



**KAWS
REDD+**



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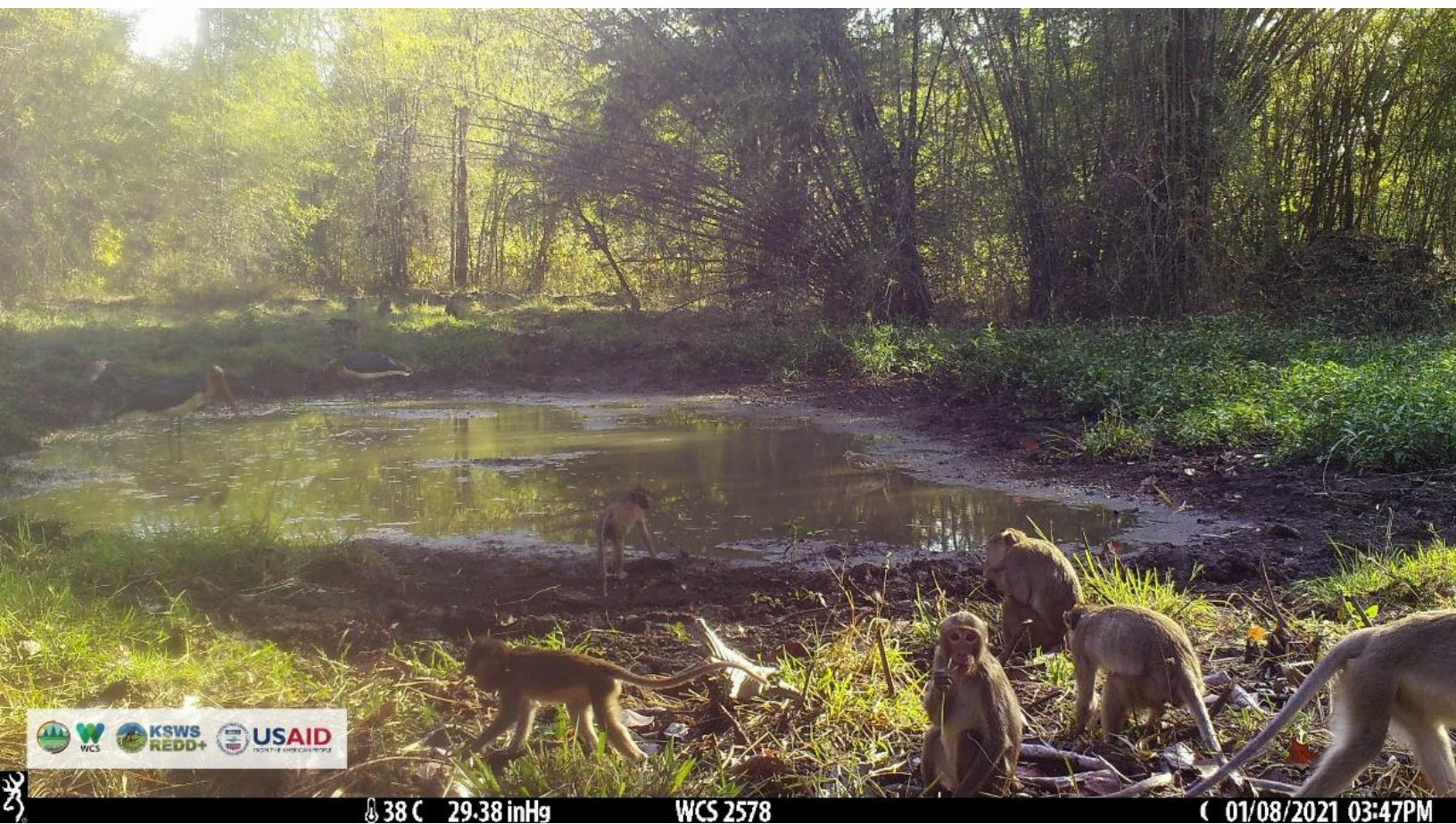
Quarterly Newsletter

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Exciting expansion of project activities coming soon!

Thanks to several sales of carbon credits from the KAWS REDD+ project recently, 2021 promises to be an exciting year for the project. Revenue from these sales will allow all of our current management activities to be expanded, so community engagement and development, biodiversity monitoring, and law enforcement will all get a boost. This is also a great opportunity to launch some new and exciting programs and activities that can take the project to the next level. Income from carbon credit sales is vital for ensuring the long-term sustainability of the KAWS REDD+ project and provides greater freedom to plan and carry out ambitious, large-scale activities that are best suited to the local context. Keep an eye on these newsletters to find out more as we start rolling out some additions over the coming months and years.





Snare removal team protects important natural water sources

Permanent pools of water, known as *trapeangs* in Khmer, are vital year-round water sources in Cambodian forests. Due to the seasonal climate, many water sources such as rivers and streams dry up after a few months without rain. Trapeangs are important during these times as a continued source of water for wildlife in KSWs, as well as providing rich minerals in the soil. As you can see from this photo recently taken by automatic camera, many different animals use these sites, often at the same time! Unfortunately, this also makes the trapeangs key targets for illegal hunters, who lay wire traps called snares to catch animals. The KSWs REDD+ snare removal team works tirelessly to comb the forests in KSWs to remove snares to protect animals from being caught in them and killed. The team pay particular attention to the areas surrounding trapeangs, especially in the dry season when animals tend to flock to these sites in great numbers. How many long-tailed macaques, lesser adjutants, and pond herons can you spot in this picture?

Second round of fieldwork completed for forest degradation study

In newsletter no. 13 (October–December 2018) we shared some news with you about the launch of a new study on damage to forests in KSWs caused by illegal logging. The KSWs REDD+ team plan to collect data every two years on the age, size, and species of illegally cut trees in KSWs, as well as information about the surrounding habitat such as canopy (the top layer of leaves in a forest) cover. Following the first round of data collection in late 2018–early 2019, the team has just completed a second round, revisiting the same areas two years on to note any changes in the growth of trees surrounding illegally logged stumps. Now that there is information spanning multiple years, the team can begin analyzing the data to find out more about the impacts of logging individual trees, compared to clearing whole patches of forest, on the surrounding habitat. Watch this space to find out more in the coming months!



Expanding community-managed sustainable bamboo business

The bamboo group in Sre Preah community protected area (CPA) continues to expand their business based on sustainable harvesting of bamboo in KSWs. The community started out harvesting bamboo and cutting it into slats for local sale. They have also been collecting young bamboo seedlings from forested areas of the CPA and growing them on in community-managed nurseries before replanting them in degraded areas of the CPA. Following training in making handicrafts, the business group were able to increase the income that they can make from the harvested bamboo. The additional time spent crafting the bamboo into products increases the value added and also allows the community to access markets further afield. Recently, members learned about techniques for drying the bamboo after harvest to ensure higher product quality. The business group has also begun looking into increasing their cultivation of bamboo seedlings with a view to selling surplus seedlings to interested buyers. As well as diversifying the community's bamboo income, this can also encourage greater use of native plants by purchasers.



Learning about traditional Bunong celebrations in KSWs

Local indigenous communities across KSWs have many traditional rituals associated with celebrating seasons and important dates, which have been practiced for many generations. There are also traditional dishes prepared in this area of the country that differ from those found elsewhere. There are three main festivals: Sen Nak Ta, Sen Srav, and harvesting. Nak Ta is a religious ceremony that is celebrated at a similar time to the Khmer New Year (early to mid-April), and includes prayers to bring good luck to relatives and dispel bad luck, as well as requesting adequate rainfall for crops and no natural disasters during the year. Sen Srav takes place in the rice fields when the new plants are being sown in September, and offers prayers for a good harvest. The final important festival takes place at home after the rice has been harvested in December or January, celebrating the gods that have provided protection to the crops and encouraging the spirit of the rice to stay within the family. The size of the celebration depends on how successful the harvest was.





Mapping community life in REDD+ communities

Many of the communities that participate in the KSWs REDD+ project want to ensure that their development is sustainable and complements forest conservation, whilst also allowing them to provide for their families into the future. This is an ongoing process and the KSWs REDD+ team will support the communities in moving towards this goal. The first stage is creating a profile of each village, including current professions, available resources (for example, farmland, forest and natural water sources), and how daily life is distributed across the village space. To do this, residents in each village begin by drawing their own maps of their village, which they label with everything that is important to them, for example for agriculture, leisure, spiritual or religious reasons, and as communal areas. The process of creating these maps is a great starting point in allowing the community to show the KSWs REDD+ team what they value in their community.

Communities exchange expertise on sustainable natural resource-based businesses

The bamboo business group in Sre Preah community protected area (CPA) recently hosted a visit from representatives of four CPAs and one community forest from the neighboring province of Kratie. The visiting representatives have experience with sustainable harvesting of honey to generate income for their communities. They shared their expertise on this topic with the bamboo business group, who in turn shared everything they know about running a community-based bamboo business. Other members of the community in Sre Preah were also on hand to tell the visitors about the organic, wildlife-friendly IBIS Rice initiative that has recently launched in their villages. This new scheme allows farmers to gain a premium when they sell rice to the Ibis Rice Conservation Company, as long as they adhere to basic rules including not clearing forest to expand their fields, no hunting, and no use of chemicals on their rice crop.





New community protected area approved in KSWS

In March, the Minister of the Environment approved a community request for a new community protected area (CPA) in the north-east of KSWS. Called O Pung Rung, this new CPA will be managed by residents of Pu Trom village, who will ensure that the forest and its natural resources are managed sustainably and in keeping with laws related to protected areas. As part of the application process, CPA members must propose a management plan, detailing how they will use different parts of the CPA for forest conservation, foraging wild foods, collecting wood for building repairs, and forest regeneration. Members carried out an inventory of the proposed CPA, measuring the size of trees in sample plots throughout the area and recording growth of wild foods. This gives them an idea of the forest resources that are available now and those that can be developed in future and will help in making the management plan.

Communities develop financial management guidelines for REDD+ benefit sharing income

Since the KSWs REDD+ project began selling carbon credits several years ago, local communities have received a proportion of the income from credit sales in recognition of their commitment to ensuring the success of the project. This income is used by the communities to fund development priorities that they have identified themselves. These have included provision of clean water to all households, construction of toilets, and construction or maintenance of community-owned buildings. For many villages, this is the first time that they have been responsible for managing substantial funds earmarked for community development. To ensure that the income is managed in a transparent way and that contractors provide timely, high quality services, the KSWs REDD+ team is working with representatives from each community to develop guidelines for financial management that are simple enough to be easily followed by people with no formal financial training but are also rigorous enough to ensure that spending and investment is documented and any external service providers can be managed efficiently.



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