

## Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

*Note: If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.*

**Submission Deadline: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022**

<b>Project reference</b>	27-005
<b>Project title</b>	Organic livelihoods conserving Cambodia's big five
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Cambodia
<b>Lead partner</b>	BirdLife International
<b>Partner(s)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rising Phoenix Co. Ltd</li> <li>2. NatureLife</li> <li>3. Department of Environment (DoE) Stung Treng and Ratanakiri provinces, Ministry of Environment</li> <li>4. Sansom Mlup Prey (SMP)</li> <li>5. IBIS Rice Conservation Co., Ltd</li> <li>6. Department of Land Management (DoL), Stung Treng and Ratanakiri provinces</li> <li>7. Seven Villages Forums around Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary</li> <li>8. O'Rey and O' Koki Community Protected Areas, and Veal Kambor Community Protected Area at Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary</li> </ol>
<b>Project leader</b>	Jonathan C. Eames
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2022, HYR3
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	N/A

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

**Project partners meetings** One quarterly Village Forum meeting and one quarterly Stakeholder Forum meetings in Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary (SPWS) were conducted in June 2022. In LWS, two quarterly stakeholder forum meetings and one stakeholder meeting by PDoE was carried out. Regular meetings were held with all other project partners.

**Project monitoring, review and reporting**

Monthly progress reports were prepared and are available upon request.

**Outputs 1: The IBIS Rice scheme will be expanded to an additional 2,250 rural people (50% women).**

At SPWS, there was an overall increase to 1,880 households. This included 374 households or 1,870 rural people from the ten existing villages and one new village where two new households comprising 10 rural people joined the scheme. At LWS there was an increase to 102 households or 408 rural people. The grand total of rural people joining the scheme in the reporting period was 2,288. We are 1.7% above the target of the Year 3 project target.

### **1.1 M & E framework establishment**

The M&E framework and the monitoring workflow was tracked regularly (Annex 1). We have added a column to track cumulative quantitative results to date.

### **1.3 Rice field mapping and registration for 260 households with the Department of Land Management (SPWS & LWS)**

From April – June 2022 in SPWS, there were 82 additional land parcels belonging to 78 households (303 hectares) were mapped. The registration of the 200 parcels from 2021 belonging to 183 households (606 hectares) in ten villages were completed. By the end of this reporting period, we mapped a total 446 land parcels covering 1,392 hectares for 424 households (including year 1, 2, & 3 results). By August in LWS, an additional 39 households were mapped, the total land demarcated is 78 parcels covering 120 hectares. The shapefiles for all the mapped land parcels are attached (Annex 2a and 2b).

### **1.4 Quarterly Village Forum meetings**

There was one Village Forum meeting held at SPWS on June 17, in four communes, Preak Meas, Thmar Keo, Sre Sambo, and Sekong, with 39 participants (4 women). It was expressed by the local community that night hunting activities and land expansion were concerning them, especially in SPWS' sustainable use zones. Minute of the meeting was prepared (Annex 3a and 3b). At LWS, two quarterly meeting were organized at Sre Chrey ann Srepork Thom on Jun 20 and 23, with 45 participants.

### **1.6 Select two villages in LWS and pilot Ibis Rice scheme at LWS**

The number of households who joined the IBIS rice scheme and signed the conservation agreement increased to 102 households from Sre Chrey and Srepok Thom villages in 2022.

### **1.8 Monitoring, evaluation of Ibis Rice related and compliance activities and results at SPWS & LWS**

At SPWS we conducted ground truth checks and eight non-compliance village meetings between April and July 2022 during which we found 39 villagers suspected of violations. Six of 685 households had violated the agreement in 2022, most violations were transporting logs (Annex 4). At LWS no non-compliance was found.

### **Output 2: One Community Protected Area (CPA) is strengthened (at LWS) and one Fish Conservation Zone (FCZ) is established (at SPWS)**

#### **2.1 Establish a M&E and baseline for CPA establishment**

This activity has been regularly tracked to the M&E framework.

#### **2.8 Baseline data collection and monitoring and evaluation of natural resource use and forest cover within the new CPAs at SPWS and LWS**

At LWS, 18 patrols totalling 54 days were carried out by 11 CPA committees. These removed 22 snares, 6kg of shock wire, removed one illegal fishing net, destroyed one illegal camp and found four cases of logging including one logger who was sent to the LWS ranger post. They also recorded 64 birds and four mammals including the critically endangered Black-shanked Dour Langur. In August 2022, NLC provided training on CPA management to the O'Koki CPA committee, who also conducted a meeting with the head of the local community office of PDoE to discuss the CPA management plan development for 5 years from 2023 to 2026.

#### **2.10 Facilitate Provincial Department of Environment awareness raising on SPWS approved zoning focusing on the rules of the conservation zone, which is the proposed location of the FCZ, including posting of signboards**

In August and September 2022, Rising Phoenix collaborated with Stung Treng Provincial Department of Environment to conduct the awareness raising meetings on the Zoning regulations and PA Law in nine villages of Khes Svay, Khes Kraom, Pong Kriel, Phabang, Lakay, Nhang Sum, Lun, Sre Russei, and Peam Khes. The total participants were 692 people (285 women). Through the meetings, the prohibition signs of illegal activities are displayed and

explained to the community people. Minutes of the meetings were prepared and available upon request (Annex 5).

### **2.11 Fisheries extension training to participating households in Khampourk village, to increase fish protein in village counteracting short term impacts of FCZ establishment.**

We developed a fish raising program for 10 community households in Kham Phouk village. Participant farmers got training skill of fish raising in August and started raising their fish at home in September. The report of fishing activities was prepared (Annex 6)

### **2.13 Implement a series of outreach events in Khampourk village to engage community in FCZ establishment and implementation**

As part of SPWS's work with the Village Forum of Kham Phouk Village in 2022, we strengthened the Fisheries Conservation Zone (FCZ) on the O'Khampha River, in the Conservation Zone near Kham Phouk village.

At SPWS, one meeting was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> June with Kham Phouk's Village Forum committees, led by Y.E.A Catalyst, Mr. Seat Lykheang, to assess and develop the community outreach planning regarding the FCZ in Kham Phouk village.

Another meeting was held on July 29 chaired by the village chief, a member of the Village Forum committee, nine farmers, together with project staff in Kham phouk to discuss the fish raising plan and select farmers for piloting the activities in the village.

### **Output 3: By March 2023, seven Village Forums in SPWS are strengthened and two Village Forums in LWS are established.**

#### **3.1 Establish M & E framework and baseline surveys for numbers of village forums established and effective, awareness raising amongst village beneficiaries, compliance and forest cover within SPWS and LWS**

An M&E framework was updated regularly (Annex 1).

#### **3.4 Quarterly Village Forum and Stakeholder Forum meetings at commune level**

In SPWS, a quarterly Village Forum meeting was held on June 16-17, 2022 in Preak Meas, Thmor Keo, Sre Sambo, and Sekong communes in SPWS. During the meeting, village and commune chiefs discussed livelihoods, conservation, and illegal activities in the wildlife sanctuary (Annex 3a). During the district Stakeholder Forum, the meeting results were shared. A District Stakeholder Forum meeting was conducted on 24 June at the Siem Pang District Hall where 42 participants (4 women) representing each of the ten villages, including all village chiefs, four commune chiefs, the district governor, Department of Environment officers, local police and military met. The purposes of the meetings were to present the progress achievement, discuss the challenges and solution, and develop workplans for the next quarter (Annex 7).

In LWS, O'Koki CPA organized quarterly Village Forum meetings in June and September, where the progress of Ibis rice implementation at Srepork Thom village was discussed. In July, NLC supported the department of Conservation of the East Mekong Protected Area territorial and Ratanakiri PDoE to organize the LWS stakeholder meeting which was presided over by the deputy governor and the under-secretary of state of MoE.

#### **3.5 Awareness raising on the importance of SPWS and LWS and the illegality of hunting/snaring conducted in nine villages by Village Forum committees**

We raised the awareness on the importance of SPWS and the illegality of hunting/snaring through the quarterly village forum meeting in June, the district stakeholder forum meeting in June, the eight non-compliance village meetings from April – July 2022, and the awareness meetings of Zoning regulation and PA Law, as reported above.

In June 2022 at LWS, NatureLife and SMP conducted the Ibis scheme promotion at Thmey village and Roveak village which included the district deputy governor, LWS director, intersectoral officer, FA, commune council, village chiefs, SMP staff, and NLC. Ninety-three villagers, including 34 females, joined the awareness in both villages. In addition broadcasts on

the importance of the protected area was conducted in five villages and video awareness at two pagodas in Srepork Thom and Sre Ang Krong.

**Output 4: Stable populations of five Critically Endangered bird species and one mammal species (Eld’s deer) within SPWS**

**4.2 Searching and monitoring nests of White shouldered Ibis in LWS and SPWS**

At SPWS we had found 36 nests of which 28 nests had fledged 61 young, compared to 31 nests found and fledged 49 young in 2021. This becomes the most successful year on record. By the end of May, at LWS we found nine nests and seven successfully fledged 11 chicks while two nests had failed.

**4.3 Searching and monitoring nests of Giant Ibis in LWS and SPWS**

At SPWS we had found 15 nests of which ten nests had fledged 16 young. Five nests had failed caused by wind and storm this year. Indications are that 2022 will be similar to year 2021 which had 17 nests. At LWS, between May and September, we had found eight nests and four nests have fledged four chicks. Three nests had failed due to human disturbance.

**4.4 Searching and monitoring vulture nests at SPWS**

At SPWS we had found 13 nests from which 13 chicks were fledged successfully, compared to ten nests found and seven nests fledged seven chicks in 2021, five nests increased in 2022.

**4.5 Conducting monitoring of three vulture species at vulture restaurants at SPWS**

We conducted vulture restaurants weekly. The maximum count was during August 2022 which had 109 individuals, compared to 97 in 2021 and 97 in 2020. In LWS, a total of 19 Red-headed vulture and 8 white-rumped vultures were recorded. Sightings occurred 8 times and 8 different locations, this is the first time that vultures have been recorded at LWS since 2019.

**4.6 Conducting White-shouldered Ibis (WSI) roost census in LWS and SPWS**

At SPWS we monitored 15 roost sites but we found only 13 in use. The maximum count in September was 377 birds compared with 373 in 2021, and 385 in 2020. The trend shows a stable population during the project period. In LWS, we monitored 17 roost sites, but only saw one bird in July, eight in August and 12 and nine on two days in September.

**4.8 Searching and monitoring Eld’s deer in SPWS (monthly census)**

A vehicle base survey was undertaken on 13th and 14th April 2022. The minimum number of unique individuals recorded was 23 and the maximum number counted was 46, compared to a minimum 14 and a maximum 23 in 2021.

**2. 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.**

No notable problems have occurred over the reporting period. Although a change request for the third year of the project was submitted and approved by NIRAS-LTS International, to update on activity and budget changes resulting on two new partners being added to the project (Approved September 2022)

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

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: Yes/No

Formal Change Request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/Ne

Change request reference if known: CR submitted on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022, and approval received on 29 September 2022. No change request reference known.

**4a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?**

Yes  No  Estimated underspend: £

**4b. 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 re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.**

**5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?**

A response document has been attached to this report, responding to points raised from the last Annual Report Review

**If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response (including the submission of your risk register), or if your Annual Report Review asked you to provide a response with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.**

**Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with NIRAS-LTS International through a Change Request. Please DO NOT send these in the same email.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com). The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number, followed by the specific fund in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 29-001 Darwin Initiative Half Year Report**