



## Twenty Villages Sign Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary's Carbon Credit Agreement for Community Development

Ministry of Environment (MoE), Provincial Authorities and WCS provided local communities from 20 villages with Community Development Agreements under Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary's (KSWS) REDD+ project (Reduced Emissions from avoided Deforestation and Forest Degradation). This agreement will provide them with a large share of the revenue from KSWS's carbon credit sales for use in implementing their prioritized village development plans, with typical activities including improving access to clean water and providing community meeting buildings.

"Participation of local communities and support from government agencies at all levels, especially MoE and provincial authorities as well as donors are very important factor and needed for KSWS's forests and wildlife resources management. With an active role in conserving forests and wildlife in KSWS, those local communities deserve credit. Carbon credit sales are among the important actions undertaken by MoE and WCS, and create a sustainable financial mechanism to conserve natural resources and improve livelihoods of local communities in KSWS," said Ken Sereyrotha, WCS's Country Program Director. [Read more](#)

## Six Critically Endangered White-shouldered Ibis Nests Protected in Kulen Promtep Wildlife Sanctuary



*Two White-shouldered Ibises on the nest in Kulen Promtep Wildlife Sanctuary. © Eleanor Briggs/ WCS*

Six White-shouldered Ibis (*Pseudibis davisoni*) nests have been found in Tmatbouy village in Kulen Promtep Wildlife Sanctuary so far this year by conservationists from Ministry of Environment (MoE), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), and Tmatbouy Community Protected Area ecotourism committee. Safeguarding the white-shouldered ibis nests are a key step forward in protecting this species from extinction.

The Tmatbouy ibis nest monitoring is paid for through a Village Development Fund (VDF) raised through eco-tourism activities conducted in collaboration with WCS partner, Sam Veasna Centre (SVC). Tourists who successfully see the ibises pay extra fee into VDF, which is managed by the CPA committee. This is providing sustainable finance for the conservation of one of Cambodia's most enigmatic, charismatic and threatened birds.

"We are very excited to find the white-shouldered ibis nests because they are target species for birding tourists who visit Tmatbouy. Most community members have a high level of understanding regarding the importance of wildlife protection for the success of the ecotourism project," said Dep Kimon, Chief of Tmatbouy Community Protected Area Committee. [Read More](#)

## Over 600 Eggs of Asian Giant Softshell Turtle Discovered in Mekong River



*Hatchlings of Asian Giant Softshell Turtle from protected nests. © Ngourn Chanti / WCS*

Conservationists from Fisheries Administration (FiA) WCS and community members have found 20 nests of Asian Giant Softshell Turtle containing 663 eggs on sand bars along the Mekong River in Kratie Province this nesting season in 2018. Illegal collection of eggs and capture of adults for consumption and sale still continues that puts this species at high risk of extinction.

The Asian Giant Softshell Turtle (*Pelochelys cantorii*) is listed on the IUCN Red List as globally Endangered. It was thought extinct in the Cambodian portion of the Mekong River until its re-discovery in 2007 in a 48-kilometer stretch of the river in Kratie and Stung Treng Provinces.

"In total, we have found 35 nests, but eggs of 15 nests were already illegally taken away when we arrived. We are now protecting 20 nests with 663 eggs until they hatch. Four community members



are now working hard to protect these nests,” Nguon Chanti, WCS Project Coordinator for the Asian Giant Softshell Turtle Project. [Read More](#)

## WCS to work with the Royal Academy of Judicial Professions

The WCS team led by Mr. Ken Sereyrotha, WCS Country Program Director, held a productive first meeting with H.E. Chhorn Proloeng, President of the Royal Academy of Judicial Professions (RAJP), together with nine other members of RAJP Senior Management. The purpose of this meeting was to seek a collaborative partnership between WCS and RAJP in order to increase the expertise and specialization of trainee prosecutors and judges on wildlife crimes.



*WCS team presented objectives and workplan of Countered Wildlife Trafficking Project to the RAJP management. © Eng Mengey/ WCS*

Several large seizures of ivory and rhino horns, together with other products including pangolin scales and big cat bones, demonstrate that Cambodia is increasingly being used as a transit point for African wildlife, which is being trafficked through Cambodia to other markets in Asia by transnational criminal syndicates. Furthermore, Cambodia's own wildlife is also under heavy poaching pressure for the illegal trade in Cambodia and neighbouring countries.

WCS is excited to work with the RAJP in the development of training and curricula materials that are designed to provide trainee and in-service Prosecutors and Judges with the awareness, knowledge and skills to effectively deal with wildlife crime and wildlife trafficking cases in Cambodia.

## WCS works with local communities to build awareness of wildlife issues and ecotourism potential

WCS's Northern Plains Community Conservation team, in partnership with Department of Environment and local authorities, conducted awareness activities with 110 local villagers from Kham Kurt and Kampong Sralov I communities in Chhep Wildlife Sanctuary on wildlife conservation issues. Topics covered included wildlife protection laws, key bird and mammal species, role of birding in ecotourism, and bird nest protection requirements.



*WCS team educated villagers about the importance of wildlife protection. © Phann Sithan / WCS*

“The main purpose of this outreach is to ensure local people are aware of important wildlife species and encourage them to support and engage in conservation activities”, said Phann Sithan, WCS’s Northern Plains Communities and Livelihoods Technical Advisor.

“Our team is now working with local people to identify potential areas for ecotourism development within these two communities to allow them generate extra income to support their livelihoods. We will also conduct awareness in four other villages in the Chhep Wildlife Sanctuary,” he added.

## WCS Partners with Cambodian Customs and Excise to Combat Wildlife Trafficking

Mr. Ken Sereyrotha, WCS Country Program Director, and the WCS Counter Wildlife Trafficking team met with H.E. Dr. Kun Nhem, General Director of Customs and Excise of Cambodia and members of his senior management team, to discuss collaboration between the General Department of Customs and Excise (GDCE) and WCS, on counter wildlife trafficking.



*WCS team (right) discussed with the Royal Academy of Judicial Professions management about collaboration to combat wildlife trafficking. © Eng Mengey/ WCS*

H.E. Dr. Kun Nhem affirmed that prevention of wildlife trafficking was a high priority issue for Customs, as evidenced by the successful recent convictions of several ivory and rhino horn traffickers following actions taken by GDCE. The meeting focused on four main activities, including seeking official focal points between GDCE and WCS to extend our collaboration, discussing upcoming plans for trainings in Sihanoukville, Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, confirming an opportunity for a bi-lateral exchange for Customs staff to Vietnam to enhance country to country collaboration on cross-border wildlife trafficking cases, and offering support for developing standard operational procedures with Customs on how to manage wildlife trafficking cases, from seizure to prosecution. WCS values the partnership and commitment of GDCE and looks forward to expanding our collaborative work in 2018.

## Over 200 young students learned about Bengal Florican and its situation

Some 210 young students from Chhouk primary school in Stoeung district of Kampong Thom Province and Wat Preahhouk primary school in Chikreng district of Siem Reap Province paid a visit to Northern Tonle Sap Protected Landscape (NTSPL) to see the Critically Endangered Bengal Floricans and understand about their natural habitat.



*Young students visited Northern Tonle Sap Protected Landscape to learn about Bengal Florican. © Ngeb Nguen / WCS*

“These young students have played a key role in protecting Bengal Florican and other waterbirds in the NT SPL because they are the key persons who always find the nest of this bird and guarding it over the past years,” said Nheb Nguen, WCS’s Bengal Florican Conservation Project Assistant who led the study tour for this young students.

The NT SPL was established in 2016 from the Bengal Florican Conservation Areas that had previously been managed by the Forestry Administration, and covers 31,159 hectares in Kampong Thom and Siem Reap provinces. WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society) works closely with the Ministry of Environment to conserve the NT SPL and the important wildlife that it supports, including the Bengal Florican, through various conservation activities such as assisting law enforcement, bird nest protection, sustainable agriculture, and raising community awareness.

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