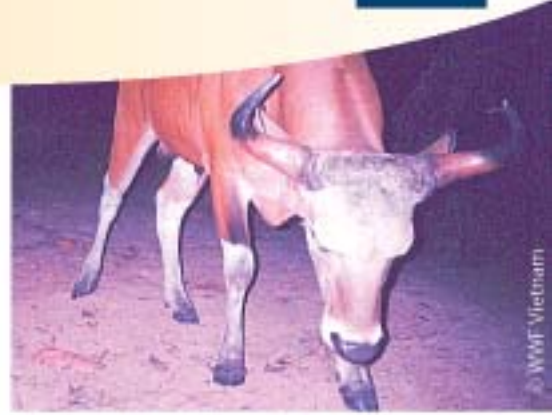




# Forests for Our Future



***Greater Mekong Subregion nations are investing USD 31 billion into their future. How will sound environmental management secure long-term return on this investment?***

# The Greater Mekong Subregion

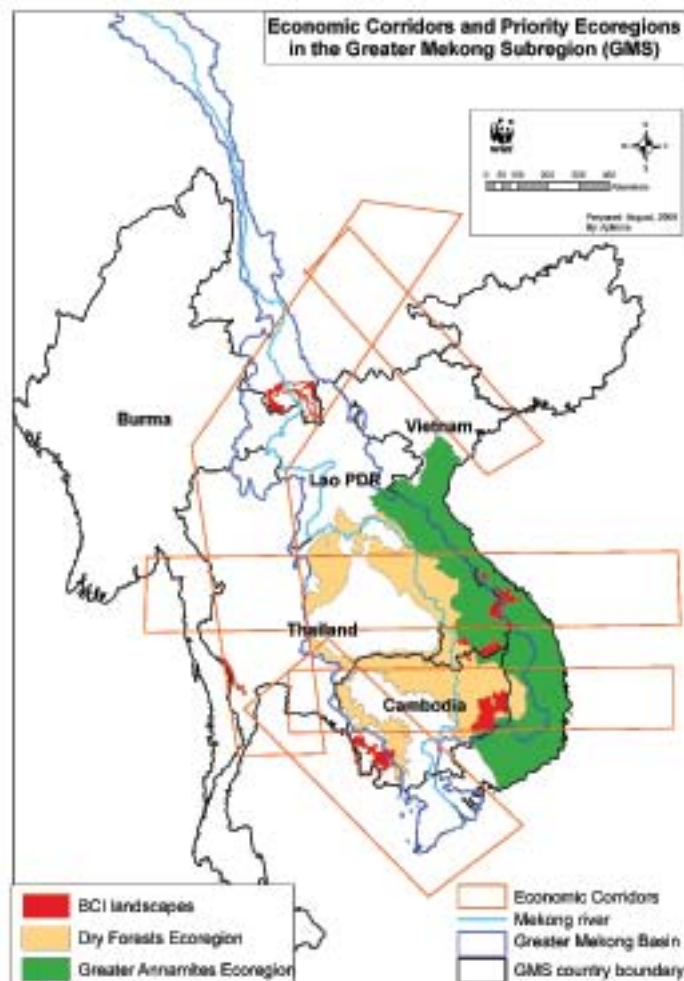
## A Snapshot of Progress

Linked by the mighty Mekong River, the Greater Mekong Subregion is made up of six culturally diverse and rapidly developing countries: Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and China (Yunnan Province and Guangxi Autonomous Region).

Remarkably rich in natural resources and globally significant biodiversity, the region is home to over 300 million people with a gross regional product of over US \$400 billion per annum.

Today, unprecedented economic development is taking place across the subregion. Concentrated along region-wide 'economic corridors' it is designed to strengthen transportation, telecommunications, energy production and usage, and cross-border trade.

While this development is yielding short-term economic benefit, it is also placing massive and unsustainable demand on the region's natural resources and globally significant biodiversity.



## The Challenge

Greater Mekong Subregion nations need to sustain economic growth, while ensuring natural ecosystems remain viable.

By adopting sound environmental management and maintaining healthy ecosystems today's investments and development can be sustained into the future, for example;

**Roads** that link major cities and promote regional trade will be protected from flooding and erosion by healthy forests and watersheds.

**Hydropower dams** that generate energy, income and employment will have sustainable water supplies and likewise be secured by healthy forests.

**Ecotourism** initiatives will provide income to local communities if wildlife and natural landscapes are conserved.

**If no action is taken to secure the Greater Mekong Subregion's natural resources and biodiversity, over the next century more than 50 percent of its remaining land and water habitats will be lost.\***

If this forecast becomes a reality, the region's most vulnerable communities and today's multi-billion dollar investments will be devastated, and some of the world's most outstanding biodiversity will vanish.

\* Asian Development Bank figures

# Securing a Sustainable Future

## Biodiversity Conservation Corridors

Working in support of the Greater Mekong Subregion's economic development, biodiversity conservation corridors are conserving, restoring and sustainably managing areas of forest and other habitats rich in biodiversity that link protected areas within the subregion's economic corridors.

As part of The Core Environment Programme, adopted by all governments of the region, biodiversity conservation corridors are ensuring there are adequate linkages in the landscape to maintain biodiversity and ecosystem services valuable to livelihoods and the economy.

Biodiversity conservation corridors are currently being implemented by local communities and governments of the Greater Mekong Subregion, the Asian Development Bank, partner non-government organisations and WWF.



All photos © WWF Cambodia

From WWF Cambodia's project site, left to right: camera-trap photo of a leopard, villagers construct a 3D map of their landscape, WWF Cambodia Country Director holds confiscated tiger snares.

## Biodiversity Conservation Corridors

- Reduce poverty
- Harmonise land management and governance
- Restore ecosystem connectivity
- Build local, national and regional capacity for sustainable ecosystem management
- Secure sustainable financing



This Muntjac was rescued from a trap by WWF Vietnam project staff and in this picture is being released into Bidoup Nuiba National Park in the Southern Annamites.

## Cambodia

Stretching across 1.3 million hectares, this biodiversity conservation corridor is run by local communities and government agencies, supported by WWF, within three wildlife sanctuaries - the Mondulkiri Protected Forest, the Yok Don and the Bu Gia Map National Protected Areas - of Cambodia's Eastern Plains.

This lush landscape is home to Cambodia's most endangered species including the Black-shanked Douc Langur and the Indochina Tiger.

The main threats to biodiversity and local livelihoods in this region are wildlife hunting and trade, forest clearance for agriculture, logging and unsustainable non-timber forest products harvest.

## Key Project Activities

- The establishment of a Village Honey Collection Association.
- Establishment of 4,700 hectares of community protected forest.
- Development of an ecotourism pilot project.
- The adoption of best environmental management practices by Mondulkiri province development planning institution.

# Securing a Sustainable Future

## Lao PDR

Local communities and government agencies of Southern Lao PDR are working to restore 900 hectares between Xe Pian and Dong Hua Sao National Protected Areas.

This biodiversity conservation corridor has incredibly rich forests, wetlands and rivers that support local livelihoods and harbour endangered species including the Asian elephant and Indochina tiger.

This pilot site is coordinated by Lao PDR's Water Resource and Environment Agency, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, IUCN and WWF.

### Key Project Activities

- Construction of two new schools, a community library, village clinic centre, and a village tourist guest house.
- Development of fish conservation pools.
- Establishment of village agroforestry models.
- Training of National Protected Area staff that patrol for illegal wildlife trade and logging.



WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by:

- conserving the world's biological diversity
- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable
- promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption



**WWF** for a living planet®



Left to Right: Red-shanked Douc Langur, inside Cat Tien National Park rattan cane used to make handicrafts.

## Vietnam

This biodiversity conservation corridor links Ngoc Linh and Xe Sap protected areas of the Central Annamites mountain range along the east-west Greater Mekong Subregion economic corridor.

The Red-shanked Douc Langur, one of the flagship species of this area, lives within this corridor whose resource-rich forests also provide food, medicines, trade and fuel to local communities.

Within this pilot site WWF works with Vietnam's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, and the communities of Quang Nam and Quang Tri provinces.

### Key Project Activities

- Socio-economic and market analysis of non-timber forest products like rattan for community forest management initiatives.
- Camera trap studies and primate surveys.
- Establishment of community development funds for sustainable livelihood activities such as non-timber forest products collection.

## Contact

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