

Letter from the NBRU of Vietnam

Dear Readers,

I take this opportunity to express my appreciation for this interesting publication which will certainly contribute to the global effort aimed at conserving biodiversity in Southeast Asia.

Last September, Vietnam had its first national roundtable to review the status of its protected area system. The event is the first of a series of workshops and roundtables, which will lead to assessing the current approaches to protected area management in Vietnam and investigate ways to integrate them more effectively with socio-economic development. The findings will be incorporated into a regional report embracing Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam. The document will be presented at the World Parks Congress in September 2003. This exercise is undertaken through a partnership of governmental and non-governmental organizations.

We do appreciate the offer to us by ASEAN Biodiversity to share with a wider audience the results of the first round table, thus soliciting reactions and contribution from a wider community.

Considering that this issue focuses on "biodiversity-related training" I would like to take this opportunity to express my satisfaction for the exercise conducted in Pu

Mat National Park, Nghe An province, Vietnam last November. Some 76 members from Thai and Dan Lai and Kinh communities worked jointly with protected area staff, representatives from different Vietnamese institutions, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity Conservation, the Social Forestry and Nature Conservation Project (Nghe An) and NGOs to manufacture a scaled relief model covering 700 sq. km of the national park and its buffer zones. The participatory 3-D Modelling process has proven to be extremely efficient in bringing people together and in generating and visualizing community knowledge. We wish that this innovative method be adopted in other protected areas to foster local participation in sustainable natural resource management.



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