

**Title**

Wildlife Diversity and its Conservation Status in National Protected Area in Lao PDR

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**Abstract**

Lao Peoples Democratic Republic (Lao PDR, Laos) is a landlocked SE Asian country. It has 20 National Protected Areas (NPAs) which cover about 14% of the country. We surveyed primates' diversity and distribution in the range from N14° 19.432' to N20° 19.276'. We could observe 5 species of macaques and collect other mammals' information by interview to the villagers and rangers of NPA. As a result, high potential of biological diversity was found.

However, recent economical development dependent on natural resources would impair the diversity without being recognized. Therefore, the role of NPAs is important. We evaluated 3 NPAs; XePian NPA in Champasak province, Dong Amphan NPA in Attapeu province and Phou Phanang NPA in Vientiane Municipality. These NPAs have serious problems in conservation of wildlife. Residents are permitted to live inside NPA and exploit natural resources for their lives yet they tend to over-exploit for commercial use, that is, logging, deforestation and digging minerals. Government permits companies to log for the construction of roads and hydraulic dams. Lands between NPAs, biological corridor, are conceded to foreign companies for plantation of rubber, sorghum, sugar canes, and bananas. The habitat for wildlife is rapidly decreasing and degraded. The situation is making difficulty for the wildlife to exchange genes. NPA office of local government cannot afford conservation activities because of budget deficiency. Recently, Ecotourism inside NPA is one of the ways to raise budget in Lao. Though, not all NPAs have promoted ecotourism and the quality of ecotourism has much room to be improved.

To solve these problems, it is suggested that giving local people an opportunity to learn environment and wildlife and sustainable way of life inside NPA. To go forward, it is important to train Lao specialists who would educate local villagers, in which overseas researchers and/or supporting organization participate.

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