



Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Annual Report

To be completed with reference to the “Project Reporting Information Note”:
(<https://iwt.challengefund.org.uk/resources/information-notes/>)

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 20 pages** in length, excluding annexes)

Submission Deadline: 30th April 2024

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IWT Challenge Fund Project Information

Project reference	IWT119
Project title	Reduced illegal wildlife trade and strengthened rural communities
Country/ies	Cambodia, Laos
Lead Partner	Rising Phoenix Co. Ltd.
Project partner(s)	1. Stung Treng Provincial Authority (STPA), Ad-hoc Committee for IBIS Rice and Siem Pang PATROL. 2. Siem Pang District Administration (SPDA), Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group. 3. Border Liaison Office 4. Stung Treng Department of Environment
IWTCF grant value	£337,596.00
Start/end dates of project	01/07/2022 to 30/06/2025
Reporting period (e.g. April 2023-Mar 2024) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	April 2023 to March 2024. Year 2 Annual Report
Project Leader name	James R.A. Lyon
Project website/blog/social media	N/A
Report author(s) and date	James Lyon: 4 th April, 19 th -21 st April – 28 th April Tukla Mang: 8 th -19 th April Sopheap Mak: 8 th -19 th April Mark Bowman: 8 th -19 th April Jonathan C. Eames: 22 nd April

Illegal wildlife trade is often conducted with impunity and openly because of a lack of capacity and coordination amongst law enforcement agencies. For example, currently there are only seven enforcement rangers deployed by the Department of Environment (DoE) in Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary, when regional norms indicate there should be one ranger per thousand hectares giving a ranger force of 135 rangers. In short, no meaningful impact to reduce wildlife trade can be expected when the ranger force is at less than 10% of the required level.

The DoE do not exist and operate in isolation as there are other law enforcement agencies operating in and around the protected area under different jurisdictions including the Border Police and Army, but their actions are not coordinated and there is no cooperation across the border. Therefore, criminal syndicates conducting international wildlife trade escape prosecution, whereas the small-time subsistence poacher working for middlemen are detained and fined placing them and their families in more debt. This project will ensure coordination is established through already existing mandates, statutes and multilateral agreements and the gaps in the capability of law enforcement is improved through replicable capacity development.

2. Project stakeholders/ partners

1. Stung Treng Provincial Authority (STPA), Ad-hoc Committee for IBIS Rice and Siem Pang PATROL.

The Stung Treng Provincial Authority has the authority to direct all government agencies and departments operating in the province, to improve the safety, security, welfare and development. The Deputy Governor chairs and implement the Ad-hoc Committee on IBIS Rice and Siem Pang PATROL.

An ad-hoc committee meeting on IBIS Rice and Siem Pang PATROL was held on 15th May 2023 (Annex A1. Stakeholder forum 15 May 2023). A second meeting was held on 24th August 2023 (Annex A2. Stakeholder forum minutes 24 August 2023) and the third meeting on the 12th January 2024 (Annex A3. Stakeholder forum minutes 12 January 2024).

2. Siem Pang District Administration (SPDA), Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group.

The Siem Pang District Administration led by the District Governor also established the Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group (SPPOWG), under the direction of the Stung Treng Provincial directive. The SPPOWG is responsible to: Direct, control and coordinate with; Border Police Battalion 701, District Police, District Royal Gendarmerie Khmer, District Military Division, other military units assigned to Siem Pang District and other required law enforcement agencies; Chair the Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group quarterly and special meetings and develop inter-agency cooperation; Direct agencies as per the Siem Pang District Administration's mandate and the SPPOWG for collaborative operations and tasks in the countering of illegal activity; Lead and attend awareness raising meetings and events in the promotion of the SPPOWG aims and activities; share information among the SPPOWG on illegal activity and determine solutions to the problems.

In March 2023, the Director of Stung Treng Provincial Department of Environment, assigned both the Director and Deputy Director of Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary to work permanently from the Siem Pang PATROL Unit office, to ensure closer cooperation and planning in leading law enforcement operation and receive on-the-job training from Rising SPPU members on correct legal procedures, patrol planning and management.

Illegal bushmeat awareness - Through the request of the Siem Pang Patrol Unit to the Chair of the SPPOWG, the District Governor issued a directive to stop the collection and selling of illegal bushmeat. This was then followed up with a law enforcement inspection and awareness program led by the district administration, PDoE and law enforcement agencies in Siem Pang in the markets and restaurants, with a total of 115 men, 32 women in 5 villages and 5 communes signing notices that they will not trade in illegal bushmeat. By the end of the

awareness campaign there was no open sales of illegal bushmeat within Siem Pang District. (Annex A13, A14, A16, A19, A20 SPPU monthly reports).

Illegal fishing awareness – Illegal fishing is a serious concern specifically with the electric fishing and the number of fishing nets that are being used. The SPPOWG, District Administration's Deputy Provincial Governor led a team comprised of the PDoE Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary Director, Village and/or Commune Chief and other competent authorities to educate villagers on the zoning of the protected area and the law on fishing within the protected area. In the past the education of fishing in the protected area had been very limited and to ensure that in the future laws can be implemented it was imperative that knowledge is distributed widely and villagers are aware of the law. In total 326 men, 114 women, were informed in 7 villages in 3 communes. (Annex A16, A18 SPPU monthly reports).

3. Border Liaison Office

Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) promote communication and cooperation between different national law enforcement agencies working along the international border. They foster greater cross-border law enforcement cooperation through the sharing of real time information on drug, wildlife, timber and human traffickers to enable fast and effective intervention by law enforcement officers on the other side of the border. BLO counterparts meet on a regular basis both formally and informally to exchange intelligence. Periodically, regional BLO workshops are held to disseminate the latest modus operandi of traffickers and the trafficking routes. The Cambodian-Lao BLO, will facilitate the requirements under Output 3: Siem Pang PATROL Programme fully operational with multi-agency, patrols and investigations, transboundary dialog and ad-hoc investigations with Lao PDR occurring along the border.

On the 23rd of August 2023 a meeting was held between the Siem Pang PATROL and the Border Liaison Office at the Trapeang Kreal International Border Checkpoint Border Liaison Office, Cambodia. (Annex A16 SPPU report August – September 2023)

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Thou Chan Peou, Deputy governor of ST Province and Chief of BLO Stung Treng Province, with his opening remarks and as well as remarks by Mark Bowman, Director of Enforcement, Rising Phoenix Co. Ltd. A presentation on the BLO mechanism was given by Pol. Maj. Gen. Kao Bumony, Deputy Director of law enforcement of the NACD on the BLO's structure and its operations. Then introduction and discussion by Mark Bowman on activities under the UK IWT Grant for Siem Pang PATROL in cooperation with the BLO: 3.1 Development of advance investigation training; 3.2 Study tour; 3.3 Approval; 3.4 Advanced investigation training; 3.5 Patrol refresher training; 3.6 Patrolling and investigation meetings, monitoring and reporting; and 3.7 PATROL guidelines manual. The meeting was attended by Mr. Phan Yuth the District Governor of Siem Pang as well as the Chairman of the Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group, NACD Phnom Penh and officer in-charge of BLO's in Cambodia, in total 8 Cambodian officials and 5 Lao Border Liaison officials including 1 female and 4 Rising Phoenix staff including 1 female.

From 5 to 6 October 2023 Rising Phoenix organized a curriculum development workshop for the advanced investigation training at Trapeang Kreal international border checkpoint, Border Liaison Office, Stung Treng, Cambodia. (Annex A17. SPPU report October 2023).

The workshop was attended by 22 males and 2 females from Cambodian and Lao Agencies including Provincial and District Administration, Border Liaison Office, Environment, Royal Gendarmerie Khmer, Border Security, Immigration, Anti-Narcotics, Anti-Weapon, Anti-Human Trafficking District and Provincial Police. The workshop was supported and facilitated by 3 male and 1 female staff from Rising Phoenix's Siem Pang PATROL Unit and 1 translator (Khmer-Lao) from the Stung Treng Provincial Authority. A total of 29 personnel participated in the workshop.

The workshop was designed to gain as much input and feedback on what are the present problems the officers from Cambodia and Lao PDR are facing with crime and investigating crimes along the porous border, and with this information the participants were able to identify

gaps in knowledge and skills that would be required to coordinate on transboundary investigations. From the information gathered we can now determine the required training outcomes and thus material to be developed and used.

4. Stung Treng Department of Environment

Provincial Department of Environment (PDoE) is the management authority for Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary and mandated to implement protection and natural resource management in accordance with the national strategic plan, policies and the protected area law.

Rising Phoenix coordinates weekly with PDoE in the development and approval of patrol orders for the officers under Siem Pang PATROL programme. Stung Treng Department of Environment rangers join the regular scout snare clearance patrols. They have also attended all the organised ad-hoc Committee for IBIS Rice and Siem Pang PATROL (Annex A1, A2, A3, Stakeholder forum minutes).

In November 2023, the Director of PDoE, signed a letter to assign the Park Director of Virachey-Siem Pang National Park (Mr. Soem Polin) as the head of law enforcement for Siem Pang District and to work in the field with the Siem Pang PATROL for at least 10-days per month as well as assigning three Rangers from his protected area to patrol SPWS for 10-days per month. This enables stronger law enforcement and the ability for PDoE to operate outside of SPWS in Siem Pang District.

November 2023, the Director of PDoE acting on a request from the Siem Pang PATROL, requested to the Provincial Governor to assign eight Royal Gendarmerie Khmer and seven-Border Police to the Siem Pang PATROL, after meetings with the Provincial Governor he will directly communicate with the National Level Police Commissioner and the Commander of the Royal Gendarmerie to assign these officers to Siem Pang PATROL.

In March 2024, the PDoE Director assigned two Rangers from the RAMSAR site to help with the protection of a herd of Banteng located on private land to the Southwest outside of Siem Pang District but supporting the efforts of Rising Phoenix to protect this endangered herd for possible future relocation to SPWS.

In March 2024, the PDoE Director sign off on the concept note to establish the Special Ranger Unit, which will consist of ten specially selected rangers from protected-areas outside of Siem Pang, that will be trained and the assigned to patrol a minimum of 10-days within Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary.

In March 2024, the PDoE Director authorised in writing for the Siem Pang Patrol Coordination centre to store in its designated freezer, wildlife specimens and evidence, due to the fact that the SPWS does not have the facilities to store such items.

3. Project progress

3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

Output 1: Expansion of IBIS Rice Programme at villages surrounding Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary, increasing household income.

1.1 Expand the IBIS Rice scheme and sell the IBIS Rice at a minimum 10% premium price

In 2023 rice growing season, 949 households representing 4,745 rural people in 15 villages grew IBIS Rice and achieved organic certification from ECOCERT in November 2023. There were 252 new households representing 1,260 rural people joined the scheme in 2023. Of these 807 households (4,035 people) sold 1,348 tonnes of IBIS Rice at a premium of 85% (95% premium if include the bonus of rice sold as 100 riel per each kg) which generated US\$530,505 income for participating households or an average of US\$657 per household (Annex A8. IBIS rice Annual Report 2023).

This compares to the 2022 rice growing season where 697 households in 11 villages grew IBIS Rice and achieved organic certification from ECOCERT in December 2022. Of these 510 households (2,550 people) sold 670 tonnes of IBIS Rice at a premium of 70% (86% premium if sold over a tonne) which generated US\$308,257 income for participating households or an average of US\$604 per household

1.2 Capacity building to Village Marketing Network committees (VMN) to become Village Agents

From April to July 2023, a total 53 VMNs from 15 villages received training on several courses included Women Empowerment Impact, Farm Diary keeping, Sale Agreement and Farmer Contracts in June, and Internal Control System (ICS) in July 2023.

After discussion between Sansom Mlup Prey (SNP), IBIS Rice Conservation Co. Ltd. (IRCC), USAID Morodok Baitong (UMB) (Rising Phoenix partners in implementing IBIS Rice in Siem Pang District) and Rising Phoenix we agreed to transform VMNs into Producer Groups (PG) registered at the commune. This is in response to the changing of the EU organic certification requirements. The structure and by-laws of the PGs were drafted for consultation with the commune councils. The PG was finalised in November 2023, and this is a key step for the long-term sustainability of IBIS Rice in Siem Pang.

SMP provided training to VMN Committees on ICS, Farm Diary Record and Threshing Record skills in eleven target villages. The training has been conducted for 3 days from 24 to 26 in June 2023 at SMP Office in Siem Pang with a total 21 VNM members.

In January and March 2023 UMB conducted three workshops and established three Producer Groups in Thmor Keo, Preak Meas and Sre Sambo communes, covering nine villages. The next Producer Group will be established in Sekong commune in May 2024. The by-laws for the producer groups were established with consultation with all VMNs, village chiefs and commune chiefs. The IBIS Rice producer groups will become legal entities facilitating standard certification and receiving future financial support to improve their technical capacity and increasing rice yield and quality. They are further intended to assist in building partnerships with market actors to improve sales coordination, and with donors to mobilize technical and financial support, engaging all IBIS Rice producer group members to comply with wildlife-friendly and organic standards, strengthening the financial conditions of the IBIS Rice producer groups through the support of development organizations and private sectors and serve as a centre for sharing information and lesson learnt with producer group members.

1.3 Rice field mapping and registration for 300 households with the Department of Land Management

The land mapping activities were successfully completed by the end of September 2023. From April-September, we mapped 452 land parcels with a total area of 1,591 hectares belonging to 396 households in 15 villages in Siem Pang district. The list of land mapped has been approved by commune chiefs in four communes and the shapefiles are kept at Rising Phoenix and SMP offices for the purposes of compliance monitoring, and IBIS Rice production work (Annex A4, A5, A6, A7, Land mapping approval for four communes).

A Zoom meeting on 26 March 2024 between Rising Phoenix and Stung Treng Provincial Department of Land Management (DoL) discussed the 2024 land mapping plan in Siem Pang district. We agreed that 300 land parcels will be mapped in 19 villages and DoL will register them at provincial level by the end of May 2024. A sub-grant agreement was signed by DoL on 1 April 2024. The result of the land mapping will be provided in the next report.

1.4 Financial management literacy training to IBIS Rice participants

Financial management literacy training was completed in the first year of the project, but was not completed in the second year. A result from the increased work load due to the large

expansion of IBIS Rice in the second year of the project, and the lag time in getting the VMN fully operational. Training is planned for the third year of the project.

1.5 IBIS Rice compliance monitoring and forest cover change assessment of SPWS

The Rising Phoenix compliance officer regularly reviewed the law enforcement monthly report to check for the rule breakers against IBIS Rice members, monitored of satellite imagery to identify land encroachment, combined with ground truthing checking around farmers' rice fields. From April – October 2023 we confirmed 28 farmers violated the IBIS Rice rules and we stopped purchasing their rice for three years. (Annex A9. First half year compliance report 2023)

From December 2023 to March 2024, the compliance team conducted ground truth checking for 35 days at 204 locations in Kham Phouk Sustainable Use Zone. As the results, we discovered 17 locations were encroached in 2024, 40 locations in 2023, 55 locations in 2022, 66 locations in 2021 and other 26 locations from 2013-2020. From the ground truth checking, we identified at least 70 people (17 IBIS Rice members and others are non-IBIS Rice members) involved in land encroachment. Most land encroachments are the new clearance for planting rice, cashew, cassava and banana. The compliance team prepared the list of suspected farmers and sent to law enforcement team to take action. We keep monitoring these new land encroachments through quarterly satellite imagery and bi-annual ground truth checking and reporting to the law enforcement team. (Annex A10. Second half year compliance report 2023)

In summary, from October 2023 to March 2024 CDU team sent three lists of a total 112 suspected people (both members and non-members) in 114 locations of land encroachment to law enforcement team. As the result, In March, there were 23 cases of land encroachment were documented and prepared by Siem Pang Patrol Unit team to submit to PDoE director to makes decisions. There was no court case submitted yet. We keep following up this with SPPU and will update the result into the next quarterly report.

1.6 Conduct Farmers' Day for sharing lesson learnt and best practice to local farmers and authorities

A farmer's day event was held on the afternoon on 12 January 2024 in Pong Kriel village, Prek Meas commune, Siem Pang district, Stung Treng province. The purpose was to disseminate the IBIS Rice project achievements across the 15 target villages, share lesson learnt, disseminate the plan for the expansion, promote community involvement and stakeholder support, as well as collect comment form participants for further discussion. The event was chaired by Mr. Chao Monira, Stung Treng Deputy Provincial Governor, Mr. Sreng Cheaheng, Stung Treng PDoE Director, Mr. Phan Yuth, Siem Pang District Governor, and 400 people, including 108 females, took-part. Keo Socheat, SMP director, and UMB team also attended the event. (Annex A11. Farmers field day report)

Rising Phoenix co-organized village festival events with UMB to celebrate the success IBIS Rice harvest in four villages on 20 – 23 February 2024 at Khes Svay, Phabang, Siem Pang and Sre Russei villages with more than 500 attendants. His Excellency US Ambassador Patrick Murphy, the US Embassy Delegation, USAID Cambodia Mission Director, and USAID Cambodia staff also participated in the harvest festival on 21 February.

Output 2: A diverse and gender inclusive scout teams are established and operational.

2.1 Notification - conduct planning and notification of Scout Team Recruitment and desired pre-qualifications in collaboration with the Siem Pang District Authority and Stung Treng Provincial Department of Environment, determine a short list of up to 60 possible recruits.

2.2 Selection Course - conduct a recruitment selection course process, including drug testing, ensuring a fair and transparent recruitment of 20 scouts from 60 applicants.

2.3 Equipment - Source and procure required equipment in accordance with policy and procedure.

2.4 Training – conduct 2-week competency-based scout training, covering Rising Phoenix policy, procedure and reporting, radio and SMART phone communications, remote first aid, navigation, field craft, surveillance patrolling, check points, de-snaring, wildlife awareness and recognition, use of camera traps and use of water craft.
2.5 Deploy – submit list of names to Stung Treng Provincial Department of Environment for official approval to work in and support activities in Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary and deploy scout team members on tasks in Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary.

Activity 2.1 to 2.5 was completed in the first year of the project and reported on in the first annual report.

2.6 Monthly reporting – produce monthly reports on activities using smart data, earth ranger and field reports.

From April 2023 to March 2024, scout teams have undertaken snare removal activities within the Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary, removing 3,947 snares and yielding other significant outcomes. Working with the rangers of SPWS, scout teams have received support, enhancing their effectiveness in carrying out their conservation mission. (Annex A27 to A38, Scout unit monthly reports) Tables 1 and 2 provide comprehensive summaries detailing the various types of patrols executed by the scout teams during this period mitigating the threat of snaring within the sanctuary.

Table 1: Summary of patrol effort of the scout unit from April 2023 to March 2024.

No	Type	# Patrols	# Days	# Nights	# Hours	Distance (km)	Coverage (km2)
1	Foot	150	484	334	4836	3677	1103
2	Boat	61	200	139	2988	3070	46
3	Motorbike	215	886	671	14122	21967	220
4	Vehicle	16	50	34	688	656	33
	Total	442	1620	1178	22633.97	29368.53	1401.47

Table 2: Summary of patrol results of the scout unit from April 2023 to March 2024.

No	Observation Type	Number	Remarks
1	Traps and snares	3947	cable, wire, rope, fowl snare, and trap
2	Carcass	17	including 2 gaurs
3	Live Animal	40	rescued and released
4	Fishing Tools	388	48 were removed
5	Land Encroachment	53	recorded and reported to law enforcement
6	Camp	37	3 logging, 17 fishing, 4 NTFPs and 13 unknown camps
7	Cutting Tools	29	7 confiscated and 1 handsaw were confiscated
8	Electro-fishing Gear	13	7 Electro-fishing gears and 6 Batteries were confiscated
9	Firearms	9	4 Homemade guns were confiscated
10	Gunshot	39	recorded and reported
11	Timber	2831	total confiscated 14.69 m3
12	Transportation	185	reported boats, hand tractors, and motorbikes
13	Direct wildlife sighting	840	recorded and reported
14	Indirect wildlife sighting	388	recorded and reported

Output 3: Siem Pang PATROL Programme fully operational with multi-agency, patrols and investigations, transboundary dialog and ad-hoc investigations with Lao PDR occurring along the border

3.1 Development of Advance Investigation Training – working with the Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group (SPPOWG) and the Border Liaison Office (BLO) finalize curriculum outline and material, translate any new material from English to Khmer, and English and Khmer to Lao, select competent instructors.

An Advanced Investigation Training Curriculum Development Workshop was held from the 5 to 6 October 2023. The workshop was attended by 22 males and 2 females from Cambodian and Lao Agencies including Provincial and District Administration, Border Liaison Office, Environment, Royal Gendarmerie Khmer, Border Security, Immigration, Anti-Narcotics, Anti-Weapon, Anti-Human Trafficking District and Provincial Police. (Annex A17. SPPU report October 2023)

The workshop was designed to gain as much input and feedback on what are the present problems the officers from Cambodia and Lao PDR are facing with crime and investigating crimes along the porous border, and with this information the participants were able to identify gaps in knowledge and skills that would be required to coordinate on transboundary investigations. From the information gathered we can now determine the required training outcomes and thus material to be developed and used.

Development of Training Material - SPPU Rising Pheonix compiled a 136-page Border Region Investigation Manual (A22. Border Region Investigation Manual English version) in accordance with the workshop's input. The manual was translated into both Khmer (Annex A23. Border Region Investigation Manual Khmer version) and Lao (Annex A24. Border Region Investigation Manual Lao version) with the following Chapters: 1. Transboundary Investigation; 2. Transboundary Task Force; 3. Basic Investigations; 4. Major Investigations; 5. Case Reporting and Documentation; 6. Notebooks; 7. Intelligence; 8. Internet Crime Investigation; 9. Informants; 10. Surveillance; 11. Listening Skills; 12. Non-verbal Communication; 13. Public Speaking; 14. Using the Telephone; 15. Interviewing; 16. Statements; 17. Media; 18. Evidence and Exhibits; 19. Crime Scene Examination; 20. Searching – Vehicles, Buildings and Open Areas; 21. Basic Search Warrant Execution; 22. Identification of Offenders; 23. Dealing with Suspects; and 25. Testifying in Court.

The instructors were selected based on their experience in the region, and dealing with border crimes, these instructors were Mr. Robert Burkes, retired FBI regional attaché based at of the US Embassy in Bangkok, and who for the last 15 years has been working on investigation training within the region and specifically with UNODC on training BLO staff. He has a basic language skill in both Khmer and Thai. Eric Tran, who is a retired Customs Border Force Officer from Australia, he was born in Lao PDR and speaks fluent Lao, he had been working for the last five years as an instructor with UNODC on Border Investigations. The prosecutors, one from Stung Treng and his counterpart from Champasek Province were selected to deal with the legal lessons, the Unit commanders from the Stung Treng Provincial Police Anti-Weapons and Anti-Narcotic unit were assigned to brief participants on these illegal activities and Mr. Soem Polin and Ranger Khon Ramo were selected to provide briefings on the illegal wildlife, timber trade and poaching within Siem Pang District.

3.2 Study Tour – working with the Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group (SPPOWG) and the Border Liaison Office (BLO) organize the approvals, schedule and selection of personnel from Lao PDR to attend a 5-day study tour to the Siem Pang PATROL Coordination Center, Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary and Border Area.

Part of the funding under this activity was used to invite the Stung Treng PDOE Director Mr. Sreng Cheaheng from 18-22 September, to see the level required to establish a professional specialist ranger team for Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary/Stung Treng and learn from Ta Phraya National Park and their issues and solutions on managing a protected area on the Thai Cambodian Border. (Annex A16. SPPU report August – September 2023). The PDoE Director

was able to see and discuss with the “King of Tigers” a specialist ranger team established for nationwide interdiction and training. This team had been established and training by Mark Bowman in 2014 and has had a very successful record. Mr. Sreng Cheaheng is now committed to developing a ten-man Specialist Ranger Team for Stung Treng Province with capacity development supported by Rising Phoenix which links to the refresher training component of this grant.

It is planned for a Study Tour from counter-parts, linked to the above study tour, whom are implementing a project on the Thai-Cambodian Border to visit the SPPOWG in Siem Pang from 07-10 April 2024. This will involve three members from Freeland Foundation and two members from the Thai Government one being from the King of Tigers command unit and one member from the Department of National Parks Wildlife Crime Reporting Unit.

3.3 Approval – working through the Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group (SPPOWG) and the Border Liaison Office (BLO) Cambodia and Lao PDR gain approval to conduct transboundary advance investigation training for up to 10 Cambodian Government Investigation Officers and 10 Lao PDR Government Investigation Officers with at least 20% being female.

In accordance with the Provincial Agreement between Rising Phoenix and the Provincial Governor on Siem Pang PATROL, a training request was submitted. This was in line with the Curriculum Development Workshop report, aiming to conduct the Advanced Investigation Training, which was later renamed as the Border Region Investigation Training (BRIT).

The Provincial Governor gave his approval and delegated the responsibility of approvals and implementation to the Deputy Provincial Governor in charge of the BLO. Following this, the Deputy Governor sent a request letter to the Cambodian and Lao agencies to assign officers as per the outline determined during the Curriculum workshop.

The Lao version of these documents was translated from Khmer to Lao by the Provincial International Relations Department. The process was bureaucratic and time-consuming, especially when waiting for responses from Lao PDR. Only two females were selected, one each from Cambodia and Lao PDR, due to the limited number of women working on border areas with an oversight on investigations.

As the training was held on the border, additional requests were made for daily transit (Border pass) of the students, instructors, and staff between Cambodia and Lao. Everyone was accommodated at a hotel in Lao PDR, as there were no hotels near the border in Cambodia. The instruction took place in a classroom on the Cambodian side of the border, with practical scenarios in the township of Dongkalar, 8 km inside Cambodia.

During the approval process, a national-level investigation was underway against a Deputy Governor of Stung Treng (not the Deputy Governor of the BLO) and Officers at the border who had allowed two vehicles carrying illegal narcotics to cross the Border from Lao to Cambodia. This investigation further complicated the approval process and necessitated more detailed checks for staff and the intent of the training. Despite these challenges, the training was approved and border passes were secured. (Annex A25. Advanced Investigation training approval letter)

3.4 Advanced Investigation Training – implement 2-week training covering: introduction to illegal wildlife trade and transboundary crime, smuggling techniques, the border liaison mechanism, intelligence theory and the intelligence cycle, sources of information, handling informants, six phases of a major investigation, crime scene processing, interviewing techniques, prosecutorial requirements, technical equipment used in an investigation, surveillance, arrests, raids and takedowns. For up to 20 Cambodian and Laos Government Investigation Officers.

The training session spanning 10 days took place from 29 January to 7 February 2024, at the Trapeang Kreal International Border Checkpoint. The attendees included 18 men and 2 women

from various Cambodian and Lao agencies such as the Border Liaison Office, Environment, Agriculture & Quarantine, Royal Gendarmerie Khmer, Border Police, Anti-Narcotics, Anti-Weapon, District and Provincial Police. (Annex A21. Border region investigation training report)

While the initial plan was to have at least 4 female officers (2 each from Cambodia and Laos), the reality of fewer women working in the Border area, particularly in roles overseeing investigations, posed a challenge.

The training was designed to be competency-based, requiring a minimum pass mark of 70%. All the participants successfully completed the course, demonstrating their understanding through practical and written tests.

Feedback forms collected at the end of the course revealed a positive response, with 16 students rating the course as “very good” and 4 as “good”.

A key insight gained during the training was the necessity to form a “Border Region Investigation Taskforce” to address crimes along the border. For many participants, this was their first interaction with their counterparts across the border. Unanimously, all participants agreed on the need to establish such a taskforce, as reflected in their feedback.

3.5 Patrol Refresher Training – Conduct refresher training for already existing Patrolling Officers under the Siem Pang PATROL programme, to update on any new tactical procedures to counter any threats utilized by poachers and violators.

Partial funding under this activity was used from the 10 to the 23 of September 2023. Rising Phoenix supported 2 Rangers from Stung Treng Province to attend the PROTECT Border Enforcement Ranger Training Course in Ta Phraya National Park in Thailand on the border with Cambodia. This training was an active step in Siem Pang PATROL being also operationalized along the Thai-Cambodian Border in Banteay Meanchey Province. (Annex A16. SPPU report August – September 2023)

Due the recent approval of the Special Ranger Unit remaining funds will be used for the capacity development of the unit of 10-Rangers including the 8-Royal Gendarmerie Khmer and 7-Border Police. (Annex A26. Special Ranger unit approval letter)

3.6 Patrolling and Investigation Meetings, Monitoring and Reporting – Through the Siem Pang PATROL Coordination Center, the Border Liaison Meetings, and the Siem Pang PATROL Operational Group meetings, feed information into agencies for investigation and monitor and report on successes and lessons learnt, utilizing operational meetings minutes and data provided.

On 23 August 2023 the Siem Pang PATROL met with the representatives of the Border Liaison Office chaired by the Deputy Provincial Governor in-charge of the BLO and attended by the Deputy Director of Law Enforcement NACD and Officer in-charge of BLO’s in Cambodia, representatives from BLO Traepang Kreal International Border Crossing Point and 5 members from the BLO Lao PDR, District Governor and Chairman of the SPPOWG and members. This meeting led to the organisation of the advanced investigation training curriculum development workshop as reported on above.

Additional activities of note under Siem Pang PATROL have included (Annex A13, A16, A15, A20 relevant SPPU monthly reports):

- District directives on wildlife selling & poisoning of domestic cattle - On the 15th of May 2023, the District Governor on the request of Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group issued directives to all agencies and stakeholders. These new directives were presented at commune meetings by the Governor and PDoE staff in June a plan will be developed to inspect and post these regulations in shops and the markets. By reducing a consider major demands, it is hoped that this will reduce both hunting and snaring of wildlife for the Siem Pang Market.

- Market Inspection led by District – In August and September the Deputy District Governor, Prum Udom led a team of 5 from relevant authorities to conduct market inspections of wildlife meat and snares and have the shop/restaurant owners sign a notice, also place the laminated District Directives at the shop. In total 115 men, 32 women in 5 villages in 5 communes, signed the notice.
- Operation Golden Gaur – From the 17 to the 26 of July, Operation Golden Gaur was implemented by the Rangers, District Army and Border Police, specifically targeting the illegal armed poaching within Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary’s core and southwest. The operation was designated as a search and capture of armed poachers.
- Illegal Fishing Along the O’Khampa – From 28 August to the end of September a check point was established at the mouth of the O’Khampa River to intercept, educate, check for illegal items and record people entering. This involved 2 Rangers and 4 Scouts.
- March 2024, A case of Sun bear poaching was submitted to the Stung Treng Provincial Court, due to the crime scene being cold, detailed crime scene processing was conducted led by Ranger Khon Ramo who had completed the Broder Region Investigation Training and this process has led to the identification of a suspect who resides in an illegally encroached house near to the Sun bear killing due to fragments of bear paw being discovered in a fire pit next to his house. It should be noted that this illegal encroachment case has also been submitted to court.
- Over 24 land encroachment cases have been documented by the Rangers and submitted to court covering an area of more than 9 ha. Of these 24 cases, 6 have received verdict to reclaim the land by the State and signs are now being erected in these areas displaying the courts findings and distributed to the village and commune chiefs.

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

Output 1. Expansion of IBIS Rice Programme at villages surrounding Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary, increasing household income.

1.1 By 2025 IBIS Rice expands from 783 (2021 baseline) to 1,200 Households.

In June 2023, 1,151 households from 16 villages had registered with the IBIS Rice scheme in Siem Pang district. Out of these, 949 households passed the internal control system (ICS) inspection and were allowed to sell their paddy to the IBIS Rice Conservation Co. Ltd. (Annex A8. IBIS rice Annual Report 2023)

As compared to 2022 rice season where, 812 households had registered with the IBIS Rice scheme in Siem Pang district. Out of these 812 registered households, 697 households passed the ICS inspection and were allowed to sell their paddy to the IBIS Rice Conservation Co. Ltd.

Progress made in Year 2 indicates that the target of 1,200 households will be met by end of project.

1.2 By 2025, 85% of participating households sell their paddy crop to IBIS Rice, as compared to the 2021 baseline of 76%

IBIS Rice Conservation Co. Ltd. purchased paddy rice from Siem Pang district between 1 to 31 December 2023. 85% (807 out of 949) approved households sold their paddy to IBIS Rice. (Annex A8. IBIS rice Annual Report 2023) This target has now been met in the second year of the project.

This years’ results compared to the 2021 baseline of 76% and the 2022 value of 74%. In addition, the volume of rice sold increased from 670 tonnes in 2022 to 1,348 tonnes in 2023, and the cash income from IBIS Rice increased from \$308,257 in 2022 to \$530,505 in 2023.

1.3 By 2025, at least 90% of participating households have followed the conservation contract, continuing from the achieved 2021 baseline.

By the end of 2023 there were 28 non-compliant households (Annex A10. Second half year compliance report 2023). Non-compliant farmers had committed acts of land encroachment, hunting, illegally logged timber and transporting wood. 97% (921 out of 949) of participating households were compliant to their conservation contracts in 2023, as compared to 99% (688 out of 697) in 2022.

However, an unknown number of violators were clearly not caught or reported during the reporting period.

1.4 By 2025 at least one village marketing networks is self-financing, as compared to the 2021 baseline of 0.

In Year 2 key steps have been taken for the village marketing network to become self-financing.

21 top VMNs from fifteen villages received capacity training on ICS implementation, farm diary record keeping and threshing record skills on 24 to 26 in June 2023. Out of these 21, six VMNs from Khes Svay, Khes Kraom, Nhang Sum and Ban Moung villages could conduct ICS inspection, do the farm diary record for farmers and do the threshing record in the village by themselves.

On 14-15 February 2024, 29 VMNs from 15 target villages got training on “leadership and essential communication skills from co-facilitators RP and the SMP team.

Three Producer Groups at commune level were established in Thmor Keo, Preak Meas and Sre Sambo communes in January and March 2024 with support from UMB team. The policy of income sources and financial management were integrated into the by-law of the Producer Group. The Producer Groups will allow VMNs to hold organic certification, have a bank account and receive direct support from partners organizations such as UMB, IBIS Rice Conservation Co., Ltd, membership fee paid by IRCC and IBIS rice members or other donors. More training skills to VMNs to manage the Producer Group will be provided in Year 3. (Annex A12. Producer group establishment documents English and Khmer signed)

Output 2: A diverse and gender inclusive scout teams are established and operational.

2.1. Ten males with 50% representation from Lao and Kavet ethnic minorities are recruited into a scout team, trained and equipped by the end of year 1.

Currently there are 13 male scouts including five Kavet, four Lao and four Khmer, therefore a total of around 70% of male scout team are from ethnic minorities. (Annex A39. Updated Scout list)

2.2. Ten female snare removal scouts 50% with representation from Lao and Kavet ethnic minorities are recruited, trained and equipped by the end of Year 1.

From 2023, there were 2 females scout resigned from the job 1 Kavet and 1 Lao. Currently, there are 8 female scouts working from which 2 are Kavet and 2 are Lao. Therefore, a total of 50% of female scouts are from ethnic minorities. (Annex A39. Updated Scout list)

2.3. Snare clearance along the O’Khampa River increases from 3 km² by end of year 1, and 30 km² by Year 3.

From table 3, patrol operation along O’Khampa is follow (Annex A27 to A38 Scout Unit Monthly reports);

- Boat patrol cover a distance of 1489km equal to 223 km²
- Boat patrol cover a distance of 585km equal to 176 km²
- Boat patrol cover a distance of 3327km equal to 33 km²
- Boat patrol cover a distance of 45km equal to 2 km²

Patrol operation along O’Khampa was 434 km² in year 2, compared to 18 km in year 1 (only three months of operation). This has already significantly exceeded the year 3 target.

Table 3: Patrol data on O’Khampa river from April 2023 to March 2024

No	Patrol Type	# Patrols	# Days	# Nights	# Hours	Distance (km)	Coverage (km ²)
1	Boat	20	77	57	1406	1489	223
2	Foot	30	125	95	1990	585	176
3	Motorbike	50	214	164	3231	3327	33
4	Vehicle	2	7	5	128	45	2
	TOTAL	102	423	321	6755	5447	434

Output 3. Siem Pang PATROL Programme fully operational with multi-agency, patrols and investigations, transboundary dialog and ad-hoc investigations with Lao PDR occurring along the border

3.1 Increased patrol area coverage (km²) of Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary from 20% per month (2021 Baseline) to 70% per month by Year 2.

Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary is 1,337.07 Km². From April 2023 to March 2024 a total of 1401.47 km² patrol area coverage was achieved via foot, boat, motorbike, and vehicle patrols. This was 105% coverage for the twelve-month period. This averages around 9% patrol coverage each month.

3.2 Increase in investigations and prosecutions of illegal wildlife traders in Siem Pang District from 2021 baseline of 0 to 3 prosecution in year 2 and 5 prosecutions in Year 3 of the project.

During the reporting period, there has been a dramatic increase in investigations as more than 24 instances of unlawful land encroachment, one instance of illegal sun bear hunting, and two instances of illegal fishing were brought to court for legal action. Of these, only six cases of illegal land encroachment have been adjudicated, with the judge issuing verdicts. The rulings resulted in the state reclaiming the land, as no suspects were associated with the cases. It’s worth noting that those who unlawfully encroach on land often engage in other illegal activities, such as hunting.

It has become evident that rangers residing within local communities are hesitant to associate illegal activities with a suspect. This issue is being addressed by recruiting law enforcement officers from outside the Siem Pang District, providing additional on-the-job training for local rangers, and appointing stronger leadership in government law enforcement. Soem Polin, who is based in Stung Treng City and therefore less likely to be concerned about his and his family’s safety and security from local villagers’ retaliation, has been assigned as the PDoE head of Law Enforcement for the Siem Pang District. With these recent changes, it is anticipated that the number of prosecutions will rise over the next six months.

3.3 Prosecution of transboundary illegal wildlife traders increases form 2021 baseline of 0, to 1 case in year 2 and 1 case in year 3.

No prosecutions of transboundary illegal wildlife traders have completed during the reporting period, but investigations are underway on the illegal transboundary trade in yellow-vine.

3.4 1 x Transboundary Advance Investigation training course conducted between Cambodia and Lao PDR, 1 x study tours to Siem Pang PATROL Coordination center by Lao PDR officers. 1 x Refresher Patrol Training. Involving 60 officers with a minimum of 20% female officers involved in working on border security and illegal wildlife trade patrolling and investigations by project end.

The Investigation training was completed (Annex A20. SPPU report March 2024

A21. Border region investigation training report), study tours are still ongoing and refresher training is still ongoing, with training in Thailand completed (Annex A16. SPPU report August – September 2023) and future training of the special ranger unit to be conducted.

3.5 Annual Border Liaison meetings involving select officers from Cambodia and Lao PDR, starting year 1 to end of project.

Informal, ad-hoc meetings were conducted every month with the BLO Cambodian and Lao authorities. These meetings were centered around discussing forthcoming events and any criminal activities that could potentially affect Siem Pang. The necessity for these informal meetings arose from the extensive paperwork and approvals required to organize official meetings. This was further complicated by the reluctance of officials at the provincial level to make decisions around the time of elections. Additionally, the situation was exacerbated by an incident involving the illegal transportation of drugs by a senior government official from Lao to Cambodia, which implicated certain border officials.

Official meetings did take place on August 23, 2023, October 5-6, 2023, and during a training course from January 29 to February 7, 2024. (Annex A16, A17, A19 relevant SPPU monthly reports) On March 29, 2024, the SPPU held an informal discussion with the Border Police Deputy Commander, the Dongkalor RGK Commander, and the Head of the Lao Border Checkpoint, all of whom had attended the training. The discussion revolved around any illegal activities they had intercepted since the training.

Key points from this meeting included a rise in human trafficking cases from Lao to Cambodia, with seven cases intercepted, and a case of turtle smuggling from Cambodia to Lao, which was handed over to PDoE. This handover was facilitated by the relationship established between the Border Police and PDoE during the training course. The Lao authorities also reported a case of a stolen Thai pick-up with Lao plates being driven across the porous border into Lao PDR from Cambodia.

These meetings indicate that there is still minimal official interaction regarding transboundary criminal activity. However, the trainees continue to maintain contact through a Telegram group established during the training course.

3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

0.1 By 2025 a minimum 2 sites one on the Cambodia-Thai Border and one on the Lao-Cambodian Border have requested to use the innovative scalable PATROL model.

A study tour was conducted to the Freeland project located on the border of Taphraya, Thailand and Bantaey Meanchey, Cambodia. This tour involved staff from Siem Pang PATROL and the PDoE Stung Treng. The Freeland staff expressed interest in extending the PATROL project to the Cambodian-Thai Border. This interest is expected to be reinforced by a proposed study tour from Thailand to Siem Pang, scheduled for April 2024.

Conversations were held with Conservation International in Phnom Penh to discuss the Special Ranger Unit under Siem Pang PATROL. The organization showed interest in being updated on issues and potentially getting involved in areas along the Cambodian-Lao Border where Conservation International is currently working.

In a meeting with the Lao Consul General in Stung Treng, followed by a Border Region Investigation Training session between Cambodia and Lao, there was significant interest in expanding the program into Lao PDR.

0.2 By 2025, the total sales income of Siem Pang IBIS rice members will reach [REDACTED] as compared to the 2021 baseline of [REDACTED]

The total income from sales of Siem Pang IBIS Rice members reached ██████████ in 2023 as compared to ██████████ in 2022 and the 2021 baseline of ██████████. The target has therefore been met and exceeded.

In 2023 Siem Pang maintained its position as the largest producer of IBIS Rice in Cambodia in 2023, producing over 70% of the total. This outcome indicator has already been achieved and was exceeded in second year of the project.

0.3 By 2025 at least one village marketing committee is self-financing, as compared to the 2021 baseline of 0.

In Year 2, key steps to be self-financing have been completed. VMNs have received additional training over the reporting period and several of them could do the IBIS rice field operation in 2023 independently. The combinations of leadership skill, the establishment of Producer Group approved by local authorities, the bank account establishment and the upcoming training capacity on management, we see key progress in their ability for future self-financing.

0.4. 20 local people are employed as scouts, in which 50% are ethnic minorities and 50% comprise a female snaring removal team by end of year 1, as compared to the 2021 baseline of 6 scouts with 33% female and 0% ethnic minorities.

These targets have been met. In 2023, there was 1 female scout moved to the Logistic Support Unit (LSU), and 2 female scouts resigned. Therefore, currently we have 21 scouts from which 8 are females (38%) and 13 males (62%). Female Kavet and Lao are 4 which is 50% of female scouts. Males Kavet and Lao are 8 which round 70% of male scouts. Therefore, about 60% of scouts are from ethnic minorities. (Annex A39. Updated Scout list)

0.5. By 2025, the total number of bushmeat, carcasses and alive animals confiscated within SPWS will be reduce by 50% as compared to the 2021 baseline of 58.

In 2023, there was a total of 57 incidents (table 4) involving bushmeat compared to 21 incidents in 2022. From the two main categories of bushmeat incidents, 17 carcasses were recorded including 2 gaur and there were 40 alive animals rescued and released. (Annex A27 to A38 Scout Unit Monthly reports)

Table 4: 2023 incident table for bushmeat, alive animals and carcass at SPWS.

No.	Type	Number	Notes
1	Carcass	17	including 2 gaur
2	Live Animal	40	40 wildlife were rescued and released

0.6 Working under the mandate of PATROL and the Border Liaison Office (BLO) local and transboundary investigations into illegal wildlife trade, prosecute more than 10 local and transboundary middlemen by end of project, as compared to 2021 baseline of 0.

No prosecutions of transboundary illegal wildlife traders have completed during the reporting period, but investigations are underway on the illegal transboundary trade in yellow-vine.

3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

Outcome level Assumptions

Assumption O.1: By 2023 COVID-19 Pandemic response allows the opening up of national and transnational travel and tourism with minimal restrictions.

Comment: This assumption has proved to be correct for Cambodia.

Assumption O.2: An increasing number of households view IBIS Rice as a saleable commodity rather than for household consumption.

Comment: Correct assumption.

Assumption O.3: A sufficient number of females and Kavet people will engage in the wage economy.

Comment: This assumption has proved to be correct.

Assumption O.4: Law enforcement agencies will cooperate.

Comment: Due to the Cambodian National elections held in 2023, The border police and district military had to recall their officers from full time patrolling within and around Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary, post elections decision were on hold while new political positions, government positions changed and new directives were issued. In meetings with the Provincial Governor, he stated it would be better to use the Royal Gendarmerie Khmer with the Border Police as they are both judicial police agencies and he would submit letters to the national level for approval. With a new Border Police commander assigned to Border Police 701 in February 2024 and subsequent meetings, he will be ready to provide assistance as soon as the order is issued from the National level. There is also a newly appointed RGK commander in Stung Treng and he is also awaiting the directive issued by National Level. The Siem Pang PATROL members also met with the Deputy Commander of the Military Region and he stated that there is a new Commander of the Military Region and he is ready to discuss future cooperation. Thus, due to elections and reshuffling of positions, things are now ready to move to a more formal cooperation.

Assumption O.5: The multiple law enforcement agency approach is more resistant to corruption. The Governments of Cambodia and Lao PDR will cooperate under the Border Liaison Mechanism to investigate illegal transboundary wildlife trade.

Comment: It has also been identified that multiagency cooperation needs to come from outside of the Siem Pang District as at the local level it has been observed that there is considerable fear and possible corrupt collusion between agencies.

Assumption O.6: Magistrates can be identified who will prosecute alleged offenders.

Comment: There is a complete lack of knowledge of the Wildlife Sanctuary Director and Rangers to correctly document cases of illegal activity to the prosecutor, this has been rectified by providing on-the-job training. But it has been identified that the locally based rangers and the Wildlife Sanctuary Director are reluctant to identify suspects. Therefore, with the Provincial Level Stakeholders it has been identified to ensure we have better leadership of the government law enforcement and to rotate specialized rangers from outside of Siem Pang through Patrolling and Investigations within Siem Pang.

Output 1 Assumptions

Assumption 1.1: Households continue to join the IBIS Rice scheme.

Comment: In 2023 we expanded the IBIS Rice from 11 villages to 15 villages across Siem Pang and 252 new additional members joined the scheme, making a total 949 households are members of the IBIS rice scheme in Year 2.

Assumption 1.2: An increasing number of households sell their paddy crop to IBIS Rice.

Comment: The number of households sold increased from 74% in 2022 to 85% in 2023 (807 out of 949). This was a 12% increase from the 2022 or 10% increase from 2021 baseline. The volume sold per household increased from 1,313kg in 2022 to 1,670kg in 2023 (27% increased); although the volume of rice sold increased from 670 tonnes in 2022 to 1,348 tonnes in 2023.

Assumption 1.3: Villagers voluntarily report infringements. Household compliance with conservation agreements reduces rate of habitat degradation and hunting.

Comment: 97% (921 out of 949) of IBIS Rice members in Siem Pang District were compliant with their conservation contract in 2023. Although households may have broken the contracts without being caught.

Assumption 1.4: Villagers are prepared to manage the scheme responsibly.

Comment: The VMN members received additional training, they have been happy to form and establish producer groups at their communes and they are moving forward to do ICS, farm dairy and threshing record, they took part in the organic certification task, they have bank

account, they have built key steps to be self-financing and they are in proceeding the producer group operation and management of the IBIS rice scheme in Siem Pang district by themselves.

Output 2 Assumptions

Assumption 2.1: A sufficient number of Kavet villagers are prepared to work and not use the job to continue illegal activities.

Comment: Seven Kavet villagers continue to serve conservation commitment within the Rising Phoenix, demonstrating their real loyalty and commitment to their responsibilities. Despite the challenges they face, these individuals always show their loyalties and commitment by keeping their positions away from unlawful activities. Through their continued involvement, they contribute significantly to Rising Phoenix on every intelligence they have about unlawful activities within SPWS.

Assumption 2.2: A sufficient number of females are prepared to work as scouts. Female scouts are able to provide time away from family to conduct the tasks and are also not stigmatized by males and family in doing this type of work.

Comment: After a full year of dedicated work in 2023, the female scouts of Rising Phoenix have demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability in their working environment. As local members of the community, they have proven themselves capable of undertaking tasks of working in forest for at least 20 days per month, exceeding expectations with their level of dedication and efficiency. Each female scout always expresses a desire to continue their commitment for conservation efforts.

Assumption 2.3: The Rising Phoenix, Surveillance Intelligence and Reporting Unit will be able to monitor in detail through SMART applications the work conducted and anticipate and respond to any issues and safety concerns with village and family members through counter-intelligence.

Comment: Within the Surveillance and Intelligence Reporting unit of Rising Phoenix, ensuring the well-being of our field scouts remains essential priority. Through advancements in technology, such as SMART and Earth Ranger, and the dedication of our field officers, we have strengthened our ability to proactively anticipate and respond to any safety concerns affecting village and family members. As a result of these measures, our scout team can confidently continue their work with unquestioning dedication, fostering a sense of satisfaction in their vital conservation efforts.

Output 3 Assumptions

Assumption 3.1: Law enforcement agencies participate and cooperate.

Comment: There are still issues of various reporting lines amongst agencies and internal politics between commanders of the same agencies. To counter this the Provincial Governor has been requested to intervene and send directives to agencies to cooperate as per the requirements of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

Assumption 3.2: Multi-agency cooperation and monitoring leads to reduced levels of corruption.

Comment: There is still a mistrust between agencies and not wanting other agencies involved in their operations due to the possible leaking of tactical information. This is being addressed through new reward schemes that create greater advantage in working together, as well as working and planning closer, facilitated by the Siem Pang PATROL coordination centre, providing information on a need-to-know basis, conducting joint agency patrols, monitoring of the patrols through earth ranger and post patrol debriefs, ensuring that all crime is reported as per the law of Cambodia. Through this process we have seen a dramatic reduction in corruption with the agencies directly involved in working with the Siem Pang PATROL. Recruitment of officers from outside of Siem Pang will also help reduce the levels of corruption.

Assumption 3.3: Core funding is maintained for patrol officers' supplements.

Comment: Rising Phoenix has maintained available core funding for the patrol officers' supplements for 2022, 2023, and for 2024

Assumption 3.4: Border Liaison Officers from Lao PDR remain active upon project commencement and committed to working on transboundary illegal wildlife trade.

Comment: Since the investigation of officers that facilitated the movement of two-vehicles with drugs from Lao to Cambodia a number of officers working at the border and a deputy governor have been removed from their positions. There now is a reluctance to make any decision at the border with cooperations. But, since the training and with the new appointment of officers occurring after the reporting period cooperation should be able to occur in the near future with more intensity, at present SPP is conducting informal ad-hoc “lunch meetings” with officers at the international border.

Assumption 3.5: Transboundary multi-agency training is able to be conducted under the mandate of the Border Liaison Office by no later than year 2.

Comment: The transboundary multi-agency training was completed in Jan-Feb 2024

Assumption 3.6: The Cambodian Government is still committed to gender inclusive target of 20% of government staff in all agencies being females.

Comment: There was a lack of female investigation officers working on the border, so only 2 female officers attended training instead of the proposed 4.

Assumption 3.7: Rising Phoenix, Surveillance Intelligence and Reporting Unit will be able to plan and monitor work conducted through SMART applications and other electronic and overt on-the-ground information collection processes.

Comment: As per assumption

3.5 Impact: achievement of positive impact on illegal wildlife trade and poverty reduction

Project Impact Statement:

Reduction of poverty and illegal wildlife poaching and trade in Siem Pang District, through innovative and scalable programmes in sustainable livelihoods, increased gender-neutral career opportunities and law enforcement

Comments

The project has completed its first twenty-one months of operation commencing in July 2022.

The project has established and operationalized a diverse and gender inclusive scout team, initially 27 scouts with 40% female (11 females) and 55% from ethnic minorities (15 from ethnic minorities) was established and by the end of the 2nd year of the project 21 scouts remained with 38% female (8 females) and 62% from ethnic minorities (13 from ethnic minorities) (Annex A39. Updated Scout list).

The IBIS Rice total income from sales for Siem Pang District increased to US\$ 530,505 in 2023 as compared to US\$ 308,257 in 2022 and the 2021 baseline of \$170,976. With total certified membership reaching 949 households from 16 villages. (Annex A8. IBIS rice Annual Report 2023)

The scout team has been operational for fifteen months and has removed a total of 5,650 snares from Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary (3,947 in 2023, 1,703 in 2022). They have also rescued a total of 43 live animals from snares (40 in 2023, 3 in 2022), most notable including a male gaur. (Annex A27 to A38 Scout Unit Monthly reports)

20 law enforcement officers from a wide range of Cambodian and Lao agencies (including Border Liaison Office, Environment, Agriculture & Quarantine, Royal Gendarmerie Khmer, Border Police, Anti-Narcotics, Anti-Weapon, District and Provincial Police) have completed advanced investigation training course (Annex A21. Border region investigation training report). The need for Border Region Investigation Taskforce has been seen by these agencies and key steps to establish this will be completed in the third year of the project

By the end of the second year of the project, key progress has been achieved towards allowing the long term project impact statement to be achieved.

4. Thematic focus

Strengthening law enforcement

The project is enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement in Siem Pang District and along the permeable border between Cambodia and Laos. This is achieved through the execution of the Siem Pang PATROL programme, which enables the collaboration of various law enforcement agencies in Stung Treng province and conducts regular patrols within the Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary.

The scout team, which operates within the Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary, has been expanded by the project. In the first quarter of 2023, considerable progress has been made in reducing the number of snares found in the sanctuary.

By identifying shortcomings in court case preparation, the project has strengthened this area by providing on-the-job training in investigation and court document preparation. As a result, for the first time in the history of the Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary, over 26 cases have been submitted to court. These cases primarily involve land encroachment, but also include instances of wildlife killing and illegal fishing.

The project has bolstered government law enforcement by appointing a PDoE officer to oversee law enforcement in Siem Pang District, and by bringing in three additional rangers from a nearby protected area to support the existing ranger force.

The project has also identified potential senior government officers who may be involved in or complicit in illegal activities. A new strategy has been developed to avoid dealing with these individuals, which involves discussions with the Provincial Governor and the identification of other agencies or commanders for future collaboration.

While there have been delays in recruiting more patrol officers due to elections, the strengthening of management, cooperation, and leadership has laid a solid foundation. This will enable the project to work with an expanded patrolling and investigation force in the near future.

Developing sustainable livelihoods to benefit people directly affected by IWT

The project has supported sustainable livelihoods in Siem Pang District, through the IBIS Rice programme which had total income of US\$ 530,505 in 2023 for members in Siem Pang District. Rising Phoenix has also supported a scout team of 21 members (old and new scouts), which provide direct employment to 21 people from Siem Pang District, who would not have employment otherwise.

5. Impact on species in focus

The projects species in focus include: Sunda Pangolin *Manis javanica*, Asian Black Bear *Ursus thibetanus*, Malaysian Sun Bear *Helarctos malayanus*, Pygmy slow loris *Nycticebus pygmaeus*, Gaur *Bos gaurus*, Banteng *Bos javanicus*, Eld's Deer *Rucervus eldii* and Siamese rosewood *Dalbergia cochinchinensis*.

During a three-year project we cannot expect to see changes in the populations of the target species because the generation time for all target species is greater than three years. In the long term, we expect to see recovery in populations of species including Gaur, Banteng, Eld's Deer and Sambar, we will also see a considerable and sustainable reduction in large scale poaching, snaring and illegal logging.

Already the snare removal team have removed 5,650 snares and rescued forty-three live animals from snares. In March 2023, a snare removal team found a snared male Gaur which was successfully darted by a vet and the snare removed and the animal released. These activities already will have achieved a positive impact for the focal species. As long the project can continue this trend it should create the enabling environment for the key focal species populations to recover.

6. Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

By the end of year two of the project twenty-one local people of Siem Pang District of which 62% our drawn from Lao and Kavet ethnic minorities, have gained full time employment with Rising Phoenix as scouts for 15 months. This means twenty-one families from these backgrounds have employment and household income.

At the end of the 2023 rice growing season 807 households from 15 villages sold their paddy to IBIS Rice at 85% premium. At total of 1,348 tonnes was sold, which generated US\$ 530,505 providing an on average US\$ 657 additional income per household. This provided cash income and improved food security to 807 households, or 4,035 rural people. Siem Pang District became the number one producer of IBIS rice in Cambodia in 2022, and in 2023 it supplied 70% of the total IBIS rice grown in Cambodia.

Rising Phoenix in collaboration with its partners Sansom Mlup Prey, IBIS Rice Conservation Co. Ltd. and USAID Morodok Baitong project aim to continue the expansion of IBIS rice programme to 3 new villages in 2024, and to continue the expansion within existing villages to allow greater project support for multidimensional poverty reduction in the final year of the project.

7. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board ¹ .	10 out of 26, 38%
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 ² .	0 out of 4, 0%

GESI Scale	Description	Put X where you think your project is on the scale
Not yet sensitive	The GESI context may have been considered but the project isn't quite meeting the requirements of a 'sensitive' approach	
Sensitive	The GESI context has been considered and project activities take this into account in their design and implementation. The project addresses basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups and the project will not contribute to or create further inequalities.	
Empowering	The project has all the characteristics of a 'sensitive' approach whilst also increasing equal access to assets, resources and capabilities for women and marginalised groups	X
Transformative	The project has all the characteristics of an 'empowering' approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change	

¹ 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.

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

Rising Phoenix Co Ltd is a gender-neutral meritocracy and is cognizant that gender roles within Cambodia and especially within the remote rural areas are deeply divided into which women are traditionally seen as working within the household or store-shop orientated positions. At Rising Phoenix males and females train together and we promote staff on the basis of ability only. We are committed to equality of opportunity and this is reflected in our approach, including project design. This project will enable us to promote our core values to give opportunity to aspiring village women and empower them socially and economically, creating role models in society.

A notable achievement for the first two years of the project is the successful establishment and 15-month operation of a diverse and gender inclusive scout team. This team at the end of the 2nd year incorporates twenty-one local people of Siem Pang District of which 62% our drawn from Lao and Kavet ethnic minorities (13 scouts), and 38% female (8 scouts).

8. Monitoring and evaluation

M&E results of the project and the wider work of Rising Phoenix are presented at each ad-hoc Committee for IBIS Rice and Siem Pang PATROL. With project partners having the ability to provide feedback and recommendations on the project.

Results and activity monitoring for Output 1 is led by Sopheap Mak (Head of the Community Development Unit) and for Outputs 2 and 3 its led by Tukla Mang (Head of Surveillance, Intelligence and Reporting unit). Oversight is provided by James Lyon the Operations Manager for Rising Phoenix.

Rising Phoenix implements an adaptive management approach to ensuring project outputs are achieved. Each unit has an annual work plan, which is reviewed each month in a monthly heads of unit meeting. This provides a regular opportunity to adapt the approach if issues are arising or activities are delayed. In addition, each unit reports against its work plan in their unit monthly report.

The Community Development Unit monthly report and the Siem Pang PATROL and Scout unit monthly reports are a key tool used to monitor the progress of the project.

The monitoring and evaluation approach has worked well in the second year of the project and all the indicators at outcome and indicator level have been reported on. Some adaption were required as discussed below.

The expansion of multi-agency patrolling officers and the implementation of their training experienced delays due to several mitigating factors. These included the national elections, the subsequent reshuffling of positions, and the anticipation of new directives from the recently appointed Prime Minister and Ministers. Additionally, issues were identified with the leadership and coordination within and between government law enforcement agencies. Some leaders were potentially involved in corruption or lacked the competence to lead effectively.

During this period, Rising Phoenix was able to establish connections with more robust government leadership and foster new relationships with more capable leaders within these agencies. This allowed for a strategic readjustment aimed at ensuring a more potent investigation and patrolling force in the near future. This force will be equipped to accurately identify suspects and process these cases to court, thereby creating a stronger deterrent.

9. Lessons learnt

In 2023, IBIS Rice Conservation Co., Ltd kept encouraging farmers to sell more of their paddy rice by adding 100 Riels per kg for all of those households who sell the rice to the project. This bonus had increased the average sale per families from 1,313 kg/hh in 2022 to 1,670 kg/hh in 2023 or the total rice sales from 670 tonnes in 2022 to 1,348 tonnes in 2023. And there were more than 440 households among 807 (55%) sold their rice more than 1,000 kg. This is a good lesson learnt and we commit to do the same or similar way for encouraging farmers increase the sale volume as well as her sale income in 2024.

The scout operations within the Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary have yielded significant outcomes in wildlife conservation. From this experience, several key lessons have revealed. Firstly, fostering collaboration among scout teams, rangers, and local communities is imperative for enhancing the success of conservation goals, particularly with sufficient number of rangers providing essential juridical support during field operations. Secondly, to retain local scouts, especially females, prioritizing their safety and well-being is important in ensuring the continuity and effectiveness of conservation efforts. Additionally, the careful monitoring and documentation of snare patterns by scouts have provided invaluable insights into the changing behaviours of local communities, crucial for wildlife protection. Overall, the remarkable results achieved through conservation activities, including snare removal and wildlife rescue, underscore the effectiveness of collaborative efforts and the importance of prioritizing the safety and well-being of field teams in safeguarding focal species.

In the development of the Advanced Investigation Training course, we found collaborative planning to be very effective. Meetings between Siem Pang PATROL, Stung Treng Provincial Authority and representatives of the Border Liaison Office and other law enforcement agencies in a curriculum development workshop led to the buy-in of the training through multi-agency input and the organization and implementation of the border region investigation training. If we were to implement this process again, we would look to focus on identifying champion officers in government leadership roles from the beginning whom would carry the flag of the program to improve greater understanding and trust between agencies from the beginning to ensure smooth cooperation. We would recommend prioritize collaborative planning for other organisations implementing similar projects.

10. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

Changes were made to the project log frame in response to feedback at the granting stage. This included two indicators at the outcome level were updated, to better capture IWT-focused benefits on the biodiversity and poverty level. Indicators were also updated to include baselines or state when the baseline will be established.

In the second half year report a response letter was submitted which provided two responses to two comments from the first-year report (Annex A40. Response letter to year 1 comments).

Two change requests were made and approved in the 2nd year of the project. The first saw the removal of two named staff on the project and the addition of two named staff to replace them. The second made virements to the main budget headings for the year 2 budget, to ensure all project funds would be spent within the U.K. financial year.

11. Risk Management

The most recent version of the project risk register has been attached as Annex B.

Over the first two years of the project there has been ten risks added to the risk register. Out of these ten risks, three risks have been closed and seven risks are still open. Regular monitoring of the open risks is implemented by the named owners of the risk. No significant adaptation of the project has been required to date.

A total of three issues have been recorded, with actions described and implemented.

12. Sustainability and legacy

Rising Phoenix Co. Ltd was established to conserve Siem Pang wildlife Sanctuary and has made a long-term commitment to supporting the site. Rising Phoenix was incorporated in Cambodia in 2015 managed as a social enterprise and seeks to bring a business approach to the management of the site. It is currently funded from a combination of sources including international donors, high net worth individuals and its board. However, the development of a sustainable financing mechanism drawing on amongst others high-end tourism and nature-based solutions is under development with guarantee sustainability in the long-term. For example in 2022 our sister NGO, Siem Pang Conservation signed a 30 year agreement with the Cambodian Ministry of the Environment to manage the site. Under this agreement Rising Phoenix will continue to manage the site and retain its current responsibilities, including

community development. In the first quarter of 2023 we registered a new company called the Siem Pang Experience, which will develop high-end ecotourism at the site, providing new employment opportunities. By the end of 2023, Rising phoenix employed 95 people and was the largest non-state employer in the district.

Under this project the IBIS Rice scheme will take its first steps towards sustainability by having at least one village networking committee self-financing by 2025. The introduction of this measures will empower the community and give them increased financial responsibility. These steps will happen within a wider context of IBIS Rice Conservation Co. Ltd achieving profitability through expanded global sales rendering third party subsidy of its operation no longer necessary

13. IWT Challenge Fund identity

Rising Phoenix has a soul focus on Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary. We are funded through annual contributions of the shareholders, regular donations of high-net-worth individuals and through grant contracts.

Rising Phoenix currently holds a portfolio of 11 donor grants. Each project contributes to a different aspect of Rising Phoenix work at Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary. The IWT grant forms part of the full scope of work at SPWS.

Rising Phoenix maintains a website, produces annual reports and promotions films about our work. Illegal Wildlife Trade logo and information has been included in Rising Phoenix 2024 annual report which is shared to its supporters.

A clear identity has been developed with government partners of how U.K. funds are supporting Siem Pang PATROL and the project. It was made clear to the government partners, trainees that the advanced investigation training was funded by the U.K. government. This include logos in the training manual that was produced in English, Khmer and Laotian.

14. Safeguarding

Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months?	Yes
Have any concerns been reported in the past 12 months	No
Does your project have a Safeguarding focal point?	No
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: 100% [80] Planned: 16% [15] staff planned to be recruited in 2024
Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses. No	
Does the project have any developments or activities planned around Safeguarding in the coming 12 months? If so please specify. Rising Phoenix holds quarterly village forums in each village that Rising Phoenix works with. This activity will continue each quarter for the next year of project implementation.	

Please describe any community sensitisation that has taken place over the past 12 months; include topics covered and number of participants.

Three village forum meetings were conducted in April, July and October 2023 with a total 189 participants (27 women) in four communes of Preak Meas, Thmor Keo, Sre Sambo and Sekong.

Have there been any concerns around Health, Safety and Security of your project over the past year? If yes, please outline how this was resolved.

No

15. Project expenditure

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (April 2023-March 2024)

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2023/24 Grant (£)	2023/24 Total actual IWT 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)				
TOTAL	160,726.11	160,726.11	0	

Table 2: Project mobilised or matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)

	Secured to date	Expected by end of project	Sources
Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project (£)			Rising Phoenix Conservation Inc grant, Rising Phoenix core funding and funds from USAID Morodok Baitong Grant.
Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project (£)			Cartier Philanthropy

16. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

Morodok Baitong USAID funding has been secured to support the expansion of IBIS Rice in Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary from 2024 to 2025. This funding will allow IBIS Rice to be expanded to at least 19 villages surrounding Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary by the end of 2025.

Refining strategy for law enforcement is to look at recruitment of Rangers and Royal Gendarmerie Khmer from outside of Siem Pang District and be used for periods of 10 to 20 days per month patrolling inside of SPWS and when on days off return to the Stung Treng City so as not to associate with the local communities and thus potentially be coerced or coerced with the local criminals.

The significant achievement in snare removal reflects the dedicated efforts of our scout teams. Through diligent foot patrols, snares have been successfully cleared, contributing to enhanced wildlife protection. However, a concerning trend has emerged as individuals adapt their tactics, dispersing snares across random fragmented areas in an attempt to conserve resources and avoid sightings from scout teams. Despite this shift, our scouts remain vigilant in their efforts. Additionally, their consistent removal of snare materials has led to a noticeable decline in quality, with many snares now constructed using predominantly string, replacing cables. Some even utilize a combination of string for leader line handles and short cables for the base cable loop. These observations underscore both the effectiveness of our patrols and the need for ongoing adaptability in our conservation strategies to combat evolving threats to wildlife.

Moreover, another emerging challenge involves the observation of illegal activities within the core zone, particularly violators are taking advantage of waterholes for capturing wildlife. This problem is exacerbated by the limited number of scouts available, as they are primarily allocated to priority areas where snaring hotspots are expanding within the wildlife sanctuary. The illegal activities, which include wildlife capture around our pumping waterholes, pose a significant threat to the conservation efforts within the sanctuary.

Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2023-2024

Project summary	Progress and Achievements April 2023 - March 2024	Actions required/planned for next period
<p>Impact</p> <p>Reduction of poverty and illegal wildlife poaching and trade in Siem Pang District, through innovative and scalable programmes in sustainable livelihoods, increased gender-neutral career opportunities and law enforcement</p>	<p>Operated a diverse and gender inclusive scout team for 12 months ending with a total of 21 scouts (8 female & 13 from ethnic minorities). They have removed a total of 3,947 snares and rescued 40 live animals in the last 12 months.</p> <p>The IBIS Rice total sales for 2023 have been US\$ 530,505, With total certified membership reaching 949 households from 16 villages.</p> <p>20 law enforcement officers (including 2 female) from Cambodia and Laos successfully completed and advance investigation training course, provide the foundation for coordinated investigations.</p>	
<p>Outcome Illegal wildlife trade reduced, household income increased and sustainable, gender equality promoted and career opportunities created for spatially marginalized ethnic minority communities.</p>		
<p>Outcome indicator 0.1 By 2025 a minimum 2 sites one on the Cambodia-Thai Border and one on the Lao-Cambodian Border have requested to use the innovative scalable PATROL model.</p>	<p>One site on the Thai-Cambodia border supported by Freeland has expressed interest to use the PATROL model. Two other NGOs (Conservation International and Fauna & Flora) have started discussion how to incorporate PATROL model at their sites on the Cambodia-Lao border.</p>	<p>A study tour for Freeland to visit the site is planned for April 2024. Rising Phoenix is in discussion with current and potential partners to apply for an IWT extra project to scale the PATROL model</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.2, By 2025, the total sales income of Siem Pang IBIS rice members will reach \$300,000 as compared to the 2021 baseline of \$170,000.</p>	<p>Total sales of Siem Pang IBIS Rice in 2023 have reached \$530,505, as compared to \$308,257 in 2022 and the 2021 baseline of \$170,976.</p>	<p>Continued expansion of IBIS rice members in Siem Pang district is planned for 2024, and the total IBIs rice sales is expected to increase.</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.3 By 2025 at least one village marketing committee is self-financing, as compared to the 2021 baseline of 0.</p>	<p>No village marketing committee is self-financing yet. Although four village marketing committees have registered as producer groups, with established bank accounts. The VNMs have received a series of capacity development course over the year.</p>	<p>Continued capacity development will be provided to the producer groups from Rising Phoenix and IBIS rice implementing partners. It is expected that producer groups will receive grants in 2024 by UMB.</p>

Outcome indicator 0.4 20 local people are employed as scouts, in which 50% are ethnic minorities and 50% comprise a female snaring removal team by end of year 1, as compared to the 2021 baseline of 6 scouts with 33% female and 0% ethnic minorities.	We have 21 scouts from which 8 are females (38%) and 13 males (62%). Female Kavet and Lao are 4 which is 50% of female's scouts. Males Kavet and Lao are 8 which round 70% of male scouts. Therefore, about 60% of scouts are from ethnic minorities.	The scout team will continue their operation into the final year of the project. Rising Phoenix intends to fundraise for the expansion of the scout unit.
Outcome indicator 0.5 By 2025, the total number of bushmeat, carcasses and alive animals confiscated within SPWS will be reduce by 50% as compared to the 2021 baseline of 58.	In 2023 there was 57 incidents, as compared to 21 incidents in 2022, and 58 incidents in 2021. The number of incidents is comparable to the baseline.	The scout unit will continue snare removal patrols in 2024 and will likely encounter additional incidents.
Outcome indicator 0.6 Working under the mandate of PATROL and the Border Liaison Office (BLO) local and transboundary investigations into illegal wildlife trade, prosecute more than 10 local and transboundary middlemen by end of project, as compared to 2021 baseline of 0.	No prosecutions of transboundary illegal wildlife traders have completed during the reporting period, but investigations are underway on the illegal transboundary trade in yellow-vine. During the specified reporting period, there has been a dramatic increase in investigations as more than 24 instances of unlawful land encroachment, one instance of illegal Sun bear hunting, and two instances of illegal fishing were brought to court for legal action. Of these, only six cases of illegal land encroachment have been adjudicated, with the judge issuing verdicts. The rulings resulted in the state reclaiming the land, as no suspects were associated with the cases. It's worth noting that those who unlawfully encroach on land often engage in other illegal activities, such as hunting.	Continued support and pressure will be applied to the law enforcement agencies to complete investigations and submit them to the court. Rising Phoenix will continue to support partners in coordinating with the courts to secure prosecutions against local and transboundary middle men for illegal wildlife trade.
Output 1 Expansion of IBIS Rice Programme at villages surrounding Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary, increasing household income.		
Output indicator 1.1 By 2025 IBIS Rice expands from 783 (2021 baseline) to 1,200 Households.	In 2023, 1,151 households registered to be part of the IBIS Rice scheme. Out of these, 949 households passed the internal control system and were allowed to sell their paddy to IBIS rice.	Continued expansion of IBIS Rice is planned for 2024, and the number of IBIS Rice members is expected to rise.
Output indicator 1.2, By 2025, 85% of participating households sell their paddy crop to IBIS Rice, as compared to the 2021 baseline of 76%	In 2023, 807 out of the 949 certified households chose to sell their rice to IBIS Rice which is 85%. This is compared to 74% in 2022 and 76% in 2021.	IBIS Rice conservation Co. Ltd. will continue to provide additional incentives for households to sell their rice in 2024, which should help keep the % high.
Output indicator 1.3 By 2025, at least 90% of participating households have followed the conservation contract, continuing from the achieved 2021 baseline.	At the end of 2023 there was 28 non-compliant members. 97% of members were compliant (921 out of 949), as compared to 99% (688 out of 697) in 2022 and the 2021 baseline of 90%.	Continued monitoring of members compliance will continue into 2024.

Output indicator 1.4 By 2025 at least one village marketing networks is self-financing, as compared to the 2021 baseline of 0.	No village marketing committee is self-financing yet. Although four village marketing committees have registered as producer groups, with established bank accounts. The VNMs have received a series of capacity development course over the year.	Continued capacity development will be provided to the producer groups from Rising Phoenix and IBIS rice implementing partners. It is expected that producer groups will receive grants in 2024 by UMB.
Output 2. A diverse and gender inclusive scout teams are established and operational.		
Output indicator 2.1. Ten males with 50% representation from Lao and Kavet ethnic minorities are recruited into a scout team, trained and equipped by the end of year 1.	At the end of the 2 nd year, there are 13 males' scouts including five Kavet, four Lao and four Khmer, therefore a total of around 70% of male scout team are from ethnic minorities.	The scout team will continue their operation into the final year of the project. Rising Phoenix intends to fundraise for the expansion of the scout unit.
Output indicator 2.2. Ten female snare removal scouts 50% with representation from Lao and Kavet ethnic minorities are recruited, trained and equipped by the end of Year 1.	At the end of the 2 nd year, there are 8 female scouts working from which 2 Kavet and 2 Laos. Therefore, a total of 50% of female scouts are from ethnic minorities.	The scout team will continue their operation into the final year of the project. Rising Phoenix intends to fundraise for the expansion of the scout unit.
Output indicator 2.3. Snare clearance along the O'Khampa River increases from 3 km ² by end of year 1, and 30 km ² by Year 3.	Patrol operation along O'Khampa was 434km ² in year 2, compared to 18km ² in year 1 (only three month of operation). This has already significantly exceeded the year 3 target.	A continued focus will be applied for the scouts along the O'khampa river in 2024, as this is a key location of snaring activity and the location of CR Siamese Crocodile and CR elongated tortoise release.
Output 3. Siem Pang PATROL Programme fully operational with multi-agency, patrols and investigations, transboundary dialog and ad-hoc investigations with Lao PDR occurring along the border		
Output indicator 3.1 Increased patrol area coverage (km ²) of Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary from 20% per month (2021 Baseline) to 70% per month by Year 2.	Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary is 1,337.07 Km ² . From April 2023 to March 2024 a total of 1401.47 km ² patrol area coverage was achieved via foot, boat, motorbike, and vehicle patrols. This was 105% coverage for the twelve-month period. This averages around 9% patrol coverage each month.	The scout team will continue their patrols in 2024. Additional law enforcement personnel is expected to start supporting Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary in 2024.
Output indicator 3.2 Increase in investigations and prosecutions of illegal wildlife traders in Siem Pang District from 2021 baseline of 0 to 3 prosecution in year 2 and 5 prosecutions in Year 3 of the project.	During the specified reporting period, there has been a dramatic increase in investigations as more than 24 instances of unlawful land encroachment, one instance of illegal Sun bear hunting, and two instances of illegal fishing were brought to court for legal action. Of these, only six	Continued support and pressure will be applied to the law enforcement agencies to complete investigations and submit them to the court. Rising

	cases of illegal land encroachment have been adjudicated, with the judge issuing verdicts. The rulings resulted in the state reclaiming the land, as no suspects were associated with the cases. It's worth noting that those who unlawfully encroach on land often engage in other illegal activities, such as hunting. No prosecutions were achieved in the second year of the project.	Phoenix will continue to support partners in coordinating with the courts to secure prosecutions against local and transboundary middle men for illegal wildlife trade.
Output indicator 3.3 Prosecution of transboundary illegal wildlife traders increases from 2021 baseline of 0, to 1 case in year 2 and 1 case in year 3.	No prosecutions of transboundary illegal wildlife traders have been completed during the reporting period, but investigations are underway on the illegal transboundary trade in yellow-vine.	Continued support and pressure will be applied to the law enforcement agencies to complete investigations and submit them to the court. Rising Phoenix will continue to support partners in coordinating with the courts to secure prosecutions against local and transboundary middle men for illegal wildlife trade.
Output indicator 3.4 1 x Transboundary Advance Investigation training course conducted between Cambodia and Lao PDR, 1 x study tours to Siem Pang PATROL Coordination center by Lao PDR officers. 1 x Refresher Patrol Training. Involving 60 officers with a minimum of 20% female officers involved in working on border security and illegal wildlife trade patrolling and investigations by project end.	The Investigation training has been completed, study tours are still ongoing and refresher training is still ongoing, with training in Thailand completed and future training of the special ranger unit to be conducted. In total 22 officers training, 2 being female.	Additional study tours and refresher training will be implemented in the 3 rd year of the project.
Output indicator 3.5 Annual Border Liaison meetings involving select officers from Cambodia and Lao PDR, starting year 1 to end of project.	Informal, ad-hoc meetings were conducted every month with the BLO Cambodian and Lao authorities. Official meetings did take place on August 23, 2023, October 5-6, 2023, and during a training course from January 29 to February 7, 2024.	Continued ad hoc and formal meetings with the BLO Cambodian and Lao authorities will be held in the third year of the project.

Annex 2: Project's full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
Impact: Reduction of poverty and illegal wildlife poaching and trade in Siem Pang District, through innovative and scalable programmes in sustainable livelihoods, increased gender-neutral career opportunities and law enforcement			

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Outcome: Illegal wildlife trade reduced, household income increased and sustainable, gender equality promoted and career opportunities created for spatially marginalized ethnic minority communities.</p>	<p>0.1 By 2025 a minimum 2 sites one on the Cambodia-Thai Border and one on the Lao-Cambodian Border have requested to use the innovative scalable PATROL model.</p> <p>0.2 By 2025, the total sales income of Siem Pang IBIS rice members will reach \$300,000 as compared to the 2021 baseline of \$170,000.</p> <p>0.3 By 2025 at least one village marketing committee is self-financing, as compared to the 2021 baseline of 0.</p> <p>0.4. 20 local people are employed as scouts, in which 50% are ethnic minorities and 50% comprise a female snaring removal team by end of year 1, as compared to the 2021 baseline of 6 scouts with 33% female and 0% ethnic minorities.</p> <p>0.5. By 2025, the total number of bushmeat, carcasses and alive animals confiscated within SPWS will be reduce by 50% as compared to the 2021 baseline of 58.</p> <p>0.6 Working under the mandate of PATROL and the Border Liaison Office (BLO) local and transboundary investigations into illegal wildlife trade, prosecute more than 10 local and transboundary middlemen by end of project, as compared to 2021 baseline of 0</p>	<p>0.1 Letters of request by 2 organizations with supporting government letters.</p> <p>0.2 IBIS Rice sale certificates. IBIS Rice household contracts, land base data shape files, compliance certificates,</p> <p>0.3. Yearly sales and purchase certificates from IBIS Rice, Attendance list; training curriculum; pre/post-test.</p> <p>0.4 Training Reports; Employment records and surveys conducted by Rising Phoenix and Village Chiefs.</p> <p>0.5 SMART data, Patrol Reports; Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group quarterly government meeting minutes.</p> <p>0.6 Prosecutors' records; PATROL Operational Working Group quarterly government meeting minutes; Border Liaison Office annual government meeting minutes.</p>	<p>By 2023 COVID-19 Pandemic response allows the opening up of national and transnational travel and tourism with minimal restrictions.</p> <p>An increasing number of households view IBIS Rice as a saleable commodity rather than for household consumption.</p> <p>A sufficient number of females and Kavet people will engage in the wage economy.</p> <p>Law enforcement agencies will cooperate.</p> <p>The multiple law enforcement agency approach is more resistant to corruption.</p> <p>The Governments of Cambodia and Lao PDR will cooperate under the Border Liaison Mechanism to investigate illegal transboundary wildlife trade.</p>
<p>Output 1 Expansion of IBIS Rice Programme at villages surrounding Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary, increasing household income.</p>	<p>1.1 By 2025 IBIS Rice expands from 783 (2021 baseline) to 1,200 Households.</p> <p>1.2 By 2025, 85% of participating households sell their paddy crop to IBIS</p>	<p>1.1 Households database; land certificate; shape files.</p> <p>1.2 Household contracts; sales agreements.</p>	<p>Households continue to join the IBIS Rice scheme.</p> <p>An increasing number of households sell their paddy crop to IBIS Rice.</p>

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
	<p>Rice, as compared to the 2021 baseline of 76%</p> <p>1.3 By 2025, at least 90% of participating households have followed the conservation contract, continuing from the achieved 2021 baseline.</p> <p>1.4 By 2025 at least one village marketing networks is self-financing, as compared to the 2021 baseline of 0.</p>	<p>1.3 Household contracts; SMART reports; compliance system database.</p> <p>1.4 Yearly sales and purchase certificates from IBIS Rice, Attendance list; training curriculum; pre/post-test.</p>	<p>Villagers voluntarily report infringements. Household compliance with conservation agreements reduces rate of habitat degradation and hunting.</p> <p>Villagers are prepared to manage the scheme responsibly.</p>
<p>Output 2</p> <p>A diverse and gender inclusive scout teams are established and operational.</p>	<p>2.1. Ten males with 50% representation from Lao and Kavet ethnic minorities are recruited into a scout team, trained and equipped by the end of year 1.</p> <p>2.2. Ten female snare removal scouts 50% with representation from Lao and Kavet ethnic minorities are recruited, trained and equipped by the end of Year 1.</p> <p>2.3. Snare clearance along the O'Khampa River increases from 3 km2 by end of year 1, and 30 km2 by Year 3.</p>	<p>2.1 Training reports, Rising Phoenix employee records.</p> <p>2.2 Training reports, Rising Phoenix employee records.</p> <p>2.3 Reports and SMART data from baseline, Siem Pang PATROL quarterly government meeting minutes.</p>	<p>A sufficient number of Kavet villagers are prepared to work and not use the job to continue illegal activities.</p> <p>A sufficient number of females are prepared to work as scouts.</p> <p>Female scouts are able to provide time away from family to conduct the tasks and are also not stigmatized by males and family in doing this type of work.</p> <p>Rising Phoenix, Surveillance Intelligence and Reporting Unit will be able to monitor in detail through SMART applications the work conducted and anticipate and respond to any issues and safety concerns with village and family members through counter-intelligence.</p>
<p>Output 3</p> <p>Siem Pang PATROL Programme fully operational with multi-agency, patrols and investigations, transboundary dialog and ad-hoc investigations with Lao PDR occurring along the border</p>	<p>3.1 Increased patrol area coverage (km2) of Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary from 20% per month (2021 Baseline) to 70% per month by Year 2.</p> <p>3.2 Increase in investigations and prosecutions of illegal wildlife traders in Siem Pang District from 2021 baseline of 0 to 3 prosecution in year 2 and 5 prosecutions in Year 3 of the project.</p> <p>3.3 Prosecution of transboundary illegal wildlife traders increases form 2021</p>	<p>3.1 SMART monitoring, Siem Pang PATROL Reports and quarterly government meeting minutes. From baseline data.</p> <p>3.2 Provincial Court prosecution documents, reports. Siem Pang PATROL quarterly government meeting minutes.</p> <p>3.3 Provincial Court prosecution documents, reports. Training reports,</p>	<p>Law enforcement agencies participate and cooperate.</p> <p>Multi-agency cooperation and monitoring leads to reduced levels of corruption.</p> <p>Core funding is maintained for patrol officers' supplements.</p> <p>Border Liaison Officers from Lao PDR are remain active upon project</p>

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
	<p>baseline of 0, to 1 case in year 2 and 1 case in year 3.</p> <p>3.4 1 x Transboundary Advance Investigation training course conducted between Cambodia and Lao PDR, 1 x study tours to Siem Pang PATROL Coordination center by Lao PDR officers. 1 x Refresher Patrol Training. Involving 60 officers with a minimum of 20% female officers involved in working on border security and illegal wildlife trade patrolling and investigations by project end.</p> <p>3.5 Annual Border Liaison meetings involving select officers from Cambodia and Lao PDR, starting year 1 to end of project.</p>	<p>Border Liaison Office (BLO) Annual meeting minutes.</p> <p>3.4 Training reports, Siem Pang PATROL quarterly government meeting minutes</p> <p>3.5 Border Liaison Official government meeting minutes.</p>	<p>commencement and committed to working on transboundary illegal wildlife trade.</p> <p>Transboundary multi-agency training is able to be conducted under the mandate of the Border Liaison Office by no later than year 2.</p> <p>The Cambodian Government is still committed to gender inclusive target of 20% of government staff in all agencies being females.</p> <p>Rising Phoenix, Surveillance Intelligence and Reporting Unit will be able to plan and monitor work conducted through SMART applications and other electronic and overt on-the-ground information collection processes.</p>
<p>Activities (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>Output 1: Expansion of IBIS Rice Programme at villages surrounding Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary, increasing household income.</p> <p>1.1 Expand the IBIS Rice scheme and sell the IBIS Rice at a minimum 10% premium price</p> <p>1.2 Capacity building to Village Marketing Network committees (VMN) to become Village Agents</p> <p>1.3 Rice field mapping and registration for 300 households with the Department of Land Management</p> <p>1.4 Financial management literacy training to IBIS Rice participants</p> <p>1.5 IBIS Rice compliance monitoring and forest cover change assessment of SPWS</p> <p>1.6 Conduct Farmers' Day for sharing lesson learnt and best practice to local farmers and authorities</p> <p>Output 2: A diverse and gender inclusive scout teams are established and operational.</p> <p>2.1 Notification - conduct planning and notification of Scout Team Recruitment and desired pre-qualifications in collaboration with the Siem Pang District Authority and Stung Treng Provincial Department of Environment, determine a short list of up to 60 possible recruits.</p> <p>2.2 Selection Course - conduct a recruitment selection course process, including drug testing, ensuring a fair and transparent recruitment of 20 scouts from 60 applicants.</p> <p>2.3 Equipment - Source and procure required equipment in accordance with policy and procedure.</p> <p>2.4 Training – conduct 2-week competency-based scout training, covering Rising Phoenix policy, procedure and reporting, radio and SMART phone communications, remote first aid, navigation, field craft, surveillance patrolling, check points, de-snaring, wildlife awareness and recognition, use of camera traps and use of water craft.</p>			

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>2.5 Deploy – submit list of names to Stung Treng Provincial Department of Environment for official approval to work in and support activities in Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary and deploy scout team members on tasks in Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary.</p> <p>2.6 Monthly reporting – produce monthly reports on activities using smart data, earth rangers and field reports.</p> <p>Output 3: Siem Pang PATROL Programme fully operational with multi-agency, patrols and investigations, transboundary dialog and ad-hoc investigations with Lao PDR occurring along the border</p> <p>3.1 Development of Advance Investigation Training – working with the Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group (SPPOWG) and the Border Liaison Office (BLO) finalize curriculum outline and material, translate any new material from English to Khmer, and English and Khmer to Lao, select competent instructors.</p> <p>3.2 Study Tour – working with the Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group (SPPOWG) and the Border Liaison Office (BLO) organize the approvals, schedule and selection of personnel from Lao PDR to attend a 5-day study tour to the Siem Pang PATROL Coordination Center, Siem Pang Wildlife Sanctuary and Border Area.</p> <p>3.3 Approval – working through the Siem Pang PATROL Operational Working Group (SPPOWG) and the Border Liaison Office (BLO) Cambodia and Lao PDR gain approval to conduct transboundary advance investigation training for up to 10 Cambodian Government Investigation Officers and 10 Lao PDR Government Investigation Officers with at least 20% being female.</p> <p>3.4 Advanced Investigation Training – implement 2-week training covering: introduction to illegal wildlife trade and transboundary crime, smuggling techniques, the border liaison mechanism, intelligence theory and the intelligence cycle, sources of information, handling informants, six phases of a major investigation, crime scene processing, interviewing techniques, prosecutorial requirements, technical equipment used in an investigation, surveillance, arrests, raids and takedowns. For up to 20 Cambodian and Laos Government Investigation Officers.</p> <p>3.5 Patrol Refresher Training – Conduct refresher training for already existing Patrolling Officers under the Siem Pang PATROL programme, to update on any new tactical procedures to counter any threats utilized by poachers and violators.</p> <p>3.6 Patrolling and Investigation Meetings, Monitoring and Reporting – Through the Siem Pang PATROL Coordination Center, the Border Liaison Meetings, and the Siem Pang PATROL Operational Group meetings, feed information into agencies for investigation and monitor and report on successes and lessons learnt, utilizing operational meetings minutes and data provided.</p> <p>3.7 PATROL Guidelines Manual – Develop and finalize a manual outlining the establishment and functioning of a PATROL programme for use by other entities and organizations.</p>			

Annex 3 Standard Indicators

Table 1 Project Standard Indicators

IWTCF Indicator number	Name of indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
IWTCF-A12	By 2025, annual turnover of IBIS Rice members in Siem Pang District will increase to £240,000 as compared to the 2021 baseline of £136,000	GBP – exchange rate use 1.25	None	£246,605	£424,404		£674,009	£600,000
IWTCF-A13	By 2025, IBIS Rice expands from 783 (2021 baseline) to 1,200 households that receive household income from the programme.	Number	None	697	252		949	1,200
IWTCF-B01	By the end of year 1 of the project 20 people will be trained in law enforcement skills to be part of the Rising Phoenix scout team.	Number	Sex: Male or Female Stakeholder: Kavet, Lao and Khmer	25 Sex: 12 female & 13 males Stakeholder: 8 Kavet, 8 Lao, 9 Khmer	21 Sex: 8 female & 13 males Stakeholder: 7 kaveat, 6 lao, 8 khmer		21	20 Sex: 10 male & 10 females Stakeholder: 10 from Lao or Kavet, 10 Khmer
IWTCF-B14	By the end of the project, 10 successful prosecutions will be completed for wildlife crimes.	Number	None	0	0		0	10

21 scouts remained with 38% female (8 females) and 62% from ethnic minorities (13 from ethnic minorities)

Checklist for submission

	Check
Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the correct template (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and deleted the blue guidance text before submission?	X
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to BCF-Reports@niras.com putting the project number in the subject line.	X
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with BCF-Reports@niras.com about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the subject line.	
Have you included means of verification? You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	X
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 17)?	
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	X
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	X
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	