

# Southern Cardamom REDD+ Project **Impact Report**

**Q1-Q2  
2021**



**EVER  
LAND**



# Southern Cardamom REDD+ Project

Location: **Cambodia**

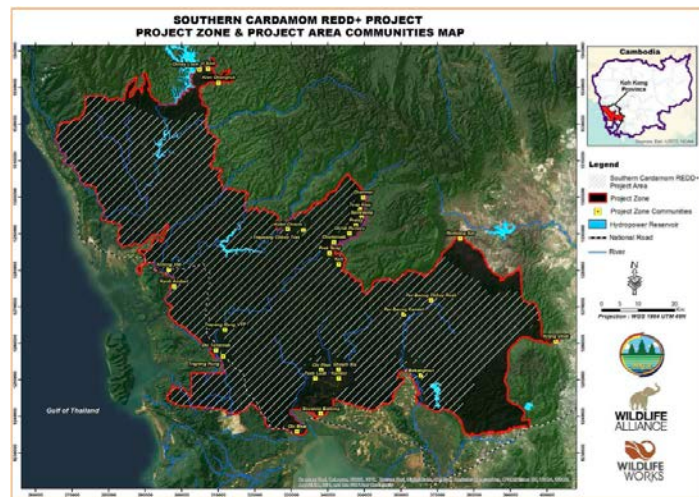
Project Proponent(s): **Wildlife Alliance**

Key Partners: **Royal Government of Cambodia, Wildlife Works**

Standards: **VCS, CCB**

## Community infrastructure development and Covid-19 Relief

The Southern Cardamom REDD+ project has intensified efforts to improve local infrastructure in the project area, provide financial assistance in response to COVID-19, and help secure land rights through demarcation. The Project has focused on helping communities by providing tangible public benefits, which in turn increases people's understanding of how keeping the forest standing benefits them directly.



**24,000,000** tonnes of CO2 emissions avoided to date  
**3,900,000** tonnes of CO2 avoided per year

## About the Southern Cardamom project

The Cardamom Rainforest Landscape is one of the last unfragmented rainforests remaining in Southeast Asia and is a critical part of the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot. Using global best practices for forest protection and community development, the Southern Cardamom REDD+ project prevents more than 3,000,000 tons of carbon emissions annually and protects 497,000 hectares of tropical rainforest in South-West Cambodia. This area is globally significant for ecosystem servicing, wildlife conservation, and community livelihoods and serves as the region's most important watershed, climate regulator and carbon sink.



# Impact Highlights

## Urgent livelihood improvements by the Southern Cardamom REDD+ Project

In 2020, Wildlife Alliance conducted a socio-economic survey and discussed infrastructure plans with the Pour Bang village chief and Commune Council. They found that the most urgent need to improve livelihoods was the completion of the road from Pour Bang village to Sre Ambel town that would enable villagers to more easily transport their agriculture products to the Sre Ambel market.

In June 2021, the Project announced at a ceremony at the Dong Peng Commune Hall in the Sre Ambel district that it would provide financial assistance to address livelihood challenges in the Pour Bang village in Dong Peng Commune, the Sre Ambel district, and Koh Kong province.

At the ceremony Wildlife Alliance, representing the Southern Cardamom REDD+ Project, announced that they had provided \$50,000 in direct assistance for infrastructure. This included:

- ✔ completing a road between the project and the village,
- ✔ a bridge to enable access to the market
- ✔ a secondary school to increase access to education, and
- ✔ a new health center to reduce the amount of time it would take for villagers to get medical attention and treatment

This critical financial assistance to Pour Bang village is the direct result of voluntary market carbon finance, and part of a crucial effort to demonstrate to local stakeholders that the forest is more valuable to the community, and to political institutions, standing than destroyed.



# COVID-19 Relief



Due to rising Covid cases in Pursat Province where some of the Southern Cardamom REDD+ communities are located, a total of \$200,000 will be provided by the MOE and Wildlife Alliance REDD+ project to help purchase essential medical supplies. The supplies include medicine and medical equipment for frontline healthcare workers and medical teams in Pursat province. This assistance follows a 29 June request for funds from the Pursat Provincial Governor, H.E. Mao Thaknin that more measures to fight the COVID-19 pandemic are needed . According to data from the Cambodian CDC published by the Khmer Times on 28 June 2021, at the time, Pursat province had recorded 671 cases of COVID-19.



# Completed Demarcation of Thmor Bang



As of the end of May 2021, demarcation posts in the Russey Chrum Commune, Thmor Bang District were installed around the community lands of two villages. This followed a successful series of participatory meetings with local people and discussions with Provincial, District and Commune authorities. The posts were installed by a joint team of Koh Kong Provincial Administration officials and Wildlife Alliance staff, from the Southern Cardamom REDD+ Project.

Approximately 500 concrete demarcation posts were installed along the 70km boundaries of the two villages of Koki Chrum and Trapeang Cheutrav, an area that has been a hotspot for land grabbing

This demarcation is important for two reasons:

- ✓ It secures the land rights of the local communities and reduces their risk of having their land grabbed by powerful businessmen, and
- ✓ It conserves the forest by clearly delineating the Protected Area boundary so people can see where the forest is protected.





# Challenges & Opportunities

## Increase in snared wildlife

The project saw an increase in the number of wildlife snared in early 2021. The team has encountered multiple reports of wounded and dead wildlife caught in snares. The increase is likely due to a combination of factors: better informants, increased public awareness leading to more reports, more effective ranger patrolling, and/or simply an increase in snares being set.

On June 18, Wildlife Alliance received a report about an injured gaur, a rare cattle species, in Khnong Veal, Phnom Aural Wildlife Sanctuary. While not within the Southern Cardamom REDD+ project, the sanctuary is close to project support stations. The team flew to rescue the animal and found the adult female close to starvation and too weak to stand. She had lost part of a front leg to the snare. The vet sedated the animal before administering antibiotics and medicine. Sadly, she was too weak and died under anesthetic. While this gaur could not be saved, the anesthetic ended her suffering.

Animals caught in snares have low survival rates. Most are dead when they are found. They die slow and painful deaths, either in the snare or from their injuries after breaking free of one. The loss of this gaur is bad news for the species, which globally is classified as Vulnerable. According to the International Union of the Conservation of Nature, the number of gaurs in the wild may be as low as 6,000. Gaurs are extremely rare in Cambodia and their scarcity is due to snaring. It is not known how many are left in the country. In the first 6 months of 2021, project rangers removed 12,610 snares. The rangers are working hard to remove as many snares as possible, and Wildlife Alliance is working closely with the MOE to explore increased legal penalties for snaring. This, combined with the community livelihood opportunities at the project, are essential for combatting the powerful economic drivers of snaring.

