

Hon Cau-Vinh Hao Proposed Marine Protected Area

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Alternative site name(s)

Cu Lao Cau-Vinh Hao

Province(s)

Binh Thuan

Area

12,500 ha

Coordinates

11°13' - 11°19'N, 108°44' - 108°51'E

Agro-ecological zone

South-eastern

Decreed by government

No

Management board established

No

Investment plan prepared

No

VCF eligibility criteria met

None

Social screening criteria met

None

Conservation needs assessment prepared

No

Operational management plan prepared

No

Tracking tool completed

No

Map available

Yes

Management history

Hon Cau-Vinh Hao was proposed as a marine protected area by the Hai Phong Institute of Oceanography in 1995. In this proposal, the area of the proposed marine protected area was given as 150 ha, although this only comprised the terrestrial component (Nguyen Huy Yet and Vo Si Tuan 1995). Hon Cau-Vinh Hao was subsequently included on a list of 16 proposed marine protected areas compiled on behalf of the former MOSTE in 1998 (Nguyen Chu Hoi *et al.* 1998).

The proposal to establish a marine protected area at Hon Cau-Vinh Hao was reiterated by the Asian Development Bank (ADB 1999) in their marine and coastal protected areas systems plan for Vietnam. In the ADB proposal, the area of the proposed marine protected area was given as 12,500 ha, comprising a marine component of 12,390 ha and a terrestrial component of 110 ha.

Topography and hydrology

Hon Cau-Vinh Hao proposed marine protected area is centred on Cu Lao Hon island (also known as Cu Lao Cau island), a low, granite island, c.150 ha in area, situated in Ca Na bay, c.10 km off the coast of Binh Thuan province. The topography of Cu Lao Cao island is characterised by rocky outcrops, with sandy beaches on the north and south sides. The highest point on the

island is 27 m, while the deepest point in the marine component is 17 m below sea level. The marine component of the proposed marine protected area includes fringing coral reefs around Cu Lao Hon island and platform reefs on submerged banks.

Biodiversity values

Hon Cau-Vinh Hao proposed marine protected area is an important site for coral reef conservation. The reefs are in a pristine condition, with an average cover of 43%. The site supports the highest diversity of hermatypic corals known in Vietnam, with more than 65 genera, including *Acropora*, *Montipora*, *Porites*, *Favia* and *Goniopora*. There is also a small area of seagrass at the site (ADB 1999).

Sea currents from the north and south meet near Hon Cau-Vinh Hao, with the result that the proposed marine protected area is located in an area of strong upwelling (ADB 1999). This phenomenon has a great influence on the marine ecosystem, leading to high marine productivity. To date, 175 phytoplankton species, 163 seaweed species, 147 coral species, 80 mollusc species, 46 crustacean species, 26 echinoderm species and 211 fish species have been recorded at Hon Cau-Vinh Hao proposed marine protected area (Nguyen Chu Hoi eds. *et al.* 1998).

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Conservation issues

The major threat to marine biodiversity at Hon Cau-Vinh Hao is unsustainable exploitation of marine resources. In particular, destructive fishing practices, such as dynamite fishing and trawling, are having serious negative impacts on the coral reef ecosystem. This problem is compounded by the low living standards and low levels of conservation awareness of local people. Furthermore, many of the people exploiting the marine resources of the site come from neighbouring Ninh Thuan province, and their activities are very difficult for the fisheries protection staff to control.

Binh Thuan Provincial People's Committee have introduced regulations for controlling fishing activities at Hon Cau-Vinh Hao during the spawning season from April until June. These regulations are enforced by a fisheries guard station on Cu Lao Hon island, which is under the management of the provincial fisheries department. Three reef-check sites for coral reef monitoring were established in 1998 (ADB 1999).

Other documented values

The waters around Cu Lao Hon island are an important fishing ground for fishers from Binh Thuan and Ninh Thuan provinces. The area is a breeding ground for anchovy *Stolephorus* sp. and a nursery site for other marine species of economic importance. The site also has high potential tourism values, due to its scenic landscape and coral reefs. Indeed, international tourism is already being developed in the area (ADB 1999).

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 is not a Special-use Forest.

Criterion	Eligibility
A _I	
A _{II}	
B _I	
B _{II}	
B _{III}	
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

ADB (1999) Draft coastal and marine protected areas plan. Hanoi: Asian Development Bank.

Nguyen Chu Hoi, Nguyen Huy Yet and Dang Ngoc Thanh eds. (1998) [Scientific basis for marine protected areas planning]. Hai Phong: Hai Phong Institute of Oceanography. In Vietnamese.

Nguyen Huy Yet and Vo Si Tuan (1995) [Information on proposed marine protected areas on the coast of Vietnam]. Hai Phong: Hai Phong Institute of Oceanography. In Vietnamese.