

Con Son-Kiep Bac Cultural and Historical Site

Alternative site name(s)

Con Son

Province(s)

Hai Duong

Area

1,477 ha

Coordinates

21°09'N, 106°22'E

Agro-ecological zone

Red River Delta

Decreed by government

Yes

Management board established

Yes

Investment plan prepared

Yes

VCF eligibility criteria met

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

Con Son-Kiep Bac Cultural and Historical Site is located in Cong Hoa, Le Loi and Hung Dao communes, Chi Linh district, Hai Duong province. Con Son-Kiep Bac was included on Decision No. 194/CT of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, dated 9 August 1986 (MARD 1997). This decision decreed the establishment of a 282 ha cultural and historical site for the purpose of conserving "pine forest for historical relic conservation" (Cao Van Sung 1995).

An investment plan for the site was approved on 15 October 1990 by Decision No. 584 of Hai Duong Provincial People's Committee, and on 2 October 1992 by Decision No. 445 of the then Ministry of Forestry (now MARD). The area given in the investment plan was 1,477 ha, comprising a strict protection area of 419 ha and a forest rehabilitation area of 1,058 ha (Hai Duong Provincial FPD *in litt.* 2000).

On 12 August 1993, a management board for Con Son-Kiep Bac Cultural and Historical Site was established under the provincial department of agriculture and rural development (Hai Duong Provincial FPD *in litt.* 2000). The management board currently has three permanent members of staff and one contracted staff member (Hai Duong Provincial FPD *in litt.* 2003).

Con Son-Kiep Bac is included on a list of Special-use Forests to be established by the year 2010, prepared by the FPD of MARD, as a 1,477 ha cultural and historical site (FPD 2003); this list has not yet been approved by the government.

Topography and hydrology

Con Son-Kiep Bac Cultural and Historical Site is situated in an area of low hills at the northern edge of the plain of the Red River. The site has a gently undulating topography, and ranges in elevation from c.100 to 238 m.

Biodiversity values

Con Son-Kiep Bac Cultural and Historical Site is covered by pine plantation. The site supports no natural vegetation and has few biodiversity values. In July 2000, Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* was recorded at the site; the first record of this species from northern Vietnam (R. Hughes and A. Tordoff pers. obs.).

Conservation issues

From a watershed protection and soil erosion control perspective, the plantation of pines at the site appears to have been ineffective: soil erosion is severe and appears to have been exacerbated by pine plantations, which have poorly developed understorey vegetation.

Con Son-Kiep Bac Cultural and Historical Site

Other documented values

Con Son-Kiep Bac Cultural and Historical Site was established to mark the birthplace of the national hero Nguyen Trai, one of Vietnam's most famous poets and writers, who lived from 1380 to 1442. His home town was Con Son and he lived there until 1400 when he went to work for the Ho dynasty. He often mentioned the site in his poems and stories, and returned there from 1437 to 1438. The main pagoda at the site was built to commemorate him, and includes a visitors' centre.

There is a second pagoda at the site, the Sinh pagoda, which marks the birthplace of the national hero Uy Cong, who died fighting the Chinese. The Sinh pagoda was built in the 11th Century by King Ly Thai Tong, and was restored in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, when its name was changed to Mau pagoda in commemoration of Uy Cong's mother, Hoang Thi Ba.

Con Son-Kiep Bac Cultural and Historical Site is easily accessible from Hanoi and is popular with domestic tourists. The site incorporates a small lake, on the shore of which is a guesthouse.

Related projects

Plantation forestry activities at the site are currently being funded by the national 661 Programme (Hai Duong Provincial FPD *in litt.* 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

Con Son-Kiep Bac is ineligible for VCF support because it does not meet the criteria for supporting forest biodiversity of international importance. In

addition, Con Son-Kiep Bac is a cultural and historical site.

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

None.