

# Rung Kho Han Nui Chua Nature Reserve

## Alternative site name(s)

Rung kho Ninh Hai, Rung kho Phan Rang

## Province(s)

Ninh Thuan

## Status

Decreed

## Management board established

Yes

## Latitude

11<sup>0</sup>35' - 11<sup>0</sup>48'N

## Longitude

109<sup>0</sup>03' - 109<sup>0</sup>14'E

## Bio-unit

05b - South Annam



## Conservation status

Rung Kho Han Nui Chua was included on Decision No. 194/CT of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, dated 9 August 1986, which decreed the establishment of a 1,000 ha nature reserve in An Phuoc (now Ninh Phuoc) district, under the name Rung Kho Phan Rang (MARD 1997). However, the deciduous forest at this site was largely destroyed during the mid 1990s. Consequently, Ninh Thuan Provincial DARD selected a coastal area further north, centred on Mount Chua, as a more suitable site for nature reserve establishment (Le Trong Trai pers. comm.).

In 1997 Ho Chi Minh City Sub-FIPI prepared an investment plan for the renamed Rung Kho Han Nui Chua Nature Reserve (Anon. 1997). This investment plan was approved by MARD on 12 January 1998, by Decision No. 243/BNN-PTLN, and by Ninh Thuan Provincial People's Committee on 1 April 1998, by Decision No. 659/QD-UBND. Also in April 1998, the provincial people's committee established a nature reserve management board with 30 members of staff, including 18 forest guards, based at the headquarters and four guard stations (Ninh Thuan Provincial FPD 2000).

The total area of the nature reserve given in the investment plan was 29,673 ha. However, when

approving the investment plan, MARD decided to transfer an area of 5,320 ha into the buffer zone, thus reducing the total area of the nature reserve to 24,353 ha, comprising a strict protection area of 16,087 ha, a forest rehabilitation area of 8,261 ha, and an administration and services area of 5 ha. In addition, a buffer zone of 11,200 ha was defined (Anon. 1997).

## Topography and hydrology

Rung Kho Han Nui Chua Nature Reserve is situated in Khanh Hiep and Khanh Hai communes, Ninh Hai district, in the coastal zone of south-central Vietnam. The nature reserve is situated on a wide, mountainous promontory, which projects into the East Sea between Cam Ranh and Phan Rang bays. The topography of the nature reserve is mountainous, with elevations ranging from sea level to 1,040 m at the summit of Mount Chua in the centre of the nature reserve. The hydrological systems within the nature reserve are comprised of short streams that drain steep slopes. Most of the streams cease to flow during the dry season, since the nature reserve is situated in an area that receives the lowest rainfall in south-central Vietnam; the nature reserve receives an average of only 650 mm of rain per year.

# Rung Kho Han Nui Chua Nature Reserve

## Biodiversity value

The original vegetation of Rung Kho Han Nui Chua Nature Reserve was a mixture of evergreen forest, semi-deciduous forest and deciduous forest. However, most of the forest at the site was destroyed at the beginning of last decade, as a result of forest over-exploitation. Currently, the only primary forest remaining is evergreen forest, distributed in the north of the nature reserve, at elevations above 800 m. At lower elevations, there are extensive areas of secondary forest. The southern parts of the nature reserve, at elevations between 150 and 800 m support scrub dominated by thorny trees. This habitat type is only found at sites with hot and dry climates, and is under-represented within the protected areas network of Vietnam.

During 1994, the fauna of Rung Kho Han Nui Chua Nature Reserve was surveyed by Xuan Mai Forestry College. During this survey, several mammal and bird species of conservation importance were found at the site, including Black-shanked Douc Langur *Pygathrix nemaeus nigripes*, Lesser Slow Loris *Nycticebus pygmaeus*, Asiatic Black Bear *Ursus thibetanus*, Sun Bear *U. malayanus* and Giant Muntjac *Megamuntiacus vuquangensis*. Bird species of conservation importance recorded at the site include Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus*, Siamese Fireback *Lophura diardi* and Great Hornbill *Buceros bicornis* (Pham Nhat 1994). Given the high human population within the site, and the potentially high levels of hunting, however, the current status of a number of these species at the site must be considered uncertain.

## Conservation issues

A total of 28,863 people live inside Rung Kho Han Nui Chua Nature Reserve, and a further 24,546 people live in the buffer zone. The majority of these people belong to the Kinh, Cham and Ra-glai ethnic groups. The socio-economic level of many of these people is quite low, especially the inhabitants of the nature reserve, who experience an average of six months of food shortages per year. Forest clearance for agriculture is a particular problem at Rung Kho Han Nui Chua: there are over 600 ha of wet rice land, over 2,500 ha of shifting cultivation and over 750 ha of industrial crop land inside the nature reserve boundary

(Ninh Thuan Provincial FPD 2000). Another problem identified by Ninh Thuan Provincial FPD (2000) is the harsh climate, which makes the forest susceptible to fire.

## Other documented values

No information.

## Related projects

Currently, the main source of funding for forestry activities at Rung Kho Han Nui Chua Nature Reserve comes from the national 661 Programme. Between 1994 and 1998, the main source of funding was the national 327 Programme (Ninh Thuan Provincial FPD 2000).

## Literature sources

Anon. (1997) [Investment plan for Rung Kho Han Nui Chua Nature Reserve, Ninh Hai district, Ninh Thuan province]. Ho Chi Minh City: Ho Chi Minh City Sub-FIPI. In Vietnamese.

Ninh Thuan Provincial FPD (2000) [FPD questionnaire]. Phan Rang: Ninh Thuan Provincial Forest Protection Department. In Vietnamese.

Pham Nhat (1994) [Faunal resources of Rung Kho Ninh Hai Nature Reserve, Ninh Thuan province]. Unpublished report to Xuan Mai Forestry College. In Vietnamese.