

**Freshwater Fishes of Northern Vietnam. A preliminary check-list of the fishes known or expected to occur in northern Vietnam with comments on systematics and nomenclature.** Kottelat, M., 2001. Environment and Social Development Unit, East Asia and Pacific region, The World Bank. 123 pp, 162 figs.

This book reports on two surveys conducted in 1998 and 1999, of which the latter was curtailed. This is the first systematics report published by the Environment and Social Development Unit of the World Bank. It is divided into two parts: the first part consists of a preliminary checklist of the fishes known or expected to occur in northern Vietnam; and the second part (in three annexes) deals with some important but poorly known Vietnamese freshwater fish literature. This report also highlights the critical situation of biological research in the Indochinese region, due in part to the Vietnam's political isolation during and just after the Vietnam War.

Two hundred and sixty-eight native freshwater fish species are reported in the preliminary checklist. Re-evaluation of the systematic status and nomenclature of these species is carried out, albeit without actual examination of specimens in some cases. The nomenclatural actions and changes made, and a comparative list of fish names used in the current report and by Mai (1978) are summarised in two separate tables. This report also contributes significantly to conforming the nomenclature of the northern Vietnamese and southern Chinese fishes to the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature.

In Annex 1, selected parts of a report by Mai (1978) are translated into English and presented with no alteration. This section is rather confusing due to the lack of consistency of legend used. In Annex 2, problems with the nomenclatural system for Vietnamese freshwater fishes proposed by Nguyen & Daon (1969), and the validity of that publication are raised, although no clear solution is suggested. The original paper by Nguyen & Daon (1969) is reproduced in Annex 3.

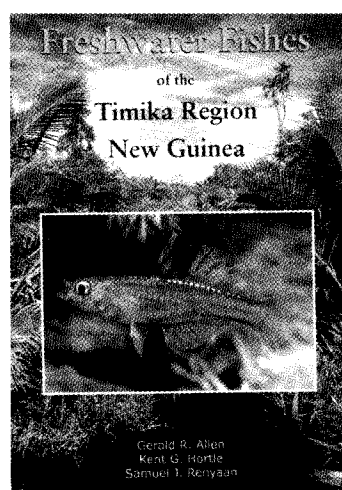
The last part of the report features well-taken photographs of the fishes (162 figures) encountered mainly from the 1999 trip. There are some minor errors in the figure captions - misspelling of names in Fig. 71 (*Balitora kwangsiensis*); and wrong genera names for Fig. 78 (*Beaufortia daon*) and Fig. 103 (*Hemibagrus pluriradiatus*). Some of the material listed is available only from the figures provided, which is a pity. This minor point aside, this is a very important effort and an important piece of work for ichthyologists working on the freshwater fishes of Southeast Asia.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Mai, D. Y., 1978. Nha xuất Ban Khoa Hoc Va Ky Thuat, Ha Noi [Identification of freshwater fishes of northern Viet Nam]. 339 pp. [In Vietnamese].
- Nguyen V. H. & L. H. Doan, 1969. Mot so dan lieu ve Thanh, nguon goc va su phan bo cac loai trong ho ca chep o mien bac Vietnam [Some data on composition, origin, and distribution of cyprinid species in northern Vietnam]. Trình bày tại hội nghị học thuật ngành thủy sản lần thứ 1 [First Scientific Seminar of Fisheries Division]. 19 pp. [In Vietnamese].

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**Freshwater Fishes of the Timika Region New Guinea.** Allen, G. R., K. G. Hurtle & S. J. Renyaan, 2000. P. T. Freeport Indonesia and Tropical Reef Research. viii+175 pp. ISBN 0-646-40480-6.

This is the first book in a series of field guides to the biodiversity of the Timika Region of southern Indonesian New Guinea. The

Timika Region lies between the Otakwa and Mamoia river basins, and the Central Dividing Range in the interior. According to the authors, the fish fauna there was virtually unknown until Freeport Indonesia's Environmental Laboratory began its quarterly sampling program there in 1995.

The taxonomy is up-to-date as first author Dr. Gerald Allen is an internationally recognised authority on both freshwater and coral reef fishes of the Australia-New Guinea region. In this comprehensive guide, 93 native species and five feral species of freshwater fish are presented. Two of the native species are new to science. The formal descriptions of the apogonid *Glossamia timika* and eleotrid *Oxyeleotris stagnosticola*, appended at the rear end of the book do not interfere with the flow of the book's concise format.