

Nam Xuan Lac Proposed Nature Reserve

Alternative site name(s)

None

Province(s)

Bac Kan

Area

1,788 ha

Coordinates

22°17' - 22°19'N, 105°28' - 105°33'E

Agro-ecological zone

North-eastern

Decreed by government

No

Management board established

No

Investment plan prepared

Yes

VCF eligibility criteria met

A, 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

Nam Xuan Lac is not included on any government decision or official set of proposals regarding the national Special-use Forests system (MARD 1997, FPD 2003). However, in 2001, a survey of Ban Thi and Xuan Lac communes, Cho Don district, was conducted as part of the *Creating Protected Areas for Resource Conservation Using Landscape Ecology (PARC) Project*. The objectives of this survey were to evaluate the biodiversity values of the site and to assess the suitability of the site for Special-use Forest status, either as part of a habitat extension of Na Hang proposed nature reserve, or as a separate protected area. The survey revealed that the site supports biodiversity of international importance (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 2001). Consequently, Bac Kan Provincial FPD proposed establishing a 1,788 ha species/habitat conservation area (a sub-category of nature reserve), called Nam Xuan Lac, at the site (Bac Kan Provincial FPD *in litt.* 2003).

In 2003, with the support of the PARC Project, Bac Kan Provincial FPD prepared and submitted a formal proposal and five-year investment plan (2004-2008) to Bac Kan Provincial People's Committee and MARD for the establishment of a species/habitat conservation area at Nam Xuan Lac. This proposal was approved in November 2003 (PARC Project *in litt.* 2003). To date, however, the establishment of a species/habitat

conservation area at the site has not been decreed by the government.

With support from the PARC Project, Bac Kan Provincial FPD is developing a trial management structure for Nam Xuan Lac, which aims to introduce a co-management approach for the site. It is proposed that the management board will include representatives of the provincial FPD, Xuan Lac commune and nearby villages in the buffer zone (PARC Project *in litt.* 2003). This is a relatively new approach to protected area management in Vietnam, and it is hoped that the trial structure will contribute to development of collaborative management strategies and structures at other sites.

Topography and hydrology

Nam Xuan Lac is situated in western Bac Kan province. To the west, the site is contiguous with the Ban Bung sector of Na Hang proposed nature reserve. The topography of the site is characterised by steep limestone karst formations, separated by flat-bottomed valleys.

Biodiversity values

In 2001, a globally endangered bird species, White-eared Night Heron *Gorsachius magnificus*, was recorded at the site (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 2001). This is the first confirmed record of this restricted-range bird

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species in Vietnam since at least 1975, and indicates that Nam Xuan Lac may lie within the South-east China Mountains Endemic Bird Area. Because of the occurrence of White-eared Night Heron, and the importance of the site for biome-restricted bird species, some of which are known from few other sites in Vietnam, the site qualifies as an Important Bird Area, called Ban Thi-Xuan Lac (Tordoff 2002).

Le Trong Trai *et al.* (2001) provisionally recorded a number of other globally threatened species on the basis of reports by local people, including Francois's Leaf Monkey *Trachypithecus francoisi*, a primate species endemic to northern Vietnam and southern China (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 2001).

Additional surveys, by the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources, have also revealed that the Nam Xuan Lac area is particularly important for several plant taxa, notably slipper orchids *Paphiopedilum*.

Of particular significance, Nam Xuan Lac may support a population of the globally critically endangered, endemic primate Tonkin Snub-nosed Monkey *Rhinopithecus avunculus*, or at least provide additional habitat for the population that occurs in the Ban Bung sector of Na Hang proposed nature reserve. During a field survey for the species in 1999, Dang Ngoc Can and Nguyen Truong Son (1999) received reports of a group of 18 to 20 individuals, which ranges occasionally into forest in Xuan Lac commune. During interviews with PARC Project staff in October 2003, residents of Na Da village, near the north-western border of the site, stated that they had seen four or five individuals at the site in 2002 (Bezuijen and Trinh Thang Long 2003).

Conservation issues

The principle threats to biodiversity at Nam Xuan Lac proposed nature reserve are habitat fragmentation and loss, due to agricultural expansion and mining; and exploitation of wildlife, timber and non-timber forest products by local communities and mine workers in and around the site (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 2001, Bezuijen and Trinh Thang Long 2003, Momberg and Fredricksson 2003). Exploitation of forest products by local communities and mine workers is for both domestic and commercial trade, particularly in the case of wildlife (Bezuijen and Trinh Thang Long 2003,

Nguyen Xuan Dang *et al.* 2003). The FPD and the PARC Project have initiated environmental management activities with local communities and mine companies in an attempt to address these issues.

Other documented values

Mining of non-ferrous metals has been conducted near the southern and eastern boundaries of the site for more than 80 years. Currently, most mining operations are controlled by the Thai Nguyen Non-ferrous Metals Corporation, consisting of four companies operating in three mine leases close to the site. Nam Xuan Lac proposed nature reserve includes 214 ha of the Pha Khao mine lease, and is adjacent to the Lung Chay mine lease (Bezuijen and Trinh Thang Long 2003). The mining corporation has agreed to develop an environmental agreement with the FPD and appropriate management measures to protect biodiversity within and near the proposed nature reserve (Bezuijen and Trinh Thang Long 2003).

Related projects

The PARC Project, a full-sized Global Environment Facility project at Na Hang proposed nature reserve and Yok Don and Ba Be National Parks, is assisting the provincial FPD with the designation and management of a species/habitat conservation area at Nam Xuan Lac. Assistance from the PARC Project includes: (i) preliminary biodiversity and resource use surveys in and around the site, between 2001 and 2003; (ii) documentation of threats to biodiversity, particularly primates, in 2003; (iii) technical assistance with the preparation of an official proposal to designate the site as a species/habitat conservation area, and development of a trial collaborative management structure, in 2003; and (iv) operational planning and management and preliminary funding for the site, in 2003 and 2004 (Bezuijen and Trinh Thang Long 2003, Bac Kan Provincial FPD 2003, PARC Ba Be/Na Hang 2003a,b).

In addition, in 2001, a FINNIDA-supported project operating in Bac Kan province worked with local communities to allocate forest land in the Nam Xuan Lac area for household management.

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Conservation needs assessment

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

Operational management plan

A five-year operational management plan, covering the period from 2004 to 2008, is currently being prepared for the site.

Eligibility against VCF criteria

Nam Xuan Lac is not currently eligible for VCF support because it is not under appropriate conservation management. However, as a management board is currently being established, the eligibility of the site for VCF support should be reviewed regularly.

Criterion	Eligibility
A _I	NH2 - Northern Highlands Limestone
A _{II}	VN029 - Ban Thi-Xuan Lac
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

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