

## Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (Due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017)

<b>Project reference:</b>	23-010
<b>Project title</b>	Implementing a model for sustainable forest management in Cambodia
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Cambodia/Siem Pang District, Stung Treng Province
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Birdlife International-Cambodia Programme
<b>Partner(s)</b>	1) General Department of Administration for Nature Conservation and Protection (GDNCP), Ministry of Environment and Stung Treng Department of Environment 2) Sansum Mlup Prey (SMP) 3) Cambodia Rural Development Team (CRDT)
<b>Project leader</b>	Jonathan C. Eames
<b>Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)</b>	31 October 2017, HYR2
<b>Project website/blog/social media etc.</b>	N/A

### 1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

#### Project management

*Recruitment of staff:* The project team leader, Phann Sithan, resigned in June 2017. He was replaced by Mean Ratanak, who is highly experienced in working with government environmental departments, international development agencies, donors and NGOs. Chea Sophea was recruited as the project's GIS Data Management Officer.

*Project meetings:* A meeting of the project partners was hosted in the BirdLife office in Phnom Penh in September 2017, where SMP and CRDT reported on progress with the wildlife-friendly rice initiative, and SMP was subcontracted by BirdLife to provide advisory support for this element of the project and training for the rice farmers. A senior management team meeting was held to prepare the 2017-2018 work plan and budget plan for the Darwin Project.

*Project monitoring, review and reporting:* Regular weekly project team meetings were held during the reporting period, to monitor progress with implementing the workplan and to discuss how to address challenges to project implementation, such as illegal land encroachment.

**Output 1:** *Local consultation structures established at village and district level, equitably representing the views of constituents.*

Forums were set up in the 7 target villages during year 1 and are awaiting final approval from their local commune councils. This is expected to be completed by November 2017. The Stakeholder Forum and Provincial Ad Hoc Committee that were also established in year 1 have been actively involved in several of the project activities described below, including discussions on preventing encroachment into the two wildlife sanctuaries, natural resource management and a field visit to introduce the Ministry of Environment to the wildlife-friendly rice initiative.

**Output 2:** *Land titles, community land-use plans and conservation agreements finalised within at least four villages neighbouring Western Siem Pang Forest.*

### *Activity 2.1: Land titling launch event*

BirdLife, the Director of the wildlife sanctuary and the local commune council held a meeting in Nhang Sum village in August 2017 which was attended by 42 participants, including 34 women. They were informed about the purpose of the rice field mapping, and they expressed interest in participating in the wildlife-friendly rice initiative and offered to pass on information about this to local people who did not attend the meeting.

### *Activity 2.2: Mapping of land claims*

Mapping of the rice fields in Khet Svay village was completed in September 2017 by Stung Treng land department; in total, 122 parcels of land belonging to 86 families with an area of 436 ha were digitised and entered into the GIS database in the Siem Pang office.

### *Activity 2.3: Meetings to develop land-use plans, incorporating land claims and conservation agreements*

Conservation agreements were signed by 41 families in Khet Svay village, under which these farmers have agreed not to undertake activities such as land encroachment, wildlife hunting, use of chemical fertilisers and illegal logging.

### *Activity 2.4: Meetings held between villagers and commune chief to endorse land-use plans*

The maps of rice fields and map information certificates for Preak Meas commune were endorsed by the local commune council in September 2017, and both hard and digital copies were deposited in the Department of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction in Stung Treng Province.

**Output 3:** *Management plan of Western Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary is developed in consultation with local communities.*

### *Activity 3.1 Consultation meetings*

Birdlife and the Department of Environment organised a district forum in June 2017 to discuss how to stop land encroachment inside the two wildlife sanctuaries, attended by 30 participants including 3 women. The meeting was presided over by the Deputy Governor, key representatives of provincial departments, the district governor, four commune chiefs and eight village chiefs.

The project senior management team attended a meeting with the General Department of Administration for Nature Conservation and Protection to finalise zoning guidelines for the protected areas in Cambodia. These will be used to zone Western Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary.

A meeting was held with the Stung Treng Department of Environment in August 2017, which decided to establish provincial and district level zonation management planning working groups that will report annually.

### *Activity 3.2 Meeting to agree sustainable use management regulations*

A strategic action plan for zonation was produced by BirdLife's Livelihood Technical Adviser in May 2017 and has been reviewed and further developed by the Darwin project team.

BirdLife participated in the annual Siem Pang district forum in July 2017, which made several important decisions relating to natural resources management, including accepting that encroachments would be prevented along Sekong River and the new 101 Army road by increased awareness and patrols, and the removal and relocation of families to approved areas, and agreeing the zonation planning process.

**Output 4:** *Improved food security in seven target villages (6,630 people) through improved local capacity in agriculture, increased income from wildlife-friendly rice sales, natural resource management and direct natural resource interventions.*

### *Activity 4.1: Cattle vaccinations and animal husbandry training provided to at least 300 households*

Two main activities were completed in partnership with the provincial Department of Agriculture: (i) vaccination awareness meetings in seven villages in Preak Mean and Thmor Keo communes in June 2017, attended by 217 households (103 female); and (ii) vaccinations against foot and mouth disease provided to a total of 880 buffalos and 483 cows from 187 households (with a further 24 cows from four households vaccinated in July 2017). In total, 65 households have been

trained in animal husbandry, and a total of 252 households have benefited from cattle vaccinations covering 1,713 stock.

*Activity 4.2: Sustainable land management training and digging of 10 trapeangs*

Four *trapeangs* were dug in Year 1, and will be monitored for water retention and ecology at the beginning of the dry season in November, when the remaining six will also be dug.

*Activity 4.3: Target villages informed about the requirements for wildlife friendly, organic rice certification, and conditional agreements signed*

The Provincial Ad Hoc Committee, the Governor of Stung Treng Province and other dignitaries, and the Ministry of Environment made a field visit in September 2017 to learn about the progress of the wildlife-friendly rice initiative in Khet Svay village, which was an important opportunity to share information on lessons learned and future plans for cultivating and marketing the rice.

A village consultation to introduce “wildlife friendly rice and rice field mapping” was held in Nhang Sum village, Thmor Keo commune in June 2017, with 98 participants including 42 women.

*Activity 4.4: Training for at least 1000 people in wildlife friendly agricultural techniques*

CRDT signed a new contract in August 2017 to provide training in wildlife-friendly agricultural techniques to the farmers in the 7 target villages. During August, training in pest management and organic fertilizer usage was provided by CRDT to 111 families (55 females) in Pornng Kreal, Khet Krom and Khet Svay villages. This training will be conducted in the other 4 target villages later in 2017.

*Activity 4.5: Study tour exchange visit for villagers from Siem Pang to learn about wildlife friendly rice production in Preah Vihear*

The project livelihood team visited Preah Vihear in July 2017 to learn from SMP about the wildlife-friendly rice process, and the roles of SMP, the village marketing network, the GIS unit and compliance system unit.

A study tour visit was then made in August 2017 by people from 3 project villages to learn about wildlife-friendly rice production and community ecotourism in Preah Vihear, including agricultural techniques, the roles and responsibilities of the participants and important challenges.

*Activity 4.6: At least 200 households selling wildlife friendly rice to SMP at a 10% premium price*

The project livelihood team organized a meeting in Khet Svay village in May 2017 to discuss the by-laws for the establishment of a village marketing network (VMN). These by-laws were endorsed by Preak Meas commune in August 2017.

BirdLife and SMP distributed 1,528 kg of rice seeds to 52 families of VMN members in Khet Svay village in May 2017. The seed was loaned to the farmers at 0% interest, and the seed loan will be paid back to the project in the harvest season.

BirdLife and SMP hosted a meeting in September 2017 where 41 families signed agreements to sell rice, and the hard copies of the agreements were endorsed by SMP and VMN.

**Output 5: Between 2018 and 2019 no further land conversion within the boundary of Western Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary**

*Activity 5.1: Ground truth mapping of all existing rice fields in four target villages*

Rice field mapping was completed in collaboration with Stung Treng Department of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction in Khet Svay and Nhang Sum villages in August-September 2017, where 100 rice fields belonging to 84 households were registered.

*Activity 5.2: Map production and remote sensing study to assess forest encroachment*

A Provincial Ad Hoc Committee meeting was hosted in Stung Treng province in June 2017 to present results of forest cover change mapping within WSP Wildlife Sanctuary. The meeting agreed to prepare an action plan to prevent encroachment, meet with stakeholders to agree on the plan and then take action for its implementation.

BirdLife signed a contract with the Department of Land Management in Phnom Penh in July 2017 to monitor forest cover change along the Sekong River and in WSP Wildlife Sanctuary, and has employed a consultant to implement the mapping and analysis.

Based on the monitoring of forest cover change in 2016-2017, the Senior Project Advisor completed a report on *Environmental impact of riverine forest destruction in Western Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary* (English and Khmer versions), which showed that the riverine forest is under great pressure, affecting the habitats favoured by globally threatened birds and mammals.

**Output 6:** *Project findings, policy brief and journal article shared with target audiences achieving increased awareness of the links between biodiversity and human-wellbeing and support for mainstreaming participatory forest management into sustainable protected forest management policy.*

**6.1 Community participatory learning workshops**

In August 2017, four facilitators from Khet Svay village met with 76 participants from Nhang Sum village (including 39 women) to share information gained during the exchange visit to Preah Vihear (see 4.5 above).

**2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.**

In August 2017, army families were settled in Nhang Sum village near to WSP Wildlife Sanctuary. This increased land-use pressure in the village and there were overlapping claims for land between the army and villagers, affecting land that was scheduled for wildlife-friendly rice cultivation in 2018. There was a risk that this would decrease the number of volunteer farmers involved in the Ibis rice scheme, but following negotiations with the army, wildlife sanctuary director and Department of Environment the families were relocated to other areas outside the village lands, highlighting the good relationship between BirdLife and the local authorities.

**2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?**

Discussed with LTS:	No
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Formal change request submitted:	No
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Received confirmation of change acceptance	No
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**3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?**

**No**  Estimated underspend: £

**3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully.** Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

**4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?**

No

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document. Additionally, if you were funded under R23 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate document.

**Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at [Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk](mailto:Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk). The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**