### Statement on shooting incident between rangers and illegal poachers

### Cambodia, Phnom Penh – WWF-Cambodia, and Mondulkiri’s Provincial Department of Environment would like to show our sympathy for Mr. Cheng Chanthy, Ministry of Environment ranger, who got shot by poachers during his night patrol in Srepok Wildlife Sanctuary (SWS) in Mondolkiri province on 29th January, 2019.

### We are alarmed by the violence of the crime committed against brave law-enforcement officials who were fulfilling their duty and mission. We urge the authorities to take the necessary actions to bring the criminals to justice.

### The incident happened at around 3.oo am on Tuesday when six rangers with three arms encountered a group of six poachers while patrolling the forest on three motorbikes. After exchanging fire, one ranger was hit and injured on the left thigh. The rangers then decided to back off and rush the victim to the hospital. The victim, Mr. Cheng Channy is now in a good care at Calmet hospital in Phnom Penh, and luckily the bullet does not hit through his bone, and it is reported that he will be discharged in about 4-5 days and will take rest at home for about a month or so to heal the wound.

### All across Cambodia, wildlife rangers courageously patrol protected areas to preserve the country’s invaluable natural heritage against illegal logging and poaching. They understand the danger of their duty and are fully committed to their mission to protect the wildlife and forests against offenders.

###  “This unfortunate incident is one example of how illegal wildlife and logging activities are having tragic impacts on biodiversity and people, and they must be immediately stopped” said Mr. Seng Teak, Country Director of WWF-Cambodia. He also added that “We call for an investigation and arrest perpetrators, and bring them to court. WWF remains committed to working closely with government to ensure rangers are equipped with the knowledge and skills to stay safe while doing their jobs and support the protection of the Cambodia’s natural heritage.”

### “Our rangers play a key role in the conservation of our forest and wildlife, but face continued threats from poachers and loggers. We are extremely concerned with the current incident and the case is under investigation and criminals will be brought to justices soon.” said Keo Sopheak, Director of Provincial Department of Environment of Mondulkiri Province”. He added that nothing can compensate those sacrifices made by the rangers to protect our forest and wildlife, so we request all partners to support us in taking urgent steps to improve the lives and working conditions of rangers.

### It is noted that this is not the first time of incidents happened between forest rangers and illegal poachers and loggers. The similar case also happened in early 2018 in Keo Siema Wildlife Sanctuary in Mondolikiri province, in which a military officer, a park ranger and an employee of Wildlife Conservation Society were shot dead during their field patrol. Moreover, another case happened in Preah Vihear Protected Forest at the end of 2015, in which two wildlife rangers were killed during a patrol.

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**About WWF-Cambodia (World Wild Fund for Nature- 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](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CEmma%5CDownloads%5Ccamobodia.panda.org) for more information.