

Illicit Wildlife Trade in Vietnam: exploring drivers, scales, and diverse knowledges in a social-ecological systems framework

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I present an interdisciplinary research approach based on social-ecological systems to examine the complex drivers and scales of illicit wildlife trade in Southeast Asia, where high levels of trade continue despite increased regulatory efforts. In Vietnam, slow lorises (small, nocturnal primates) are subject to local, regional, and international demand for diverse uses including as medicine, for religion, food, and as pets. I present results from a case study of slow loris trade in Vietnam including ecological fieldwork as well as ethnographic and semi-structured interviews with people across Vietnam. The results confirm the dynamic complexity of trade in Vietnam in terms of actors, prices, uses, values, and networks across scales. I also compare interview results on trade patterns and networks with results from a genetic reference database used to assign geographic provenance of confiscated animals and clarify patterns and hotspots of trade. This study highlights the importance of conducting interdisciplinary research within a strong theoretical framework for forward-thinking and sustainable trade management.

Mary E. Blair, Ph.D. is the Assistant Director for Research and Strategic Planning at the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH). She studies the conservation biology of primates and has 10 years of field research experience in Latin America and Asia, studying the evolutionary processes that generate primate diversity to inform the spatial prioritization of conservation actions. Most recently, she is investigating the diversity of slow lorises in Vietnam and the patterns, scales, and drivers of illicit trade in these and other animals through an NSF Science, Engineering, and Education for Sustainability (SEES) Fellowship. In 2013, she co-edited *Primate Ecology and Conservation: A Handbook of Techniques*, published by Oxford University Press, and her blogs for the *New York Times*' Scientist at Work and AMNH's From the Field have reached a global audience. Dr. Blair is Affiliated Faculty at Columbia University and the Richard Gilder Graduate School at the AMNH, and is President of the AMNH Chapter of the Association for Women in Science.

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