

Bac Hai Van Proposed Cultural and Historical Site

Alternative site name(s)

Bach Ma-Hai Van, Col des Nuages

Province(s)

Thua Thien Hue

Status

Proposed

Management board established

Yes

Latitude

16°10' - 16°15'N

Longitude

107°51' - 108°12'E

Bio-unit

05c - North Annam



Conservation status

Decision No. 194/CT of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, dated 9 August 1986, decreed the establishment of Bach Ma-Hai Van National Park, with a total area of 40,000 ha (MARD 1997). However, following the preparation of the national park investment plan, the area was divided into three: Bach Ma National Park, Bac Hai Van proposed cultural and historical site and Nam Hai Van proposed cultural and historical site (Vu Van Dung pers. comm.).

In 1994, an investment plan was prepared for Bac Hai Van, which proposed establishing a 14,547 ha cultural and historical site. This investment plan was approved by Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee in the same year (FPD 1998). In 1999, a revised investment plan was prepared by Hue Sub-FIPI, which gave the area of the cultural and historical site as 11,128 ha. This investment plan was approved by the provincial people's committee on 27 April 1999, following Decision No. 784/QD (Thua Thien Hue Provincial FPD 2000). Bac Hai Van is included on the 2010 list with a proposed area of 14,547 ha (FPD 1998). The site is currently managed by Phu Loc District FPD (Thua Thien Hue Provincial FPD 2000).

Topography and hydrology

Bac Hai Van proposed cultural and historical site is situated in southern Thua Thien Hue province. The proposed cultural and historical site is bordered to the west by Bach Ma National Park, to the south by Da Nang city and to the east by the East Sea. The proposed cultural and historical site is approximately 35 km long and 6 km across at its widest point.

Bac Hai Van is situated on the northern face of a mountain ridge running west-east from the Annamite mountains to the East Sea. At the eastern end of the proposed cultural and historical site is Hai Van pass, over which National Highway 1 passes. All streams originating in the site drain to the north, either directly into the sea, or into one of the lagoons that characterise this part of the Vietnamese coastline. The highest point in the proposed cultural and historical site is Hon Chay mountain at 1,413 m.

Biodiversity value

Bac Hai Van proposed cultural and historical site lies at the southern extent of the Annamese Lowlands Endemic Bird Area (Stattersfield *et al.* 1998). However, although the avifauna of neighbouring Bach Ma National Park has been well studied, less information is available about Bac Hai Van.

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Historically, several restricted-range bird species were recorded at Bac Hai Van, including Annam Partridge *Arborophila merlini*, Edwards's Pheasant *Lophura edwardsi* and Crested Argus *Rheinardia ocellata* (Delacour and Jabouille 1927). However, the current status of these species at the site is not clear.

According to Thua Thien Hue Provincial FPD (2000), the cultural and historical site contains 8,904 ha of natural forest land and 2,009 ha of plantation forest land. However, it would seem that a significant proportion of this land does not support forest, as the total area of forest given by FPD (1998) is only 5,962 ha. The main plantation species are *Acacia auriculiformis*, *A. mangium* and *Pinus* sp. (Vu Van Dung pers. comm.).

Conservation issues

Thua Thien Hue Provincial FPD (2000) identify extraction of timber and hunting of wildlife as the biggest threats to biodiversity at Bac Hai Van proposed cultural and historical site. Because Bac Hai Van is located close to major centres of population, the pressures on the natural resources of the area are high. A total of 30,753 people live in the four buffer zone communes. The site is bisected by National Highway 1, which facilitates access and may increase levels of exploitation. The main railway between Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City also bisects the site, and there are plans to build a tunnel under Hai Van pass for National Highway 1 to pass through.

Bac Hai Van proposed cultural and historical site is an important component of a wider conservation landscape. The site is contiguous with Bach Ma National Park to the west and with Nam Hai Van proposed cultural and historical site to the south. Just a little further to the south lies Ba Na-Nui Chua Nature Reserve, and further to the east are located Cu Lao Cham and Ban Dao Son Tra Nature Reserves. Collectively, these areas protect the eastern extent of the last contiguous belt of forest running between the Laotian border and the East Sea. In combination with forest areas to the west, in Quang Nam and Thua Thien Hue provinces and in Laos, these protected areas protect an unbroken transition zone of natural habitats.

In their review of Vietnam's protected areas system, BirdLife and FIPI proposed extending Bach Ma National Park to the east by 22,500 ha (Wege *et al.* 1999). Such an extension would include Bac Hai Van proposed cultural and historical site.

Other documented values

According to FPD (1998), the justification for establishing Bac Hai Van is the scenic landscape of Hai Van pass. The scenery of Hai Van pass is well known nationwide (Vu Dung undated), and many travellers between Hue and Da Nang stop at the top of the pass to enjoy the panoramic views.

Related projects

No projects appear to be specifically targeted at Bac Hai Van. However, the proposed cultural and historical site is included with the 'Green Corridor' landscape-level conservation project.

Literature sources

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