

STATUS OF *NOMASCUS* GIBBONS IN VIETNAM

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All gibbons indigenous to Vietnam are crested gibbons of the genus *Nomascus*. Of the six species in this genus, all are present in Vietnam except for the Hainan gibbon *N. hainanus*. Populations of gibbons in Vietnam continue to be in rapid decline, and are threatened by a greater habitat fragmentation and hunting pressure than those in the neighbouring range states of Cambodia and Lao PDR. Where viable populations of gibbons remain, they are often found in mountainous border areas and for all but one species, the cao vit gibbon *Nomascus nasutus*, more viable populations are found outside Vietnam. The situation of the cao vit gibbon is exceptional and critical, because only one small population of this species is known from a forest straddling the Vietnam – China international border. One small population of the western black crested gibbon *N. concolor* appears to be stabilising in the north-west following a decade of conservation efforts by FFI. The prospects for the northern white-cheeked crested gibbon *N. leucogenys* appear to be poorest of all gibbons in Vietnam, given a lack of focused conservation efforts directed at this species in recent years. In central and southern Vietnam, gibbon populations and their habitats are larger than the north so the outlook for southern white-cheeked crested gibbons *N. siki* and yellow-cheeked crested gibbons *N. gabriellae* is better, but still doesn't compare favourably with neighbouring countries. Despite the high pressures on gibbons in Vietnam, it remains an important country for their conservation given the highly threatened status of the genus.

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