

**BirdLife**  
**International**  
*Vietnam Programme*





## Why is BirdLife International working in Vietnam?

- \* BirdLife's global conservation priority setting process placed Vietnam among the top countries in the world in terms of levels of biodiversity and numbers of threatened bird species (ie. Those with an IUCN category of threat).
- \* Vietnam supports the highest level of bird species endemism in continent South-East Asia.
- \* BirdLife has identified four biodiversity "hotspots" termed Endemic Bird Areas (EBAs) in Vietnam only one of which currently supports an established protected area.
- \* Vietnam suffers one of the highest human population growth rates in the world, which is placing unsustainable demands on its remaining natural resources, including its protected areas.
- \* Vietnam's rate of forest loss is such that the country, outside protected areas, will be denuded of natural forest cover by 2090.
- \* Many of these endemic and threatened species are not adequately conserved by the current protected areas system.
- \* Vietnam currently experiences a severe limitation in terms of its human capacity and financial resources to adequately address these challenges.

Vietnam Programme



# BirdLife INTERNATIONAL Vietnam Programme

### Xuan Lien Nature Reserve

A feasibility study for Xuan Lien Nature Reserve, in Thanh Hoa province, was completed by BirdLife/the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (FIPI) and published in 1999. As a result of this work, FIPI is now working on an investment plan to establish Xuan Lien Nature Reserve.

### Ke Go Nature Reserve

BirdLife discovered this site in 1989 and, together with FIPI, successfully advocated its gazettment as a new nature reserve. In 1996, BirdLife, with funding from the British Birdwatching Fair, constructed guard stations, and provide dtraining and equipment for staff. Ke Go is now the focus of a new integrated conservation and development project initiative by BirdLife for implementation in the year 2000 and beyond.

### Ngoc Linh (Kon Tum) Nature Reserve

BirdLife/FIPI surveys, conducted to provide baseline data, discovered two bird species new to science and resulted in the publication of an investment plan for the nature reserve, which marks an important contribution to the management plan and the establishment of the protected area.

### Chu Yang Sin Nature Reserve

Identified as the priority site in the Da Lat Plateau EBA, this site will be the focus for a major conservation initiative in the year 2000.

### Ha Tien Plains

Hon Chong within the Ha Tien Plains is an example of an important wetlands site recently discovered by BirdLife/the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources (IEBR) in Kien Giang province. The site provides habitats for several threatened wetlands birds, including the Sarus Crane *Grus antigone* and White-shouldered Ibis *Pseudibis davisoni*. BirdLife/IEBR will advocate the addition of this site to the protected area system and its designation of this site under the Ramsar Convention on wetlands.

### Thai Thuy

#### The Conservation of Key Coastal Wetlands Sites in the Red River Delta.

BirdLife and FIPI have identified and evaluated all the wetlands sites in the coastal zone of the Red River Delta. Funded by Danida, through the Royal Danish Embassy, this project identified three sites worthy of conservation designation under the Ramsar Convention on wetlands, one of which Thai Thuy, is now proposed by the government as a new nature reserve.

### Phong Dien and Dakrong Nature Reserves

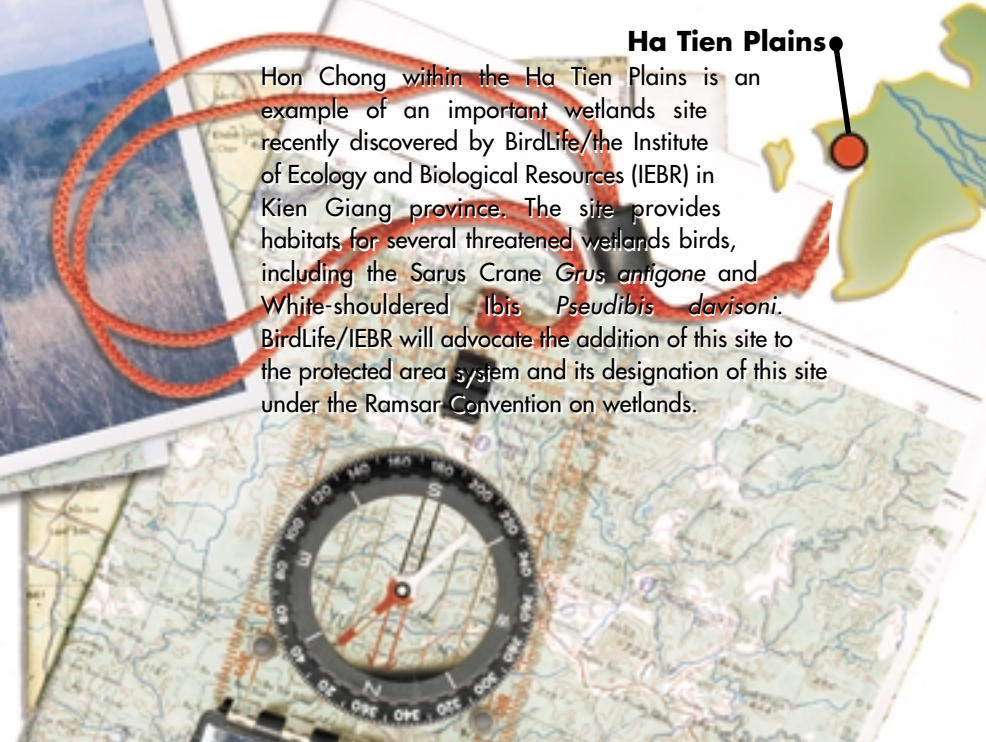
BirdLife and FIPI recently published a feasibility study for the establishment of Phong Dien (Thua Thien Hue province) and Dakrong (Quang Tri province) Nature Reserves. These two contiguous nature reserves aim to conserve the last remaining area of evergreen and semi-evergreen lowland forest in the Annamese Lowlands EBA, which support the only known population of Edwards's Pheasant *Lophura edwardsi*.

### Ngoc Linh (Quang Nam) Nature Reserve

BirdLife and FIPI in collaboration with the American Museum of Natural History, Missouri Botanical Gardens, and the Royal Ontario Museum have appraised the biodiversity value of Mount Ngoc Linh in Quang Nam province. The work will result in a feasibility study, which will make recommendations for the establishment of a new protected area to be contiguous with Ngoc Linh Nature Reserve in Kon Tum province.

### The Conservation of Key Wetlands in the Mekong Delta

The Mekong Delta is the most agriculturally important area in Vietnam but continued destruction of natural wetlands for agriculture and aquaculture now threatens the remaining natural and semi-natural habitats. Funded by the Royal Netherlands Embassy, BirdLife is collaborating with IEBR to locate all wetland sites in the Mekong Delta of international conservation importance, advocate the conservation of these sites and take direct measures to conceive the most important.



# How does BirdLife assist biodiversity conservation?

## Conservation priority setting – the species approach

BirdLife identifies, then seeks to address, global priorities for conservation, using birds as indicators. The extinction of a species is the most significant measure of biodiversity loss. Consequently, preventing the extinction of any bird species in the wild is at the heart of BirdLife's mission.

BirdLife in conjunction with IUCN, the World Conservation Union, researches and compiles the bird Red Data Books. A Red Data Book details species considered to be at risk of extinction. Its purpose is to provide information to decision makers, which will allow the scarce resources available for conservation to be allocated for species and ecosystems that are most in need of conservation action.

## Species discoveries and rediscoveries

The Black-crowned Barwing *Actinodura sodangorum* and Golden-winged Laughingthrush *Garrulax ngoclinhensis* were discovered by a joint BirdLife/FIPI team during biodiversity surveys in Ngoc Linh Nature Reserve in 1996. The discovery of two new species indicates the high biodiversity value of the wider area and merits its designation as an Endemic Bird Area (EBA). These two species represent the first new species of bird to be described from continental South-East Asia for nearly 30 years.

The absence of recent information on Vietnam's endemic and threatened bird species led to a concerted effort by BirdLife to determine their conservation status as a vital step in establishing its in-country conservation priorities. An active programme of field projects has led to the rediscovery of many of Vietnam's enigmatic bird species. The rediscovery of the Grey-crowned Crocias *Crocias langbianis* at Chu Yang Sin Nature Reserve has established this site as a priority for conservation action within the Da Lat Plateau EBA. The discovery of a population of the endangered Vietnamese Pheasant *Lophura hatinhensis* in southern Ha Tinh province, resulted in BirdLife/FIPI securing the gazettelement of a new nature reserve to conserve the last lowland forests in the province.

### *Actinodura* Sp.



## Conservation priority setting: Important sites and habitats

Birds have dispersed to, and diversified in all regions, habitat types and altitude zones in the world, and can therefore be used as global measures of biodiversity. BirdLife has shown that the majority of areas identified on the basis of their importance for birds are also important for plants and other animals. Thus BirdLife uses birds as indicators of overall biodiversity within its site-based approach to conservation, known as the Important Bird Area (IBA) programme. The purpose of the IBA programme is to identify and protect a global system of sites that are internationally significant for conservation. IBAs are sites identified by BirdLife which meet a rigorous set of criteria which aims to conserve restricted-range, biome-restricted assemblages, globally threatened species and congregations of species.

The current and future emphasis of BirdLife's conservation programme in Vietnam is therefore to identify and secure the conservation of critically important sites for the conservation of bird diversity. This programme is focusing on the conservation of terrestrial forests and wetlands. Notable achievements to date include the identification and gazettement of a new nature reserves at Ke Go, an evaluation of the protected areas system, and the elaboration of feasibility studies and investment plans for the most important sites.

## Expanding the protected areas network in Vietnam for the 21st Century

BirdLife together with FIPI, and with funding from the European Commission, have embarked on a major initiative to identify sites for inclusion in the expanded system of protected areas. This has resulted in an evaluation of the existing protected areas system, and led to the writing of feasibility studies and investment plans for important sites for conservation.

## Advocacy

### *Popular bird book for Vietnam*

With a grant from IUCN/World Bank, BirdLife will produce a bird identification guide in Vietnamese. The publication of a popular bird book aims to promote public awareness in Vietnamese birds and their conservation.

### *Evaluation of the protected areas System*

BirdLife and FIPI have conducted a desk-top gap analysis to review the protected areas system in relation to biogeography, forest cover and the distribution of threatened species. This is the first time such analysis has been undertaken in Vietnam. It clearly shows policy makers and the donor community where new protected areas could be added and where resources could be targeted.

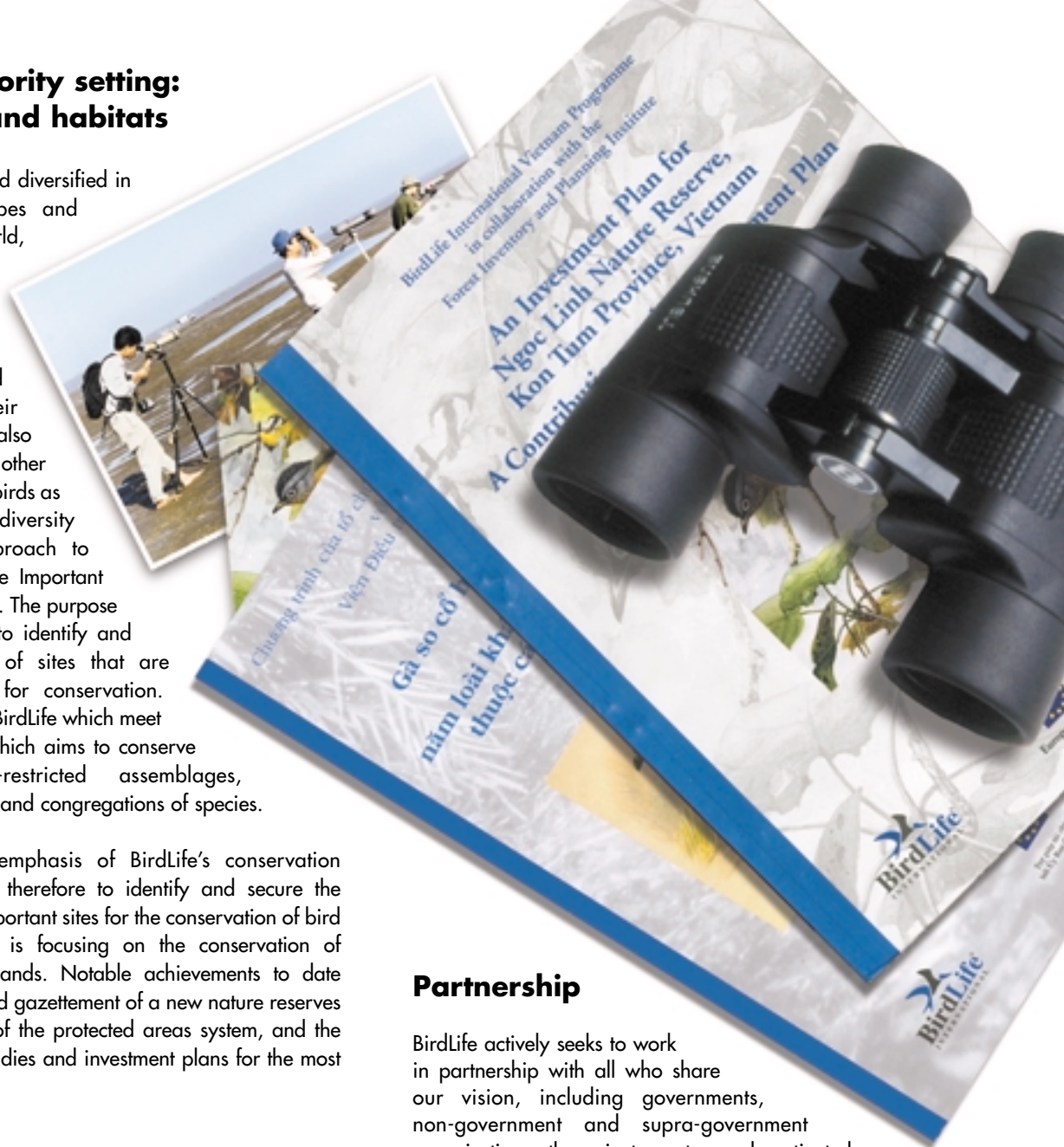
## Partnership

BirdLife actively seeks to work in partnership with all who share our vision, including governments, non-government and supra-government organisations, the private sector and motivated individuals. In Vietnam BirdLife works closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment, and government institutions including FIPI, the National Environmental Agency (NEA) and IEBR. Our projects have been generously supported by the European Commission, Danida through the Royal Danish Embassy, the World Bank/IUCN, the Royal Netherlands Embassy and the British Birdwatching Fair.

## Capacity Building

### **Institutional strengthening of the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources including field training in conservation techniques**

In 1998, with funding from Danida through the Royal Danish Embassy, BirdLife and IEBR implemented a capacity building project using an endangered species as a case study. A major project output included the first quantitative survey undertaken for any vertebrate species in Vietnam. As well as confirming the continued presence of the Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus* at sites throughout Dak Lak province and generating data to assist in the future conservation of this species, this project provided training IEBR staff in biological field survey techniques. The project report entitled "The status and distribution of Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus* in Dak Lak province, Vietnam" was the first report published in BirdLife International Vietnam programme's conservation series.





BirdLife International is a global conservation federation with a worldwide network of Partner organisations, Representatives and committed individuals. BirdLife International seeks to conserve all bird species on earth and their habitats and, through this, it works for the world's biological diversity and sustainability of human use of natural resources.

BirdLife International was amongst the first international conservation NGOs to be invited to work in Vietnam. BirdLife began its conservation programme in Vietnam in 1988. In 1997 BirdLife became one of a few select NGOs to be granted a representative office licence by the Government of Vietnam. From its modern offices in Hanoi, its professional and dedicated staff implement a conservation programme nationwide. BirdLife's Vietnam Programme is a country programme of the BirdLife International Secretariat.

BirdLife International is a UK registered charity number 286211.

### **The BirdLife International Vietnam Programme:**

- \* Promotes the conservation of bird species, important sites, expansion of the national protected areas system, compiling and publishing data on threatened bird species.
- \* Advocates the conservation of important habitats amongst decision makers.
- \* Collaborates with local communities and government institutions charged with conservation in Vietnam. Our partners include: the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute and the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources.
- \* Works in partnership with other NGOs, bilateral and multilateral organisations. Past and present BirdLife projects have been generously supported by the European Commission, Danida through the Royal Danish Embassy, World Bank/IUCN, the Royal Netherlands Embassy and the British Birdwatching Fair.



BirdLife International  
Vietnam Programme  
11, Lane 167, Tay Son  
Dong Da, Hanoi, Vietnam  
Phone/Fax: +844 851 7217  
E-mail: [birdlife@netnam.org.vn](mailto:birdlife@netnam.org.vn)