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

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

**Threats to Biodiversity, Environment, and IPLC Regional Context:**

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| Country | Threats to biodiversity and environment | Threats to IPLCs, and Root Causes |
| Cambodia | * The main causes of forest degradation include commercial logging, slash and burn cultivation, land encroachment, farming and infrastructure development and cutting wood for fuel. Destructive fishing practices such as the use of explosives and poison, construction of dams in upper streams and invasive alien species are direct threats to freshwater fish species and reptiles. One important cause for endangering fish species is the construction of irrigation projects and hydropower projects.[[1]](#footnote-0) * From 2001 to 2018, Cambodia lost 2.17Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 25 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 914Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Cambodia, the top 10 regions were responsible for 56 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Kâmpóng Cham had the most relative tree cover loss at 50 percent compared to an average of 26 percent. | * Cambodia is ranked 55th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). While it has been unevenly improving across economic and social indicators since 2013, its performance on several political indicators and cohesion indicators have either been flat or worsened. * According to Global Witness, at least 3 land defenders were killed in Cambodia between 2016-2018. |
| Lao PDR | * The major threats to biodiversity include hydropower development, mining, infrastructure development and land use change..[[2]](#footnote-1) * From 2001 to 2018, Laos lost 3.01Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 16 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 1.15Gt of CO₂ emissions. * In Laos, the top 8 regions were responsible for 55 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Vientiane [prefecture] had the most relative tree cover loss at 26 percent compared to an average of 16 percent. | * Lao PDR is ranked 63rd /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). While it has been improving steadily along most economic indicators and on security apparatus, and human rights, it has worsened in terms of state legitimacy for most of the past decade. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Malaysia (Peninsular) | * Threats to biodiversity in Malaysia include threats to ecosystems and species, such as land development, pollution, poaching and collection, encroachment, climate change and invasive alien species.[[3]](#footnote-2) * From 2001 to 2018, Malaysia lost 7.73Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 26 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 3.38Gt of CO₂ emissions. * In Malaysia, the top 9 regions were responsible for 72 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Melaka had the most relative tree cover loss at 47 percent compared to an average of 28 percent. | * Malaysia is ranked 120th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). While it has been slowly improving across economic, political, social, and cohesion indicators over the past decade. * According to Global Witness, at least 1 land defender was killed in Malaysia between 2016-2018. |
| Myanmar | * Major threats to biodiversity in Myanmar include hunting, overfishing, forest depletion and degradation, encroachment, forest fires, habitat destruction (which is expected to grow due to increasing urbanization), climate change, introduction of alien invasive species and increasing markets for wildlife and their derivatives in neighboring countries (i.e. illegal trade in wildlife and their products).[[4]](#footnote-3) * From 2001 to 2018, Myanmar lost 3.38Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 7.9 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 1.33Gt of CO₂ emissions. * In Myanmar, the top 5 regions were responsible for 57 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Naypyitaw had the most relative tree cover loss at 35 percent compared to an average of 9.4 percent. | * Myanmar is ranked 22nd /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It has worsened or remained flat along most economic, cohesion, and political indicators over the past decade. Displacement has sharply risen since 2013. * According to Global Witness, at least 4 land defenders were killed in Myanmar between 2016-2018. |
| Thailand | * In regard to forest ecosystems, the shrinking of habitats for local plants and animals due to urbanization has resulted in the loss of indigenous plant and animal species. Urban and industrial growth has led to a critical decrease in (and deterioration of) agricultural ecosystems. Coastal ecosystems are threatened by illegal logging, overfishing, community settlement, industrialization and tourism development.[[5]](#footnote-4) * From 2001 to 2018, Thailand lost 1.93Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 9.6 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 757Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Thailand, the top 11 regions were responsible for 47 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Amnat Charoen had the most relative tree cover loss at 52 percent compared to an average of 10 percent. | * Thailand is ranked 82nd /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). After worsening across most indicators for the first part of the decade, Thailand has been improving across most cohesion, social, and economic indicators since 2016. However, state legitimacy and human rights have not improved. * According to Global Witness, at least 1 land defender was killed in Thailand between 2016-2018. |
| Vietnam | * Threats to biodiversity in Vietnam include population growth and consequent consumption growth, overexploitation of natural resources, characterized by illegal exploitation of timber and non-forest timber products, unsustainable fishing and illegal wildlife hunting and trade. Other threats include changes in land use, characterized by massive infrastructure development, extension of land for agricultural and industrial plantations, introduction of alien species and climate change.[[6]](#footnote-5) * From 2001 to 2018, Vietnam lost 2.64Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 16 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 958Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Vietnam, the top 11 regions were responsible for 32 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Bình Dương had the most relative tree cover loss at 65 percent compared to an average of 14 percent. | * Vietnam is ranked 110tt /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). Vietnam has been unevenly improving across most cohesion, economic, and social indicators for the past decade. However, human rights and state legitimacy have been slowly worsening over this period. * According to Global Witness, at least 1 land defender was killed in Vietnam between 2016-2018. |

1. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=kh#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=la#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=my#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=mm#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=th#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=vn#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-5)