LINC continuing

After a considerable delay, the proposal for LINC Phase II has finally been approved by the Donor - WWF UK and DfID. The DfID has found LINC is very good project and it falls in its priority. Unfortunately the donors can only offer funding for LINC project for one year instead of the 3 proposed due to a change in the planning and strategies. WWF UK has committed to support WWF Indochina to seek for the remaining funding needed for the other two years. In the first year of implementation with the fund secured, the project (phase II) in Vietnam will be focused on monitoring and evaluation of the present fauna and flora of the area, the threats placing impacts on the biodiversity, sustainable resource use management, capacity building and transboundary cooperation. WWF will continue to support the efforts of upgrading Phong Nha Nature Reserve to Phong Nha Ke Bang National Park as well as the nomination of Phong Nha Ke Bang to be the UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site.

Phase I of the Hin Namno NBCA Project (LINC Lao) officially ended in September 2000. With funding from WWF UK extended field activities will be conducted until December 2001, which will fulfill the original MOU with the Lao government. Now an agreement is being reached with the Lao Government to use these funds to support conservation and local community livelihood in Hin Namno NBCA.

For more information, Contact: Ms Marianne Meijboom, LINC Vietnam Field Advisor at:
LINC project field office
PO box 1, Dong Hoi, Quang Binh province
Tel/fax: 052-675 021
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and in Lao PDR Roland Eve at
roland@laotel.com

In this issue:


Notice:
CCO Unit in WWF Indochina Programme (or Communications and Conservation Outreach Unit) has just been renamed as Communications Unit (CU).
Environmental Education *

From 31 January to 2 February 2001, the EE Unit held a training course on conservation education for four staff of the Conservation Education Team, Cat Tien NP. The purpose of the training was to provide the participants with knowledge and skills to implement conservation education activities in an interim period from February to August 2001 in the local primary and secondary schools which are located in Cat Tien NP’s buffer zone. At present, the programme is being developed further in Cat Tien NP.

Under an EE Strategy for Cat Tien NP drafted by WWF, at the present the EE Unit is preparing the “Manual on Training in Conservation Education” for Cat Tien. As planned, EE Unit will continue an intensive training on EE for the Conservation Education Team, Cat Tien NP in July and August 2001.

(Contact: hanh@wwfvn.org.vn for details.)

Strengthening Protected Area Management in Vietnam (SPAM)

✓ The National Project Office (NPO) working with the National Protected Area Working Group, the Provincial Working Groups and WWF have developed a Draft Structure for the National Strategy, a list of Major Issues and is currently developing the Guiding Principles, which are the basis for the strategy’s objectives and actions and will guide its implementation.

✓ Agreement has been reached between the WWF and the NPO on Proposed Information Activities. These include publishing an information booklet about protected areas in Vietnam, publishing relevant material from project technical reports, publishing the final strategy document, producing a protected areas system map and partially funding a National Photo Contest (together with WWF-IPO and others).

✓ The second meeting of the National Protected Area Working Group was held on 20 February to discuss project progress and the last of the liaison meetings with the four Provincial Working Groups was held in Gia Lai province to clarify roles, tasks and responsibilities.

✓ First consultancy under this project- A Review of current Legislation, Policies for the Management of Protected Areas in Vietnam was completed on 31 March 2001. Other consultancies are in various stages of implementation and development according to the planned timetable.

(For more information contact Dr. Keith Williams - Project CTA at Keithdw@hn.vnn.vn).

Cat Tien Conservation Project

In March 2001, WWF team conducted its supervision and planning meeting with Cat Tien National Park Conservation Project. During a three intensive working days with the Project and Park Management Board, the team was appraising all of the activities of year 2000 and discussing the plan and activities for the year 2001. WWF team also met with the Project Management of the Forest Protection and Rural Development Project (WB loan and co-funding by the Dutch government) that assists the development in the buffer zone of Cat Tien National Park to discuss on further cooperation between the two projects to speed up the activities.

(Contact: Hoang Thanh at Ht thanh@wwfvn.org.vn for more information).
**Participatory Approach to Awareness Raising and Nature Interpretation in Con Dao National Park**

- During 9-11 March 2001, WWF EE Team conducted two training courses on conservation education through Green Club and Visitors’ Center development for various target groups in Con Dao NP. These two training courses were designed in a way that five newly trained key multipliers also involved in the programme design and acted as facilitators while introducing certain games and sharing information about Cuc Phuong Conservation Education Programme to the rest of participants. More than 20 people have been trained.

- From 19 to 22 March a training course on marine biodiversity was held for 15 local school teachers and representatives from community groups and park staff. The training was facilitated by marine biodiversity specialists from NTIO. This training course was to provide to the participants more knowledge on marine biodiversity and its values as well as to help them to be aware of threats to the marine environment.

- An exhibition room was established within Con Dao National Park headquarters for Environmental Education and Conservation Awareness as an activity under the project. The park staff decided themselves to choose for such topics displaying in the exhibition room as general introduction of the Con Dao NP, natural forest in Con Dao, marine ecosystems, etc. The Ong Dung forest trail (from the Park’s headquarter to Ong Dung beach) was decided to be a demonstration interpretation trail.

- Based on data from a previous study and the ecotourism development plan of Con Dao, a CD-rom presenting general information of Con Dao NP, its natural characteristics, biodiversity values, plant and animal species, as well as the coral reefs has been produced. The CD is available in both Vietnamese and English at Con Dao NP.

(Contact: Tran Minh Hien at Hien@wwfvn.org.vn for more informations)

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**Strategic Planning and Integration Eco-region Conservation in the Strategic Planning for WWF Indochina Programme**

With the support from Eco-region Conservation Programme and WWF US, Shobhana Palat Madhavan has been working with the WWF Indochina Programme in finalising a new Strategic Plan for FY 2002 – 2006. Jenny Springer – A/P Director from WWF US attended the Ecoregion Planning meeting on 5th – 6th March with valuable inputs and advice. Several meetings were organized for senior management and programme staff from Vietnam, Lao, and Cambodia. During March issues on integration of Ecoregion conservation activities were discussed and agreed. Targets have been reviewed and aligned with WWF’s Global and AP targets for 3 priorities which are Forests, Freshwater, Oceans and Coasts. A final draft of WWF ICP Strategic Plan for 2002 – 2006 have been prepared and being commented by senior staff concerned.

(For more information, contact Eric Coull at eric@wwfvn.org.vn).
Supporting Forest Sustainable Management and Certification in Vietnam

✓ From 12-19 a WWF International Forest Advisory Group (FAG)'s meeting was held in Bali, Indonesia. There were about 120 people from WWF offices around the world attending the meeting. It aimed to discuss on how the network and the New Forest Target Driven Programme will shape its forest conservation activities in accordance with the revised Forests for Life's Strategy for the period 2001 – 2005. Le Cong Uan, WWF Hanoi Office together with Jack Hurd, Cambodia Office and Roland Eve, Lao Office, attended the meeting. During the meeting, Le Cong Uan had a short meeting with both former director of FSC Mr. Tim Synott and new executive director Dr. Maharaj Muthoo to brief them the activities which have been implemented in Vietnam in term of sustainable forest management. A trip to Vietnam in October 2001 to assist the National Working Group on SFM has been promised by the new director of FSC.

✓ From 12-15 March 2001, the Vietnam Working Group's team paid a visit to Gia Lai Province to work with DARD Gia Lai on the development of the pilot SFM and certification model in some selected SFEs in the. The DARD Gia Lai has agreed with WWF Indochina on piloting certification model at some selected state forest enterprises (SFEs) in the province. A two day field test was conducted at two selected SFEs (Ha Nung and So Pai in K' Bang district). The team selected a number of criteria and indicators in the draft Vietnamese Standards on SFM to test the appropriateness of the standards at the field level. The team will come back to the province with some recommendations to speed up certification works in production forestry in Gia Lai.

(Contact Le Cong Uan at uan@wwfvn.org.vn for more information)

Preliminary Biological Assessment in Kon Plong Forest Complex

With the additional financial support from WWF-World Bank Alliance and Tropical Forest Trust/ScanCom, WWF conducted an preliminary biological assessment in Kon Plong Forest Complex, Kon Tum Province under the Ecoregion Programme. The purpose of this survey (from 20/12/2000 to 20/01/2001) is to get a profile of biological status and current implementation of the State Forest Enterprises in the areas. The survey team members were scientists with different professional backgrounds from the international and national conservation institutions including BirdLife International, Vietnam-Russian Tropical Center and IEBR. The publication of the assessment report is expected to be available by the end of April 2001.

(Contact Hoang Thanh at Hthanh@wwfvn.org.vn for more information)

5M Ha partnership meeting in Hoi An

A partnership meeting for coordination of the 5M ha National Programme was organized in the ancient Hoi An from 9 – 11 February, 2001. At this meeting, the representatives from Partnership signatories have debated over the results of the synergies from Phase I and a possible frame work where donors can contribute effectively in the promotion of this National Programme. The main output of the meeting was a Forestry Sector Support Programme (FSSP) for a 10 year period of 2001 – 2010. WWF – WB Forest Alliance has contributed USD 10,000 for the Partnership to build on the study results in the 2nd Phase of the Partnership.

(For more information, contact Ben Hodgdon at ben@wwfvn.org.vn).
Supervision field visit to Coastal provinces of Vietnam for Marine Conservation issues

From 26 – 31 March 2001, a supervision visit was paid by Eric Coull, WWF Representative and a WWF team to the central provinces, including Khanh Hoa, Ninh Thuan and Quang Nam of Vietnam, for Marine Conservation issues.

Marine conservation in Vietnam is attracting more and more attention from both donors and local communities and government. During the visit, WWF team has received a warm welcome and full support from the Provincial People’s Committees, Departments of Science, Technology and Environment as well as the Fisheries Departments of the provinces that he met.

During this visit, it was noticable how many new shrimp farms were established and being constructed. Unfortunately in the understandable drive for economic development the environmental impacts are often forgotten, as they have been in agriculture and tourism – this of course is not unique to Vietnam.

However, it was only 5 years ago that shrimps farming in the Me Kong Delta collapsed because of disease with tremendous social and environmental costs. It is understandable that this may be a “new method”, but regardless the environmental costs could be high and should be assessed, and the results considered before more and more people are encouraged to get involve in seafood production.

For more information, contact Eric Coull at eric@wwfvn.org.vn.

WWF in Lao PDR

Lao Project Office opens in Vientiane

On the 11 January the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lao PDR, approved the installation/implementation of a WWF Lao Project Office. The office has been set up in Vientiane at 53 Ban Saylom Road. It is located near the center of town, close to the Department of Forestry.

Promoting CITES in Lao PDR

The Wildlife Trade Project started on December 15, 2000 after a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with the Lao Government to give technical assistance for extension of CITES Regulations and Forestry Laws of Lao PDR. WWF Lao will work in close collaboration with the TRAFFIC colleagues in Hanoi and Lao counterparts - the Department of Forestry. The project will be implemented, including such activities like project preparation, national workshop, training of trainers, etc.

The Community Natural Resource Management in the Xe Khampo Area of Western Attapeu Province

After the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on December 14, 2000, “The Community Natural Resource Management in the Xe Khampo Area of Western Attapeu Province Project” should have started in January 2001 and continued until November 2003. However, the Donors (SIDA and WWF Sweden) withdrew funding on December 17, 2000. Despite several efforts to raise funds to meet the project budget within the WWF network, and the recognition of the global importance of the forests of Lower Mekong, there were no successes. This project is important for many reasons like for supporting sustainable natural resources management with the participation of local communities, and for the conservation of a forest corridor between two NBCAs, Dong Hua Sao and Xe Pian. It is hoped the WWF network will consider offering support for this beneficial project.

(Contact Roland Eve at roland@wwfvn.org.vn for more information)
**WWF in Cambodia**

**Forest Management Certification**

With support from the World Bank-WWF Alliance, the WWF Conservation Program in Cambodia held two meetings on forest management and certification on 22 February (about community managed forests) and 23 February (about concession managed forests). The purpose of these meetings was to introduce and increase awareness on forest management certification concepts and experiences, and to create a forum for discussing on the role certification as a tool for promoting sustainable forest management in the near future.

**Forestry Law Draft**

In February, the WWF Conservation Program in Cambodia contributed to an NGO submission of comments to the Forestry Law Draft. WWF is playing a leading role in advocating significant changes in the law through consultations with World Bank and IMF representatives, government officials, NGOs, and legal experts. The key advocacy issues include ensuring protection of protected areas, increasing community rights, and strengthening the legal framework for sustainable forest management.

(Contact Jackh@bigpond.com.kh for details)

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**Tiger Conservation Project**

- In early January 2001, the WWF Conservation Program in Cambodia and its government counterparts at the provincial level of Ratanakiri and Stung Treng provinces began a series of tiger and large mammal surveys in and around the Virachey National Park (VNP). The surveys were supported by WWF-US Species Program.

- Two training courses on tiger survey techniques and conservation have been held recently in Veun Sai and Siem Pang rangers' stations of VNP with participation of 120 people from Ratanakiri and Stung Treng provinces to get learned mainly about tiger ecology, identifying and characterizing potential tiger areas, assessing indirect evidence for tigers, etc. The Khmer language version of the tiger survey techniques and conservation handbooks were produced and circulated to all participants attending the tiger training courses.

- Following the survey training sessions, two tiger teams have been formed, one in Veun Sai Ranger station and another in Siem Pang Ranger station. The forests in around Phnom Tung (Tung mountain), Veun Sai district and the area along O Laylay, Siem Pang district, were chosen for the first round tiger survey activity. Track and sign surveys were conducted simultaneously with camera trapping activities. Tracks and signs of gaur, banteng, sambar, elephant, cats, gibbon, and tiger were recorded on standard-format datasheet. The team will discuss the second round survey in the Virachey National Park in April.

(Contact Jackh@bigpond.com.kh or TeakS@bigpond.com.kh for details)
Asian Rhinos and Elephants Action Strategy (AREAS Project)

Following on national-level training in conservation principles and survey methods, WWF teams have carried out further provincial trainings and surveys in Virachey National Park, Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary, and Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary. AREAS-Cambodia’s new Project Manager, Lic Vuthy, worked with technical staff and trainers Chak Sokhavicheaboth and Ou Ratanak on planning, surveys, and reporting. Support from the program from WWF-US and from the US Fish and Wildlife Service allowed the program to engage two international experts, Ajay Desai and Prithiviraj Fernando, to help with training, survey supervision, interpretation of field signs, and analysis of the data and the program. Data from these surveys will be presented to the upcoming AREAS Technical Working Group workshop in Ho Chi Minh City, in early June, then to the ERBC Dry Forests Conservation Strategy Workshop in late June, in Phnom Penh.

ERBC in Cambodia

As a part of the ERBC Dry Forests Project, one team of researchers from the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries is studying vegetation ecology in two areas in northeastern Cambodia with Dr. Andy Maxwell of WWF as the technical advisor. At the end of January the team went to Mondulkiri’s Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary to collect plant specimens and to take data for a 400-meter long forest profile. The team returned to the field again in late March, to southern Ratanakiri province, for more plant collecting and forest profiles. The first presentation of data will occur at the ERBC Dry Forests Conservation Strategy Workshop, scheduled for late June, in Phnom Penh.

(Contact jackh@bigpond.com.kh or TeakS@bigpond.com.kh for details)

Staff

People coming…

- **Nguyen Thi Tuong Anh**, new assistant to the WWF-IP Representative, has started working since 2 April.
- **Craig Leisher**, Programme Director, will join WWF-IP from Monday 16th April 2001 and work on part-time basis, for the time being while he completes his works with UNDP.
- **Hoang Phuong Thao**, who used to be the REP’s secretary, has taken the new position as Policy Coordinator since 2nd April 2001.

New Publication

**Transboundary Conservation in Indochina: 1995 – 1999 and beyond**, recently published by the WWF Indochina Programme (WWF IP), introduces the idea of transboundary conservation, presents justifications for the approach in Indochina, and details the activities and lessons learned by WWF over four years of piloting transboundary conservation. The document also profiles transboundary conservation efforts elsewhere in the world.

The booklet is available from the WWF Indochina Programme Office, 53 Tran Phu, Hanoi, Vietnam, tel: (84 4)733 8387, fax: (84 4)733 8388.

For more information, contact Ben Hodgdon at Ben@wwfvn.org.vn, or Diep Hoa at hoa@wwfvn.org.vn.
• Dale Withington has applied successfully for the position of Conservation Manager in Cambodia office. He will start working from 1st May 2001.
• Martin Geiger, Forest Coordinator, will join WWF IP in the near future.

and leaving

• Jack Hurd, Conservation Manager, WWF Cambodia, will leave the programme and back to the U.S in the end of May 2001 after nearly 3 years working for WWF IP.
• Ben Hodgdon, Conservation Officer, will leave us soon for the U.S where he will continue his studies. He started working for WWF IP from 1 August 1998.
• After two years with the Hin Namno NBCA Project, Khamtom Vanthanouvong left the project in January 2001. Unfortunately, one month later, a blood vessel in his brain burst. Khamtom had major surgery in Thailand and is now recovering well. WWF Lao and Khamtom appreciate the donations made by WWF staff members on Khamtom’s behalf.