

# Thac Ba Cultural and Historical Site

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

Ho Thac Ba [Thac Ba lake]

## **Province(s)**

Yen Bai

## **Status**

Decreed

## **Management board established**

No

## **Latitude**

21°42' - 22°05'N

## **Longitude**

104°45' - 105°03'E

## **Bio-unit**

06a – Tropical South China



## **Conservation status**

Thac Ba reservoir covers an area of 19,050 ha and contains many islands. The reservoir was created in 1970 by the construction of a dam on the Chay River (Anon. 1998).

The establishment of Thac Ba Cultural and Historical Site was decreed on 9 August 1986, by Decision No. 194/CT of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers (MARD 1997). The area of the cultural and historical site was given as 5,000 ha, and its stated purpose was to protect the watershed of the reservoir and the habitat of bird species (Cao Van Sung 1995). An investment plan has not yet been prepared for the cultural and historical site. Thac Ba is included on the 2010 list, which proposes increasing the area of the cultural and historical site to 20,000 ha, including 10,594 ha of forest (FPD 1998).

## **Topography and hydrology**

Thac Ba reservoir is situated on the Chay River, which runs parallel to and to the east of the Red River. The difference in elevation between the river bed upstream and downstream of the reservoir is 130 m (Scott 1989). The reservoir is over 80 km long and up to 8 km wide, although the lake is significantly narrower in many places as the shoreline is highly

irregular, with many bays and promontories. There are also numerous islands in the reservoir, which is surrounded by steep mountainsides.

## **Biodiversity value**

Prior to the construction of the dam, the area was covered in lowland evergreen forest and was very rich in wildlife. However, the area has since been extensively deforested, and much of the forest cover today is a result of reafforestation activities. The reservoir supports some emergent vegetation, including reed beds and marsh grasses. Thac Ba reservoir is considered to be an important staging and wintering area for a range of migratory waterfowl species (Scott 1989).

## **Conservation issues**

Extensive deforestation in the catchment of Thac Ba reservoir has led to increased soil erosion and an estimated 5.35 million tonnes of silt enter the reservoir each year. As a result of this siltation, the life span of the reservoir has been significantly reduced and it is no longer possible to generate electricity during the dry season. In an effort to reduce rates of sedimentation, reafforestation activities have been conducted in the watershed of the reservoir (Scott 1989).

## Other documented values

Thach Ba reservoir has important economic functions, including regulation of outflow for agricultural purposes, and hydro-electricity generation. In addition, Scott (1989) noted that the reservoir supports a large fishery, which represents an important source of protein for local residents. This fishery yields 55 tonnes of fish per year (Anon. 1998). It can also be assumed that Thac Ba Cultural and Historical Site has potential recreational and amenity values; one of the justifications for including the site on the 2010 list is its scenic landscape (FPD 1998).

## Related projects

No information.

## Literature sources

Anon. (1998) [Basic planning for a wetland nature reserve]. Hanoi: Forest Inventory and Planning Institute. In Vietnamese.

Scott, D. A. (1989) A directory of Asian wetlands. Gland: IUCN.