



WWF *for a living planet*®

WWF-Cambodia

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Press Release

For immediate release

WWF warns Eastern Plains wildlife is on an alarming decline Talks in Mondulkiri to seek new ways for conservation and development

Phnom Penh/Mondulkiri – 07 June 2016 – WWF and its partners warn in a high-rank workshop in Mondulkiri that species population in the Eastern Plains (EPL) are on a dramatic decline, including large mammals. Camera traps and other scientific research show a big loss of wild animals over the last years. The reasons for this alarming development are un-controlled economic growth, poaching, extraction of goods, free road access and less control of illegal weapon use inside protected areas and a low number of rangers patrolling the protected areas. Also land-use conflicts affecting Community Forests (CFs). Companies buy land from the villagers for establishing plantations and people try to intrude to conservation areas in search for new land and cut the trees for agriculture.

“We are still facing immense problems to combat biodiversity loss and enhance conservation of wildlife. Spatial planning is the key to harmonize development and conservation. The private sector plays an important role in the future of our protected forests in the Eastern Plains”, so Moul Phath, Eastern Plains Landscape Manager of WWF-Cambodia in Mondulkiri.

Royal Cambodian Government officials, Mondulkiri provincial authorities, district and community representatives, NGOs and corporate partners alongside with University experts participate in the annual EPL reflection workshop today. The workshop, organized by Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), aims to bring Eastern Plains (EPL) stakeholders together to reflect on their efforts, analyze the current situation, discussing successes, progress and challenges and develop new strategies for the region.

Participants agreed that stronger focus should be put on law enforcement to ensure that the dramatic decline of wildlife finally stops. Participants discussed concrete solutions and needed cooperation amongst all stakeholders to continue protecting the unique value of the landscape. Law enforcement and training of rangers and officials are a key element to the protection of the landscape’s value.

“Community members patrol together with park rangers, police and WWF to reduce illegal wildlife trade. On a monthly basis, they allow thousands of snares and traps to be destroyed, poachers and illegal loggers to be arrested and hundreds of kilogram of wild meat, lumbers, weapons and vehicles to be confiscated”, so Moul Phath.

However a long-term sustainable development strategy is also needed. Through a project funded by the European Union (EU) “Sustaining biodiversity, environmental and social benefits in the protected area of the EPL”, WWF and its implementing partners NTFFP-EP, MyVillage and RECOFTC, are promoting a landscape approach for the sustainable development of the Mondulkiri Province by supporting the provincial spatial planning process, engaging with the private sector to ensure sustainable practices and promote the establishment of sustainable conservation financing mechanisms, as well as supporting communities protected areas and CBNEs development.

“Much has been achieved for the benefit of the people as well as conservation successes in the last two years. But Cambodia’s rapid economic development and the need for using land and resources have to be pursued in a holistic approach that guarantees a sustainable future for Cambodia’s wildlife and its people”, said Elodie Maria-Sube, EU attaché, Natural Resources Management – Climate Change”, said Elodie Maria-Sube, EU delegation representative.

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News to the editors:

About WWF-Cambodia

WWF was established in Cambodia in 1995 as a part of the WWF Greater Mekong Programme. WWF’s mission in Cambodia is to ensure that there will be strong participation and support from all people to conserve the country’s rich biological diversity. Through the encouragement of sustainable use of natural resources, WWF-Cambodia promotes new opportunities for the benefit of all people, enhancing local livelihoods and contributing to poverty reduction in the Kingdom of Cambodia. Go to cambodia.panda.org for more information.

About the European Union-Cambodia cooperation

Over the years, EU-Cambodia cooperation activities have touched the lives of millions of Cambodians. EU development cooperation programmes involve Cambodians from all walks of life and take place in sectors ranging from education and agriculture to governance, public finance management, private sector development and climate change. The EU together with the Member States is Cambodia’s largest partner in terms of development assistance.

RECOFTC is the only international not-for-profit organization that specializes in capacity development for community forestry. RECOFTC’s mission is to enhance capacities for stronger rights, improved governance and fairer benefits for local people in sustainable forested landscapes in the Asia and the Pacific region.

My Village (MVI) is a Cambodian NGO operating in northeast provinces of Cambodia, particularly in Mondulkiri, Kratie and Stung Treng. MVI’s mission is to provide high quality support to local civil societies for improving natural resource-dependent livelihoods.

NTFP-EP (Non-Timber Forest Product-Exchange Program) is a strong and dynamic regional exchange network providing strategic and practical support for sustainable NTFP-EP development and community-based livelihoods.