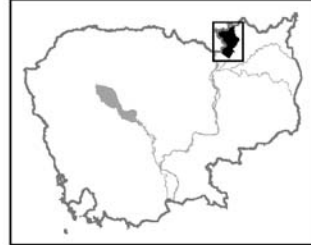


Western Siem Pang

Criteria A1, A3 & A4i

Province(s):	Stung Treng
District(s):	Siem Pang, Sesan and Stung Treng
Area (ha):	138,137
Altitude (m asl):	55 to 186
Central coordinates:	14°07'N 106°14'E



General description

The IBA comprises of an area of open deciduous dipterocarp forest in western Siem Pang District, which is bordered to the east by the Sekong River, and to the north and west by Xe Pian Protected Area in Laos. The topography of the IBA is dominated by a flat plain, which rises in the extreme north, close to the international border with Laos, to form a series of low hills. The vegetation of the IBA is dominated by deciduous dipterocarp forest, which is relatively open in places and denser in others, and has a grassy understorey. Scattered throughout the forest are a number of pools and seasonally wet meadows. The western bank of the Sekong River supports a strip of tall gallery forest, while the hills in the north of the IBA support semi-evergreen forest. Along the western bank of the Sekong River, in the area to the west of Siem Pang town, and along the road between Siem Pang town and Road No. 13, areas of forest have been converted into agricultural land, much of which is only cultivated during the rainy season.

The IBA supports the most significant population of the globally critical White-shouldered Ibis *Pseudibis davisoni* yet known in Cambodia. This species has been observed at a number of wetlands on the flat plain, close to Siem Pang town, and is reported to breed in the west of the district, close to the international border with Laos. The IBA also supports a range of other globally threatened and near-threatened bird species, characteristic of the dry forests of central Indochina, including vultures, Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus*, Sarus Crane *Grus antigone*, Giant Ibis *Pseudibis gigantea*, Lesser Adjutant *Leptoptilos javanicus* and Asian Golden Weaver *Ploceus hypoxanthus*.

Key bird species

Common name	Scientific name	IBA criteria
Green Peafowl	<i>Pavo muticus</i>	A1
Sarus Crane	<i>Grus antigone</i>	A1
Grey-headed Fish Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>	A1
White-rumped Vulture	<i>Gyps bengalensis</i>	A1
Red-headed Vulture	<i>Sarcogyps calvus</i>	A1
Greater Spotted Eagle	<i>Aquila clanga</i>	A1
White-shouldered Ibis	<i>Pseudibis davisoni</i>	A1
Giant Ibis	<i>P. gigantea</i>	A1 A4i
Black-necked Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i>	A1
Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>	A1
Asian Golden Weaver	<i>Ploceus hypoxanthus</i>	A1

Biome restricted species

Two species are restricted to the Indochinese Tropical Moist Forests and eleven to the Indo-Malayan Tropical Dry Zone (see Appendix 4).

Globally threatened primate species

Long-tailed Macaque *Macaca fascicularis* and Silvered Langur *Semnopithecus cristatus*.

Globally threatened elephant and ungulate species

Eld's Deer *Cervus eldii*, Gaur *Bos gaurus* and Banteng *B. javanicus*.

Threats to biodiversity

Although grazing of livestock, small-scale extraction of timber, clearance of forest for cultivation, and general human activity take place at low levels within the IBA, it is notable that many of the field records of White-shouldered Ibis have come from areas with moderate to high levels of disturbance. Perhaps a greater potential threat to the population of White-shouldered Ibis is over-exploitation, for example, in 1999, two juveniles were opportunistically collected from nest in the IBA. One obstacle to the conservation of this species is a lack of understanding of its ecology and the reasons for its dramatic decline in other parts of its range. The biggest potential threat to biodiversity at the IBA is posed by plans to grant a land concession in western Siem Pang District for the establishment of a plantation, which would likely have irreversible impacts on the habitat of White-shouldered Ibis and other globally threatened and near-threatened bird species.

Recommendations

- Any development or logging in the area under its current designation as land concession should not be undertaken without a full environmental impact assessment and a proper understanding of the potential negative effects of such development on the habitats of White-shouldered Ibis.
- Further surveys and research across the whole area from the Sekong River to the international border with Laos should be undertaken in both wet and dry seasons, in order to better understand the distribution and ecology of White-shouldered Ibis.
- Serious consideration should be given to affording strict protection to key areas for White-shouldered Ibis as documented by the above surveys and research.
- Immigration, illegal settlement and land encroachment into the most important and critical areas across the IBA should be discouraged.

References

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