

Project Update: May 2013

Conservation of conifer tree species in Hoa Binh – Son La limestone corridor

In October 2012 a 2-day training course was held for 15 staff of forest rangers from two protected areas Hang Kia – Pa Co (Hoa Binh) and Xuan Nha (Son La). Methods of conifer identification, field survey and conservation assessment for conifer tree species were presented to the participants. The participants also went on a practical trip to the conifer forest along the limestone ridge in Hang Kia – Pa Co Nature Reserve. Information of the training was published on the website of PanNature.

<http://nature.org.vn/vn/2012/11/tap-huan-phuong-phap-va-ky-nang-dieu-tra-danh-gia-hien-trang-bao-ton-cay-la-kim-tren-hanh-lang-nui-da-voi-tay-bac/>

From November 2012 to April 2013 intensive field surveys were conducted in six locations in Hang Kia – Pa Co Nature Reserve, Xuan Nha Nature Reserve and in the limestone area of Moc Chau district. The surveys provided:

- More than 200 specimens of nine conifer species of the area.
- Full information on the status of the conifers in the corridor Hoa Binh – Son La, including information on their occurrence, abundance, phenology, natural regeneration, threats etc.
- Photos of the conifers in the natural habitats.

Propagation materials (seeds and stem cuttings) were also collected for six endangered conifers. The materials are under propagation facilities and nursery. To April 2014 all of the cuttings in the experiments formed new roots meaning successful propagation for the conifers.

During the field survey a new five-needle pine was discovered in Xuan Nha Nature Reserve. The pine is preliminary identified as Chinese white pine *Pinus armandii* Franch but it has several distinct morphological characteristics and possible will become a new pine species for Vietnam and for the world. Information on the discovery has been published at <http://www.nature.org.vn/en/news/projects/another-five-needle-pine-species-discovered-in-vietnam/>. Collected seeds of the new pine were sown and germinated successfully in the nursery.

The field survey also found an exceptional community of endangered conifers including *Amentotaxus yunnanensis* and *Cephalotaxus mannii* in Pha Luong peak (Xuan Nha Nature Reserve). The large size of the *Amentotaxus yunnanensis* tree amazed specialists since there is very rare such large individual of the conifers known until now. Detail information of the findings was on the website <http://www.nature.org.vn/en/news/projects/a-community-of-endangered-conifers-found-in-xuan-nha-nature-reserve/>.