

# The Story of Ban Ho commune

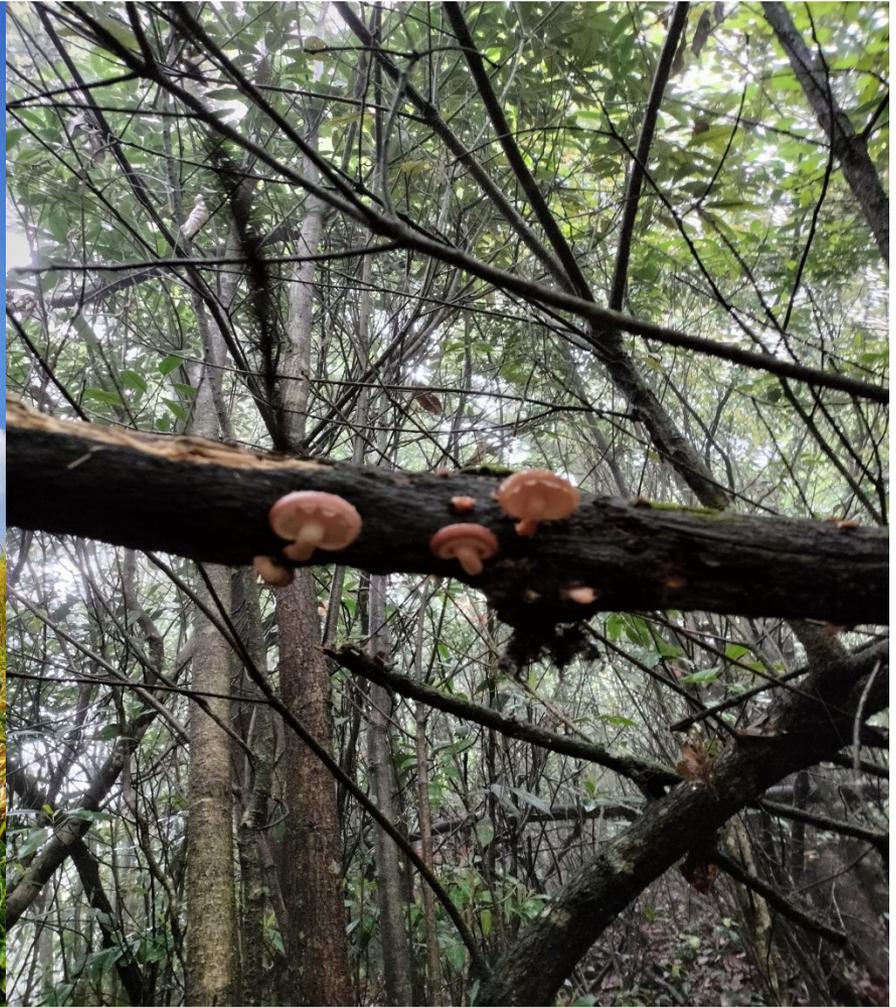
By: Sung A Kinh



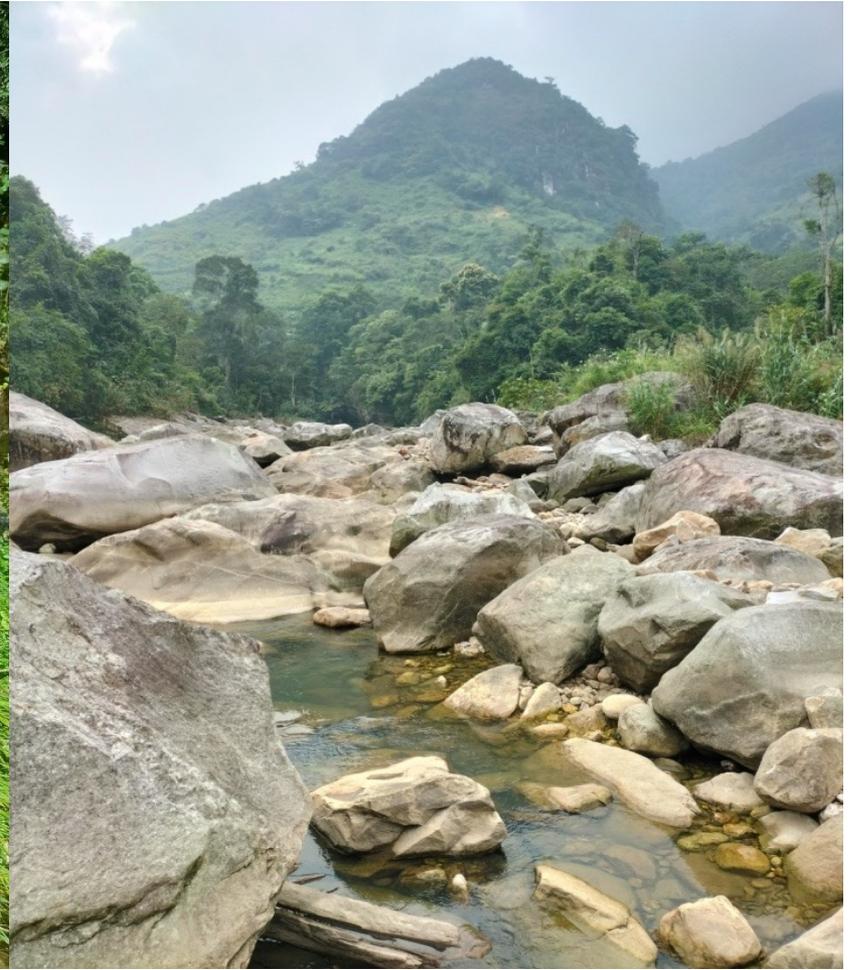
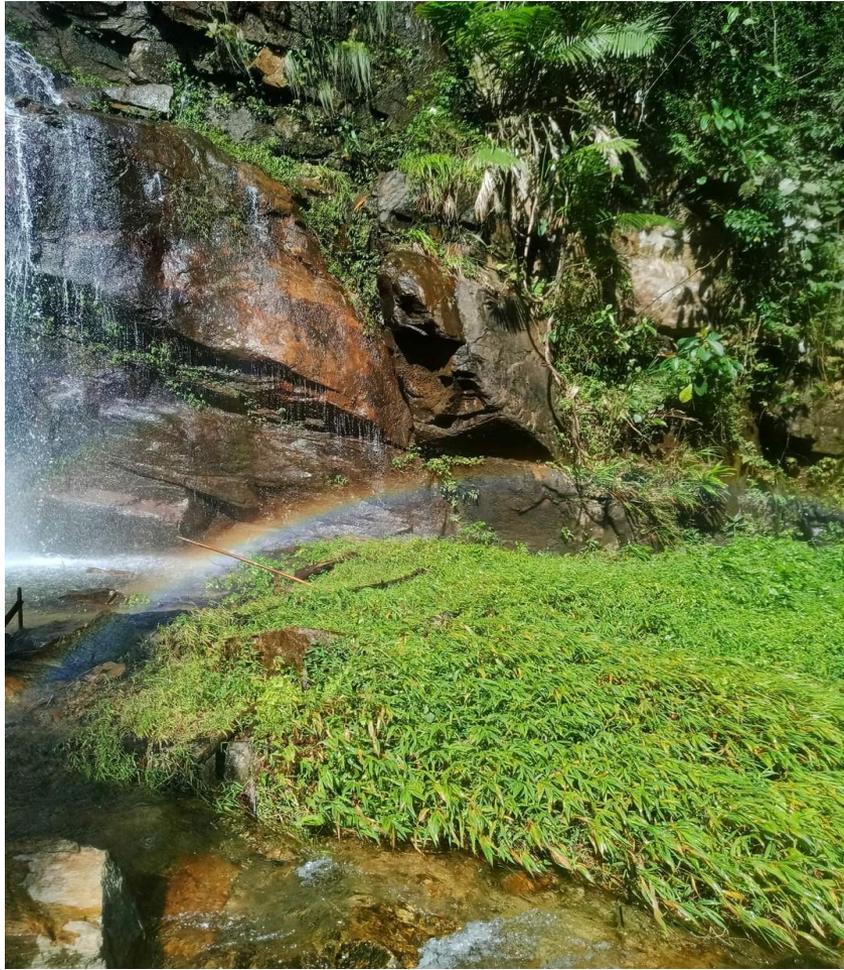
Once upon a time, in the Northwest mountainous area of Sapa, there was a village named Ban Ho. Many ethnic people such as Tay, Dao, and Mong lived there.



The people mostly lived off rice and crops, and local tourism.



Ban Ho was one of the tourists' favorite places in Sa Pa. It has majestic natural landscapes, eye-catching terraced rice fields, splendid Muong Hoa valley, and various fauna and flora.



Two clean and cool streams flow through the village, La Ve stream and Muong Hoa stream, creating a peaceful and beautiful sight for the whole town and its people's communal activities.



Came to Ban Ho, we can experience unique traditional cultural activities of local ethnic people, such as the spring festival, Xòe dance festival, Long Tong (Going To The Field) festival, and Then singing festival.



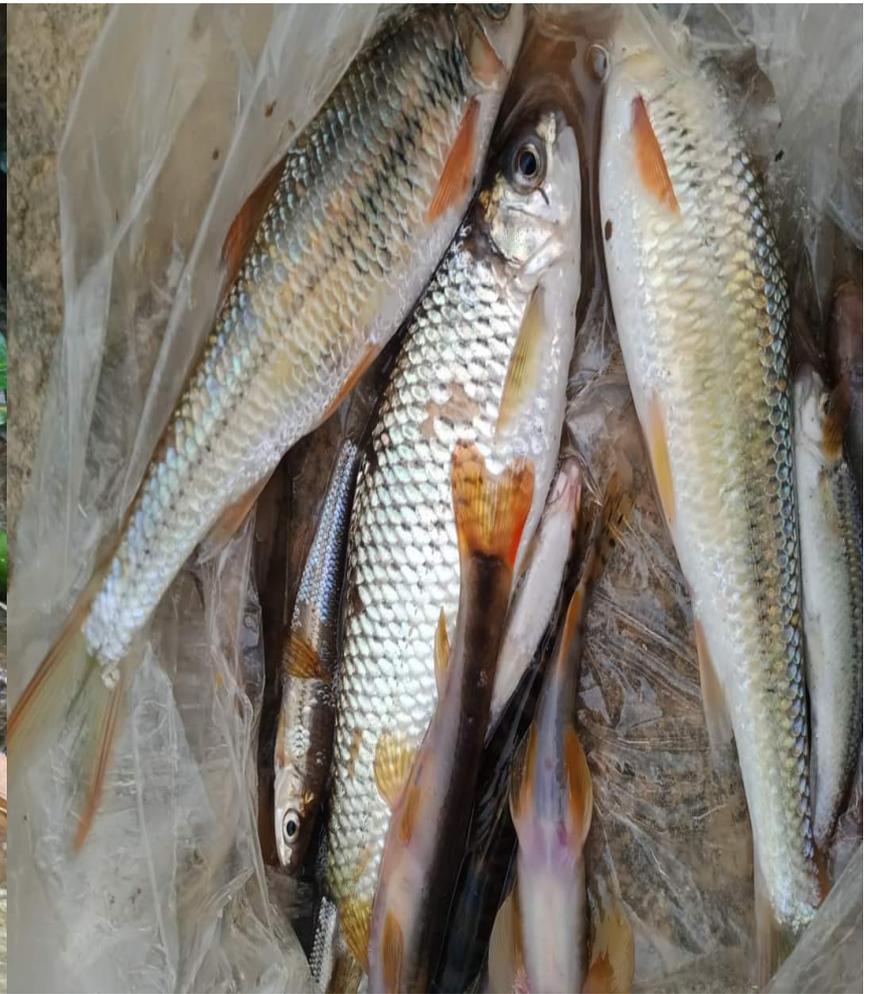
One day in 2016, a hydropower plant was established (Su Pan 1) that tremendously reduced the stream water in the downstream area of Ban Ho commune.



Along with the plant, climate change, droughts, and floods due to abnormal heatwaves and rain have dramatically impacted the lives of the people here.



There was not enough water for the plants, and the fields became barren. The soil, crops, animals, and plants were swept away by floods



Stream faunas - Ban Ho's local specialties, such as stream carp, Chien fish (*Bagarius bagarius*), catfish, eel, prawn, and shrimp, have decreased in number and were at risk of extinction.



The arrival of tourists has declined since then.



To overcome the difficulties, people in the village have worked together to rebuild it.



They have ceaselessly planted more trees, especially the tea plant, to improve their earnings and stop the floods after rain.



They have planted bamboo trees by the streams to stop erosion. They have applied intensive farming to crops such as corn, sweet potato, and jicama.



Instead of hunting mountainous and stream animals, they have changed to raising pigs and commercial cows or building freshwater fish, salmon, and caviar farms.



Moreover, they have invested in and developed local tourism to attract more tourists.



With great care and help and timely actions of the local government and volunteers from the commune, the effect of the hydropower plant, natural disasters, and climate change has been partly reduced, making Ban Ho's deprivation less severe.



The people in Ban Ho have actively improved their income and preserved and promoted their cultural identity. Their lives gradually stabilized and developed. Ban Ho has become an interesting tourist attraction.