

World's 1st Saola breeding center formed in Vietnam

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HANOI, July 11 (Xinhua) -- The world's first center for breeding Saola, a critically endangered hoofed mammals, is being constructed in Vietnam's central region.

The center in Bach Ma National Park in Thua Thien Hue province is scheduled to open next year as a joint effort by the Saola World Working Group and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, which will help tackle the ungulate endemic, local online newspaper VnExpress quoted the park's management board as saying on Tuesday.

Since Saola, the *pseudoryx nghetinhensis*, was spotted for the first time in 1992, scientists have documented this rare species in the wild on only four occasions, according to the World Wild Fund. The latest recorded sighting of Saola was in 2013 in central Vietnam.

Saola is recognized by two parallel horns with sharp ends, which can reach 51 centimeters in length and are found on both males and females.

Meaning "spindle horns" in Vietnamese, Saola is a cousin of cattle but resembles an antelope.