI Expert during the Policy Networking Sessions in the Lạng Sơn province, the Bình Thuận province and the Dak Lak province**:
 - **Management by the GI Association as ANNEX I**
 - **Sustainable development of the GI: Labelling & Promotion as ANNEX II**
 - **GI Protection: The use of the GI right as ANNEX III.**

3) Assessment and drafting:

- As a result of the meeting with the Hoà Lộc cooperative in the Tiền Giang province, **assessing the progress made by involved stakeholders** on the GI management (the traceability system and control plan) as well as the sustainability and further development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
- **Identifying the weaknesses and challenges** that involved stakeholders face for fulfilling the recommendations set on the Implementation Plans provided by EU-MUTRAP GI experts in May 2016.
- **Identifying the priorities to move forward** making progress on the GI management (traceability system and control plan) as well as on the consolidation and development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
- Prepare a **first draft of the Status Report**, to be completed with further data to be provided by relevant stakeholders.

4) Reviewing and completing:

- Working with the relevant stakeholders on the **data gathering of the check list**, in order to assess the level of progress on the performance of the Implementation Plan, to evaluate the current status of the GI as well as to propose the priorities to be implemented by all related stakeholders in the short term. You may find the **Check List on the Status of the Implementing Planning of the Hoà Lộc mango GI completed by the local GI expert as ANNEX IV**.
- As a result of the previous actions, **reviewing and finalizing the Status Report** regarding the Implementation Plan for the development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.

B. Findings

The impossibility of holding a Policy Networking Session with stakeholders involved on the management and development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI (local authorities, Hoà Lộc cooperative, producers and traders/exporters) has resulted in difficulties to make a complete assessment on the progress made by involved stakeholders regarding the GI management as well as the sustainability and further development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.

However and thanks to the work undertaken by the EU-MUTRAP local and international GI experts in collaboration local authorities and interviewed stakeholders before, during and after the field visit to the GI area, it has been possible to **gather some useful information on the status of the Hoà Lộc mango GI** and the level of execution of the Implementation Plan prepared by EU-MUTRAP GI experts and provided to local stakeholders in May 2016. Such data has allowed for an **analysis of the following aspects:**

- The GI product
- The awareness and interest in the GI by involved stakeholders
- The management of the GI by the GI association
- The traceability system and control plan of the GI
- The labelling and promotion actions undertaken by involved stakeholders
- The marketing of the GI product by GI stakeholders
- The protection of the GI product
- The impact of the GI for producers, consumers and the local community

The **main findings** regarding the current situation of the Hoà Lộc mango GI can be summarized as follows:

B.1. The GI product

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI production area, **it seems that the product has consolidated its high quality, but faces serious problems of production due to the climate change. The GI area might be bigger, so should be reviewed in the product specifications. As regards to the awareness of GI stakeholders about the product specifications and their implementation, they seem to be totally unaware of its existence, so they lack of any understanding on the relation between the product's quality and the GI.**

- Interviewed stakeholders are aware and agree on the high quality of the Hoà Lộc mango, recognizing a high reputation at regional and national levels.
- The quality of the Hoà Lộc mango GI seems to be guaranteed especially when participating on certifications schemes such as VietGAP and Global GAP, in response to the demand of buyers. Unfortunately and as a threat to the product's quality, the Hoà Lộc cooperative is hesitating about renewing the Global GAP certification because it is very expensive and they do not see much benefit from it.
- The lack of techniques to overcome the weather conditions (climate change, rain, etc.) has resulted on a reduction of the production capacity of Hoà Lộc mango to 1/3 in respect to the previous year. In fact, the Hoà Lộc cooperative has been forced to resign to some

contracts because they could not comply with the production requests due to natural causes. Therefore, an improvement on the production constitutes a priority for the Hoà Lộc cooperative.

- In fact, even if the harvesting seasons are the last 4 months of the year and the first 4 months of the following year, by early December 2016 with MUTRAP experts visited the GI area, there was no more production and everything had been sold out.
- The representatives of the Hoà Lộc cooperative stressed that they had never seen the GI product specifications, which may result in a lack of understanding about the GI, its purpose, implications and benefits.
- Another issue at stake is the GI area, which seems to be bigger than indicated in the product specification but has not been confirmed by the Hoà Lộc cooperative, due to its lack of human resources and financial difficulties to cover the VietGAP and GlobalGAP certification. Even if the GI area for the production of the Hoà Lộc mango GI might have increased ever since the GI was registered at NOIP, the product specifications have not been reviewed by the Hoà Lộc cooperative and the Tiền Giang DOST yet.
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative works with an agency under the DARD for maintaining and improving the quality of the product.
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative undertakes regular training to their members on production practices, provided by technical personnel under DARD, companies as well as staff from the cooperative for technical matters. However, no regular training has been undertaken on the implementation of the GI product specifications by Hoà Lộc cooperative, because the cooperative is not familiar with such key document and because local authorities have no funding for training support.
- Even if production practices of producers, collectors and traders might respect the product specifications of Hoà Lộc mango GI, they are not totally aware of the relation between such practices and the GI, as no guidelines on the implementation of the GI product specification, their rights and duties, have been prepared by the Hoà Lộc cooperative and yet, claiming for the support of local authorities to do so.
- Other management tools, code of conduct, quality standards, etc. for the Hoà Lộc mango GI have not been prepared yet by the Hoà Lộc cooperative, claiming for the support of local authorities to do so.
- According to the provided information, capacity building on the maintenance and improvement of the quality of the Hoà Lộc mango GI for producers and businesses has not been undertaken yet by the Hoà Lộc cooperative, because local authorities do not have funding for training support. So far, the Hoà Lộc cooperative only reminds frequently to members to follow GAP standards and product sample testing.

B.2. Awareness and interest in the GI by involved stakeholders

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI production area, **the awareness concerning the GI concept, its implications and potential benefits remains very weak among all stakeholders, including producers, the Hoà Lộc cooperative and even local authorities. It is especially worrying that the representatives of the Hoà Lộc cooperative are not familiar with the GI product specifications. However, it can be assessed a strong commitment and willingness of the Hoà Lộc cooperative to learn and exploit the GI, which constitutes a positive asset for the**

consolidation and development of the GI. The endorsement and support by the Tiền Giang PPC (especially the Tiền Giang DOST) will be needed to ensure progress.

- According to the information from interviewed stakeholders, the Tiền Giang DOST was aware of the Implementation Plan sent by EU-MUTRAP GI expert on May 2016, claiming for guidelines and financial support to execute it. However, the agenda constraints for organizing the Policy Networking Session provoked some concerns among MUTRAP GI experts on the commitment of local authorities to consolidate and development the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative did not seem to be familiarized with the Implementation Plan nor with the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
- The awareness of producers and members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative about the GI concept, its purpose, implications and benefits can only be weak, when they have never seen the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, which is the key document of the GI.
- With a slight increase in number, at present there are 130 producers located in the Hoà Lộc mango GI area of 11.300 hectares, who are members the Hoà Lộc cooperative, which is the only entity with a certificate to use the GI. The fact of being the only entity with the certificate to use the GI raises again the concern about the purpose of this GI certificate, as it is granted once but there is no follow up on the respect of the product specifications or any control on its use by the entity that received the certificate.
- Out of these 11.300 hectares, only 50 hectares are certified under VietGAP and Global GAP.
- The interest to join the Hoà Lộc cooperative seems low, due to the insufficient production to cover the market requirements. So farmers simply harvest and sell all their production.
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative undertakes regular training to their members on production practices, provided by technical personnel under DARD, companies as well as staff from the cooperative for technical matters.
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative also carries out training on the GI every month, but they lack the needed funds for doing formal seminar, hence the training is weak.
- Therefore, even with those trainings, the knowledge about the GI among producers is very general and, therefore, their interest is very limited.
- Even the representatives of the Hoà Lộc cooperative consider that their knowledge about the GI is very general and do not know much about its purpose, implications and benefits.
- When the Hoà Lộc mango GI was registered at NOIP, the Tiền Giang DOST organized awareness raising actions for all stakeholders in the GI area (also to those not members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative) to explain the GI scheme, its implications and benefits, encouraging them to join the initiative by joining the Hoà Lộc cooperative. Ever since, these actions have not been repeated by the Hoà Lộc cooperative or the Tiền Giang DOST, due to limited resources.
- The Tiền Giang DOST has appointed a new Deputy Director for following up on management of the Hoà Lộc mango GI by the Hoà Lộc cooperative. However, the position of GI specialist has changed officer several times, which influences on the results of the implementation plan.
- The cooperation between the Hoà Lộc cooperative and the Tiền Giang DOST seems fluent, but it is advisable to ensure some stability on the officers dealing with the Hoà Lộc mango GI, to ensure tangible results.

- The Tiền Giang DOST seems interested to contribute to the development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, but it has not created a multidisciplinary team of officials from involved agencies (DARD, DOIT, etc.) to follow up together on the development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI and support the work by the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
- As regards to stakeholders, as well as buyers, consumers and general public, the only awareness raising actions to explain the GI concept and its benefits for them, have been undertaken by DOST with the support of NOIP, through local general workshops. Any additional effort in this sense has not been done yet, due to the lack of financial resources by local authorities. The Hoà Lộc cooperative would be willing to coordinate such actions.

B.3. Management of the GI

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI production area, **some improvements on the Hoà Lộc cooperative, regarding the structure, the staff and the financial resources through membership fees, have been assessed. However, there are still important challenges as regards to the consolidation of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, needing to increase the number of members, to clarify the role and services for all relevant stakeholders, to receive capacity building and training on GI management, etc.**

- The Specialized Management Section under the Tiền Giang is reviewing the regulations on the GI management to be implemented by the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
- The register of all GI stakeholders within the Hoà Lộc mango GI area, with all necessary data on producers (individual or members of farmers groups, cooperatives or other structures), plantations, production, packaging and labelling, traders, etc., has not been properly set up yet by Hoà Lộc cooperative, having only registered the activity production and business by the local authority management office. In addition, those involved in certification schemes like VietGAP and Global GAP, have some sort of registration system in place.
- At present, only the Hoà Lộc cooperative is granted with the right to use the GI.
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative has slightly increased its number of members, including at present a total 130 members, within a GI certified area of 11.300 hectares. However, this number is still low and should be ideally gathering in a common entity all producers of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, even from other associative structures.
- There has been an improvement on the structure of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, who now counts with two deputy directors with specific responsibilities, a production group, a technical group, a purchasing group and a selling group.
- No data has been found about the specific missions of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, which should be reviewed for ensuring the representation, promotion and protection of the GI at all levels.
- The staff Hoà Lộc cooperative works part-time with the budget of the cooperative and only full time when the work so requires. Its representatives seem to understand the GI system and voluntarily follow the regulation to guarantee the product's quality, even if they are not familiar with the product specifications.
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative is financed by a membership fee of 500.000VND as well as some contributions from which members obtain benefits.

- The Hoà Lộc cooperative has not found means of financial support for its activities, so financial resources remain insufficient. Other means of financial support, such as increasing the number of members or looking for partnerships with traders and exporters have not been explored yet.
- The Tiền Giang DOST does not have a fund allocated for the GI management by the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
- According to the provided information, capacity building on the GI management for the Hoà Lộc cooperative has not been undertaken yet, because local authorities do not have funding for training support.
- Likewise, training for officers and members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative to GIs with a strong and well-settled management system has not been implemented due to the limited resources of local authorities.
- According to interviewed stakeholders, the Tiền Giang PPC should allocate financial resources for the Tiền Giang DOST, in order to support the capacity building actions and training activities on GI management for the officers and members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
- As regards to local authorities and according to the Tiền Giang DOST, the officers responsible for the management still have limited capacities.
- According to local authorities, NOIP should issue some clear regulations on GI management.

B.4. Traceability system and control plan of the GI

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI production area, **the traceability system remains a challenge for the Hoà Lộc cooperative, because without a proper register of GI stakeholders it is not possible to trace the GI product back to the plantation. The control plan is not implemented yet in any of its stages (auto-control, internal control and external control), hence the yearly production of the Hoà Lộc mango GI is not certified before being placed in the market, putting into risk the credibility of the entire GI. Intense capacity building and training actions are needed to be able to set up the auto-control and internal control plan, while a decision by the Tiền Giang PPC on the external control body needs to be adopted urgently to set up the external control plan.**

- So far, the Hoà Lộc cooperative uses VietGAP and GlobalGAP to have a traceability system in place, but do not have a traceability system for the GI yet.
- However, as the cultivation area controlled under GAP standards is too small, it is very difficult to use such system for tracing and controlling the GI.
- Up to present, it is not possible to have clear information on the exact number of hectares and stakeholders involved on the production of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, and only those involved in certification schemes like VietGAP and Global GAP have some sort of registration system in place.
- As previously mentioned, the register of all GI stakeholders within the Hoà Lộc mango GI, with all necessary data on producers (individual or members of farmers groups, cooperatives or other structures), plantations, production, packaging and labelling, traders, etc., which is necessary to set up the traceability system of the GI, has not been properly set up yet by Hoà Lộc cooperative due to its lack of human resources.

- Interviewed stakeholders assess that the auto-control is done by producers through their production practices.
- However, no guidelines for the auto-control by producers, collectors and traders, in respect of the GI product specifications have been prepared by the Hoà Lộc cooperative, so it is difficult to verify if the auto-control is effectively implemented by GI stakeholders.
- According to the provided information, capacity building on auto-control for GI stakeholders has not been undertaken yet by the Hoà Lộc cooperative, because local authorities do not have funding for training support.
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative is responsible for the internal control of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative holds monthly meetings with producers and also goes to the plantation regularly. However, the internal control undertaken by the Hoà Lộc cooperative is the one used for GAP standards, not having an internal control plan prepared and implemented for the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
- However, the Hoà Lộc cooperative does not count with human resources with the understanding and experience on GI control, hence the cooperative cannot provide the necessary support for producers on GI control, such as training, guiding on the implementation of the GI product specifications, guiding on auto-control, etc.
- According to the provided information, capacity building on traceability and internal control for the Hoà Lộc cooperative has not been undertaken yet, because local authorities do not have funding for training support or technical assistance to implement the traceability system.
- The responsibility to implement the GI external control has not been designated to any entity yet. In fact, the Tiền Giang PPC has not issued guiding documents, has not assigned the GI management to the Hoà Lộc cooperative, and has not distributed tasks to the different related departments for the external control of the GI.
- In 2016, the Tiền Giang DOST submitted a proposal to the Tiền Giang PPC, asking for the designation of the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center (under DOST) as responsible for the external control of the GI. Up to now, the Tiền Giang DOST has not received a response from the Tiền Giang PPC.
- The Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center has been recognized by the Bureau of Accreditation (BoA) as Vilas 369, designated also by the Horticulture Department for VietGAP certified units, in accordance with Vietnam Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (VILAS). Under such accreditation, the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center complies with the international requirements of the ISO/IEC 17025:2005, for the competence to carry out tests and/or calibrations, including sampling. It covers testing and calibration performed using standard methods, non-standard methods, and laboratory-developed methods. However, it does not cover the international requirements of the ISO/IEC 17065:2012, regarding Conformity Assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services.
- Therefore, the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center must have the technical capacity complying with international regulations (ISO/IEC 17065:2012) by receiving the accreditation by the BoA or, at least, shall proof its independence and impartiality, having the qualified personnel to control and certify the yearly production of the GI before being placed in the market.
- The Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center has received capacity building on external control, but has not set up and implement an external control plan for the GI yet.

In addition, it does not have the accreditation or proved the capacities, independence and impartiality required under international rules for Conformity Assessment.

- As a result of the above, the Hoà Lộc mango GI production is not yearly certified by the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center as external control body.
- The Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center has not prepared an external control plan for the Hoà Lộc mango GI, because the Tiền Giang DOST is waiting for the decision of the Tiền Giang PPC, regarding the designation of this Centre as responsible for such external control. Once this decision is adopted, the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center may start preparing the external control plan for the Hoà Lộc mango GI, while going through the accreditation process under international regulations or, at least, proving its independence and impartiality, having the qualified personnel to control and certify the yearly production of the GI before being placed in the market.
- The Tiền Giang PPC should allocate financial resources to support capacity building actions for producers on auto-control, for the Hoà Lộc cooperative on internal control and for the designated agency under Tiền Giang DOST on external control.

B.5. Labelling and promotion actions

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI production area, **provisions regarding the labelling of the Hoà Lộc mango GI are provided by local authorities, while the implementation of such labelling is done by the Hoà Lộc cooperative. However and according to interviewed stakeholders, labelling is ruled by buyers in practice, who indicate the labelling, code of farmers and quality controls that they expect from the product. The printing of stamps by the Hoà Lộc cooperative is a very positive step to ensure homogeneity, but some guidelines and awareness raising actions on the use of the GI logo and mention could be useful. As regards to promotion, the Hoà Lộc cooperative does not undertake any promotion actions, because they do not have production to cover the demand, while the Tiền Giang DOST has developed promotion actions on the product itself but not pointing out the PGI status of the Hoà Lộc mango.**

- The provisions regarding the labelling of the Hoà Lộc mango GI are provided by Tiền Giang DOST. However, there is no regulation or guidelines on labelling processed products when using the GI as an ingredient, such as dried mango, mango juice, mango slices, etc.
- In practice, it seems that labelling is ruled by buyers, who indicate the required codes of reference of farmers and undertake their own quality controls on the product.
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative is in charge of labelling the mangoes with the GI logo.
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative deals with the printing of stamps and labels according to the designs of the Tiền Giang DOST.
- For the national market, the all mangoes are labelled directly by the cooperative.
- As regards to the international market, labelling may be done:
 - Depending on the country of destination, labelling in some cases all mangoes (Pe. South Korea) or only the package (Pe. Japan).
 - Depending on the process: when mangoes go through watering process for export, they are labelled in another province and not in the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
- The stamps are printed by authorized printing companies and paid by the Hoà Lộc cooperative.

- In light of the labelling seen during the field visit to the Hoà Lộc cooperative, the packaging includes the Hoà Lộc mango logo which includes the name “Hoà Lộc mango”, but it does not include the mention of being a “Protected Geographical Indication” or a “PGI”. The Hoà Lộc cooperative should explore adding the mention “Protected Geographical Indication” or “PGI” to the logo and labelling practices.
- There is no regulation or guidelines on labelling processed products when using the Hoà Lộc mango GI as an ingredient, for dried mango, mango juice, mango slices, etc.
- No measures have been adopted to encourage the use of the GI logo, through awareness raising activities for traders and exporters on the importance to include the GI mention and logo for the Hoà Lộc mango GI to be sold in the domestic and export markets. This is due to the lack of financial resources of local authorities for training support, but the Hoà Lộc cooperative would be willing to coordinate such actions.
- It is important to note that labelling will remain weak because it is not possible to ensure that the labelled products are effectively Hoà Lộc mango GI, as long as the traceability system, as well as the external control and certification of the yearly GI production are not in place.
- NOIP is working on the preparation of a national GI logo for registered Vietnamese GIs. According to NOIP, the national GI logo in preparation will be a useful tool to improve the image and awareness on GIs, as well as to enforce their protection. Likewise, including the mention “Protected Geographical Indication” or “PGI” on the product and the packaging of the Hoà Lộc mango GI needs to be considered.
- The Hoà Lộc cooperative does not undertake promotion actions because they do not have enough production to respond to the demand.
- The Tiền Giang DOST has undertaken some promotion actions towards buyers and consumers on the product itself, comprising posters on the highway, fairs to introduce products, pamphlets, flyers, advertisements in local TV, etc. However, no promotion actions on the GI itself have been undertaken. The Tiền Giang DOST stressed its willingness to promote the GI in the near future. To that end, the Tiền Giang PPC should allocate financial resources to support the Tiền Giang DOST on promotion activities, such as linkages between tourism and the GI, holding and participating in contests, expo, fruit fairs, etc.
- Trade promotion activities for the Hoà Lộc mango GI have only been carried out by the Department of Trade and Industry.
- By now, NOIP has not defined or prepared a National GI Promotion Strategy to support the promotion of Vietnamese GIs at national and international levels, but it is foreseen to include a GI Promotion Strategy in the framework of the National IP Strategy in preparation at present.

B.6. Marketing of the GI product

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI production area, **the commercialization of the Hoà Lộc mango GI remains very weak and unstable, due to the insufficient production together with the lack of market channels and a market strategy for the GI.**

- Due to weather conditions, the production for export has been reduced to 1/3 in respect to the previous year. As a result, the Hoà Lộc cooperative has been forced to comply only

with 1/3 of the amount Hoà Lộc mango GI requested by a Japanese company and to resign to a contract with South Korea due to the insufficient production to comply with it.

- The internal market remains a challenge for producers, because brokers are between the producer and the market, hence they earn the highest benefit when selling the Hoà Lộc mango.
- There is still no market strategy for the Hoà Lộc mango GI. Each enterprise/cooperative has its own market strategy, causing difficulties in the GI management and development in general level, both domestically and internationally.
- The research and preparation of a marketing strategy for the marketing and commercialization of the Hoà Lộc mango GI in the domestic market or towards target markets has not been carried out, because cooperatives lack the skilled human resources to do so.
- There are no official trading and marketing channels for the GI product, therefore the added value of the GI product compared to the non-GI products has not been created. There is still no differentiation between GI and non-GI products in terms of price.
- Advocacy and visibility actions for buyers and consumers at national and international level on the official channels to obtain the Hoà Lộc mango GI have not been undertaken by local authorities, due to the lack of financial resources. The Hoà Lộc cooperative would be willing to coordinate such actions.

B.7. Protection of the GI product

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI production area, **the protection of the Hoà Lộc mango GI and its enforcement at national and international level remains a pending issue.** The main challenge is that **as long as the GI is not properly controlled and certified, it will not be possible to ensure the enforcement of the protection, since it will be as difficult to identify the real product that respects the product specifications or the fake product.** Furthermore, **there is a general lack of knowledge about the possible types of infringements and the lack of financial resources results in a lack of enforcement of the GI protection at national level.** In the international scenario, **there is no data about the protection of the Hoà Lộc mango GI abroad and there is no strategy yet to analyze the need to protect the GI and its logo on foreign markets.**

- The purpose of the GI certificate as a guarantee of protection remains unclear, as it is granted once but there is no follow up on the respect of the product specifications or any control on its use by the company that received the certificate. At present, NOIP is working on the review of the current regulation regarding the procedure for granting the certificate to use the GI and the implementation of the registration dossier for the GI, in the framework of the preparation of the amendment to the IP law.
- According to the provided information, cooperatives have discovered how to use counterfeited stamps pasted on the mango as if it is a real Hoà Lộc mango GI, but stakeholders do not know how to handle these infringements.
- There is a general lack of knowledge about the GI protection and enforcement, confusing protection and enforcement of the GI with the use of the GI right, and considering that the Hoà Lộc mango GI does not face cases of infringements.

- Most stakeholders do not have a clear understanding about the different cases of infringements that may occur against a GI. In fact, infringements are the use of the GI name or logo by third parties not part of the GI, but also the use of the GI name and logo by those within the GI that do not respect the product specifications. Including awareness raising actions within the GI protection strategy seems important to allow for a better understanding of the possible infringements.
- Among its roles, the Hoà Lộc cooperative is in charge of detecting the intrusion on the GI rights, but has not prepared any guidelines for enforcing the protection of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, setting up a system of sanction against infringements. According to the provided information, the Hoà Lộc cooperative and local authorities do not have enough capability to do so.
- If any infringement has been identified so far, the Hoà Lộc cooperative sends a request to stop such abusive activity and normally they stop. After that, they do not know about any other means to react against infringements.
- Up to present, there are no specific guidelines for stakeholders on the risks of being abused or actions to be undertaken when infringements against GIs occur. There are guidelines only for general IP rights.
- The enforcement of the GI has not been implemented as the commercialization of the product still faces several challenges, due to the lack of GI control, as well as the lack of human and financial resources for its implementation. As long as the control of the GI product is not implemented, the compliance of the GI with the product specifications and related provisions is very difficult to ensure, hence it will be very difficult to fight against infringements, from stakeholders that may not respect the elaboration process of the Hoà Lộc mango GI or from third parties that use the name “Hoà Lộc” for mangoes that are not the real Hoà Lộc mango GI.
- The Tiền Giang DOST works with the Market Surveillance forces for solving infringements but they do not seem to have any particular methodology in place.
- NOIP tries to accompany the companies and groups raising awareness about the role of the GI but it is also necessary the coordination between DOST, Market Surveillance, Market Police, etc. to provide a warning to the infringers. If the infringements persist, there are other measures available, such as imposing fines and disposing fake products causing confusion among consumers. Furthermore, NOIP is working with an international organization in order to develop a mechanism within a National IP Strategy in preparation that will comprise handling acts of violation against GIs.
- Even if the legislation foresees general actions against infringements, NOIP has not yet provided localities with a concrete methodology for the actions that can be taken against infringements as well as the sanctions to apply to those infringements. This methodology would be very useful for stakeholders and could be one of the results of the National GI Protection Strategy to be included in the National IP Strategy in preparation.
- According to NOIP, the national GI logo in preparation will be a useful tool to improve the image and awareness on GIs, as well as to enforce their protection. Likewise, including the mention “Protected Geographical Indication” or “PGI” on the logo and/or packaging of the Hoà Lộc mango GI needs to be considered.
- Awareness raising actions on GI protection enforcement and implementation of the GI rights for the Hoà Lộc cooperative and its members, producers, traders and exporters, have not been implemented up to now, because local authorities do not have financial

resources and capability to do so. Only workshops, seminars and meetings regarding the GI concept in general have been undertaken by Tiền Giang DOST with the support of NOIP.

- No data has been provided on the registration of the Hoà Lộc mango GI in foreign markets and the follow up on such protection measures.
- The analysis of foreign markets where it would be necessary to protect the Hoà Lộc mango GI, registering the GI if needed, has not been undertaken yet because local authorities do not have financial resources and capability to do so.
- The analysis regarding the need to register the Hoà Lộc mango GI logo abroad (especially in the EU) has not been undertaken yet, because local authorities do not have the financial resources and capability to do so.
- The Tiền Giang DOST does not supervise the protection of the Hoà Lộc mango GI at national level. According to the provided information, the Hoà Lộc cooperative and local authorities are looking forward to receiving some training from NOIP.
- On the contrary, the supervision of the protection of Vietnamese GIs at national and international level in the framework of a GI Protection Strategy has not been set up yet. It is possible that this strategy may be included in the National GI Strategy in preparation. The Hoà Lộc cooperative and local authorities are looking forward to receiving some training from NOIP in this matter once it is set up.

B.8. Impact of the GI

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI production area, **the impact of the Hoà Lộc mango GI has not been appreciated so far**. This may be due to several reasons:

- The general lack of knowledge or insufficient understanding about the GI, its impacts and benefits by most related stakeholders.
- The lack of a strong / on the ground-based GI management by the Hoà Lộc cooperative, still undeveloped and weak in terms of resources and capacities.
- The lack of a traceability system and control plan at all levels (auto-control, internal control and external control), having as a result the lack of certification of the yearly production of the GI before being placed in the market.
- The insufficient awareness raising towards all stakeholders directly or indirectly involved and affected by the Hoà Lộc mango GI on the efforts to be made for achieving tangible results in the future.

The aforementioned deficiencies make very difficult to develop market strategies, awareness raising or promotion actions to foster the benefits of the GI for producers, consumers and the local community.

C. Conclusions

In light of the documentation analysis, the information provided and the meeting with related stakeholders during the field visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI area, EU-MUTRAP IV GI international and local experts reached the following **conclusions**:

- The **Hoà Lộc mango GI has consolidated its high quality**, but faces serious **problems of production due to the climate change**.
- **The GI product specifications are totally unknown by related stakeholders**, who should be the ones implementing them on their production practices.
- **The awareness concerning the GI concept, its implications and potential benefits remains very weak among all stakeholders**, including producers, the Hoà Lộc cooperative and even local authorities.
- **There is a strong commitment and willingness of the Hoà Lộc cooperative to learn and exploit the GI**, which constitutes a positive asset for the consolidation and development of the GI.
- **The endorsement and support by the Tiền Giang PPC (especially the Tiền Giang DOST) will be needed to ensure progress**.
- **Some improvements on the Hoà Lộc cooperative**, regarding the structure, the staff and the financial resources through membership fees, have been assessed.
- **There are still important challenges as regards to the consolidation of the Hoà Lộc cooperative**, needing to increase the number of members, to clarify the role and services for all relevant stakeholders, to receive capacity building and training on GI management, etc.
- **The traceability system remains a challenge for the Hoà Lộc cooperative**, because without a proper register of GI stakeholders it is not possible to trace the GI product back to the plantation.
- **The control plan is not implemented yet in any of its stages** (auto-control, internal control and external control), hence **the yearly production of the Hoà Lộc mango GI is not certified before being placed in the market**, putting into risk the credibility of the entire GI.
- **Provisions regarding the labelling of the Hoà Lộc mango GI are provided by local authorities**, while **the implementation of such labelling is done by the Hoà Lộc cooperative**.
- **In practice, labelling is ruled by buyers**, who indicate the labelling, code of farmers and quality controls that they expect from the product.
- **The printing of stamps by the Hoà Lộc cooperative is a very positive step to ensure homogeneity**, but there are no guidelines and awareness raising actions on the use of the GI logo and mention.
- **The Hoà Lộc cooperative does not undertake any promotion actions**, because they do not have production to cover the demand.
- **The Tiền Giang DOST has developed promotion actions** on the product itself but not pointing out the PGI status of the Hoà Lộc mango.
- **The commercialization of the Hoà Lộc mango GI remains very weak and unstable**, due to the insufficient production together with the lack of market channels and a market strategy for the GI.
- **There is a general lack of knowledge about the possible types of infringements** and the lack of financial resources results in a lack of enforcement of the GI protection at national level.
- **The protection of the Hoà Lộc mango GI and its enforcement at national and international will remain unsolved**, as long as the GI is not properly controlled and certified, since it will be as difficult to identify the real product that respects the product specifications or the fake product.



- In the international scenario, **there is no data about the protection of the Hoà Lộc mango GI abroad and there is no strategy yet to analyze the need to protect the GI and its logo on foreign markets.**

The field visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI area was too short to be able to have a deep exchange with stakeholders on the status of the GI. It is important to note that interviewed stakeholders (representatives of the Hoà Lộc cooperative and representative of the Tiền Giang DOST) very cooperative during the visit as well as after the visit providing information to complete the check list. But unfortunately, the meeting did not allow MUTRAP GI experts for giving them guidance and recommendations using practical examples (as it was done on the other 3 localities) to strengthen and improve the management, labelling, promotion and protection of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.

However and in light of the gathered information, several aspects need to be tackled to make tangible progress in the near future, being crucial to maintain a regular follow up on their actions as well as to provide them with short term “tasks” on the priorities that they need to address in the next months.

III. Recommended implementing priorities

The Implementation Plan prepared by EU-MUTRAP GI experts and provided to local stakeholders in May 2016 responded to the request of the Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to create the capacity of selected GI associations (Hoà Lộc mango GI among them) to carry out all the relevant steps to establish and maintain their geographical indications (GIs) locally, including, among the others, the identification of an adequate plan to manage all the relevant steps to be completed before, during and after receiving the protection as a GI.

Such implementation plan included a wide range of actions to be implemented by all involved stakeholders in order to improve the GI management (the traceability system and control plan) as well as to foster the sustainability and further development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI. However, after six months of its delivery and through the present status report, it has been assessed that **stakeholders need to be provided with a selected number of priorities to be implemented within the framework of a provided timetable, seeking to make tangible progress on the management as well as on the consolidation and development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.**

Therefore, EU-MUTRAP GI experts propose herewith the **recommended implementing priorities to be undertaken in the coming 6 months**, from March to August 2017, which will seek to solve the first challenges that the Hoà Lộc mango GI faces to consolidate as a GI and make progress on its development in the future.

It is important to note that the following selected priorities are not the only actions to be implemented for the consolidation and development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, hence they will not bring immediate tangible results. On the contrary, **with these priorities EU-MUTRAP GI experts seek to provide a clear orientation to all involved stakeholders on the actions to be implemented first, which shall be followed by others actions to be defined after these first have been completed.**

The **recommended implementing priorities** are the following:

BY THE HOÀ LỘC COOPERATIVE:

1) Improving the management of the Hoà Lộc mango GI:

The **objective** of this priority is strengthening the structure of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, in order to enforce some aspects that difficult the development of the GI.

Regardless other actions to be implemented at a later stage, this priority **includes** obtaining and getting familiarized with the product specifications, assessing the number of stakeholders currently involved in the GI, identify, approach and welcome other stakeholders in the GI area to join the Hoà Lộc cooperative, set up an efficient database of GI stakeholders within the Hoà Lộc mango GI area that will serve to develop the traceability system for the Hoà Lộc mango GI,

and improve the capacities and resources of the Hoà Lộc cooperative on the GI concept and its management, for a better management of the GI.

In order to implement this priority, some of the **following steps** as well as others to be identified are advised for their implementation by the Hoà Lộc cooperative:

A. Involving all stakeholders in the consolidation and development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, through participatory actions led by the Hoà Lộc cooperative:

- **Organize a meeting with the Tiền Giang DOST to obtain and discuss with them the GI concept and the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI**, analysing if any amendments must be prepared (in terms of product description, geographical area of the GI, etc.). If necessary, work in close cooperation with the Tiền Giang DOST for amending the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI (see recommended implementing priority nº 2)
- Once all workers within the Hoà Lộc cooperative are familiar with the product specifications, **organize an agenda of meetings with all stakeholders of the Hoà Lộc mango GI**, members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative as well as potential members involved on the GI (including households, cooperatives, farmers' associations, collectors, traders, ...), to explain the GI right and the importance to work together on its consolidation and development. Several meetings shall be organized to reach all interested stakeholders.
- **Undertake the planned meetings with identified stakeholders of the Hoà Lộc mango GI**, members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative as well as potential members involved on the GI. Further to explaining the GI concept, its benefits and implications, as well as the importance to work together for its defence and promotion, other issues to be discussed at these meetings may be:
 - The role and functions of the Hoà Lộc cooperative to provide useful services to all members. Its functions may be completed according to the discussions.
 - The membership fees and yearly fees that all members may be ready to pay to receive the services, representation and defence by the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
 - New voluntary stakeholders ready to collaborate on the work of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, especially to set up a database of the GI area.
 - Calendar for volunteers to gather the information to build up the database.
 - Budget to build up the database (payment to volunteers gathering the data), which shall be covered with the fees from members if at all possible.
 - Other means to look for other financial support for the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
 - Other aspects that may arise.

It is important to note that the more stakeholders are identified and join the cooperative, the higher representatives and benefits may provide the cooperative for the development of the GI.

The results of these meetings must be gathered by the Hoà Lộc cooperative, achieving as results: an increase on the number of members, an agreement on the fees for the cooperative and a system to collect them, a pool of volunteers to gather the information to set up the database, a timeframe for gathering the information, a budget to build up the database, a list of possible options to gather additional financial resources for the cooperative.

B. Setting up the Hoà Lộc mango GI's database: The database of members within the Hoà Lộc mango GI shall include plantations, production, hectares, etc. In order to build the updated database, it is recommended to:

- **Elaborate a methodology to build up the GI database**, which may include among other contents:
 - Defining the contents of the database that will serve to set up the traceability system (plantations, name of producers, households, cooperatives, farmers' associations, collectors, traders,... hectares, production, etc.).
 - Defining the format of the database (electronic or manual, data introduction and update, etc.). It may be useful to profit the databases already used for certification schemes, such as VietGAP and Global GAP as a basis,
 - Preparing templates to gather the data with contents of data to collect, especially to set up the database from different areas, etc.)
- **Provide training for trainers to the identified volunteers**, which may include among other contents:
 - With the list of volunteers from different areas willing to assist on building up the database, preparing a training sessions for identified volunteers, where explaining the GI concept, the purpose of the database, the methodology to gather the data, the area that shall be covered, the budget to gather the data, etc.
 - Providing templates and clarify questions
- **Set up the Hoà Lộc mango GI's database**, including plantations, production, hectares, etc. In order to build the updated database, it shall:
 - Collecting the information provided by volunteers.
 - Inserting on the database
 - Setting up the database.
 - Launching the methodology for regular update as soon as it is complete.

The resulting database for the Hoà Lộc mango GI will not only serve to properly represent, inform, involve and assist the members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, but also as basis to set up a traceability system for the Hoà Lộc mango GI.

C. Improving the capacities of the working personnel at the Hoà Lộc cooperative:

- **Set up a training plan:** Besides the first discussions with the Tiền Giang DOST on the GI concept and the product specification of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, set up and implement a plan of regular training for improving the capacities of the officials working in the Hoà Lộc cooperative, with the support of the relevant local authorities. These training may include, among others:
 - The GI concept, its requirements and benefits
 - The GI management and quality control (a control and certification body may be hired to provide it)
 - The services to provide to members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
 - The division of responsibilities for each department or individual within the Hoà Lộc cooperative.

2) Strengthening the basis of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, by reviewing the product specifications (only if necessary) and setting up an efficient auto-control plan by involved stakeholders:

The **objective** of this priority is twofold:

- ONLY IF NECESSARY, adapting the product specifications to the reality of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, in case the GI area of production needs to be modified.
- Setting up a proper auto-control of the Hoà Lộc mango GI by all stakeholders involved in the elaboration process, in order to ensure a strong basis for the control of the GI at all stages.

This priority **implies** working in close cooperation with the Tiền Giang DOST on the review of the GI product specifications if needed, presenting it for approval and registration to NOIP, as well preparing a tool for facilitating the understanding of households, cooperatives, farmers' associations, collectors, traders, ... on the production practices they must respect based on the product specifications and other related provisions on the elaboration of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.

In order to implement this priority, some of the **following steps** as well as others to be identified are advised for their implementation by the Hoà Lộc cooperative:

A. Reviewing the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI (ONLY IF NEEDED), including the following actions among others possible:

- **Prepare and undertake a meeting with the Tiền Giang DOST to discuss the review of the product specifications.** The main aspects to be discussed and agreed on shall include:
 - The procedure and requirements of NOIP to present the modification of the product specifications.
 - The update of the GI area, production and administrative demarcation, to include all districts producing the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
 - Other aspects that might need to be amended on the product specifications.
- **Define and agree on the amendment of the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI**, by:
 - Jointly drafting the amendments according to the discussed issues.
 - Submitting the amended product specifications for approval by all members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
 - Collaborating with the Tiền Giang DOST on the presentation of the amended product specifications for approval and registration by NOIP.

B. Setting up an efficient auto-control system by involved stakeholders, including the following actions among others possible:

- **Prepare a tool for facilitating the understanding of producers and processors on the production practices they must respect based on the product specifications** and other related provisions on the elaboration of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, which shall explain clearly how producers and processors shall verify that they are respecting the rules of the product specifications, while becoming a friendly and accessible instrument to all GI stakeholders for its implementation on their plantations and processing companies. For preparing such tool, it is advisable to:

- Organize and implement an agenda of meetings with all members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, once new members have joined and the database setting has been launched, to collect all relevant information on the elaboration process of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
- Based on the collected information, prepare some guidelines on the production practices that all stakeholders must implement on their plantations and trading centres.
- Based on these guidelines, prepare a tool, easy to understand by all stakeholders, explaining clearly how producers, collectors and traders shall verify that they are respecting the rules of the product specifications, while becoming a friendly and accessible instrument to all GI stakeholders for its implementation on their plantations and trading companies.
- Once the tool is drafted, organize meetings with all members to validate its content.
- **Provide the tool to stakeholders so that they may implement an efficient auto-control system:**
 - Once the tool is validated, find the necessary resources for its editing in a friendly format, printing and disseminating among stakeholders, to have it accessible on their plantations and companies.
 - Edit the tool, with the supporting resources.
 - Once the tool is edited, print as many copies and formats (flyer, poster, etc.) as members shall have them on their plantations, processing centres or companies.
 - Organize a planning to disseminate and explain the content of the tool and the importance to comply with it on their daily work elaborating the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
 - Implementing the planning, disseminating the tool to all stakeholders within the Hoà Lộc mango GI.

Thanks to the provided tool, producers and processors may undertake auto-controls on their plantations and trading centres, gaining the ability to ensure themselves and prove to others that they produce the Hoà Lộc mango GI in conformity with the product specifications.

3) Setting up the traceability system and the internal control plan of the Hoà Lộc mango GI:

The **objective** of this priority is consolidating the traceability system and internal control plan of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, once the database of the GI is updated and the product specifications is reviewed.

This priority **implies** working in close cooperation with the members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative to define a traceability system, adapted to the specificities of all members and compatible with their certification schemes some are involved in, as well as setting up and internal control plan, to supervise the respect of the product specifications by all members.

In order to implement this priority, some of the **following steps** as well as others to be identified are advised for their implementation by the Hoà Lộc cooperative:

- A. Setting up a traceability system for the Hoà Lộc mango GI**, comprising the following actions among others possible:

- **Define the methodology for the traceability system:**
 - Contact all members and gather their information regarding the traceability they apply on their businesses, to ensure that the product originates from the delimited GI area.
 - Define a methodology for a common traceability system: This methodology can start from the auto-controls implemented by producers and packaging and commercializing structures; it can also profit the traceability used for certification schemes that some members may apply, as possible synergies may be profited to reduce costs.
 - With such information, propose common traceability markers at different stages of the production process that shall be agreed for their use by all members.
 - **Agree and launch the traceability system:**
 - Organize meeting with members to discuss and agree on a common traceability system, to ensure the origin of the Hoà Lộc mango GI from the start of the production process through to the final product.
 - Put the traceability system in place and correct if necessary.
- B. Setting up an internal control plan for the Hoà Lộc mango GI**, which may be implemented delegating some of the controls to local producer groups as long as the Hoà Lộc cooperative supervises and reports its full implementation. Please note that the internal control must be totally separated from the external control to be undertaken by the designated local authorities. In order to do so, some of the following steps as well as others to be identified are advised:
- **Define the parameters of the internal control plan:**
 - The control plan specifies how the rules defined for the elaboration of the Hoà Lộc mango GI are to be checked (in the product specifications as well as in other adopted provisions, such as the guidelines on the production practices defined for the auto-control).
 - The Hoà Lộc cooperative must define: the critical points to be controlled for each rule, the method used to control (visual, document analysis, etc.), the moment of control, the frequency of controls and the coverage (all producers, sampling), the sanctions depending on the seriousness of the non-compliance (economic, such as fines or prohibition to use the GI name, or social, such as the exclusion from the group).
 - **Prepare and launch the internal control plan:**
 - Draft an internal control plan, to be discussed and agreed by all members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
 - In case the Hoà Lộc cooperative needs orientation for setting up the internal control plan, it may explore the possible collaboration with a control and certification body, which can assist on the elaboration of the internal control plan and training of agents within the Hoà Lộc cooperative for its implementation. For further information on control and certification bodies that could be contacted for this purpose, you may find the **list of competent control and certification bodies accredited by the BoA in ANNEX V**.
 - In case there are limited human resources to implement the internal control, it is always advisable to profit the synergies within the Hoà Lộc cooperative, having some voluntary members to rotate for implementing the internal control.

Once these recommended priorities have been implemented by the Hoà Lộc cooperative and in light of the results, corrections shall be proposed and further actions defined to make progress as regards to labelling, marketing, promotion and protection of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.

BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES (LED BY TIỀN GIANG DOST):

1) Setting up an effective GI Multi-Disciplinary Team of local officials for the support and further development of the GI.

The **objective** of this priority is setting up a GI Multi-Disciplinary Team of officials from all local agencies directly or indirectly involved in the GI, to jointly define and coordinate the implementation of all actions to be undertaken at local and national level to support the sustainability of and to develop, promote and protect the Hoà Lộc mango GI, as well as other GIs that may arise in the future in the Tiền Giang province.

The **tasks** of such team may be the following:

- Design the methodology to programme, prepare, implement and follow up on all actions to support and develop the GIs from the Tiền Giang province.
- Define the role of each relevant local agency, setting up a coordinated division of competences for the development, promotion and protection of GIs from the Tiền Giang province.
- Set up an awareness-raising programme for official from local authorities, with regular updates on the GI scheme and its progress.
- Prepare a road map of actions to be implemented at regional level for the development, promotion and protection of GIs from the Tiền Giang province.
- Based on the road map of actions, define annual work plans, taking into account the views of stakeholders and the competences of each local agency, to ensure implementation of the annual priorities identified in a coordinated manner by all parties involved.
- Coordinate the proposed actions with the relevant national authorities (NOIP and others if necessary)
- Define the skills, duties and resources needed to implement the actions proposed in the annual work plans.
- Identify, contact and recruit the skilled technical personnel, local officials or external experts required to implement the activities proposed in the annual work plans.
- Allocate the required resources and manage the administrative arrangements necessary for the implementation of the activities proposed in the annual work plans.
- Supervise, coordinate and implement the actions set out in the annual work plans.
- Report regularly on the results to the relevant government ministries and agencies (NOIP and others if necessary).
- Follow up on outcomes, identifying the additional activities to be implemented in subsequent annual work plans.

In order to implement this priority, some of the **following steps** as well as others to be identified are advised for their implementation by local authorities (led by Tiền Giang DOST):

A. Involving all agencies directly or indirectly involved in the establishment and development of GIs in the Tiền Giang province

- **Identify the local agencies that need to be involved:** Based on its contacts with different departments under the Provincial People’s Committee, the Tiền Giang DOST shall set up a list of all relevant departments and agencies (Agriculture, Trade, Tourism and those that are directly or indirectly involved/interested in the development of GIs).

B. Setting up the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team:

- **Organize a meeting of all related local agencies** to agree on the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team structure, roles and duties, skills and the resources required to set it up.

At that meeting, it is advisable to agree on:

- Structure, functions and resources: what each agency can do, what resources they can allocate, what are the actions that they must undertake as a priority, what may be the support to request from NOIP, what may be the support to the Hoà Lộc cooperative, etc.
- In terms of actions: how to provide awareness raising of the GI concept, how to support the Hoà Lộc cooperative, Agriculture,... it terms of quality maintenance and improvement the department of agriculture, in terms of promotion the department of tourism and trade, in terms of market strategy and contacts with private national and international partners department of trade and DOST.
- Set up a deadline for the appointment of the officials who will make up the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team.
- **Set up the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team**, appointing the proposed members and defining the next steps (training, calendar of meetings, tasks, etc.).
- Provide training to the team members on the GI concept, the GI scheme, its potential benefits and the current challenges in Vietnam.
- Organize and hold the first meeting of the new GI Multi-Disciplinary Team of officials to launch its activities, discussing the road map of actions to be implemented (in terms of awareness raising, quality maintenance and improvement, support the GI association on the development and market strategy for the GI, promotion actions, etc.). Based on the road map of actions, further documents shall be prepared (annual work plan, calendar, follow up meetings, etc.).

Some **additional recommendations** regarding the form and roles of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team:

- The GI Multi-Disciplinary Team should take the form of a horizontal group of local officials with sufficient skills to implement the specific tasks they are given.
- The team may be made up of lead persons appointed from within each local agency or new officials from outside the agency hired to be part of the team.
- The main role of these officials will be to carry out the tasks assigned to the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team and to channel the actions to be taken by the agencies they represent, when required.
- Each agency involved should ensure that the designated trained officials can undertake their duties within the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team and that their duties and workload are

always covered by/transferred to other suitably skilled officials, if they change/transfer jobs.

- In order to ensure the long-term sustainability and efficiency of this team, it should receive both initial as well as regular training on the GI scheme and updates on its progress at national and international levels, with the support of NOIP.

2) Strengthening the basis of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, by reviewing the product specifications (only if necessary) and continuing the support to the Hoà Lộc cooperative:

The **objective** of this priority is ensuring the improvement and further development on the management of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.

This priority **implies** working in close cooperation with the Hoà Lộc cooperative, providing capacity building and financial support on the several actions to be implemented in the coming months.

In order to implement this priority, some of the **following steps** as well as others to be identified are advised for their implementation by the Tiền Giang DOST:

A. Reviewing the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI (ONLY IF NEEDED), including the following actions among others possible:

- **Providing the Hoà Lộc cooperative with the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI:** This shall be a urgent action, so that the Hoà Lộc cooperative and its members may acquire a proper understanding of the GI, as it is registered at NOIP. Please note that it will also be crucial for the Hoà Lộc cooperative to know the content of the product specifications for amending them, asking stakeholders to implement the auto-control and setting up the internal control plan.
- Once all workers within the Hoà Lộc cooperative are familiar with the product specifications, **prepare and undertake a meeting gathering the members of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team and the representatives of the Hoà Lộc cooperative** to discuss the review of the product specifications. The main aspects to be discussed and agreed on shall include:
 - The procedure and requirements of NOIP to present the modification of the product specifications.
 - The update of the GI area, production and administrative demarcation, to include all districts producing the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
 - Other aspects that might need to be amended on the product specifications.
- **In close cooperation with the Hoà Lộc cooperative, define and agree on the amendment of the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, by:**
 - Jointly drafting the amendments according to the discussed issues.
 - Once the product specifications are approved by all members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, presenting the amended product specifications for approval and registration by NOIP.
 - Assisting the Hoà Lộc cooperative on the elaboration of the tool for facilitating the understanding of producers and processors on the production practices they must respect based on the product specifications and other related provisions on the

elaboration of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, providing support on the drafting and dissemination among producer, collectors, traders, etc.

B. Brainstorming with the Hoà Lộc cooperative on the needs to improve and develop the Hoà Lộc mango GI.

- **Meeting between local authorities and the Hoà Lộc cooperative:** Once the product specifications have been modified and in parallel to its registration by NOIP, organize a meeting, gathering the members of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team as the representatives of the Hoà Lộc cooperative.

During such meeting, discuss the training support and financial resources that the Hoà Lộc cooperative needs to implement the recommended priorities in this report. Among others, it would be needed for:

- Financial support for preparing the database of members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
- Financial support for editing and printing the tool on auto-control for stakeholders.
- Technical assistance for training for officials working in the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
- Technical assistance for providing training for trainers to the identified voluntaries, so that they can gather the information for the database of members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
- Financial support for hiring a control and certification body to assist on the preparation of the internal control plan.

C. Setting up an action plan for the support of the Hoà Lộc cooperative.

- Once the needs have been discussed, **assess and decide on the means that shall be provided to support the Hoà Lộc cooperative** and prepare a plan for its provision and supervision of its use.

It is advisable that the provided financial support is partial, in order to ensure also a commitment by the members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative. As regards to the training, it is advisable to ensure that contents are accessible but complete, in order to ensure that trained professionals may afterwards disseminate their knowledge to others.

- **Set up an action plan**, including all actions that shall be supported by local authorities, including technical and financial means that each agency within the GI Muti-Disciplinary Team will provide to endorse and support the activities by the Hoà Lộc cooperative.

3) Setting up the external control plan of the Hoà Lộc mango GI:

The **objective** of this priority is completing the guarantee system of the Hoà Lộc cooperative mango GI, allowing for the control and certification of the GI production before being placed in the market.

This priority **includes** obtaining an urgent response from the Tiền Giang PPC designating the the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center (under DOST) as responsible for the external control of the GI, improving the capacities of such Centre for controlling and certifying the Hoà Lộc mango GI, as well as setting up the external control plan to control and certify the Hoà Lộc mango GI before being placed in the market.

It will imply working in close cooperation with the designated entity that shall undertake the external control of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, with the Hoà Lộc cooperative, as well as with an external control and certification body accredited by the BoA (if needed).

In order to implement this priority, some of the **following steps** as well as others to be identified are advised for their implementation by the Tiền Giang DOST:

A. Adopt an URGENT decision on the external control and certification body for the GI:

- **Undertake the necessary actions to designate the agency responsible for the external control and certification of the Hoà Lộc mango GI:** Following the discussions with the Tiền Giang DOST during the field visit to the Hoà Lộc mango GI, NOIP shall support them to kindly ask the Tiền Giang PPC for an urgent decision regarding the designation of the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center as the entity responsible for the external control and certification of the Tiền Giang province's GIs, Hoà Lộc mango GI among them. **This decision should be adopted urgently to be able to set up the external control plan for the Hoà Lộc mango GI.**

B. Ensuring the necessary capacities to undertake the external control and certification of the GI:

- In order to be able to set up an external control plan, it is crucial to have a decision adopted by the Tiền Giang PPC, on the organism that will assume such tasks.
- If, as proposed by the Tiền Giang DOST, this organism is the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center, it shall **ensure that it has the technical capacity complying with international regulations (ISO/IEC 17065: 2012)**, by receiving the accreditation by the BoA or, at least, by proving its independence and impartiality, having the qualified personnel to control and certify the yearly production of the GI before being placed in the market. In any case, the Centre shall have the resources and appropriate expertise to fulfil such task.
- In order to do so, it is advisable to **organize trainings with the BoA** to receive the accreditation or at least to ensure independence and impartiality of the entity as well as the capacities of its personnel. Hiring an external control body to train the designated entity and support on the elaboration of the external control plan may be extremely useful.
- As the the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center is not accredited by the BoA on the international requirements for Conformity Assessment (ISO/IEC 17065:2012), if DOST or the PPC decide that the designated centre must receive the accreditation by the BoA, the centre shall **contact the BoA and start the accreditation process** (around 5/6 months minimum).

C. Setting up and implement an external control plan for the Hoà Lộc mango GI:

- **Set up the external control plan for the Hoà Lộc mango GI (the designated control and certification body):**

In parallel to the accreditation process (if in process) and to avoid delays, the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center shall start setting up the external control plan, including the following elements to control:

- The evaluation of production conditions and quality system, including the elaboration process, the management by the Hoà Lộc cooperative and its members.
- The traceability, including the correct application and intervention in case of a system failure by the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
- The quality of the final product, including labelling, aspect, taste, etc. through visual controls and laboratory analysis.

Hence, the external control plan specifies how the rules defined for the elaboration of the Hoà Lộc mango GI are to be checked (in the product specifications as well as in other adopted provisions), how the management by the Hoà Lộc cooperative is undertaken, if the traceability of the product is ensured and if the final product complies with the rules for the Hoà Lộc mango GI (product specifications and other provisions).

- The Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center **shall work in cooperation with the Hoà Lộc cooperative** to define: the critical points to be controlled for each rule, the method used to control (visual, document analysis, etc.), the moment of control, the frequency of controls and the coverage (all producers, sampling), the sanctions depending on the seriousness of the non-compliance (economic, such as fines or prohibition to use the GI name, or social, such as the exclusion from the group).
- The Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center shall **draft the external control plan**, to be discussed and agreed by the Tiền Giang DOST. The external control plan shall include a certification of conformity or non-conformity of the yearly GI production before the GI is placed in the market.
- **Implement the external control plan for the Hoà Lộc mango GI** (the designated control and certification body together with related local authorities), including:
 - The implementation of the external control plan.
 - The detection and correction of deviations if needed.
 - The certification of the yearly production of the Hoà Lộc mango as a GI before being placed in the market.

In case the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center needs orientation for setting up the control plan, it may explore the possible collaboration of a control and certification body, which can assist on the elaboration of the external control plan and training of agents within the department for its implementation. For further information on control and certification bodies that could be contacted for this purpose, you may find the **list of competent control and certification bodies accredited by the BoA in ANNEX V**.

Once these recommended priorities have been implemented by the local authorities (led by Tiền Giang DOST) and in light of the results, corrections shall be proposed and further actions defined to make progress as regards to promotion, market surveillance and protection of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.

IV. Timetable for implementing priorities

HOÀ LỘC COOPERATIVE:

1) Improving the management of the Hoà Lộc mango GI:

STEPS	ACTIONS	CONTENT	IMPLEMENTING PERIOD	EXPECTED RESULTS
A. Involving all stakeholders in the consolidation and development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, through participatory actions led by the Hoà Lộc cooperative	Organize an introductory meeting with the Tiền Giang DOST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organize a meeting with the Tiền Giang DOST to exchange with them on the GI concept and obtain and discuss the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, analysing if any amendments must be prepared (in terms of product description, geographical area of the GI, etc.). If necessary, work in close cooperation with the Tiền Giang DOST for amending the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI (see recommended implementing priority n° 2) 	1 March – 10 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear understanding on the GI concept, its implications and potential benefits. - Product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI handed to the Hoà Lộc cooperative and clearly discussed to explore possible amendments.
	Organize an agenda of meetings with all stakeholders of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative as well as potential members involved on the GI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify all stakeholders involved in the elaboration of the Hoà Lộc mango GI (producers, collectors, companies, etc) and prepare a list - Prepare the calendar of meetings - Prepare and send the invitations for meetings to stakeholders - Follow up on confirmations - Several meetings shall be organized to reach all interested stakeholders. 	1 March – 10 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of stakeholders to invite to meetings. - Calendar of meetings depending on the area. - Invitation for meetings. - List of confirmed participating stakeholders.
	Undertake the planned meetings with identified stakeholders of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative as well as potential members involved on the GI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explain the GI concept, its benefits and implications - Explain the importance to work together for the consolidation and development of the Hoà Lộc mango GI. - Discuss the role and functions of the Hoà Lộc cooperative to provide useful services to all members: open to contributions. - Discuss the membership fees and yearly fees that all members may be ready to pay to receive the services, representation and defence by the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - Request new voluntary stakeholders ready to collaborate on the work of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, especially to set up a database of the GI area. - Agree on a calendar for volunteers to gather the information to build up the database. - Discuss the budget to build up the database (payment to volunteers gathering the data), which shall be covered with the fees from members 	10 March – 31 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear understanding of the GI concept, its implications and benefits as well as the importance to work together for consolidating, defending and promoting the Hoà Lộc mango GI. - Agreement on the role and functions of the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - Agreement on the membership fees and yearly fees of the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - Pool of voluntary stakeholders to help the Hoà Lộc cooperative, especially to gather the information for the GI database. - Calendar to gather the information for the GI database. - Budget to set up the GI database.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if at all possible. - Discuss on possible means of financial support for the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - Other aspects that may arise. - Invite to join the Hoà Lộc cooperative. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of possible options to gather additional financial resources for the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - List of members, including new members, of the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
B. Setting up the Hoà Lộc mango GI's database	Elaborate the methodology to build up the GI database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define the contents of the database that will serve to set up the traceability system (plantations, name of producers, households, cooperatives, farmers' associations, collectors, traders,... hectares, production, etc.) - Define the format of the database (electronic or manual, data introduction and update, etc.) - Prepare templates to gather the data with contents of data to collect, especially to set up the database from different areas, etc.) 	15 March – 31 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methodology to build up the database of the Hoà Lộc mango GI. - Format of the GI database. - Templates for data collection.
	Provide training for trainers to the identified voluntary stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With the list of volunteers from different areas willing to assist on building up the database, prepare a training sessions for identified volunteers, where explaining the GI concept, the purpose of the database, the methodology to gather the data, the area that shall be covered, the budget to gather the data, etc. - Provide templates and clarify questions 	25 March – 15 April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trained pool of volunteers to gather the information for the GI database.
	Prepare and implement a planning to gather the information to build up the GI database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With the pool of voluntary stakeholders and the prepared calendar to gather the information for the GI database, set up a planning for data collection, based on the proposed implementing period. - Assign volunteers to the task of collecting the data and monitor the process. - Follow up on the data gathering. 	15 April – 31 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning for volunteers to collect the data
	Set up the Hoà Lộc mango GI's database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collect the information provided by volunteers. - Insert on the database - Set up the database. - Launch the methodology for regular update as soon as it is complete. 	15 April – 31 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Database of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, to properly represent, inform, involve and assist the members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, but also as basis to set up a traceability system for the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
	C. Improving the capacities of the working personnel at the Hoà Lộc cooperative	Set up a training plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up and implement a plan of regular training for improving the capacities of the officials working in the Hoà Lộc cooperative, with the support of the relevant local authorities. - Include on the training the following: the GI concept, its requirements and benefits; the GI management and quality control; the services to provide to members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative; the division of responsibilities for each department or individual within the Hoà Lộc cooperative, among other aspects to be identified. 	1 April – 31 August (yearly plan to be continued)

2) Strengthening the basis of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, by reviewing the product specifications (only if necessary) and setting up an efficient auto-control plan by involved stakeholders:

STEPS	ACTIONS	CONTENT	IMPLEMENTING PERIOD	EXPECTED RESULTS
A. Reviewing the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI (ONLY IF NEEDED)	Prepare and undertake a meeting with the Tiền Giang DOST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss the procedure and requirements of NOIP to present the modification of the product specifications. - Discuss on the need to update of the GI area, production and administrative demarcation, to include all districts producing the Hoà Lộc mango GI. 	1 March – 15 March 2017	- Agreement on the aspects of the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI to be modified.
	Define and agree on the amendment of the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jointly draft the amendments according to the discussed issues. - Submit the amended product specifications for approval by all members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - Collaborate with the Tiền Giang DOST on the presentation of the amended product specifications for approval and registration by NOIP. 	1 March – 31 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approval of the amended product specifications on all members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - Amended product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI. - Approval and registration by NOIP of the amended product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
B. Setting up an efficient auto-control system by involved stakeholders	Prepare a tool for facilitating the understanding of producers and processors on the production practices they must respect based on the product specifications and other related provisions on the elaboration of the Hoà Lộc mango GI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organize and implement a meeting with all members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, once new members have joined and the database setting has been launched, to collect all relevant information on the elaboration process of the Hoà Lộc mango GI. - Based on the collected information, prepare some guidelines on the production practices that all stakeholders must implement on their plantations and trading centres. - Based on these guidelines, prepare a tool, easy to understand by all stakeholders, explaining clearly how producers, collectors and traders shall verify that they are respecting the rules of the product specifications, while becoming a friendly and accessible instrument to all GI stakeholders for its implementation on their plantations and trading companies. - Once the tool is drafted, organize meetings with all members to validate its content. 	1 April – 30 April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidelines on the production practices for the elaboration of the Hoà Lộc mango GI. - Friendly tool explaining clearly how producers, collectors and traders shall verify that they are respecting the rules of the product specifications of the GI. - Approval of the proposed tool.

	<p>Provide the tool to stakeholders so that they may implement an efficient auto-control system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once the tool is validated, find the necessary resources for its editing in a friendly format, printing and disseminating among stakeholders, to have it accessible on their plantations and companies. - Edit the tool, with the supporting resources. - Once the tool is edited, print as many copies and formats (flyer, poster, etc.) as members shall have them on their plantations, processing centres or companies. - Organize a planning to disseminate and explain the content of the tool and the importance to comply with it on their daily work elaborating the Hoà Lộc mango GI. - Implement the planning, disseminating the tool to all stakeholders within the Hoà Lộc mango GI. 	<p>1 May – 31 Aay 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Edited tool for GI stakeholders. - Awareness raising among stakeholders on the importance to respect he production practices on the elaboration of the Hoà Lộc mango GI. - Coordinated auto-controls of Hoà Lộc mango GI on all plantations, processing centres, trading and roasting companies.
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3) Setting up the traceability system and the internal control plan of the Hoà Lộc mango GI:

STEPS	ACTIONS	CONTENT	IMPLEMENTING PERIOD	EXPECTED RESULTS
A. Setting up a traceability system for the Hoà Lộc mango GI	Define the methodology for the traceability system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact all members and gather their information regarding the traceability they apply on their businesses, to ensure that the product originates from the delimited GI area. - Define a methodology for a common traceability system: This methodology can start from the auto-controls implemented by producers and packaging and commercializing structures; it can also profit the traceability used for certification schemes that some members may apply, as possible synergies may be profited to reduce costs. - With such information, propose common traceability markers at different stages of the production process that shall be agreed for their use by all members. 	1 June – 15 June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methodology for a common traceability system for the GI. - Traceability markers and tracing codes
	Agree and launch the traceability system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organize meeting with members to discuss and agree on a common traceability system, to ensure the origin of the Hoà Lộc mango GI from the start of the production process through to the final product. - Put the traceability system in place and correct if necessary. 	15 June – 31 July 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinated traceability system in place for the Hoà Lộc mango GI, agreed by all members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
B. Setting up an internal control plan for the Hoà Lộc mango GI,	Define the parameters of the internal control plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The control plan specifies how the rules defined for the elaboration of the Hoà Lộc mango GI are to be checked (in the product specifications as well as in other adopted provisions, such as the guidelines on the production practices defined for the auto-control). - Hoà Lộc cooperative must define: the critical points to be controlled for each rule, the method used to control (visual, document analysis, etc.), the moment of control, the frequency of controls and the coverage (all producers, sampling), the sanctions depending on the seriousness of the non-compliance (economic, such as fines or prohibition to use the GI name, or social, such as the exclusion from the group). 	1 July – 31 July 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidelines for the implementation of the internal control plan

	<p>Prepare and launch the internal control plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft an internal control plan, to be discussed and agreed by all members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - In case the Hoà Lộc cooperative needs orientation for setting up the internal control plan, it may explore the possible collaboration with a control and certification body, which can assist on the elaboration of the internal control plan and training of agents within the Hoà Lộc cooperative for its implementation. - In case there are limited human resources to implement the internal control, it is always advisable to profit the synergies within the Hoà Lộc cooperative, having some voluntary members to rotate for implementing the internal control. 	<p>15 July – 31 August 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trained agents within the Hoà Lộc cooperative to implement the internal control plan. - Internal control plan in place for the Hoà Lộc mango GI, agreed by all members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative.
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BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES (LED BY TIỀN GIANG DOST):

1) Setting up an effective GI Multi-Disciplinary Team of local officials for the support and further development of the GI:

STEPS	ACTIONS	CONTENT	IMPLEMENTING PERIOD	EXPECTED RESULTS
A. Involving all agencies directly or indirectly involved in the establishment and development of GIs in the Tiền Giang province	Identify the local agencies that need to be involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the local agencies that need to be involved, setting up a list of all relevant departments and agencies (Agriculture, Trade, Tourism and those that are directly or indirectly involved/interested in the development of GIs). - Undertake first contacts to ensure the involvement of agencies and the identification of the official to be part of the future GI Multi-Disciplinary Team. - Prepare the meeting. - Prepare, send and follow up on the invitations for meetings to agencies, ensuring the participation of the identified official/s from each agency. 	1 March – 10 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of local agencies to be part of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team - Invitation for the meeting. - List of confirmed participating officials.
B. Setting up the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team	Organize a meeting of all related local agencies to discuss and agree on the main aspects of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team to set it up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design the methodology to programme, prepare, implement and follow up on all actions to support and develop the GIs from the Tiền Giang province. - Define the role of each relevant local agency. - Organize a meeting with all related local agencies to agree on the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team structure, roles and duties, skills and the resources required to set it up (what each agency can do, what resources they can allocate, what are the actions that they must undertake as a priority, what may be the support to request from NOIP, what may be the support to the Hoà Lộc cooperative, etc.) - Set up a deadline for the appointment of the officials who will make up the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team. 	10 March – 31 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methodology of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team - List of officials from each agency proposed to be part of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team

Set up the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team

- Organize and hold the first meeting of the new GI Multi-Disciplinary Team to launch its activities, comprising the following:
- Confirm the appointment of the proposed members and defining the next steps (training, calendar of meetings, tasks, etc.).
- Provide training to the team members on the GI concept, the GI scheme, its potential benefits and the current challenges in Vietnam, setting up an awareness-raising programme, with regular updates on the GI scheme and its progress.
- Prepare a road map of actions for the development, promotion and protection of GIs from the Tiền Giang province.
- Define annual work plans.
- Coordinate the proposed actions with the relevant national authorities.
- Define the skills, duties and resources needed to implement the actions proposed in the annual work plans, identifying and recruiting the skilled technical personnel, local officials or external experts required to implement the activities proposed in the annual work plans.
- Allocate the required resources and manage the administrative arrangements necessary for the implementation of the activities.
- Supervise, coordinate and implement the actions set out in the annual work plans.
- Report regularly on the results to the relevant government ministries and agencies.
- Follow up on outcomes, identifying the additional activities to be implemented in subsequent annual work plans.

20 March – 31 March 2017

- GI Multi-Disciplinary Team in place
- Trained officials integrating the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team
- Programme of awareness raising and update on the GI scheme.
- Work Plan for 2017/2018, including the road map of actions for the development, promotion and protection of GIs from the Tiền Giang province.
- Pool of technical experts to support on the implementation of the activities.
- Clear resources from all agencies to ensure the implementation of the yearly work plans.

2) Strengthening the basis of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, by reviewing the product specifications (only if necessary) and continuing the support to the Hoà Lộc cooperative:

STEPS	ACTIONS	CONTENT	IMPLEMENTING PERIOD	EXPECTED RESULTS
A. Reviewing the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI (ONLY IF NEEDED)	Provide the Hoà Lộc cooperative with the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold a meeting with the Hoà Lộc cooperative to provide them with the product specifications, in order to allow them to acquire a proper understanding of the GI, as it is registered at NOIP. - Please note that it will also be crucial for the Hoà Lộc cooperative to know the content of the product specifications for amending them, asking stakeholders to implement the auto-control and setting up the internal control plan. 	1 March – 10 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear understanding on the GI concept, its implications and potential benefits. - Product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI handed to the Hoà Lộc cooperative and clearly discussed to explore possible amendments.
	Prepare and undertake a meeting gathering the members of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team and the representatives of the Hoà Lộc cooperative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gather the members of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team and the representatives of the Hoà Lộc cooperative to discuss the review of the product specifications. - Discuss the procedure and requirements of NOIP to present the modification of the product specifications. - Discuss the need to update of the GI area, production and administrative demarcation, to include all districts producing the Hoà Lộc mango GI. - Discuss other aspects that might need to be amended on the product specifications. 	1 March – 15 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreement on the aspects of the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI to be modified.
	Define and agree on the amendment of the product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jointly draft the amendments according to the discussed issues. - Once the product specifications are approved by all members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, present the amended product specifications for approval and registration by NOIP. - Assist the Hoà Lộc cooperative on the elaboration of the tool for facilitating the understanding of producers and processors on the production practices they must respect based on the product specifications and other related provisions on the elaboration of the Hoà Lộc mango GI, providing support on the drafting and dissemination among producer, collectors, traders, etc. 	1 March – 31 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approval of the amended product specifications on all members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - Amended product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI. - Approval and registration by NOIP of the amended product specifications of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.

<p>B. Brainstorming with the Hoà Lộc cooperative on the needs to improve and develop the Hoà Lộc mango GI</p>	<p>Meeting between local authorities and the Hoà Lộc cooperative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once the product specifications have been modified and in parallel to its registration by NOIP, organize a meeting, gathering the members of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team as the representatives of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, in order to discuss the training support and financial resources that the Hoà Lộc cooperative needs to implement the recommended priorities in this report. - Among others, it would be needed for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial support for preparing the database of members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - Financial support for editing and printing the tool on auto-control for stakeholders. - Technical assistance for training for officials working in the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - Technical assistance for providing training for trainers to the identified voluntaries, so that they can gather the information for the database of members of the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - Financial support for hiring a control and certification body to assist on the preparation of the internal control plan. 	<p>1 April – 15 April 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Useful exchange on the needs of the Hoà Lộc cooperative, in terms of training support and financial resources needed to implement the recommended priorities in this report.
<p>C. Setting up an action plan for the support of the Hoà Lộc cooperative</p>	<p>Assess the support support the Hoà Lộc cooperative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once the needs have been discussed, assess and decide on the means that shall be provided to support the Hoà Lộc cooperative. 	<p>15 April – 31 May 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreement on the actions and resources to be supported by the GI Multi-Disciplinary team.
	<p>Set up an action plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare a draft plan, including all actions that shall be supported by local authorities, including technical and financial means that each agency within the GI Muti-Disciplinary Team will provide to endorse and support the activities by the Hoà Lộc cooperative. - Discuss, approve and implement the agreed action plan by the GI Muti-Disciplinary Team. 	<p>1 June – 31 August 2017 (yearly plan to be continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreed action plan in place to to endorse and support the activities by the Hoà Lộc cooperative.

3) Setting up the external control plan of the Hoà Lộc mango GI:

STEPS	ACTIONS	CONTENT	IMPLEMENTING PERIOD	EXPECTED RESULTS
A. Adopt an URGENT decision on the external control and certification body for the GI	Undertake the necessary actions to designate the agency responsible for the external control and certification of the Hoà Lộc mango GI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With the support of NOIP, contact the Tiền Giang PPC to kindly ask for an urgent decision regarding the designation of the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center as entity responsible for the external control and certification of the Tiền Giang province's GIs, Hoà Lộc mango GI among them. 	1 April - 30 April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated agency responsible for the external control and certification of the Hoà Lộc mango GI.
B. Ensuring the necessary capacities to undertake the external control and certification of the GI	Ensure that the Tiền Giang Technical and Biotechnological Center has the needed technical capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that it has the technical capacity complying with international regulations (ISO/IEC 17065:2012). - If the designated entity is not an accredited body by the BoA, organize trainings with the BoA to receive the accreditation or to ensure independence and impartiality of the entity. - If DOST or the PPC decides that the designated entity must receive the accreditation by the BoA, contact the BoA and start the process to do so. 	1 May – 31 August 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accreditation by the BoA as a control and certification body. - Technical capacity complying with international regulations (ISO 17065), for controlling and certifying GIs.
C. Setting up and implement an external control plan for the Hoà Lộc mango GI	Set up the external control plan for the Hoà Lộc mango GI (the designated control and certification body)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work in cooperation with the Hoà Lộc mango GI to define: the critical points to be controlled for each rule, the method used to control (visual, document analysis, etc.), the moment of control, the frequency of controls and the coverage (all producers, sampling), the sanctions depending on the seriousness of the non-compliance (economic, such as fines or prohibition to use the GI name, or social, such as the exclusion from the group). - Draft the external control plan, to be discussed and agreed by the Tiền Giang DOST. - Include a certification of conformity or non-conformity of the yearly GI production before the GI is placed in the market. - Explore the possible collaboration of a control and certification body, which can assist on the elaboration of the control plan and training of agents within the designated entity for its implementation. 	1 July – 15 July 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidelines for the implementation of the external control plan.
	Implement the external control plan for the Hoà Lộc mango GI (the control and certification body together with related local authorities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement the external control plan. - Detect and correct deviations if needed. - Ensure the certification of the yearly production of the Hoà Lộc mango as a GI before being placed in the market. 	15 July – 31 August 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - External control plan in place - Certification of the yearly production in place.



V. Annexes

ANNEX I – Presentation delivered in localities by the International GI expert on “Management by the GI Association”

ANNEX II – Presentation delivered in localities by the International GI expert on “Sustainable development of the GI: Labelling & Promotion”

ANNEX III – Presentation delivered in localities by the International GI expert on “GI Protection: The use of the GI right”

ANNEX IV – Check List on the Status of the Implementing Planning of the Hoà Lộc mango GI completed by the local GI expert.

ANNEX V – List of competent control and certification bodies accredited by the BoA