

Extended Abstracts of Selected Papers

Problems Facing Conservation in Pidaung Wildlife Sanctuary

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- An inventory in 1999 listed 107 plant species, 103 bird species, and 20 mammal species. Forest depletion and wildlife are being caused by poaching, shifting cultivation, habitat disturbances, and population pressure.
- Difficulties in conserving the area and communicating with the local communities include the use of traditional practices, language barriers, and insufficient incomes.
- Technical programmes should address people’s income, fuelwood requirements, and cash-crop planting techniques. Help and collaboration from other agencies and departments would also be beneficial.

Interpretation of the current status of land use in Pidaung Wildlife Sanctuary, using remote sensing and geographic information systems (by U. Nyan Hlaing, Staff Officer, GIS Section)

To assess current land use, remote sensing (RS) and geographic information (GIS) systems are essential tools in the field of forest management and conservation. Satellite images are also widely used in various fields such as forestry, agriculture, mining, civil engineering, construction, and defence.

A view of land use in Pidaung Wildlife Sanctuary was obtained from the recently recorded image from the land observation satellite (LANDSAT-7) in March 2000. Next the existing vegetation cover was interpreted and classified. The results of RS interpretation (Table 29) illustrate the current land-use status.

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Land-use class	Area (ha)	Area (sq.m)	Percentage
Good forest	7,327	73,282,590	10.49
Degraded/scrubland/shifting cultivation	27,493	274,931,488	39.38
Swamp	1,720	17,203,068	2.46
Bamboo	870	8,703,518	1.24
Agricultural/grassland	29,499	294,989,269	42.25
Water body	2,897	28,974,779	4.15
Total	69,807	698,084,712	99.97

The land-use images show that good forest cover occurs in the south-west and north-west (about 7,327 ha, only 10.49% of the area). The degraded forests and bamboo brakes (40.62%) are good resources that would presumably recover if the area was carefully protected. The swamps and streams (water bodies) (6.61%) are favourable sites for avifauna and reptiles.

In conclusion, the wildlife habitats in the sanctuary are still in good shape. Other excluded areas should be analysed and assessed for rural development and for the provision of good buffers to the protected areas.

The status of bird species and their conservation in Pidaung Wildlife Sanctuary (by U. Thein Aung, Park Warden, Hkakaborazi National Park)

According to records from 1960 there was a rich biodiversity of birds in Pidaung Wildlife Sanctuary. Although the abundance of wild animals, especially large mammals, has declined and huge areas of natural habitats were destroyed during the Second World War, a large number of bird species still inhabit the sanctuary.

According to a recent report by the Park Warden, 101 bird species have been recorded and some rare forest birds, such as green peafowl, hornbill, and pheasant, inhabit the remaining natural forest of the northern part of the sanctuary.

The current status of bird species indicates that some remaining species and their habitats will need to be protected in time.

Recommendations

- A systematic ornithological survey should be carried out to study the presence and abundance of bird species in the sanctuary.
- Further forest cutting should be restricted. The local community should be educated about the importance of conserving bird species.
- The remnant natural forest area should be strictly protected for conserving roosting and breeding sites.

Recommendations for addressing land-use conflicts in Pidaung Wildlife Sanctuary (by U. Zaw Weik, Director of the Forest Department, Kachin State)

Pidaung Forest Reserve was initiated in 1918, and extended to 72,448 ha in the 1940s. Settlements and permanent agriculture encroached on 2,619 ha, and now a net area of 69,829 ha forms the wildlife sanctuary within the protected area system.

There are currently three villages of hill tribes (Kachin, Lisu, Maru, and Lacheik) with a population of 2,815, some settlements of army regiments, and some railway stations.

Constraints on forest management include forest cutting, fuelwood and charcoal production, grazing, shifting cultivation, and poaching. These disturbances are unavoidable due to the sanctuary's accessibility and to population pressure.

In conclusion, recommendations from the forest management perspective are that

- Fuelwood plantations should be established for local supply.
- Community forestry practices should be introduced to the residents.

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- To change land use by introducing good agroforestry systems
- Local communities should be helped to use efficient stoves, to solve fuelwood problems.
- Education programmes should be extended to foster better understanding and a mutual relationship between the Forest Department and local communities.
- New methods for domestic cattle farming instead of traditional grazing should be introduced.

The outcomes from the discussions of the workshop are expected to be beneficial in finding an integrated management system suitable for both the local communities and the wildlife sanctuary.