

Hai Van-Hon Son Tra Proposed Marine Protected Area

Alternative site name(s)

Hai Van-Son Tra; Hai Van-Son Cha

Province(s)

Thua Thien Hue and Da Nang

Status

Proposed

Management board established

Unknown

Latitude

16°04' - 16°19'N

Longitude

107°58' - 108°13'E

Bio-unit

05c - North Annam



Conservation status

Hai Van-Hon Son Tra was included in a list of proposed marine protected areas prepared on behalf of MOSTE (Nguyen Chu Hoi *et al.* eds. 1998). This proposed marine protected area comprised three areas in the south of Phu Loc district, Thua Thien Hue province: Son Tra island, Lang Co lagoon and Bac Hai Van proposed cultural and historical site. The total area of the proposed marine protected area was given as approximately 6,000 to 7,000 ha (Nguyen Chu Hoi *et al.* eds. 1998).

The site has also been identified as a candidate site for inclusion in a coastal and marine protected areas system by the Asian Development Bank (ADB 1999). In the ADB proposal, the site, referred to as Hai Van-Son Tra, also includes Nam Hai Van proposed cultural and historical site in Da Nang city. The total area of the site is proposed to be 27,416 ha, comprising a terrestrial area of 25,390 ha and a marine area of 2,026 ha.

Topography and hydrology

Hai Van-Hon Son Tra proposed marine protected area is situated between Cau Hai lagoon in south-western Thua Thien Hue province and Da Nang bay. The site is located at the eastern end of a mountain

ridge, which runs from the Annamite mountains to the coast. Elevations range from 1,413 m at the summit of Hon Chay mountain to a depth of less than 15 m below sea level in the marine sector.

Son Tra island is a small island, about 150 ha in area, located less than 1 km off the tip of the Hai Van pass. The highest point on the island is 230 m. Lang Co lagoon, also known as Lap An swamp, is situated on the northern side of the Hai Van pass. The lagoon is approximately 1,500 ha in extent and is fed by rivers originating on the north face of the Hai Van pass.

Biodiversity value

The Hai Van pass is of particular interest as it is a biogeographical boundary between northern and southern Vietnam. For many terrestrial species, the pass forms the northern or southern extent of their ranges. How far this is the case for marine species, however, is less well known.

The coastal forest is in a good condition, with natural vegetation cover dominated by *Symplocos longifolia* and *Lithocarpus nebulorum* (ADB 1999). However, significant areas of Hai Van pass have been planted with *Acacia auriculiformis*, *A. mangium* and *Pinus* sp. (Vu Van Dung pers. comm.).

The marine ecosystems are diverse. Coral reefs are found along the northern seaboard of the Hai Van pass

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and around Son Tra island, where 23 coral species and 70 coral reef fish are known. Seagrass beds are distributed mostly in Lang Co lagoon, and are dominated by *Halophila ovalis*, *Thalassia hemprichii*, *Halodule pinifolia* and *Zostera japonica* (ADB 1999).

Conservation issues

There are currently two FPD guard stations at the site, one in Thua Thien Hue province and one in Da Nang city. However, there is presently insufficient capacity to adequately protect the large terrestrial and marine components of the site. The forest is threatened by cutting and local people still hunt in the area. Marine resources have been over-exploited, and with the use of destructive fishing techniques, such as dynamite fishing. Unplanned aquacultural developments in Lang Co lagoon are also taking place (ADB 1999).

The site is juxtaposed between the large urban areas of Hue and Da Nang cities, and National Highway 1 passes through the site. Consequently, it is easy to access the site to exploit the natural resources therein. Moreover, Da Nang has been earmarked for development as a third major centre of economic growth, behind Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. In combination these factors pose a major challenge to conservation of this area.

Other documented values

The area is scenically beautiful, and has high potential for tourism due to its location near to the tourism centres of Hue and Da Nang cities. Access to the site is very good.

Related projects

ADB are currently supporting a regional technical assistance entitled *Coastal and Marine Environment Management in the South China Sea (East Sea)*. This is partly supported by a technical assistance grant from the Swedish Development Cooperation Agency. The project aims to promote improved management of coastal and marine resources in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Hainan and Guangxi Provinces of the People's Republic of China. Under this project, a draft coastal and marine protected areas plan for Vietnam has been

compiled, which reviews a number of candidate sites for inclusion within a revised national system of 30 marine and coastal protected areas. Hai Van-Son Tra is included in this plan (ADB 1999).

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 Chu Van Thuoc (1997) [Investigation and evaluation of biological diversity and potential for conservation of Son Cha island]. Hai Phong: Hai Phong Institute of Oceanography. In Vietnamese.