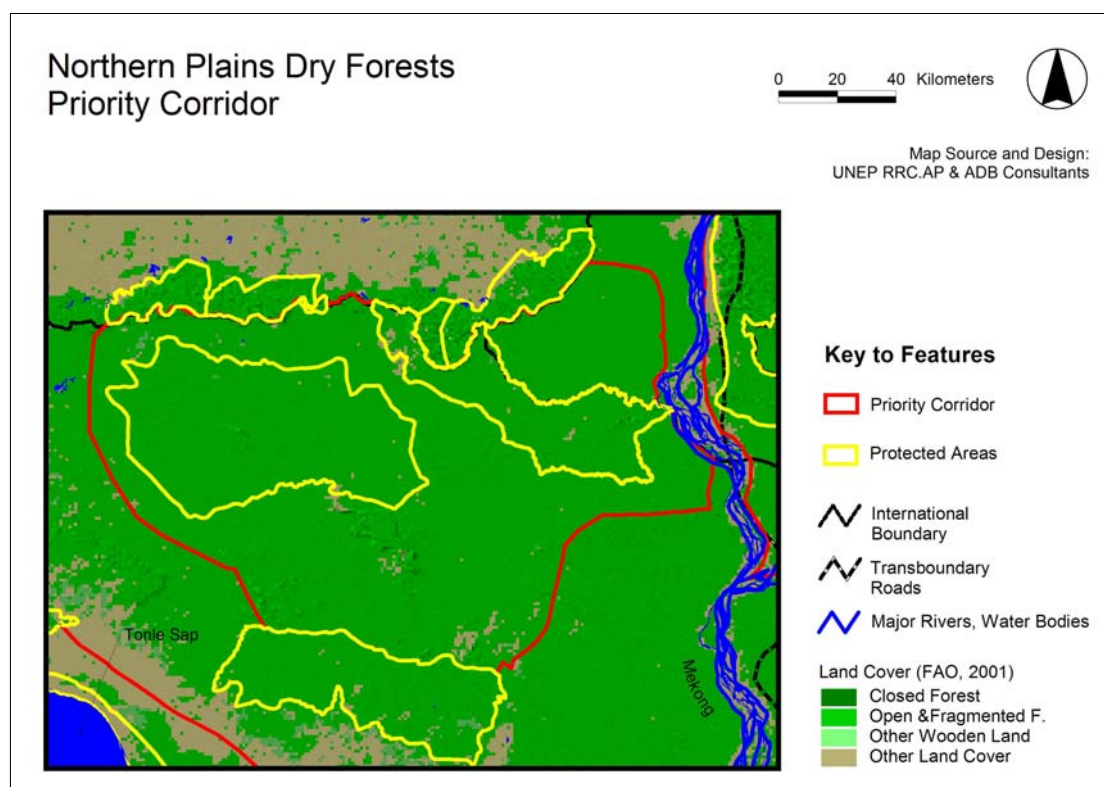


ANNEX 3.4 Description of GMS Priority Biodiversity Conservation Corridors

Figure 1: Northern Plains Dry Forest



Northern Plains Dry Forests

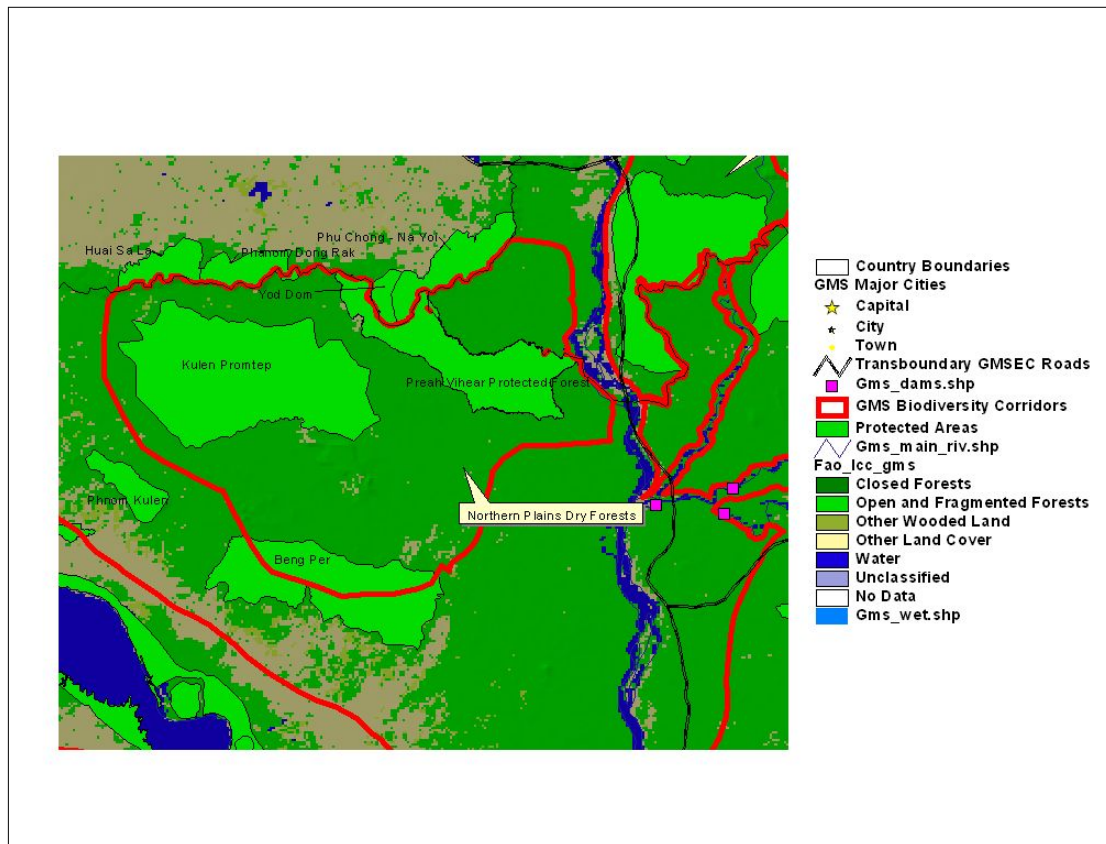
Countries: Cambodia and Laos

Provinces/Districts: Stung Treng, Preah Vihear, Otdar Meanchy, Siem Reap, and Kampong Thom (Cambodia); Champasak (Laos).

This GMSBCC, located in northern Cambodia and touches on southern Lao PDR, represents the Central Indochina Dry Forests and smaller extents of the Southeastern Indochina Dry Evergreen Forests ecoregions. While the former is characterized by deciduous species of Dipterocarpaceae such as *Shorea siamensis*, *S. obtusa*, *Dipterocarpus obtusifolius*, and *D. tuberculatus*, the latter forests also include giant *Ficus*, *Tetrameles*, and *Heritiera* among the emergent trees. Scattered throughout the landscape are seasonal pools, permanent marshlands, and large savanna grasslands.

The important protected areas include Kulen Promtep WS, Beng Per WS, and the Preah Vihear Protected Forest. All three are in Cambodia, although there are four other protected areas in Thailand that are adjacent to the northern boundary of the landscape (Figure 2).

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



While the Kulen Promtep Wildlife Sanctuary and Preah Vihear Protected Forest are separated by less than 10 km of intact habitat, the Beng Per WS is over 40 km to the south of Kulen Promtep. However, because of the intact habitat between the protected areas, there appears to be potential to maintain the habitat linkages.

The landscape supports several large, wide-ranging mammals and birds of conservation significance. The landscape is within a Level 1 Tiger Conservation Unit (Dinerstein *et al.* 1997). Recent surveys have also shown that the GMSBCC supports globally significant populations of several other highly threatened species, including Banteng, Wild Water Buffalo, White-winged Duck, Sarus Crane, Giant Ibis, Greater Adjutant, Lesser Adjutant, Long-billed Vulture, White-rumped Vulture, White-shouldered Ibis, and Siamese Crocodile (Baltzer *et al.* 2001). Many of these are landscape species. The region within the GMSBC is also considered to be important for conservation of the Red-headed Vulture, Greater Spotted Eagle, Black-necked Stork, and the Woolly-necked Stork (Baltzer *et al.* 2001).

Key Conservation Issues And Threats To Biodiversity

Human immigration and the accompanying habitat conversion for agriculture and settlements are considered to be significant threats. The important wetland habitats are especially vulnerable since they are suitable for conversion to rice paddies.

Although the level of hunting in the region is undocumented and unclear, patterns elsewhere in the region probably hold even within this GMSBCC.

Impacts of the GMSEC

The GMSBCC falls within the South 2 GMSEC (Figure 2). Route R6 runs to the east of the GMSBCC, but the zone of influence extends into the Preah Vihar Protected Forest.