

Bai Tu Long National Park

Alternative site name(s)

Ba Mun, Dao Ba Mun

Province(s)

Quang Ninh

Area

15,783 ha

Coordinates

20°58' - 21°08'N, 107°34' - 107°38'E

Agro-ecological zone

North-eastern

Decreed by government

Yes

Management board established

Yes

Investment plan prepared

Yes

VCF eligibility criteria met

B, C

Social screening criteria met

None

Conservation needs assessment prepared

No

Operational management plan prepared

No

Tracking tool completed

No

Map available

Yes

Management history

Decision No. 41/TTg of the Prime Minister, dated 24 January 1977, decreed the establishment of a 2,000 ha nature reserve called Dao Ba Mun (MARD 1997). In 1998, MARD requested the development of an investment plan for the site, following Decision No. 1784/KH-QS, dated 12 June 1998. In November of the same year, an investment plan was published by FIPI (Anon. 1998), and was subsequently approved by Quang Ninh Provincial People's Committee and MARD. Following approval of the investment plan, Ba Mun Nature Reserve was officially established in September 1999. In the investment plan, the nature reserve was defined as the whole of Ba Mun island at low tide: a total area of 2,153 ha (Anon. 1998).

Based upon its biodiversity and potential economic values, particularly high ecotourism potential, Quang Ninh Provincial People's Committee proposed expanding Ba Mun Nature Reserve to include the surrounding islands and marine waters, and revising its status to national park. An investment plan for the renamed Bai Tu Long National Park was prepared by FIPI in October 1999 and later approved by the provincial people's committee. Following the approval of the investment plan by MARD, the establishment of Bai Tu Long National Park was decreed by Decision No. 85/TTg of the Prime Minister, dated 1 June 2001. Subsequently, Bai Tu Long was included on a list of Special-use Forests to be established by the year 2010,

prepared by the FPD of MARD, as a 15,783 ha national park (FPD 2003); this list has not yet been approved by the government.

The management board of Bai Tu Long National Park currently has 28 members of staff, based at three guard stations. The national park is under the management of Quang Ninh Provincial FPD (Bai Tu Long National Park Management Board *in litt.* 2003).

Topography and hydrology

Bai Tu Long National Park is situated in Bai Tu Long bay in Van Don district, Quang Ninh province. The topography of Bai Tu Long bay is similar to that of Ha Long bay, immediately to the south: limestone karst islands and islets, surrounded by marine waters. One distinctive feature of Bai Tu Long bay is Ba Mun island, a larger island, composed of schist, sand and gravel, not limestone. Ba Mun island consists of a narrow strip of land, 18 km long and, on average, 1 km wide. The highest point on the island is Cai Quyt peak at 307 m. A number of streams originate on the central ridge of the island, most of which are seasonal.

Biodiversity values

Bai Tu Long National Park supports about 2,000 ha of lowland evergreen forest, most of which is on Ba Mun. This forest has, however, been heavily disturbed by selective timber extraction and very little undisturbed forest remains. On Tra Ngo island,

however, significant stretches of limestone forest still remain.

Tree species diversity is high in the forest in the national park, with no one family dominating. Common tree species include members of the Caesalpiniaceae, Theaceae, Dipterocarpaceae, Myrtaceae and Sapotaceae families. A total of 398 vascular plant species have been recorded on Ba Mun island to date, four of which are listed in the *Red Data Book of Vietnam*: *Decussocarpus fleuryi*, *Goniothalamus chinensis*, *Morinda officinalis* and *Smilax glabra*.

The national park also includes a number of significant patches of mangrove forest. The dominant mangrove species is *Aegyceras corniculata*, while *Bruguiera gymnorhiza*, *Kandelia candel* and *Rhizophora stylosa* are also present. The Ang valley on Tra Ngo island contains the largest patch of mangrove forest in the national park. It can be accessed through Cai De cave, a 2 km-long tunnel, which connects the valley to the sea.

Despite the national park's isolation from the mainland, it supports a high diversity of terrestrial fauna. Prior to 1975, the fauna of Ba Mun island was the most diverse and abundant known in Quang Ninh province. Subsequent decades of illegal hunting and timber extraction have, however, significantly reduced the diversity of the island's fauna (Anon. 1998). According to the investment plan for the former Ba Mun Nature Reserve (Anon. 1998), Eurasian Wild Pig *Sus scrofa* and Red Muntjac *Muntiacus muntjak* still occur, although the presence of other large mammal species, such as Asian Black Bear *Ursus thibetanus*, could not be confirmed.

The national park has been the focus of preliminary ornithological surveys. A single globally threatened species has been recorded: Pale-capped Pigeon *Columba punicea* (Eames and Tordoff in prep.).

Conservation issues

The overall level of human impact on the natural resources of Bai Tu Long National Park is relatively low. The national park is situated far from centres of human population, and levels of forest product exploitation are relatively low. Nevertheless, hunting and timber extraction remain significant threats to

biodiversity at Bai Tu Long National Park. Timber is extracted for house construction and manufacture of pit props for coal mines in Quang Ninh province. The most commonly extracted timber species are *Erythrophleum fordii*, *Vatica odorata*, *Hopea chinensis*, *Aglaia gigantea* and *Madhuca* sp. As a result of hunting, populations of large mammal species have declined over the past 10 years, and some species may already have been eradicated from the national park. Although controls on illegal hunting and logging have improved in recent years, these threats are likely to continue for the foreseeable future. Tightening controls on timber extraction and wildlife trade, and conducting conservation awareness activities could mitigate these threats further (Anon. 1998).

Unsustainable tourism development is a potential future threat to biodiversity at the national park. On-going developments include resorts planned near marine turtle nesting grounds and resorts within the core zone of the national park, both of which could have significant impacts upon the national park's flora and fauna.

Other documented values

With its beautiful scenery and relatively low levels of human impact, Bai Tu Long National Park has high potential for ecotourism development. Basic tourism infrastructure has already been developed on Quan Lan island, which is linked to the mainland via a ferry service, and further developments are planned.

Related projects

With funding from the Darwin Initiative of the UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Frontier-Vietnam are currently implementing the *Bai Tu Long Bay Biodiversity Awareness Project*. The objectives of this project, which is scheduled to run from 2001 to 2004, are: to organise a series of capacity building workshops for national park staff; to produce a series of taxonomic field guides and posters to raise awareness of the national park's biodiversity; to build and develop a biodiversity interpretation centre; to develop and implement an environmental education programme; to fund and implement a radio speaker system in the national park buffer zone; and to produce

awareness materials and organise events that promote conservation of Bai Tu Long National Park.

Throughout 2002, Frontier-Vietnam also undertook a baseline biodiversity survey of the national park. A full report is due to be published in early 2004.

Conservation needs assessment

A conservation needs assessment has not been conducted for the site.

Operational management plan

An operational management plan has not been prepared for the site.

Eligibility against VCF criteria

The site is ineligible for VCF funding because it does not meet the criteria for supporting forest biodiversity of international importance.

Criterion	Eligibility
A _I	
A _{II}	
B _I	Decision No. 95/TTg, dated 01/06/01
B _{II}	National Park
B _{III}	Under provincial management
C _I	Management board established
C _{II}	

Social screening requirements

A social screening report has not been prepared for the site.

Criterion	Eligibility
A	
B	
C	
D	

Literature sources

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