

# Hon Me Nature Reserve

## **Alternative site name(s)**

Dao Me, Dao Hon Me

## **Province(s)**

Thanh Hoa

## **Status**

Decreed

## **Management board established**

Unknown

## **Latitude**

19°22' - 19°23'N

## **Longitude**

105°55' - 105°56'E

## **Bio-unit**

05c - North Annam



## Conservation status

Hon Me was decreed as a 500 ha nature reserve, following Decision No. 194/CT of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, dated 9 August 1986. According to Thanh Hoa Provincial FPD (2000), the nature reserve does not yet have an investment plan, and a management board has not been formed. However, the Asian Development Bank (ADB 1999) states that Hon Me Nature Reserve currently has 11 personnel, five of whom are assigned to the administrative office, and six of whom are assigned to a single guard post. Furthermore, an operations budget has apparently been provided by the central government (ADB 1999).

Hon Me Nature Reserve is believed to only contain terrestrial and coastal habitats. However, the nature reserve is included within the Hon Me archipelago, a larger area, which has been proposed as a marine protected area (see Hon Me proposed marine protected area site card).

In 1997, it was decided that Hon Me no longer met the requisite standard for Special-use Forest status and should be removed from the national protected areas network (MARD 1997). Consequently, the site was not included on the 2010 list (FPD 1998).

## Topography and hydrology

Hon Me Nature Reserve comprises Hon Me island, a 420 ha island located about 10 km off the coast of Tinh Gia district, Thanh Hoa province. Hon Me is the biggest of the nine sizeable islands in the Hon Me archipelago, and reaches a height of 256 m.

## Biodiversity value

The Hon Me archipelago consists of several small islands, which support high levels of biodiversity and an abundance of habitats. Hon Me island is the biggest and most uniquely vegetated island in the archipelago, and harbours wildlife that has yet to be studied adequately (ADB 1999). The waters around the islands were the subject of a study by Hai Phong Institute of Oceanography in October 1998 (Nguyen Chu Hoi *et al.* eds. 1998). However, very little is known about the biodiversity value of the island itself.

## Conservation issues

Tinh Gia district suffers from a lack of financial resources, and has a poorly developed economy. This has led to high levels of dependence on marine resources among local populations, with well documented negative impacts (ADB 1999). Thanh Hoa

Provincial FPD (2000) gives the main threat to the site as illegal exploitation of forest products. There are no permanent residents on the island except for a few civil servants and army personnel (ADB 1999). People from outside the area are, therefore, responsible for most of the threats to biodiversity at Hon Mun, which are identified by ADB (1999) as unsustainable and destructive fishing practices (including dynamite fishing and use of small-mesh nets), and siltation of coral reefs.

Thanh Hoa Provincial FPD (2000) [FPD questionnaire]. Thanh Hoa: Thanh Hoa Provincial Forest Protection Department. In Vietnamese.

## Other documented values

The Hon Me archipelago is an important fishing ground in the Gulf of Tonkin, and supports the livelihoods of communities in Tinh Gia district, Thanh Hoa province, as well as commercial fishing enterprises. A number of fish of high economic value occur in the area, such as members of the Pomacanthidae and Holocentridae (ADB 1999). There is no information available about the non-biodiversity values of the nature reserve itself.

## Related projects

ADB are currently supporting a regional technical assistance called *Coastal and Marine Environment Management in the South China Sea (East Sea)*, partly supported by a grant from the Swedish Development Cooperation Agency. This project aims to promote improved management of coastal and marine resources in the region, and is being implemented by MOSTE. Under this project, a draft coastal and marine protected area systems plan for Vietnam has been compiled, which discusses a number of candidate sites for inclusion within a revised national system of 30 marine and coastal protected areas. Hon Me Nature Reserve is included within this plan.

## 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.