



# Final report

Organisation name: [Ostrava Zoo, Czech Republic]

ASAP species: [Delacour's langur *Trachypithecus delacouri*]

Project title: [Survey Delacour's langur (*Trachypithecus delacouri*)]

Period of project implementation: [October 2020 – March 2021]

## 1. Brief Executive Summary

[An area adjacent to Van Long Nature Reserve, which harbours the only viable population of the 'Critically Endangered' Delacour's langur, needs protection status. A survey provided evidence about the existence of about 30 langurs in this area and avoids thereby the allocation for tourism development and limestone quarrying for cement production.]

## 2. Objectives. Please list your project's objectives and report progress against each.

[The survey in Lac Thuy District, Hoa Binh Province, adjacent to Van Long Nature Reserve, should provide distribution and number of individuals and distribution as background information for the application of a protection status for the area.]

The survey result provides a good picture of the home ranges and the used habitat of the Delacour's langur groups. The habitat, close to the nature reserve, is mostly undisturbed limestone forest and human interference is currently very low. The Delacour's langurs in this area are undoubtedly a part of the population inside the nature reserve, even if a direct contact or exchange of individuals was not directly observed. In this area, five groups with a total of 32 to 33 individuals were recorded.]

### 3. Outcomes and impacts.

- a. Please describe how your project contributed to the conservation outcome(s) you included in your application.

The survey provides evidence of the existence of a significant portion – about 10 % - of the total population of Delacour's langurs in the adjacent area to Van Long Nature Reserve. To support the long-term existence of what is currently the largest population of the species in Van Long Nature Reserve, there needs to be protection status for the adjacent area to the nature reserve to provide sufficient habitat that can carry a viable population.

In addition to the planned surveys included in the application, an MoU was agreed between four partners as a first step to save and protect the area, until the longer procedure with the nomination as a protected area can be realized. The MoU is agreed between the NGO 'Three Monkeys Wildlife Conservancy' (also a new member of ASAP), Van Long Nature Reserve, the local District administration and the Forest Protection Department of the District. This agreement will also allow rangers of Van Long Nature Reserve to carry out patrols and protection activities inside the area belonging to the neighbouring province.

- b. How were your project's results or successes measured?

To provide evidence of the existence of a significant portion of the largest viable Delacour's langur population is a binding requirement for the nomination of a protected area. The agreed MoU between the four partners is an important bridge until the establishment of a protected area is gazetted.

4. Please describe any barriers or challenges you had when implementing this project, and if you were able to overcome these, what you did.

Locals and commune leaders in the survey area are aware about the importance of the area for the conservation of the Delacour's langur and have already supported protection activities for several years. There were no difficulties in carrying out the survey, and the plan to establish a protected area also received strong support from locals. The limestone area is not usable for agriculture, but locals and communes are aware that any plan to turn it in a quarrying site for cement production would fundamentally change the living conditions in the area. The protection of the area with a potential development for eco-tourism is the supported option.

5. Were any components of your project not achieved or not completed? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the project?

The intended objectives of the survey have been achieved

6. What are your next steps or future plans for the ASAP species this project targeted?

The next step should be the cooperation with, and the involvement of, the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute, the government agency responsible for the application of the protection status for the area. To provide the application needs additional funding, also the establishment of a protected area with a headquarters and ranger staff. The NGO 'Three Monkeys Wildlife Conservancy' will continue to raise funds from several donors to support the application process and to make a financial contribution to the administrative procedure for the nomination as protected area. For the financing of a headquarters and ranger staff, Government and provincial sources must be allocated and secured for the continuation of the protection.

7. Based on the results of your project, what are your recommendations for conserving your project's focal ASAP species?

The cooperation with Van Long Nature Reserve has a quite long history. After the discovery of a Delacour's langur population in the area in the early 1990's and a long application period for the establishment, Van Long Nature Reserve was finally gazetted in 2001. The transition period from an unprotected area partly used for rice cultivation, grazing of goats, cows and water buffaloes, duck and pig keeping, small limestone quarrying, charcoal production and fuel wood cutting into a nature reserve without human interference was quite difficult. It needed intensive work with locals to raise awareness and different sources of income provided. An advantage was the development of Van Long into a tourism hotspot with the arrangement of boat tours for visitors and home stay accommodations. With the complete elimination of hunting and the strict ban on entering one of the core zones, the behaviour of the langurs changed completely. The formerly very shy langurs which were extremely difficult to observe are now the most commonly photographed Critically Endangered primates of Vietnam. Tourists can take photos with mobile phones from a boat at a relatively close distance without disturbing the animals. This supports furthermore the popularity of Van Long Nature Reserve and also induces pride from the locals. The local communities surrounding the nature reserve now strongly support the protection activities. This was also acknowledged with the award of the nature reserve as the first Vietnamese protected area on the IUCN Green List and the status as Ramsar Site, both in 2020. With the establishment of a protected area adjacent to Van Long Nature Reserve the



uncontrolled construction of tourist resorts and tourist accommodations in this scenic landscape should be avoided, and in particular the issuing of licences for quarrying activities. Close to the planned protected area, beside a larger lake, a tourist complex already exists. This should be the focal point for the development of eco-tourism and special langur observation tours. The development of tourism in the area should include – similar to Van Long Nature Reserve – a factor for protection to stop uncontrolled access and avoid negative impacts to the area.

Guards recruited from the commune in the area and managed by the Management Board of Van Long Nature Reserve have already been working for 20 years for the protection of the area. They are involved in the SMART patrol system of Van Long Nature Reserve and in community education programs. The protection of the area has a high acceptance by locals who also prevent access to the area from strangers or hunters. |