

## KuangXi Waterfall Forest Park

Managed by: Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Department, District Information, Culture and Tourism Office, and Thapene community  
Financed by: Collection of park entrance fee



Picture: KuangXi Waterfall. Source: <https://goo.gl/images/RGrVRD>

**KuangXi Waterfall Forest Park** is located in Luang Prabang district and province, approximately 25 km south of Luang Prabang town. It was proclaimed as the first Lao PDR's park in 1984, even before the establishment of the National Biodiversity Conservation Areas in 1993. It was first opened to public in 1987 and claimed the national heritage title in 1993. The park includes Xi river headwater that provides irrigation water to agriculture land for nearby communities and forms the KuangXi Waterfall, which is one of the iconic and the most visited waterfalls of Lao PDR.

The KuangXi Forest Park covers the area of 9,669 ha which is broken down into three main sections: widen protected area (9,232 ha), provincial conservation forest (421 ha) and the tourism zone (16 ha). It consists of the moist evergreen forest gallery surrounded by slopes and uplands of the catchment that are generally covered by degraded forest at different stages of regrowth. It is home to 52 bird species, 22 reptiles, and 32 mammal species, of which seven are recognized by the IUCN as being endangered or at risk of being endangered, including Asiatic Black Bear, Pigmy Loris, Marbled Cat, Asian Golden Cat, Dhole, Malayan Porcupine, and the Serow (Site Management Plan, 2007).

**Local communities.** Prior to the year Luang Prabang became the UNESCO's World Heritage Site in 1995, the area was home to five villages—two Khmmu villages, two Lao villages and one Hmong village—that had resided in the area for more than two centuries. They were peasant

farmers who depended heavily on forests, non-timber forest products and subsistence agriculture for livelihoods. During 1995-1996 the villagers were relocated for the creation of the catchment area to allow the development of KuangXi Waterfall Park for recreational and conservation purposes. The villagers were relocated to nearby designated vacant land and to already existing villages outside the catchment boundary, leaving only Thapene Village together with the district government responsible for the park management.

The early years of resettlement were difficult for the villagers to gain livelihoods due to the restriction imposed on local communities not to forage in the catchment area, but they received compensation in cash and in kind (such as the distribution of iron roofs, clear land for housing and production, irrigation and water supply systems, among others) from the provincial government to begin with. After two decades of resettlement, today the villagers have become more settled and appreciated the provision of public infrastructure and social services available in their [new] villages. In terms of incomes and livelihoods, local communities are largely holding small-scale rainfed agriculture, plantations, handicraft, and provide goods and services for tourism.

### **Field visit plan on Sep 29, 2017**

**Note: Please wear comfortable clothing, no high heels please.**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activities</b>
07:30	Depart from hotels to Thapene village
08:10	Walking to Ban Nam Ork
08:30	Meeting LPB DAFO, Forest Management in the KuangSi Waterfall catchment area
09:20	Snacks
09:40	Reforestation to enhance forest cover in the catchment
10:40	Walking down to KuangSi Waterfall area
11:20	Sight-seeing (waterfall, bear rescue center...)
12:00	Lunch at the Waterfall
13:30	Travel to Ban Naouan
13:45	Meeting villagers
14:45	Travel to hotels
15:05	Arrive at the hotels (End of the trip)

\*\*For more information, please contact the organizing team\*\*