Korup National Park









Country: Cameroon Administrative region: Southwest (Region) Central co-ordinates: 5.20000 N, 8.90000 E Area: 1873km²

Qualifying IPA criteria

A(i)

IPA assessment rationale

Korup National Park qualifies as a potential IPA under criterion A(i) due to the presence of a very high number of globally threatened species, several of which are endemic or nearly so. It also likely qualifies under criterion B(ii) for its many range restricted species, B(iii) for its richness in wild harvested species, and criterion C(iii) as a representative of its habitat type.

Site description

Korup National Park, in Southwest Region (Manyu and Ndian divisions), Cameroon, was established in 1986 following research by primatologists and NGOs such as WWF from the late 1970s. It expands on the former Korup Forest Reserve, which dates to the

1930s. The National Park's borders encompass 1,259 km2 of lowland forest rainforest, with another 600 km2 demarcated through a 3 km buffer zone all around the perimeter except where it joins the border with Nigeria. A 100 km2 core zone in the south near Mundemba is further demarcated, and agencies and government have also targeted for development and conservation work a much larger Korup Project Area, incorporating Ejagham Forest Reserve to the north, Nta Ali reserve in the northeast, Rumpi Hills in the east, and land in the south up to the the mangrove forest of Ndongere proposed national park. The boundaries of the IPA proposed here are constituted by the Korup National Park and buffer zone. The park has its official entrance, the iconic suspension bridge spanning the river Ndian, in the south, close to the town of Mundemba. The towns of Nguti and Manyemen serve the northeast part. Principal access is along a 120 km long unpaved road from Kumba to Mundemba, and can be difficult in the wet season.

Botanical significance

Korup is situated within the Biafran rain forest block (Letouzey, 1968), a part of the Guineo-Congolian Regional Centre of Endemism (White, 1983). The floral and faunal diversity of the Biafran rain forest zone is very high and there are many endemics (Gartlan, 1994). Southwestern Cameroon has been indicated to have the highest diversity of both species and genera per degree square in tropical africa (Barthlott et al., 1996; Dagallier et al., 2020). The National Park is nearly completely covered in lowland and submontane evergreen rain forest and is one of the most important botanical areas in tropical Africa (Gartlan, 1994). The site is relatively well studied compared to other areas of coastal forest in neighbouring Nigeria and Cameroon, and is known to harbour very high plant diversity with around 3,500 vascular plant species (Gartlan, 1994). Many species are endemic to the site itself or known only from Korup and a few other nearby sites such as Mt Cameroon, Rumpi Hills, Ejagham Forest Reserve or Oban Hills in Nigeria. Exceptionally high rainfall and particular edaphic properties may partly explain the botanical richness. Korup is also considered a forest refugium where the climate has been relatively stable during the Pleistocene, enabling the forest to persist during periods with a generally cooler and drier climate (Maley, 1998; Sosef, 1994). The tree species composition in the southern part of the park shows a remarkably low presence of pioneer species, indication that this part of the park has been little affected by natural and anthropogenic disturbances (X.M. van der Burgt, unpublished data). Elsewhere in the park, some areas with secondary forest occur (Gartlan, 1994).

Habitat and geology

Korup has a two-season climate, with the wet season running between March and November. It is one of the wettest areas in tropical Africa. In the south of the park, total annual rainfall averaged 5,382 mm over a 14 year period, with the months December to February averaging c.100 mm per month, and July and August each averaging c. 1,000 mm per month. Rainfall is considerably less in the north of the park, averaging 2,200 mm, although measurements were from a different source and averaged over a much shorter period (Rodewald et al., 1994). Mean monthly temperatures range from c. 24-30° C and mean peak temperatures range seasonally between c. 30-32° C, with a diurnal range of 10° C (Chuyong, 2004; Thomas et al., 2015).

The area is underlain by ancient metamorphic basement rocks, with some granitic outcrops and boulders (Letouzey 1985; Burgt, 2018). Soils are classified as predominantly yellow ferralitic soils over acid rocks according to Vallerie (1970) or nitisols according to Yerima & Van Ranst (2005). They are typically described as strongly weathered, sandy, acidic and infertile, with deficient phosphate and potassium (Burgt, 2018; Chuyong, 2004; Newbery et al., 2004). Periodically inundated soils occur along streams and rivers (Burgt, 2018).

Three major rivers flow through the park, taking different routes to meet the sea in the same approximate area. The Ndian river flows south from Ejagham, through the middle of the park, then forms the eastern boundary and is joined by tributaries from the Rumpi Hills area before continuing to meet the sea at the Rio del Rey. The Korup river forms the western boundary of the park and part of the international border with Nigeria, flowing south to join the Cross River estuary. The Munaya river flows north from the Rumpi Hills through northwest Korup, to join the Cross River which also eventually turns southwards towards the Bight of Bonny. Nearly 50% of the national park is below 360 m altitude (Rodewald et al., 1994). Mt Rana, in the middle of the park, is the highest point at 1,080 m, and there is also steep terrain in the northwest part. Closedcanopy, lowland, coastal evergreen rainforest covers almost the entire site but patches of periodically inundated rainforest occur along watercourses and some sub-montane forest appear on the highest points; tree species from the Leguminosae-Detarioideae are locally abundant and sometimes dominant (Newbery et al., 2004). There are also a few granite inselbergs and steep granite slopes with shrubby vegetation and bare rock. Some areas have been cleared for coccoa farming, and extensive areas in the buffer zone for palm oil (Diaw et al., 2003; Siewe et al., 2017).

Conservation issues

Korup National Park represents one of the first attempts in West or Central Africa at integrated conservation and development (Malleson, 2002). Agencies including WWF-UK, WCS, UK ODA (now FCDO), the German development agency GTZ (now GIZ) and the European Commission were involved with the Cameroon government in the establishment and funding of the national park and associated Korup Project (Oates et al., 2004). Implementation has been criticised for the treatment of villagers inside the park (Diaw et al., 2003; Siewe et al., 2017). Five villages remain within the park boundary (Erat, Bera, Esukutan, Ikenge, Bareka Batanga) and another 25 are situated within the buffer zone where development projects have been focused (Siewe et al., 2017; Malleson, 2002). One village, Ikondo-Kondo has been relocated, in 2000, to a new location, while other efforts have been abandoned (Malleson, 2002). The relocation policy has been controversial and villagers have reportedly been left feeling angry and betrayed (Malleson, 2002; Diaw et al., 2003). Since 2017, a new collaborative management approach has been attempted and villagers and other stakeholders have provided input to the 2017-2021 management plan (Shu & Ebua, 2018). This development has also led to permanent use zones (PUZs), legalising the status of two of the remaining 5 villages within the park. As of 2017 PUZs had yet to be implemented for the remaining villages (Shu & Ebua, 2018).

Up to 8% of the national park area has apparently been cultivated by villagers, with cultivation increasing in response to abandonment of relocation plans and restrictions on use of the forest for hunting and other resources (Malleson, 2002). Cocoa farming is the main agricultural activity and almost universally practised by villagers (Siewe et al., 2017). However, villagers continue to utilise the forest, and bushmeat hunting was reported as continuing, with sales across the Nigerian border evading policing efforts (Malleson, 2002; Siewe et al., 2017). Large scale oil palm cultivation is evident in the buffer zone, logging is reported to remain a major threat nearby, and numerous forestry concessions surround the park and overlap the buffer zone (KBA partnership, 2020; WRI, 2020). The Anglophone crisis has interrupted conservation work and brought significant numbers of people seeking refuge within the forest, likely increasing agricultural and hunting activity (Linder et al., 2019).

Korup National Park is adjacent to the protected Cross River National Park in Nigeria, which enhances the size and importance of the overall habitat. There are also connections with other IPAs and conservation sites in Cameroon, including Ejagham and Nta Ali Forest Reserves, Rumpi Hills and Banyang Mbo Wildlife Reserve, Ndongere proposed National Park and the Mt Cameroon area. Connecting corridors are, however, increasingly threatened by development which may limit dispersal and migration. Populations of mammals have declined significantly as a result of poaching, and this will negatively affect the recruitment of many plant species in the forest that are reliant on mammal dispersers (Abernethy et al., 2013; Estrada et al., 2017).

Site assessor(s)

Bruce Murphy, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew Xander van der Burgt, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

IPA criterion A species

SPECIES	QUALIFYING SUB- CRITERION	≥ 1% OF GLOBAL POPULATION	≥ 5% OF NATIONAL POPULATION	1 OF 5 BEST SITES NATIONALLY	ENTIRE GLOBAL POPULATION	SOCIO- ECONOMICALLY IMPORTANT	ABUNDANCE AT SITE
Aframomum tchoutoui D.J.Harris & Wortley	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Afrothismia hydra Sainge & T.Franke	A(i)	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	_	-	
Ancistrocladus korupensis D.W.Thomas & Gereau	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Aporrhiza multijuga Gilg	A(i)	~	\checkmark	~	_	_	
Begonia quadrialata Warb. subsp. dusenii (Warb.) Sosef	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Beilschmiedia jacques-felixii Robyns & R.Wilczek	A(i)	\checkmark	~	\checkmark	-	-	
Cassipourea korupensis Kenfack & Sainge	A(i)	~	~	~	~	-	
Cola mamboana Kenfack & Sainge	A(i)	~	\checkmark	\checkmark	-	~	
Cola suboppositifolia Cheek	A(i)	~	~	~	_	~	
Cola zemagoana Kenfack & D.W.Thomas	A(i)	~	~	~	~	~	
Cryptosepalum korupense Burgt	A(i)	~	\checkmark	~	_	-	
Deinbollia angustifolia D.W.Thomas	A(i)	~	~	~	~	-	
Deinbollia saligna Keay	A(i)	~	\checkmark	~	-	-	
Deinbollia unijuga D.W.Thomas	A(i)	~	\checkmark	~	-	-	
Dichapetalum korupinum Breteler	A(i)	~	~	~	~	-	
Dichapetalum Ietouzeyi Breteler	A(i)	~	\checkmark	~	~	-	

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Didelotia korupensis Burgt	A(i)	~	~	~	~	_	
Empogona talbotii (Wernham) Tosh & Robbr.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Gardenia epiphytica Jongkind	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Gluema korupensis Burgt	A(i)	~	~	~	-	_	
Guaduella humilis Clayton	A(i)	\checkmark	~	~	-	_	
Hugonia batesii De Wild.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Hymenostegia bakeriana Hutch. & Dalziel	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Ixora delicatula Keay	A(i)	\checkmark	~	~	_	_	
Justicia tenuipes S.Moore	A(i)	\checkmark	~	~	_	_	
Korupodendron songweanum Litt & Cheek	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Lecomtedoxa plumosa Burgt	A(i)	\checkmark	~	~	~	_	
Memecylon korupense R.D.Stone	A(i), A(iii), A(iv)	~	~	~	~	-	
Memecylon rheophyticum R.D.Stone, Ghogue & Cheek	A(i), A(iii), A(iv)	~	~	~	~	-	
Pavetta baconiella Bremek.	A(i)	~	~	~	~	-	
Pavetta grossissima S.D.Manning	A(i)	~	~	~	~	-	
Physacanthus talbotii S.Moore	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Piptostigma oyemense Pellegr.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Placodiscus caudatus Pierre ex Pellegr.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	

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Psychotria elephantina Lachenaud & Cheek	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Rinorea thomasii Achound.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Salacia lenticellosa Loes. ex Harms	A(i)	~	~	\checkmark	-	-	
Staurogyne kamerunensis (Engl.) Benoist subsp. calabarensis Champl.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Talbotiella korupensis Mackinder & Wieringa	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Tessmannia korupensis Burgt	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Tricalysia achoundongiana Robbr., Sonké & Kenfack	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Vepris heterophylla (Engl.) Letouzey	A(i)	-	~	\checkmark	-	-	
Vepris letouzeyi Onana	A(ii)	~	~	~	-	-	
Boutiquea platypetala (Engl. & Diels) Le Thomas	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Isolona pleurocarpa Diels	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Landolphia maxima (K.Schum. ex Hallier f.) Pichon	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Hoplestigma pierreanum Gilg	A(i), A(iii)	~	~	~	-	-	
Salacia lucida Oliv.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Grossera major Pax	A(i)	~	-	~	-	-	
Eurypetalum unijugum Harms	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	

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Strychnos gnetifolia Gilg ex Onochie & Hepper	A(i)	~	~	~	-	_	
Phyllanthus dusenii Hutch.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Drypetes preussii (Pax) Hutch.	A(i)	-	_	~	-	-	
Drypetes staudtii (Pax) Hutch.	A(i)	~	_	~	-	-	
Belonophora ongensis S.E.Dawson & Cheek	A(i), A(iii)	~	~	~	_	_	
Belonophora talbotii (Wernham) Keay	A(i), A(iii)	~	~	~	_	_	
Psychotria densinervia (K.Krause) Verdc.	A(i), A(iii)	-	-	~	-	-	
Psychotria lanceifolia K.Schum.	A(i)	~	~	~	_	_	
Tricalysia ferorum Robbr.	A(i), A(iii)	~	~	~	-	-	
Deinbollia pycnophylla Gilg ex Engl.	A(i)	~	~	~	_	_	
Placodiscus angustifolius Radlk.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Dicranolepis polygaloides Gilg ex H.Pearson	A(i)	~	-	\checkmark	-	-	
Afrofittonia silvestris Lindau	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Asystasia lindauiana Hutch. & Dalziel	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Schefflera mannii (Hook.f.) Harms	A(i)	~	_	~	_	_	
Berlinia korupensis Mackinder & Burgt	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Gilbertiodendron newberyi Burgt	A(i)	~	~	~	-	~	
Microberlinia bisulcata A.Chev.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	~	

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Chazaliella obanensis (Wernham) Petit & Verdc.	A(i)	~	-	-	-	-	
Hymenostegia talbotii Baker f.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	\checkmark	
Hymenostegia viridiflora Mackinder & Wieringa	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Costus albiflos Maas & H.Maas	A(i)	~	~	~	_	_	
Vitex lokundjensis W.Piep.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Anthonotha xanderi Breteler	A(i)	~	\checkmark	\checkmark	-	-	
Begonia oxyanthera Warb.	A(i)	\checkmark	-	-	-	~	
Memecylon dasyanthum Gilg & Ledermann ex Engl.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	~	
Corymborkis minima P.J.Cribb	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Afropectinariella pungens (Schltr.) M.Simo & Stévart	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Anthocleista scandens Hook.f.	A(i)	~	_	-	_	_	
Leonardoxa africana (Baill.) Aubrév. subsp. letouzeyi McKey	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Begonia preussii Warb.	A(i)	~	-	\checkmark	-	-	
Napoleonaea egertonii Baker f.	A(i)	~	-	~	-	-	
Salacia lehmbachii Loes var. pes- ranulae N.Hallé	A(i)	~	-	~	-	-	
Jollydora glandulosa G.Schellenb.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Calochone acuminata Keay	A(i)	~	~	~	_	~	
Angylocalyx talbotii Baker f. ex	A(i)	_	-	~	_	_	

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Hutch. & Dalziel							
Antrocaryon micraster A.Chev. & Guillaumin	A(i)	-	-	~	-	~	
Cola megalophylla Brenan & Keay	A(i)	~	~	\checkmark	-	~	
Crateranthus talbotii Baker f.	A(i)	_	_	\checkmark	_	_	
Garcinia staudtii Engl.	A(i)	~	_	~	_	_	
Rhodognaphalon brevicuspe (Sprague) Roberty	A(i)	-	-	\checkmark	-	~	
Warneckea austro- occidentalis R.D.Stone	A(i)	~	~	\checkmark	-	-	
Ancistrocladus grandiflorus Cheek	A(i)	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	-	-	
Cola nigerica Brenan & Keay	A(i)	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	-	-	
Diospyros korupensis Gosline	A(i)	~	~	~	-	~	
Amanoa strobilacea Müll.Arg.	A(i)	-	~	~	-	-	
Cola praecuta Brenan & Keay	A(i)	~	\checkmark	\checkmark	-	-	
Liparis gracilentis Dandy	A(i)	~	\checkmark	\checkmark	-	-	
Sabicea medusula K.Schum. ex Wernham	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Uvariopsis korupensis Gereau & Kenfack	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Aframomum plicatum D.J.Harris & Wortley	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Begonia prismatocarpa Hook. subsp. delobata Sosef	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Cuviera talbotii (Wernham) Verdc.	A(i)	~	-	~	-	-	

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Macropodiella pellucida (Engl.) C.Cusset	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Placodiscus opacus Radlk.	A(i)	~	_	~	_	-	
Psychotria minimicalyx K.Schum	A(i)	~	-	~	-	-	
Trichostachys interrupta K.Schum.	A(i)	~	~	~	_	_	
Vepris trifoliolata (Engl.) Mziray	A(i)	\checkmark	~	~	-	-	
Tricalysia lejolyana Sonké & Cheek	A(i)	~	~	~	-	~	
Allexis obanensis Violaceae	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Memecylon candidum, Melastomataceae	A(i)	-	-	~	-	-	
Gaertnera letouzeyi Malcomber	A(i)	~	~	~	-	_	
Allexis cauliflora	A(i)	\checkmark	\checkmark	~	_	-	
Amanoa bracteosa Planch.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Baillonella toxisperma Pierre	A(i)	-	~	~	-	~	
Daniellia oblonga Oliv.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Diospyros crassiflora Hiern	A(i)	_	_	~	_	~	
Garcinia kola Heckel	A(i)	_	_	~	_	~	
Leplaea thompsonii (Sprague & Hutch.) E.J.M.Koenen & J.J.de Wilde	A(i)	-	-	~	-	~	
Lophira alata Banks ex Gaertn.f.	A(i)	_	_	~	_	~	
Magnistipula cuneatifolia Hauman	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	

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Magnistipula multinervia	A(i), A(iii)	~	~	~	~	-	
Manilkara Iososiana	A(i)	~	~	~	~	-	
Turraeanthus mannii Baill.	A(i)	-	-	-	-	~	
Berlinia hollandii Hutch. & Dalziel	A(i)	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	-	-	
Millettia laurentii de Wild.	A(i)	-	\checkmark	\checkmark	-	-	
Salacia nigra Cheek	A(i)	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	-	-	
Salacia volubilis Loes. & H.J.P.Winkl.	A(i)	~	-	-	-	-	
Magnistipula butayei De Wild. subsp. korupensis Burgt	A(iii)	\checkmark	~	~	\checkmark	-	
Afrothismia korupensis Sainge & T.Franke	A(i)	~	~	~	~	-	
Bulbophyllum subligaculiferum J.J.Verm.	A(i)	-	-	-	-	-	
Aframomum makandensis Dhetchuvi	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Anisophyllea neopurpurascens Li Bing Zhang, Xin Chen & H.He	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Craterispermum capitatum Taedoumg & De Block	A(i)	~	~	\checkmark	-	-	
Garcinia afzelii Engl.	A(i)	-	-	~	-	-	
Neolemonniera ogouensis (Dubard) Heine	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Cola brevipes Malvaceae	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Globulostylis minor Wernham	A(iii)	~	~	~	-	-	
Piptostigma longepilosum	A(i)	~	~	~	_	-	

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Piptostigma macrophyllum Ghogue, Sonké & Couvreur	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Psychotria camerunensis E.M.A.Petit	A(i)	~	-	-	-	-	
Pterygota bequaertii De Wild.	A(i)	-	-	-	-	-	
Terminalia ivorensis A.Chev.	A(i)	-	~	~	-	-	
Begonia rubromarginata Gilg	A(i)	~	~	~	-	_	
Allophylus nigericus Baker f.	A(iv)	~	~	~	-	_	
Callichilia basileis Beentje	A(iv)	~	~	~	_	_	
Cassipourea atanganae Kenfack	A(iii)	~	~	~	~	_	
Chytranthus micranthus Gilg ex Radlk.	A(iv)	~	~	~	-	-	
Costus acutissimus Maas & H.Maas	A(iii)	~	~	~	-	-	
Crotonogynopsis korupensis Kenfack & D.W.Thomas	A(iv)	~	~	~	-	-	
Cuviera trilocularis Hiern	A(iv)	~	~	~	_	_	
Psychotria korupensis O.Lachenaud	A(iii)	~	~	~	~	-	
Scaphopetalum parvifolium Baker f.	A(i)	~	~	~	-	-	
Scyphosyce pandurata Hutch.	A(iv)	~	~	~	-	-	

IPA criterion C qualifying habitats

НАВІТАТ	QUALIFYING SUB-	≥ 5% OF NATIONAL	≥ 10% OF NATIONAL	1 OF 5 BEST SITES	AREAL COVERAGE
	CRITERION	RESOURCE	RESOURCE	NATIONALLY	AT SITE

General site habitats

GENERAL SITE HABITAT	PERCENT COVERAGE	IMPORTANCE
Forest - Subtropical/Tropical Moist Lowland Forest	90	Major
Forest - Subtropical/Tropical Swamp Forest	1	Minor
Forest - Subtropical/Tropical Moist Montane Forest	3	Minor

Land use types

LAND USE TYPE	PERCENT COVERAGE	IMPORTANCE
Nature conservation	90	Major
Agriculture (arable)	10	Minor

Threats

THREAT	SEVERITY	TIMING
Agriculture & aquaculture - Annual & perennial non-timber crops - Shifting agriculture	Medium	Ongoing - increasing
Agriculture & aquaculture - Annual & perennial non-timber crops - Small-holder farming	Medium	Ongoing - increasing
Agriculture & aquaculture - Annual & perennial non-timber crops - Agro-industry farming	Medium	Ongoing - increasing
Biological resource use - Hunting & collecting terrestrial animals	High	Ongoing - trend unknown
Biological resource use - Logging & wood harvesting	Medium	Ongoing - trend unknown

Protected areas

PROTECTED AREA NAME	PROTECTED AREA TYPE	RELATIONSHIP WITH IPA	AREAL OVERLAP
Korup National Park	National Park	protected/conservation area matches IPA	1873

Conservation designation

DESIGNATION NAME	PROTECTED AREA	RELATIONSHIP WITH IPA	AREAL OVERLAP
Korup National Park	Important Bird Area	IPA encompasses protected/conservation area	1259
Korup National Park	Key Biodiversity Area	IPA encompasses protected/conservation area	1259

Management type

MANAGEMENT TYPE	DESCRIPTION	YEAR STARTED	YEAR FINISHED
Site management plan in place	Under the new collaborative mangement approach implemented by MINEF through the Programme for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the South West Region (PSMNR-SWR), the 32 villages and other stakeholders were reportedly involved in creation of the latest management plan.	2017	2021

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