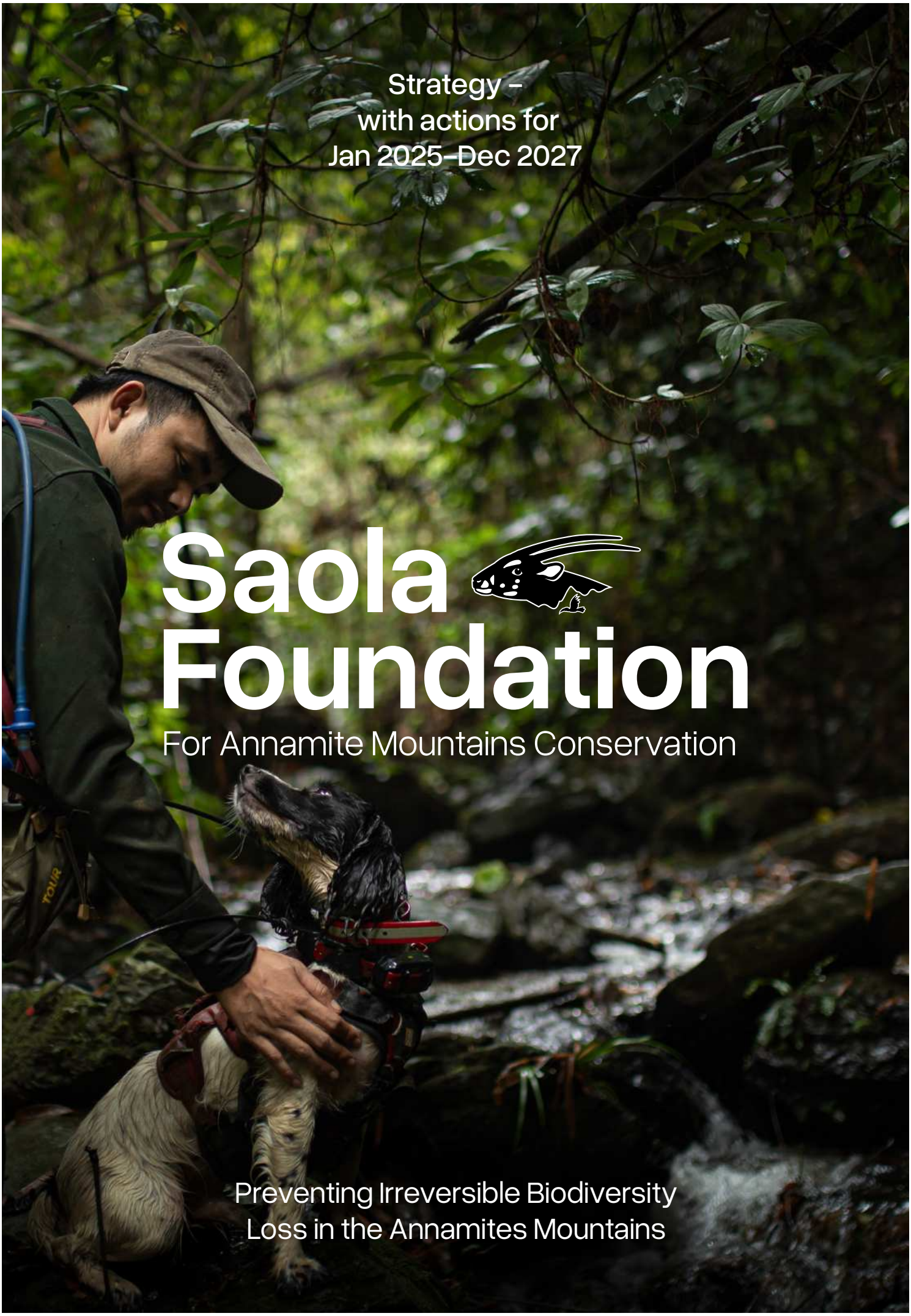
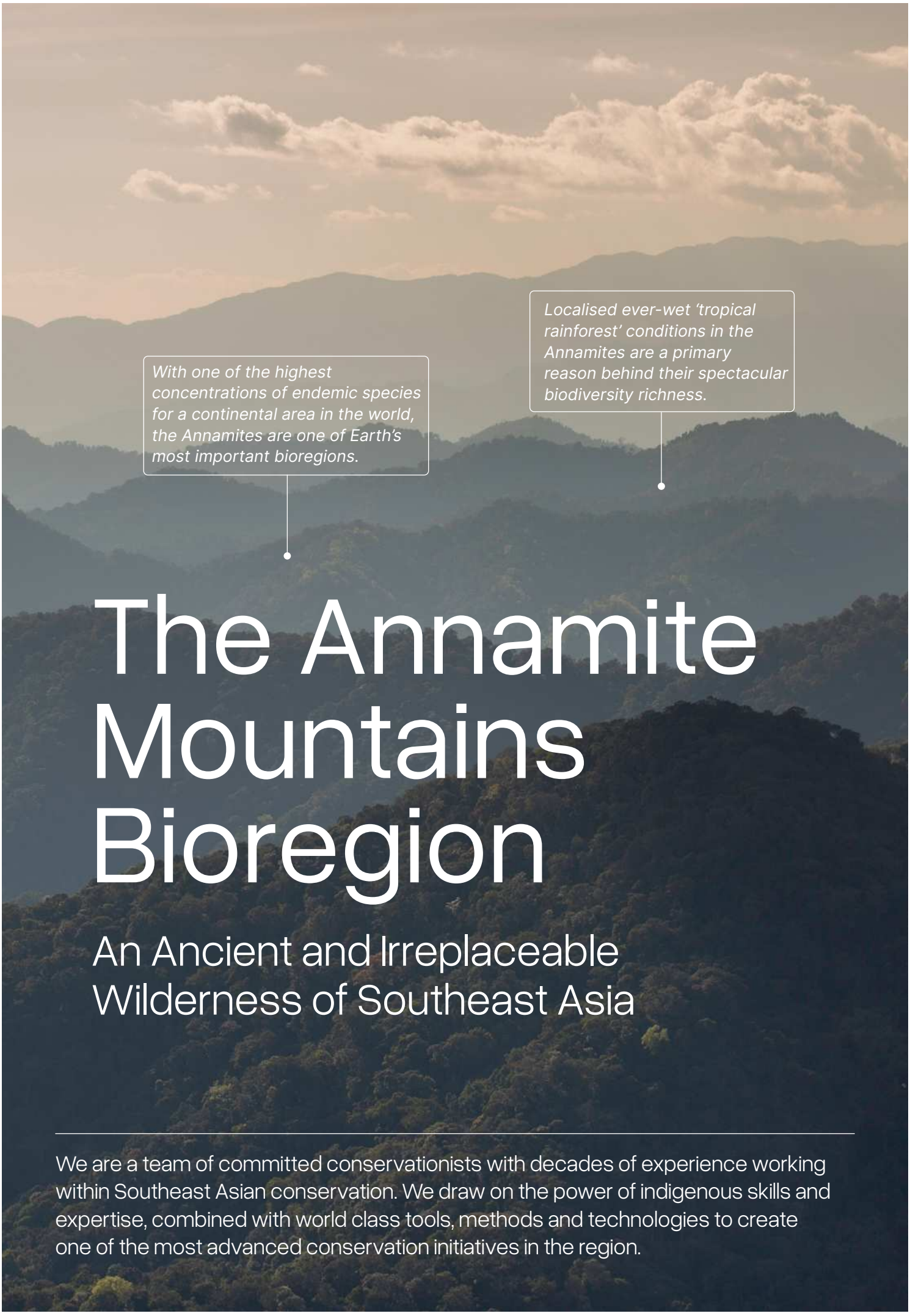


Strategy –
with actions for
Jan 2025–Dec 2027

Saola Foundation

For Annamite Mountains Conservation

Preventing Irreversible Biodiversity
Loss in the Annamites Mountains



The Annamite Mountains Bioregion

An Ancient and Irreplaceable Wilderness of Southeast Asia

We are a team of committed conservationists with decades of experience working within Southeast Asian conservation. We draw on the power of indigenous skills and expertise, combined with world class tools, methods and technologies to create one of the most advanced conservation initiatives in the region.

Stretching over 1,100 km along the border of Lao and Viet Nam and extending into eastern Cambodia, the rugged Annamite Mountains are a biodiversity hotspot, hosting a high concentration of endemic species that are facing global extinction. Despite not receiving the global attention it deserves, there is more at stake in this region than in almost any other part of the world.

The Annamite Mountains came to recent global attention with an astonishing series of new species discoveries, including the Saola *Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*, the Large-antlered Muntjac *Muntiacus vuquangensis*, and the Annamite Striped Rabbit *Nesolagus timminsi*. This region's pace of surprising scientific discoveries surpasses anywhere else in the world, with yet more to be found.

Ranked as one of the world's most important bioregions, it hosts one of the Earth's highest concentrations of endemic species for a continental area. The Annamites also has perhaps the world's highest concentration of highly threatened species, due to recent surges in largely commercially driven natural resource exploitation and relatively low levels of conservation investment, making the Annamites one of the most important areas for increased conservation attention globally. Without urgent changes, the Saola and other irreplaceable Annamite biodiversity may be lost forever.

The Annamites also represent an important nexus between cultural and biodiversity conservation. This region has been described as an area of "linguistic and cultural mega-diversity", with a majority of these languages and cultures found only in the Annamites.

Above: Coral-billed Ground Cuckoo, an Annamites near-endemic whose foraging strategy includes following ungulates, has rapidly vanished from most of the Annamites Bioregion due probably to a combination of both the direct and indirect effects of snaring.

The Annamites are a living museum for evolutionary history with estimates of thousands of undocumented endemic species.

Annamite biodiversity features 'old endemicity', with species little changed since the Miocene Epoch (5 + million years) and beyond. Although most Annamite mammals and birds have now been documented, the numbers of undocumented endemic flora, fauna and funga species certainly exceed those known, and specialists estimate that a new species could be discovered every day within the Annamites.

See page 17 for information on the exciting discovery of a new species of monkey in 2024. *Rhacophorus orlovi* (pictured), was also a recent discovery.

Our Vision

The Annamite Mountains Bioregion retaining its current levels of biodiversity, free from the existential threats of this time, valued by, and supporting the health and prosperity of local and global communities alike.

Our Mission

Our mission is to protect the rich biodiversity of the Annamite Mountains Bioregion by leading efforts to prevent unrecoverable biodiversity loss through a combination of direct interventions, empowering national conservationists, conducting applied research and priority setting, and collaborating with key stakeholders.

Long Term Goals

Over the next 25 years, we will focus our efforts on unrecoverable biodiversity loss by preventing the global extinction of species, such as the Saola and Large-antlered Muntjac, as well as the many cryptic and otherwise overlooked species facing imminent global extinction, while protecting and restoring irreplaceable Annamite ecosystems to prevent extinction of these and other highly threatened species.

Ten Year Goals

+ **Prevent the extinction of three iconic Annamites species** (Saola, Large-antlered Muntjac, and the new Bolikhamxay Leaf Monkey), whilst protecting critical *in situ* ecosystems and the irreplaceable biodiversity they sustain.

+ **Establish an *in situ* Annamite Research and Conservation Center** at a critical site for irreplaceable biodiversity in the Annamite Mountains Bioregion.

+ **Maximize our impact** through working with partners and other stakeholders on direct interventions, capacity building, applied research and priority setting.

+ **Adhere to a dynamic and adaptive approach,** identifying and capitalizing on conservation gaps and opportunities as they arise, to prevent the extinction of other species facing imminent global extinction, especially those that act as flagships for irreplaceable sites and ecosystems.

SMART Goals

We follow the Open Standards approach to conservation planning. All our actions are driven by scientific evaluation of the likely outcomes of the decisions we make. Our ambitious conservation strategy and SMART Goals - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timebound - are continually growing and evolving adaptively in order to meet the needs of overlooked species facing global extinction in the Annamite Mountains Bioregion.

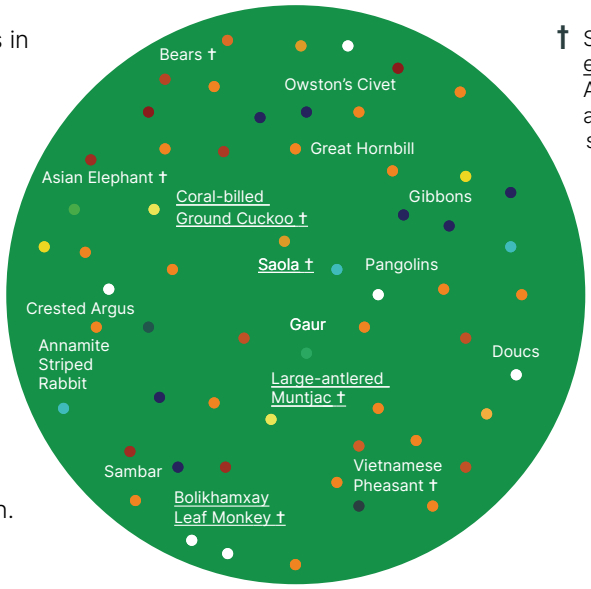
A Vision for the Future of the Annamite Mountains Bioregion

The Saola Foundation is uniquely positioned to fill a critical niche in the current conservation landscape of the Annamite Mountains Bioregion

Annamites now

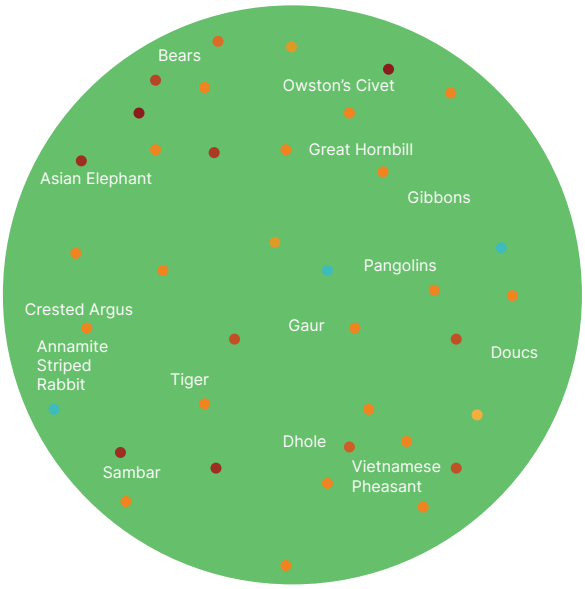
Gaps in current conservation efforts in the Annamite Mountains Bioregion mean that many species facing global extinction are at risk of being lost forever. Increased focus and investment are urgently needed to address these gaps.

The colored dots represent the richness of biodiversity, most of which is encompassed by cryptic, unrecognised, overlooked and ignored species, primarily of flora and non-vertebrate fauna. Although very little is known, certainly many species must be in imminent danger of global extinction.

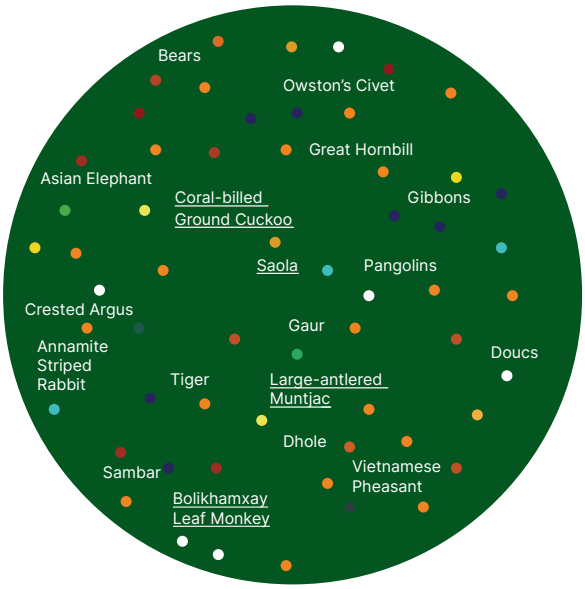


† Species in imminent danger of global extinction or extirpation from the Annamites. Tiger and Dhole appear already to be extirpated.The other species depicted on the graphic, although generally considered highly threatened, are not, given current conservation efforts, in imminent danger of extinction or extirpation from the Annamites.

Which long-term future do you prefer?



Future biodiversity under a business as usual scenario: many overlooked species in the Annamites now globally extinct



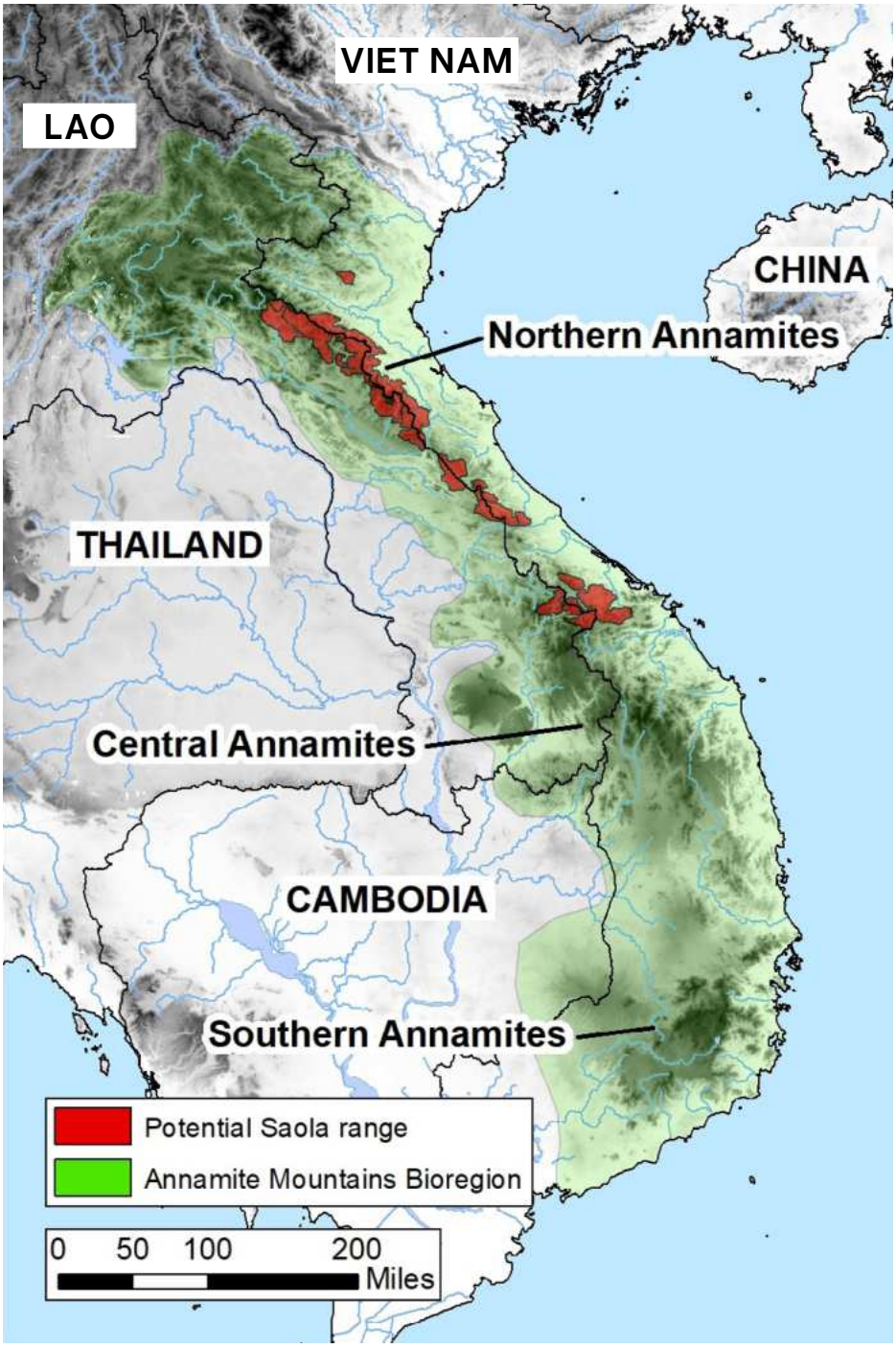
Future biodiversity under the vision of the Saola Foundation: survival of endemic species targeted by our actions

Geographic and Ecological Scope

Through its well-designed programs, the Saola Foundation aims to benefit the entire Annamite Mountains Bioregion, encompassing a vast richness of fauna, flora, funga and other biodiversity.

The Annamite Mountains have three main biogeographic components, all of which have been inhabited by multiple different indigenous human groups for centuries.

What is seen in the Annamites today is the fruits of a long-running evolutionary factory resulting in narrowly endemic species. The interaction of geography with continental and oceanic weather systems over the Annamites creates localised 'ever-wet tropical rainforest' conditions strikingly different from adjacent drier 'monsoonal' areas of Southeast Asia. This localised climatic regime has evidently been stable over a long geologic timescale and has driven a process in the Annamites of both relative evolutionary stasis (of Miocene and older biodiversity, represented by species like the Saola and Annamite Striped Rabbit) and isolated 'island-like' evolutionary adaptation. The latter process is very similar to that seen in the Galapagos, with, for example, different species of gibbon evolving within geographically and temporally isolated 'islands' of Annamite 'ever-wet' tropical rainforest.



The *Extraordinary* Story of Saola

How did a single ancient species spark a conservation movement in the Annamites?

Miocene (10+ million years BP)

The first Saola (likely to have changed little since)

Pliocene (ca. 2.5+ million years BP)

The first Homo

Pleistocene (ca. 300,000 years BP)

Modern humans
H. sapiens *evolved*

Holocene (ca. 10,000 years BP)

The Saola has survived multiple ice ages and the anthropogenic-driven megafauna extinction 'event' at the end of the Pleistocene Epoch, which generally had lesser effect in tropical Asia compared with other continental areas

1992

Do Tuoc and other Vietnamese scientists 'discovered' the Saola in village houses

1993

First scientific observations of a living Saola, an animal in captivity

Mid 1990s

Intensive snaring starts its relentless sweep through the Saola's habitat, the forests of the Annamites of Lao and Viet Nam

1996

Martha, a captive Saola made famous through scientific observations by William Robichaud, came into Lak Xao menagerie (and died shortly after)

1998

First camera-trap photo of a Saola in the world, from Viet Nam, captured by Fauna and Flora International

The Saola is nothing if not enigmatic. Much like an antelope in appearance, its present-day relatives are wild cattle such as Gaur, bisons and buffalos. The sole representative of the genus *Pseudoryx*, this quiet, shy creature has hidden in the Annamite Mountain rainforests for millions of years, changing little in that time.

2000
Evidence from multiple localities shows that commercially driven hunting is wiping out large mammal populations throughout the Annamites

2006
The Saola declared Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. The Saola Working Group formed, within the IUCN SSC Asian Wild Cattle Specialist Group

2012
Start of relatively intensive searching with camera-traps and eDNA

2013
Last photographic evidence of the Saola's existence, a camera-trap record from Viet Nam

2020
Saola Foundation for Annamite Mountains Conservation launches in response to the urgency to find Saolas in the wild

2022
Rapid Saola DNA field testing platform makes its debut in Lao, beginning to test potential dung samples

2023
Initiation of intensive search activities for the Saola using integrated real-time data collection methods, wildlife trackers and scent detection dogs,significantly accelerating efforts in the race to find the last Saolas

2025
Saola Foundation signed a formal partnership agreement with the Government of Lao, intensifying the search for Saolas and paving the way to our future vision

Above: Bicycle cable snares collected by a patrol team. Below: Saola horns on display in Copenhagen Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark.

In the last half-century, the Saola's existence has become seriously threatened by the encroachment of humans and their technology. Most devastating has been the advent of industrial-scale wildlife snaring in the late 1980s and early 1990s, since when tens of millions of snares have been dispersed across the Annamites. Such indiscriminate snaring has been fueled by demand in the region for wild meat and for traditional medicinal products.

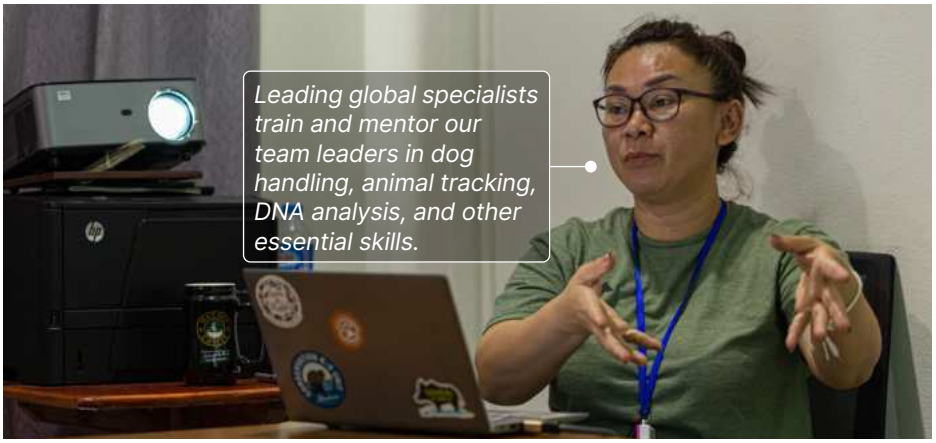
Since its scientific discovery in 1992, the Saola has intrigued people globally – bringing with it a desire to change the trajectory of biodiversity loss in the Annamites for the Saola and all other incredible biodiversity.

Annamite Mountains Research and Conservation Team

The Annamite Mountains Research and Conservation Team: one of the most advanced field teams in Southeast Asia, integrating scent detection dogs, animal trackers, and technical and logistical expertise.

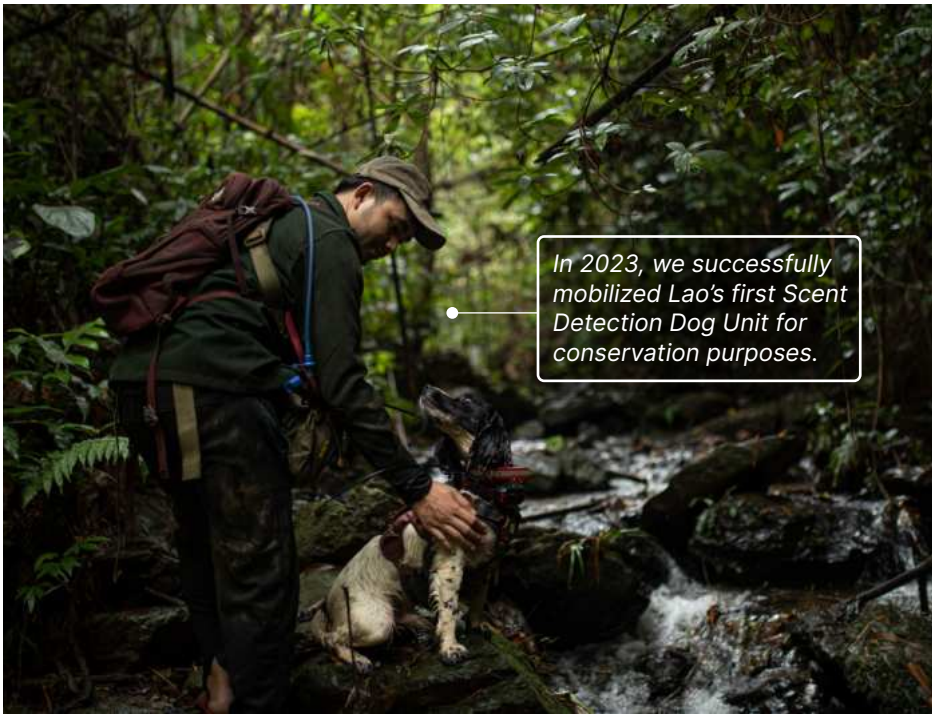
Self-sufficient, with skilled technical and logistical staff, we deploy efficiently without reliance on external human resources. Our team is adaptive and versatile, thanks to our research and monitoring skills.

Our team has extensive experience using scent detection dogs, tracking large mammals, and processing biological samples for DNA analysis in the field. We have an award-winning videographer for documenting scientific findings and capturing an audio-visual record of our work, and always, as a first for a team in the Annamites, adheres to the 'leave no trace' principle by removing non-compostable waste from the forest and otherwise minimizing environmental impact. We collaborate closely with government and community-led law enforcement teams.



Leading global specialists train and mentor our team leaders in dog handling, animal tracking, DNA analysis, and other essential skills.

We are developing innovative field techniques, such as specialized sampling procedures for tropical ungulate dung.



In 2023, we successfully mobilized Lao's first Scent Detection Dog Unit for conservation purposes.

A Saola DNA field testing kit that can rapidly test dung samples is a game changer in the race to find Saolas.

Through innovation, technology, and partnerships, we seek to raise the bar for biodiversity conservation in the Annamites to global standards.

Our organization employs 33 Lao nationals, 11 from rural communities within the Annamite Mountains range.

We are committed to tackling cultural and societal barriers that prevent women in the Annamites and internationally from pursuing conservation careers.

At the heart of our mission is preventing extinction and the loss of irrecoverable biodiversity.

Our work aligns with five of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

Our Strategy

By addressing gaps in conservation, we will save species from extinction, through direct interventions, applied research and priority setting, and by investing in the capability and capacity development of local citizens.

Our Values

+ **Sustainability:** A core component of our mission is helping to develop the national capacity effectively to manage Annamite biodiversity in perpetuity.

+ **Inclusivity:** Local citizens and communities are at the core of work, inspiring a future of locally-driven conservation efforts.

+ **Scientific Integrity:** Our work is always grounded in facts and evidence.

+ **Adaptability:** We remain agile and always adaptive to ensure that our strategy evolves as needed, always looking for opportunities to act where action is most needed.

+ **Innovation:** To lead in developing and testing new approaches and technologies, in order to maximize positive long-term outcomes for Annamite biodiversity.

+ **Creating Conservation Legacy:** We are committed to preventing unrecoverable biodiversity loss in the Annamite Mountains Bioregion and ensuring that its ecosystems remain rich, long into the future.

We are driven by our commitment to preserve the Annamite Mountains Bioregion's unique biodiversity, including species like the Saola and Large-antlered Muntjac, whose loss would leave an irreplaceable gap in the Earth's evolutionary history, recognizing that biodiversity includes much more than large mammals.

Our approach is to take immediate actions that will create a positive, lasting legacy for the Annamites, focusing on those species facing imminent global extinction without our help. By conducting objective assessments and evaluations, we are able to prioritize which species, sites and interventions are most needed - and within our grasp - giving us confidence in achieving successful outcomes. Prioritization is a continuous process ensuring that we expand and adapt based on scientific logic.

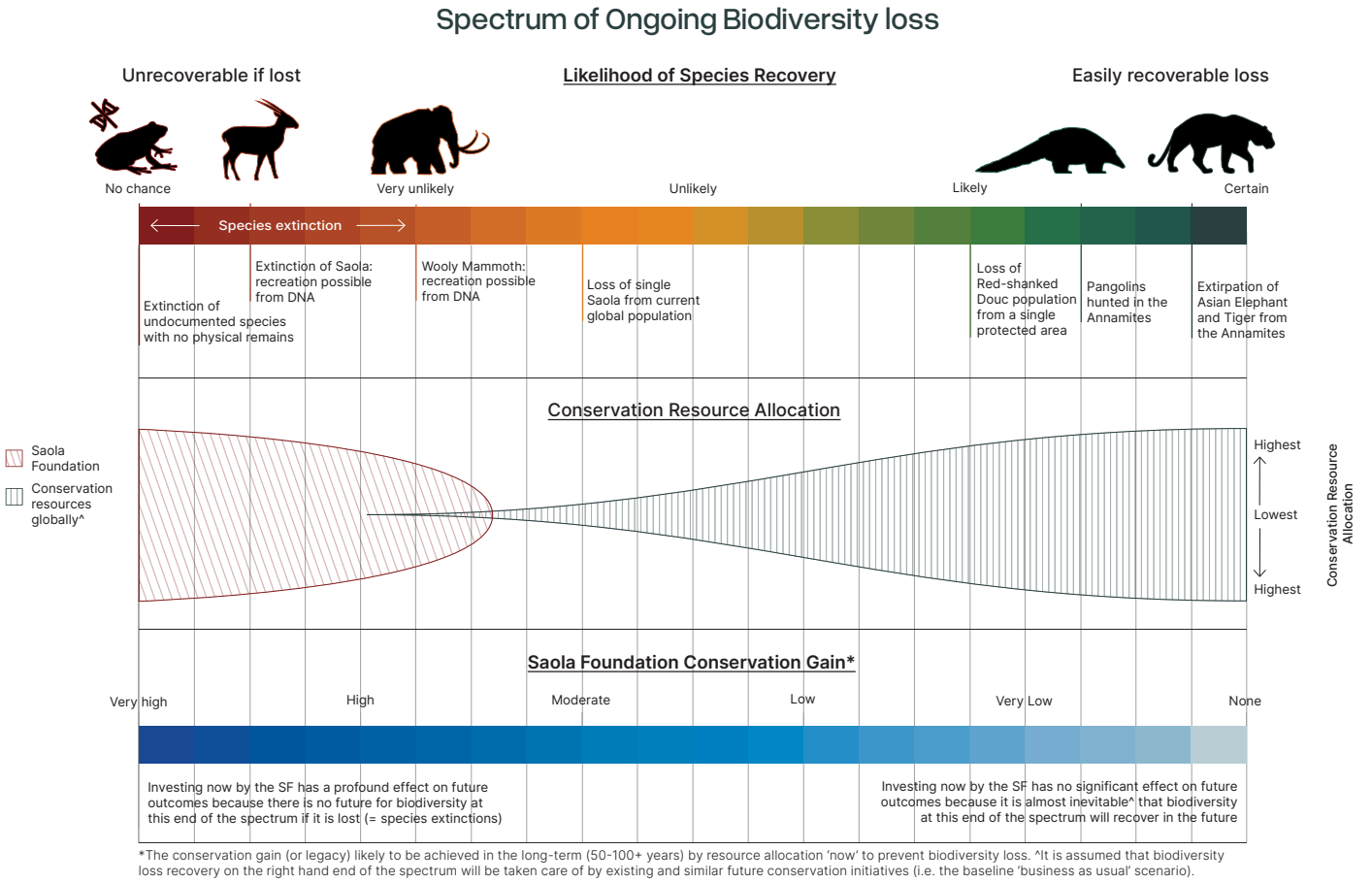
Our strategy, with its long-term outlook, considers both the immediate and the long-term needs of species, from countering the immediate threats *in situ*, to prevent species extinction in the near-term, to creating the long-term change needed to suppress the causes of these direct threats, by tackling their root causes, and for instance making unsustainable wildlife poaching a thing of the past.

We are confident that the growing strength of conservation efforts in the region mean that threats to biodiversity in the Annamites will one day be brought under control, wildlife populations including iconic species such as the Tiger and Asian Elephant will recover and repopulate the Annamites, and tall trees create a majestic canopy once again over extensive areas.

As the Saola Foundation, we will focus on ensuring that species such as Saola, and cryptic and otherwise overlooked biodiversity facing imminent global extinction, will also be a part of this positive future change, and will be proud to play a leading role in creating this legacy.

Our Approach to Maximize Conservation Gains for the Annamites

We aim to maximize long-term conservation gains, measured against 'business as usual' counterfactual scenarios, by preventing unrecoverable biodiversity loss, primarily in the form of saving species from global extinction.



*The conservation gain (or legacy) likely to be achieved in the long-term (50-100+ years) by resource allocation 'now' to prevent biodiversity loss. ^It is assumed that biodiversity loss recovery on the right hand end of the spectrum will be taken care of by existing and similar future conservation initiatives (i.e. the baseline 'business as usual' scenario).

Conservation resource allocation often favors charismatic, well-known species, such as Tiger and elephants, as well as easily achieved biodiversity loss prevention. However, these same species have insurance populations, which can be used to restore populations in the Annamite Mountains Bioregion in the future, whilst easily achieved biodiversity loss prevention tends to focus again on aspects of biodiversity relatively resilient and with high potential for recovery in the future. The overlooked species, the underdogs, such as Saola and Large-antlered Muntjac, suffer from limited attention and investment. These flagship species of the Annamites are associated with with irreplaceable ecosystems that sustain many more cryptic and otherwise overlooked endemic species facing imminent global extinction, many not even described by science. Although the ecosystems themselves are unlikely to disappear these flagships, along with the other cryptic and otherwise overlooked endemic species that they represent, are on the precipice of extinction – once they are gone, they are gone forever, leaving in their wake much poorer ecosystems.

Above: In May 2024, an undescribed species of primate was photographed in Lao – just the latest in a long line of discoveries of overlooked species facing global extinction.

Four Cornerstones of our Strategy

Our cornerstones serve as the contextual foundations for the main thematic pillars of our long-term strategy to fill strategic gaps in the Annamite Mountains conservation landscape, and to achieve measurable long-term legacy biodiversity conservation gains.

One

Direct Intervention

Implement direct conservation interventions (both *in situ* and *ex situ*) for species facing imminent global extinction and for the ecosystems crucial for their survival.

Two

Capacity Building

Develop the conservation capability and capacity of Annamite nation citizens and strengthen national conservation policies and practices.

Three

Applied Research

Conduct and steer proactive, applied conservation research to inform critical and pivotal decisions, in order to minimalize irreversible global biodiversity loss from the Annamite Bioregion.

Four

Priority Setting

Develop and use globally applicable biodiversity conservation metrics and prioritization tools, to measure conservation outcomes and gains, make decisions and identify key conservation activities to pursue.

1. Direct Interventions

Through evidence-based direct interventions, we will target flagship and other species facing imminent global extinction, and the irreplaceable ecosystems that sustain them, to maximize long-term conservation gains.

Our Goals and Outcomes

+ **Long-term Outcome:** A strategic and synergistic network of direct conservation interventions, including the protected area landscape, optimised to prevent unrecoverable biodiversity loss across the Annamites, supported by multiple stakeholders, effectively to manage all Annamite biodiversity.

+ **10 year Goals:** To prevent the extinction of three iconic Annamite species (Saola, Large-antlered Muntjac, and the Bolikhamxay Leaf Monkey), using them as flagships to protect and restore strategically identified *in situ* ecosystems and the irreplaceable biodiversity they sustain; and to work with partners and other stakeholders on evaluation, strategic planning and prioritization of a geographic network of Annamite 'key sites' for biodiversity conservation investment, to minimalize long-term unrecoverable biodiversity loss, resulting in pivotal positive changes for species facing imminent global extinction and the irreplaceable ecosystems that sustain them.

Saving the Saola

+ **Objectives:** Our near-term objective is to answer the question 'Can Saola be reliably detected in the wild and safely captured, to make it a viable strategy to save the Saola from extinction?' If the answer is 'yes', a capture and conservation breeding strategy will be developed.

+ **Outcomes:** Through this flagship program we will obtain objective certainty in the status of the Saola and appropriate next steps. Regardless of the outcome, the project will still be invaluable, systematically collecting unprecedented levels of data on other Annamite biodiversity, lead to lessons on how to save other at-risk species, and develop the conservation capacity of Annamite nation nationals.

+ **2025-2027 Actions:** Complete a two year systematic search for the species in carefully selected sites of Bolikhamxay Province, Lao. The search will, at an unprecedented level of intensity, initially focus on detection of Saolas, and once Saolas are found, rapidly pivot search protocols to gain critical knowledge of Saola behavior and ecology. This to ensure development of effective strategies and protocols confidently to detect remaining Saolas for (in most likely scenario) capture and conservation breeding.

The Bolikhamxay Leaf Monkey and its limestone karst home

+ **Objectives:** After confirming in 2024 the existence of an undescribed species of leaf monkey in unprotected, isolated limestone karst of Bolikhamxay Province, we aim to develop and test innovative approaches for effective long-term protection of the monkey and other threatened biodiversity elements associated with the karst landscape.

+ **Outcomes:** Through this program we anticipate the creation of innovative long-term sustainable strategies to ensure effective protection of an entire limestone karst ecosystem, which will offer reciprocal benefits to the local communities who have used it over the past and present.

+ **2025-2027 Actions:** We will develop a pilot program to establish, test, and evaluate three alternative long-term *in situ* conservation management strategies around three separate blocks of karst limestone. We will put in place a long-term experimental monitoring and evaluation plan to investigate the strengths and weaknesses of each strategy. Our project will work closely with government, local communities and other elements of civil society – maximizing support from communities for biodiversity conservation whilst working to provide substantial reciprocal benefits to them.

Large–antlered Muntjac and the irreplaceable ecosystems it inhabits

+ **Objectives:** Our objective is to develop an effective long-term management strategy for the Large-antlered Muntjac and other species facing imminent global extinction at a site of irreplaceable biodiversity significance in Lao.

+ **Outcomes:** Through this project we expect to establish at a site in Lao an *in situ* conservation program that provides effective protection for the Large-antlered Muntjac, that will also maximize conservation benefits for other species facing imminent global extinction.

+ **2025-2027 Actions:** Through close collaboration with the Government of Lao, we will investigate the feasibility of implementing conservation initiatives to save the Large-antlered Muntjac at carefully selected candidate sites, evaluated for their significance for other species facing imminent global extinction and feasibility of success. At the most appropriate site we will develop and establish an on-ground approach that prioritizes immediate interventions, to protect and stabilize populations of Large-antlered Muntjac and other species on the precipice of extinction.

2. Capacity Building

Sustained and effective biodiversity conservation in the Annamite Mountains Bioregion depends on Annamite nation nationals having appropriate conservation skills, knowledge and passion, and on robust scientifically driven national conservation policies and practices.

We are committed to building the conservation capability and capacity of Annamite nation citizens and to creating national conservation champions and leaders, together with bringing innovation in conservation tools and technology to this under-resourced region and breaking away from a long-standing model of foreigner-led technical input.

We aim to expand our reach by empowering partner organizations and other Annamite stakeholders to engage effectively in Annamite conservation interventions and thus greatly multiply future positive outcomes.

Our Goals and Outcomes

+ **Long-term Outcome:** For the Annamite Mountains Bioregion to have the necessary national capacity, including the tools, skills, and knowledge, as well as the ability to mobilize financial resources, effectively to manage the region's biodiversity. With Annamite conservation self-reliant, networking and collaborating with global actors as equal partners.

+ **10 year Goals:** Within the next 5-10 years we aim to establish a physical, *in situ*, state-of-the-art Annamite Mountains Research and Conservation Center as an incubator for Annamite conservation capacity development and to serve as a hub for global networking to bring state-of-the-art science to the Annamites.

+ **2025-2027 Actions:** We will continue to develop the capability and capacity of our Annamite Mountains Research and Conservation Team, training and mentoring new and existing team members and adding new scent detection dogs; to take concrete steps towards development of the proposed research and conservation center, including an initial feasibility study; to strengthen and build partnerships with government and civil society to expand opportunities for capacity building; and to continue developing our global partner network to bring state-of-the-art science to the Annamites.

3. Applied Research

Gaps in knowledge of Annamite biodiversity pose a critical impediment to achieving effective solutions, and a primary factor placing species at the precipice of extinction.

Our Goals and Outcomes

+ **Long-term Outcome:** Applied conservation research, explicitly developed and designed to answer pivotal questions about biodiversity conservation strategy, is used to guide decision making and prioritisation of conservation interventions across the Annamites to manage all Annamite biodiversity effectively.

+ **10 year Goals:** To lead, in collaboration with engaged stakeholders, applied research to enhance understanding of the characteristics of species facing imminent global extinction and the distribution of Annamite biodiversity, and objectively to test and evaluate innovative conservation *in situ* interventions and their outcomes, explicitly to feed into the development, refinement and prioritisation of pivotal conservation interventions to prevent unrecoverable biodiversity loss in the Annamites. Our proposed research and conservation center, as discussed earlier, will serve as the base for this research.

+ **2025-2027 Actions:** During 2025-2027 we will focus on continuing the development of concepts and strategies for applied research, networking to form research partnerships with stakeholders and donors, developing, if appropriate, a scientific 'think-tank' to guide the research, and commence collaborative pilot phase research as opportunities arise.

4. Priority Setting

Promote stakeholder synergy, optimal resource allocation, and maximized conservation gain by use of globally applicable metrics and prioritization tools to prevent unrecoverable biodiversity loss.

Our Goals and Outcomes

+ **Long-term Outcome:** Precise metrics and tools for objectively assessing, measuring and prioritising interventions for unrecoverable biodiversity loss, and quantification of conservation gain / loss in conservation outcomes, are used scientifically and objectively to guide conservation interventions across the Annamites to manage all Annamite biodiversity effectively.

+ **10 year Goals:** To provide scientific confidence in our strategy and those of other stakeholders in the region we, along with partners, will investigate, develop and use appropriate biodiversity conservation metrics and tools for scientific objective decision making and prioritization. We will include a metric to measure unrecoverable biodiversity loss and to form the basis for conservation gain / loss calculations, with the potential to be monetized. We will use prioritization tools objectively to assess, based primarily on probability of successful outcomes and future conservation gain, optimal conservation interventions between species, sites, and strategies. These will be used to develop our future strategies, conservation targets, *in situ* management plans and other conservation interventions.

+ **2025-2027 Actions:** During 2025-2027 we will focus on continuing the development of concepts and strategies for appropriate metrics and tools, networking to form working partnerships with stakeholders and donors, developing, if appropriate, a scientific 'think-tank' to lead the 'science' behind appropriate metrics and tools, and commencing a collaborative pilot phase of metrics and tools development as opportunities arise.

Success Built on Partnerships and Collaboration

Our success is built on outstanding partnerships. To achieve our vision for the Annamite Mountains Bioregion and bring much needed critical resources and expertise, we will continually seek opportunities to form strategic partnerships in the years ahead.

Technical partnerships

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Government of Lao

Through all aspects of our work, we work in collaboration with the Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

CyberTracker

Since the early 1990s, CyberTracker Conservation has been the international goldstandard for certifying the skill of wildlife trackers, elevating animal tracking to a dedicated discipline of focused study. In 2020, CyberTracker began collaborating with the Saola Foundation and is now one of our key technical partners in the Saola search.
Link to website

WCS Lao PDR

In 2021, we formed a vital alliance with the Wildlife Conservation Society's Lao PDR Program. This partnership is built on shared goals for the Annamites, and we work collaboratively together in Bolikhamxay Province of Lao, where our search for Saolas is ongoing, and where in 2024 we verified the existence of a new species of leaf monkey.
Link to website

WCS Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory

In 2021, we partnered with the Wildlife Conservation Society's Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory at the Bronx Zoo in New York. to develop a Saola specific, rapid, field-friendly DNA test kit. When our trackers or detection dogs find a potential source of Saola DNA, such as dung, the kit can return a result within two hours. This has been a revolutionary advancement over waiting for weeks or months for a test result from a lab – and an absolute game-changer in the search for Saolas.
Link to website

Working Dogs for Conservation

Beginning in 2022, we partnered with Working Dogs for Conservation, the world's leading conservation detection dog organization, to establish the first-ever national Lao scent detection dog unit. This represents a crucial component of the Saola search, and an invaluable future asset in equipping Annamite nations with the capacity and tools for effective Annamite Mountains Bioregion biodiversity conservation.
Link to website

Partners who have invested at least $50,000 within one year in the Saola Foundation's Saola search program

Donor partnerships

We are grateful to all our donors who have supported our journey to date and for their confidence in our mission. Particularly in the case of the Saola, this really is the last chance to save it from extinction - so to each person, organization and institution that has recognized the urgency to take action and make our work possible, we are truly thankful. This support has been invaluable in establishing and nurturing our Annamite Mountains Research and Conservation Team, paving a future for sustained, nationally led conservation efforts in the Annamite Bioregion.

We have ambitious plans to promote innovation in biodiversity conservation and greatly to reduce unrecoverable biodiversity loss throughout the Annamite Mountains Bioregion, transforming national conservation capacity, and creating a lasting legacy. This real and long-lasting legacy, which we are greatly confident is achievable, requires equally ambitious levels of financial investment from concerned donors who share our vision and deep commitment to preserving the wonderful biodiversity and cultural richness of the Annamites.

We are kindly inviting you to support our vision, as existing or new donors, in whatever ways are appropriate for you. We are committed to diversifying our funding, seeking out sustainable solutions such as Nature-Based Financing, which we believe offer long-term solutions for ensuring that the Annamite Mountains Bioregion has the resources needed to achieve our vision in full.

Global Outreach

The Saola Foundation has been featured in global media platforms like The Guardian, The Revelator, Enasia, and Mongabay. Our growing audience engages daily with incredible stories and images from the Annamite Mountains Bioregion via social media, podcasts, and newsletters. We are also exploring collaborations with nature filmmakers to reach a worldwide audience and further draw attention and resources to the region.

SAOLA
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FOR
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Saola Foundation
512 N 50th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53208 USA
info@saolafoundation.org

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