

## Ea So

Criteria: A1 &amp; A3

**Province(s):** Dak Lak  
**PA Status:** None  
**Latitude:** 12°56'N  
**Longitude:** 108°37'E  
**Area:** 27,800 ha  
**Altitude Range:** 140-1,046 m asl

**EBA / SA:**  
None  
**Priority Landscape:**  
SA 1 - Ea So Complex



### General Description

The IBA is situated in the Central Highlands and comprises Ea So proposed nature reserve. The topography of the IBA is dominated by a flat plain, around 300 m in elevation, which rises in the north to meet a ridge of low mountains. The IBA supports one of the last extensive areas of natural savanna grassland in the Central Highlands, which is an important habitat for wild cattle species. In addition, the IBA supports large areas of semi-evergreen forest and evergreen forest, as well as a smaller area of deciduous forest<sup>1</sup>. To the north and west, the IBA is contiguous with other forest areas in northern Dak Lak and southern Gia Lai provinces.

### Bird Fauna: Key Features

The avifauna of Ea So IBA has a component characteristic of deciduous dipterocarp forest. This component includes such species as Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus*, Indian Nightjar *Caprimulgus asiaticus*, Yellow-footed Green Pigeon *Treron phoenicoptera*, Red-headed Vulture *Sarcogyps calvus* and Small Minivet *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*. The avifauna of the IBA also includes a component characteristic of dense, evergreen and semi-evergreen forests. This component includes Pale-capped Pigeon *Columba punicea*, Great Hornbill *Buceros bicornis* and, potentially, Germain's Peacock Pheasant *Polyplectron germaini*. The latter species has not been confirmed to occur at the site but is judged likely to occur due to the availability of suitable habitat and its presence at a neighbouring site<sup>2</sup>. If the occurrence of this species at the IBA is confirmed, it will qualify for inclusion within the South Vietnamese Lowlands Endemic Bird Area.

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
[Germain's Peacock Pheasant <i>Polyplectron germaini</i> ]	A1, A2	VU	5	The species was recorded at Ea Tam, a nearby site in Krong Nang district, between February and May 1998 <sup>2</sup> . However, while it is judged likely to occur at Ea So, there are no confirmed records from the site to date.
Green Peafowl <i>Pavo muticus</i>	A1, A3	VU	8	One bird was seen, at least four birds were heard calling, and tracks of up to six birds were seen during February 1998 <sup>2,3</sup> .
Pale-capped Pigeon <i>Columba punicea</i>	A1, A3	VU	5	Two birds and three birds were observed separate days in February 1998 <sup>2</sup> .
Great Hornbill <i>Buceros bicornis</i>	A1	NT	13	A flock of 18 was observed in February 1998 <sup>3</sup> .
[Lesser Fish Eagle <i>Ichthyophaga humilis</i> ]	A1	NT	7	A single fish eagle, thought to be this species, although possibly Grey-headed Fish Eagle <i>I. ichthyaetus</i> , was observed in February 1998 <sup>3</sup> .
Red-headed Vulture <i>Sarcogyps calvus</i>	A1, A3	NT	3	A single bird was seen in flight along the Ea Krong Nang river in February 1998 <sup>3</sup> .

Notes: [ ] = unconfirmed record.

**Biome Restricted Species:** The site qualifies under criterion A3 because it supports 13 species restricted to the Indo-Malayan Tropical Dry Zone (11). See Appendix 4 for details.

## Secondary Criteria

### Species

[Elongated Tortoise *Indotestudo elongata*]<sup>4</sup>  
Gaur *Bos gaurus*<sup>2,5</sup>

### Status

EN  
VU

### Species

Banteng *Bos javanicus*<sup>2</sup>

### Status

EN

Notes: [ ] = unconfirmed record.

## Threats to Biodiversity

The major threats to biodiversity at Ea So IBA are hunting, illegal extraction of timber and other forest products, and conversion of natural habitats to agriculture. The human population density in and around the IBA is currently low, with less than 150 people living inside the proposed nature reserve and less than 4,000 people in the buffer zone. Consequently, most threats to biodiversity are currently at relatively low levels, with the exception of hunting, which is a severe threat to the populations of key mammal and bird species at the site. However, the threats to biodiversity at Ea So IBA, particularly habitat loss, are likely to intensify as a result of increased human population pressure due to the settlement of migrants in the area. This problem is likely to be exacerbated if plans to construct a highway through the IBA go ahead<sup>1</sup>.

Threat	Severity
Agricultural intensification / expansion	• •
Hunting	• • •
Infrastructure development	• •
Selective logging / cutting	•

## Conservation Actions

- A investment plan for Ea So was prepared in 1998 and proposed establishing a 27,800 ha nature reserve. This investment plan was approved by Dak Lak Provincial People's Committee in 1999 and a management board was established in the same year. To date, however, the establishment of a nature reserve at Ea So has not been decreed by the government of Vietnam<sup>1</sup>.

## Recommendations

- Ea So should be decreed as a nature reserve by the government of Vietnam.
- Enforcement of protected area management regulations should be enforced.
- An Environmental Impact Assessment should be conducted prior to the construction of the planned highway through the IBA, and mitigation measures should be implemented. These may include selection of an alternative route for the highway and introducing strict controls on human settlement along the route.
- Strict controls should be placed on human settlement within the IBA or into surrounding areas, in order to avoid placing additional pressure on the natural resources of site.

## References

1. BirdLife International and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (2001) *Sourcebook of existing and proposed protected areas in Vietnam*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute.
2. Brickle, N. W., Nguyen Cu, Ha Quy Quynh, Nguyen Thai Tu Cuong and Hoang Van San (1998) *The status and distribution of Green Peafowl Pavo muticus in Dak Lak province, Vietnam*. Hanoi: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme.
3. Eames, J. C. and Tordoff, A. W. (in prep.) Recent records and a conservation status review of some threatened and near-threatened bird species in Vietnam.
4. Anon. (1998) [Investment plan for Ea So Nature Reserve]. Buon Ma Thuot: Department of Agroforestry, Tay Nguyen University. (In Vietnamese.)
5. Eames, J.C. Personal observation.



Pale-capped Pigeon *Columba punicea*