

# Tay Con Linh II Proposed Nature Reserve

## Alternative site name(s)

Tay Con Linh

## Province(s)

Ha Giang

## Status

Proposed

## Management board established

Yes

## Latitude

22°38' - 22°48'N

## Longitude

104°41' - 104°57'E

## Bio-unit

06a – Tropical South China



## Conservation status

Tay Con Linh II is not included on any government decree relating to protected areas. However, an investment plan for the site was published in July 1994 by FIPI, which proposed establishing a 21,554 ha nature reserve, comprising a strict protection area of 9,635 ha and a forest rehabilitation area of 11,919 ha (Anon. 1994). This investment plan was approved by MARD, and, subsequently, by Decision No. 493/UB-QD of Ha Giang Provincial People's Committee, dated 21 September 1994. Following the approval of the investment plan, a management board was established by the provincial people's committee on 24 November 1994. Tay Con Linh II proposed nature reserve is currently under the management of the provincial FPD (Ha Giang Provincial FPD 2000).

The 2010 list (FPD 1998) includes a proposal to establish a 40,344 ha nature reserve called Tay Con Linh, which would incorporate Tay Con Linh II and Tay Con Linh I, a separate but contiguous area to the south (see Tay Con Linh I site card). In 2000, MARD instructed FIPI to prepare an investment plan for a single nature reserve, combining Tay Con Linh I and Tay Con Linh II proposed nature reserves.

## Topography and hydrology

Tay Con Linh II proposed nature reserve lies within Cao Bo and Quang Ngan communes, Vi Xuyen district, and Tung San commune, Hoang Su Phi district, Ha Giang province. To the north, Tay Con Linh II proposed nature reserve is contiguous with Tay Con Linh I proposed nature reserve.

Tay Con Linh II proposed nature reserve lies on the southern face of Mount Tay Con Linh, the highest mountain in Ha Giang province, and the highest point in Vietnam east of the Red River. The topography of the proposed nature reserve is steep and mountainous. Elevations range from 2,616 m at the summit of Mount Tay Con Linh to under 100 m in the south-east of the proposed nature reserve. The geology of the proposed nature reserve is a mixture of limestone and granite.

Tay Con Linh II lies on the boundary between two watersheds. Streams and rivers originating in the west of the nature reserve flow west, into the Chay river, which feeds the Thac Ba reservoir. Streams and rivers originating in the east of the nature reserve flow east, into the Lo river, which joins the Red River in Phu Tho province.

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## Biodiversity value

According to the investment plan (Anon. 1994), Tay Con Linh II proposed nature reserve supports 8,612 ha of forest, equivalent to only 40% of the total area of the proposed nature reserve. Most of the remaining area supports grassland and scrub, although there is also a significant area of agricultural land. The forest begins sharply at 1,200 m (R. Bain and C. Vogel pers. comm.), and the main forest types are lower montane evergreen forest and upper montane evergreen forest. The tree flora is dominated by members of the Fagaceae, Euphorbiaceae, Lauraceae and Moraceae families (Anon. 1994). According to the investment plan (Anon. 1994), 236 species of vascular plants have been recorded at the proposed nature reserve. Notably, the site supports a high diversity of conifers, including *Podocarpus brevifolius*, *Decussocarpus wallichianus*, *Cupressus torulosa* and *Fokienia hodginsii* (Anon. 1994).

According to the investment plan (Anon. 1994), Tay Con Linh II supports 46 species of mammal, 114 species of bird, 18 species of reptile and 11 species of amphibian. However, the source of this data is not clear, and these lists may include figures expected to occur on the basis of known distributions.

During April and May 2000, the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) and the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources (IEBR) carried out a biodiversity survey of Tay Con Linh II proposed nature reserve. This survey focussed particularly on reptiles, amphibians and birds. During the survey, a total of six reptile and 38 amphibian species were recorded. Most of the species had been previously recorded in Lao Cai or Cao Bang provinces. However, two of the amphibian species recorded were new records for Vietnam (R. Bain and C. Vogel pers. comm.).

During the AMNH/IEBR survey, a tentative total of 110 species of bird in 36 families were recorded. These included two globally threatened and five globally near-threatened species. It is predicted that, upon further review of the collected material and literature, as many as 25 range extensions may be delineated and new taxa described (R. Bain and C. Vogel pers. comm.).

## Conservation issues

Ha Giang Provincial FPD (2000) identify clearance of forest for agriculture, forest fire and timber extraction as the major threats to biodiversity at Tay Con Linh II. A total of 5,856 people live inside the proposed nature reserve, comprising members of the Dao, Co Lao, Hmong, Hoa and Tay ethnic groups (Ha Giang Provincial FPD 2000). Population growth is estimated as 2.7% per year (Anon. 1994). Already a significant area of forest inside the proposed nature reserve has been cleared for agriculture. Ha Giang Provincial FPD (2000) report that there are 591 ha of wet rice agriculture, 485 ha of hill agriculture and 460 ha of industrial crops inside the boundaries of the proposed nature reserve.

R. Bain and C. Vogel (pers. comm.) consider exploitation of the forest by local people to be the most obvious threat to biodiversity in the area. Members of the Dao ethnic group cultivate land up to 1,200 m and utilise the forest above for hunting and harvesting of other forest products. Anecdotal information obtained via interviews with local inhabitants indicates that there have been severe declines in megafaunal populations and diversity in the last 30 years. Furthermore, birds seem to be under strong hunting pressure. Species that are particularly sensitive to hunting pressure, such as hornbills, raptors, parakeets and pheasants, were conspicuously absent or rare during the recent AMNH/IEBR survey (R. Bain and C. Vogel pers. comm.).

Tay Con Linh I is one of four decreed and proposed protected areas that lie along or close to the Chinese border in western Ha Giang province. The other three areas are Phong Quang, Tay Con Linh II and Bat Dai Son (see relevant site cards). Together, these four sites protect some of the last significant areas of montane forest in northern Vietnam. Through a programme of reforestation, it may be possible, in the future, to establish habitat corridors between these sites, thus creating a contiguous area of conservation coverage.

## Other documented values

Tay Con Linh II has an important role in watershed protection for the local population. Members of the Dao ethnic group utilise streams originating in the

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proposed nature reserve to irrigate their wet rice fields (R. Bain and C. Vogel pers. comm.).

## Related projects

No information.

## Literature sources

Anon. (1994) [Investment plan for Tay Con Linh II Nature Reserve]. Hanoi: Forest Inventory and Planning Institute. In Vietnamese.

Ha Giang Provincial FPD (2000) [FPD questionnaire]. Ha Giang: Ha Giang Provincial Forest Protection Department. In Vietnamese.