

Bac Lieu Bird Sanctuary Nature Reserve

Alternative site name(s)

San Chim Bac Lieu, Vinh Thanh

Province(s)

Bac Lieu

Status

Decreed

Management board established

Yes

Latitude

9°15'N

Longitude

105°43'E

Bio-unit

05a - Mekong Delta



Conservation status

Decision No. 194/CT of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, dated 9 August 1986, decreed the establishment of a 500 ha nature reserve called Cac San Chim in the then Minh Hai province. This nature reserve comprised three separate sites: one in Vinh Loi district in what is now Bac Lieu province and one each in Ngoc Hien and Tran Van Thoi districts in what is now Ca Mau province (MARD 1997) (see Cha La bird sanctuary and Dam Doi bird sanctuary site cards). The site in Bac Lieu province is now known as Bac Lieu bird sanctuary.

A management board for the three sites was established in 1977 under Minh Hai Provincial FPD. After Minh Hai province was split into Ca Mau and Bac Lieu provinces, a nature reserve management board for Bac Lieu bird sanctuary was established under Bac Lieu Provincial People's Committee. An investment plan for Bac Lieu bird sanctuary was approved by the provincial people's committee in 1997. The area of the nature reserve given in the investment plan was 127 ha, all of which is forest. Bac Lieu bird sanctuary is included on the 2010 list as a 127 ha nature reserve (FPD 1998).

Topography and hydrology

Bac Lieu bird sanctuary is located in the plain of the Mekong Delta. The site is a remnant of an elevated mangrove forest, which is waterlogged during the rainy season. The site is surrounded by paddyfields (Phung Trung Ngan 1987).

Biodiversity value

In terms of area, Bac Lieu bird sanctuary is largest of all the bird colonies in the Mekong Delta. The vegetation at the site comprises small areas of mangrove forest dominated by *Lumnitzera racemosa* and the palm *Phoenix paludosa*; plantations of *Thespesia populnea* and *Acacia auriculiformis* scattered with the shrub *Wedelia biflora*; and small patches of seasonally inundated grasslands.

A substantial colony of breeding waterbirds is to be found at Bac Lieu bird sanctuary, one of the most important in the Mekong Delta. Species of particular note that have been recorded at the nature reserve include Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus*, Darter *Anhinga melanogaster* and Indian Cormorant *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*. Bac Lieu bird sanctuary may be particularly important for the latter, since 930 birds were recorded at the site in 1999,

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constituting over 3% of the global population of this species (Buckton *et al.* 1999).

Conservation issues

The overall level of impact of local people on the nature reserve is considerable. The population density in surrounding communes is high. Driven by governmental economic development policies in the past, settlements have expanded up to the canals that form the boundary of the nature reserve. The major threats to biodiversity at this site, therefore, are hunting and over-exploitation of natural resources. The total number of birds recorded at this site declined by approximately 90% during the years between 1980 and 1992 (Do Tuoc and Le Trong Trai 1996). The findings of a recent BirdLife/IEBR survey showed that the illegal hunting and poisoning of birds, together with the collection of eggs and fishing still occur on a huge scale at Bac Lieu bird sanctuary. Control of bird poaching, promoting alternative sources of income and conducting conservation awareness activities could mitigate these threats (Nguyen Duc Tu pers. comm.).

Other documented values

Bac Lieu bird sanctuary is a famous tourism destination in Bac Lieu province and the Mekong Delta.

Related projects

No information.

Literature sources

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