

STATUS, THREATS AND DISTRIBUTION OF PRIMATES IN VIETNAM - AND CURRENT CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

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Vietnam is home to the highest number on primate taxa in the countries of the Southeast Asian mainland. It contains 25 primate species of which 23 are listed on the IUCN-Red List as threatened, including seven listed as "Critically Endangered". Four endemic taxa are listed in this latter category. Of the world's 25 most endangered primates, five are Vietnamese taxa which mean that 20% of the most endangered primates belong to the fauna of Vietnam. Despite protection laws in Vietnam, these primates are still under high hunting pressure as ingredients for specialty dishes in restaurants, for the pet trade, for ornaments, for the illegal stocking in legal primate farms, but mainly for the preparation of "traditional medicines". Several endangered taxa have very small and restricted distributions, and exist in extremely low numbers: the endemic Cat Ba langur (*Trachypithecus p. poliocephalus*) with a population of about 65 individuals, the endemic Delacour's langur (*T. delacouri*) and the endemic Tonkin snub-nosed monkey (*Rhinopithecus avunculus*) both with populations of about 200 individuals, the eastern black crested gibbon (*Nomascus nasutus*) comprising 120 individuals, and the grey-shanked douc langur (*Pygathrix cinerea*) represented by less than 1000 individuals. Habitat fragmentation has split these into small isolated subpopulations, many of which are on the brink of extinction. Conservation activities from Fauna & Flora International, Frankfurt Zoological Society, and Zoo Münster, Germany are focusing, with differing success, on the conservation of the most endangered taxa.

Keywords: Vietnam, Primates, Status, Conservation