

Trung Khanh Nature Reserve

Alternative site name(s)

Ban Doc waterfall, Ban Gioc waterfall

Province(s)

Cao Bang

Area

3,000 ha

Coordinates

22°51'N, 106°42'E

Agro-ecological zone

North-eastern

Decreed by government

Yes

Management board established

No

Investment plan prepared

No

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

Trung Khanh Nature Reserve is located in Trung Khanh district, Cao Bang province. Trung Khanh was decreed as a 3,000 ha nature reserve by Decision No. 194/CT of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, dated 9 August 1986 (MARD 1997) with the main objective of conserving Forest Musk Deer *Moschus berezovskii*. To date, however, a management board has not been established, and the precise boundary of the nature reserve remains undefined. In fact, there exists no official document that indicates where in Trung Khanh district the nature reserve is to be established (Tordoff *et al.* 2000).

Using 1995 Landsat data, Wege *et al.* (1999) calculated that Trung Khanh district supported a very limited area of natural forest, and recommended that the management category of Trung Khanh Nature Reserve be reviewed. Due to uncertainty concerning the location of the nature reserve and limitations of the remote sensing data, a rapid field survey was conducted by the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute and BirdLife International during November 1999 (Tordoff *et al.* 2000). This survey visited Dam Thuy and Chi Vien communes, in the east of the district, close to Ban Doc waterfall, and concluded that, due to the limited amount of natural forest remaining and the absence of key bird and mammal species, this area was not appropriate for nature reserve status.

Subsequently, a further series of surveys were conducted in Trung Khanh district by Fauna & Flora International (FFI). These surveys focussed on Phong Nam and Ngoc Khe communes, in the north of the district, and resulted in the discovery of a remnant population of Eastern Black-cheeked Crested Gibbon *Hylobates concolor nasutus*.

Trung Khanh is included on a list of Special-use Forests to be established by the year 2010, prepared by the FPD of MARD, as a 3,000 ha nature reserve (FPD 2003); this list has not yet been approved by the government.

Topography and hydrology

The topography of Trung Khanh district is characterised by low mountains in the south of the district and limestone karst in the north. Elevations in the district range between c.400 and c.900 m.

Biodiversity values

The original vegetation types in Trung Khanh district were limestone forest in the north and lower montane evergreen forest in the south. Trung Khanh district is almost entirely devoid of natural forest. The only significant forest fragments remaining are in Dam Thuy and Chi Vien communes in the east of the district, and Phong Nam and Ngoc Khe communes in the north. The latter fragments support a remnant

population of Eastern Black-cheeked Crested Gibbon, numbering over 20 individuals. Despite its small size, this population is of global significance as it is the largest known population of this taxon remaining in the world.

Conservation issues

The biodiversity values of Trung Khanh district have already declined significantly as a result of habitat loss and hunting. Almost all of the limestone forest in the district has been destroyed by clearance for agriculture, and extraction of timber, firewood and other forest products, for both domestic use and illegal export to China. Remaining areas of forest are fragmented and under continued pressure from over-exploitation of forest products (Tordoff *et al.* 2000). Furthermore, surviving mammal populations, including Eastern Black-cheeked Crested Gibbon, are under pressure from hunting.

A boundary has not yet been defined for Trung Khanh Nature Reserve. It may, however, be possible to do so in Phong Nam and Ngoc Khe communes, to incorporate all remaining areas of habitat for Eastern Black-cheeked Crested Gibbon. Given that only a very small area of potentially suitable habitat remains for the species in Trung Khanh district, it is a priority to assess the extent and potential suitability of contiguous areas of natural habitat across the international border in China.

Other documented values

Ban Doc waterfall, the largest waterfall in Vietnam, is situated in the east of Trung Khanh district, on the international border between Vietnam and China. Cao Bang Provincial People's Committee wish to develop this waterfall, along with a nearby cave, as a site for tourism (Tordoff *et al.* 2000).

Related projects

No information.

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 not currently eligible for VCF support because it is not under appropriate conservation management.

Criterion	Eligibility
A _I	NH2 - Northern Highlands Limestone
A _{II}	
B _I	Decision No. 194/CT, dated 09/08/86
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

Tordoff, A. W., Vu Van Dung, Le Van Cham, Tran Quang Ngoc and Dang Thang Long (2000) A rapid field survey of five sites in Bac Kan, Cao Bang and Quang Ninh provinces: a review of the Northern Indochina Subtropical Forests Ecoregion. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute. In English and Vietnamese.