

Terms of Reference

Technical Advisor, Protected Area Management, Greater Tonle Sap Landscape WCS Cambodia Program

The Tonle Sap Great Lake floodplain is one of the most important wetlands in mainland South-east Asia for both biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods. Much of it lies within the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Reserve. The WCS Cambodia Program has three long-running site-based projects in and around the floodplain – in the Prek Toal Core Area of the Biosphere Reserve, at Ang Trapeang Thmor Sarus Crane Reserve (ATT) and in a network of Integrated Farming and Biodiversity Areas (IFBAs), now known as the Bengal Florican Conservation Areas (BFCAs). At all three sites WCS works very closely with government agencies to build and implement effective management systems. All three are heavily used by people; whilst some of these uses are compatible with or even beneficial to conservation objectives, others are threats.

A technical advisor (TA) is needed to work across all three sites. At each site the advisor will oversee WCS activities and give technical inputs relating to the wide diversity of activities that WCS and its partners are involved in. These activities include analysing community use of natural resources (including, in different settings, farmland, pasture, fisheries, hunting and plant products) and then developing practical, politically and socially acceptable ways to manage these uses to benefit conservation, and establishing or improving data collection systems for monitoring target species, human impacts, illegal activities and law enforcement activities. Support is also available from several other technical advisors working elsewhere on the program.

The TA will support the field teams in the full range of management activities at these sites as the need arises. The TA will also provide guidance and direction and be involved in developing strategy for biodiversity conservation in these projects. The TA will also contribute to donor reporting and fund-raising needs relating to these sites as identified by the Country Director.

Requirements

- strong research and analytical skills, including the ability to design statistically robust social surveys, manage survey teams and write coherent reports that will influence policy and on-site management decisions
- the ability to work effectively in a South-east Asian cultural setting in remote areas alongside staff with limited resources and relatively low technical capacity
- a practical, results-orientated approach to protected area management
- an outgoing personality and an ability to network effectively with other conservation staff, researchers and development professionals as a way to access information, potential collaborations and funding opportunities

The post will initially be for 12 months with the expectation of further employment given satisfactory performance.

The advisor will be based at the WCS Cambodia Program Head Office in Phnom Penh but should expect to spend 50-75% of working time at the field sites, depending on the season.

The advisor will report to Mark Gately for work relating to Prek Toal and ATT and to Tom Evans for work relating to the BFCAs.

Principal tasks

Prek Toal and the Tonle Sap Lake

- Following from the initial phases of the Prek Toal Fishing Lot Study in 2008/09 and 2010, the technical advisor would coordinate and manage future phases of this study to implement management recommendations, including the establishment of the Prek Toal Refuge, to establish monitoring protocols to record fish catch and changes to livelihoods and food security in relation to the fishing lot, and to provide support to projects aimed at supporting and building capacity of local communities and authorities to manage Community Fisheries.
- Provide support in the use and refinement of the existing computerised data management system for law enforcement patrols (MIST).
- Provide support in the use and refinement of the existing monitoring system for the large waterbird colonies, and potentially its expansion to new colonies elsewhere around the Great Lake.
- Provide support in the use and refinement of existing monitoring system for water snakes and other species.

The advisor will be expected to build a network of relationships with key local stakeholders, and will increasingly become involved in representing WCS to senior government officials as his or her familiarity with the sites and issues grows.

Ang Trapeang Thmor

- Work with the on-site management team to conduct a review of the existing zoning system and related law-enforcement patrols, taking into account known human uses, threats and information on key wildlife species. Provide recommendations on improved design and patrolling of the most important zones.
- Assist the team to continue using the MIST patrol reporting system, and to use the results effectively.
- Help the field team to summarise and report on the ongoing waterbird monitoring work, assess any need for refinements, and train the staff on improved use of the datasheets.
- Conduct mapping surveys of Eld's Deer, Bengal Florican and breeding, roosting and feeding sites for large waterbirds as necessary.
- Work with the GIS officer to develop and implement a strategy for improved vegetation land-use mapping at the site, including both remote sensing data and field surveys.

Integrated Farming and Biodiversity Areas

- Support the field teams in the development of community consultation committees, land-use regulations and management plans for the BFCAs.
- Conduct surveys and analyses of aspects of community use of the BFCAs as required to inform management planning, and to increase recognition of their livelihood values.
- Engage with local rural development NGO partner CEDAC to maximise the conservation impact of their work
- Provide inputs to a collaborative project with local NGO the Sam Veasna Centre to increase the conservation benefits of bird tourism at the site
- Assist the law enforcement team to monitor their effort and results, and work with them to improve their systems, including working with the GIS officer to maintain the GIS datasets (effort, birds, land cover etc), assist with and ensure documentation of monthly meetings, participate in monthly team review meeting on patrolling strategy.
- Assist in updating and overseeing implementation of the breeding season Bengal Florican surveys, and lead the production of the annual report.
- Assist in updating and implementing the non-breeding season Bengal Florican surveys, help Virak to write up the reports and process the data, and lead the production of the annual report.
- Develop continually updated land-use maps for the BFCAs based on a combination of field surveys and remote sensing as appropriate.

General program activities

For all three projects, the advisor would also be expected to assist in general activities.

- Assist with routine reporting to donors and other necessary reporting.
- Assist Sarath and Project managers to monitor expenses on a monthly basis in relation to donor budgets and committed match from WCS
- Assist with developing funding proposals.
- Coordinate required outputs to the CEPF Project (most of which are covered by activities outlined above).
- Represent WCS in Tonle Sap meetings and workshops as appropriate.