A Brief Introduction to the Wetlands Phang Nga Marine National Park

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Wetlands Phang Nga Marine National Park

Location: Muang and Ta kau thung districts, Phang Nga Province

Area 650 square kilometers (406,250 rai)
Geographical coordinates:
8° 08' -26' N and 98° 27' -45' E

Situated at sea level, while islands and hills reach a height of up to 439 meters
Pang Nga Bay is located in Pang Nga province, the southern part of Thailand with approximately 788 km. from Bangkok.
Wetland Phang Nga Bay Marine National Park
Wetland type:

Bay estuary,
mangrove forests,
mudflats,
cliffs,
rocky shores
and seagrass beds.
OVERVIEW:

Pang Nga Bay is shallow bay, the depth between 1-4 meters with 1-3 meters tidal fluctuation, approximate 42 islands where mostly comprises of 40,000 ha of Phang Nga Bay National Park, approximately 21,180.96 ha of mangrove forest and 4,048 ha of mud flats. The bay is located near Tanoasri and Phuket mountain ranges, originated in cretaceous and early tertiary period, which act as natural boundary between Thailand and Myanmar and continue onward until reaching Pang Nga and Phuket provinces.
JUSTIFICATION OF THE CRITERIA SPECIFIED UNDER POINT 9:

Criteria 1: Pang Nga Bay Marine National Park comprises of 42 islands including Khao Tao, Pra Art Toh, Maprao, Boey Yai, Raya Ring, Pa Nak, Hong and Pan Yi, and many wetland ecosystem such as bay, estuary, mangrove forests, mud flats, cliffs, rocky shores and seagrass beds. It is a unique example of natural wetland type.
Criteria 2:
It supports critically endangered, endangered, threatened and near threatened species as follows:
- Dugong (*Dugong dugon*), critical endangered species.

- Globally threatened species are Malaysian Plover (*Charadrius peronii*) and Asian Dowitcher (*Limnodromus semipalmatus*),

Criteria 3:

At least 88 bird species

There were at least 82 fish species found.

At least 18 reptile species

There were at least 17 mammal species found in this wetland area.
Criteria 4:

It supports plant and/or animal species at a critical stage in their life cycles, or provides refuge during adverse conditions such as Mullet (*Mugil* spp.), Whipjin Silverbiddy (*Gerres punctatus*), Croaker (*Johnius* spp.) and Brownspot Grouper (*Epinephlus tauvina*), etc.
Tropical monsoonal climate with an average annual rainfall of 2,379 mm.

Most of which falls during the southwest monsoon, from May to October.

The relative humidity varies from 68% in February to 81% in October.

The average daily temperature is 28.1 degree celsius (24.0-31.3 degree celsius).
The principal values of Pang Nga Bay are sediment trapping, transportation and maintenance of seawater quality.
ECOLOGICAL FEATURES
FLORA
SOCIAL AND CULTURE VALUE
Khao Khien

- Historical Sight Seeing

Lies on the way to Koh Panyee. Khoa Khien have a cave painting of their pre-historic people about 3,000 years. There are ancient depictions of animals and boats.
Khao Tapu (James Bond Island) - Khao Phing Kan

-Cave/Geological Touring

-Canoeing-Kayaking

Khao Tapu - Khao Phing Kan is the main tourist attraction which all tourist boat must stop for visiting and take a photograph. The front side of Khao Tapu is very well-known by foreigners because it's one scene of the "James Bond" movie.
Koh Hong is actually the limestone mountain, inside have many cave and beautiful, which separate into many rooms arranged in the same line and has stalactite there. To visit them, you must park your boat in front of island and then use the canoe to take you look around and access to inner sea.
Koh Panyee, actually, is the fisherman village, built on the area which can be flooded by the sea, so their houses were leveraged to the most high level over the highest level of the sea. This village is located outside the national park. Panyee people are the original fishermen, living with the shallow fishery by using floating bag-net, cockle farming, fish farming in cage. At present, Koh Panyee is the community for serving tourist and some of buildings had been modified to be restaurants and souvenir shops.
Pang Nga Marine National Park is state own that operates by the Royal Forest Department. Surrounding areas are mangrove forest that own by the state and declared as the preservation forest.
CURRENT LAND USE

Fishing and harvesting the fronds of *Nypa* palm for the production of thatch. The area is a major tourist attraction and a great many boatmen realize income from parties of sightseers, cave support populations of Edible-nest Swiftlets.
ADVERSE FACTORS AFFECTING THE ECOLOGICAL CHARACTER OF THE SITE

Threats to the area include encroachment of mangrove forest, aquaculture in forest, shell harvesting in the coral reefs, illegal fishing, the enlargement of communities which situated in National Park as well as over massive tourists and boat at Ping Kun Mountain and Tapoo Mountain.
Mangrove forest, mud flats, seagrass bed, coral reefs, island and evergreen forest are included in 40,000 ha of the Pang Nga Bay National Park, while the other of Pang Nga Bay, 25,000 ha, are not included.
CURRENT RECREATION AND TOURISM

In the proposed Ramsar Site is an international tourist site such as Pan Yee Island, Ping Kun Mountain and Tapoo Mountain. The ancient painting in Khian Mountain, Pan Yee Mountain and Raya Mountain has much recreational site. While mangrove forest has potential for eco-tourism. Many tourists more that 200,000 come to visit Pang Nga every year.
Conclusions

Major Justification for designation as a site of international importance

The mangrove forest found is the largest and the one of the least disturbed in Thailand. Islands and limestone mountains contribute unique scenery to the area and so the bay has great tourist potential. Timber and fishing products from the wetlands of the bay are of tremendous value to local communities. These characteristics meet the criteria of the Ramsar Convention; 1b, 2a, 4b
Conclusions

Conservation status and management

Two-thirds of mangrove forests in Phang Nga bay are located within Phang Nga marine national park, which was declared in 1981. The remaining are reserved forests. Although a master plan for the national park was formulated for the period between 1993-1997, the park is still under threat from illegal logging for fuel wood, construction of seaports and expansion of urban areas. Phang Nga bay with its unique scenery, is one of the most outstanding tourist spots in Thailand.