

Conserving the critically endangered Tonkin snub-nosed monkey in Vietnam

Beneficiary: Fauna & Flora International
Location: Vietnam, Asia
Grant Cycle: 2023 - 2026
Type of Grant: three-year program support
Animal Welfare & Protection
Website: fauna-flora.org

Established in 1903, Fauna & Flora International (FFI) is the world's oldest international conservation organisation. For more than 120 years FFI has been working with its partners around the world to protect and conserve threatened species and ecosystems. The Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation's commitment to protecting the environment dates back to its founding in 2000 and Flora & Fauna was one of the first organisations the Foundation partnered with to help preserve the world's biodiversity. Since 2001, the NaEPF has worked with Flora & Fauna on several projects, and in 2023 the NaEPF renewed its support for the organisation with a grant of over EUR 3 million that will fund six new projects to preserve the environment and biodiversity worldwide. The critically endangered Tonkin snub-nosed monkey (TSNM) is an endemic species to Vietnam, that is found in just two known locations in the world. The global population of the species currently stands at less than 200, which means the lasting existence of the TSNM species is very precarious. With such small and isolated populations, loss of genetic diversity and inbreeding are likely to be occurring within both TSNM populations. Moreover, the populations may be susceptible to unpredictable catastrophes, such as disease outbreaks or natural disasters, that could wipe them out completely. The most important remaining stronghold for the species, holding about 80% of the global population, is the approximately 2,000 hectares (ha) Species and Habitat Conservation Area at Khau Ca. TSNM were rediscovered at this site by FFI in 2002, and have subsequently been the focus of two decades of sustained conservation action.

During this time, FFI has worked with Vietnamese authorities and local partners to ensure that Khau Ca forest was given official protection. It also established a long-term community-based patrol team to reduce threats and foster local support for the species. As a result of this work, the population appears to have experienced a promising recovery, from around 60 individuals in 2002 to an estimated 160 individuals in the most recent FFI survey in 2022. The other known population of Tonkin snub-nosed monkeys is located in the Tung Vai Watershed Protection Forest. This small population was only discovered by FFI as recently as 2007 and, since then, the organisation has been working to bolster and recover the species there. However, the TSNM population of Tung Vai is becoming more difficult to find due to human disturbance and the decrease in their population. Both populations of TSNM are highly threatened by cardamom cultivation, logging for agriculture and illegal hunting and trade. To address these dangers, FFI is supporting local activities to protect and actively safeguard Tonkin snub-nosed monkeys in their habitats. The funding from the **Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation** will help increase the populations of Tonkin snub-nosed monkeys in Ha Giang Province by increasing the engagement of local communities in conservation to ensure the primates are more sustainably protected and monitored.