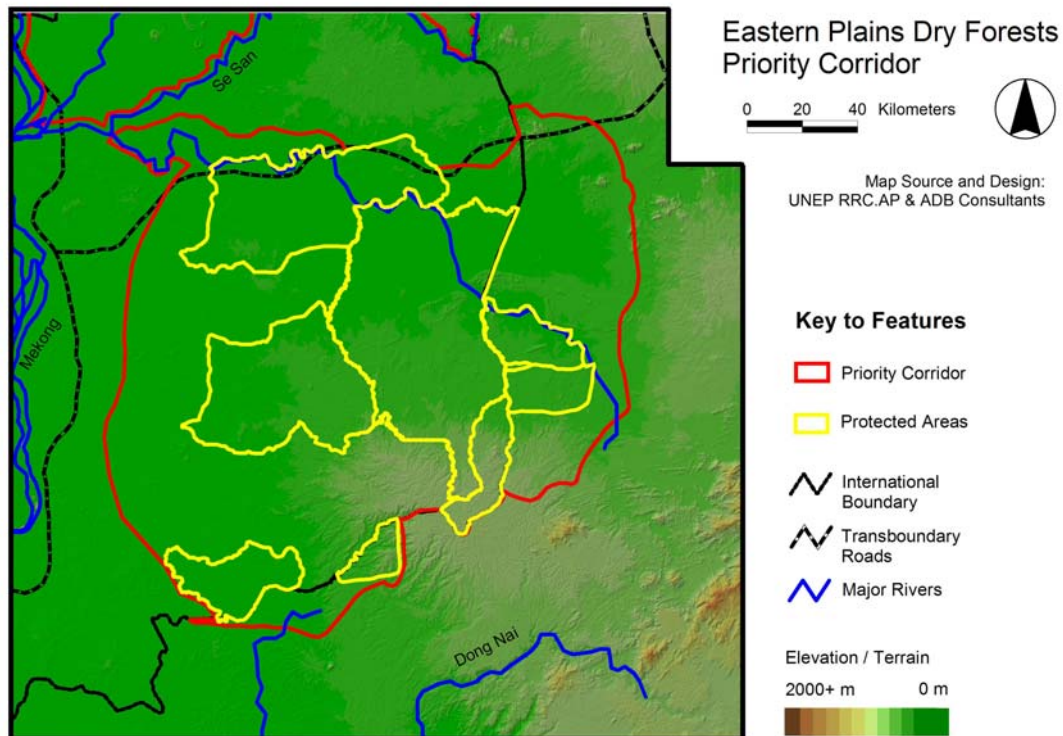


ANNEX 3.5: Description of GMS Priority Biodiversity Conservation Corridors

Figure 1: Eastern Plains Dry Forest



Eastern Plains Dry Forests

Countries: Cambodia and Vietnam

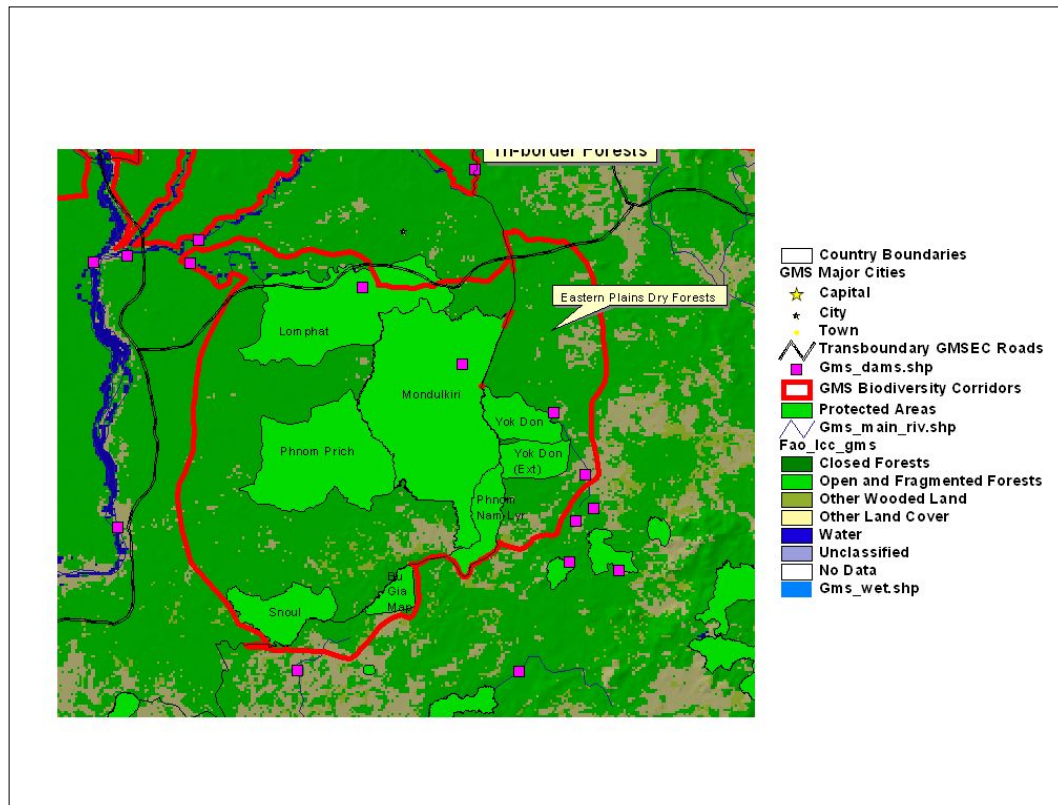
Provinces: Mondul Kiri, Kracheh, and Rotank Kiri (Cambodia);
Dac Lac, Binh Phouc, and Gia Lai (Vietnam)

The Eastern Plains Dry Forests GMSBCC represents the Central Indochina Dry Forests ecoregion, but also includes smaller extents of the Southeastern Indochina Dry Evergreen Forests ecoregion in the southern part of the landscape.

The dominant vegetation is the deciduous Dry Dipterocarp Forest that forms an open forest or woodland community. The dominant species are deciduous Dipterocarpaceae, especially *Shorea siamensis*, *S. obtusa*, *Dipterocarpus obtusifolius*, and *D. tuberculatus*. Ground fires are common, and the forest association is considered to be a fire climax community.

The terrain is largely flat with a few scattered hills and small, seasonal wetlands. The habitat is considered to be ideal for large ungulates. This could be one of the few places where the Kouprey (*Bos sauveli*) may still be found.

Figure 2: The Eastern Plains Dry Forests GMSBCC, showing the protected areas, major transnational roads, dams, and remaining forest cover



The major protected areas in the landscape include Yok Don NP, Yok Don Extension, and Bu Gia Map in Vietnam and Snoul WS, Lomphat WS, Phnom Prich WS, and Phnom Nam Lyr WS and the Mondulkiri protected forest in Cambodia (Figure 2). The Mondulkiri Protected Forests link Lomphat, Phnom Prich, Phnom Nam Lyr and the Yok Don complex in Vietnam. Snoul and Bu Gia Map are isolated from this large protected areas complex.

The landscape supports many large and wide-ranging species, especially the large mammals and birds that are characteristic of the dry forests of Indochina, such as the Asian Elephant, Tiger, Banteng, Gaur, Wild Water Buffalo, and several large birds such as Sarus Crane, Giant Ibis, Lesser Adjutant, Green Peafowl, Long-billed Vulture, White-rumped Vulture, and White-shouldered Ibis. The southern part of the GMSBC falls within the southern slopes of the Annamites and support Sun Bear, Yellow-cheeked Crested Gibbon, and Douc Langur. Many of these species are Globally Threatened landscape species. Because the habitat is still relatively intact and the protected areas complex in the landscape represents a large core area, this landscape has a high potential to conserve these endangered species.

Key Conservation Issues and Threats to Biodiversity

Hunting is rife; animals are hunted for both subsistence and trade. The larger species such as tigers, elephants, gaur, and the large birds such as cranes and peacock are especially at risk.

Immigration into the region is resulting in widespread conversion of the habitat into agriculture. The valuable wetlands are especially vulnerable to conversion into rice cultivation.

Impact of the GMSEC

The R6 road runs parallel to, but outside, the western boundary of the landscape (Figure 2). But Route R9 heads east into Vietnam through the Lomphat WS, which is an important core protected area in the landscape. The zones of influence of both roads extend deep into the core protected areas complex of the landscape.

Five dams have been planned or proposed within this landscape. Six others are within 10km of the GMSBCC. Three of the dams, the Lower Sre Pok3, Sre Pok, and Ea Tung along the Sre Pok River will have serious impacts on the protected areas complex by inundating important wildlife habitat.