

# Dakrong Proposed Nature Reserve

**Alternative site name(s)**

None

**Province(s)**

Quang Tri

**Area**

40,526 ha

**Coordinates**

16°23' - 16°42'N, 106°53' - 107°09'E

**Agro-ecological zone**

North Central Coast

**Decreed by government**

No

**Management board established**

Yes

**Investment plan prepared**

Yes

**VCF eligibility criteria met**

A, B, C

**Social screening criteria met**

No

**Conservation needs assessment prepared**

No

**Operational management plan prepared**

No

**Tracking tool completed**

No

**Map available**

Yes

## Management history

Dakrong proposed nature reserve is situated in Dakrong district, Quang Tri province. In 1993, the site was designated as a watershed protection forest, with an area of 32,171 ha. In June and July 1998, BirdLife International and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (FIPI) assessed the feasibility of upgrading Dakrong Watershed Protection Forest to nature reserve status. The feasibility study concluded that a 35,072 ha nature reserve should be established (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 1999). In 2000, FIPI prepared an investment plan for Dakrong, and recommended the establishment of a 40,526 ha nature reserve (Anon. 2000). This investment plan was approved by Quang Tri Provincial People's Committee in September 2000, and by MARD on 5 December 2000, following Decision No. 4218/BNN-KH. Consequently, Quang Tri Provincial People's Committee issued Decision No. 768/QD-UB, dated 9 April 2001, to establish a nature reserve at Dakrong.

A nature reserve management board has been established for Dakrong, following Decision No. 4343/QD-UB of the provincial people's committee. The management board currently has 30 members of staff, based at three guard stations, and is under the management of Quang Tri Provincial FPD (Nguyen Long, Director of Dakrong Nature Reserve *in litt.* 2003).

Dakrong is included on a list of Special-use Forests to be established by the year 2010, prepared by the FPD of MARD, as a 40,526 ha nature reserve (FPD 2003); this list has not yet been approved by the government.

## Topography and hydrology

Dakrong proposed nature reserve is situated on a ridge of low mountains, which extend south-east from the Annamite mountains, and form the boundary between Quang Tri and Thua Thien Hue provinces. The highest point in the proposed nature reserve is Mount Dong Ba Le at 1,102 m, although most of the proposed nature reserve lies below 500 m.

Dakrong proposed nature reserve is situated in the watershed of the Quang Tri (Thach Han) river. Streams originating in the south of the site drain into the Dakrong river, which feeds the Quang Tri river. Streams originating in the north of the site drain directly into the Quang Tri river. As a result of extreme seasonality in rainfall, localised rainfall patterns and low retention in degraded upper water catchments, there are large temporal variations in water flow. Heavy rainfall can result in flash floods and extensive erosion (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 1999).

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## Biodiversity values

In combination with Phong Dien proposed nature reserve in Thua Thien Hue province, Dakrong proposed nature reserve supports the largest remaining area of lowland evergreen forest in central Vietnam (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 1999). However, the forest at Dakrong has been heavily disturbed, and primary forest only occupies around 60% of the total area of the proposed nature reserve.

Dakrong proposed nature reserve is located in the south of the Annamese Lowlands Endemic Bird Area (Stattersfield *et al.* 1998). In 1996, Edwards's Pheasant *Lophura edwardsi*, a globally endangered, restricted-range bird species was rediscovered at Dakrong and neighbouring Phong Dien proposed nature reserves; these were the first records of this species since 1929 (Eve 1997). Dakrong proposed nature reserve also supports populations of at least four other restricted-range bird species: Annam Partridge *Arborophila merlini*, Crested Argus *Rheinardia ocellata*, Short-tailed Scimitar Babbler *Jabouilleia danjoui* and Grey-faced Tit Babbler *Macronous kelleyi* (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 1999). Moreover, a juvenile Imperial Pheasant *Lophura imperialis*, a globally data deficient, restricted-range bird species, was collected within the proposed nature reserve in 2000 (Eames and Tordoff in prep.). Because of its importance for globally threatened and restricted-range bird species, Dakrong qualifies as an Important Bird Area (Tordoff 2002).

Dakrong proposed nature reserve is an important site for the conservation of mammal diversity. Two recently discovered large mammal species, Saola *Pseudoryx nghetinhensis* and Large-antlered Muntjac *Muntiacus vuquangensis*, occur at the proposed nature reserve. Furthermore, Dakrong supports populations of several primate species of conservation concern, including Red-shanked Douc *Pygathrix nemaeus*, Northern Pig-tailed Macaque *Macaca leonina* and Bear Macaque *M. arctoides* and White-cheeked Crested Gibbon *Hylobates leucogenys* (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 1999).

## Conservation issues

Several factors have played a role in the reduction and fragmentation of forest cover in the area,

particularly use of chemical defoliants during the Second Indochina War. Small-scale timber extraction continues to threaten the remaining forest. The scarcity of economically valuable timber trees is leading to the exploitation of less accessible areas and the targeting of less valuable tree species (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 1999).

Trapping and hunting are widespread at the proposed nature reserve. Common trapping methods include box traps and wire snares. These trapping methods are indiscriminate, and potentially pose a threat to ground birds, such as Edwards's Pheasant. Other human activities incompatible with conservation include clearance of land for agriculture, and livestock grazing (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 1999).

Dakrong proposed nature reserve is contiguous with Phong Dien proposed nature reserve in Thua Thien Hue province. The two proposed nature reserves are isolated from forest areas in southern Quang Binh province by large expanses of agricultural land, scrub and grassland. However, the possibility of establishing forest corridors to link the two proposed nature reserves to forest blocks to the west, in Laos, and south, in southern Thua Thien Hue province should be investigated (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 1999).

## Other documented values

Dakrong proposed nature reserve protects the upstream catchments of the Quang Tri (Thach Han) river. This river supplies freshwater for many agricultural areas downstream. Because of the topography of the area, localised rainfall patterns and the prevalence of periods of intense rainfall, downstream areas are particularly prone to soil erosion, flood damage and drought (Le Trong Trai *et al.* 1999).

## Related projects

In 2003, the Centre for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies began implementation of a three-year, MacArthur Foundation-funded project to help develop provincial-level mechanisms for protected area management at Dakrong proposed nature reserve.

The Netherlands Local Environment Fund, administered by SNV, provided a small grant to the

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management board of Dakrong proposed nature reserve for capacity building activities during 2003.

## Conservation needs assessment

A conservation needs assessment has not been conducted for the site, although SNV plan to conduct one in the first half of 2004.

## Operational management plan

An operational management plan has not been prepared for the site, although SNV plan to prepare one in the first half of 2004.

## Eligibility against VCF criteria

Dakrong is eligible for VCF support because it meets criteria A, B and C.

Criterion	Eligibility
A <sub>I</sub>	CA1 - Central Annamites
A <sub>II</sub>	VN031 - Dakrong
B <sub>I</sub>	Proposed Special-use Forest
B <sub>II</sub>	Nature Reserve
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

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