

CURRENT STATUS OF BLACK-SHANKED DOUC IN VIETNAM

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In Vietnam, the globally endangered black-shanked douc (*Pygathrix nigripes*) is reported to occur in the Central Highlands and southern region, being primarily confined to protected areas. This paper presents the current status of the species based on archival studies and fieldwork conducted for 4 years covering most of the area within the known geographical distribution of the species in Vietnam. Our results confirmed the occurrence of the species in most previously identified locations and also discovered four new populations. The range of the species is confirmed between 10°48'N, 107°54'E and 13°31'N, 107°39'E with some previous records northward to 14°30'N. About 75% of the records are between 200 to 1,000m but the species also occurs at the level over 1500m in some locations. Total natural forest area within the range of the black-shanked douc is about 2.9 million ha but only about 625,000ha or 21.5% is inside the protected area system. The habitat is very fragmented and only a few large populations of several hundred individuals remain. Hunting, agriculture encroachment and tourist development are the most serious threats to the black-shanked douc and its habitat. Since 2007, thousands of hectares of forest have been cleared and at least 70 individuals were reported to be poached. Many small and isolated populations are facing the risk of extinction in the near if appropriate management action is not taken.

Keywords: *Pygathrix nigripes*, conservation, distribution, threat