

PROJECT UPDATES

Extensive administrative changes to the responsibilities of ministries, provincial and district administrations in Vietnam, which are responsible for approving fieldwork, as well as the availability of cameras, delayed the start of the project by about six months.

The 50 cameras required were provided by WWF Vietnam.

Instead of January/February 2025 as planned, the installation of the cameras did not begin until the end of July to mid-August.

The removal of the cameras and the evaluation of the images is planned for October 2025. Experience from numerous surveys with camera traps has shown that the essential results can be documented over a period of about two months with active cameras. This operating time of the cameras is also roughly equivalent to the service life of the batteries.

The cameras were installed by two biologists familiar with the technology, with the support of locals who know the area. Particularly noteworthy is the enthusiasm and support for the project shown by the leaders of the local communities. The communities are extremely interested in obtaining protected status for the area. Protected status for the area with its impressive landscape would be a prerequisite for the development of sustainable tourism in the neighbouring area without negatively impacting the protected area.

The results of the camera trap survey, which confirmed the presence of other species worthy of protection in addition to the already documented occurrence of the critically endangered Delacour's langurs, would be an essential criterion for granting protected status to the area.

The area, with its extremely rugged limestone cliffs, is extremely difficult to access and required a great deal of physical effort on the part of the teams to install the cameras. Depending on the terrain, 3 to 4 cameras could be installed per day. The installation locations were determined based on experience from previous surveys and the coordinates were documented. The cameras were aligned for mammals and birds moving on the ground.



Fig. 1, 2: Typical landscape in the Yen Mo Limestone Complex. Photos: Tilo Nadler.





Fig. 3, 4: Installation of the cameras. Photos: Nguyen Thanh Phuong.



Fig. 5. View from the Yen Mo limestone complex of the Yen Mo Commune which is separated from the rocky area by a lake. Photo: Nguyen Thanh Phuong.