**Region: South East Asia (Mainland)**

Countries Include: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia (Peninsular), Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam

**Biodiversity and Global Environmental Benefits Regional Highlights:**

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| Country | Country-level biodiversity significance |
| Cambodia | * Cambodia is separated into seven biodiversity management regions: the Southwestern coastal ranges and marine waters, Northern plains, Northeastern forest, Kampong Cham, Mekong Delta region, Tonle Sap floodplain, and the Northwestern region. The ecoregions are highlighted [here](https://opendevelopmentcambodia.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/09/Key-Biodiversity-and-Important-Bird-Area-Kbas-Ibas.jpg). Cambodia has some of the most threatened ecosystems in Southeast Asia, with declining forest and coastal resources largely due to economic expansion and exploitation.[[1]](#footnote-0) * In terms of range-size rarity the country is of low importance, with the exception of the Southern Cardamom and Elephant Mountains corridor. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate below the global average, 39.54 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) distributed throughout the country and include: [Central Oddar Meanchey](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/31501), [Stung Sen / Santuk / Baray](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/16672), [Stung / Prasat Balang](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/16668), among others. PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 35.84 percent. * A likely outdated IWGIA [Country Technical Notes on Indigenous Peoples’ Issues](https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/40224860/cambodia_ctn.pdf/02148186-48e9-4c08-bc09-b3565da70afb) for Cambodia is also provided. * Academic prioritization studies include a broader study on [community-based natural resource management in the Cardamom Mountains](https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/environmental-conservation/article/of-biodiversity-and-boundaries-a-case-study-of-communitybased-natural-resource-management-practice-in-the-cardamom-mountains-cambodia/78636BADBDE8C0BE3272E0D671337D74), an assessment on [Indigenous and community perceptions to Payment for Ecosystem Protection](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-90400-9_12) scheme in the Mekong, and a [trajectory study of forest landscapes](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00267-020-01290-9) that includes analysis of Indigenous Communal Tenure. * Cambodia contains several priority KBAs for the Indo-Burma Hotspot, this [CEPF profile](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/final.indoburma_indochina.ep_.pdf) contains extensive modeling of its protected areas system. Sites include the Stung Sen/Santuk/Baray, Mekong River, Prek Toal, and Preah Net Preah/Kra Lanh/Pourk, as well as neighboring KBAs. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are moderate throughout the country, but high in the Southern Cardamom and Elephant Mountains and Eastern Plains Dry Forests Corridor. * The primary land cover types are Agriculture - 8.27Mha; Forest - 6.16Mha; Shrubland - 2.98Mha; Wetland - 728kha; and Water - 413kha. * Cambodia has 5 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Cambodia.pdf). * Cambodia is below the global average of ocean health with considerable deficiencies in sustainable food provision and moderate gaps in clean waters. The country has high coastal protection, coastal livelihoods, and biodiversity. |
| Lao PDR | * Lao PDR, or Laos is a landlocked country in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula, with high forest/mountain cover, moderate biodiversity importance. Laos has five ecoregions including: the Annamite Range Moist Forests, Indochina Dry Forests, Northern Indochina Subtropical Moist Forests, Mekong River and its catchment. The Mekong river and its catchment is of particular conservation priority, with over 500 species of indigenous fish, and an estimated 8-11,000 species of plants.[[2]](#footnote-1) * In terms of range-size rarity the country is of moderate importance, with the exception of the Southern Upper Xe Kaman and Mekong River KBAs. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate above the global average, 45.48 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) distributed throughout the country and include: [Nam Ou River Headwaters](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/48968), [Chonabuly](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/22567), [Phou Kathong](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/22575), and [Nam Ghong](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/22570), among others. PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 44.04 percent. * This [report by the Global Association for People and the Environment](https://data.opendevelopmentmekong.net/dataset/protected-area-governance-and-equitable-access-in-the-lao-pdr/resource/78bc71dd-61a9-4b8c-b41f-2c1139c184d3?inner_span=True) highlights the role of Indigenous Peoples' and community conserved territories and areas (CCAs) in Cambodian conservation. * A slightly outdated IWGIA [Country Technical Notes on Indigenous Peoples’ Issues](https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/40224860/laos_ctn.pdf/24089e12-d0e8-43db-9fb8-978b48526499) for Laos is also provided, which includes maps of the country’s ethnic composition. * Laos contains two priority KBAs for the Indo-Burma Hotspot, this [CEPF profile](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/final.indoburma_indochina.ep_.pdf) contains extensive modeling of its protected areas system. Sites include the Southern Upper Xe Kaman and Mekong River KBAs. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are high throughout the country, with peaks in the Northeast of the country. * The primary land cover types are Shrubland - 9.91Mha; Forest - 9.59Mha; Agriculture - 4.48Mha; Water - 238kha; and Wetland - 97.4kha. * Laos has 2 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Lao-People-s-Democratic-Republic.pdf?1589506923). * Laos is landlocked and thus has no marine data. |
| Malaysia (Peninsular) | * Malaysia is one of the world’s megadiverse countries, with equal importance of its terrestrial and marine habitats. Due to a strong commitment by the national government at Rio in 1992, Malaysia’s forest cover remains high, covering over 50 percent of land area. Hill and montane forests have a high level of endemism, which rises with increases in altitude. Malaysia’s tropical peatlands are a highly vulnerable category of wetland, and provide significant ecosystem services from carbon storage to fish provision for local communities.[[3]](#footnote-2) * Malaysia’s coastal regions are dominated by mangroves, which cover 544 kHa of Malaysia’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Also within the EEZ, is the Coral Triangle area, which has the greatest concentration of marine biodiversity in the world. Malaysia’s coral reefs are predominantly located along the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah, and Sarawalk. Valuation of the ecosystem services of these reefs were estimated in 2014 at $45B/yr.[[4]](#footnote-3) * There are a number of endemic species to Malaysia's ecosystems, which are found predominantly in Western Peninsular Malaysia (Perak, Selangor, and Negeri Sembilan States) and in Island Malaysia (Northern Sarawak and Northern Sabah). This distribution is matched in the geographic scope of species range-size rarity—relative to Peninsular and Island Malaysia, the States of Sarawak and Sabah have a higher concentration of important ranges. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate below the global average, 37.08 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) clustered in Southern Sarawak and Peninsular Malaysia and include: [Kelabit Highlands](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/16067), [Hose-Laga mountains](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/16058), [South-East Pahang peat swamp forest](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/16040), [Belum-Temenggor](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/16003), [Bintang Range](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/16005), and [Ulu Muda](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/16048). PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 36.55 percent. * PACOS Trust has ongoing projects with Indigenous or local communities in Gana village, Kota Marudu; Wasai village, Tamparuli; Kipouvo village, Penampang; Kipouvo village, Penampang; Kibunut village, Penampang; and Togudon village, Penampang.[[5]](#footnote-4) * Academic studies include a [multi-criteria decision making case study in Sabah](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0169204604000763) and [mapping research agendas for tropical peatland management](https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/environmental-conservation/article/research-agendas-for-the-sustainable-management-of-tropical-peatland-in-malaysia/B36784C62D03B95324F1A6228D5BEA0C). * The Coral Triangle Initiative has a [marine biodiversity conservation prioritization](http://www.coraltriangleinitiative.org/sites/default/files/resources/8_Geographic%20Priorities%20for%20Marine%20Biodiversity%20Conservation%20in%20Indonesia.pdf) map, which includes limited prioritization of Island Malaysia. In 2018 WWF produced a [marine priority conservation area mapping report](https://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/hob_spatial_planning_report_fa.pdf) for Island Malaysia, considering climate change mainstreaming, proactive engagement with state authority, and community conservation efforts. * The CEPF document for the Sundaland hotspot, contains no information for Malaysia.[[6]](#footnote-5) * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are moderate throughout the country, with key concentrations in along protected corridors. * The primary land cover types are Forest - 100Mha; Agriculture - 67.1Mha; Wetland - 15.9Mha; Water - 2.55Mha; and Sparse vegetation - 1.93Mha. * Malaysia has 7 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Malaysia.pdf). * Malaysia is below the global average in ocean health, with large gaps in sustainable food provision, and moderate deficiencies in clean waters. |
| Myanmar | * Myanmar is high in biodiversity due to the country’s varying elevations and ecosystems. Among the top ecosystems, forests and freshwater ecosystems provide extensive habitat and ecosystem services. Myanmar’s coastal and marine ecosystems contain the most preserved landscapes in mainland Southeast Asia.[[7]](#footnote-6) * In terms of range-size rarity the average state is low, with hotspots along the Chindwin Catchment, Lower Chindwin forest, and the Rakhine Yoma range. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate below the global average, 23.26 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) distributed throughout the country and include: [Myinmoletkhat](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/22591), [Nam San Valley](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/16316), [May Hka Area](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/31561), and [Lenya](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/16313). PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 14.88 percent. * Academic prioritization studies include a recent [publication by IWGIA](https://www.iwgia.org/images/documents/Books/Indigenous%20peoples,%20land%20rights%20and%20forest%20conservation%20in%20Myanmar.pdf) stocktaking of Ingidenous Peoples and community forest concessions, and the potential future conservation and wellbeing synergies; as well as an accompanying [case study in Yusomoso](https://www.iwgia.org/images/publications/new-publications/yusomoso-myanmar-participatory-action-research.pdf) on customary forest tenure. * While Myanmar does not contain any priority KBAs for the Indo-Burma Hotspot, this [CEPF profile](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/final.indoburma_indochina.ep_.pdf) contains extensive modeling of its protected areas system. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are moderate to low throughout the country, but are high in the Southern coasts. * The primary land cover types are Forest - 27.6Mha; Agriculture - 24.4Mha; Shrubland - 17.8Mha; Water - 1.02Mha; Grassland - 684kha; and Wetland - 547kha. * Myanmar has 6 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Myanmar.pdf). * Myanmar is well below the global average in ocean health, with large gaps in sustainable food provision and clean waters; however, it is among the global leaders in marine carbon storage. |
| Thailand | * Thailand is a high biodiversity rich country in Southeast Asia, with considerable landscape diversity. Thailand’s landscapes are split by the Indochinese region in the North and the Sundiac region in the South. The country’s coastal and marine ecosystems are exceptionally rich, due in part to the mangrove forests that cover 36 percent of the coastline.[[8]](#footnote-7) * In terms of range-size rarity the average state is moderate, with hotspots along the Western Forest Complex, Phu Khieo-Nam Nao, and Phu Miang-Phu Thong corridors. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate well above the global average, 71.74 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) distributed throughout the country and include: [Lower Central Basin](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/15340), and [Trat Wetlands](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/23525). PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 67.17 percent. * Academic prioritization studies include a study on [distrust between local communities and MPA efforts](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X13001711), [community-based ecotourism in Southern Thailand](https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/51383531/Local_knowledge_and_adult_learning_in_environmental_adult_education_community_based_ecotourism_in_southern_Thailand.pdf?response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DLocal_knowledge_and_adult_learning_in_en.pdf&X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=ASIATUSBJ6BAGYQVROG2%2F20200522%2Fus-east-1%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20200522T164820Z&X-Amz-Expires=3600&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Security-Token=IQoJb3JpZ2luX2VjEPD%2F%2F%2F%2F%2F%2F%2F%2F%2F%2FwEaCXVzLWVhc3QtMSJIMEYCIQCvELmWbL3dKlhANnjnNueBMlyoAgqb1Sr1Gts%2FwTtA2wIhAOfHNDTSbQH7hB72mK7Gsxvz2FGuYWHhEHQkiihGL8y4KrQDCEkQABoMMjUwMzE4ODExMjAwIgziV1%2BROBqoPv1bFz8qkQMNvTxP0j4Oiyapf3fe1pbeN0y4YUbIALRJhm1mQBEM4%2BD0x7v%2Bvv1dWXieVPl%2FKQRN0tkOUeUGx0RO6Omd9LfFqejgiuJuerw6%2BfryKjT19flwcvTdgdlWcJg%2BmB%2BAnTy%2FgZVpqcwh4j1%2FI4jjrPSztETO3QYMhfL%2BVEnQef3owUj%2BX0Y8CBOFGX%2BxOR6q337x8rWARods3d3hdLoJQUPaBphDOmBcUfztxj1IX9lVgETCp5mVb0IWD9n9KMj6FyeuIqKO9RNagmh%2Bo5rFVlqqyTvFw1TCmHN9%2Fhh9cydKP%2BBOw7W%2BEaQsfoKxUdoKvjVT%2BP4jepI6dId8OPqDeXIicJ7%2BrtZMj8h68XBEQXwPODG9UXBwz3%2BGMtEfU9E3S1L3qw59mvjlVB7sHX8zxGskhmkxebz11VXQecrUuVo5djPNKXQqDAKtX7BJ1C8VukYJ86XqvoKyh9bknEFej0DRR%2FXi0Uv%2FQ6CFG1Oj79cyzSNQ%2FI061mHpozQQNV%2F8Gf%2BqMqAg5KgD42Hyq6QgKzOtPjDd55%2F2BTrqAUaaTGyEt9x6iPUurofxHYLnh3nll%2FfhJ3R3D5d1X0qr0zQ%2B0nqhteDY%2B6SYVfszEByiG4fkWnFsBK%2BkqPqRN3GF5bQg38AnogoTD%2FMsGrlg0M2LgNdX2bAjkeW6cagqGGt9ZGArfIQwkxxMdXsO97n6g5WLb5oFS%2BoGt2Ma56OrCJYGp%2F1OEdSVdirISFPSz4wWBP2PE5E%2BFQ5nL3uws4aOh1r%2Fq7cVHg7dtrjNioUA6oKbnW1ghFGKo%2FcKMIYAPqi%2FgpkK364gBKjfJDI%2B8HSzXTxWFK6TD2T%2Bzxl2zhRlXWDjjWsnMcnDdw%3D%3D&X-Amz-Signature=087352f0a10b7187717ee2ef18b8cb692ff334d4c26507068ed731aedecbfe4e), and the national government supplement to CBD sixth National report on the [contribution of indigenous peoples and local communities](https://www.cbd.int/doc/nr/nr-06/th-nr-06-en.pdf) to conservation measures. * While Thailand does not contain any priority KBAs for the Indo-Burma Hotspot, this [CEPF profile](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/final.indoburma_indochina.ep_.pdf) contains extensive modeling of its protected areas system. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are moderate to low throughout the country, but are high in the North of the country and the Lum Nam Pai-Salawin corridor. * The primary land cover types are Agriculture - 36.3Mha; Forest - 8.41Mha; Shrubland - 7.04Mha; Water - 849kha; and Settlement - 428kha. * Thailand has 15 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Thailand.pdf). * Thailand is just below the global average of ocean health with considerable deficiencies in sustainable food provision, and moderate gaps in clean waters. The country has high carbon storage and biodiversity due to the coastal mangrove ecosystems. |
| Vietnam | * Vietnam’s terrestrial ecosystems consist of primarily forests, agricultural fields, and urban areas. These areas have moderate biodiversity and conservation value, particularly the mountainous forests highlighted below. The country’s considerable marine, coastal, and inland water ecosystems (while rapidly deteriorating), are a vital resource for the country’s population—with the coastal and marine ecosystems providing livelihoods for approximately 20 million people alone.[[9]](#footnote-8) * In terms of range-size rarity the country is endowed with several key areas of importance: the Southern Annamites Main Montane Block, the Central Annamites, and the Ailao/Hoang Lien Mountains. * Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the country are protected at a rate below the global average, 40.84 to 44 percent, respectively. Large KBAs outside of/or partially within Protected Areas (PAs) distributed throughout the country and include: [Truong Son](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/12069), [Nam Ghong](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/22570), [Attapu Plain](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/16637), and [Bao Loc - Loc Bac](http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/22608). PA protection of KBAs has risen from 2000, from 11.8 percent. * A likely outdated IWGIA [Country Technical Notes on Indigenous Peoples’ Issues](https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/40224860/vietnam_ctn.pdf/c19c0ef7-ad08-4ef3-813f-4ce4c0fef407) for Vietnam is also provided, which includes further distribution mapping of ethnic minorities in the country. * Academic prioritization studies include a broader study on [mapping conservation priorities in Southeast Asia](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-10-2624-9_5), a [USAID report on Vietnam’s tropical forest biodiversity](https://2012-2017.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1861/Vietnam118_119FinalDraft%2015Oct2013%20%28Public%20Version%29.pdf), and study on conservation corridors and prioritization mapping for the [Vu Gia Thu Bon (VGTB) watershed in Central Vietnam](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-10-2624-9_5). * Vietnam contains several priority KBAs for the Indo-Burma Hotspot, this [CEPF profile](https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/final.indoburma_indochina.ep_.pdf) contains extensive modeling of its protected areas system. Sites include Tay Con Linh, Binh An, Ban Thi-Xuan Lac, and neighboring KBAs. * Stores of irrecoverable carbon are moderate to high throughout the country, with the exception of Southwestern Vietnam. * The primary land cover types are Agriculture - 16.6Mha; Forest - 9.51Mha; Shrubland - 6.98Mha; Water - 734kha; Settlement - 356kha; and Wetland - 275kha. * Vietnam has 9 ramsar sites with additional context [here](https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Viet-Nam.pdf). * Vietnam is well below the global average of ocean health with considerable deficiencies in sustainable food provision and clean waters, and moderate gaps in carbon storage. The country has high coastal protection, coastal livelihoods, and biodiversity. |

1. National Biodiversity Steering Committee, Ministry of Environment. The Fifth National Report To The Convention On Biological Diversity. Phnom Penh: 2014. Accessed 20 May 2015. <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/kh/kh-nr-05-en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=la#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/my/my-nbsap-v2-en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.(2014). Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Putrajaya,

   Malaysia. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. <https://pacostrust.com/projects/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. <https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/sundaland-ecosystem-profile-2001-english.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
7. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=mm#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
8. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=th#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
9. <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/vn/vn-nr-05-en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)