Cardamom Rainforest Protection

Cardamom Rainforest Landscape
Cambodia
8,350 km²
Protected by Wildlife Alliance since 2001
A critical part of the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot supporting >50 IUCN threatened species
10,986 snares removed
7 ranger stations
110 forest rangers
Cardamom Rainforest Protection

Wildlife Alliance are the leaders in the Direct Protection of Forests and Wildlife in tropical Asia. The 110 rangers of our Rainforest Protection Program safeguard 8,350-km² of the Cardamom Rainforest Landscape: the Amazon of Asia. Our approach is not that of a traditional conservation NGO and we do not implement the failed model of hands-off ‘business as usual conservation’. Instead we are proud that we directly supervise and manage all law enforcement across this vast landscape. We are thus responsible for the management and security of one of Asia’s greatest tropical forest wildernesses. Our staff are at the frontline of the battle against wildlife trade and deforestation. We ensure our rangers are well paid, receive full health and life insurance, have the equipment and capacity to work safely and effectively, and are motivated and led by inspirational supervisors. This leadership and supervision which we provide is critical. We create a culture of excellence in conservation, high performance, and zero tolerance for corruption.

During 2018, our ranger field teams:
- Conducted 3,229 patrols which covered more than 130,000-km
- Removed 20,000 lethal poaching snares and more than 15-km of hunting nets
- Destroyed 779 illegal forest camps and confiscated 553 chainsaws

This effort is what keeps the unique forests and wildlife of the Cardamom Rainforest standing for the benefit of future generations of Cambodians and for the world.

Judicial Actions and Prosecutions

Effective judicial action and prosecutions against wildlife criminals are necessary to back up the on-the-ground work of forest rangers. Not only do prosecutions and custodial sentences act as a deterrent to future poaching and illegal activity but they are also important for the morale of field rangers. Witnessing poachers that they have arrested being let-off by the authorities due to indifference, corruption, or simply administrative errors is highly demoralizing for law enforcement rangers.

Wildlife Alliance works intensively, and face-to-face, with the Cambodian judiciary, including judges and prosecutors, to ensure that serious criminal poachers face maximum punishment under Cambodian law. This requires precision, persistence, and, where necessary, making high level political interventions.

Case File 008
Date: March 23, 2018
Name: So Sina
Crime: Illegally poaching a banteng, one of the rarest mammals on earth
Political Connection: Military police officer – nephew of high-ranking general
Wildlife Alliance Intervention: Gathering all evidence, hiring prosecution lawyer, direct communication with Military Police command and investigating judge
Verdict: 1-year imprisonment with no bail

Case File 017
Date: November 12, 2018
Name: Heng Santera and Senglay Sengly
Crime: Illegal sale and possession of elephant ivory and bear and leopard skins
Political Connection: Working for three star general
Wildlife Alliance Intervention: Undercover surveillance and raid on property, rapid filing of legal case and direct collaboration with provincial prosecutor and investigating judge
Verdict: 6-year imprisonment & fine of $29,907
Wildlife Alliance have been fighting the Illegal Wildlife Trade in Cambodia since 2001 and the interventions of our Wildlife Rapid Rescue Team continue to make major impacts on the domestic wildlife trade. Gone are the days when wildlife for sale could be found everywhere: in markets, restaurants, homes, and even on sidewalks.

However, in an increasingly globalized world, and one in which the shadow of China looms large over the region, Cambodia is at the heart of the global illegal wildlife trade, acting as a source-transit-and final destination for wildlife products from across the world including elephant ivory, rhino horn, and tiger skins. In 2018 Wildlife Alliance’s award-winning wildlife trade work expanded to begin addressing the transcontinental wildlife trafficking links and the Vietnamese criminal trafficking syndicates shipping high value African wildlife products through Cambodia.

Working with trusted government partners in Cambodian Customs we have been building connections with key government and civil society partners across Asia and Africa including in Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya, and Vietnam. These partnerships are being used to actively investigate criminal trafficking networks and provide the evidence needed for effective judicial action.

We have also been working with the Cambodian government to strengthen the underlying legislation preventing wildlife crime. In August we ensured that all African elephant, rhinoceros, and pangolin species were added as protected species under Cambodia’s wildlife law.

WRRT action in 2018:
- 3,231 live animals rescued from the illegal trade
- >1 ton of wildlife meat destroyed
- 101 wildlife traders apprehended
- 12 court cases prosecuted

Combating Wildlife Trafficking

In December 2016 Cambodian Customs, in collaboration with Wildlife Alliance and US Homeland Security, made a major seizure of ivory and other wildlife products originating from Mozambique and hidden in hollowed-out logs. Information obtained from the consignee’s warehouse in Phnom Penh, and shared with Homeland Security agents, provided important evidence directly linking this seizure with Vietnamese criminal syndicates operating in West Africa. Subsequent operations by US government agents resulted in multiple arrests in the Ivory Coast including one Vietnamese national. In December 2018 a new shipment of 3.4 tons of ivory originating from the Mozambique port of Nacala was seized. Wildlife Alliance has shared key information from this seizure with government and civil society partners in Africa, the United States, and Asia. This included evidence that the ivory was obtained from a theft of Mozambique’s national stock-pile. As a direct result of this information and collaboration, a court case against the shipper (an employee of the Mozambique Revenue Authority) has been filed by the Attorney General’s Office in Mozambique.

Case Study

Cambodia

CITES and United States Government country of concern for global ivory trade

11X increase in ivory availability in Sihanoukville in the past 36 months

25 seizures of African wildlife products in Cambodia since 2014

3.4 tonnes of ivory seized in Phnom Penh in December 2018
Wildlife Alliance’s approach to the illegal wildlife trade is holistic and we provide care for any animal rescued by our law enforcement efforts.

Care for Rescued Wildlife
Animals not fit for immediate release are taken to the Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Center, a government-owned facility situated in 2,300 hectares of regenerating forest outside of Phnom Penh. Our Care for Rescued Wildlife program provides refuge and care for over 1,400 rescued wild animals, including Asian elephants, tigers and pileated gibbons. Our team of specialists provide care and medical treatment to prepare as many animals as possible to return to the wild and provide lifetime care to those that are not. Eld’s deer, Leopard cat, sambar, red muntjac, and golden jackals have been reintroduced to the forest surrounding the facility.

Wildlife Release Station
Species more suitable to be released in a protected rainforest habitat are taken to our Wildlife Release Station situated within the Cardamom Rainforest Landscape. The Wildlife Rehabilitation Station focuses on ‘soft’ release projects that allow animals to become acclimated to their new environment before release. Wildlife Alliance has demonstrated that acclimation, provision of supplementary food and post-release monitoring increases survival rates dramatically. This methodology has led to the successful release of many species, including binturongs, pileated gibbons, and Critically Endangered Sunda pangolins.

Angkor Forest Release Program
The Angkor Temple Complex, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Cambodia’s biggest tourist attraction, contains some of the country’s oldest forests. Pileated gibbon were fully extirpated from this forest due to over hunting in the twentieth century. It is now well protected so Wildlife Alliance, in partnership with the Cambodian Forestry Administration and APSARA, have endeavored to repopulate the forest by reintroducing gibbons and other species. In 2018, we released silver langurs and muntjac deer and have brought a third pair of gibbons to a pre-release enclosure to acclimatize to the forest. As the released populations grow, we hope the Angkor Complex will eventually serve as a safe refuge for much of Cambodia’s Endangered and Critically Endangered wildlife species.

RIGHT
Populations of Pileated Gibbons (Hylobates pileatus) in Cambodia – the world’s stronghold for this species – are in decline due to habitat loss and poaching. Wildlife Alliance is reintroducing gibbons to the forests surrounding the iconic temples of Angkor.
Environmental Education

Wildlife Alliance began addressing the widespread lack of environmental awareness in Cambodia in 2005 by creating the Kouprey Express, which travels across the country building capacities of students, teachers and whole communities to address the many factors which threaten Southeast Asia’s wildlife: habitat loss, forest degradation and fragmentation, poaching, and the illegal wildlife trade. Engaging youth is critical to protecting the future of Cambodia’s natural heritage as 60% of the population is under 30 years of age. At present, Cambodia’s core curriculum completely lacks an environmental education component. The Kouprey Express has been working with the Ministry of Environment to rectify this. In 2018, the team worked closely with the Ministry of Environment to show how we work in rural schools and provide a needs assessment as the first step in developing an environmental education component for the national curriculum.

As a result of the Kouprey Express’ efforts, we have been recognized by other conservation NGOs, as well as the Cambodian government, as the nation’s leader in environmental education, and we are regularly called upon to conduct education and outreach in their respective project areas. We continued to work alongside our long-time friend and partner, Freeland, to bring wildlife education to Cambodian speaking communities in eastern Thailand in Khao Yai and Ta Phraya National Parks. This has been an amazing opportunity for the Kouprey Express to extend beyond Cambodia as wildlife know no borders. The Kouprey Express has been instrumental in ensuring the long-term success of our conservation efforts, equipping tomorrow’s leaders with the tools to safeguard our natural heritage.

Kouprey Express 2018 achievements:
- 7,203 students and 157 teachers reached at 45 schools and 11 NGOs in 13 provinces, the capital region, and eastern Thailand
- 8 events with MOE reaching a total of 24,530 people
- 11 community events reaching 1,900 villagers
- 11 trips to Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Center for 1,585 Cambodians
Climate change is the biggest threat to the long-term survivorship of humanity and the maintenance of an inhabitable planet. Among the proposed solutions to climate change, such as energy savings, technological improvements, and the development of renewable energies, those which are provided by nature and intact tropical forests are often overlooked, underestimated, and insufficiently resourced.

Halting ecosystem loss and ensuring the preservation of natural habitats are the most cost-effective way of tackling climate change. The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) states these strategies alone could account for one third of the total carbon captures required by 2030.

This reduction of deforestation in the tropics is the mission, and specialty of, Wildlife Alliance.

The forests of the Cardamom Rainforest Landscape, which Wildlife Alliance has been protecting for the past 20 years, make an incalculable contribution to global climate stability influencing processes as far away as rainfall patterns on the Pacific coast of the USA. The loss or degradation of these forests, which act as the Lungs of Asia, would be catastrophic.

Support for Wildlife Alliance, the protection of the Cardamom Rainforest Landscape, and our proven record of addressing drivers of deforestation, will contribute to mitigating the impacts of climate change on all of humanity.

Southern Cardamom REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation) Project covers more than 4,000-km2 of the Cardamom Rainforest Landscape and is working with the Royal Government of Cambodia to market and sell verified carbon emissions from the landscape initially to the voluntary carbon market.

3.5 million tones of carbon per year (reduced emissions versus business as usual) from the protection of the Cardamom Rainforest Landscape

Equivalent to the annual electricity consumption from the city of Boston or charging 496 billion smart phones

The project, which was officially verified based on global best standards, in November 2018, is fully aligned with Cambodia’s national REDD+ strategy and is thus eligible to receive compliance payments under the framework of the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) from 2022.
### Organization and Individual Donors

Our considerable advances in conservation are a direct result of the organizations and individuals who share our values.

#### $100,000+
- Barbara Delano Foundation
- Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- Fondation Segré
- Full Circle Foundation
- Morgan Family Foundation
- United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Wilderness Freedom Fund
- Wildlife Works Carbon

#### $50,000-$99,999
- Wallace Research Foundation
- British Embassy Phnom Penh
- Golden Triangle Elephant Foundation
- Margaret Ellwanger

#### $25,000-$49,999
- John Swift
- Ministry of Land Management
- Suwanna Gauntlett
- Thomas Plant
- WWF-Cambodia

#### $10,000-$24,999
- 4 Rivers Floating Lodge
- Ahimsa Foundation
- Anderson-Rogers Foundation
- Conservation International
- Cyrus and Joanne Spurlino
- Friedman-French Foundation
- Indochina Trade & Logistic Ltd.
- Jeff Morgan
- National Geographic Society
- Noah and Anette Osnos
- SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund

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### Expense Breakdown

- **Programs**: 83.4%
- **Administration**: 10.4%
- **Fundraising**: 6.2%

Habitat loss & low densities of prey are the greatest threats facing the globally endangered dhole (*Cuon alpinus*). Wildlife Alliance is protecting the Cardamom Rainforest Landscape, one of the most important forests for this wild dog, also known as cinnamon wolves, in Southeast Asia.