

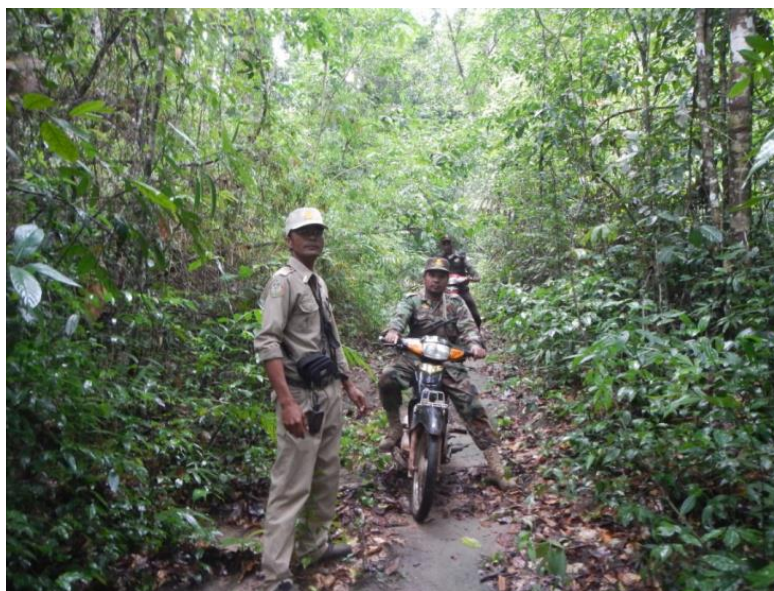
Cambodia
Central Cardamoms Protected Forest Project
News from the Field

August 2016
Conservation International

Management of the Central Cardamoms Mountains National Park

The Ministry of Environment (MoE) assumed full management responsibility of protected areas across the country from the Forestry Administration (FA) in April 2016. This resulted in an administrative upgrade from Protected Forest to National Park, leading to the newly titled Central Cardamoms Mountains National Park (CCMNP). This change expanded the area under protection, including a new southern landscape, while increasing the rights communities have in the management of their forest resources. In support of this process, CI facilitated the transfer of the existing ranger team from the FA to the MoE. This ensured a continued level of protection over the forest at a time of uncertainty. CI will now start working with the MoE in zoning the new national park—a fundamental step in the development of a management plan for the forest.

Working with both the FA and MoE, CI developed a six-month work plan and budget for the CCMNP. The plan seeks to achieve 1) finalization of the CCMNP's management plan, 2) completion of ranger and station safety protocols and the training of rangers on community engagement, 3) improvement in the efficiency of data collection by using technologies such as SMART, 4) collaborations with the MoE on zoning, and 5) improvement in the level of facilities at ranger stations.



Rangers on patrol (© Peov Somanak)

Trust Fund

The Trust Fund Committee meeting was held on June 16, 2016 and was attended by 12 persons. The meeting covered a range of topics including an update on the status of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between CI and MoE, a progress report for the last six months, a presentation on the workplan and budget for the next six months, and the implications of sub-decree number 81 dated May 9 2016 (referring to the transfer of the Central Cardamoms Protected Forest from the FA to the MoE and the subsequent change in title). In addition, there was an update on the finances of the trust fund and agreement on the establishment of a finance sub-committee. The committee also agreed that, because of the changed jurisdiction of the CCMNP, a new board member should be included.

Patrolling and Enforcement

Despite the uncertainty over the transfer from the FA to the MoE, the rangers continued work in the CCMNP. This showed real dedication and commitment to the job because it was unclear when they would be paid and by whom.



© Peov Somanak
Rangers on patrol in Rolek (© Peov Somanak)



© Jeremy Holden
Rangers lend each other a helping hand in Thmr Bang (© Jeremy Holden)

The CCPF/CCMNP Management team continued to meet over the reporting period. Discussions focused largely on how best to manage the situation of the transfer, how to ensure the transfer of rangers from the FA to the MoE, how to continue patrols, and how to strengthen the relationship with the MoE. Daikin support continued to make possible regular community

patrols in three communes. The patrols focused on dragon fish pools and Siamese crocodile sanctuaries.

Training

Daikin funding supported refresher training of rangers over the reporting period. The training included SMART Refresher training, GIS (geographical information system) training, and compass- and map-reading. Daikin funding also supported the training of two CI staff on new smartphone-based applications (*WildScan* and *Cyber Tracker*) intended to strengthen the ability of rangers to report illegal activities.

Camera Trap Data

There was no camera trap data collected over the reporting period. The camera traps were removed from the site because of the onset of the rainy season. This period is used for repairs and the downloading and analysis of data.

Community-based Eco-tourism (CBET)

With Daikin support, CI deepened its work on the CBET initiative in the Tatai Leu commune. The relationship with the eco-lodge on the Tatai River has expanded with a number of hotel guests now visiting the project site. There have also been a number of study tours that have come to the village. This has generated a high level of enthusiasm among the community in the project. Bicycles have been purchased by the project in order to encourage a bicycle rental service and new bird watching/hiking tours have been established.



The Areng River flows through Tatai Leu in the Cardamom Mountains (© Jeremy Holden)

Communications

CI and the FA/MoE started work on the second edition of the ranger newsletter (now to be called the 'CCMNP Newsletter'), which will be released in mid-August. A facebook page for the rangers is also being developed and will be launched in August/September.

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