

# Tho Chu Proposed Marine Protected Area

## Alternative site name(s)

None

## Province(s)

Kien Giang

## Status

Proposed

## Management board established

No

## Latitude

9°17'N

## Longitude

103°28'E

## Bio-unit

07b - Malay Transition



## Conservation status

Tho Chu was first proposed as a marine protected area by Nguyen Huy Yet and Vo Si Tuan (1995), who listed it together with Nam Du and Phu Quoc islands as Cac Dao Tay Nam Bo [islands off south-western Vietnam] proposed marine protected area. Subsequently, the Asian Development Bank (ADB 1999) proposed establishing a marine protected area at Tho Chu, with a total area of 22,400 ha, comprising a terrestrial component of 1,190 ha and a marine component of 21,210 ha. The area is currently under the management of the armed forces (ADB 1999).

## Topography and hydrology

The Tho Chu archipelago comprises a group of five islands and the surrounding marine waters. The largest island, Tho Chu, has a total area of 1,190 ha and a highest point of 167 m (Nguyen Huy Yet and Vo Si Tuan 1995). ADB (1999) propose that the marine protected area also include the Cao Cat islands, two small islands located about 15 km to the north-east of the Tho Chu archipelago.

## Biodiversity value

The forest on the islands is in a good condition, without any degradation. The terrestrial flora comprises at least 200 species, and is dominated by the Guttiferae, Fabaceae and Sapotaceae families. Coral reefs are common at the site, and are characterised by a high abundance but low diversity of coral species. A total of 99 coral species have been identified, and the dominant genera are *Acropora* and *Montipora* (ADB 1999). ADB (1999) report that the coastal beaches in the proposed marine protected area are favorable nesting sites for Hawksbill Turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata* and Green Turtle *Chelonia mydas*. However, the status of these species at the site is unclear.

## Conservation issues

The islands and the surrounding marine ecosystem are reportedly well protected by military personnel stationed on the islands (ADB 1999).

## Other documented values

The islands have an important role in fisheries production. Economically important species recorded at the site include Pearl Oyster *Pinctada margaritifera*

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and the sea cucumbers *Actinopyga echinites* and *Bohadschia graeffei* (ADB 1999).

## Related projects

No information.

## Literature sources

ADB (1999) Draft coastal and marine protected areas plan. Hanoi: Asian Development Bank.

Nguyen Huy Yet and Vo Si Tuan (1995) [Information on proposed marine protected areas on the coast of Vietnam]. Hai Phong: Hai Phong Institute of Oceanography. In Vietnamese.