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FACTSHEET

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Sustaining Biodiversity, Environmental and Social Benefits in the Protected Areas of the Eastern Plains Landscape of Cambodia



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Eastern Plains Landscape

Covers 30,000 square km

One of WWF's 36 priority
areas for global biodiversity

Covers 4 provinces:
Ratanakiri, Monduliri,
Kratie, Stung Treng

Two Protected Areas
supported by WWF:
- Monduliri Protected Forest
(363,177ha)
- Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanc-
tuary (222,500ha)

BACKGROUND

The Eastern Plains Landscape (EPL) is part of the Lower Mekong Dry Forest - the largest intact block of dry forest in Southeast Asia. At the core of the Eastern Plains, Monduliri Protected Forest (MPF) and Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary (PPWS) harbour a large diversity of habitats ranging from evergreen hills to open dry forest, and resident populations of many endangered species including Asian elephant, banteng, Siamese crocodile, and Eld's deer as well as several endangered large waterbirds and vultures. It has also been recognised as a key tiger recovery area in the region.

Being sparsely populated, the area offers a unique opportunity to secure the biodiversity of EPL at a large scale. At the same time, the forests and their rich biodiversity are under tremendous pressure from commercial land clearance, agricultural expansion and illegal trade in luxury wood and wildlife. Strategic and coordinated actions that enable local communities to take part and make decisions are necessary to ensure sustained benefits of the protected areas and its resources.

Overall Objective

By 2020, the natural heritage and significant biodiversity of EPL is secured ensuring protected habitat connectivity and the provision of environmental services and sustainable livelihoods over 1.6 million ha.

THE PROJECT

Funded by the European Union, WWF will work in collaboration with NTFP-EP, My Village, and RECOFTC to implement a joint project on sustaining the biodiversity and ecosystem services of the EPL. The project works towards preserving environmental and social benefits of the Protected Areas in order to secure the sustainable livelihoods of local communities.

This will be done through innovative methods that generate income and business opportunities, as well as economic benefits through use of and payment for existing ecosystem services provided by the two protected areas. The funds acquired through these innovative financing methods can then support effective management of the Protected Areas.

Over four years, the project will effectively address the issues of land degradation and conversion as well as give support to establish sustainable financing mechanisms for the management of PPWS and MPF by the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) respectively. The project will also secure better access of local people to sustainable natural resources management.

Specific Objectives

- By 2017, Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary (PPWS) and Monduliri Protected Forest (MPF) are ready to implement innovative financing mechanisms.
- By 2017, livelihoods of local communities surrounding MPF and PPWS are improved through community-based enterprises and ecosystem services investment mechanisms.

Project Activities

- **Map, value and validate Ecosystem services, and engage Government authorities in their sustainable use and protection.** This includes strengthening Government's capacity to use Integrated Valuation of Ecosystem Services and Trade-offs (InVEST) – a tool to map and value the goods and services from nature that sustain and fulfill human life. Activities include reviewing and updating of existing data as well as biophysical and economic reference maps, explaining models, and sharing the results with the Technical Working Group to be included in the Forestry Reform.
- **Identify and implement Protected Areas (PA) fundraising mechanisms that engage the private sector.** This includes involving private sectors in payment for ecosystem services schemes, gathering best practices on sustainable PA financing, carrying out an evaluation and analysis on PA financing schemes for Monduliri and establishing those schemes, encouraging engagement, and lastly sharing results and lessons learnt with stakeholders and potential multipliers.

- **Build capacity and gain Government support for provincial land-use planning that integrates sustainable PA financing and implementation of the monitoring and evaluation of management plans for community forests and community protected areas.** This includes holding consultations to secure support and establish foundation with the government as well as training provincial Government agencies (e.g. study tours) and community actors to conduct a situation analysis so they can develop sustainable development vision and spatial development strategies, and put in place the mechanism for investment screening, monitoring and updating.
- **Establish Community Forests (CF), Community Protected Areas (CPA) and Community Enterprises.** This includes training of trainers and “training for Action” for CF / CPA establishment and development. It also requires the completion of all processes and documentation in support of the establishment of CF / CPAs and their management plans. Other activities include facilitating land tenure agreements, strengthening forest governance at community level, initiating and strengthening enterprise identification, development, implementation, monitoring, and finally disseminating best practices and results.

Project Beneficiaries

1. Local Communities

Around 60,000 people in Monduliri Province will benefit from facilitated land tenure and improved livelihood opportunities.

2. Business Community

National businesses and community-based enterprises will gain access to opportunities and support in implementing best practices.

3. National and Provincial Government Administrations

Government agencies at provincial and national level will get support to improve central government financing system for staff and activities in PAs as well as to enhance integrated planning capacities.

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	<p>Why we are here To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.</p> <p>WWW.panda.org</p>
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WWF-Cambodia

#21, St. 322, Boeung Keng Kang I, Phnom Penh Cambodia
Tel: +855 (0)23 218 034; Fax: +855 (0)23 211 909