



This project is funded by the European Union



for a living planet[®]

Press Release

For immediate release

The European Union (EU) and WWF officially launch a 2.8 million EUR project to conserve natural resources in Cambodia

Phnom Penh, 29th March 2018— The EU and WWF continue cooperation for sustainable resource use and protected area management. Today, WWF and the European Union (EU) have officially launched a project worth 2.8 million EUR (equivalent to more than 3.3 million USD) for a project supporting the sustainable management of the rich forest resources of Monduliri Province. The 5 year project (2018- 2022) is called 'Advancing CSO's Capacity to Ensure Sustainability Solutions (ACCESS)', and its overarching objective is to strengthen the role and participation of Cambodian forest dependent communities in improved governance, inclusive policy dialogue, and natural resources conservation in Monduliri province.

The EU is funding this project, which is to be implemented by a consortium of non-governmental organizations long operating in Cambodia, including the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Community Legal Education Center (CLEC), ADG and My Village Organization (MVI), in order to specifically ensure the active contribution of members of forest dependent communities in Monduliri Province, organized into Community Protected Areas (CPA).

The launching workshop aims at developing common understanding of expected overall objectives and outcomes to various stakeholders including project beneficiaries at provincial and national level and the role of project implementers. The workshop encourages stakeholder participation in all stages of the project. It will open the floor to discuss and gather inputs on resolutions or mechanism, share related challenges at target intervention areas, and provide recommendations on improving the approaches on project management, implementation, and monitoring to better achieve desired outcomes.

The project seeks to ensure that marginalized forest communities affected by threats such as increasing pressure from external economic interests to the natural resources which they depend upon are able to legally enforce the protection of their forest. It will specifically support the empowerment of forest-dependent communities in Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary (PPWS) and Srepok Wildlife Sanctuary (SWS), which jointly cover 40% of Monduliri Province.

These “Community Protected Areas are like effective living fences to protect our forests and biodiversity” says Seng Teak, WWF-Cambodia Country Director. “Engaging and empowering these communities to sustainably manage the forest resources, at the same time, increasing their well-being is the way forwards for natural resources conservation. We would like to see target Community Protected Areas in Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary and Srepok Wildlife Sanctuary are capacitated and empowered to exercise their rights to conserve natural resources through livelihood development, sustainable harvesting and law enforcement to build resilience for ecosystem services.” He also added that as a key implementing partner, WWF welcomes the support of the EU on this vital issue.

“We are delighted to financially support this project. It contributes to the efforts of the Royal Government on protected areas management and sustainable development in Monduliri. To make the project succeed, we encourage strong commitment and responsive actions from decision makers, civil society and as well as communities themselves so that the project can unfold its full benefits for the local population, forests and wildlife.” says the Ambassador of the European Union to the



for a living planet[®]

Kingdom of Cambodia, Mr George Edgar. “Community Protected Areas play a crucial role in environmental protection and sustainable resource use, and it is important that those people have strong capacity to implement their work. We hope that this model of community-led resource management can be replicated in other place of the country. It could potentially benefit over 6 million people dependent on forest, making a real contribution to the implementation of the Royal Government's policy of Protected Area Management”, he added.

The beneficiaries of the project are 2,000 households located in 34 villages inside two adjacent national Protected Areas, Srepok Wildlife Sanctuary (SWS) and Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary (PPWS) in Monduliri Province. Those two Wildlife Sanctuaries provide agriculture and Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP)-based subsistence livelihoods to over 30,000 people including 8,000 indigenous people. The majority of these communities have been living in the region for generations, sustaining themselves through the forest and being directly responsible for the conservation of these forest resources, preserving biodiversity for future generations, educating and encouraging others to participate in natural resources conservation and sustainably using these resources for income generation.

###

For relevant photos about this topic, please click on this link:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1ad9EvoEylJ0XfXaZh7Pb22xvMYsN1__E

For more information:

Mr. Un Chakrey, Communication Manager of WWF-Cambodia

Email: Chakrey.un@wwf.panda.org

Ms Pok Poun, Press and Information Assistant at the EU Delegation,

Email: Pok.POUN@eeas.europa.eu, Tel (+855)-(0)23216996

About WWF-Cambodia

WWF (Worldwide Fund for Nature) 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 in Cambodia

The EU has long enjoyed a close relationship with Cambodia. Through substantial development assistance, support to the democratic process and a commitment to open markets, the EU has helped Cambodia in its efforts to build a brighter future for its population and to play an active role on the regional and international stages.