

Lo Go Xa Mat

Criteria: A1, A2 & A3

Province(s): Tay Ninh
PA Status: National Park

Latitude: 11°35'N
Longitude: 105°54'E
Area: 16,754 ha
Altitude Range: 5-20 masl

EBA / SA:
 Southern Vietnamese Low lands EBA
Priority Landscape:
 None



General Description

The IBA comprises Lo Go Xa Mat (LGXM) National Park, which is located in the north-western corner of Tay Ninh province, adjacent to the international border and contains the single largest area of forest within the province, accounting for roughly 25% of its total natural forest cover¹. The site supports a mosaic of lowland semi-evergreen forest and lowland deciduous forest, with smaller areas of lowland evergreen forest along watercourses and *Melaleuca* forest. A variety of wetland habitats, including seasonally inundated grasslands and forests, permanent lakes and watercourses, are also present².

Bird Fauna: Key Features

Given the available habitat at the site, it is probable that LGXM supports significant populations of Germain's Peacock Pheasant *Polyplectron germaini* and Siamese Fireback *Lophura diardi*². The site qualifies for inclusion within the Southern Vietnamese Lowlands EBA, due to the occurrence of two of the three restricted-range species that define this EBA. LGXM appears to be a stop-over area for Sarus Cranes *Grus antigone* migrating between the Mekong Delta and northern Cambodia. Although there have been no records to date, the available habitats indicate that LGXM may support populations of several other globally threatened species, including Lesser Adjutant *Leptoptilos javanicus*, White-shouldered Ibis *Pseudibis davisoni* and Spot-billed Pelican *Pelecanus philippensis*^{1,2}. Aside from the key species considered above, several species that are regarded of national conservation concern in Vietnam have also been recorded at LGXM, including Stork-billed Kingfisher *Halcyon capensis*, Asian Openbill *Anastomus oscitans*, Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* and Bar-bellied Pitta *Pitta elliotii*².

Species	IBA Criteria	Global Threat Status	Other IBAs	Notes
Germain's Peacock Pheasant <i>Polyplectron germaini</i>	A1, A2	VU	4	Vocalisations of a single individual were heard in semi-evergreen forest in October 2001 ² .
†Sarus Crane <i>Grus antigone</i>	A1	VU	4	Five individuals were reportedly observed in wetland habitat in 1999 ² . A single individual was satellite-tracked to LGXM by the International Crane Foundation in 2001 ² .
Siamese Fireback <i>Lophura diardi</i>	A1, A3	NT	13	A single male and three females were observed in semi-evergreen forest in October 2001 ² . Also separately recorded between October and November 2001 ² .
[Great Hornbill <i>Buceros bicornis</i>]	A1	NT	14	Recorded at interview during October 2001 ² .
Grey-faced Tit Babbler <i>Macronous kelleyi</i>	A2		12	A single individual was observed in semi-evergreen forest in October 2001 ² .

Notes: [] = unconfirmed record; † = not confirmed to regularly occur in significant numbers.

Biome Restricted Species: The site qualifies under criterion A3 because it supports 10 species are restricted to the Indochinese Tropical Moist Forests (Biome 09) and 10 species restricted to the Indo-Malayan Tropical Dry Zone (Biome 11). See Appendix 4 for details.

Secondary Criteria

Species	Status	Species	Status
[Northern Slow Loris <i>Nycticebus bengalensis</i>] ²	DD	[Silver Langur <i>Trachypithecus villosus</i>] ^{2,3}	DD
Pygmy Loris <i>Nycticebus pygmaeus</i> ^{2,3}	VU	[Black-shanked Douc <i>Pygathrix nigripes</i>] ^{2,3}	EN
Northern Pigtail Macaque <i>Macaca leonina</i> ²	VU	[Siamese Crocodile <i>Crocodylus siamensis</i>] ^{2,3}	CR
[Rhesus Macaque <i>Macaca mulatta</i>] ³	NT	[Elongated Tortoise <i>Indotestudo elongata</i>] ²	EN
Long-tailed Macaque <i>Macaca fascicularis</i> ²	NT	[Wattle-necked Soft-shelled Turtle <i>Palea steindachneri</i>] ³	EN
[Stump-tailed Macaque <i>Macaca arctoides</i>] ³	VU	[Chinese Soft-shelled Turtle <i>Pelodiscus sinensis</i>] ³	VU

Notes: [] = unconfirmed record.

Threats to Biodiversity

Of the various habitats present at LGXM, wetlands are particularly important for bird conservation as they support a number of key bird species not found in other habitats². These are also the most fragile habitat present, due to their easy accessibility and high susceptibility to changes in the hydrological regime, tree planting activities and conversion to agricultural land².

Currently, the greatest threat to the integrity of the IBA is posed by human settlement¹. During early 2001, a network of roads and drainage canals were constructed within the largest wetlands, as part of a planned resettlement project. Fortunately, following realisation of the biodiversity values of the IBA among the provincial authorities, this project was halted. However, the canals that were completed may already be affecting the hydrological regime at the wetlands, with serious implications for biodiversity.

Threat	Severity
Afforestation	• •
Disturbance to birds	• •
Drainage	• • •
Hunting	• •
Infrastructure development	• • •
Selective logging / cutting	• •
Unsustainable exploitation of NTFPs	•

Conservation Actions

- A management board for LGXM was established in 1997, and currently employs 60 members of staff based at 14 guard stations².
- During 2001, a series of workshops were held to raise awareness of the values of the site among the provincial authorities.
- LGXM was decreed as a national park on 12 July 2002.
- During 2002-2003, the national park management board and BirdLife International will implement an SNV/WWF-funded project to build local capacity for wetland management.

Recommendations

- An investment plan should be prepared for the national park².
- All wetlands within the IBA should be strictly protected against any activities or forms of development that could prove detrimental to their integrity².
- Important wetlands located outside the current boundaries of the national park should be afforded adequate management and protection to safeguard their biodiversity value².
- Current controls on all forms of hunting at the site should be maintained and strengthened².
- Measures should be implemented to raise awareness of the biodiversity and socio-economic values of the site among all stakeholders².
- Cross-border trade should be restricted to the border crossing at Xa Mat, and not take place through the IBA.
- Further bird survey work should be conducted to clarify the status of key species predicted to occur at the site.

References

1. BirdLife International and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (2001) *Sourcebook of existing and proposed protected areas in Vietnam*. Hanoi, Vietnam: BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute.
2. Tordoff, A.W., Pham Trong Anh, Le Manh Hung, Nguyen Dinh Xuan and Tran Khac Phuc (2002) *A rapid bird and mammal survey of Lo Go Sa Mat special-use forest and Chang Riec protection forest, Tay Ninh province, Vietnam*. Unpublished report to the BirdLife International Vietnam Programme and the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources.

3. Le Trong Trai and Tran Hieu Minh (2000) *A rapid field survey of the Kalon Song Mao Nature Reserve (Binh Thuan province) and Lo Go Sa Mat Nature Reserve (Tay Ninh province), Vietnam*. Hanoi: Birdlife International Vietnam Programme and the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute.



Asian Openbill *Anastomus oscitans*