



Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot

Indochina Region

CEPF INVESTMENT PLANNED
\$9.5 million

QUICK FACTS

Indochina has a human population of around 200 million people, most living in rural areas.

Lowland evergreen forests have been so severely affected that few intact areas remain - all remaining blocks of lowland evergreen forest are of critical conservation importance.

37 percent of key biodiversity areas are not included within formal protected areas, and this proportion is as high as 65 percent in Vietnam.

Unregulated, unsustainable, and generally illegal overexploitation has driven many animal species in the region to the verge of extinction in the wild, and severely suppressed populations of others.

Encompassing more than 2 million square kilometers of tropical Asia, Indo-Burma is one of the most threatened of Earth's 34 biodiversity hotspots. Only about 5 percent of its natural habitats remain in relatively pristine condition.

These habitats represent forest, coastal, and freshwater ecosystems that support a large number of globally threatened species and provide for the livelihoods of a substantial proportion of the region's human population.

THREATS

The combination of economic development and an increasing human population is creating unprecedented pressures on the region's natural resources. Overexploitation has reached critical levels in many areas, compounded by a lack of effective planning and management to control these pressures.

Habitat loss is also pervasive. Commercial logging and conversion of forest to cash crops such as sugar, tea, coffee, oil palm, and rubber are significant causes of forest loss. Intensification and expansion of agriculture in many lowland areas has resulted in extensive drainage and conversion of wetlands.

CEPF INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The council of donors that governs the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) approved a \$9.5-million, 5-year investment strategy for the Indochina region of this hotspot in April 2007. The Indochina region includes Cambodia, Lao P.D.R., Thailand, and Vietnam, as well as parts of southern China.

CEPF investments in the Indo-Burma Hotspot (right) will focus on the conservation of two landscapes in the Indochina region and 28 key biodiversity areas within them.



CEPF investment in this region will begin with the selection of a regional implementation team.

BirdLife International developed the CEPF strategy in collaboration with the Bird Conservation Society of Thailand, Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden, and the WWF Cambodia Program with the technical support of the Center for Applied Biodiversity Science at Conservation International. The process included extensive consultation with stakeholders in the region.

CEPF will provide grants enabling nongovernmental organizations, community groups, and other private sector entities to help conserve the hotspot.

The basic premise underlying the CEPF niche developed for this region is that conservation investment should be targeted where it can have the maximum impact on the highest conservation priorities, while supporting the livelihoods of some of the poorest sections of society.

Supported activities will include efforts to safeguard globally threatened species, which is a huge funding gap in this region. Funding will also be provided for development of innovative, locally led approaches to site-based conservation, and for engaging key actors in reconciling biodiversity conservation and development objectives.

Conservation of two large landscapes—the Northern Highlands Limestone, and Mekong River and Major Tributaries biodiversity conservation corridors—and 28 key biodiversity areas within them will be emphasized. Sixty-seven animal species and all 248 globally threatened plant species will also be priorities for investment.

The Northern Highlands Limestone Corridor bordering China and Vietnam is particularly important for the conservation of primates. It is also of global importance for plant conservation, supporting many unique species and the region's richest assemblages of conifer species. The Mekong River and Major Tributaries Corridor stretches across Cambodia, Lao P.D.R., and Thailand and represents the best examples of Indochina's remaining riverine ecosystems.

Strategic Funding Directions

CEPF investments in this region will be guided by four strategic directions and related investment priorities, a full description of which can be found in the ecosystem profile on www.cepf.net. Each project must be linked to one of the strategic directions to be approved for funding.



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Among the investment priorities for CEPF is to assess the global threat status of selected freshwater taxa and integrate the results into planning processes for the conservation of wetland biodiversity and development plans in the Mekong River and its major tributaries.

ABOUT US

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund is a joint program of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International (CI), the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank. As one of the founding partners, CI administers the global program.

CEPF provides strategic assistance to nongovernmental organizations, community groups, and other civil society partners to help safeguard biodiversity hotspots—the biologically richest and most threatened regions on Earth. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in conserving the hotspots.