



**KSWs  
REDD+**



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**Quarterly Newsletter**  
A selection of highlights from our work in KSWs

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### **Community guardians deployed to protect first giant ibis nest of the season**

The first giant ibis nest of this breeding season was recently discovered by the KSWs REDD+ biodiversity monitoring team, in the northern part of the protected area. Community guardians have already been recruited from neighboring Sre Andaol village. These individuals have received training on how to ensure that the nest is protected from human disturbance and also how to monitor the progress of the eggs hatching and the young birds developing. The guardians will be employed to keep watch over this nest until all of the young have fledged and left the nest. In the meantime, the biodiversity monitoring team will keep looking for new nests through surveying the forest and following up on community reports.



## Workshop on building community economies to support conservation

Members of seven community protected area (CPA) management committees in KSWs recently attended a workshop to provide feedback on a draft of the Ministry of Environment's bylaws on the Federation Network for Natural Resources. These bylaws, once introduced, will provide greater guidance on natural resource management and livelihood improvement in CPAs across Cambodia. Management committee members also took this opportunity to share their experiences of developing savings groups and honey harvesting within their CPAs. The KSWs REDD+ team continues to support villages in KSWs to apply for greater control over their local natural resources through establishing CPAs, which is a key way that the Ministry of Environment seeks to engage communities in protected area management.





## Introducing the national Eco-Schools program to KSWS

The KSWS REDD+ project recently awarded a sub-grant to [YEA Catalyst](#) to work closely with the Ministry of Environment and local school principals to introduce the Eco-School program to KSWS. Guidelines from the Ministry of Environment outline what students and teachers must do to obtain eco-school recognition. This includes good waste management within school grounds, creating school gardens and learning more about the environment. High schools in Keo Seima district and Khneng, as well as primary schools in O Am and Pu Trom, are interested in the program. Students will be encouraged to think about ways that they can reduce their impact on the environment and how their schools can support conservation in KSWS and further afield.

## **KSWs REDD+ project has trained almost 8,000 people since its launch**

We recently updated the indicators that are used to measure the impact of the KSWs REDD+ project. Since its start, an estimated 7,907 different community members have received some form of training under the project. Training courses are tailored to the needs of individuals and communities, and have covered a huge range of topics. Some examples include climate-smart agricultural techniques, community financial management, planning community patrols, providing interpretation for birding tours, and making bamboo handicrafts. Training is a very important part of the project as it empowers project residents to become more involved in activities and supports their personal development. A recent KSWs REDD+ sub-grant to [Mondulkiri Indigenous People's Association for Development \(MIPAD\)](#) is expanding access for community members to vocational training offered by the Provincial Training Center of Mondulkiri.





## **Legal support for Indigenous communities protesting land-grabbing**

The KSWs REDD+ project continues to provide support for communities suffering from land-grabbing through facilitating engagement with lawyers from R&L Law. These specialist lawyers are providing expert legal advice and helping community committees to ensure that potential land-grabbing cases are appropriately documented. The lawyers also assist with progressing the cases to resolution. As a first step, an out-of-court resolution is sought. The arrangements offered are designed to fit the specific situation. Some land grabbers have agreed to give back the land that they have illegally claimed after requests from R&L Law staff. For those who have illegally cleared spirit forest, which has great religious significance to local communities, Indigenous committees have requested that in addition to surrendering the land, the perpetrators perform traditional ceremonies or make spiritual offerings. Others who illegally claimed land for farming have agreed to give the land back to the local community committee and have entered into a contract to rent the land from the community, so that they have somewhere to farm.

## **Bamboo group negotiating new sales agreements**

The bamboo producer group from Sre Preah community protected area is negotiating new agreements with potential buyers of products made from sustainably sourced bamboo. The producer group has recently started making furniture in addition to smaller handicrafts, so that they can cater to a wider market. Some of the buyers are also interested in buying the raw, unprocessed bamboo, although this provides less opportunity for the producer group to make a profit because they cannot add any value to the final product sold. Any agreements that are finalized will outline the sharing of benefits within the producer group and across the community more widely, and will include sale limits to ensure that the bamboo harvesting remains sustainable.





## **Latest annual community development plans agreed**

The latest community development plans, outlining activities to be funded with REDD+ benefit sharing revenue, have just been finalized. Communities will receive an increased amount this year, part of which is a bonus based on their performance in maintaining forest cover, engaging in conservation, and supporting community development. Communities decided on their priorities for the coming year and identified how benefit sharing revenue can best be used to work towards these goals. Some of the activities from previous years have remained popular, such as constructing wells, supporting community law enforcement patrols, and school breakfast clubs. Several villages have proposed new activities, including improving sanitation in local schools, constructing school gardens and libraries, provision of sports equipment in schools and contributions towards the cost of transport of pregnant women in labor to the nearest healthcare facility. We're looking forward to updating you on the progress of these exciting activities in the coming year!

## Promoting traditional local handicrafts

Residents of Pu Tang recently met to discuss the traditional local handicrafts that have been produced in their village, in the past and present. The KSWs REDD+ team will support residents to explore ways to earn income from these traditional activities whilst respecting the forest and wider environment. Currently, the most common product is honey from wild bees, which is very popular in the closest town, Sen Monorom. Many people make traditional bamboo baskets that are worn like backpacks. Traditional scarves are woven by others in the village and sold at tourism resorts and in the village itself.



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