

Introducing development and conservation initiatives in the Greater Annamites...



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With 37 million people, and covering 23 million hectares, the Greater Annamites Ecoregion has a wealth of development and conservation initiatives in action across its diverse landscape. Working at all levels from grassroots to central government levels, and including support from local, national, international and multinational agencies, a broad range of initiatives policies, programmes and projects are working in the Greater Annamites.

Promoting global biodiversity conservation...

Both Lao PDR and Vietnam are signatories to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, demonstrating their policy commitment to biodiversity conservation. At a national level this commitment is further strengthened by the development of National Environment Strategies, Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and Forestry Strategies.

Government efforts in rural development...

Vietnam's Hunger Elimination and Poverty Reduction programme provides assistance in rural development at the grassroots level for the poorest communes in the country, many of which are within the Greater Annamites. The National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy in Lao PDR has identified 47 poor districts as priority areas for development, many of which are situated along the western spine of the Annamites mountain chain.

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Reversing deforestation...

Both countries are committed to reversing deforestation and increasing forest cover. The government of Vietnam placed a ban on the export of timber and has launched an ambitious programme to establish an additional five million hectares of forest. The government of Lao PDR has set a target of 60 per cent forest coverage by 2020 and is currently finalizing their national forest strategy to work towards this goal.

Sustainable forest management...

The government of Vietnam is taking steps to reform the State Forest Enterprises, which are responsible for the country's production forests. In Lao PDR, policies are in place to facilitate grassroots management of production forests by villagers. The World Bank/FINIDA Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development Project aims to contribute to alleviating rural poverty, protecting biodiversity and enhancing national and local economies. Three of the four project areas are in the Greater Annamites.

Protected area systems...

Some 54 protected areas are included in the Greater Annamites: 44 are in Vietnam (covering almost 1.4 million hectares) and 10 are in Lao PDR (covering more than 1.6 million hectares). The Vietnamese government is presently undertaking an extensive review to ensure that protected areas provide effective shelter to the unique and threatened biodiversity in this region and in 2003 the government of Vietnam launched a protected area strategy. Within Lao PDR, strong protected area management is an integral component of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

Species actions...

Both within and outside protected areas activities to monitor and protect some of the world's most endangered species are underway. Bringing scientists together to create a conservation action plan to conserve the newly discovered saola, and establishing a Javan rhino patrol team for one of only two remaining global populations are just some of the most recent activities in the region.

Reducing the wildlife trade...

Both Vietnam and Lao PDR are signatory states to CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, and have trained government staff dedicated to halting the illegal wildlife trade. In Vietnam, a new national programme will strengthen wildlife trade controls in an attempt to reduce what is undoubtedly one of the biggest threats to conservation efforts in the Greater Annamites.

Integrating conservation and development...

In Nghe An province, in the northern Annamites, an ambitious Social Forestry and Nature Conservation project funded by European Commission is working to improve local livelihoods and protect biodiversity as the country's largest integrated conservation and development project. In Bolikhamxay Province in Lao PDR, the Wildlife Conservation Society is in the process of developing a province wide capacity building project to support improved natural resource management over the provincial landscape. The project will include a specific focus on 5 key species or species groups including: Tiger, Elephant, Saola, Crested Argus, and Endemic Primates.

These are only some of the activities helping to conserve biodiversity and support livelihoods of rural people in the Greater Annamites.



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Find out more about activities in the Greater Annamites ecoregion at <http://www.wfindochina.org> and www.panda.org/asiapacific/annamites