

LiveDiverse

**SUMMARY-REPORT FROM 1ST
STAKEHOLDER FIELDTRIPS:
VIETNAM, 2ND-13TH NOVEMBER
2009**



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Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement No. 211392

Presentation of the fieldtrip

The Vietnam field trip had several objectives: to raise awareness on the Livediverse project; to identify and understand the key issues related to biodiversity and livelihoods from different perspectives (national, provincial, local; governmental/ non-governmental); and to identify existing initiatives and projects within the case study areas that complement the aims and objectives of LiveDiverse project.

The field trip was organized by the National Institute of Agricultural Planning and Projection (NIAPP), LiveDiverse case-study partner and leader of WP5. The field trip was divided into two weeks, the first one was devoted to Ba Be National Park in Bac Can province and the second one to Na Hang Natural Reserve in Tuyen Quang Province

Both trips to Ba Be National Park and to Na Hang Natural Reserve were structured around the meetings of the same categories of stakeholders from the Provincial level to the village level, giving us a good overview of the administrative structure and also the possibility to interact with some villagers. Meetings with the management board of both protected areas were also arranged.

The field trip started with a meeting at NIAPP in Hanoi on Monday 2nd, November 2009. During this meeting, NIAPP presented the work already done in the case-study areas. The first presentation gave us the actual socio-economic situation in the core and buffer zones of the Ba Be national Park and Na Hang Natural Reserve; the second presentation was about the initial calculation of the environmental vulnerability index; and the last presentation dealt with the construction, management and facilitation of GIS Database.

The Livediverse team left Hanoi the day after to reach Ba Be National Park located around 250km north of the capital. A first meeting at Bac Can provincial town was scheduled to meet with Bac Can Provincial People's Committee which provided us with the main context and issues of the poorest Province in Vietnam. Bac Kan is located in the north east of Vietnam, 120 km from the Chinese border, covering an area of 4800km², with around 300 000 inhabitants, 8% are ethnic minorities. There are 7 districts, including Ba Be and one provincial town.



On the 4th November, the Livediverse team met with the director of Ba Be National Park, for an overview of the park and also for asking more specific questions on the management of the park, the role of local people, the allocation of land, etc. Ba Be National Park was established in 1992 and is among the 9 national parks of Vietnam. It covers 7610 ha, including a 500 ha lake. The first functions of Ba Be are conservation, scientific research, ecotourism and support to the local communities. Ba Be covers 9 communes and 4 ethnic minorities live inside the park: Tay, Mong, Dao and Nung. Regarding biodiversity, Ba Be benefits from a high rate of biodiversity in all South-East Asia. Ba Be was recognized as an ASEAN heritage site. Regarding conservation, local communities are involved in forest protection through forests' rights allocation. Scientific research is also carried out in Ba Be through collaboration with universities. Ba Be develops ecotourism in which local communities are involved, but also environmental education (for local people, foreigners, students). Education of local communities embraces also the means by which they can improve their livelihoods and increase their incomes.

A boat trip on Ba Be Lake gave the team a more concrete view of the park. The afternoon was devoted to the visit of Ban Chan village located in the buffer zone of the park, and to a meeting with Dong Phuc commune People's committee.

Next day, the team visited two villages (Bo Lu and Pac Ngoi) inside the core area and had the opportunity to exchange with village leaders and households. In the afternoon, the team visited a cave; after a meeting with Nam Mau commune People's Committee and chairmen of different Unions gave the team insights about the main issues the commune is facing.

The second week of the field trip was devoted to visit the Na Hang Natural Reserve, located in Tuyen Quang Province, and bordering Ba Be National Park. A first meeting at Tuyen Quang Provincial town was scheduled with deputy directors of different departments of the Province. Then the team met with the deputy director of the Na Hang Natural Reserve, providing an overview of the biological and cultural diversity of the reserve and the main forestry issues. Established in 1994, the Na Hang Nature Reserve includes 4 communes covering 36,646 ha. There are 3 types of forests, but the special use forest is the biggest area with 22 000 ha. There are 3 major minority groups in the core area. The forest cover area is around 89% and the total area of the Reserve is larger than the Ba Be National Park. The main objectives of the reserve are the conservation of fauna and flora and the protection of the ecosystem.



The following days allowed us to visit villages and meet with two Commune's People Committees to understand some of the biodiversity and livelihoods issues within the reserve.

The field trip ended on Friday, 13th with a round of meetings with different departments of the Ministries, such as:

- the Department of Water resource Management,
- the Biodiversity Conservation Agency, a new agency created in 2008 under MONRE. The Agency supports the Environmental administration especially on biodiversity conservation, it develops legal documents and also focuses on genes resources.
- the Forest Protection Department,
- the Tourism administration
- and also an international NGO, IUCN.

Conclusion of the field trip:

The Vietnam field trip was invaluable in achieving a number of objectives, including raising awareness of the project amongst key stakeholders, identifying the most pressing issues and challenges in managing the interface between sustainable livelihoods and biodiversity conservation, and identifying what past, present and potential initiatives are being undertaken within the case study area. While many issues were identified through the discussions key issues included the current status of Ba Be as a national park and Na Hang as a nature reserve, and the question of whether the profile of the latter could be improved by a more formal linkage with the former. Linked to the issue of a Ba Be-Na Hang complex, is the issue of gaining international status for the sites, through accreditation as a World Natural Heritage Site. As the meeting notes show, there are numerous other issues that need to be considered.

In closing, NIAPP are due a huge vote of thanks for their significant and effective efforts in organizing the field trip.

Acknowledgement: The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme [FP7/2007-2013] under grant agreement n° 211392