

**INTRODUCING THE CENTRAL
TRUONG SON INITIATIVE**



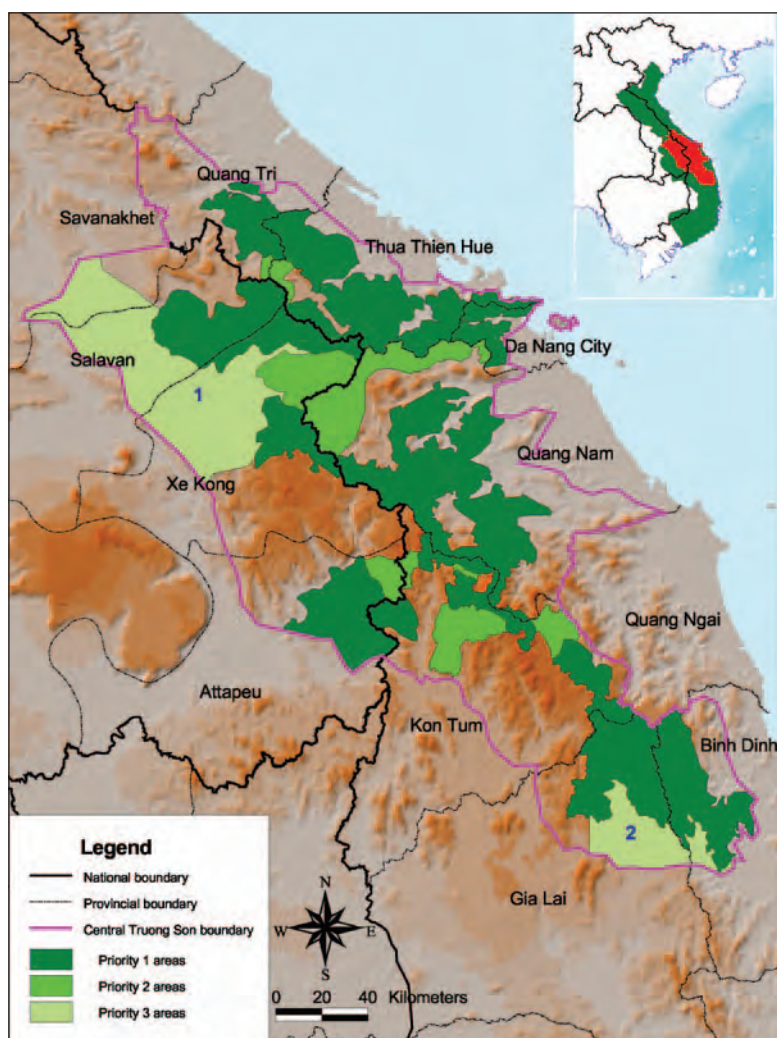
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Summary Introduction

The Greater Annamites comprises the **some of the most unique and threatened wildlife on Earth**. From its charismatic endemic species such as the stunning douc langur and the remarkable saola, to some of the world's most endangered species like the Asian elephant, Indochinese tiger, and Javan rhinoceros, the Greater Annamites is a region of global significance. The central Truong Son landscape is the critical centre-pin for successful conservation of the Greater Annamites as it has characteristics of a transition zone between temperate and tropical systems, and has a unique biodiversity value both within the Greater Annamites and globally. The central Truong Son (CTS) is situated in central Vietnam and southern Laos PDR and is based around the central massif of the Truong Son mountain chain.



Map Showing three priority areas in the Central Annamites



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Central Truong Son Initiative

Long-term objective

To establish an integrated mosaic of complementary land-use and development practice to protect, manage and restore natural resources and biodiversity in the Truong Son in the industrialization and modernization process, while also contributing to institutional development, good governance and raised standards of living for local communities.

Time



Coordination (Foundation for Success)

To create and maintain an effective mechanism and operational structure for implementing the Programme.

Legal framework

To establish a legal, policy and institutional framework to strengthen the management, protection and restoration of natural resources in the CTS. All regional initiatives and development schemes routinely address conservation priorities and conform to legal documents of conservation.

Capacity

To strengthen the capacity and skills for all stakeholders to protect, manage and restore the natural ecosystems of the CTS landscape.

Development

To manage forest resources and biodiversity at a sustainable level in order to raise the standard of living for local people, contributing to poverty alleviation and hunger eradication, and meet the demands of socio-economic development.

The full strategy can be downloaded at www.panda.org/downloads/ecoregions/thectseci.pdf

Programme priorities and phases

In the long-term, the objective is to link the CTSL with its neighbouring landscapes. This is likely to require the restoration of large areas of habitat depending on the socio-economic situation and land-use patterns established over the last fifty years in the landscape.

Following the prioritisation of short, medium and long-term priorities presented in the biological assessment, the initiative has been divided into three key phases. Specific actions and targets have been designed for each of the three phases under each of the five objectives.



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The Central Truong Son Initiative

The concept for the Central Truong Son Initiative was developed in partnership with the Government of Vietnam who nominated the Forest Protection Department, within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, as the lead agency in the initiative. The Central Truong Son Initiative focuses on the Vietnam component of the landscape in the six provinces of Quang Tri, Thua-Thien Hue, Quang Nam, Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Binh Dinh and Danang city.

The initiative is unique because it is:

- A pilot part of the Greater Annamite ecoregion programme
- Designed to be one of the world's first comprehensive large-scale conservation efforts

Launched in Hue in November 2000, the Central Truong Son Initiative is an intensive, collaborative conservation effort involving government institutions at central and local levels, and international organisations in Laos and Vietnam. Following the launch of the initiative the Forest Protection Department set up an advisory group to lead the initiative; this advisory group has members from 15 government institutions, WWF, as well as senior international experts.

The first stage of the Central Truong Son Initiative was to develop a conservation strategy. This leaflet outlines how we developed the strategy and the next steps. The conservation strategy was developed after conducting both a biological assessment and a comprehensive situation analysis of policy and development in the area. We believe that this process has helped to provide a realistic and achievable conservation strategy for the central Truong Son.

**conservation strategy = biological assessment +
situational analysis**



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Biological assesment

The biological assessment formulated a biological vision for the central Truong Son landscape, which presents an ambitious aim for concerted conservation action over the next 50 years.

There were four steps to the biological assessment:

1) Defining the conservation foci: Conservation foci define the central Truong Son and are the focus of conservation action.

Conservation foci

Habitats:

Lowland forest, lower and medium montane forest, upper montane forest, rapids and headwaters, middle reaches of main rivers.

Landscape features:

Habitat corridors, core areas, ecological transitions.

Taxa:

Saola, Tiger, Indochinese Hog deer, Siamese crocodile.

Taxa groups:

Endemic and near-endemic animal species, wide-ranging large mammals, all primates, lowland galliformes, large congregatory bird species, all turtle species, eels in the genus *Anguilla*, commercially valuable catfish, endemic and near-endemic animal species, endemic and near-endemic plant species, species severely threatened by over-exploitation.

2) Mapping the distribution of the conservation foci: mapping the distribution and range of the conservation foci facilitated the design of a conservation landscape that will adequately conserve the full range of biodiversity and biological processes in the priority landscape.

3) Setting biological targets: Short-term and medium-term biological targets translate into quantitative targets for conservation action. Targets were set for each conservation focus.

4) Designing the conservation landscape: A conservation landscape is a spatial representation of conservation priorities, which facilitates the long-term conservation of the full range of biodiversity and biological processes within the central Truong Son.

After following these four steps, we had built a complete biological picture of the central Truong Son landscape and were able to prioritise the landscapes into three categories that would be the absolute minimum required for conservation of biodiversity and biological process in short, medium and long term.



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Situation analysis

Five separate studies formed a situation analysis of the central Truong Son, which provided a picture of reality on the ground in the region:

Benchmark socio-economic data

Socio-economic data is essential for planning successful conservation and development initiatives. This information highlights clear differences between provinces within the central Truong Son landscape, and even within individual provinces. This benchmark data is needed to tailor conservation efforts to each area of this diverse landscape, where areas are geographically, climatically and culturally distinct.

Land use and management

Within Vietnam extensive work has been carried out in designating land-use management practices. The situation analysis produced cohesive GIS data and maps of existing land-use management practices in the central Truong Son.

Policy and development

Within the central Truong Son there are a number of national and internationally supported development initiatives, which may have potential effects on conservation efforts. The initiative aims to combine biodiversity conservation with sustainable development, so it is essential that existing and planned development initiatives are identified in order for them to be integrated into this conservation strategy.

Tourism

Tourism is a rapidly expanding sector throughout Vietnam, including the central Truong Son. Having the potential to either benefit or harm conservation in the area tourism, if developed carefully, could provide significant financial benefits to the inhabitants of the central Truong Son who are amongst the most disadvantaged people in the country.

Stakeholder analysis

Across the provinces of the central Truong Son, a quantitative assessment of the key stakeholders was conducted. The analysis focused on stakeholders' relationships to three core issues: landscape integrity, ecological services, and livelihoods.



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Each stakeholder, or stakeholder group, was interviewed by a collaborating convener. The convenors were neutral institutions, such as the Women's Union, Hue University or the Vietnam Bank for the Poor. Questions on each issue tested the stakeholders level of 'power', 'legitimacy' and 'urgency', using the maxim that:

"Power gains authority through legitimacy, and it gains exercise through urgency".

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Power | - The power to promote interests, influence or affect the issue |
| Legitimacy | - The moral, legal or traditional 'right' of interests related to the issue |
| Urgency | - The pressing nature of the stakeholder's interest related to the issue. |

The analysis then classified stakeholders according to their potential to help or hinder conservation activities.

Target

The biological assessment together with the comprehensive situation analysis has allowed a detailed and targeted strategy to be developed for biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of natural resources as part of wider efforts to establish sustainable development in the central Truong Son.

The Central Truong Son Strategy is built on a foundation of cross-sector and multiple partner coordination where the success will be due to the creation and maintenance of an effective mechanism and operational structure for implementing the programme. Five mutually supportive objectives are central to the strategy:

Conservation

The global biodiversity values of the CTS will be protected, maintained and restored for the benefit of the people of the CTS and Vietnam to contribute to national and international conservation efforts.

Awareness and responsibility

To increase the responsibility of every individual, organisation and local community in the CTS landscape to protect, manage and restore ecosystems in the area.

2004 - 2010 Phase One - Creating the Foundations for a Sustainable Landscape

To create the foundations for long-term conservation and remove the immediate threats to highly threatened habitats and species.

2011-2015 Phase Two – Expanding the Priority Landscape

To expand the representation of biodiversity throughout all of the landscape including restoration of degraded habitat, improve the quality of the ecosystems and maximise the sustainable benefits from natural resources and biodiversity.

2016-2020 Phase Three – Making the Connections

To establish effective habitat corridors between the CTSL and neighbouring landscapes to ensure evolutionary processes are maintained.

Large-scale conservation efforts such as the Central Truong Son Initiative are based on the principles of partnerships and collaboration. The CTSI will only be successful if a large group of stakeholders and partners, representing a wide sector of interests, work together. Based on the five integrated objectives of conservation, awareness and responsibility, legal framework, capacity and development WWF is supporting bringing these sectors together for effective management of a globally significant conservation landscape. As one of the first comprehensive large-scale conservation efforts in the world, the successes and lessons learned from the Central Truong Son Initiative will be able to be replicated at other landscapes in the Greater Annamites and around the world.

These priority activities urgently need everyone's help. The central Truong Son needs you! Now as we prepare to carry out the first activities we are calling for your help, your generosity, your determination and your cooperation. You are vital to give the people, plants and animals of the central Truong Son hope for the future...



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Compiled by Steph Cox
Photo research by Nguyen Thi Dao

WWF Indochina Programme

WWF Vietnam Country Programme
International P.O. Box 151
Hanoi
VIETNAM

Telephone 84 (0) 4 736 6375
Facsimile 84 (0) 4 736 6376

Website: www.wwfindochina.org
www.panda.org/asiapacific/annamites

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