


**Cambodia
Central Cardamoms Protected Forest Project
News from the Field**

August 2018

Conservation International



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Camera footage of two males Sambar was captured by a camera trap at Tatay Leu commune of CCMNP (© CI/Narin, 2018)

From April to August 2018, the team supported the management of the Central Cardamoms Mountains National Park (CCMNP) through patrolling and law enforcement in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment (MoE). The focus was on biodiversity research and community engagement to support alternative livelihoods.



Patrolling and enforcement

The MoE ranger team conducted 54 patrols across the landscape. As a result, rangers confiscated 11 logs (18.515 m³ of timber), one truck with 100 fence poles, eight chainsaws, and one air gun, removed 18 snares, seized and released one Pygmy Loris, and destroyed four illegal camps. They also compiled four court cases of land clearing.

One station manager and one CCMNP deputy manager attended five days of training on SMART data and system management.

Station managers attended a quarterly meeting and monthly and meetings held at Rolek station. At the meetings, which are important in helping managers learn from each other and coordinate activities, participants reviewed past activities and challenges and developed plans for the next month.



CCMNP-MoE Rangers participated in 5-day training on SMART data and system management at the CI office (© CI/Narin, 2018)

Biodiversity research

Sentinel sites: Data collection from the 16 camera traps in the nine sentinel sites in Tatay Leu continued on a routine basis in collaboration with CCMNP rangers and the local community. There were a total of 15,896 images and 31 video clips, including one clip of a Sunda Pangolin *Manis javanica*, as well as many of mammals and birds.



Footage of an Asian Golden Cat (left) and a Leopard Cat (right) (©CI)

Alternative community livelihoods

Agroforestry

Aquilaria (agar wood): Sixteen trees have received the second inoculation. Harvest will be in December 2018, soon after the end of the rainy season.



The second and last inoculation for 16 agarwood trees in the Tatay Leu and Thmo Don Pov communes. (©CI/Narin 2018)

Discussions were held with Tatay Leu villagers regarding soil quality and farming in the village. As a result, soil samples were taken from four locations in three villages. These will be tested at the Agriculture National Laboratory in Phnom Penh and results are expected in the next reporting period.



Collecting soil samples (©CI/Narin, 2018)

An organic shop in Phnom Penh was introduced to the community, and the shop's expressed interest in buying papayas, tomatoes, carrots, cabbages, and red dragon fruits. Twenty-seven families in the village registered as a producer group, and they will be trained in techniques for growing and harvesting these crops.

Non-timber forest products (NTFPs)

Turmeric: Several kilograms of turmeric were sent to India for testing and were found of satisfactory quality by the testing company, which now wants to purchase large amounts. The plan is to conduct trial growing and harvesting during the rainy season to test the process for drying the turmeric and facilitating its sale to commercial buyers, so as to provide feedback to farmers before the new planting season.

Lemon grass: The quality of lemon grass oil goes down during heavy rains, so the producer group has been instructed to stop production until the end of the rainy season. The process will resume in November.

Beekeeping: Beekeeping was deemed feasible in the last report, and so it is hoped a trial can be conducted. But since the bees used are not local, NGO partner FFI challenged this initiative, expressing concern about the long-term effect on the local ecosystem. The MoE was contacted for comment, but since no answer was received the planned trial has been cancelled.

Eco-tourism: In early July 2018, a group of 18 Australian students visited Tatay Leu to witness its rich biodiversity and understand community engagement in natural resource protection.



Australian students learn about community activities of national resources management in the Tatay Leu commune. (©CI/Narin 2018)

Under Asian Development Bank (ADB) funding, we have planned to provide the community with some basic equipment like mountain bikes, tents, and binoculars for serving the tourists. The current ecotourism committee has not been recognized by the department of tourism and MoE, and there are several steps that need to be taken because authority for the area has shifted from the MAFF to the MoE. First, the current Community Forestry committee has to be converted to a Community Projected Area, and then under this converted committee an ecotourism committee must be established.



Discussion meeting on the main challenges and solutions for ecotourism and a revolving fund for the Tatay Leu community. (© Save Cambodia's Wildlife (SCW))

Engagement with government technical departments

Continuing from the previous reporting period, meetings were held with the participation of MoE technical officers in Koh Kong, the Provincial Department of Environment (DoE), the governor, and Tatay Leu representatives. At the meetings, the DoE explained to Tatay Leu representatives the necessity of converting from Community Forestry to Community Protected Area.



At the meeting with MoE technical officers (©CI/Narin 2018)

Regarding the above-mentioned soil testing in Tatay Leu, meetings were held with MAFF technical officers, the Koh Kong PDAFF, the Department of Land Resources Management, and the Tatay Leu community. The meeting promoted better understanding of soil sample collection and analysis.



Meeting with MAFF technical officers (© CI/Narin)

Partnerships

In May 2018, the CI team and World Bank representatives spent four days on field visits to Tonle Sap Lake and the Cardamoms, meeting with stakeholders including local authorities, the community, private sector businesses like tour operators, and NGOs like Wildlife Alliance. The World Bank is expected to develop a project proposal for the areas visited.



The World Bank team visited CI's target area to see and understand livelihood improvement work (© CI/Naven 2018)

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