

Xuan Nha Nature Reserve

Alternative site name(s)

None

Province(s)

Son La

Status

Decreed

Management board established

Yes

Latitude

20°36' - 20°48'N

Longitude

104°29' - 104°50'E

Bio-unit

10b – Northern Indochina



Conservation status

Xuan Nha was included on Decision No. 194/CT of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, dated 9 August 1986, as a 60,000 ha nature reserve (MARD 1997). In 1991, an investment plan was prepared, which proposed establishing a 38,069 ha nature reserve, comprising a strict protection area of 15,489 ha and a forest rehabilitation area of 22,580 ha. In addition, the investment plan defined a buffer zone of 66,436 ha (Anon. 1991).

According to FPD (1998), the investment plan was approved by the former Ministry of Forestry, and a nature reserve management board was established. Xuan Nha is included on the 2010 list as a 38,069 ha nature reserve, including 22,172 ha of forest (FPD 1998).

Topography and hydrology

Xuan Nha Nature Reserve lies in Moc Chau district in south-western Son La province. To the south and east the nature reserve is bordered by Hoa Binh and Thanh Hoa provinces, while, to the west, it is bordered by Laos. The highest point in the nature reserve, Mount Pha Luong at 1,970 m, lies on the mountain ridge that forms the border with Laos. The topography of the nature reserve is composed of two wide, shallow-sided

valleys, which run east across the nature reserve from the Laotian border. The northern valley is formed by the Nha stream, while the southern valley is formed by the Nam Can stream. These two streams meet in the extreme south-east of the nature reserve, from where they flow south to join the Ma river.

Biodiversity value

According to the investment plan (Anon. 1991), Xuan Nha Nature Reserve supports 22,172 ha of forest, all of which is natural forest. This figure includes 2,626 ha of limestone forest. However, the dominant forest type at Xuan Nha is evergreen forest.

The investment plan (Anon. 1991) states that 456 species of plant occur at Xuan Nha, including several species listed in the Red Data Book of Vietnam, such as *Podocarpus neriifolius*, *Chukrasia tabularis*, *Markhamia stipulata*, *Madhuca pasquieri* and *Rauwolfia verticillata*. In addition, the investment plan states that 160 mammal, 48 bird, 44 reptile and 19 amphibian species occur at Xuan Nha, including several globally threatened species. The source of both the faunal and floral data is not clear, and further studies are required to assess the biodiversity value of the site.

Conservation issues

The investment plan (Anon. 1991) notes in-migration to be a major threat to biodiversity at the nature reserve. The majority of in-migrants are believed to be members of the Hmong ethnic group, who have cleared forest for agriculture. The investment plan includes an estimate that from 100 to 200 ha of forest are lost in this manner each year. Hunting is also considered to be a big problem in Xuan Nha Nature Reserve.

The investment plan (Anon. 1991) mentions two forest enterprises operating in and around Xuan Nha Nature Reserve. Chieng Ve Forest Enterprise was established in October 1969. At the time the investment plan was written, this forest enterprise was allocating land inside the nature reserve to local people for tea production. Moc Chau 4 Forest Enterprise was established in 1987, with the principal objective of supplying timber from the construction of the Hoa Binh dam. At the time the investment plan was written, this forest enterprise was continuing to extract *Fokienia* timber from within the nature reserve. The current activities of these forest enterprises are not known.

Other documented values

Forest inside the nature reserve has economic importance for local people as a source of timber and other forest products. The nature reserve protects part of the watershed of the Ma river, one of the main sources of water for domestic use and irrigation for households in Thanh Hoa province.

Related projects

No information.

Literature sources

Anon. (1991) [Investment plan for Xuan Nha Nature Reserve, Son La province]. Son La: Son La Provincial Forest Protection Department. In Vietnamese.