



Tonda extension, Wereaver and Aramba Wildlife Management Areas

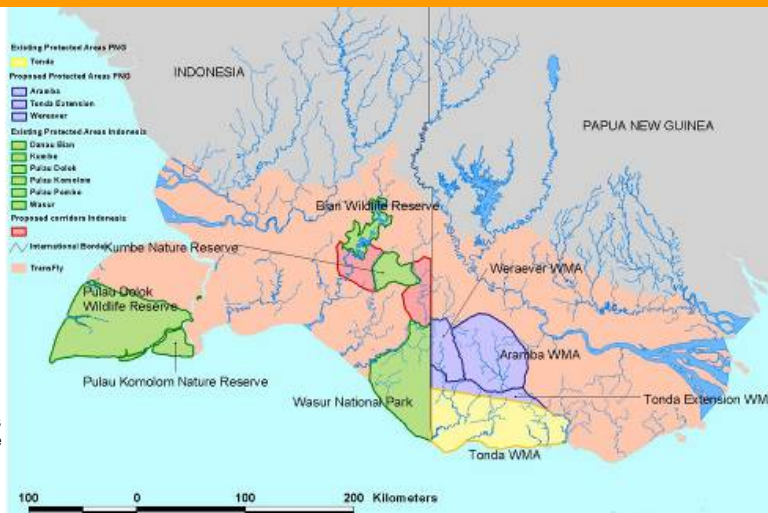


TransFly Ecoregion, Western Province, Papua New Guinea

The TransFly Ecoregion: A Global Treasure

The TransFly ecoregion straddles the international border of Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. This low-lying coastal region of grasslands, savannas wetlands and monsoon forest habitats covers more than 10 million ha. The area is home to some of the largest and healthiest wetlands in the Asia-Pacific region. Millions of birds inhabit the floodplains of slow moving rivers, and the surrounding savannas and monsoon forests are unique to the TransFly. They are home to endemic marsupial cats, flying possums and birds of paradise. Over 50% of New Guinea's total bird population is found in the ecoregion, including 80 species endemic to New Guinea.

The TransFly Ecoregion Program is developing approaches to conservation that embrace both the biodiversity and cultural diversity of the TransFly. Biological assessments generate spatial conservation priorities but it is the sociocultural factors that will determine the success or failure of conservation interventions. WWF is working to understand the indigenous knowledge and sociocultural values so this can inform conservation strategies to protect priority landscapes in the development of the biodiversity vision. Recognizing the unique cultural and biological diversity of this region, WWF is pioneering a "community visioning process" for local landowner groups that spans both sides of the political border. This approach identifies and prioritizes the landscapes, species, and traditions that have particular cultural, social, or livelihood values. WWF will then work with community leaders, scientists and partner organizations to integrate the community visions and the biological vision to develop a uniquely vigorous strategy for conservation action across the TransFly.



Three New and Unique Protected Areas in PNG

Location: Western Province, adjacent to Tonda Wildlife Management Area

Purpose: The three new Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are being established by customary landowners in the vicinity of Suki and Morehead, South Fly District to provide refuge for biodiversity as well as the maintenance of culturally and economically important habitats and natural resources. **Tonda extension WMA** will extend the existing reserve by about 100,000 ha and is an important site for international ecotourism. **Wereaver WMA** extends north along the border with Indonesia and protect the headwaters of the Torassi river and important monsoon forests. The largest, **Aramba WMA**, contains massive expanses of monsoon forests and wetlands and is being established by the Aramba people. Each of these WMAs contain sites of cultural significance and totem species.

Management and Support: Responsibility for management of the WMAs lies with the WMA committees who are elected by the local landowning community. Monitoring, technical advice and assistance are now being provided by WWF with support from WWF US, UK, Australia and the European Commission.

TransBoundary Protection: At the heart of the TransFly a two million ha transboundary protected area complex that will ensure the sustainable management of water and natural resources for the benefit of people and biodiversity is gradually growing. Working with governments and communities in both PNG and Indonesia will secure shared watersheds and resources and almost 20% of the unique and globally important TransFly ecoregion – a massive contribution towards CBD commitments by both countries.



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