

A. Proposal:

Inclusion of the Giant Muntjac (*Megamuntiacus vuquangensis*)
on Appendix I.

B. Proponents: Socialist Republic of Vietnam

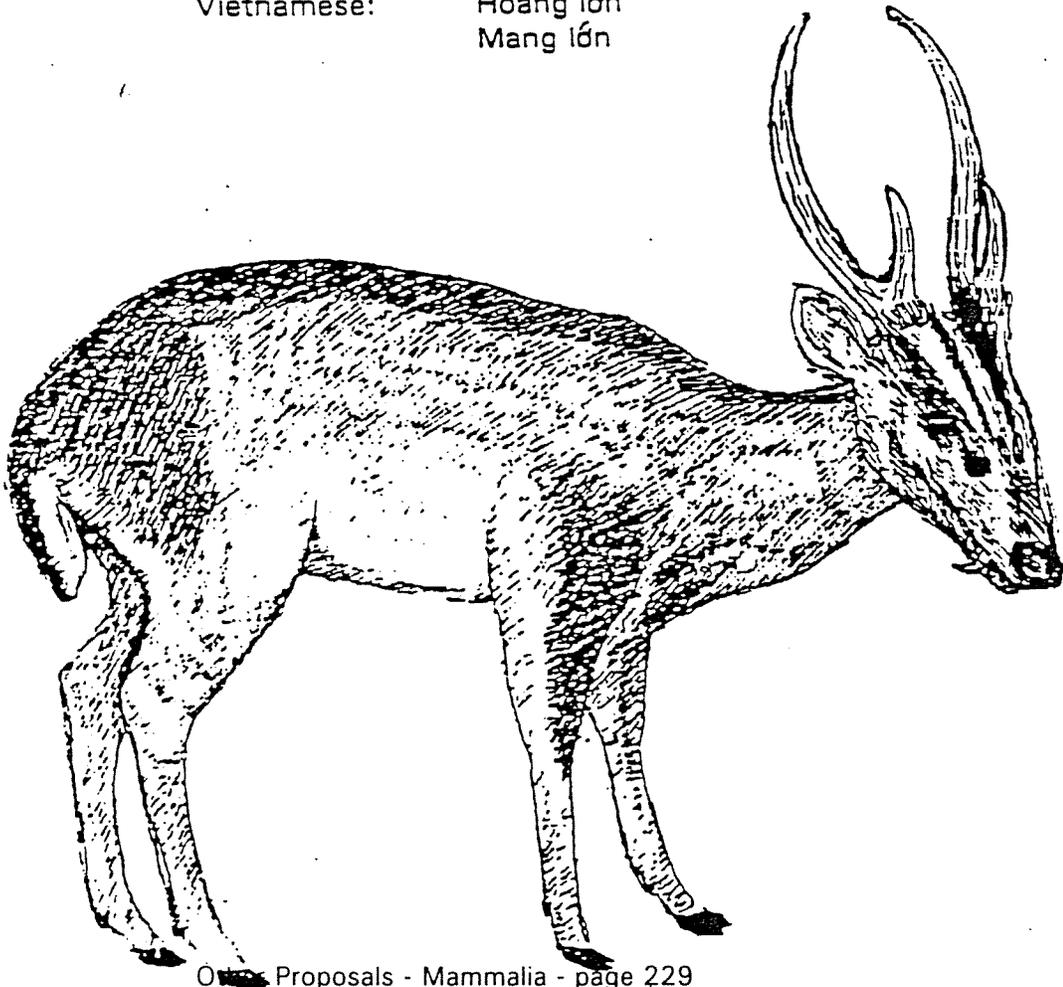
C. Supporting statement:

1. Taxonomy:

- 11. Class: Mammalia
- 12. Order: Arctiodactyla
- 13. Family: Cervidae
- 14. Species: *Megamuntiacus vuquangensis*
- 15. Common names:

English: Giant Muntjac

Vietnamese: Hoẵng lớn
Mang lớn



2. Biological data:

21. Distribution: The Giant Muntjac has been found in the Ha Tinh and Nghe an provinces of northern Vietnam and is also reported from adjacent areas of Laos in primary forests between 104°0' E by 19°0' N and 106°10' E by 17°40' N (Tuoc et al., 1994). Its distribution appears to match that of the recently discovered Vu Quang bovid *Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*. The currently known range of the species is about 5000 km² and the species seems to use forests from 100 - 1000 m. It is sympatric with common muntjac *Muntiacus muntjak* which makes more use of secondary forest and scrublands. A single skull seen in Boun Me Thuot some 200km south of the known range may represent a recent range deduction.
22. Population: Unknown but somewhat more numerous than *Pseudoryx*, probably a few thousand individuals, but declining. Hunters at Vu Quang regard the animal as "rare" while in Laos it is considered to be very rare.
23. Habitat: Lowland evergreen forests dominated by *Hopea molissima*. Keeps to denser forest than Common Muntjac.

3. Trade data:

31. Natural utilisation: The Giant Muntjac is hunted for its meat and skin by the local villagers. Skulls are ground up as medicine and frontlets with antlers are sometimes hung up in hunters houses where they are used as racks as well as displayed as trophies. Since the discovery of the species, such trophies have acquired a raised value and are for sale to scientists, journalists etc. In recent studies of local hunting practice the Giant Muntjac was found to be the third most commonly killed mammal after wild pig and common muntjac. Continued hunting of this species is also a threat to the rarer *Pseudoryx* which is taken at the same time. Hunting is principally by snare in winter months and with dogs in the rest of the year. Hunters admit the population is declining.

The Wildlife Conservation Society (G. Schaller) reports very heavy hunting in the Lao part of the species distribution with all mammal densities reduced to very low levels.

32. Legal international trade: There is currently no realistic restriction on international trade which could grow as demand

for zoological specimens from this newly discovered animal develops. Vietnam is adding the species to local protection lists, however, law enforcement in some areas remains weak. Laos denied the export of specimens to the United Kingdom for scientific comparisons.

33. Illegal trade: As a hunting ban has been placed on most of the species' known habitat in Vietnam by the Ministry of Forestry, all trade is illegal. Laos will be consulted further.

34. Potential trade threats:

341. Live specimens: As this species has only very recently been discovered, efforts to collect live animals for zoological gardens and private animal collectors can be expected. Thailand, for instance, has a large trade in trophies of rare mammals.

342. Parts and derivatives: The fact that this animal has been recently discovered and the publicity already generated over its discovery is likely to create an interest among collectors and trophy hunters. The fact that a few Vietnamese institutions have already paid money for specimens has alerted local hunters of the potential value of the animal. Antlers of small deer are used as handles of silver knives manufactured as tourist souvenirs.

4. Protection status:

41. National: The species is protected only in nature reserves (Pu Mat, Ho Ke Go and Vu Quang in Vietnam and Nakai Plateau in Laos). Even in reserves, enforcement is very weak. The species will be added to protected species lists as soon as possible in Vietnam. Laos will be consulted, but is already enforcing a ban on export.

42. International: Laos has not yet ratified CITES.

43. Additional protection needs: Strict control on national and international trade.

5. Information on similar species:

The related Common Muntjac is widely hunted in Vietnam for food and its antlers are regularly used as decorative knife handles for sale

to tourists. The antlers of Giant Muntjac are sufficiently distinct to avoid confusion of identification.

6. Comments from countries of origin:

Vietnam is proposing the submission. Laos authorities have expressed verbal support.

7. Additional remarks:

The Giant Muntjac has been hunted and used by local villagers for many years but it was only in 1994 that scientists in both Vietnam and Laos independently realised that there were two sympatric muntjacs and gave a formal description to this animal (Tuoc et al., 1994). The type specimen was found in the same village as that of the Vu Quang Ox *Pseudoryx nghetinhensis* two years earlier. The two species have similar distribution and face similar threats from local hunters who set large numbers of snares in the period before the Lunar New Year (estimated at 40,000 snares set in one district alone). Hunters are well aware of the great interest now being shown in both species by foreigners as well as domestic research institutions and zoos. They now regard these animals as valuable and will be more active in acquiring these species than formerly when they were only good for food.

The species has a very limited distribution, shows signs of range contraction, e.g. old specimens found well to the south of the current range, rarity in forests to the north of Vu Quang, and extreme rarity of all mammals on the Lao side of the border (Schaller, pers. comm.)

Vietnamese authorities are now in the process of declaring new reserves at Vu Quang, Pu Mat and Ho Ke Go and also applying a hunting ban for these animals. It is important not to frustrate these efforts by allowing a commercialization of these species to develop.

8. References:

Dung, V.V., P.M. Gizo, N.N. Chinh, D. Tuoc, P. Arctander & J. MacKinnon, 1993: A new species of living bovid from Vietnam. *Nature*, Vol. 363, pp. 443-445.

Tuoc, D., V.V. Dung, S. Dawson, P. Arctander & J. MacKinnon, 1994: *Introduction of a New Large Mammal Species In Vietnam*. Occasional Paper No. 3/1994 of the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute, Hanoi.