



JAHOO GIBBON CAMP

Jahoo Gibbon Camp is a responsible community-based ecotourism and wildlife conservation project in Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary (KSWS), where visitors have the chance to see yellow-cheeked crested gibbons and black-shanked douc langurs, as well as rare and endemic bird species. The community is composed mainly of Bunong indigenous people, who have traditionally lived in a close relationship with the forest, but who have limited access to means of income, education, and healthcare.

Jahoo Gibbon Camp aims to protect the wildlife of the KSWS through promoting wildlife-based tourism to create alternative livelihoods for the Bunong and mitigate their marginalization, poverty and reliance on environmentally damaging and illegal livelihoods such as hunting and logging. The initiative supports local Bunong leaders to effectively understand and implement rights for the protection of their forest and self-governance provided them through the Indigenous Community Land Title (ICT).

The project also seeks to promote greater involvement by women, especially in initiatives which promote tourism and increase community conversation efforts.

IMPORTANCE OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Jahoo Gibbon Camp will help to raise community awareness on the importance of wildlife conservation for sustainable development through employment in the ecotourism industry, dialogue and action within the community including community ranger patrols and educational events, and use of a Village Development Fund (VDF) to be invested in community development projects including clean water, health, and sanitation.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

The World Hope team provide training and continued mentoring to improve the governance of the Indigenous Community Committee (ICC) to manage ecotourism, stop illegal activities that threaten wildlife and take the lead on conservation efforts on indigenous lands by launching community patrols with government partners to protect their natural resources from external threats such as loggers, hunters and land grabbers.

GENDER EQUITY

In a region where women are still oppressed and face harsh realities of violence and poor education which impact not only them, but the children they raise, gender equity is of absolute necessity. The project involves men and women equally and will promote women to positions of influence at Jahoo and within the various committees, including the ICC and the ecotourism committee which oversee the direction of the Jahoo community project.



HOW THE ECOTOURISM MODEL WORKS

Direct payments are made to staff involved and fees to support park management are paid to the Department of Environment. Tourism fees provide local staff at Jahoo with a reliable income with a small fee provided to the Department of Environment to support park operations within KSWS. Tourism fees also support the VDF and are conditional on tourists successfully observing key wildlife such as the endangered primates and endemic birds. This conditional contribution to the VDF ensures a direct link between wildlife conservation success and social development.

Tours begin from a unique forest camp, built using local and renewable materials inspired by traditional Bunong building design. Expert Bunong forest guides lead visitors through the forest to observe wildlife. At the camp, guests can enjoy comfortable accommodation, forest showers and Bunong cuisine cooked by local cooks.

As well as gibbon and bird watching, visitors will visit forest waterfalls and learn about indigenous forest knowledge and Bunong culture. One-day, overnight and longer visits to Jahoo can be organised through exclusive responsible tour operators.

THE BUNONG COMMUNITY

The Bunong, an indigenous group of approximately 160,000, are amongst the poorest people in Cambodia. With spiritual, cultural and livelihood connections to the forest and its resources, the Bunong remain among the poorest people in the nation. Marginalized by four decades of war followed by displacement from their homeland by the Khmer Rouge, their development has been severely strained. One in four men and one in three women from the province have never

been to school and more than half of the population (56%) falls within the country's lowest two wealth quintiles.¹

The forest is the ancestral home of the Bunong and livelihoods largely remain dependent on the natural environment. Loss of forest, wildlife and culture exacerbate their poverty and marginalization in a rapidly modernizing Cambodian society. Ecotourism provides the Bunong with an alternative livelihood that can provide an important income, protect their environment, celebrate their culture and support sustainable Bunong development.

1. Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2014

PROJECT FUNDING

Since 2016, WHI has worked with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) to support the Bunong in local development, including leveraging the Bunong's forest knowledge into ecotourism livelihood opportunities and ensuring access to clean and safe drinking water. Additional partners include Bambusa Global Ventures, Sam Veasna Center (SVC), and the Andong Kralong ICT Committee. Globally, funders include the United States Department of State, UN Women, USAID, UKAid, Global Affairs Canada, and the European Commission.

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WILDLIFE AT JAHOO GIBBON CAMP

Mammals

Several globally endangered species, as recognized by IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species are found at Jahoo. Five primate species are regularly observed in the area:

- Yellow-cheeked crested gibbon (Endangered),
- Black-shanked douc (Endangered),
- Pig-tailed macaque (Vulnerable),
- Long-tailed macaque, and
- Stump-tailed macaque (Vulnerable)

KSWS is the last remaining stronghold for these endangered primate species. Several other mammals have been observed in the area, including

- Asian elephant (Endangered) and
- Binturong (Vulnerable)

Birds

Jahoo is a birders paradise and arguably the best location in Cambodia to see forest specialist bird species, such as:

- Germain's peacock pheasant (Endemic to Southern Indochina)
- Green peafowl (Endangered),
- Siamese fireback,
- Great hornbill,
- Orange-necked partridge,
- Bar-bellied pitta,
- Blue pitta,
- Orange-breasted trogon,
- Red-headed trogon,
- As well as Broadbills, Barbets and many more species.

Jahoo is also home to one of the worlds largest concentrations of Woodpecker species.