

# Xuan Son National Park

## Alternative site name(s)

None

## Province(s)

Phu Tho

## Area

15,048 ha

## Coordinates

21°03' - 21°12'N, 104°51' - 105°01'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

Xuan Son was included on Decision No. 194/CT of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, dated 9 August 1986, which decreed the establishment of a 4,585 ha nature reserve (MARD 1997). In 1990, an investment plan was prepared by FIPI, which defined the area of the nature reserve as 5,487 ha (Anon. 1990). This investment plan was approved by the then Vinh Phu Provincial People's Committee and the former Ministry of Forestry in 1992 (FPD 1998, Phu Tho Provincial FPD 2000). In 1995, two investment plans were prepared by FIPI: the first covered investment in the nature reserve for the period from 1996 to 2000, while the second covered investment in the buffer zone. These investment plans were approved by Decision No. 2101/QD-UB of the then Vinh Phu Provincial People's Committee, dated 15 October 1996 (Anon. 1995).

Subsequently, the management category of Xuan Son was revised from nature reserve to national park, following Decision No. 49/TTg of the Prime Minister, dated 17 April 2002. According to this decision, Xuan Son National Park is under the management of Phu Tho Provincial People's Committee, with a total area of 15,048 ha, comprising a strict protection area of 11,148 ha, a forest rehabilitation area of 3,000 ha, and an administration and services area of 900 ha.

A nature reserve management board was established for Xuan Son on 28 November 1992, and was upgraded to a national park management board, following the revision of the management category in 2002 (Phu Tho Provincial FPD *in litt.* 2000, Tran Dang Lau, Director of Xuan Son National Park *in litt.* 2003). The management board of Xuan Son National Park currently has 38 members of staff based at six guard stations. The national park is under the management of Phu Tho Provincial FPD (Tran Dang Lau, Director of Xuan Son National Park *in litt.* 2003).

Xuan Son is included on a list of Special-use Forests to be established by the year 2010, prepared by the FPD of MARD, as a 15,048 ha national park (FPD 2003); this list has not yet been approved by the government.

## Topography and hydrology

Xuan Son National Park is located in Thanh Son district, Phu Tho province, at the extreme south-eastern extent of the Hoang Lien mountains, 45 km south-west of the confluence of the Red and Black Rivers. Elevations at Xuan Son are lower than elsewhere in the Hoang Lien mountains: the nearest point above 2,000 m is 40 km to the north-west. The national park ranges in elevation from c.200 to 1,386 m at the summit of Mount Voi (Anon. 1990).

Limestone karst covers 1,661 ha, equivalent to 30% of the area of the national park (Anon. 1990). The limestone karst contains a large number of caves, some of which contain river systems. The national park is situated in the watershed of the Red River.

## Biodiversity values

The natural vegetation types at Xuan Son are lowland and lower montane evergreen forest, and lowland and lower montane limestone forest. According to the first investment plan, 314 vascular plant species, 48 mammal species, 121 bird species, 13 reptile species and 14 amphibian species have been recorded at Xuan Son National Park. The investment plan reported the occurrence of one group of Black-cheeked Crested Gibbon *Hylobates concolor* with three or four individuals, and one group of Phayre's Leaf Monkey *Trachypithecus phayrei* with 15 to 18 individuals (Anon. 1990). However, the current status of these species at the site is not known, and it is possible that both are locally extinct. In addition, the extensive cave systems at Xuan Son are reported to support a high diversity of bat species (Anon. 1990).

## Conservation issues

The national park has a buffer zone of 18,639 ha. A total of 26,954 people inhabit the buffer zone, and a further 2,730 people live inside the national park (Tran Dang Lau, Director of Xuan Son National Park *in litt.* 2003). Most of these people belong to the Dao, Muong and Kinh ethnic groups (Phu Tho Provincial FPD *in litt.* 2000).

The main threats to biodiversity identified by Phu Tho Provincial FPD (*in litt.* 2000) are shifting cultivation and forest fire. These would appear to be bigger threats in non-limestone areas, where hillsides are suitable for cultivation. Communities inside the national park, which live in limestone areas, cultivate wet rice on flat valley bottoms. However, the limestone hillsides close to these communities are still covered with primary forest (A. Tordoff pers. obs.).

One conservation issue at Xuan Son is that the national park is, perhaps, too small to support viable populations of several mammal and bird species in the long-term. However, the national park is contiguous

with forest areas to the west, in Son La province, and to the south, in Hoa Binh province, and is, therefore, part of a larger area of natural habitat.

## Other documented values

Xuan Son National Park has potential as a site for tourism, as the site is relatively close to Hanoi, the site has great scenic beauty, and the ethnic minority communities in the area still practice traditional lifestyles (A. Tordoff pers. obs.).

## 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 ineligible for VCF support because it does not meet the criteria for supporting forest biodiversity of international importance.

Criterion	Eligibility
A <sub>I</sub>	
A <sub>II</sub>	
B <sub>I</sub>	Decision No. 49/TTg, dated 17/04/02
B <sub>II</sub>	National Park
B <sub>III</sub>	Under provincial management
C <sub>I</sub>	Management board established
C <sub>II</sub>	

## Social screening requirements

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

Criterion	Eligibility
A	
B	
C	
D	

### Literature sources

Anon. (1990) [Investment plan for Xuan Son Nature Reserve, Vinh Phu province]. Viet Tri: Vinh Phu Provincial People's Committee. In Vietnamese.

Anon. (1995) [Investment plan for Xuan Son Nature Reserve and buffer zone]. Viet Tri: North-eastern Sub-FIPI. In Vietnamese.

Vietnam News (2002) Vietnam gets 15th national park. Vietnam News 23 April 2002.

Vu Quang Manh ed. (1998) [Faunal and floral resources of Xuan Son Nature Reserve, Thanh Son district, Phu Tho province]. Phu Tho: Management Board of Xuan Son Nature Reserve. In Vietnamese.