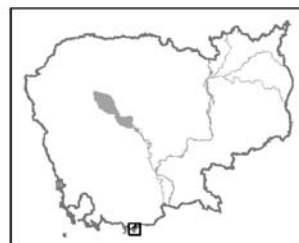


Kampong Trach

Criteria A1 & A4i

Province(s):	Kampot
District(s):	Kampong Trach
Area (ha):	1,108
Altitude (m asl):	3 to 6
Central coordinates:	10°26'N 104°31'E



General description

The IBA is located at the western edge of the Mekong Delta, and comprises an area of seasonally inundated grassland, interspersed with *Melaleuca* scrub, along the international border with Vietnam. It is the northern extent of the Ha Tien plain, a once extensive area of seasonally inundated grassland and other natural habitats, which extends into Kien Giang Province, Vietnam. Large areas of natural habitat in the Vietnamese part of the Ha Tien plain have been converted into agriculture and aquaculture, while the mosaic of natural habitats in the Cambodian part has been reduced to around 1,000 ha in extent. The seasonally inundated grasslands support a non-breeding population of Sarus Crane *Grus antigone*, estimated by local people to number 80 to 150 birds. Whether these birds are part of the non-breeding population that regularly visits Kien Luong IBA (VN005) in the Vietnamese part of the Ha Tien plain is not known but, given the proximity of the two sites, this seems likely. In February 2003 the IBA survey team counted 48 Sarus Cranes in one small part of the total area.

Key bird species

Common name	Scientific name	IBA criteria
Sarus Crane	<i>Grus antigone</i>	A1 A4i

Biome restricted species

Two species are restricted to the Indo-Malayan Tropical Dry Zone (see Appendix 4).

Threats to biodiversity

The biodiversity of the IBA is under severe and immediate threat. Local people report that, each year, poison is used to hunt Sarus Cranes for food. However, the most serious threat is habitat loss. In recent years, a large proportion of the natural habitat at the IBA has been converted into agricultural land and aquacultural ponds. Drainage canals have already been dug into the most significant remaining areas of seasonally inundated grassland, and it is very likely that, without immediate and effective conservation action, all remaining areas of natural habitat at the IBA will soon be lost.

Recommendations

- Any further irrigation or agricultural development in the area should not be undertaken without a full environmental impact assessment and a proper understanding of the potential effects on the natural wetland upon which the Sarus Cranes are reliant.
- Enforcement activities should be initiated as soon as possible, focusing on hunting of waterbirds.

References

- Seng Kim Hout, Kuy Tong and Hong Phoeung (2003) *A rapid field survey of Kampong Trach district, Kampot province*. Unpublished report to the Wildlife Conservation Society Cambodia Program and the BirdLife International Vietnam Programme.
- Tordoff, A. W., Pech Bunnat and Prum Sophal (2002) *A rapid field survey of Kampong Trach district, Kampot province*. Unpublished report to the Wildlife Conservation Society Cambodia Program and the BirdLife International Vietnam Programme.
- Tran Triet *et al.* (2000) *Aerial survey of grasslands in Takeo and Kampot provinces*. Unpublished report to the International Crane Foundation.