

Q3 2020

Keo Seima REDD+ Project **Impact Report**

**EVER
LAND**



**Wildlife
Conservation
Society**

10 years of species monitoring in the Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary reflects the successes of the project – and its ongoing challenges

The population of 11 key species in the Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary (KSWS) were monitored between 2010 — 2020 using line transects. The report shows that populations of green peafowl and pig-tailed macaque are increasing, that populations of black-shanked douc langur, yellow-cheeked crested gibbon, long-tailed macaque, and wild pig are stable, and that populations of Germain's silvered langur, stump-tailed macaque, and all ungulates except wild pig are decreasing. More than 80% of species trends matched or improved on the anticipated trends set in 2010 in the REDD+ Project Document. These results highlight the success and impacts of the project, while spotlighting where new conservation interventions are most urgently needed.

✓ Key species status report published

✓ Three additional indigenous communal land titles (ICT) obtain pre-approval

✓ Remote KSWS REDD+ verification conducted





2020 Key species status report published

The 2020 KSWS key species status report has been published, and results were presented to the Ministry of Environment this past quarter.

Biodiversity monitoring is key to understanding the project's impact, successes, and failures, and allows important adaptation of interventions to take place.

Wildlife abundance data were collected by KSWS field teams who, since 2010, have walked survey lines of more than 9,000 km — which is equivalent to walking from Battambang, Cambodia to Moscow, Russia. New data were analysed, and old data reanalysed using an improved method for better trend estimates.

The results show increasing populations of green peafowl and pig-tailed macaque, stable populations of black-shanked douc langur, yellow-cheeked crested gibbon, long-tailed macaque, and wild pig, and decreasing populations of Germain's silvered langur, stump-tailed macaque, and all ungulates except wild pig. More than 80% of species trends matched or improved on the anticipated trends set in 2010 in the REDD+ project development. KSWS supports 80% of the global populations of Endangered black-shanked douc langur and Critically Endangered yellow-cheeked crested gibbon. By stabilising the populations of these species in the KSWS, the project is making a significant contribution to their global conservation. These results highlight the success and impact of the project, but also demonstrate the on-going threat posed by snares and hunting with dogs, emphasizing the critical role of the project.

Griffin O. & Nuttall M. (2020). *Status of Key Species in Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary 2010–2020*

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Available from <https://cambodia.wcs.org/About-Us/Publications.aspx>



Highlights



Three additional indigenous communal land titles (ICT) obtain pre-approval

Indigenous communities are considered to be the most vulnerable community group in KSWs — as their traditional land is highly vulnerable to pressure from outsiders, potentially leading to a loss of farmland and forest areas that are important for traditional livelihoods and culture. Based on the land law (2001), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) works to strengthen tenure rights and reduce landlessness by supporting indigenous communities to register their traditional land within KSWs as an ICT.

In 2010, the WCS team started the process of ICT registration in Pu Kong, Ktong and Pu Char villages. ICT registration is a lengthy process that involves four different ministries. The first stage involves obtaining indigenous identity recognition for the community from the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), followed by legal entity recognition from the Ministry of Interior (MoI). Following an exhaustive participatory community consultation process to develop draft boundaries of the ICT and its zones, pre-approval is sought from the Ministry of Environment (MoE). The final stage is receiving the actual communal land title from Ministry of Land Management Urban Planning and Construction (MLMUPC). In late August 2020, Pu Kong, Ktong and Pu Char communities received their pre-approval from the MoE, an important milestone in the process to securing indigenous communal land titles.





Remote KSWS REDD+ verification conducted

For Keo Seima's third REDD+ verification, independent 3rd-party auditors have been evaluating the project's delivery of net climate, community, and biodiversity benefits in accordance with the requirements of the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) and the Community, Climate and Biodiversity (CCB) standards. When the verification is completed, it will allow sales of carbon credits generated in 2018 – 2019.

Verification of the credits generated in 2018 – 2019 is almost completed. Usually, a verification would involve a site visit from an international verification team, however, because of travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, a remote verification was conducted, one of the first in the world.

As part of the verification process, the international verification team conducted a series of remote meetings and local consultants conducted a field visit reporting back to the international verification team. During the field visit, the team held meetings with various stakeholders including local communities in Pu Cha, Pu Haim and Andong Kraloeng villages to verify the Monitoring and Implementation Report against the VCS and CCB standards. CCB findings are now closed and all remaining questions of the verifier have been adequately addressed. There were no issues identified that would jeopardize a smooth pathway to verifying the 2018 and 2019 credits.



Expanded sustainable development activities help increase community engagement in saving wildlife

Communities in KSWs depend on natural resources for their livelihoods, making them the best partners in the prevention of poaching and illegal logging in KSWs. Through the REDD+ Project, communities are engaged in pilot livelihood improvement activities, and have begun receiving benefits directly from REDD+ carbon sales. The scale-up of these activities presents an incredible opportunity to increase the participation of local communities in conservation.



Challenges

- ✓ Slowing and reversing loss of large ungulates in KSWs
- ✓ Government support for community patrolling team to improve law enforcement effectiveness
- ✓ Enhanced support for sustainable livelihoods to increase community participation in conservation



Slowing and reversing loss of large ungulates in KSWs

The 2020 key species status monitoring report shows declines in large ungulate species in KSWs: Gaur, banteng, sambar, and Eld's deer. Large ungulates play a key role in ecosystems, and the loss of these species would be both negative to the conservation status of individual species, as well as to the KSWS ecosystem as a whole. Discussions with relevant authorities are being undertaken to develop a recovery process to address this issue. At this point, populations are too small to have a high chance of natural recovery, and new approaches such as fencing key areas and establishing a captive breeding program will be required. These programs will take some time to develop, but the key species status report gives the project an important starting point to reinforce the need for these new approaches.



Government support for community patrolling team to improve law enforcement effectiveness

Communities in KSWs engage in natural resource protection through establishment and operation of community patrol teams. Only two years ago, there were no community patrol teams in KSWs. Today there are 14 community patrol teams, with more than 100 community members participating.

Inspired by a deep connection and desire to protect their forest, community members play an active role in patrolling and looking for illegal activities. While community members have no power to enforce the law, they can suspend illegal activities, educate suspects and report them to government rangers. There is a great opportunity for government rangers to join with community patrol teams, and respond quickly to their reports, to help reduce the level of illegal activities taking place in KSWs. Without this support from the government, communities could lose their enthusiasm and commitment to forest protection.

To sustain their commitment, the KSWs project team will facilitate a monthly coordination meeting with the park director and park rangers to identify and address challenges. WCS's regional law enforcement advisor is going to devote significant time to KSWs over the next six months to train government rangers and establish systems that will increase their support to community patrol teams.



Enhanced support for sustainable livelihoods to increase community participation in conservation

Local communities are the drivers of many of the threats to forest and wildlife (through poaching, illegal agricultural expansion, and logging) but they can also be the first line of defence against illegal activities from outsiders. More than 4,000 families live in KSWs REDD+ target villages, and these people need to be effectively engaged in conservation. Through the REDD+ benefit sharing fund, the communities have already benefitted from small scale infrastructure such as pump wells, small-scale water supply systems, meeting halls, road repairs, bridges, and toilets. A small number of communities have also received support on sustainable bamboo production, ecotourism and Ibis Rice.

There is incredible potential to increase the impact of the REDD+ Project on communities, and to engage local people in conservation. The KSWs project team will continue to work with communities to develop and expand models of sustainable income-generation to help people reach their development ambitions and work together as partners in conservation. The project will expand their bamboo growing and processing enterprise, wildlife-friendly home gardening, livestock raising, family aquaculture, Ibis Rice, as well as sustainable community agroforestry models.



Impact Over Time



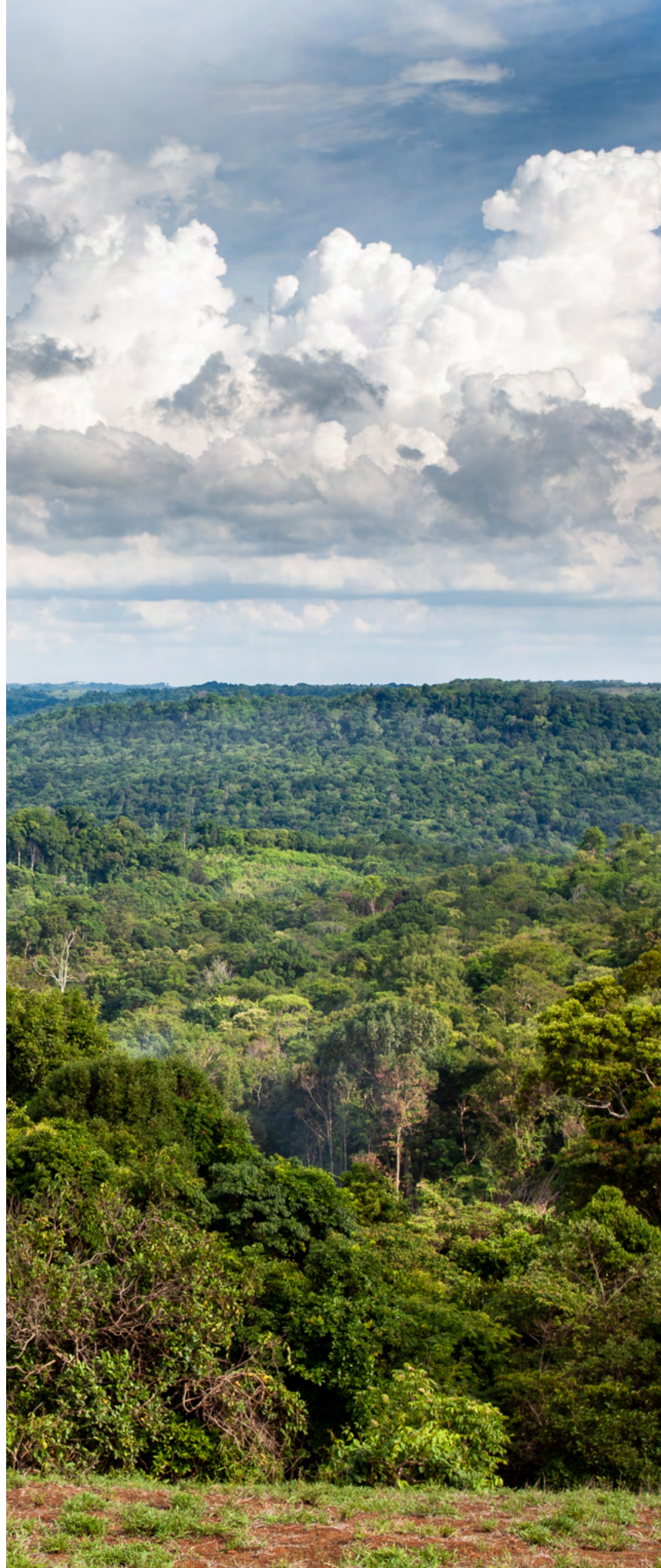
Forest Impacts



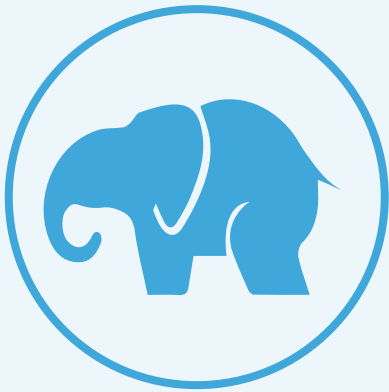
25,000 hectares of deforestation avoided since 2010



21,817 Community members trained on a wide range of sustainable natural resource management skills, including NTFP collection and bamboo harvesting, ecotourism service provision, and community patrol team skills



V Wildlife Impacts



- V **Highest** number of wildlife species recorded in any protected area in Cambodia
- V World's **largest** stable populations of several charismatic primate species
- V Cambodia's first data-driven zonation process, with more than **40** spatial data layers



Impact Over Time

Community Impacts



- ✓ Preserved cultural identity and natural resources for over **2,500** households
- ✓ **1,624** jobs created through the project (law enforcement and community agents)
- ✓ Indigenous community land titles for **7** Bunong communities, **6** more under review by MoE and **4** in process
- ✓ Established the Jahoo Gibbon Ecotourism Camp, bringing more than **\$14,000** annually in community income





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