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KEO SEIMA REDD+

Quarterly Newsletter



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Carbon Credit Sale to Disney!



Seima REDD+ is projected to avoid the emission of more than 14 million metric tons of CO2 equivalents over the first 10-year period between 2010-and 2019.

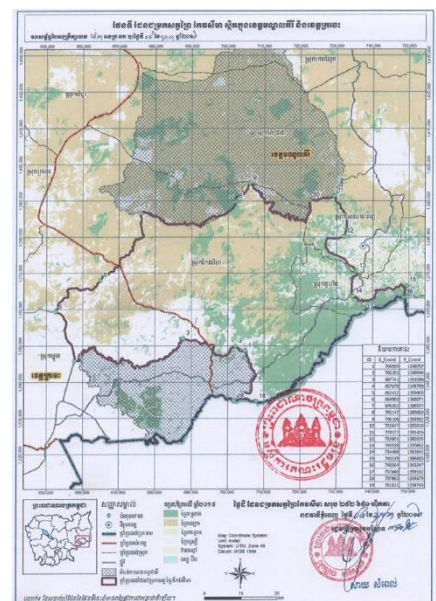
Hello and a warm welcome from the Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary (formerly Seima Protection Forest) team. The Royal Government of Cambodia, through a long-running partnership with Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), has sold to Disney the first carbon credits from a climate change mitigation project in Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary. The protected area encompasses a total area of 292,690 hectares, of which 166,983 hectares is part of the REDD+ project area. The sale represents one of the largest transactions of carbon credits generated from an avoided deforestation project.

“This first large carbon sale for Cambodia is an important part of our vision for sustainable financing of protected areas in Cambodia,” said His Excellency Minister Say Samal of the Ministry of Environment, the agency responsible for management of the country’s protected areas. “The agreement we have signed giving almost all the revenue to forest protection and community development shows our commitment to forests and people in Cambodia.”

New Sub-decree Puts Seima Forest under Ministry of Environment’s Management

In June 2016, Royal Government of Cambodia decided to change the jurisdiction and management rights of Protection Forests, Conservation Forest Areas, Production Forest Areas and Economic Land Concession (ELCs) from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) to the Ministry of Environment (MoE). All Protected Forests will be placed under management of the MoE effective from July 2016. Seima Protection Forest will be changed to Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary (KSWS), and Wildlife Conservation Society is working closely with the MoE to manage an array of endangered wildlife and natural habitats from now on.

WCS would like to take this opportunity to thank the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries’ Forestry Administration for its past collaboration and partnership, especially with the initiation and joint implementation of the REDD+ project over a past decade at Seima Protection Forest.



Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary created by Sub-decree June 2016.

Helicopter Flight over the Eastern Plains Landscape

On 12th May, WCS staff joined representatives from the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Interior, USAID, and WWF for a helicopter flight over the Eastern Plains Landscape. The flight path took the delegation over much of Mondulkiri Province, with stops at the Headquarters of Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary (formerly Seima Protection Forest), and at Merouk station inside Sre Pok Wildlife Sanctuary (formerly Mondulkiri Protected Forest). It was clear that there are many challenges facing the Eastern Plains Landscape, with huge areas of forest loss caused by Economic Land Concessions and illegal land clearance by individual farmers. However, it was also very clear that there is an enormous amount of forest remaining, with evergreen, semi-evergreen, and open deciduous forests stretching out as far as the eye could see.



These two photos highlight the difference between areas where conservation has been successfully implemented, and where it has not.

The two photos below highlight the difference between areas where conservation has been successfully implemented, and where it has not. Without the USAID's Supporting Forests and Biodiversity Project which has been funding critical conservation action over the last 4 years, there would be far less forest remaining. This amazing landscape needs continuing support to ensure these beautiful forests remain for future generations.

Monitor Lizard and Elongated Tortoise Were Rescued In Seima Forest

A local taxi driver brought in a monitor lizard. He said he saw it in a sack on the side of the road. He suspected that it was going to the market to sell for meat, when it fell off the guy's bike. He brought it to the Stations HQ because he knew WCS staff would know what to do with it.



The Monitor Lizard was found inside the bag and then released back into the wild by Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary's law enforcement team.

In May, Toeun Soknai, WCS's Eco-tourism Assistant in Andoung Kralong village, brought in an Elongated tortoise (*Indotestudo elongata*) that he saw on the road. The turtles tend to cross the roads after heavy rains and are easy to catch. As a result, he brought the turtle to the HQ in order to avoid someone finding it and selling it to the market. The turtle was released the same day into a portion of the landscape with terrain features blocking access to the road.

This species of tortoise is listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List.



Toeun Soknai released the elongated tortoise back to live in Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary.

Human-elephant Conflict Occurs in Andoung Kralong Village

A handful of Bunong indigenous villages located in or on the edge of Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary (formally known as Seima Protected Forest) are suffering from human-elephant conflict, which in this case is when elephants enter their farms and eating and/or damaging their crops. This is a recent problem with the elephants only causing this degree of damage over the last 2-3 years. The likely causes of this issue are loss and disturbance of elephant habitat from forest clearance and illegal logging. Elephants have extremely large home ranges recorded from 50 km² in Sri Lanka up to 1000 km² in India, and disturbance to these areas can cause significant changes in movement patterns and behaviour.

WCS, in partnership with the Government of Cambodia, have been working to assess the impact and possible solutions to deal with this issue. Human-elephant conflict occurs in every country Asian elephants are found, and finding solutions to this problem is extremely difficult. One of the best ways to reduce the scale of conflict is to prevent it in the first place, by ensuring elephant habitat is protected, and not disturbed or destroyed.

In 2015, during the months that the elephants were raiding crops, a WCS camera trap being used to investigate wildlife diversity around the village of Andoung Kralong captured a young calf washing in a small forest pool close to the village.



A young calf Asian elephant was photographed by camera trap near Andoung Kralong village.



Crops were eaten and damaged by Asian Elephant inside Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary.

Endangered Black-shanked Douc Langur Video Reflects Biodiversity Conservation at Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary

Ms. Chan Phalkun has spent the last six months with WCS as a Communications Intern. This experience has helped broaden her understanding about forest and wildlife protection and she is keen to pursue a career that helps conserve Cambodia's endangered and rare wildlife, which is threatened by habitat loss and poaching. This important wildlife needs the support of everyone to save them from extinction. To raise public awareness of the importance of wildlife, Phalkun decided to produce a documentary video of the endangered Black-shanked douc langur of Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary (formally Seima Protection Forest) located in Mondulkiri Province. The world's largest population of this species is recorded from this protected area. Her video shares information on the population status, habitat, threats and effective solutions for conserving this species from extinction. Follow this link to view the video: goo.gl/QYDRZA



Phalkun and her film crew, together with WCS technical staff went to film black-shanked douc langur at Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary.

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