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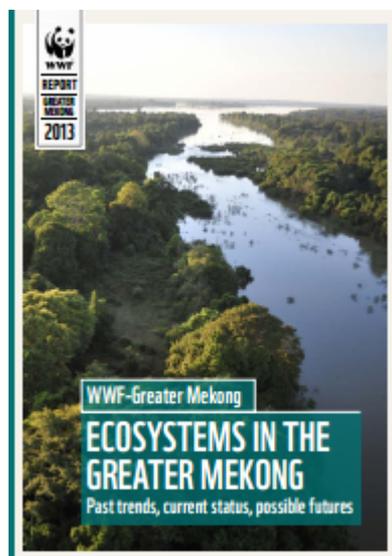
Ecosystems in the Greater Mekong. Past trends, current status, possible futures.

Resource
May 2013

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Summary

The Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS: Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Yunnan and Guangxi in China) is undergoing unprecedented changes. Many of these are positive, reflecting

political stabilization and economic growth following decades of poverty and conflict. But the rate and type of development is also threatening critical natural resources, particularly native forests, the Mekong River and its tributaries, and many wild plant and animal species. The GMS faces a critical choice: it can either continue with unsustainable development and see many of its unique natural resources disappear forever or switch policies and choose a more sustainable path into the future. This report gives an overview of what is happening, and provides key recommendations for how natural resource management can be made more sustainable. The core of the report is a series of maps, developed by WWF, describing the historical trends, current status and future projections of forests in the GMS excluding China. Future projections for the period 2009 to 2030 contrast two scenarios; an unsustainable growth scenario, which assumes deforestation rates between 2002 and 2009 continue, and a green economy scenario, which assumes a 50 per cent reduction in the annual deforestation rate relative to the unsustainable growth scenario, and no further losses in key biodiversity areas.

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