



Report of World Wetlands Day 2013 in Cambodia

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This annual public awareness event was organized with contribution and collaboration from the following donors and organizations:



Brief report of World Wetland Day 2013 in Cambodia

Cambodia is one of contracting parties to the Ramsar Convention. This convention is a global intergovernmental treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. Under this treaty, the Contracting Parties have an obligation to protect and sustainably use all the wetlands on their territory by implementing the necessary local activities through measures of national and international cooperation. Since 1997, the 2nd February has been celebrated as an annual public awareness campaign, known as World Wetland Day (WWD). Event is held globally to inform and advocate decision makers, stakeholders and local communities about the ecosystem services and value of wetlands and encourage active collaboration in maintaining their ecological characteristics.

In Cambodia, the Department of Wetlands and Coastal Zones (DWC) of the Ministry of Environment - is the national Ramsar Administration Authority (RRA) and government focal point to the convention. On the 23 & 24 of February 2013, Cambodia organized its own public awareness event at Peam Krasob Secondary School, with support from DWC in collaboration with the Forestry Administration (FA) and Fisheries Administration (FiA) and Non Governmental Organization (NGO) partners including IUCN, GEF-Coastal Zone Climate Change Project, BirdLife International (BirdLife), Flora and Fauna International (FFI), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), NGO-Forum, International Crane Foundation (ICF), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Mlub Baitong, Live and Learn, Linkworld Travel agency, and Pannasastra University of Cambodia (PUC).

Since 2010, Cambodia has established a network of government agencies, NGO and private agencies to support the annual wetland awareness event (World Wetland Day). This is an unofficial partnership but it work well and the members usually maintain their commitment in hosting the annual World Wetland Day. In last 3 years we organized meeting among partners at national level in order to raise fund but this year we did fund raising through emails communication however we receive really useful output with 9510 US\$ was raised (not include the money contribute by 300 PUC students to cover their own food and accommodation) from the above mentioned NGOs, private company and university (see table 1). All raised money was spent in this event, we still have not closed the transaction yet however the unused money will bring forward to next year if there is a remaining balance.

The theme of the 2013 World Wetlands Day was “Wetlands take care of water”, inspired by the United Nations “International Year of Water cooperation”. To raise awareness, 1000 posters, 500 t-shirt and 20 banners were produced in Cambodian language. Plain language was used in the material in order to effectively communicate the messages linking water and wetland. The PA material was circulated to relevant governments and NGO stakeholders, local communities, students from primary school to university and local government administration across four provinces including Kampong Thom, Stung Treng, Battambang, and Kok Kong (see table 2). Twenty banners were also hung in front of the Ministry of Environment, University and Secondary School and along national roads.

Peam Krasob Secondary School is located at the coastal area, next to Kok Kapik Ramsar site and Peam Krasob Wildlife Sanctuary, Kok Kong province. The 2013 World Wetland Day event was presided by H.E. Say Socheat (deputy governor of Kok Kong Province) and Dr. Srey Sunleang (Director of Department of Wetlands and Coastal Zones of Ministry of Environment) with participation from government stakeholder representatives from National and Kok Kong provincial level. University student from Phnom Penh, local communities and primary and secondary school students were also in attendance, totaling 650 people.

During the forum, Mr. Phalla, director of Kok Kong Environmental Department, mentioned about his great support to this wetland awareness event and thanks for choosing Kok Kong Province to organize this event. In addition, Mr. Kong Kim Sreng, Senior Programme coordinator of IUCN- Cambodia, and representatives of NGO partners, reiterated the importance of wetlands and water, he did compare water as blood and wetland as vessel in human body. These two elements are very important in support our living.

Further to Mr. Sreng, Dr. Chea San Chanthan, rector of PUC, defined wetlands in terms of their ecological and environmental function and raised the key concern of the rapid loss of wetlands and forest in the world. Beside mention about good collaboration among partners from government, NGO, academic institute and private sector, Dr. Sunleang also explained the meaning of wise use concepts particular draw attention to all participants that take care of wetland is our responsibility. On behalf of Kok Kong provincial governor, H.E. Say Socheat expressed his gratitude to all partners for organising this meaningful event, particularly the donors and volunteer student from Phnom Penh. H.E. Socheat reminded about the Cambodian government policy in conserve wetlands and the important of Mangrove forest located in his province. Mangrove not only helps to reduce the greenhouse effects but its roots also help to purify the water and drop down the pollution. He also expressed strong support to all partners that use this event to plant mangrove forest in Kok Kapik Ramsar site and Peam Krasob Wildlife Sanctuary.

The final agenda of day one of this celebration was “Wetlands knowledge sharing”. At least sixty groups of PUC students from Phnom Penh volunteered to play a role as extension trainers in the six classes of primary and secondary school students. The key lessons shared were: biodiversity values and the services of wetland and forest, the role and initiatives of the Ramsar Convention and practicable activities for wetlands and forest protection. Approximately 50 children were awarded with prizes following a quiz related to wetlands, forests and water.

On second day, 320 university students and representatives from government agencies and NGO were divided to two groups. Group A consists of 200 people, led by Dr. Srey Sunleang, plant mangrove forest in Peam Krasob wildlife sanctuary and other group called B, led by H.E. Say Socheat, travelled by boats to Peam Krasob beach, where the beach migration and erosion is happening, for planting grass and mangrove. Based on IUCN monitoring result, they saw that in last few years the mangrove forest in front line were died, instead of planting only mangrove seed, grass is another option to protect this beach. That why during this world wetland day event, more than 200 kilograms of grass and more than 500 mangrove seed were planted. For more detail about why need to plant grass for protect the beach, please contact Mr. Kong Kim Sreng, Senior Programm Coordinator of IUCN- Cambodia.

The public event was also captured by several well known public media entities such as Apsara TV, South East Asia TV and National TV (TVK). Broadcasts ran for between 2 minutes and 15 minutes. It is hoped that these messages reached policy decision makers, local and national governments officers, private sectors and local communities in twenty four provinces and the capital of Cambodia.

Table 1: List of World Wetland Day Contributors

No	Name	Amount (US\$)
1	IUCN	3500
2	Department of Wetlands and Coastal Zones	460
3	GEF-Climate change project	3000
4	BirdLife	400
5	NGO forum	500
6	WWF	500
7	FFI	300
8	ICF	200
9	Mlub Baitong	200
10	WCS	200
11	Live and Learn	150
12	Link World	100
13	PUC students cover their food and accommodation	
	Total	9510

Table 2: Public material publication and circulation

No	List	Number of publication	Circulation area				
			Stung Treng Ramsar site (Stung Treng)	Boeung Tonle Chmar Ramsar site (Kampong Thom)	Even at Peam Krasob (Kok Kong)	Prek Toal proposed Ramsar site (Battamborng)	Stakeholder s & partners
1	Poster	1000 sheets	80	80	300	80	270*
2	T-shirt	500	18	18	340	18	106**
3	Banner	25	3	3	6	3	5

* IUCN (55 sheets), GEF climate change (50 sheets), NGO forum (45 sheets), WWF (45 sheets), FFI (20 sheets), ICF (20 sheets), WCS (15 sheets), Mlub Baitong (20 sheets), Live and Learn (10 sheets), LinkWorld (5 sheets), DWC (80 sheets) and BirdLife (95 sheets)

** IUCN (10), GEF climate change (15), NGO forum (10), WWF (5), FFI (4), ICF (3), Mlub Baitong (3), WCS (3), Live and Learn (2), LinkWorld (2), BirdLife (21), and DWC (28)

The World Wetland Day 2013 was regarded as successful event. It provided the opportunity to deliver the message of the importance of wetlands and water and the responsibility of all stakeholders from decision makers and academic students to children and local communities. The speeches given by key persons at the events and media broadcasts have helped to raise awareness about the significant of wetlands and the Ramsar convention. Particularly, the quiz provided an activity encouraging a new generation’s attention to wetlands. Profile of Ramsar convention and wise use concept has spread to university student mind.

Awareness material T-shirts



Awareness material posters



Awareness material banners



Event Images



Participants in World Wetland Day at Peam Krasob Secondary school on 23 Feb 2013



Key speakers in World Wetland Day at Peam Krasob Secondary school on 23 Feb 2013



Quiz and answer about wetland and Ramsar for award with secondary school student



Quiz and answer about wetland and Ramsar for award with Primary school kids



H.E. Say Socheat provided award to kid who gave the correct answer about wetlands and water



Poster and other awareness was given to school rector for extension awareness raising about WWD



University student exposure visit to Peam Krasob wildlife sanctuary



Dr. Srey Sunleang delivery mangrove seeds to all participants



Mangrove seed for plant at front line beach



This grass species was selected to plant at front line beach



H.E. Say Soheat lead group in planting mangrove forest



Student plant grass at front beach



Mangrove and grass planting



NGO representatives plant grass



Group led by H.E. Say Soheat celebrate mangrove and grass planting at front line beach



University Student learn from expert about the breeding process of mangrove



Monk participated in grass and mangrove planting



University student prove for being involve with wetland conservation activities



More than 120 participants plant mangrove and grass at front line beach



University student prove for being involve with wetland conservation activities



Media release about important of wetland and why we need to plant mangrove and grass at front line beach



Collect rubbish at the beach after finish planting