

Yen Tu Nature Reserve

Alternative site name(s)

Nui Yen Tu

Province(s)

Quang Ninh and Bac Giang

Status

Decreed

Management board established

Yes

Latitude

21°10'N

Longitude

106°42'E

Bio-unit

06a - Tropical South China



Conservation status

Yen Tu 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 2,000 ha nature reserve in Quang Ninh province and a contiguous 3,000 ha nature reserve in former Ha Bac (currently Bac Giang) province (MARD 1997). An investment plan for the nature reserve in Quang Ninh province was approved by the provincial people's committee in 1995, and a management board was then established. This investment plan gave the total area of the nature reserve as 3,040 ha, including 1,914 ha of forest (FPD 1998). The process of establishing the nature reserve in Bac Giang province is less advanced. However, Bac Giang Provincial FPD (pers. comm.) report that they are planning to prepare an investment plan for a nature reserve with an area of 13,098 ha, including 11,523 ha of forest.

Yen Tu is included on a proposed list of Special-use Forests currently being prepared by FPD and FIPI as two separate sites: a 3,040 ha nature reserve in Quang Ninh province and a 13,098 ha nature reserve in Bac Giang province (FPD and FIPI in prep.).

Topography and hydrology

Yen Tu Nature Reserve is located on the ridge of mountains that forms the border between Dong Trieu district, Quang Ninh province, and Son Dong district, Bac Giang province. The nature reserve is centred on the 1,068 metre-high Mount Yen Tu, the highest point along this ridge. Streams originating on the northern face of the ridge flow north, into the Luc Ngan river, while streams originating on the southern face flow south, and feed the Kinh Thay river.

Biodiversity value

Remote sensing data indicate that Yen Tu Nature Reserve supports a significant area of evergreen forest, and that the nature reserve may be linked to Ky Thuong proposed nature reserve by a corridor of natural forest. It would appear, therefore, that Yen Tu Nature Reserve supports part of one of the largest remaining areas of evergreen forest in north-eastern Vietnam. This forest type has been extensively cleared from areas of Vietnam east of the Red River, and, as a result, Yen Tu may support viable populations of plant and animal species that are no longer found elsewhere in the country. Detailed surveys, particularly of plants and invertebrates, are required, however, before further conclusions can be drawn.

Initial surveys have already been conducted on the vertebrate fauna of Yen Tu Nature Reserve. During 2000, a survey by the IEBR Zoology Department (2000) recorded 45 mammal species, 143 bird species, 26 reptile species and 22 amphibian species (excluding species listed on the basis of past reports). Notable mammal records included Raccoon-dog *Nyctereutes procyonoides*, a species with a limited distribution within Vietnam, and the globally threatened Owston's Banded Civet *Hemigalus owstoni*. Few of the bird species recorded at the site are of global conservation concern, with the exception of the globally near-threatened Bar-bellied Pitta *Pitta elliotii*. Finally, three amphibians recorded at the site are believed to be endemic to Vietnam: *Rana maosonensis*, *R. chapaensis* and *R. sauteri*.

Nguyen Van Sang, Nguyen Quang Truong and Nguyen Truong Son (2000) Preliminary results of the survey on herpetofauna in Yen Tu mountain area. Tap Chi Sinh Hoc [Journal of Biology] 22(15)CD: 11-14. In Vietnamese.

Vietnam News (2000) Yen Tu forest destroyed. Vietnam News 15 July 2000.

Conservation issues

Illegal logging appears to be a serious threat to biodiversity at Yen Tu Nature Reserve. In July 2000, Vietnam News (2000) reported that illegal loggers, taking advantage of rough terrain and limited forest protection, had logged 1,000 ha of forest in the Yen Tu area since late 1999. Loggers reportedly used explosives to clear access roads, and employed local people from surrounding areas to assist with the logging.

Other documented values

Yen Tu is a popular site for tourism, and receives a significant number of domestic tourists from Hanoi, Hai Phong and elsewhere in northern Vietnam. There are several temples on the Quang Ninh side, and a trail leading to the top of Mount Yen Tu.

Related projects

No information.

Literature sources

Department of Zoology, IEBR (2000) [Survey of the fauna (mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians) of Yen Tu mountain]. Hanoi: Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources. In Vietnamese.