



## Darwin Initiative Main: Final Report

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### Darwin Initiative Project Information

Project reference	27-005
Project title	Organic livelihoods conserving Cambodia's big five
Country(ies)	Cambodia
Lead Partner	BirdLife International
Project partner(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rising Phoenix Co. Ltd</li> <li>2. NatureLife Cambodia</li> <li>3. Department of Environment (DoE) Stung Treng and Ratanakiri provinces, Ministry of Environment</li> <li>4. Sansom Mlup Prey (SMP)</li> <li>5. IBIS Rice Conservation Co., Ltd</li> <li>6. Department of Land Management (DoL), Stung Treng and Ratanakiri provinces</li> <li>7. Seven Villages Forums around Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary</li> <li>8. O'Rey and O'Koki Community Protected Areas, and Veal Kambor Community Protected Area at Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary</li> </ol>
Darwin Initiative grant value	£ 298,000
Start/end dates of project	01/04/2020 - 31/03/2023
Project Leader name	Jonathan C. Eames & Lahiru Wijedasa
Project website/blog/social media	N/A
Report author(s) and date	<p>Rising Phoenix: Sopheap Mak, James Lyon, Romain Legrand and Jonathan Eames – June 2023</p> <p>NatureLife: Thol Sovanarith and Bou Vorsak, June 2023</p> <p>BirdLife International: Lahiru Wijedasa and Hui Koon Lim – June 2023</p>

## 1 Project Summary

This project will enable 2,750 rural people to improve food security via an organic rice scheme at nine villages surrounding two globally irreplaceable protected areas in Cambodia: seven at Siem Pang and two at Lomphat wildlife sanctuaries. The project will work closely with local authorities and communities to support rural people, reduce illegal activities, establish two additional Community Protected Areas within the two sanctuaries, allowing for stable populations of Cambodia's Big Five Critically Endangered bird species.

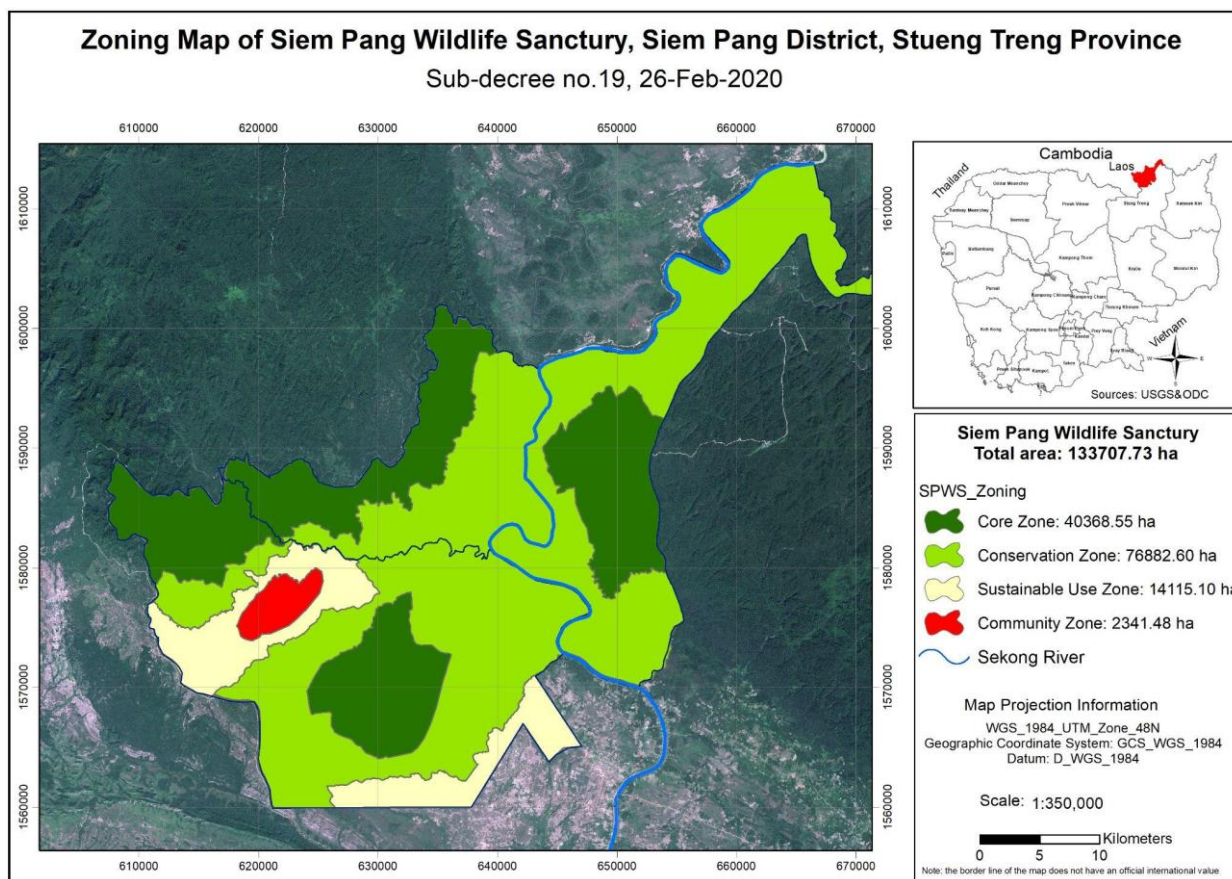
Siem Pang (SPWS) and Lomphat (LWS) wildlife sanctuaries in Cambodia (Figures 1 and 2) are irreplaceable, supporting globally significant populations of five Critically Endangered bird species, and 15 IUCN listed mammal species, which are at risk of extinction from local communities practising hunting, logging, and encroachment to supplement household income. These activities are driven by poverty.

Monitoring and research by BirdLife has shown that the local communities surrounding both protected areas live at subsistence level and that food security is an issue. Both wildlife

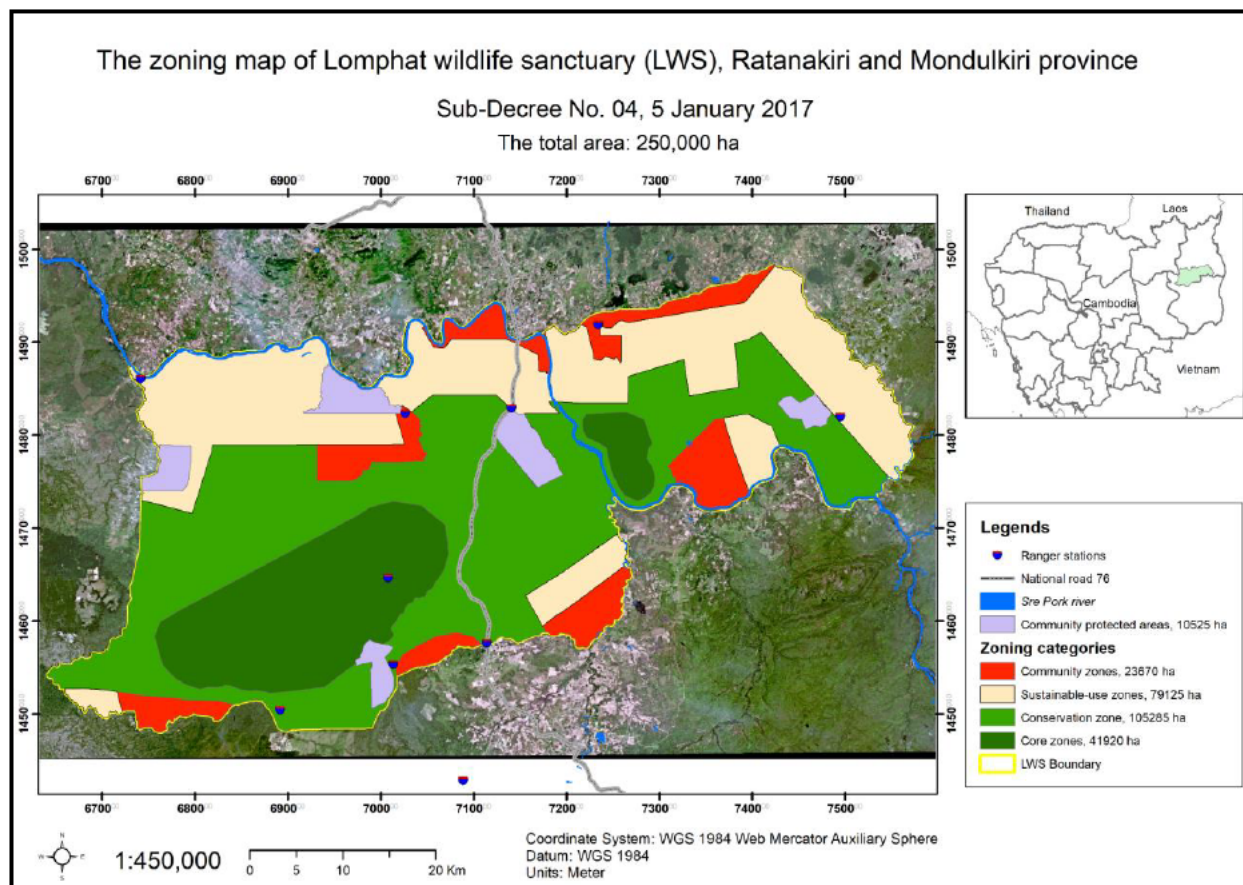
sanctuaries are relatively recently established and are located at the forest frontier. Governance is weak at this frontier and if the protected area boundaries are to be stabilised and biodiversity secured within them, management control over access to them must be in place. Since this will mean restrictions on access, compensation of income is required to offset any economic loss imposed by restrictions on natural resource use.

A fundamental challenge conservationists face is how to provide tangible reductions in household poverty in return for positive behaviour towards adjacent protected areas and their conservation. The IBIS Rice scheme provides the opportunity for households to significantly increase household income through growing and selling a premium organic jasmine rice.

Research by the University of Oxford and WCS has shown that households participating in IBIS Rice had an increase in wealth equivalent to the income of one family member in full time employment or to owning a hand tractor. Correspondingly, households participating in the scheme, which is compliance based, cleared up to four times less forest.



**Figure 1: Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary Zonation map**



**Figure 2: Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary Zonation map**

## 2 Project Partnerships

In 2021 BirdLife International began its strategic withdrawal from Cambodia as part of a process to handover all BirdLife projects, assets, and staff to local civil society partners. Beginning in September, implementation of BirdLife’s operations at Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary and Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary was transferred to Rising Phoenix Co. Ltd and NatureLife Cambodia through sub-grant agreements.

Other key long-term partners are Stung Treng and Ratanakiri Departments of Environment (DoE), Sansom Mlup Prey (SMP), IBIS Rice Conservation Co., Ltd, and the Departments of Land Management (DoL) of Stung Treng province.

The **DoEs**, Rising Phoenix Co. Ltd (hereafter RP) and NatureLife Cambodia (hereafter NLC) continue to work hand in hand for the conservation of the Sanctuaries, working together on law enforcement and awareness raising initiatives. Mr Sreng Cheaheng, the new head of the Stung Treng Department of the Environment, is more supportive than his predecessor, reflected in participation of the DoE in Stakeholder Forums, staff support of IBIS Rice meetings, awareness raising and providing technical support for problem solving in the project.

**Sansom Mlup Prey (SMP)** is a Cambodian NGO that has worked with farmers living in and around protected areas to reduce poverty in ways that are consistent with biodiversity conservation since 2009. RP and NLC are working with SMP through a new partnership. At SPWS Rising Phoenix-SMP has expanded the IBIS Rice scheme from four to eleven villages over the project. While at SPWS and LWS SMP is engaged with USAID to continue and expand the IBIS Rice scheme. Under this Darwin project, SMP continues to develop the capacities of farmers via agricultural extension training and engagement to abide by the rules of the compliance system.

**IBIS Rice Conservation Co., Ltd (IRCC)** is a not-for-profit conservation enterprise that purchases rice at a premium when farmers comply with conservation agreements and obtain organic rice certifications. At SPWS in 2022, 670 tonnes of IBIS Rice were sold at 86% premium while at LWS, 124 metric tons at a 20% premium.

**The Department of Land Management (DoL)** of Stung Treng and Ratanakiri provinces have collaborated with BirdLife since 2016 to map household rice fields. To date, DoL of Stung Treng has mapped 1,454 land parcels from 1,056 households in eleven villages in Siem Pang. The mapping process enables monitoring of changes to the extent of rice fields and in determining whether there has been encroachment, an essential prerequisite for joining IBIS Rice. In March 2022, Rising Phoenix signed a sub-contract with Stung Treng DoL to register 217 land parcels which were mapped in 2021 of which 212 have been registered. An additional 100 new land parcels were to be mapped in 2022, which was exceeded with 108 new land parcels mapped. In total, 320 land parcels covering 945 ha belonging to 295 households have been mapped.

**O'Rey and O'Koki Community Protected Areas, and Veal Kambor Community Protected Area (CPA)** in LWS are officially registered, and 15-year agreements have been signed with the Ministry of Environment to co-manage an area of 1,908 ha for sustainable use and biodiversity protection. In O'Koki, regular meetings of the CPA committee with local officials and patrolling have been ongoing. The O'Koki CPA management plan is being drafted prior to endorsement from the Ministry of Environment.

### **Project and partner Coordination over the reporting period**

RP and SMP met in September 2022 to update the work plan and timetable for implementing the IBIS Rice scheme at the eleven villages surrounding SPWS in the final year. Four meetings with SMP and one meeting with IRCC were held from June 2022 to February 2023 in Siem Pang to discuss the results of the work and conduct field visits. In October 2022, two RP staff in the Community Development Unit visited the IBIS Rice project in Preah Vihear Province to exchange experience. A Microsoft Teams meeting with the data manager of SMP was held in February 2023 to review and update the compliance system. RP met with DoL of Stung Treng Province in March 2022 to discuss and sign a sub-contract for rice field mapping in ten villages in Siem Pang in 2022. Three quarterly Village Forum meetings were conducted in June, October 2022 and Jan 2023 to introduce the project, recruit new members to join the IBIS Rice scheme, discuss any issues and find common solutions.

Two quarterly Stakeholder Forum meetings which at district/provincial level were conducted in June 2022 and January 2023 at Siem Pang District Hall to introduce the project, review the progress with the IBIS Rice scheme, and to seek solutions to any issues raised.

Meetings with village and commune chiefs from three new villages were conducted separately in September 2021 and January 2022 to introduce the IBIS Rice scheme and establish the Village Forum Committees to support the scheme in Sre Russei, Peam Khes, and Lun villages.

In 2021, NLC and SMP conducted 6 Zoom/Google meetings in addition to three online meetings with the SMP CEO. Regular meetings continued between the SMP CEO and the community outreach officer that engages with them in Ratanakiri province. Joint village consultations between NLC and SMP to support communities were carried out.

RP hosted the United Kingdom Ambassador to Cambodia, Her Excellency Tina Redshaw at Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary over 5-8 November 2021. Based at our tented camp, Tina was able to visit the wildlife sanctuary and learn about our work from Jonathan C. Eames and other staff. She met the unit heads and Mak Sopheap gave a presentation on the work of the Community Development Unit focussed on the IBIS Rice project. During her stay, Tina was also able to meet and have dinner with Mr Phan Yut, the Siem Pang District Chief and Mr Sreng Cheaheng the Head of the Provincial Department of Environment.

### **Future relationship between project partners**

In 2023, Rising Phoenix has secured USAID-Morodok Baitang to develop a REDD+ project in SPWS which will continue to maintain the partnerships that were developed and strengthened over this Darwin Initiative project.

In 2022, NLC secured funding from USAID-Morodok Baitang to develop a REDD+ project in Lomphat and strengthen the community protected area network.

RP and NLC is continuing to work with SMP on the continuation and expansion of IBIS Rice through engagement of SMP over the period 2022-2026 funded through USAID-Morodok Baitang.

### 3 Project Achievements

#### 3.1 Outputs

Please support all comments with reference to evidence and log frame indicators.

#### **Output 1. The IBIS Rice scheme will be expanded to an additional 2,250 rural people (50% women)**

Indicator 1.1. 90% of participating farmers have gained a minimum 10% income premium on IBIS Rice sales by project end.

At SPWS, in 2020, 73% (387hh/530hh) of participating rural people sold their paddy and received a premium of 66%. In 2021, 74% (509hh/682hh) of participating rural people sold their paddy and received a premium of 71%. In 2022, 73% (510hh/697hh) of participating rural people sold their paddy and received a premium of 86%. (Annex 6a & 7a).

At LWS, in 2021, 52% (37hh/72hh) and 83 % (95hh/118hh) in 2022 of participating rural people sold their paddy at a 20% premium. (Annex 6b & 7b).

In 2022, to encourage rural people the IBIS Rice Conservation Co. Ltd added a 50- and 100-Riels bonus per kg for those who sell more than 1,000 kg and 2,000 kg. This bonus increased the average sale per family from 767 kg/hh in 2021 to 1,313 kg/hh in 2022 or the total rice sales from 397 tonnes in 2021 to 670 tonnes in 2022. Over 290 of 510 households sold more than 1,000 kg.

While we may not have met the indicator, the participating rural people have received a far higher premium and the bonus payment has resulted in large volumes of rice being sold at the higher premium by the participating farmers. We have also secured funding to continue expanding to eight villages and to the entire district by 2025.

Indicator 1.2. Over 50% of participating farmers have obtained a provincially recognized land certificate by the end of the project.

From 2020-2022, there were 441 additional households that had received a provincially recognised land certificate for 476 land parcels representing 1,388 hectares (Annex 8a). Over the life of the project all the 697 households have obtained a provincially recognised land certificate (representing 1,052 land parcels). At the end of 2022 there were 697 members of IBIS Rice therefore 100% of participating rural people in SPWS have obtained a land certificate.

At LWS, most of the rice fields of the IBIS Rice members are in the protected area where a land certificate cannot be obtained, as an alternative the land mapping is recognized by the commune councils, and PDoE park director and used to support the compliance system. By March 2023, 436 land parcels were mapped, that includes 226 parcels of rice, 43 other crop land and 163 settlements (Annex 8b).

Indicator 1.3 90% of participating farmers have not broken the contract's rules within the project lifetime.

At SPWS, in 2020, 5 households out of 530 broke the contract rules representing 1% of participating rural people. In 2021, 30 households out of 682 broke the contract rules representing 4% of participating rural people. In 2022, 9 households out of 697 broke the contract rules representing 1% of participating rural people (Annex 9a).

At LWS, IBIS Rice commenced in October 2020 with 72 households in 2021 and 118 households in 2022. No households broke the contract rules (Annex 9b).

Indicator 1.4. 90% of participants pass the financial literacy test BEOP

At SPWS, 75% of 307 rural people (156 women) in 2020, 63% of 351 rural people (190 women) in 2021 and 75% of 366 rural people (223 women) in 2022 passed the financial literacy test after training (Annex 10). The detailed nature of the questionnaire is challenging for the largely illiterate community, while we could have simplified this to achieve the indicator it would not result in the long-term improvement in financial literacy. So while the target is not met, the project will continue long-term engagement till the community is financially literate.

Indicator 1.5. Establish pilot IBIS Rice schemes at two villages at LWS by the end of project.

At LWS, the IBIS Rice schemes were piloted at two villages called Sre Chrey and Srepok Thom village starting with 480 people (253 women). In 2021, 80 households were registered as IBIS Rice members. In 2022, SMP got a grant from USAID-Morodok Baitang and they collaborated with NLC to expand the IBIS Rice scheme to two new villages - Thmei and Roveak. In 2022 and 2023, 69 and 100 new households from four villages registered, bringing a total of 249 households registered between 2021-2023. (Annex 7b).

#### 1.6 Lessons learnt and best practice shared at village level and a national workshop for central government and civil society.

To disseminate the IBIS Rice project achievements in the 11 target villages and the plan for the expansion, promote community involvement and support from stakeholders, as well as share lessons learned to young conservationists and stakeholders a National Farmer's Day event was held in the afternoon on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2022 in Pong Kriel village in the Siem Pang district. The event had 249 participants of which 89 were women, had participations from six NGOs and was chaired by Mr. Chao Monira, Stung Treng Deputy Provincial Governor and Mr. Sreng Cheaheng, Stung Treng PDoE Director and Mr. Phan Yuth, Siem Pang District Governor (Annex 11).

### **Output 2. One Community Protected Area (CPA) is strengthened (at LWS) and one Fish Conservation Zone (FCZ) is established (at SPWS)**

#### Indicator 2.1. 500 rural people at two villages (one at SPWS and one at LWS) have participated in the design and implementation of a CPA and FCZ management plans BEOP.

A PA Law and Zoning regulation awareness campaign was carried out by the Provincial Department of Environment and Rising Phoenix from August 2022 to January 2023. 888 people (364 women) across 11 villages participated in the meetings (Annex 12). The Kham Phouk village meeting on the 6th Dec 2022 had 93 participants (42 women) (Annex 13). A series of outreach events on strengthening the FCZ in Kham Phouk village was conducted between Dec 2022 and March 2023 (Annex 14a). A total of 76 villagers participated, where they engaged and proposed to build a dam across O'Laak to retain water to supply fish water during the dry season.

The O'Koki CPA management plan is the final draft. NLC provided the training on CPA management plan development to the O'Koki CPA committee and local authorities; 19 people (5 women) joined the training. To develop the CPA management plan 51 forest inventory plots were completed to estimate wood volume, this was combined with a socio-economic report which involved 204 household interviews to determine community economic situation, NTFP use and wood consumption needs. Data collection is complete and a grant from USAID has been secured to further develop the management plan and obtain MoE endorsement in September 2023. (Annex 14b1).

#### Indicator 2.2. One CPA and one FCZ (one in LWS and another one in SPWS) are gazetted by government BEOP.

At SPWS, we have not formally gazetted the proposed FCZ as it already lies within the SPWS sustainable use zone.

At LWS, The O'Koki CPA management committee was reactivated; 11 people (3 women) were recruited and endorsed by the Sre Angkrong commune chief. 143 people and key stakeholders (40 women) joined the CPA management committee voting event (Annex 14b2). The new CPA committee was formed, and by-laws revised. At the village and commune level 119 people (40 women) joined the revision process of the O'Koki CPA by-laws (Annex 14b3). The CPA was gazetted by the minister of MoE, they have signed a 15-year agreement, with an associated endorsement letter (Annex 14b4).

#### Indicator 2.3. 85% of participating households do not break the CPA or FCZ rules within the lifetime of the project.

At SPWS, a mechanism to monitor the FCZ has not yet been put in place. As part of the Siamese crocodile reintroduction the FCZ has been monitored since the first quarter of 2022, with no households breaking the rules.

In LWS, in the O’Koki CPA 76% of households (348 households of 459 HH from 3 villages) registered as CPA members. The CPA committee conducted 9 patrol days per month, with a total of 90 patrol events (from Oct 2022 to March 2023) equal to 273 days. Each patrol event had at least four people including women. The patrols resulted in action to stop and report incidents to rangers for follow up action, this included 6 land encroachment events, 16 illegal logging cases, detection and removal of 540 snares and traps (electric shock, bird net) and removal of 11 illegal poaching camps. Households who broke the rules were from non-CPA villages. (Annex 14b5).

Indicator 2.4. Both CPA and FCZ support at least one of the five Critically Endangered bird species and Critically Endangered Siamese Crocodile BEOP.

In 2021, three Giant Ibis nests and one White-shouldered Ibis were nesting in Kham Phouk sustainable use zone of SPWS. Two of the three Giant Ibis nests successfully fledged two chicks. The one White-shouldered Ibis nest successfully fledged one chick. RP released 19 Siamese crocodiles in 2022, which occupy the waterways of SPWS including the proposed area of the FCZ.

At LWS, O’Koki CPA committees joined field monitoring of the Giant Ibis and White-shouldered Ibis inside and outside the CPA areas. Two giant Ibis were recorded at the farm near the village and one white-shouldered Ibis nest was found in 2021. In 2022 and by March 2023 no Ibis were sighted in the CPA.

**Output 3. By March 2023, seven Village Forums in SPWS are strengthened and two Village Forums in LWS are established.**

3.1. Five new Village Forums (3SPWS and 2LWS) reject illegal activities in their respective villages BEOP.

In SPWS, three newly established Village Forums signed conservation agreements in September 2021 and January 2022 which committed to reject illegal activities in their villages and respect the protected area law. All members of the ten village forums at SPWS have agreed to reject illegal activities and signed the conservation agreements. In year 3 of the project, three quarterly village forums meetings (Annex 15a) and two stakeholder forum meetings (Annex 16a) were conducted in June, October 2022, and January 2023 to discuss conservation issues, illegal activities and find solutions.

At LWS, in year 3, 10 meetings were organised at two villages (Sre Chrey and Srepok Thom) attended by 209 people (127 women). 12 key stakeholder meetings at the CPA and village level were organised and attended by 150 people (18 women). The meetings were organised to update progress and strengthen conservation and organisation of the IBIS Rice scheme among stakeholders (district governors, PDoE, local authority, IBIS Rice members). (Annex 15b).

3.2. Seven Village Forums (five new and two already established) raise awareness amongst people from their villages on the importance of SPWS and LWS and the illegality of hunting/snaring BEOP.

At SPWS, the ten established village forums raised awareness on the importance of SPWS and the illegality of hunting/snaring through the three quarterly village forum meetings and two stakeholder forum meetings in Siem Pang. Rising Phoenix in collaboration with Stung Treng Department of Environment conducted the awareness raising campaign on PA Law and Zoning regulation from August 2022 - January 2022 in 11 villages with a total 888 participants (364 women) in Siem Pang (Annex 12).

At LWS, NLC decided instead of establishing new village forums to work on strengthening existing CPA and CBO forums which are running well, holding regular meetings and conducting broadcast and classroom-based awareness programmes. NLC collaborated with PDoE-LWS

office to conduct awareness on PA Law, zoning, key flagship species along with its habitat conservation and protection, climate change and REDD+ project. As a result, 22 meetings and awareness raising events were conducted at IBIS Rice and CPA target villages, where 352 people (107 women) participated in the events (Annex 16b).

#### **Output 4. The five Critically Endangered bird species and one mammal species (Eld's deer) within SPWS and LWS are regularly monitored and maintained.**

##### 4.1 The numbers of nests of White-shouldered Ibis, Giant Ibis and three vulture species remains stable compared to baseline at project start SPWS and LWS, during the project period.

#### **White-shouldered Ibis**

In SPWS, 2022 was the most successful year on record with an 82% nesting success of 44 nests fledging 61 young. The nesting is a 15% increase compared to 2021, 49% compared to 2020 and 27% compared to 2019 (Figure S1a and Table S1a). For the ongoing 2023 breeding season, we recorded so far 32 nests that fledged 43 young as of the beginning of April. The number of nests found and young fledged has significantly increased from the baseline.

In LWS, 2022 there were 13 fledged chicks, which is an 18% increase in 11 fledged chicks from 2021, and almost as many as the highest number of 14 chicks in 2018 (when records began). The number of nests is stable compared to the baseline data of nest breeding season 2018-2019 to 2022-2023 (five breeding seasons).

#### **Giant Ibis**

In SPWS, 2022 had the highest number of chicks fledged since records began with 67% success of 11 nests fledging 18 young (Figure S2a and Table S2a). The fledgling is a 29% increase from 2021. 80% compared to 2020 and 70% compared to 2019. The number of fledglings has increased significantly from the baseline. Compared to SPWS in 2022, just 22 chicks were fledged from 16 nests across all other protected areas in Cambodia.

In LWS, the trend in total individuals and number of fledged chicks appears stable between 2019 and 2021. However, in 2022 there was a decrease in both detected total individuals and number of fledged chicks. The decrease may be due to limited nest searches compared to other years partly because of flooding from mid-August till October which limited nest searching in LWS.

For both Ibis species we continue to observe a nesting success of 70-80%. Nest failure is sometimes associated with human disturbance caused by subsistence use of the forest by local people. Harvesting of mushrooms during the wet season threatens nesting Giant Ibis and tarantula collection in the dry season threatens nesting, White-shouldered Ibis (Figure S3). White-shouldered Ibis are prone to abandoning their nests when disturbed early in the nesting season, where close human presence alone is a disturbance for these shy birds. Although the issue has been discussed at a recent meeting in January 2023, controlling NTFP collection is not easy since SPWS currently has open borders. According to the zonation plan, only authorised persons are allowed in the Conservation and Core zones but with current levels of manpower, enforcing this is not possible.

#### **VULTURE SPECIES NESTS**

Three species of vulture regularly attend the feeding station, while two species - slender-billed vulture (*Gyps tenuirostris*) (hereafter SBV) and red-headed vulture (*Sarcogyps calvus*) (hereafter RHV) nest in the wildlife sanctuary. For SBV and RHV, the number of nests has remained stable since 2019 (Table S3), with between 70-90% of success. The number of RHV nests remains stable at 2 but with success rate being variable due to the low number of nests recorded (Table S4).

White-rumped vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*) (hereafter WRV) is the third and most commonly recorded vulture species at the SPWS feeding station with an average monthly attendance of 48 birds in 2022. However, it is known to nest only rarely in SPWS with one nest found in 2015



and two nests in 2016. In addition, no WRV nests were recorded anywhere in Cambodia in 2020 and 2021. To resolve the mystery of their breeding sites, we proceeded with the capture and tagging of two individuals in April 2020 and two other birds in April 2023. Information provided by the GPS-GSM transmitters quickly revealed a breeding colony only a few kilometres from the sanctuary in Laos. We have monitored that colony in 2020, 2021 and 2023 (Table S5).

#### 4.2 The numbers of vultures recorded at the SPWS vulture restaurant remains stable compared to baseline, during the project period.

The number of vulture restaurants was increased from 30 to 51 from 2019 to 2022 (Figure S4). The attendance has been stable with 72 (43 WRV, 25 SBV and 5 RHV) in 2019, 69 (38 WRV, 26 SBV and 5 RHV) in 2020, 69 (41 WRV, 23 SBV and 4 RHV) in 2021 and the highest number of 79 (48 WRV, 26 SBV and 4 RHV) in 2022.

The national census conducted on 30th September 2022 recorded a total of 106 Vultures (61 WRV, 30 SBV and 15 RHV) of which 96 were observed in SPWS (61 WRV, 30 SBV and 5 RHV). Another census on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022 recorded 109 vultures (66 WRV, 32 SBV and 11 RHV) of which 87 in SPWS (56 WRV, 28 SBV and 3 RHV). After the decline observed during the period 2006-2015, the Cambodian vulture population now appears to be stable.

At LWS, 8 WRV, 17 RHV and three unidentified species were sighted in 2021 and 2022. Sightings of vultures were recorded 12 times at 11 different locations. Most of the sightings were recorded in the dry season in Sre Chrey and Mchu Nga villages.

The efforts undertaken in the past years to provide carrion every week at SPWS vulture restaurant are probably a major factor in vulture population stabilisation. SPWS remains a stronghold for the three critically endangered vulture species.

#### 4.3 The numbers of White-shouldered Ibis recorded at communal roosts at SPWS and LWS remains stable compared to baseline, during the project period.

The population of White-shouldered Ibis is monitored at wet season roosts during July, August, September and October.

At SPWS in the 2022 wet season 377 White-shouldered Ibis were recorded. Though the number of birds observed is still below the 2013-2015 period, an encouraging stable or slight increasing trend is observed from the 2018 baseline.

At LWS in the 2022 wet season 14 White-shouldered Ibis were recorded. The 2022 observations are lower than the 2019 baseline of 25 birds. However, it is higher than the five birds observed in 2021. The survey was hampered by flooding limiting site access in 2022.

The national census conducted during the wet season in coordination with other protected areas in Cambodia counted a total of 820 White-shouldered Ibis.

#### 4.4 Giant and White-shouldered Ibis are recorded at both new CPAs.

In SPWS during 2021, three Giant Ibis nests and one White-shouldered Ibis were nesting in Kham Phouk sustainable use zone. Two Giant Ibis nests successfully fledged two chicks while one failed. One White-shouldered Ibis nest successfully fledged one chick.

In LWS, the O'Koki CPA committee joined the field monitoring of Giant Ibis and White-shouldered Ibis inside and outside the CPA area. In 2021, two individuals of Giant Ibis were recorded at the farm near the village and one white-shouldered Ibis nest was found.

#### 4.5 Eld's deer population at SPWS remains stable compared to baseline at start of the project.

Eld's deer population is monitored by camera trapping during the dry season and by a rapid annual survey (which only gives a glimpse of the minimum population) is conducted every year at the same period.

In April 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023, we encountered a minimum of 32, 25, 46 and 19 Eld's deer. However, sightings on a specific day may not reflect the actual population as they are influenced by multiple factors.

Analysis of camera trap data from 2020 (application of a spatial capture-recapture model) estimated the total population in SPWS to be between 169 and 435 individuals. There is currently no more recent estimate. Further efforts are currently planned or being made to better monitor this species, including analysis of camera trapping at water holes, purchase of additional camera traps and implementation of a robust camera trapping protocol.

#### 4.6 National and international awareness raised of status of focal species at SPWS & LWS.

In August 2021 BBC News and BBC World broadcast a three-minute feature on vultures at SPWS. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmNrn-2wVCA>.

The paper detailing the Giant Ibis population at SPWS was published in December 2021 in the Cambodian Journal of Natural History (Annex 17).

RP has developed four promotional films about its work at Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary which can be viewed on Rising Phoenix Facebook page @<https://web.facebook.com/RisingPhoenixSiemPang/videos>, this includes:

1. Livelihoods and Biodiversity: A conservation contract
2. Water Buffalo and Landscape Management
3. Law enforcement: Safeguarding a Unique Wildlife Sanctuary
4. Siamese Crocodile: A totem of a healthy wetland

RP CEO Jonathan Eames attended the first Global BirdFair from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> July 2022, where he gave daily presentations on the work of RP at Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary and the key focal species of this project.

The status of Giant Ibis and White-shouldered Ibis in LWS was shared with stakeholders at national level through a stakeholder meeting and NatureLife/BirdLife social media channels. NLC is working with other NGOs and the Ministry of Environment to establish the Cambodia Ibis Working Group with the aim to draw more attention from all key stakeholders on Giant Ibis and White-shouldered Ibis and leverage more resources for scale up of conservation actions.

### **3.2 Outcome**

**Outcome Statement. 2,750 rural people achieve improved food security through wildlife friendly practices, and with the support of local authorities, commit to the sustainable use of SPWS and LWS increasing endemic biodiversity.**

Indicator 0.1. The IBIS Rice scheme will be expanded to an additional 2,250 rural people by March 2023. Comprising 1,000 additional rural people in the four villages at SPWS that are currently participating, 750 rural people at three new villages at SPWS and 500 rural people at two new villages at LWS.

The target was met and exceeded at both sites.

At the start of the project in SPWS there were 1,545 rural people from 309 households (hereafter hh) in the IBIS Rice scheme. By the end of the project, an additional 1,282 rural people from 185 households were added from the original four villages. The project expanded the IBIS Rice programme to an additional 1,189 rural people from 203 households across 7 new villages. The programme was expanded to 2,471 rural people from 388 new households representing eleven villages in Siem Pang district. In total, there are 4,016 rural people from 697 households across 11 villages participating in the IBIS Rice programme at SPWS. (Table S6a & S7).

At LWS, the IBIS Rice scheme was started as part of this project. In 2021, 385 rural people from 80 hh in Sre Chrey and Srepok Thom villages registered to join the project, of which 72 hh signed the farmers contract. This increased by 69 and 100 newly registered households in 2022 and 2023. The IBIS Rice target villages were increased from two to four villages by 2023. By April 2023, the programme had 1,129 rural people, including 735 women from 249 households IBIS Rice across in four villages. 238 hh of 249 agreed to sign farmer contracts for the sale of rice.

Indicator 0.2. Across nine villages (7 at SPWS and 2 at LWS) 2,250 rural people (1,750 at SPWS and 500 at LWS) will receive organic certification for their rice production.

The target was met with 4,106 rural people in SPWS receiving organic certification. In LWS, 736 rural people are in the first and second year of qualification for organic certification.

In 2020, at SPWS 3,029 rural people (1,448 women) from 530 hh from seven villages gained organic certification for their rice production. In 2021, 3,831 rural people (1,903 women) from 682 households across 10 villages gained certification. In 2022, 4,016 rural people (1,909 women) from 697 households across eleven villages gained certification.

At LWS in 2021 and 2022, 385 rural people (193 women) from 72 hh and 736 rural people (316 women) from 118 hh passed the first year and second year of the organic quality process (a minimum of three years is needed). In 2023, SPM and IBIS Rice will conduct the third year evaluation on whether the farmers qualify for organic certification. The evaluation will cover 736 rural people (316 women) representing 118 households.

Indicator 0.3. By March 2023, 500 additional rural people (50% women) will have sustained access to ecosystem services from the establishment/strengthening of one Community Protected Areas (CPAs) and one Fish Conservation Zone (FCZ) and no longer engage in the illegal activities in SPWS and LWS.

At SPWS, the FCZ is established on the stretch of the O'Khampha River that flows through the Sustainable Use Zone around Kham Phouk village. Kham Phouk village has a population of 212 families comprising 953 people (477 women), and 30 families (134 people) all of which joined the fish farming initiative introduced in 2022 to offset any perceived loss of fish protein income as a result of the Siamese crocodile re-introduction.

In addition 54 families (242 people) joined the IBIS Rice scheme, while 93 people were involved in the PA law and Zoning regulation awareness raising meeting in December 2022 (Annex 13) and 24 rural people joined the Fisheries Conservation Zone establishment meetings chaired by the village chief (Annex 18). One large community fishpond and two other community wells were dug and powered by solar energy at each well. A dam on O'Laak behind the village is planned to be constructed in 2023 to store more fish to provide for villagers' domestic consumption to offset any loss of food resources because of controls on fishing. At least 493 people have been directly involved in the project activities.

At LWS, The O'Koki CPA were established with 1,547 (779 women) rural people in three villages across 348 (76%) registered. In 2022, 117 households from four villages joined the IBIS Rice scheme with 636 (326 women) rural people. By March 2023, 1,544 people, including 925 women, were involved in the LWS REDD+, PA law, climate change and species conservation awareness raising.

Indicator 0.4. By March 2023, the populations of five Critically Endangered bird species and one Endangered mammal species (Eld's deer) within SPWS and two bird species at LWS will remain stable compared to the project baseline.

Latest censuses for the five Critically endangered bird species hosted at SPWS tend to show that their populations are stable over the period 2020-2023. Eld's deer data is not robust enough to give a population trend during the project period.

At LWS, the last censuses for the two critically endangered bird species show that their populations are stable over the period 2020-2023.

Indicator 0.5. Forest cover inside SPWS and LWS does not decline by more than 2% over the lifetime of the project.

In SPWS, 1.4% forest cover loss caused by land clearance activities has occurred between 2019 to 2022. There has been a steady decrease in annual forest cover loss of 0.7%, 0.4% and 0.3% from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 (Annex 19a).

In LWS, forest cover loss was only mapped before the project 2018-2020, during which annual forest cover decline was 1.8%, for the 2018-2020 forest cover assessment report showing 3.6% loss in 2018-2020. Most land encroachment locations were at the east of Sre Pork river and in ELC. (Annex 19b).

### **3.3 Monitoring of assumptions**

#### **Outcome level assumptions**

Assumption 1: Government support and socio-economic conditions nationally remain favourable to implementation.

Comment:

Government support has increased throughout the project. In 2022, RP built one more ranger station, ensured the protected area wide radio communications system functioned, strengthened Standard Operating procedures, trained and deployed a scout force (team composed of different government agencies) and a community scout team to support the enforcement team and remove snares in SPWS. Siem Pang PATROL (Partnership Against Transnational-crime through Regional Organized Law-enforcement) a government sanctioned forum for all law enforcement agencies within the district was established with the support of the ministries of Interior and Environment and the Stung Treng provincial authority. The established PATROL coordination centre includes 15 Army and 15 Border Police trained as a new Tiger Unit to support the DoE rangers in SPWS. In December 2022, a new 30-year agreement on management of SPWS was signed with MoE.

In LWS, the government support also has increased. For instance, NLC has conducted the REDD+ project document development for LWS many activities such as village consultation meetings, forest inventory, vegetation survey, and other related activities. Those activities were engaged at all sub-national levels and local authorities, even LWS rangers.

Assumption 2: Rate of community compliance with conservation agreements remains high.

Comment:

At SPWS, 1% of 530hh, 4% of 682 hh and 1% of 697 hh in 2020, 2021 and 2022 broke the contract rules reflecting a high rate of community compliance. In LWS, all rural people were compliant with the conservation agreements. However, this remains a work in progress and will improve with increased patrolling and community participation.

Assumption 3: Community compliance with conservation agreements reduces rate of habitat degradation.

Comment:

In SPWS, the encroachment hotspots are along the Sekong river and around Khes Svay and Kam Phouk villages. After we supported the demarcation of 33 km of the southern boundary of SPWS in December 2021, the rate of encroachment decreased from 4% in 2021 to 1% in 2022. However, in SPWS most of the deforestation has been along the Sekong river and due to the army and not communities.

Assumption 4: Land speculation outside the protected areas does not force villagers to clear land inside the protected areas.

Comment:

In SPWS, there has been land grabbing and fencing at Khes Svay, Khes Kraom and Pong Kriel villages and a few poorer households have grabbed land within the Sustainable-use Zone. We

fear this is a growing trend. Stung Treng provincial authority announced in March 2022 the intention to reclaim illegally cleared land and prosecute offenders in early 2023. Stung Treng DoE is preparing legal documents to persecute 10 offenders in 2023.

Assumption 5: Rates of inward migration to villages around the protected areas remains low.

Comment:

There was no new inward migration to the villages around SPWS. In LWS, there was inward migration into the adjacent economic land concession for work.

Assumption 6: Rainfall patterns remain stable and there are no prolonged dry seasons caused by El Nino events.

Comment:

The rainfall in 2022 was higher than the average rainfall in 2020 and 2021. As a result rice yields increased to 670 tonnes in 2022 compared to 397 tonnes in 2021. NOAA has announced an El-Nino has started in mid-2023, with a prolonged dry season predicted in 2024.

Assumption 7: The premiums paid by IBIS Rice continue to make it profitable for villagers to participate in the scheme.

Comment:

Premiums paid are already profitable for villages and the number of households has increased year on year. In SPWS, premium price for organic certified IBIS Rice was 66%, 70% and 86% in 2020, 2021, and 2022 compared to premiums during the precertification period of 10%, 35% and 55% in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

## **Output 1 assumptions**

Assumption 1.1: Villagers voluntarily report infringements.

Comment:

The IBIS Rice Village Marketing Network (VMN) and Village Forum committees supported project staff in conducting compliance inspections among their members. Villagers voluntarily reported 9 of 697 households (1%) had violated the rules in 2022 and offending households were suspended from the project for two years. In addition, ten compliance village meetings were conducted with the support of VMN in Khes Svay, Khes Kraom, Pong Kriel, and Nhang Sum villages through which 166 suspected violations were reported in 2022.

Assumption 1.2: Community compliance with conservation agreements reduces the rate of habitat degradation.

Comment:

Rate of habitat loss decreased, which is a bigger threat than degradation, from 0.7% to 0.4% and finally 0.3% from 2019-2020, 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

Assumption 1.3: Communities remain engaged in the organic, wildlife-friendly rice certification scheme for the duration of the project.

Comment:

Overall the number of households participating in the scheme has steadily increased from year to year. Siem Pang district authorities suggested expanding the IBIS Rice scheme to the whole district (27 villages) in 2023. The expansion will be supported by a new grant from USAID committing to 21 villages in Siem Pang. Evidence of community engagement is seen through the expansion and registration in the IBIS Rice programme of 219 new households in 7 new villages in 2023.

Assumption 1.4: A close partnership is created with SMP and IBIS Rice commits to continue purchasing the IBIS Rice produced in the villages even after project end.

Comment:

The close partnership is reflected by SMP successfully securing funding from the USAID Morodok Baitang project to continue at both SPWS and LWS through 2022-2026. RP are discussing with SMP and IRCC future collaboration to expand the scheme and scale up production in Siem Pang including integrating climate change adaptation measures, agricultural innovation, and making the shift towards sustainability. In 2022, SMP in collaboration with IRCC

purchased 670 tonnes of paddy from eleven villages at SPWS at 86% premium price and Siem Pang district became the biggest producer of IBIS Rice in Cambodia. Siem Pang has become the largest producing area in Cambodia for IRCC.

## **Output 2 assumptions**

Assumption 2.1: Villagers understand what a Sustainable use zone means in the context of protected areas management.

Comment:

888 people (364 women) participated in awareness raising meetings on PA Law and zoning regulations held from August 2022 to January 2022 in eleven villages. The boundary demarcation along the sustainable-use zone was completed in December 2022.

Assumption 2.2: Villagers wish to become engaged in CPA/FCZ development and management.

Comment:

In SPWS, Village chief and Village Forums members in Kham Phouk were very supportive to establish an FCZ. They chose to restore water sources for aquaculture, water and fish storage capacity for their village. The challenge of COVID-19 in 2021 delayed the formal establishment and policing of the no-fish take FCZ along the O'Khampa River during the reporting period. At the O'Koki CPA 1547 (779 women) villagers participated in the CPA development and management.

Assumption 2.3: Villagers will abide by the protected area zonation plan.

Comment:

Although the concept of a protected area is new to most villagers and the zonation plan adds a layer of further conceptual complexity, a boundary demarcation meeting in September 2021 was conducted with 125 villagers from three villages, in addition eleven awareness meetings on PA Law and Zoning regulation was conducted in eleven villages around SPWS with participation from 888 villagers. From August 2022 to January 2023, the boundary poles were demarcated around the sustainable-use zone, six big zoning sign boards were installed around main roads and SPWS. Awareness raising through the three village forums and two stakeholder forum meetings in 2022 engaged the community people to increase awareness of the law and zonation of SPWS.

Assumption 2.4: Villagers will abide by the rules of the CPA/FCZ that they establish and not log within the protected areas.

Comment:

99% of villagers abided by the rules.

## **Output 3 assumptions**

Assumption 3.1: Local authorities perceive the value of the project and start preventing poachers and middlemen from conducting illegal activities in their villages.

Comment:

In SPWS, regular patrolling is implemented with the support of local authorities as reflected by the setting up and running of the multi-agency Siem Pang PATROL team. Although work remains to be done as local authorities may still allow some poaching and middlemen to operate within SPWS.

Assumption 3.2: Local communities and local authorities continue to be interested in engaging and contributing to these forums.

Comment:

In SPWS, participation in forums by villagers and officials remained high with from 30 to 40 participants attending each meeting.

Assumption 3.3: Close relationship with Government at District and Provincial level ensures a reduction in encroachment from the Army and private companies.

### Comment:

At SPWS, as evidence in March 2022, there was encroachment pressure from a company named Siemon (Cambodia) Agriculture Comprehensive Development Co, Ltd. The PATROL team arrested three trucks of timber belonging to this company near the southern boundary of SPWS. Siem Pang PATROL programme was essential at resolving this issue between the wildlife sanctuary and company. This incident was addressed again at the quarterly stakeholder forum meeting in March 2022. Addressing this incident provides an illustration of our close relationship with government at district and provincial level.

## **Output 4 assumptions**

Assumption 4.1: That nesting success, roost counts and restaurant counts reflect overall species trends.

### Comment:

Attendance at vulture restaurants is monitored every week, and the national census takes place every three months. Because of the small vulture population in Cambodia, counting at restaurants is a fair reflection of the whole vulture population in the country. Current counting of nesting success for vulture species is imperfect because nesting can occur out of the sanctuary, but counting of immature individuals attending the vulture restaurant gives a proper trend for the evolution of the population and the success of the breeding season.

For White-shouldered Ibis, roost counts don't capture the whole population at a given time but once again reflects the species trend at a national level. For Giant Ibis, the population in the Sanctuary is small and counting nesting pairs give a good indication of the population trend in SPWS. In LWS, both Ibis trends seem stable regarding roost count and number nest found data and the vulture sightings were recorded by the field team.

Assumption 4.2: That there is no destruction of nest and roost trees.

### Comment:

During the project period there was no record of destruction of nesting or roosting trees in the sanctuary. However, some nests which failed were associated with human disturbance such as tarantula or mushroom collection around the nests. Several roosting trees outside the sanctuary (at Toul Bosphnhiev) were cut in 2020.

Assumption 4.3: That there is no poisoning of vultures.

### Comment:

No vulture poisoning event was recorded for the population of the three vulture species attending vulture restaurants or nesting in SPWS over the project period.

## **3.4 Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty reduction**

### Project Impact statement

Two globally important but degraded protected areas in a landscape of poverty will be transformed to productive and flourishing havens for Cambodia's wildlife, generating benefits for local communities.

### Comments

In Year 2 of the project, we saw a positive impact on the species monitored at SPWS compared to the baseline. For example, 2021 saw the greatest number of White-shouldered Ibis nests and young fledged, in addition to the largest number of Giant Ibis nests found in a year. The annual census of White-shouldered Ibis roost counting in 2021 increased over the baseline and the vulture count at vulture restaurants remained stable compared to the baseline.

The IBIS Rice scheme provides the opportunity for households to significantly increase household income through growing and selling a premium organic jasmine rice. In 2022, at the ten participating villages at SPWS 510 households sold their paddy to IBIS Rice at a 86% premium price and received US\$ 308,257 as cash income or US\$ 604 per household (Annex

7). This is income that would have not been otherwise earned and during the three years, the project helped secure the customary land-use rights by mapping a total of 476 land parcels belonging to 441 households covering 1,388 hectares of lands in eleven villages around SPWS (Annex 8a). Participating households showed a quantifiable impact on poverty reduction. In LWS, 436 land parcels belonging to 215 households covering 718.60 hectares were mapped.

## **4 Contribution to Darwin Initiative Programme Objectives**

### **4.1 Project support to the Conventions or Treaties (e.g. CBD, Nagoya Protocol, ITPGRFA, CITES, Ramsar, CMS, UNFCCC)**

The project supports CBD Aichi biodiversity targets 12 and 14. A meaningful contribution will be made towards target 12 as both project sites support the protection of globally significant populations of five Critically Endangered bird species and mammal species that are found at SPWS and LWS and are now at high risk of extinction. The five Critically Endangered birds' species our work will support are: Giant Ibis (*Thaumatibis gigantea*), White-shouldered Ibis (*Pseudibis davisoni*), White-rumped Vultures (*Gyps bengalensis*), Slender-billed Vultures (*Gyps tenuirostris*), and Red-headed Vultures (*Sarcogyps calvus*). The Critically Endangered and Endangered mammal species our work will address are Sunda pangolin (*Manis javanica*), Germain's langur (*Trachypithecus germaini*), Red-shanked douc (*Pygathrix nemaeus*), Northern yellow-cheeked crested gibbon (*Nomascus annamensis*), Dhole (*Cuon alpinus*), Large-spotted civet (*Viverra megaspila*), Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*), Eld's deer (*Rucervus eldii*) and Banteng (*Bos javanicus*). Data on species supports nationwide population monitoring of endangered species by MoE, this is in addition to participation in national Vulture/Ibis surveys.

The project contributes to CBD Aichi target 14 by safeguarding the access of poor and vulnerable rural communities to essential ecosystem services. This project resulted in 4,016 rural people in SPWS receiving organic certification, while 736 rural people in LWS are in the second of three years needed to qualify for organic certification. This is about a third of the total population of the fifteen project villages, eleven in SPWS and four in LWS. Lessons learned have been shared at a National Farmer's Day event in Stung Treng Province and are regularly shared at stakeholder forums. Learnings will be further shared on a national level with the Government and other NGOs for potential replication in other provinces.

### **4.2 Project support to poverty reduction**

The IBIS Rice scheme provides the opportunity for households to significantly increase household income through growing and selling a premium organic jasmine rice. In 2022, at the eleven participating villages at SPWS (four existing villages and seven new villages) 510 households sold their IBIS Rice at a 86% premium price and received US\$308,257 as cash income or US\$604 per household, an increase in income. While in LWS, where organic certification is in the second of three qualifying years for certification, in 2021, 52% (37hh/71hh) and 83 % (87hh/96hh) in 2022 of participating farmers-sold their paddy at a 20% premium.

During the three years, the project helped secure the customary land-use rights for 476 and 432 land parcels in SPWS and LWS. These belonged to 441 hh / 1,388 hectares across eleven villages around SPWS and 215 hh / 718.58 ha in LWS. The project helped map land parcels for local communities of which only some were IBIS Rice participants, so we overall contributed to local communities getting government recognized land rights.

The additional intervention in 2022 to encourage rural people by adding a 50- and 100-Riels bonus per kg for those who sell more than 1,000 kg and 2,000 kg increased the sale per family from 767 kg/hh in 2021 to 1,313 kg/hh in 2022, an total increase in IBIS rice of 397 tonnes in 2021 to 670 tonnes in 2022. Over 290 of 510 households sold more than 1,000 kg.



### 4.3 Gender equality and social inclusion

When working with local communities, we build relationships at the family level. In this project both men and women continue to be engaged in project activities. A database of IBIS Rice participants in training, meetings and site visits is maintained and allows the team to track participation based on gender in all activities. IBIS Rice agricultural training, the financial literacy training, Village and Stakeholder Forum meetings, IBIS Rice promoting meetings, SPWS boundary awareness meetings, PA law and Zoning regulation meeting, outreach events, vaccination awareness events helped women better understand both livelihood management and conservation involvement. A total 90 meetings and training activities in the 11 target villages directly involved 3,901 people (43% or 1,665 women) (Annex 20) and the total IBIS Rice members of 4,016 people involved 1,909 women (48%) benefited from the IBIS Rice scheme. The same level of participation is found at LWS with 316 women (43%) out of a total of 736 people in the programme. In LWS, 2021-2023, 49 trainings were provided to IBIS Rice rural people at four villages. 424 people, including 244 women (57%) were invited to join the training. 22 meetings were organised, 318 people, including 103 women (32%), were joined. and 44 awareness raising including 12 IBIS Rice promotion seasons were organised, and 2,024 people including 1,178 women (58%) joined.

Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board <sup>1</sup> .	30% RP 40% NLC
Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women <sup>2</sup> .	0%

### 4.4 Transfer of knowledge

Transfer of knowledge to all levels of participants from the rural people to national level government was carried out throughout the project. At the rural people level, IBIS Rice trainings were carried out for 697 rural people at SPWS, along with regular stakeholder engagements where knowledge sharing among all participants was carried out every quarter. Over the project period this included ten sharing events at SPWS. In addition to farmer engagements, IBIS Rice staff were present on site throughout the project to maintain constant engagement.

A total of ten Stakeholder forums were held every quarter. The MoE, DMOE, village communes and all stakeholders attended these events. While at the National level, the programme participated in the National Farmers Day event in Stung Treng.

The organisation of the programme to be participatory from the start meant that knowledge transfer was interactive and inclusive. With challenges and solutions discussed openly at numerous forums and at different levels. The engagement was maintained through sharing and discussions in Telegram groups which included all stakeholders, PDoE and Government representatives. This discussion was documented through monthly reports and minutes of meetings. The approach results in strong community buy-in, government engagement and the district government proposing to expand the project to an entire district. This expansion to 8 new villages in 2023 and the entire district by 2025.

### 4.5 Capacity building

The government engagement at regional and national level for both SPWS and LWS is done only by Cambodian nationals with non-Cambodian involvement mainly being in guidance and

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<sup>1</sup> A Project Board has overall authority for the project, is accountable for its success or failure, and supports the senior project manager to successfully deliver the project.

<sup>2</sup> Partners that have a formal governance role in the project, and a formal relationship with the project that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities.

support. RP has 104 staff of which 100 are Cambodian nationals, of which all unit heads are Cambodian. NLC has 29 staff (9 women) of which 28 are Cambodian nationals. While all staff showed an improvement, the direct senior project management staff are highlighted here. Sopheap Mak (RP) and Sovannarith Thol (NLC) are the overall project leaders and have led project management and report writing in all stages of the project. Both these staff are involved in direct engagement with all stakeholders including IBIS Rice, funders, government and rural people. At the provincial level both these leaders are engaged directly for advice and guidance by foreign NGOs, such as USAID, as they have been developing their programmes in Cambodia. Their status nationally is as subject experts.

At the next level, staff reporting to Sopheap and Sovannarith have shown formidable increase in their performance and contribute to a successful project achievement. Sung Ren (RP), the IBIS Rice Section Leader, and Hai Bunleng (RP), the Compliance Section Leader, have demonstrated more leadership, teamwork, GIS program, and field coordination skills and have provided significant support on the expansion of the IBIS Rice scheme and compliance system. Mr. Vanthet Roeun, was promoted to SMART and Data officer in charge for ibis rice compliance unit (NLC). Both RP and NLC have provided all these staff with salary raises in Year 3 to reflect their overall performance.

In addition, one female staff - Miss Soeurng Laeuth - the Community Assistance Section Leader of RP was promoted in year 3 to become the Security Section Leader in PATROL coordination centre unit with a doubling of salary. PATROL is a multi-agency enforcement team which requires skill to navigate and manage.

## **5 Monitoring and evaluation**

### Monitoring and evaluation framework

We have created a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework at the start of this Darwin project, and we have updated this framework throughout the life of the project (Annex 21).

### Biodiversity monitoring

Biodiversity indicators focus on the combination of species monitoring through ground observation through sightings or camera traps, key habitat features notably forest cover and remote sensing. The project Biodiversity Monitoring Unit is responsible for the monitoring of the five Critically Endangered bird species occurring at the site and Siamese crocodile; White-rumped Vulture, Slender-billed Vulture, Red-headed Vulture, Giant Ibis and White-shouldered Ibis, and Eld's deer. Monitoring of these species was conducted throughout the project, with the three vulture species counted at the four vulture restaurants provided each month, and Giant and White-shouldered Ibis are monitored at their roosting and nesting sites and camera trapping/field observation of Eld's deer. The Siamese crocodile was monitored in the FCZ.

### Monitoring conservation agreement compliance

During Year 3, the project measured and registered rice fields in eleven and four villages in SPWS and LWS. The project Compliance Section Leader is responsible for monitoring rice field expansion and checking reports of law enforcement (SMART) to find the rule breakers among the IBIS Rice members. An annual report of "Forest cover changes at SPWS" has been conducted since 2016 while a 2018-2020 forest cover change analysis for LWS has been completed. These will provide a baseline for monitoring of future changes in forest cover.

The Compliance Section Leader will use the existing compliance database to monitor the participants' respect for the rules. This compliance system cross checks information provided by staff on the ground, biodiversity reports, and law enforcement reports (SMART), to create twice a year a list of rule breakers.

### Poverty reduction monitoring

Poverty reduction is monitored through the IBIS Rice sales data, which highlights how much additional income is made by each participating household. In addition to data collection on how many participants pass the financial literacy training.

## **6 Actions taken in response to Annual Report reviews**

Five comments were received from the 2<sup>nd</sup> year annual report, and these comments were responded to in a separate document which was attached to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year half report. These comments related to the new contracting arrangements, RP as a partner, dual roles of Jonathan Eames and a request to update to the monitoring and evaluation framework.

In September 2022 a change request was submitted for the project. This change request was approved and made minor edits to the 3<sup>rd</sup> year budget and log frame. This change request was made to better align the project after most of its implementation was sub-granted to RP and NLC.

## **7 Lessons learnt**

IBIS Rice farmers only sell the rice which is in surplus to their own consumption. In 2021 at SPWS, 76% of IBIS Rice farmers sold their paddy to IBIS Rice. The farmers who did not sell were because they did not have any surplus rice to participate in the scheme. The way around this is to increase farmers' rice productivity. This led to a discussion with SMP and IBIS Rice Company, where we agreed that in Year 3 we will focus on improving the rice productivity in current villages rather than expanding to new villages.

Instead of subsidising farmers, in 2022, the IBIS Rice Conservation Co. Ltd proposed to encourage farmers to sell more of their rice by adding 50 Riels/kg for those who sold more than 1,000 kg, and 100 Riels/kg for those who sold more than 2,000 kg. The result was an increase in the average sale per family from 767 kg/hh in 2021 to 1,313 kg/hh in 2022 or the total rice sales from 397 tonnes in 2021 to 670 tonnes in 2022. More than 56% of farmers (290 hh / 510 hh) in the programme sold more than 1,000 kg.

The main learning outcome was that instead of subsidising farmers through payments prior to increase in production, we incentivised the farmers through a higher postproduction payment akin to a performance-based payment. However, we do note that the incentive (i.e. pre-production vs performance-based payment) may need to vary based on the socioeconomic/environmental situation of each specific community.

Another key lesson is the continuous engagement of all stakeholders at all levels throughout the project period. The inclusion has seen the project grow, empowered local communities and importantly brought together rural farmers, communities, communes, NGOs, government at local and national level together to support the IBIS Rice scheme and secure funding to continue and expand the project to an entire district.

## **8 Risk Management**

No new risks have arisen over the last 12 months of the project, and no significant adaptations to the project had to be made.

## **9 Sustainability and Legacy**

The success of the project is reflected in Government support to expand the project to 8 new villages by 2023 and an entire district by 2025. The funding for this expansion has been secured from USAID for 2022-2026. While the steady increase in number of farmers participating, volumes of rice and premiums obtained reflect stakeholder support and financial sustainability of the programme.

On the partner level, since 2021 RP has had full responsibility of all projects in SPWS including securing an agreement with the government for investment and management responsibility for the site under a private public partnership for 30 years. In addition, RP has secured USAID funding to carry out pre-feasibility studies on the establishment of a REDD+ project in SPWS. RP in 2023 has established a sister company called Siem Pang Experience which is developing an eco-tourism resort at SPWS which will lead to long term financial sustainability. While in LWS, NLC has negotiated an agreement with the government to develop a REDD+ project over 30 years. Both RP and NLC have secured funding to maintain their staff resources into the coming years, while the development of both sites (SPWS as a public-private partnership and LWS as a REDD+ project) will result in sustained long-term financing to continue IBIS Rice beyond the USAID funding.

## 10 Darwin Initiative identity

Darwin Initiative support has been acknowledged (using the Darwin logo) at workshops, meetings, and signboards held by the project, which has been profiled as a distinct project. This has raised the profile of the Darwin Initiative within government departments in Cambodia, as well as the project partner organisations and other stakeholders

## 11 Safeguarding

Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months?	No
Have any concerns been investigated in the past 12 months	No
Does your project have a Safeguarding focal point?	Yes
Has the focal point attended any formal training in the last 12 months?	No
What proportion (and number) of project staff have received formal training on Safeguarding?	Past: 30% RP 100% NLC Planned: 0%
<p>Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Grievance mechanism boxes needed awareness raising to encourage farmers to participate. When originally deployed there was no feedback. Following engagement, we were able to encourage farmers to use the boxes to provide independent feedback. Which could be discussed in village forums and lead to action.</li> </ul>	

## 12 Finance and administration

This section seeks information about the finances of your project **since your last Annual Report**.

### 12.1 Project expenditure

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2022/23 Grant (£)	2022/23 Total actual Darwin Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)				
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items (see below)				
Others (see below)				
<b>TOTAL</b>	137,113	137,113.00		



Source of funding for additional work after project lifetime	Total (USD)
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### 12.3 Value for Money

The original plan was for an additional 2,250 rural people in 9 villages. Through the project we were able to get to an additional 3,207 rural people in 15 villages across both sites. IBIS Rice in SPWS is now the largest producer in Cambodia. The evidence of the project success is reflected in being able to secure USAID funding for 2022-2026 to expand to a further 8 new villages and subsequently government support to expand to an entire district by 2025.

The project has seen stable populations among the critically endangered species in the two sites. In addition to this, we have also recorded the return of vultures to LWS after an absence of a few years. Through the project, we were also able to find the roosting sites of White-rumped vulture in Laos which are present in SPWS. We have engaged with Laotian counterparts to secure these populations in Laos. In addition, through securing co-funding, we also expanded the species coverage to include the re-introduction of the previously extinct Siamese crocodile in SPWS.

### 13 OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes.

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds Secretariat to publish the content of this section

The original plan was 2,250 additional rural people in 9 villages in both SPWS and LWS. Through the project we were able to get to 3,207 additional rural people in 15 villages across the two wildlife sanctuaries. The evidence in the success of the project is reflected in being able to secure USAID funding for 2022-2026 to expand to a further 8 villages and subsequently government support to expand to an entire district.

The project has seen stable populations among the critically endangered species in the two sites. In addition to this, we have also recorded the return of vultures to LWS after an absence of a few years. Through the project, we were also able to find the roosting sites of White-Shouldered Ibis in Laos which are present in SPWS but do not roost. We have engaged with Laotian counterparts to secure these populations in Laos. In addition, through securing co-funding, we also have been able to expand the species coverage to include the re-introduction of the previously extinct Siamese crocodile in SPWS.

In 2022 Siem Pang district became the biggest producer of IBIS Rice in Cambodia, finally eclipsing production in Preah Vihear Province where the project first started. In 2023, we teamed-up with the USAID Morodok Baitang project and now have expanded the IBIS Rice programme to all 19 villages in Siem Pang district.

## Annex 1 Project’s original (or most recently approved) logframe, including indicators, means of verification and assumptions.

Note: Insert your full logframe. If your logframe was changed since your Stage 2 application and was approved by a Change Request the newest approved version should be inserted here, otherwise insert the Stage 2 logframe.

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Impact:</p> <p>Two globally important but degraded protected areas in a landscape of poverty will be transformed to productive and flourishing havens for Cambodia's wildlife, generating benefits for local communities.</p>			
<p>Outcome:</p> <p>2,750 rural people achieve improved food security through wildlife friendly practices, and with the support of local authorities, commit to the sustainable use of SPWS and LWS increasing endemic biodiversity.</p>	<p>0.1.The IBIS Rice scheme will be expanded to an additional 2,250 rural people by March 2023. Comprising 1,000 additional rural people in the four villages at SPWS that are currently participating, 750 rural people at three new villages at SPWS and 500 rural people at two new villages at LWS.</p> <p>0.2.Across nine villages (7 at SPWS and 2 at LWS) 2,250 rural people (1,750 at SPWS and 500 at LWS) will receive organic certification for their rice production.</p> <p>0.3.By March 2023, 500 additional rural people (50% women) will have sustained access to ecosystem services from the establishment/strengthening of one Community Protected Areas (CPAs) and one Fish Conservation Zone (FCZ) and no longer engage in the illegal activities in SPWS and LWS.</p> <p>0.4. By March 2023, the populations of five Critically Endangered bird</p>	<p>0.1.1 Sales receipts in participating villages between village households and IBIS Rice Conservation Co. Ltd.</p> <p>0.2.1 IBIS Rice certification certificates in participating villages in Y1 and Y3 of the project.</p> <p>0.3.1 Community Protected Area management plans.</p> <p>0.3.2 Baseline and end of project assessment reports assessing rural people’s access to ecosystem services and natural resources within the new CPAs.</p> <p>0.3.3 SMART patrol reports.</p> <p>0.4.1 BirdLife biodiversity team led species census and results compared with 2019 baseline for the five Critically Endangered bird species and one Endangered mammal species – Eld’s deer.</p> <p>0.5.1 Annual Forest cover change report using remotely sensed data.</p>	<p>Government support and socio-economic conditions nationally remain favourable to implementation.</p> <p>Rate of community compliance with conservation agreements remain high.</p> <p>Community compliance with conservation agreements reduces rate of habitat degradation.</p> <p>Land speculation outside the protected areas does not force villagers to clear land inside the protected areas.</p> <p>Rates of inward migration to villages around the protected areas remains low.</p> <p>Rainfall patterns remain stable and there are no prolonged dry seasons caused by El Nino events.</p> <p>The premiums paid by IBIS Rice continue to make it profitable for</p>

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
	<p>species and one Endangered mammal species (Eld's deer) within SPWS and two bird species at LWS will remain stable compared to the project baseline.</p> <p>0.5. Forest cover inside SPWS and LWS does not decline by more than 2% over the lifetime of the project.</p>		<p>villagers to participate in the scheme.</p>
<p>Outputs:</p> <p><b>1. The IBIS Rice scheme will be expanded to an additional 2,250 rural people (50% women)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 90% of participating farmers have gained a minimum 10% income premium on IBIS Rice sales by project end.</li> <li>2. Over 50% of participating farmers have obtained a provincially recognized land certificate by the end of project.</li> <li>3. 90% of participating farmers have not broken the contract's rules within the project lifetime.</li> <li>4. 90% of participants pass the financial literacy test BEOP.</li> <li>5. Establish pilot IBIS Rice schemes at two villages at LWS by the end of project.</li> <li>6. Lessons learnt and best practice shared at village level and a national workshop for central government and civil society.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1.1 Farmers' contracts; sales agreements.</li> <li>1.2.1 Farmers' database; land certificate; shape files.</li> <li>1.3.1 Farmers' contracts; SMART reports; compliance system database.</li> <li>1.4.1 Attendance list; training curriculum; pre/post-test.</li> <li>1.5.1 Farmers contracts at LWS.</li> <li>1.6.1 Attendance lists for participating village workshops and national workshops.</li> </ol>	<p>Villagers voluntarily report infringements.</p> <p>Community compliance with conservation agreements reduces rate of habitat degradation.</p> <p>Communities remain engaged in organic, wildlife-friendly rice certification scheme for the duration of the project.</p> <p>A close partnership is created with SMP and IBIS Rice commit to continue purchasing the IBIS Rice produced in the villages even after project end.</p>
<p><b>2. One Community Protected Area (CPA) is strengthened (at LWS) and</b></p>		<p>2.1.1 Minutes of village meetings.</p>	<p>Villagers understand what a Sustainable use zone means in the</p>



Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>one Fish Conservation Zone (FCZ) is established (at SPWS)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 500 rural people at two villages (one at SPWS and one at LWS) have participated in the design and implementation of an CPA and FCZ management plans BEOP.</li> <li>2. One CPA and one FCZ (one in LWS and another one in SPWS) are gazetted by government BEOP.</li> <li>3. 85% of participating households do not break the CPA or FCZ rules within the lifetime of the project.</li> <li>4. Both CPA and FCZ support at least one of the five Critically Endangered bird species and Critically Endangered Siamese Crocodile BEOP.</li> </ol>	<p>2.2.1 Government notice of gazette for CPA &amp; FCZs and management plans.</p> <p>2.3.1 Pre and post project assessments of rural people from the two new CPA &amp; FCZs assessing their access to natural resources and ecosystem services.</p> <p>2.4.1 SMART reports. official list of Prosecutions.</p> <p>2.4.2 Monthly biodiversity reports compared to baseline data already collected.</p>	<p>context of protected areas management.</p> <p>Villagers wish to become engaged in CPA/FCZ development and management.</p> <p>Villagers will abide by the protected area zonation plan.</p> <p>Villagers will abide by the rules of the CPA/FCZ that they establish and not log within the protected areas.</p>
<p>3. By March 2023, seven Village Forums in SPWS are strengthened and two Village Forums in LWS are established.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Five new Village Forums (3SPWS and 2LWS) reject illegal activities in their respective villages BEOP.</li> <li>3. Seven Village Forums (five new and two already established) raise awareness amongst people from their villages on the importance of SPWS and LWS and the illegality of hunting/snaring BEOP.</li> </ol>	<p>3.1.1 Conservation agreements signed; Village Forums by-laws; Village Forums declaration.</p> <p>3.2.1 Attendance list; agenda; events minutes; Pre and post awareness tests.</p>	<p>Local authorities perceive the value of the project and start preventing poachers and middlemen from conducting illegal activities in their villages.</p> <p>Local communities and local authorities continue to be interested in engaging and contributing to these forums.</p> <p>Close relationship with Government at District and Provincial level</p>

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
			ensures a reduction in encroachment from the Army and private companies.
<p><b>4.</b> The five Critically Endangered bird species and one mammal species (Elds deer) within SPWS and LWS are regularly monitored and maintained.</p>	<p>4.1 The numbers of nests of White-shouldered Ibis, Giant Ibis and three vulture species remains stable compared to baseline at project start SPWS and LWS, during the project period.</p> <p>4.2 The numbers of vultures recorded at the SPWS vulture restaurant remains stable compared to baseline, during the project period.</p> <p>4.3 The numbers of White-shouldered Ibis recorded at communal roosts at SPWS and LWS remains stable compared to baseline, during the project period.</p> <p>4.4 Giant and White-shouldered Ibis are recorded at both new CPAs.</p> <p>4.5 Elds deer population at SPWS remains stable compared to baseline at start of the project.</p> <p>4.6 National and international awareness raised of status of focal species at SPWS &amp; LWS.</p>	<p>4.1.1 Monthly biodiversity reports produced by the BirdLife field monitoring teams. These data have been collected monthly for &gt; ten years so baseline already exists.</p> <p>4.2.1, 4.3.1, 4.4.1, (as above).</p> <p>4.5.1 Annual surveys of Eld’s deer population at SP.</p> <p>4.6.1 Journal papers. At least one journal paper produced by project staff published reporting population trend of Ibis, vultures or Eld’s deer BEOP.</p> <p>4.6.2 News stories on BirdLife website, e-newsletters and magazines.</p> <p>4.6.3 Reports shared with key stakeholders.</p>	<p>That nesting success, roost counts, and restaurant counts reflect overall species trends.</p> <p>That there is no destruction of nest and roost trees.</p> <p>That there is no poisoning of vultures.</p>
<p><b>Activities</b> (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)</p> <p>Outputs 1: The IBIS Rice scheme will be expanded to an additional 2,250 rural people (50% women)</p> <p>1.1 Establish M &amp; E framework and baseline surveys for rice production, rice sales, financial literacy and land certification and compliance of all new participants at start of project.</p>			

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>1.2. Sales of IBIS Rice are made at a minimum 10% premium price at SPWS and LWS.</p> <p>1.3 Rice field mapping and registration for 260 households with the Department of Land Management (SPWS &amp; LWS).</p> <p>1.4 Quarterly Village Forum meetings.</p> <p>1.5 Financial literacy skills training sessions.</p> <p>1.6 Select two villages in LWS and pilot IBIS Rice scheme at LWS.</p> <p>1.7 Conduct national and local workshops to disseminate lessons learnt and best practice.</p> <p>1.8 Monitoring, evaluation of IBIS Rice related and compliance activities and results at SPWS &amp; LWS.</p> <p>Output 2: One Community Protected Area (CPA) is strengthened (at LWS) and one Fish Conservation Zone (FCZ) is established (at SPWS)</p> <p>2.1. Establishing M &amp; E framework and baseline for newly established Protected Areas, including numbers of participating villagers, access to ecosystems services, compliance, and forest cover within CPA.</p> <p>2.2. Establishment of Protected Area working groups at SPWS and LWS.</p> <p>2.3 Participatory assessment and consultation with relevant communities at SPWS and LWS.</p> <p>2.4 CPA establishment application.</p> <p>2.5 Develop bylaw and organizing of CPA structure.</p> <p>2.6. Boundary demarcation.</p> <p>2.7 Development of CPA management agreement.</p> <p>2.8 Baseline data collection and monitoring and evaluation of natural resource use and forest cover within the new CPA &amp; FCZ at SPWS and LWS</p> <p>2.9 Biodiversity surveys.</p> <p>2.10 Facilitate Provincial Department of Environment awareness raising on SPWS approved zoning focusing on the rules of the conservation zone, which is the proposed location of the FCZ, including posting of signboards.</p> <p>2.11 Fisheries extension training to participating households in Khampourk village, to increase fish protein in village counteracting short term impacts of FCZ establishment.</p> <p>2.12 Study tour to Xe Champhone Ramsar site in Laos for participating households in Khampourk village.</p> <p>2.13 Implement a series of outreach events in Khampourk village to engage community in FCZ establishment and implementation.</p> <p>2.14 Stakeholder consultation on FCZ areas and rules, leading to gazetting and management plan approval.</p> <p>2.15 Awareness raising on FCZ including posting of signboards.</p> <p>2.16 Scout recruitment from Khampourk village, and subsequent training and patrolling of FCZ (Matched funding).</p> <p>Output 3: Village Forums, with local authority support IBIS Rice and CPA initiatives and commit to SPWS and LWS protection.</p> <p>3.1 Establish M &amp; E framework and baseline surveys for numbers of village forums established and effective, awareness raising amongst village beneficiaries, compliance, and forest cover within SPWS and LSW.</p> <p>3.2 Village Forum Declarations made by newly established Village Forums.</p> <p>3.3 Village Forum Conservation Agreements Signed.</p> <p>3.4 Quarterly Village Forum meetings at commune level.</p> <p>3.5 Awareness raising on the importance of SPWS and LWS and the illegality of hunting/snaring conducted in nine villages by Village Forum committees.</p> <p>3.6 Awareness raising on the importance of SPWS and LWS and illegality of hunting/snaring/logging conducted in two CPAs.</p> <p>3.7 Baseline data collection and monitoring and evaluation of forest cover within the new CPAs and other areas within SPWS and LWS.</p>			

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Output 4: Stable populations of five Critically Endangered bird species and one mammal species (Eld's deer) within SPWS and LWS</p> <p>4.1 Compile all baseline data for the 5 CR bird species and establish baseline data for Eld's deer and establish M &amp; E framework for the same.</p> <p>4.2 Searching and monitoring nests of White shouldered IBIS in LWS and SPWS (monthly census during the breeding period).</p> <p>4.3 Searching and monitoring Giant Ibis nests in LWS and SPWS (monthly census during the breeding period).</p> <p>4.4 Searching and monitoring vulture nests in LWS and SPWS (monthly census during the breeding period).</p> <p>4.5 Conducting monitoring of three vulture species at vulture restaurants at SPWS (monthly census).</p> <p>4.6 Conducting White-shouldered Ibis (WSI) roost census in LWS and SPWS (monthly and annual census).</p> <p>4.7 Survey to establish baseline and monitoring White-shouldered Ibis and Giant Ibis at two new CPAs (year one only).</p> <p>4.8 Searching and monitoring Eld's deer in SPWS (monthly census).</p> <p>4.9 Awareness raised via BirdLife website, e-newsletters, journal publications and events held throughout the project's lifetime.</p>			

## Annex 2 Report of progress and achievements against final project logframe for the life of the project

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements
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**Impact:**

Two globally important but degraded protected areas in a landscape of poverty will be transformed to productive and flourishing havens for Cambodia's wildlife, generating benefits for local communities.

During the lifetime of the project, we saw a positive impact on the biodiversity and livelihoods monitored at SPWS compared to the baseline. For example, the nests of White-shouldered Ibis found in 2022 was the most successful year on record. The nests of Giant Ibis increased in breeding success in 2021 and remained stable in 2022. The nests of the three vultures have remained stable since 2019. The number of White-shouldered Ibis recorded at communal roosts at SPWS have remained stable; the vulture count at restaurants remained stable compared to the baseline.

The IBIS Rice scheme provides the opportunity for households to significantly increase household income through growing and selling a premium organic jasmine rice. In 2022, at the ten participating villages at SPWS 510 households sold their paddy to IBIS Rice at an 86% premium price and received US\$ 308,257 as cash income or US\$ 604 per household. This is income that would have not been otherwise earned and during the three years, the project helped secure the customary land-use rights by mapping a total of 476 land parcels belonging to 441 households covering 1,388 hectares of lands in eleven villages around SPWS. Those had shown a quantifiable impact on poverty reduction.

<p>Outcome</p> <p>2,750 rural people achieve improved food security through wildlife friendly practices, and with the support of local authorities, commit to the sustainable use of SPWS and LWS increasing endemic biodiversity.</p>	<p>0.1.The IBIS Rice scheme will be expanded to an additional 2,250 rural people by March 2023. Comprising 1,000 additional rural people in the four villages at SPWS that are currently participating, 750 rural people at three new villages at SPWS and 500 rural people at two new villages at LWS.</p> <p>0.2.Across nine villages (7 at SPWS and 2 at LWS) 2,250 rural people (1,750 at SPWS and 500 at LWS) will receive organic certification for their rice production.</p> <p>0.3.By March 2023, 500 additional rural people (50% women) will have sustained access to ecosystem services from the establishment/strengthening of one Community Protected Areas (CPAs) and one Fish Conservation Zone (FCZ) and no longer engage in the illegal activities in SPWS and LWS.</p> <p>0.4. By March 2023, the populations of five Critically Endangered bird species and one Endangered mammal species (Eld’s deer) within SPWS and two bird species at LWS will remain stable compared to the project baseline.</p> <p>0.5. Forest cover inside SPWS and LWS does not decline by more than 2% over the lifetime of the project.</p>	<p>0.1. At SPWS, there are an additional 1,282 rural people from 185 households from the original four villages and 1,189 rural people from 203 households from seven new villages. Totally, we have increased the participation to 2,471 rural people from 388 households representing eleven villages.</p> <p>In LWS, in 2021 had 385 rural people (193 women) from 72 households in two villages. In 2022, we expanded to a further 736 rural people (316 women) in two new villages.</p> <p>0.2. At SPWS, in 2022 there were 4,016 rural people from 697 households across eleven villages that gained organic certification for their rice production. They sold their organic IBIS Rice at 86% premium price.</p> <p>In LWS, in 2022 there were 736 rural people (316 women) from 118 households in four villages who were either in year 1 or year 2 of obtaining the organic certification. 80% ( 95hh/118 hh) of participating farmers sold their rice and received a premium of 20%.</p> <p>0.3. At SPWS, the FCZ is established on the stretch of the O’Khampha River that flows through the Sustainable Use Zone, around Kham Phouk village. Kham Phouk village has population of 212 families, and 30 families joined fish farming, 54 families joined the IBIS Rice scheme, 93 people involved in the PA law and Zoning regulation awareness raising in December 2022, 24 villagers joined the Fisheries Conservation Zone establishment meetings chaired by the village chief, one large community fishponds and two others community wells were dug and powered by solar at each, a dam on O’Laak behind the village is planned to construct in 2023 to store more fish for villagers consumption to offset any loss of income because of controls on fishing.</p> <p>At LWS, the O’Koki CPA was established by 1,547 rural people (779 women) from three villages registered as CPA members. By 2022, there were 736 rural people (316 women) from 118 households across four villages in year 1 and year 2 in the process of obtaining organic certification for their rice production.</p>
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0.4. Over the project period, we have monitored vulture populations through weekly attendance at the vulture restaurant, WSI population through communal roosts during the wet season, and GI population by the number of breeding pairs during the breeding season. Latest censuses for the five Critically endangered bird species hosted at SPWS tend to show that their populations are stable over the period 2020-2023.

Eld's deer, data is not robust enough to give a trend of the evolution of the population during the project period.

0.5. In SPWS, 1.45% forest cover loss caused by land clearance activities has occurred between 2019 to 2022.



<p><b>Output 1.</b> The IBIS Rice scheme will be expanded to an additional 2,250 rural people (50% women)</p>	<p>1.1 90% of participating farmers have gained a minimum 10% income premium on IBIS Rice sales by project end.</p> <p>1.2 Over 50% of participating farmers have obtained a provincially recognized land certificate by the end of project.</p> <p>1.3 90% of participating farmers have not broken the contract's rules within the project lifetime.</p> <p>1.4 90% of participants pass the financial literacy test BEOP.</p> <p>1.5 Establish pilot IBIS Rice schemes at two villages at LWS by the end of project.</p> <p>1.6 Lessons learnt and best practice shared at village level and a national workshop for central government and civil society.</p>	<p>1.1 At SPWS, by the end of the project, 73% (510hh/697hh) of participating farmers sold their paddy and received a premium of 86%. The percentage of the farmers sold is a bit less than the indicator due to farmers keeping the rice for their consumption, but the premium income is much higher than the target.</p> <p>1.2 Over the lifetime of the project 697 households have obtained provincially recognised land certificates (representing 1,454 land parcels). At the end of 2022 there were 697 members of IBIS Rice therefore 100% of participating farmers in SPWS have obtained a land certificate.</p> <p>1.3 At SPWS, 1%, 4% and 1% broke the rules, in year 1, year 2 and year 3 of the project. It showed 96% of participating farmers have not broken the contract's rules within the project lifetime.</p> <p>1.4 In 2021, 63% of participants passed the training test.</p> <p>At SPWS, from 63% to 75% of participants (between 307 to 366 farmers) have passed the financial literacy test after the trainings during lifetime of the project.</p> <p>1.5 In 2021, 80 hh registered and 72 hh signed farmer contracts as IBIS Rice members at two villages called Sre Chrey and Sre Porkthom. This increased in 2022 by 131 hh registered and 118 signing farmer contracts across four villages called Sre Chrey, Sre Porkthom, Thmey and Roveak.</p> <p>1.6 The good solution strategy of IBIS Rice Conservation Co., Ltd in 2022 by adding additional premium price for those who sell more had encouraged farmers to sell more of their rice and had increased the average sale per family and the number of top sales. This a good lesson learnt will be committed to do the same or similar way for 2023.</p> <p>A National Farmer's Day event held in 2022 had disseminated the IBIS Rice project and its achievements in the 11 target villages and promoted community and stakeholders to involve and support more in the scheme and young conservationists from six NGOs representatives learnt about the successful Siem Pang IBIS Rice scheme.</p>
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<p>Activity 1.1 Establish M &amp; E framework and baseline surveys for rice production, rice sales, financial literacy and land certification and compliance of all new participants at start of project.</p>	<p>The monitoring workflow has been regularly updated, the baseline survey of rice production and sales were established, the baseline surveys of financial literacy was not record prior to the project, survey through pre-test and post-test of financial management literacy training was established from year 1, the land certification and compliance of all participants at start of the project was produced and incorporated in the framework.</p>
<p>Activity 1.2. Sales of IBIS Rice are made at a minimum 10% premium price at SPWS and LWS.</p>	<p>The premium price made from the sales of the organic IBIS Rice was very high from 66% to 86%. For example, year 1 was 66%, in year 2 was 70%, and year 3 was 86%.</p>
<p>Activity 1.3. Rice field mapping and registration for 260 households with the Department of Land Management (SPWS &amp; LWS)</p>	<p>At SPWS, a total 476 land parcel mapping were registered with the Department of Land Management belonging to 441 households with 1,388 hectares of land areas.</p>

Activity 1.4. Quarterly Village Forum meetings.

In SPWS, during three years of the project, ten quarterly village forum meetings and ten stakeholder forum meetings were conducted to discuss conservation issues, illegal activities and find solutions.

Three newly established Village Forums signed conservation agreements in September 2021 and January 2022 which committed to reject illegal activities in their villages and respect the protected area law. All members of the ten village forums at SPWS have agreed to reject illegal activities and signed the conservation agreements.

In year 3 of the project, three quarterly village forums and two stakeholder forum meetings were conducted in June, October 2022, and January 2023 to discuss conservation issues, illegal activities and find solutions. From 40 to 50 participants attended each meeting.

Activity 1.5. Financial literacy skills training sessions.

From 02 Nov - 29 Dec 2022, the IBIS Rice section leader, Sung Ren, conducted the financial management literacy training in 11 villages with a total of 418 participants (223 F).

<p>Activity 1.6. Select two villages in LWS and pilot IBIS Rice scheme at LWS.</p>	<p>In 2021, two villages were selected to pilot the Ibis rice scheme and 2022, two more villages were selected by SMP (other grant), by March 2023, there were four villages in LWS piloting the Ibis rice scheme.</p>
<p>Activity 1.7. Conduct national and local workshops to disseminate lessons learnt and best practice.</p>	<p>We shared the achievement and lesson learnt of the IBIS Rice via ten Village Forum meetings and ten Stakeholders Forums meetings.</p> <p>SMP had a good lesson learnt on the bonus of the IBIS Rice purchase that encouraged farmers to sell more of their rice and had increased the average sale in December 2022.</p> <p>RP conducted two Farmer's Day events in 2020 and 2022 to disseminate the IBIS Rice project and its achievements in the 11 target villages and promoted community and stakeholders to involve and support more in the scheme and young conservationists from six NGOs representatives learnt about the successful Siem Pang IBIS Rice scheme. Total participants were 615 (345 women)</p>
<p>Activity 1.8. Monitoring, evaluation of IBIS Rice related and compliance activities and results at SPWS &amp; LWS.</p>	<p>We monitored all the activities through the M&amp;E Framework, the gender tracking tools, Compliance Monitoring Report, Forest Cover Change Reports, minutes, and CDU monthly report.</p>

<p><b>Output 2.</b> One Community Protected Area (CPA) is strengthened (at LWS) and one Fish Conservation Zone (FCZ) is established (at SPWS).</p>	<p>2.1 500 rural people at two villages (one at SPWS and one at LWS) have participated in the design and implementation of an CPA and FCZ management plans BEOP.</p> <p>2.2 One CPA and one FCZ (one in LWS and another one in SPWS) are gazetted by government BEOP.</p> <p>2.3 85% of participating households do not break the CPA or FCZ rules within the lifetime of the project.</p> <p>2.4 Both CPA and FCZ support at least one of the five Critically Endangered bird species and Critically Endangered Siamese Crocodile BEOP.</p>	<p>2.1 Through the awareness raising campaign on PA Law and Zoning regulation by the Provincial Department of Environment and Rising Phoenix from August 2022 to January 2022 in eleven villages there were 888 people (364 women) participating in the meetings. There were 93 participants (42 women) in Kham Phouk village participating in the meeting conducted on 6 December 2022. There were 76 people participating in a series of outreach events in Kham Phouk in December 2022 and March 2023 to learn and discuss strengthening the Fisheries Conservation Zone in Kham Phouk village. On 30 March 2023, a meeting chaired by Kham Phouk village chief, participated by 24 villagers, was held to discuss the Fisheries Conservation Zone establishment behind Kham Phouk village. They proposed the build a damp across O’Laak to keep the water and fish available in the dried season.</p> <p>At LWS, the revised version of CPA by-law was endorsed by the director of Ratanakiri provincial department of environment (PDoE). 89 people (28 women) joined the meeting at commune and village levels. 18 meetings were organised, 236 people(64 women) participated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CPA management plan training: 35 people, including 7 women joined the training.</li> <li>- forest inventory was conducted by 22 people, including 4 women.</li> <li>- 69 (32 women) of rural people joined the awareness seasons.</li> <li>- 204 households were interviewed for timber and non-timber forest product consumption.</li> </ul> <p>2.2 At SPWS, we have not formally gazetted the proposed FCZ, and it is felt at this stage that this will not be necessary.</p> <p>A LWS, the O’Koki CPA officially gazetted by the MoE and the management committee were re-activated and endorsed by Sre Angkrong commune chief.</p> <p>2.3 At SPWS, the FCZ has been proposed but not formally established to date, therefore the community has not had an opportunity to break the rules so far.</p> <p>At LWS, The O’Koki CPA were established by three villages with 1547 rural people, including 779 women (348 households) registered as the CPA member.</p>
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2.4 During the three years, at KP Sustainable Use Zone of SPWS we recorded five nests of WSI, six nests of GI, seven sighting of WSI, and eleven sighting of GI. In 2021, three Giant Ibis nests and one White-shouldered Ibis were nesting in Kham Phouk sustainable use zone of SPWS. Two Giant Ibis nests successfully fledged two chicks, and another failed. One White-shouldered Ibis nest successfully fledged one chick. Rising Phoenix released 19 Siamese crocodiles in 2022, which occupy the waterways of SPWS including the proposed area of the FCZ.

LWS:

In the O'Koki CPA area, the CPA committee didn't meet, record both Ibis. but near the villages we found and monitor from 2020-2023 as below:

- Nine nests of WSI found, 7 nests were succeeded with 12 chicks.
- 51 sightings of GI were encountered and recorded 2 birds as average and the maximum recorde was 4 birds.
- 89 sighting of WSI were recorded, the maximum recorded was 6 birds, and the minimum of 1 bird.

<p>Activity 2.1. Establishing M &amp; E framework and baseline for newly established Protected Areas, including numbers of participating villagers, access to ecosystems services, compliance, and forest cover within CPA.</p>	<p>At SPWS we have elected not to proceed with CPA establishment, for the reasons given in the first annual report. By incorporated with the M&amp;E framework as a whole project, we recorded all data of participants and villagers and all meetings, events, or trainings, especially in KP villages and KP Sustainable Use Zone.</p>
<p>Activity 2.2. Establishment of Protected Area working groups at SPWS and LWS.</p>	<p>In SPWS we are working within existing structures comprising the Kham Phouk village forum and Village Marketing Network instead of establishing a CPA working group. In LWS, the O’Koki was established before project started. NLC just collaborated with DoE and local authorities to reactivate and support them.</p>

Activity 2.3. Participatory assessment and consultation with relevant communities at SPWS and LWS.

As stated in the first annual report, the government started a nationwide process to review land claims in all protected areas and the process appears open-ended and to date no guidelines have been issued by the Ministry of Environment. Linked to this the government is registering land in the Core and Conservation zones as State Private Land. So, the future of land in the Community and Sustainable-use Zones where CPAs must be located is uncertain. CPAs and Village Forums carry out the same functions but have different levels of government recognition. We have therefore decided to work with the already established Village Forum and Village Marketing Network (VMN) of the IBIS Rice scheme in Kam Phouk village where we are developing a Fisheries Conservation Zone (FCZ) on the stretch of the O'Khampa River that flows through the Sustainable-use Zone. To date they have excavated one large fishpond and restored two others, by digging solar-powered wells at each, to offset any loss of income because of controls on fishing.



Activity 2.4. CPA establishment application.

For reasons given above no formal CPA establishment is planned at SPWS, we established a Fisheries Conservation Zone (FCZ) in the third year of the project. Through the awareness raising campaign on PA Law and Zoning regulation with 93 participants (42 women) in Kham Phouk on 6 December 2022, there were 76 people participated in a series of outreach events in Kham Phouk in December 2022 and March 2023 to learn and discuss about strengthening the Fisheries Conservation Zone in Kham Phouk village, a meeting on 30 March 2023 with 24 villagers to discuss about the Fisheries Conservation Zone establishment behind Kham Phouk village, a damp across O'Laak will be built to keep the water and fish available in dried season.

In LWS, the O'Koki CPA establishment application was endorsed before the project started.

<p>Activity 2.5. Develop bylaw and organizing of CPA structure.</p>	<p>In SPWS, we used the existing by-laws and organizing structures of Village Forums and Village Marketing Networks established. After the awareness raising meetings on PA law and Zoning regulation, sign boards of illegal of legal and illegal activities, and maps of zoning of SPWS were deployed in the village and in the FCZ areas, zoning and boundary were demarcated, series of outreach event and study visit were conducted in KP, we uses the PA and Zoning law as the whole at SPWS.</p> <p>In LWS, The O’Koki was activated and functioned. The CPA management committee was recruited and endorsed by the commune chief, the CPA by-law was revised and endorsed by the director of Ratanakiri Provincial Department of Environment.</p>
<p>Activity 2.6. Boundary demarcation.</p>	<p>In SPWS, we supported PDoE to demarcation of 33 Km of the southern boundary of SPWS and this was completed in December 2021 and the demarcation of the sustainable use zone around Kham Phouk was completed in March 2022.</p> <p>In LWS, The O’Koki CPA boundary was demarcated and endorsed by MoE before project started.</p>
<p>Activity 2.7. Development of CPA management agreement.</p>	<p>In SPWS, we follow the AP law and Zoning regulation as a whole. In LWS, The O’Koki CPA has signed on the CPA management agreement for 15 year with MoE.</p>
<p>Activity 2.8. Baseline data collection and monitoring and evaluation of natural resource use and forest cover within the new CPA &amp; FCZ at SPWS and LWS.</p>	<p>The annual forest cover change reports were producing each year. The biodiversity data on GI and WSI within the KP sustainable use zone were regularly recorded in to the M&amp;E Framework.</p>

<p>Activity 2.9. Biodiversity surveys.</p>	<p>Biodiversity data were regularly collected and monitored monthly and available in the Biodiversity Monitoring (BMU) monthly reports.</p>
<p>Activity 2.10. Facilitate Provincial Department of Environment awareness raising on SPWS approved zoning focusing on the rules of the conservation zone, which is the proposed location of the FCZ, including posting of signboards.</p>	<p>Through the awareness raising campaign on PA Law and Zoning regulation by Provincial Department of Environment and RP from August 2022 to January 2023 in eleven villages there were 888 people (364 women) participating in the meetings. Through the meetings, the prohibition signs of illegal activities are displayed and explained to the community people. After the awareness raising meetings on PA law and Zoning regulation, sign boards of illegal of legal and illegal activities, and maps of zoning of SPWS were deployed in the village and in the FCZ areas, zoning and boundary were demarcated, series of outreach event and study visit were conducted in KP.</p>
<p>Activity 2.11. Fisheries extension training to participating households in Khampourk village, to increase fish protein in village counteracting short term impacts of FCZ establishment.</p>	<p>10 community households in Kham Phouk village joined the fish raising program and started in September 2022 and have their first harvested in Decembers and are starting new cycle, and other 20 new community households got training skill of fish raising in April 2023 and started raising their fish in June 2023 at home. Totally 30 farmers are raising fish in KP.</p>

Activity 2.12. Study tour to Xe Champhone Ramsar site in Laos for participating households in Khampourk village.

On 1-4 November 2022, Rising Phoenix collaborated with Stueng Treng Provincial Administration, held a study tour on the exchange experience of rewilding of the Siamese crocodiles in Savannakhet province (Tan Som village, Champhone district, and Nav Nue village, Xayboully district), Laos. 10 villagers from KP join the study tour.

Activity 2.13. Implement a series of outreach events in Khampourk village to engage community in FCZ establishment and implementation.

At SPWS, Kham Phouk village chief joined three Village Forum meetings in 2022.

One meeting was held on 2nd – 3rd June 2022 with Kham Phouk's Village Forum committees, led by Y.E.A Catalyst, Mr. Seat Lykheang, to assess and develop the community outreach planning regarding the FCZ in Kham Phouk village.

Another meeting was held on July 29, 2022, chaired by the village chief, a member of the Village Forum committee, nine farmers, together with project staff in Kham phouk to discuss the fish raising plan and select farmers for piloting the activities in the village.

Outreach 1: On 27th – 30th August 2022, YEA Catalyst team of three, led by Mr. Seat Lykheang, CDU team of two, total five, went to Kham Phouk village to conduct awareness campaign of Siamese crocodile to villagers, discuss the plan to visit Lao in October, and plan on student awareness in Kham Phouk. Then on 30th August 2022, we met monks, education officers, and school director in Siem Pang.

Outreach 2: On 12-15 Dec 2022, series of meeting led by YEA team, to Identify key influence people in the village (women, youth, elders, tribe

leaders and village chief, spiritual leader, teacher), understand about their traditional and cultural value, and perception about what's important for their livelihood, and identify social and cultural events, communication channels where we can integrate or modify new activities for conservation outreach. A total of 206 participants (119 women) in 4 days participated.

Outreach 3: On 02-07th March 2023, YEA team conducted a “Creative learning and collectively promoting Siem Pang Biodiversity” to 22 participants (Male: 13, Monks: 2, Women: 7) to promote the conservation work, build capacity of village outreach team and networks, and discuss the developing plan for 2022-2023.

<p>Activity 2.14. Stakeholder consultation on FCZ areas and rules, leading to gazetting and management plan approval.</p>	<p>We consulted the FCZ areas and rules through the three Stakeholder Forum meetings in June, October 2022 and January 2023 which are led by the deputy provincial governor and attended by the director of PDoE and other stakeholders. They approved the management plan and involved in the release events of Elongated turtle the Siamese Crocodile in April and May 2023.</p>
<p>Activity 2.15. Awareness raising on FCZ including posting of signboards.</p>	<p>Signboards were posted by LSU team</p>
<p>Activity 2.16. Scout recruitment from Khampourk village, and subsequent training and patrolling of FCZ (Matched funding</p>	

**Output 3.** By March 2023, seven Village Forums in SPWS are strengthened and two Village Forums in LWS are established.

3.1 Five new Village Forums (3SPWS and 2LWS) reject illegal activities in their respective villages BEOP.

3.2 Seven Village Forums (five new and two already established) raise awareness amongst people from their villages on the importance of SPWS and LWS and the illegality of hunting/snaring BEOP.

3.1 In SPWS, during three years of the project, ten quarterly village forum meetings and ten stakeholder forum meetings were conducted to discuss on conservation issues, illegal activities and find solutions. Three new Village Forums were established in Year 2 and had signed conservation agreements in September 2021 and January 2022 which committed to reject illegal activities in their villages and respect the protected area law. All members of the ten village forums at SPWS have agreed to reject illegal activities and signed the conservation agreements. In year 3 of the project, three quarterly village forum and two stakeholder forum meetings were conducted in June, October 2022, and January 2023 to discuss on conservation issue, illegal activities and find solutions.

3.2 At SPWS, the ten established village forums raised awareness on the importance of SPWS and the illegality of hunting/snaring through the three quarterly village forum meetings and two stakeholder forum meetings in Siem Pang as mentioned above. Rising Phoenix in collaboration with Stung Treng Department of Environment conducted the awareness raising campaign on PA Law and Zoning regulation from August to December 2022 in 11 villages with total 888 participants (364 women) in Siem Pang, and the boundary poles installation at southern side and around the sustainable use zone were completed.

<p>Activity 3.1. Establish M &amp; E framework and baseline surveys for numbers of village forums established and effective, awareness raising amongst village beneficiaries, compliance, and forest cover within SPWS and LSW.</p>	<p>The M&amp;E framework was developed and updated regularly. We monitored local authority attendance at village forums by number of attendees, gender, and whether they hold a position of authority in the government. The compliance unit monitors and reports any household infringing the conservation agreements. The forest cover change reports, give a measure of government support for protected areas.</p>
<p>Activity 3.2. Village Forum Declarations made by newly established Village Forums.</p>	<p>Three new Village Forums of Lun, Russei, and Peam Khes villages were established in SPWS and declared by commune chiefs of Sre Sambo and Sekong communes in September 2021 and January 2022.</p>
<p>Activity 3.3. Village Forum Conservation Agreements Signed.</p>	<p>All the ten Village Forum have signed conservation agreements by the heads of Village Forums in SPWS. During the reporting period we ensured the quarterly meetings were conducted following the agreement.</p>



Activity 3.4. Quarterly Village Forum meetings at commune level.

In SPWS, during three years of the project, we conducted ten quarterly village forum meetings and ten stakeholder forum meetings to discuss on conservation issues, illegal activities and find solutions.

We established three Village Forums in Lun, Sre Russei and Peam Khes villages. They signed conservation agreements in September 2021 and January 2022 which committed to reject illegal activities in their villages and respect the protected area law. All members of the ten village forums at SPWS have agreed to reject illegal activities and signed the conservation agreements. In year 3 of the project, three quarterly village forum and two stakeholder forum meetings were conducted in June, October 2022, and January 2023 to discuss on conservation issue, illegal activities and find solutions. From 40 to 50 participants attended each meeting.

<p>Activity 3.5. Awareness raising on the importance of SPWS and LWS and the illegality of hunting/snaring conducted in nine villages by Village Forum committees</p>	<p>We raised the awareness on the importance of SPWS and the illegality of hunting/snaring through the ten quarterly village forum meetings, the then district stakeholder forum meetings, the series of non-compliance village meetings, the AP law and zoning regulation meeting campaigns, and series of outreach events at KP villages, and boundary demarcation meeting as reported above.</p>
<p>Activity 3.6. Awareness raising on the importance of SPWS and LWS and illegality of hunting/snaring/logging conducted in two CPAs</p>	<p>We are raising the importance of SPWS and illegality of hunting/snaring/logging conducted in SPWS in ten village forums meetings and ten stakeholder forum meetings, the entire protected area not just the sustainable use zone. Rising Phoenix in collaboration with Stung Treng Department of Environment conducted the awareness raising campaign on PA Law and Zoning regulation from August 2022 to January 2023 in 11 villages with total 888 participants (364 women) in Siem Pang.</p>
<p>Activity 3.7. Baseline data collection and monitoring and evaluation of forest cover within the new CPAs and other areas within SPWS and LWS</p>	<p>We regularly monitored and collected data in whole SPWS through LE/SMART report, ground truth checking, satellite imagery, compliance monitoring report, and the annual forest cover change report.</p>

**Output 4.** The five Critically Endangered bird species and one mammal species (Eld's deer) within SPWS and LWS are regularly monitored and maintained.

4.1 The numbers of nests of White-shouldered Ibis, Giant Ibis and three vulture species remains stable compared to baseline at project start SPWS and LWS, during the project period.

4.2 The numbers of vultures recorded at the SPWS vulture restaurant remains stable compared to baseline, during the project period.

4.3 The numbers of White-shouldered Ibis recorded at communal roosts at SPWS and LWS remains stable compared to baseline, during the project period.

4.4 Giant and White-shouldered Ibis are recorded at both new CPAs.

4.5 Eld's deer population at SPWS remains stable compared to baseline at start of the project.

4.6 National and international awareness raised of status of focal species at SPWS & LWS.

4.1. We have listed and monitored each nest of GI, WSI and vultures species found in SPWS during respective breeding season and until young were fledged or nest failed. Number of nests for all species nesting in SPWS have remained stable or have increased over the 2020-2023 period.

4.2. We have provided a carrion of cow or buffalo weekly to the vulture restaurant in SPWS and have monitored vulture attendance. Attendance at the vulture restaurant in SPWS is stable for the 2020-2023 period.

4.3. We have monitored WSI roosting sites during the wet season. Number of WSI recorded at communal roosts in and around SPWS during wet season remains stable over the 2020-2023 period.

4.4. Since the FCZ is within the protected areas they are already subject to the same monitoring protocols as the rest of the protected areas and a baseline already exists. Through the recorded of the biodiversity data from 2020-2023 in KP Sustainable Use Zone, we found five nests of WSI, six nests of GI, seven sighting of WSI, and eleven sighting of GI. Obviously, in 2021, two Giant Ibis nests and one White-shouldered Ibis were found nesting in the Kham Phouk sustainable use zone. One Giant Ibis nest successfully fledged one young, and another failed. The White-shouldered Ibis nest was successfully fledged on young. [u3]

4.5. Data regarding Eld's deer population are not robust enough to establish a population trend for that species.

4.6. BBC News and BBC world broadcast a three-minute feature on vultures at SPWS in August 2021. See the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmNrn-2wVCA>. The vultures at SPWS reached about 45 million people in the world.

The paper detailing the Giant Ibis population at SPWS was published in December 2021 in the Cambodian Journal of Natural History

<p>Activity 4.1. Compile all baseline data for the 5 CR bird species and establish baseline data for Eld's deer and establish M &amp; E framework for the same</p>	<p>M&amp;E framework was established in the first year of the project, and data has been collected and reported on each month.</p>
<p>Activity 4.2. Searching and monitoring nests of White shouldered IBIS in LWS and SPWS (monthly census during the breeding period)</p>	<p>We have listed and monitored each WSI nest found in SPWS during breeding season and until young were fledged or nest failed.</p>
<p>Activity 4.3. Searching and monitoring Giant Ibis nests in LWS and SPWS (monthly census during the breeding period)</p>	<p>We have listed and monitored each GI nest found in SPWS during breeding season and until young were fledged or nest failed.</p>
<p>Activity 4.4. Searching and monitoring vulture nests in LWS and SPWS (monthly census during the breeding period)</p>	<p>We have listed and monitored each red-headed and slender-billed nest found in SPWS during breeding season and until young were fledged or nest failed. We have monitored the breeding colony discovered in Laos in 2020, 2021 and 2023. We have installed artificial nests around the vulture restaurant to encourage nesting in the area.</p>
<p>Activity 4.5. Conducting monitoring of three vulture species at vulture restaurants at SPWS (monthly census)</p>	<p>Since August 2020 we have provided a carrion (cow or buffalo) weekly at the vulture restaurant and recorded attendance by species and by sex and age whenever possible. We have participated in quarterly national census.</p>
<p>Activity 4.6. Conducting White-shouldered Ibis (WSI) roost census in LWS and SPWS (monthly and annual census)</p>	<p>We have conducted several census during the wet season in July, August, September, and October to monitor attendance at WSI roosting sites.</p>

<p>Activity 4.7. Survey to establish baseline and monitoring White-shouldered Ibis and Giant Ibis at two new CPAs (year one only)</p>	<p>Routine monitoring has detected the presence of these species in the KP Sustainable Use Zone as mentioned in the output 4.4 above.</p>
<p>Activity 4.8. Searching and monitoring Eld's deer in SPWS (monthly census)</p>	<p>We conducted a yearly rapid survey in April 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. We recorded individual picture of each animal whenever possible.</p> <p>We analysed camera traps images to monitor the population.</p>

Activity 4.9. Awareness raised via BirdLife website, e-newsletters, journal publications and events held throughout the project's lifetime

BBC News and BBC world broadcast a three-minute feature on vultures at SPWS in August 2021. See the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmNrn-2wVCA> The vultures at SPWS reached about 45 million people in the world.

The paper detailing the Giant Ibis population at SPWS was published in December 2021 in the Cambodian Journal of Natural History.

Rising Phoenix has developed four promotional films about its work at Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary which can be viewed on Rising Phoenix Facebook page @RisingPhoenixSiemPang, this includes:

1. Livelihoods and Biodiversity: A conservation contract
2. Water Buffalo and Landscape Management
3. Law enforcement: Safeguarding a Unique Wildlife Sanctuary
4. Siamese Crocodile: A totem of a healthy wetland

Rising Phoenix CEO Jonathan Eames attended the first Global BirdFair from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> July 2022, where he gave a presentation on the work of Rising Phoenix at Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary and the key focal species of this project.

The status of Giant Ibis and White shouldered Ibis in LWS was shared with stakeholders at national level through a stakeholders meeting. NatureLife is working with other NGOs and the Ministry of Environment to establish Cambodia Ibis Working Group with the aim to draw more attention from all key stakeholders on Giant Ibis and White shouldered Ibis and leverage more resources for scale up of conservation actions.



## Annex 3 Standard Indicators

The Biodiversity Challenge Funds (BCFs) use high quality and accessible Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) to enable scaling, replication and increase the impact of the funds and the projects we support.

By asking project teams to align indicators with the Darwin Initiative Standard Indicators, we aim to increase our contribution to the global evidence base for activities that support biodiversity conservation, poverty reduction and capability & capacity.

The tables below are provided to assist project teams in reporting against Standard Indicators. Please report against the Standard Indicators that you have selected specifically for your project in Table 1 below. Refer to the Standard Indicator Guidance & Menu available on the [Darwin Initiative](#) website for guidance on how to select indicators, as well as how to disaggregate reporting within your chosen indicators.

We recognise that our menu cannot cover all the potential monitoring needs for all projects – where necessary you can select indicators from other sources or develop your own. See our BCF MEL guidance on best practices for selecting and developing indicators.



Table 1 Project Standard Indicators

Group		Indicator Number	Darwin Initiative Standard Indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Meeting notes for RP and NLC	Sopheap and Sovannarith, please fill this column based on the notes in Column G. Take info directly from the Final report draft. Don't need to find any new info.
A: Capability and Capacity	Core Indicator	DI-A03	Number of local/national organisations <sup>4</sup> with improved capability and capacity as a result of project.	Number of organisations	Organisation type.	List the number of project partners: IBIS rice, RP, NLC, SMP, Project partners	10 (SMP, IRCC, RP, NLC, DoL, O'Rey CPA, O'Koki CPA, Veal Kambor CPA, Stakeholder Forum, and Village Forum)
	Core Indicator	DI-A04	Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training.	People.	Gender; Age Group; Stakeholder group: Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities, Nationals, public sector, civil society, private sector;	IBIS rice, RP, NLC, SMP, Project partners listed	4,016 people from 697 households in eleven villages at SPWS and 736 rural people from 117 households of four villages at LWS are planting the IBIS Rice following techniques they learnt from the project. 6 RP, 13 NLC, 5 SMP

		DI-A07	Number of government institutions/departments with enhanced awareness and understanding of biodiversity issues <sup>5</sup> . and associated poverty	Government institutions	Govt. Organisation Type (local, national, treasury, planning, environmental, agricultural, forestry).	Stakeholders at stakeholder meetings. Eg: DoE, Commune chief, etc.	Total 40 - 50 people (Stung Treng Deputy Provincial Governor, Siem Pang District Governor, DoE, DoA, DoL, District Police and Armies, Director of SPWS, District officers, Commune Chiefs, Village Chiefs, SMP staff, and Rising Phoenix staff) At LWS more than 50 people (MoE officials, Mondulkiri and Ratanakiri Deputy Provincial Governor, Konmon, Lumphat and Koh Nhek District Governors, DoE, DoA, District Police and Armies, Director of LWS, District officers, Commune Chiefs, Village Chiefs, SMP staff, and NatureLife Cambodia staff)
B: Policies, Practices and Management	Core Indicator	DI-B03	Number of new/improved community management plans available and endorsed*.	Number	Languages (local/other); Typology of community management plans.	O'Koki CPA by-laws revised	1 by-law of O'Koki CPA revised

	Core Indicator	DI-B05	Number of people with increased participation in local communities / local management organisations (i.e., participation in Governance/citizen engagement).	People.	Gender; Age Group; Typology of community/management organisations.	<p>O’Koki CPA by-law revision. How many people participated.</p> <p>At LWS, The O’Koki CPA management committee was re-activate and voted; 11 people (3 women) were recruited and endorsed by the Sre Angkrong commune chief. 143 people and key stakeholders (40 women) joined the CPA management committee. The new CPA committee was formed, and by-laws revised. At the village and commune level 119 people (40 women) joined the revision process of the O’Koki CPA by-laws.</p>	2,097 rural people, including 1,067 women participated in meetings, awareness raising, and other events at O’Koki CPA at LWS
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		DI-B07	Number of people participating in community-based management groups and/or Payment for Ecosystem Service schemes.	People	Gender; Age Group; Scheme type.	Number of people participating in the IBIS rice in each site.	4,016 rural people (1,909 women) from 697 households in eleven villages at SPWS and 736 rural people (316 women) form 117 households of four villages at LWS are participating in the IBIS Rice.
		DI-B08	Volume of internationally traded products standards complying with sustainability	Tonnes/ Kilograms	Taxa (Flora/Fauna/Fungi); Standard used; Product Type.	Report IBIS rice volume in each site per year.	At SPWS: In Y1 we produced 1,515 tonnes and we sold 357 tonnes In Y2 we produced 1,482 tonnes and we sold 396 tonnes In Y3 we produced 2,517 tonnes and we sold 670 tonnes At LWS: In Y2 we produced 70 tonnes and we sold 35 tonnes In Y3 we produced 332 tonnes and we sold 124 tonnes

		DI-B09	Number of individuals / households reporting a decrease in unsustainable practices as a result of project activities.	People/ Households	Gender; Age Group; Typology of unsustainable practice.	IBIS rice condition violations per year.	<p>At SPWS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In 2020, 5 households out of 530 broke the contract rules representing 1% of participating farmers.</li> <li>- In 2021, 30 households out of 682 broke the contract rules representing 4% of participating farmers.</li> <li>- In 2022, 9 households out of 697 broke the contract rules representing 1% of participating farmers.</li> </ul> <p>At LWS by March 2023, we didn't find any household of Ibis rice farmer from four villages broke the contract rules.</p>
C: Evidence and Best Practice	Core Indicator	DI-C02	Number of new conservation or species stock published assessments	Number	Taxa (Flora/Fauna/Fungi), RDL Category (global/regional), Assessment method.	The publication on Giant Ibis population.	1 (A second population assessment of the Critically Endangered Giant Ibis <i>Thaumatibis gigantea</i> in Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary, Cambodia, published in December 2021 in the Cambodian Journal of Natural History)

	Core Indicator	DI-C05	Number of projects contributing data, insights, and case studies to national Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) related reporting processes and calls for evidence.	Number	MEA, Information typology (data, insights, case studies).	National Ibis survey, National Vulture survey.	4 (National Giant Ibis Survey, National White Shouldered Ibis Survey, National Vulture Survey, Eld's Deer survey).
		DI-C17	Number of unique papers submitted to peer reviewed journals.	Number		Giant Ibis paper.	2 (1 is the second population assessment of the Critically Endangered Giant Ibis <i>Thaumatibis gigantea</i> in Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary, Cambodia published in December 2021 in the Cambodian Journal of Natural History, and 2 is the first population assessment of the Critically Endangered Giant Ibis <i>Thaumatibis gigantea</i> in Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary, Cambodia in May 2020 in the Cambodian Journal of Natural History).

D: Sustainable Livelihoods, Biodiversity and Climate Resilience	Core Indicator	DI-D01	Hectares of habitat under sustainable management practices.	Area, hectares or km <sup>2</sup>	Protected areas/non-protected areas, Biome/Ecosystem/Habitat, community controlled or non-community controlled. Extent of habitat disaggregated by pre-project and post project sustainably managed area, and other.	Number of hectares of Ibis rice. & add area of O’Koki CPA in Ha.	4,285 hectares (2,028 hectares of IBIS Rice at SPWS, 349 hectares of IBIS Rice and 1,908 hectares of O’Koki CPA at LWS).
		DI-D04	Stabilised/improved species population (relative abundance/distribution) within the project area.	% Increase; Area (ha or km <sup>2</sup> ).	Flora/Fauna/Fungi.	Vultures and Ibis.	The population of the five species at SPWS remains stable. The national censuses in 2022 were conducted; a maximum of 377 White-shouldered Ibis were recorded at SPWS, while the nationwide census counted a total of 820 White-shouldered Ibis. The national census conducted on 30th September 2022 at SPWS recorded a total of 106 Vultures (61 WRV, 30 SBV and 15 RHV) of which 96 were observed in SPWS (61 WRV, 30 SBV and 5 RHV).

E: Impact on Biodiversity and Poverty		DI-E03	Status of Threatened Species (DEFRA KPI)	tbc	Threats reduced	Prevention of pesticide/weedicide in the IBIS rice areas. Report IBIS rice areas per year which are pesticide and weedicide free.  Community patrolling in the CPA area, number of patrols per year.	2,377 hectares (2,028 hectares at SPWS and 349 hectares at LWS) in 2022 were free of chemical substance.  The community patrolling in O’Koki CPA covered 1,908 hectares at LWS.
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In addition to reporting any information on publications under relevant standard indicators, in Table 2, provide full details of all publications and material produced over the last year that can be publicly accessed, e.g. title, name of publisher, contact details, cost. Mark with an asterisk (\*) all publications and other material that you have included with this report.

Table 2 Publications

Title	Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
The first population assessment of the Critically Endangered giant ibis <i>Thaumatibis gigantea</i> in Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary, Cambodia.	<i>Cambodian Journal of Natural History</i> , 2020, 7–14.	Pin C., Bou V., Eames, J.C., Samorn V. & Thol S. (2020)	Male	Cambodian	<i>Cambodian Journal of Natural History</i> , Phnom Penh	<a href="https://www.fauna-flora.org/publications/cambodian-journal-natural-history">https://www.fauna-flora.org/publications/cambodian-journal-natural-history</a>



Title	Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
<p>A second population assessment of the Critically Endangered giant ibis <i>Thaumatibis gigantea</i> in Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary,</p> <p>Cambodia</p>	<p><i>Cambodian Journal of Natural History</i> 2021 (1) 12–20</p>	<p>EANG Samnang, VANN Vrehchet &amp; Jonathan C. EAMES, 2021</p>	<p>Male</p>	<p>Cambodian</p>	<p>Centre for Biodiversity Conservation, Phnom Penh</p>	<p><a href="https://www.fauna-flora.org/app/uploads/2022/01/FFI_202112_Cambodian-Journal-of-Natural-History.pdf">https://www.fauna-flora.org/app/uploads/2022/01/FFI_202112_Cambodian-Journal-of-Natural-History.pdf</a></p>

#### 14 Checklist for submission

	Check
<b>Is the report less than 10MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a> putting the project number in the Subject line.	N
<b>Is your report more than 10MB?</b> If so, please discuss with <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a> about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	Y
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 10)?	Y
<b>Have you included means of verification?</b> You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	Y
<b>Do you have hard copies of material you need to submit with the report?</b> If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number. However, we would expect that most material will now be electronic.	N
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 10)?	N
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	Y
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	Y
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	