

Kaydoh Mae Nyaw Wildlife Sanctuary

The Kaydoh Mae Nyaw Wildlife Sanctuary (KMWS) is one of 13 established Wildlife Sanctuaries under the administration of the Kawthoolei Forestry Department (KFD) within Karen State. The KMWS encompasses 91,599 acres (37,069 hectares/ 271 km²) of forest resources in the Southeast corner of Mutraw (Papun) District. It is home to great biodiversity and a number of endangered and vulnerable species, including the Critically Endangered Chinese pangolin and Sunda pangolin.

This area experienced heavy armed conflict during 1994-1995, and many villages and communities were displaced from their homes. It encircles a Karen mountain range known to the locals as "Bu Thoh", where the famous Twee Hpah Wee Joh hill was the site where many KNLA and Burmese soldiers had lost their lives in intense and deadly fighting in the 1990s. These destructive conflicts led to the mass displacement of the Karen communities in this area, and have had long-lasting negative impacts on the previously sustainable livelihoods of such communities.

In the past, the villagers living in and near the Kaydoh Mae Nyaw Wildlife Sanctuary were well-known for their hunting skills. These hunters had extensive knowledge about the geographical features in Kaydoh Mae Nyaw area and they would spend weeks at a time in the deep forests hunting and gathering foods. However, after it was decided that this area should be conserved, the community members have chosen to use their knowledge to protect their forests and its inhabitants, and hunting activities have been decreasing ever since.

The Kaydoh Mae Nyaw Wildlife Sanctuary is the first KFD Protected Area to be established within the Salween Peace Park (it is located in the southern-most section of the Salween Peace Park). Thus, the KMWS ties into a more wide-reaching initiative by the KNU Mutraw District leaders and KESAN to establish an integrated, indigenous Karen Reserve, which encompasses nearly the entire area of the KNU-administered Mutraw District.





Landmine marked near the southern border of the KMWS

Current Challenges

A major threat to the integrity of the Kaydoh Mae Nyaw Wildlife Sanctuary is the proposed Hatgyi hydro-power dam project on the southeastern boundary of the KMWS on the Salween River. The project would cause massive negative impacts on the ecology of the Sanctuary as well as to the livelihoods of indigenous Karen people, due to the construction process and the subsequent flooding.

Since the KMWS is located in an area where heavy conflict has taken place in the past, leftover landmines are spread throughout some of the areas inside the KMWS, which is a threat to both the welfare of rangers and to wildlife.

Despite signing of the NCA, the Burmese Army continues to maintain a strong presence in the areas around the KMWS (see the map on the left), which has negatively affected the ability of villagers to travel freely and pursue their livelihoods.

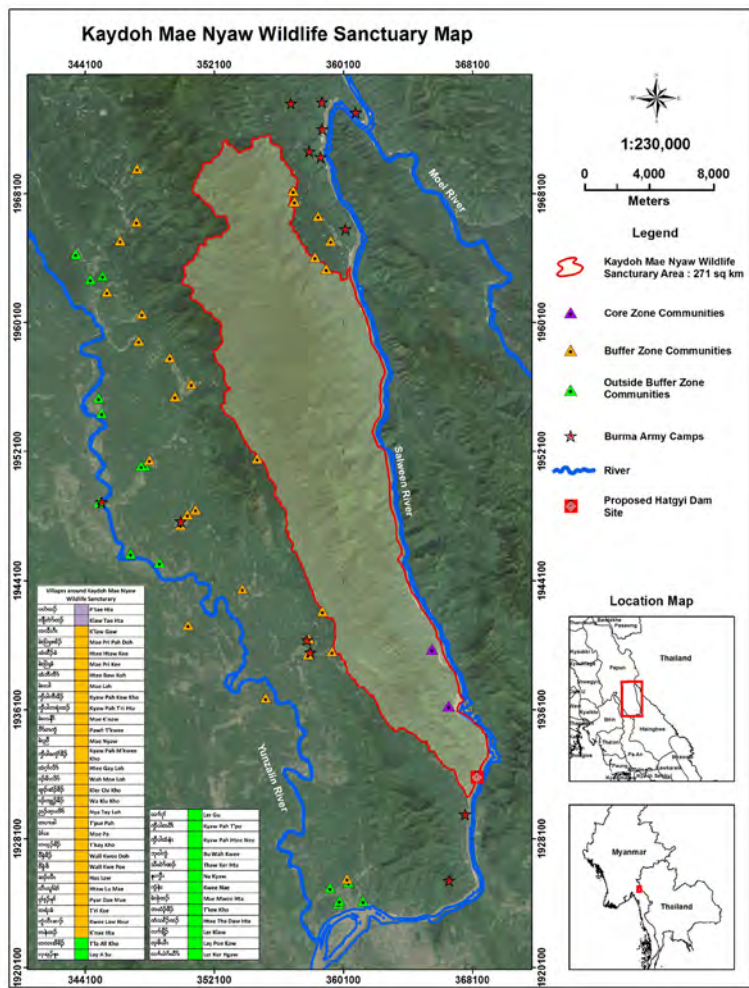
Community Data

Communities located in and around the KMWS have been classified into three zones:

- Core Zone communities- located within KMWS boundaries
- Buffer Zone communities- located in areas adjacent to the KMWS and the
- Outside Buffer Zone communities- located in areas non-adjacent to the KMWS

Livelihoods

The majority of Kaydoh Mae Nyaw communities rely mainly on agricultural activities (both lowland paddy farming and upland rotational



KMWS Communities' Population

Zone	Villages	Household	Population		
			Female	Male	Total
Core	2	44	126	101	227
Buffer	28	1,083	3,786	3,412	7,198
Outside Buffer	15	499	1,558	1,427	3,101
TOTALS	45	1,626	5,470	4,940	10,526

NR Management Committee Members

Zone	Committee Members	Female	Male	Total
Core	2	0	5	5
Buffer	27	15	84	99
TOTALS	29	15	89	104

farming) and forest resources for their livelihoods. Most community members are involved in some form of NTFP cultivation and/or collection, including bamboo, rattan, cardamom, betel nut, durian, dogfruit, and rubber, to supplement their food and income.

Wildlife Protection Unit

Set-up in December 2015, the Kaydoh Mae Nyaw Wildlife Protection Unit (WPU) is made up of twenty wildlife rangers from the Kawthoolei Forestry Department. At the WPU's inception in 2015, the wildlife rangers were given initial tactical and field patrol training sessions. This initial training session was facilitated and supported by the Karen Wildlife Conservation Initiative (KWCI)¹. They have also received multiple trainings to use the 'SMART' patrol system and database (used by wildlife rangers across the globe working in protected areas and wildlife sanctuaries). The Kaydoh Mae Nyaw WPU conducts field patrols for two weeks every month on the average, during which the rangers record observations on wildlife, human activity, and natural resources. In 2017, construction of a WPU field station located on the West boundary of the Sanctuary was completed.

Wildlife Research/ Camera Traps

From 2013 to 2015 two camera trap wildlife surveys were conducted in the Kaydoh Mae Nyaw Wildlife Sanctuary led by Karen researcher Saw Hsa Bweh Moo (KWCI's technical field expert) and revealed the extraordinary biodiversity in the montane forests of the sanctuary. Combining both camera trap data and direct observations of wildlife, KESAN and the KWCI have documented 64 mammal species, including many endangered and vulnerable species.

Two of those species, the Chinese pangolin and Sunda pangolin are listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Among the other enigmatic species documented by the wildlife survey team are the leopard, Clouded leopard, the Asian wild dog (Dhole), Marbled cat, Eastern hoolock gibbon, Gaur, slow loris and Phayre's Leaf Monkey.

Mammals at risk in the Kaydoh Mae Nyaw WS

- 4 Endangered species
- 2 Critically Endangered species
- 13 Vulnerable species
- 3 Near Threatened species

¹ The Karen Wildlife Conservation Initiative was established in 2012 with the objective of conserving biodiversity and threatened wildlife species in Karen state. It is a collaboration between the Kawthoolei Forestry Department, KESAN and international partners.



Rotational Agriculture practiced by a villager next to the KMWS



WPU recording data in the KMWS



Leopard recorded by camera traps in the KMWS



Silver pheasant recorded by camera traps in the KMWS

Community-level participation in demarcation and development of rules/regulations

Kaydoh Mae Nyaw communities have collaborated with the KFD and KWCI on the establishment of the Wildlife Sanctuary, and have been involved in the design of rules and regulations regarding the use of forest resources. From 29 October-6 November 2016, the Mutraw KFD demarcated the boundary of Kay Doh Mae Nyaw Wildlife Sanctuary, while holding consultations with Resource Management Committees in three places.

From 11 June-5 July 2016, 3-day community consultation meetings were organized in five locations near the KMWS. A total of 338 people (266 men and 72 women) from 40 villages participated in these consultations. During the consultation period, Natural Resource Management Committees (NRMC) were established that are responsible for coordinating natural resources management and biodiversity protection. The NRMCs work closely with the KFD and the Wildlife Protection Unit to monitor the KMWS.

Responsibilities of Village Level NRMCs

- Collaborate and patrol in the Wildlife Sanctuary to monitor the forests and check for any illegal activities, such as logging or poaching.
- Raise awareness of rules and regulation and objectives of the Kaydoh Mae Nyaw Wildlife Sanctuary in their communities.
- Report rule/policy violations to authorities in charge of protecting Wildlife Sanctuary, through Joint Committees.

Land and Natural Resource Regulations developed and adopted by Core Communities

- It is not allowed to extend or expand new areas for rotational agriculture, but rotational farming is allowed in existing or previously farmed areas.
- No long term fruit trees or plants are allowed to be planted on the rotational agriculture lands.
- The extension of or expansion into new areas for farming is banned.
- The rotational farming lands and crop cultivation areas in the Sanctuary will be guaranteed recognition and registration under the KNU.
- The cutting and cleaning of grass in a 50 yard-radius around already existing orchards/gardens for betel nut, betel nut leaves, durian trees is allowed in the Sanctuary, but they will not be allowed to plant more trees.
- Cutting down trees, rattan and bamboo for selling is prohibited, except for household needs, building and construction.
- Local people are allowed to find food such as vegetables and honey and other non-timber forest products, but they are not allowed to destroy forest and harm animals.
- Wild animals in the Sanctuary are not allowed to be hunted for selling. (The exact area where hunting will be allowed is to be determined and formally recognized at a later date).
- The technology tools or machines which can destroy and harm forest and species are not allowed to sell or trade.
- People living within the Sanctuary area are not allowed to invite new arrivals.
- People living within the Sanctuary area are not allowed to support and encourage outside people to destroy or harm the forest in their areas.
- New religious buildings are not allowed to be built in the Sanctuary.

Moving forward

- KFD, KWCI and community members will work together to demarcate the boundaries of the KMWS Buffer Zone
- Continue to conduct regular monitoring patrols within the KMWS
- Conduct a regular review of conservation efforts in and around the KMWS zone
- Support communities around and inside KMWS to develop their livelihoods in a sustainable manner



Village consultation conducted in 2016