

Bao Thang Proposed Nature Reserve

Alternative site name(s)

None

Province(s)

Lao Cai

Area

13,429 ha

Coordinates

22°24' - 22°32'N, 104°02' - 104°15'E

Agro-ecological zone

North-eastern

Decreed by government

No

Management board established

No

Investment plan prepared

No

VCF eligibility criteria met

B

Social screening criteria met

None

Conservation needs assessment prepared

No

Operational management plan prepared

No

Tracking tool completed

No

Map available

Yes

Management history

Bao Thang is not listed on any government decision regarding the national Special-use Forests system, nor is it included on a list of Special-use Forests to be established by the year 2010, prepared by the FPD of MARD (FPD 2003). However, Lao Cai Provincial FPD, with support from the WWF *Strengthening Protected Areas Management in Vietnam Project*, have proposed the establishment of a species/habitat conservation area (a sub-category of nature reserve) at the site (SPAM 2002). This proposal has been incorporated into the approved provincial management strategy for Special-use Forests (Lao Cai PPC 2003).

To date, an investment plan has not been prepared for the site and a management board has not been established. The site is currently under the management of Lao Cai Provincial FPD (*in litt.* 2003). According to Lao Cai Provincial FPD (*in litt.* 2003), the proposed protected area covers 13,429 ha in Phong Hai and Ban Cam communes, Bao Thang district, and Coc Ly commune, Bac Ha district. In addition, the buffer zone covers 13,456 ha in Phong Nien commune, Bao Thang district, and Bao Nhai and Nam Mon communes, Bac Ha district.

Topography and hydrology

Bao Thang proposed protected area is situated in a mountainous region of northern Vietnam, to the east of

the Red River. Both SPAM (2002) and Lao Cai PPC (2003) state that the proposed protected area includes limestone mountains with "a lot of underground caves".

Biodiversity values

According to SPAM (2002), the vegetation of the proposed nature reserve is dominated by *nghien*, which presumably refers to *Burretiodendron tonkinensis*, a globally endangered tree species characteristic of limestone forest in northern Vietnam.

According to Lao Cai PPC (2003), the conservation features of the proposed protected area include "high biodiversity typical of the northern limestone ecosystem of Vietnam", plus "some gibbon species" and "monkeys living on limestone mountains". The source of these data is not given, however.

Conservation issues

A total of 2,341 people live inside of the proposed protected area, and a further 13,015 people live within the buffer zone (Lao Cai Provincial FPD *in litt.* 2003). According to Lao Cai PPC (2003), the site is threatened by "illegal forest product exploitation, poaching, deforestation, and slash-and-burn agricultural practices".

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Other documented values

Lao Cai PPC (2003) suggest that it may be possible to combine the biodiversity conservation objectives of the proposed protected area with ecotourism development; mountain climbing in particular.

Related projects

As part of the provincial Special-use Forests management strategy, a number of projects are proposed for Bao Thang proposed protected area: (i) buffer zone management; (ii) wood garden establishment; (iii) participatory forest management; (iv) forestry methods for poor forests; and (v) ecotourism development (Lao Cai PPC 2003).

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

Bao Thang is currently ineligible for VCF support because it does not meet the criteria for supporting forest biodiversity of international importance. In addition, the site is not under appropriate conservation management.

Criterion	Eligibility
A _I	
A _{II}	
B _I	Proposed Special-use Forest
B _{II}	Nature Reserve
B _{III}	Under provincial management
C _I	
C _{II}	

Social screening requirements

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

Criterion	Eligibility
A	
B	
C	
D	

Literature sources

Lao Cai PPC (2003) Management strategy for Special-use Forests in Lao Cai: 2003-2010. Lao Cai: Lao Cai Provincial People's Committee.

SPAM (2002) Assessment of the Special-use Forest system and its management in Lao Cai province. Hanoi: Strengthening Protected Areas Management In Vietnam Project.