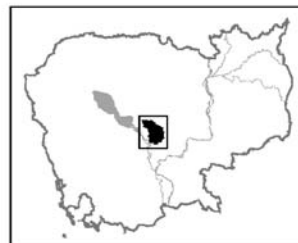


## Stung Sen / Santuk / Baray

Criteria A1, A3 &amp; A4i

<b>Province(s):</b>	Kampong Thom, Kampong Cham and Kampong Chhnang
<b>District(s):</b>	Kampong Svay, Santuk, Stung Sen, Baray, Batheay, Chul Kiri and Kampong Leng
<b>Area (ha):</b>	109,081
<b>Altitude (m asl):</b>	4 to 16
<b>Central coordinates:</b>	12°25'N 104°53'E

**General description**

The IBA is located to the south of Kampong Thom town, within the inundation zone of Tonle Sap Lake. The IBA comprises one of the largest remnant tracts of seasonally inundated grassland within the Tonle Sap floodplain, variably influenced on its eastern and northern fringes by deepwater rice. This habitat is mixed with scattered, but often extensive, areas of dense scrub, lotus swamps, sedge beds, and, in the dry season, numerous small to medium-sized ponds. At the height of the wet season (August-October), the whole IBA is inundated. Parts of the IBA lie within Tonle Sap Multiple Use Area, designated under the 1993 Royal Decree on Protected Areas, and Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve.

The IBA is a very important breeding site for Bengal Florican *Houbaropsis bengalensis* during the dry season (December to May). In the wet season (May to July), a number of non-breeding waterbirds visit the site, including adjutants *Leptoptilos* spp., Painted Stork *Mycteria leucocephala* and Asian Openbill *Anastomus oscitans*. In addition, the IBA supports a substantial wintering population of Manchurian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus tangorum*, as well as small numbers of wintering Greater Spotted and Imperial Eagles *Aquila clanga* and *A. heliaca*. In addition, the largest flock of White-shouldered Ibis *Pseudibis davisoni* recorded in Cambodia in recent decades was observed here in 1999.

**Key bird species**

Common name	Scientific name	IBA criteria
Bengal Florican	<i>Houbaropsis bengalensis</i>	A1
Sarus Crane	<i>Grus antigone</i>	A1
Grey-headed Fish Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>	A1
Greater Spotted Eagle	<i>Aquila clanga</i>	A1
Imperial Eagle	<i>A. heliaca</i>	A1
Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	A1
White-shouldered Ibis	<i>Pseudibis davisoni</i>	A1
Spot-billed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus philippensis</i>	A1
Milky Stork	<i>Mycteria cinerea</i>	A1
Painted Stork	<i>M. leucocephala</i>	A1
Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	A4i
Black-necked Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i>	A1
Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>	A1
Greater Adjutant	<i>L. dubius</i>	A1 A4i
Manchurian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus tangorum</i>	A1
Asian Golden Weaver	<i>Ploceus hypoxanthus</i>	A1

**Biome restricted species**

One species is restricted to the Indo-Malayan Tropical Dry Zone and one to the Indo-Gangetic Plains (see Appendix 4).

**Globally threatened primate species**

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

**Threats to biodiversity**

Although there is no permanent human settlement within the seasonally inundated area, a number of villages and associated rice paddies are situated at the limit of the inundation zone. During the dry season, as floodwaters recede, large numbers of people move into the inundation zone, from a radius of over 50 km away, to fish, harvest grasses, gather brushwood and wetland plants, and graze domestic livestock in herds that can number several hundred animals. This causes high levels of disturbance throughout large areas of the IBA. Deepwater rice is cultivated annually in the eastern and northern parts of the IBA. During this period, much of the area is ploughed by tractor, which presents a serious threat to nesting Bengal Floricans, in the form of disturbance and nest destruction. A potential future threat is further conversion of grassland areas to deepwater rice cultivation.

Another major threat to biodiversity at the IBA is hunting for both food and trade, which affects all waterbirds in the area, and also Bengal Florican. Hunting has almost certainly accounted for a major decline in florican numbers in the recent past. However, conservation interventions over the last two years appear to have significantly reduced hunting levels in the IBA.

**Recommendations**

- The current law enforcement initiative focused on the hunting and trade of key species, particularly Bengal Florican and large waterbirds should be expanded throughout the area.
- The current community awareness initiative begun in Kruos Kraom and adjacent areas should be expanded throughout the IBA.
- Further research should be carried out on the relative ecological importance of seasonally flooded grassland and deepwater rice areas, particularly with regard to the conservation of Bengal Florican.
- Any further agricultural development, particularly expansion of deepwater rice, should not be undertaken without a full environmental impact assessment and a proper understanding, based on the above, of the potential effects of conversion of the semi-natural ecosystems to agriculture.

**References**

- Davidson, P. (2001) A further twelve new species for Cambodia. *Cambodia Bird News* 7: 26-35
- Goes, F. ed. (2000) Recent sightings. *Cambodia Bird News* 6: 44-51.
- Goes, F. and Davidson, P. eds. (2002) Recent sightings. *Cambodia Bird News* 9: 47-59.
- Goes, F., Hong Chamnan, Davidson, P. and Poole, C. M. (2001) *Bengal Florican* *Houbaropsis bengalensis conservation in Kampong Thom province, Cambodia*. Phnom Penh: Wildlife Conservation Society.
- Sam Veasna (1999) *Survey for Sarus Crane and other endangered bird species in southern Kampong Thom province, Cambodia*. Unpublished report to the Oriental Bird Club.
- Seng Kim Hout *et al.* (2002) *Field survey of seasonally flooded wetlands located in the east of Tonle Sap Lake in Kampong Thom and Siem Reap provinces*. Unpublished report to the Wildlife Conservation Society Cambodia Program and the BirdLife International Vietnam Programme.