

DISTRIBUTION PATTERN OF MACAQUE SPECIES INSOUTHERN LAO PDR: EXAMINING THE ECOLOGICAL SEGREGATION AMONG MACAQUE SPECIES

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In southern Lao People's Democratic Republic (hereafter Laos), the distribution boundary is supposed between long-tailed (*Macaca fascicularis*) and rhesus macaques (*M. mulatta*), between assamese (*M. assamensis*) and pig-tailed macaques (*M. nemestrina leonina*), between species of douc langurs (*Pygathrix spp.*), between gibbons (*Nomascus leucogenys siki* and *N. l. gabriellae*). However, distribution patterns of these primate have not been studied. We conducted surveys in southern Laos. Lorises (*Nycticebus bengalensis* and *N. pygmaeus*), macaques (*Macaca arctoides*, *M. assamensis*, *M. nemestrina leonina*, and *M. mulatta*), gibbons and colobines (*Pygathrix nemaeus* and *Trachypithecus phayrei*) were determined. Assamese macaques are distributed north of 15°N, while pig-tailed macaque ranges throughout southern Laos. Long-tailed macaques range 15.2°N or lower in both banks of the Mekong River. Rhesus macaques range until 14°N at least. Thus, the pairs of ecologically competing macaques range sympatrically. They may have different ecological preferences. Although heavy threats on non-human primates appear incipient, though habitat loss by agriculture (especially for commodity crops), mining and hydropower; and hunting pressure will soon be posted on non-human primates. Developing alternative options on the land use is the key consideration. Two monkey farms were found to keep thousands of long-tailed macaques which were presumably collected from neighboring countries and exported for biomedical researches and tests to developing countries.

Keywords: non-human primates, LaoPDR, distribution, present status