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Endangered Species in Central Laos are Under Threat by Nam Theun 2 Dam

13 Species of Globally Endangered Animals are being Threatened

Habitats of endangered species in the Nakai Plateau of central Laos are now being threatened by the Nam Theun 2 Hydroelectric Project, for which the World Bank and Asian Development Bank are considering providing risk guarantees and financing.

The reservoir of the proposed Nam Theun 2 Hydroelectric Project would flood 450 square kilometers--40 percent of the Nakai Plateau-- and "degrade" another 500 square kilometers. It will inundate habitat for 60 species of birds and mammals and disrupt migration routes. The area is home to a large variety of rare and endangered plant and animal species, including Asian elephants, white-winged Duck, and Saola, one of the rarest large mammals in the world.



Saola: A Vu Quang ox, which became known to Western scientists only in 1993.

List: Most Threatened Wildlife Species Recorded in the Nakai Nam Theun-National Protected Area

Scientific Name	Common Name	Global Threat Status	
		Critically Endangered	Endangered
<i>Bos javanicus</i>	Banteng	-	X
<i>Elephas maximus</i>	Asian Elephant	-	X
<i>Panthera tigris</i>	Tiger	-	X
<i>Pseudoryx nghetinhensis</i>	Saola	-	X
<i>Pygathrix nemaeus</i>	Douc Langur	-	X
<i>Rhinoceros sondaicus</i> / <i>Dicerorhinus sumatraensis</i>	Rhinoceros sp.	X	-
<i>Cairina scutulata</i>	White-winged Duck	-	X
<i>Cuora galbinifrons</i>	Indochinese box turtle	X	-
<i>Cuora trifasciata</i>	Chinese three-striped box turtle	X	-
<i>Indotestudo elongata</i>	Elongated tortoise	-	X
<i>Platysternon megacephalum</i>	Big-headed turtle	-	X
<i>Pyxidea mouhotii</i>	Keeled box turtle	-	X
<i>Sacalia quadriocellata</i>	Four-eyed turtle	-	X

Source:

NTPC 2004, *Summary Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (SESIA)*.

Asian Elephants and Nam Theun 2 Dam

A large population of wild Asian elephants, which are globally endangered, lives on the Nakai Plateau. According to the advanced draft of the Nam Theun 2 Environmental Assessment and Management Plan (EAMP), the most recent estimate shows at least 120 elephants--approximately ten percent of the total elephant population in Laos--live in one of the subpopulations inhabiting the Nakai Plateau. Another large sub-population living on the plateau has never been surveyed, thus the total number of elephants living on the Nakai Plateau is unknown.



Asian Elephant in Laos

The dam's construction would inundate and degrade almost all mineral licks and large areas of forests and grasslands that are essential habitat for the Nakai elephants. According to Premrudee Daoroung of Bangkok-based Terra (Towards Ecological Recovery and Regional Alliance), however, the World Bank and Nam Theun 2 Power Company have yet to disclose the impact on elephant herds living on the plateau.

What is the Nam Theun 2?

The Nam Theun 2 dam is an internationally controversial large dam project which the World Bank is considering for funding. It is expected to relocate approximately 6,000 people and impact the livelihoods of 100,000 more. The budget of the project is 1.2 billion dollars, equivalent to 70% of the GDP of Laos. Seventy percent of revenues are expected to come from overseas donors, and whether or not enough financing can be assembled depends largely on the decision by the World Bank. If the World Bank does make a final decision to finance the project, it will provide a "stamp of approval" which will encourage private banks charging high interest rates to invest in already heavily indebted Laos. In addition to the environmental and social risks, the project also brings great economic risks.

Help save the endangered animals of the Nakai Plateau!

If the World Bank and Asian Development Bank do not provide risk guarantees and funding for the proposed Nam Theun 2 Hydroelectric Project, the project will probably never be built. Then conservation of the Nakai Plateau and habitats of endangered species can begin.

Express your opposition to present and future World Bank and Asian Development Bank involvement in the destructive Nam Theun 2 Hydroelectric Project.

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