

## **Process Framework for Involuntary Restrictions**

**January 5, 2023**

**CEPF-113612**

**Sansom Mlup Prey Organization**

***“Increasing inclusivity, diversity, and effectiveness of  
the IBIS Rice model***

**Kulen Promtep, Prey Preah Roka, and Chhaeb wildlife Sanctuary, Preah Vihear Province,  
Cambodia**

## **Grant Summary**

1. Sansom Mlup Prey Organization
2. Increasing inclusivity, diversity, and effectiveness of the IBIS Rice model
3. CEPF-113612
4. USD \$180,000
5. 03/01/2023 – 03/31/2025
6. Cambodia

The project will design and pilot a new approach to non-rice ‘Chamka’ agricultural uplands which to date have not been integrated to the IBIS Rice model. Currently these uplands are used for unsustainable cassava cultivation, which has become the most profitable and accessible crop for many households in the landscape. As a result, many Ibis Rice farmers have switched their focus to these crops and become non-compliant, because they are clearing upland forests to grow cassava or have less labor available for rice-production causing them to use chemicals to maintain yields.

Bringing households back into a compliance system will require the generation of new incentives connected to chamkar production. This will mean designing options for agricultural transition from cassava to more diversified and sustainable cultivation, in partnership with farmers, IRCC, and potential other private sector partners. These opportunities need to be compelling economically and compatible with conservation outcomes, including the ability for IBIS Rice to apply existing certifications and conservation incentives to these products. Based on recent research, we expect a successful strategy for ‘Chamka’ uplands to rapidly increase participation rates in existing villages, enable participating rice-farmers to diversify their income and maintain compliance, and thus respond directly to new drivers of deforestation. All research activities will be reviewed for research ethics by the WCS institutional review board, and participants will provide their free, prior, and informed consent.

Building on successful piloting of climate resilience and soil nutrition strategies with IBIS Rice farmers (such as wildlife-friendly ponds, land-leveling and community composting) we will design and deploy financing models that accelerate inclusive adoption by farmers. Cashflow constraints of and other household level investment needs will be identified by a dedicated agricultural economist. These constraints will then be addressed by the partners, particularly IRCC and potential external financial institutions with options for different payment structures and incentives as well as bespoke financing products. All research activities will be reviewed for research ethics by the WCS institutional review board, and participants will provide their free, prior, and informed consent.

We aim to continue building the capacity of the VMN to manage further aspects of the program, especially the Internal Control System and recruitment of members in their community. This will include moving from a per-diem structure to an annual budget and professionalized members using digital data-collection tools and participating in a centralised IBIS Rice training and support structure. This progression allow IRCC to sustainably finance these operations leaving SMP to focus on diversification and resilience innovations. These activities will be implemented with members who have ongoing relationships with SMP and who provide their ongoing consent to participate in these trainings.

7. 06 January 2023

**The Process Framework will describe the project and how restrictions of access to natural resources and measures to assist affected communities. Affected communities should have the opportunity to participate in the drafting of the Process Framework. Typically, the Applicant will prepare a draft Framework that will then be shared and discussed with local communities and other relevant stakeholders. Based on the consultations, a final Framework will be prepared. CEPF may provide guidance on development of the Framework and will review and approve the final Framework prior to approving the final project proposal application. The Process Framework should include the following elements:**

**A. Project background**

The Northern Plains of Cambodia support a suite of highly threatened species, including five Critically Endangered bird species, among which the Giant Ibis (*Thaumatibis gigantea*), Cambodia's National Bird, is the most threatened. The three Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) that make up the Northern Plains Corridor are protected under the Chhep Wildlife Sanctuary (formerly Preah Vihear Protected Forest), Kulen Promtep Wildlife Sanctuary and Prey Preah Rokha Wildlife Sanctuary. These protected areas are inhabited by approximately 25,000 local people who live in nearly 50 villages that pre-date the establishment of the protected areas. These people practice rain-fed rice cultivation and rely heavily on forest resources. Although this creates a potential conflict between protected area management authorities and local communities, it also creates an opportunity to engage them in conservation and sustainable agricultural practices in a way that can both protect the forest ecosystem and promote climate change resilience.

Since the enactment of Protected Area Law (2008), the Ministry of Environment in collaboration with the Wildlife Conservation Society have been implementing participatory protected area zoning activities to develop four management zones within the protected areas (Core, Conservation Area, Sustainable Use, and Community) together with local communities. The process and zonation plans have now been approved by the Preah Vihear provincial authorities, and has been submitted for ratification by the Ministry of Environment, and subsequent approval by the Council of Ministers.

Within the Community Zone of a protected area, a land use plan is developed for each village. This plan determines areas that can be cultivated for rice and others suitable Chamkar crop, areas of forest which must be protected due to the services that it provides, and areas of forest that may be cleared in the future for pre-defined community uses. This zonation management approach for Cambodian protected areas, and specifically the creation of community zones, is currently the only way that a community can obtain user-rights within a protected area, and also serves as an effective barrier to large-scale land acquisition by external actors. Within community zones, it is therefore essential that environmentally sensitive agricultural practices are strengthened and innovative climate resilient approaches are developed to maximize productivity and reduce associated impacts on the surrounding ecosystem.

These community zones contain some extremely important habitat, and there are some proven co-benefits between organic and wildlife-friendly agriculture practices and foraging opportunities for critically endangered birds.

Ibis Rice was conceived by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in 2009 to produce wildlife-friendly agricultural products from remote communities located in protected areas in order to improve livelihoods whilst incentivizing conservation practices. To deliver this program, WCS supported the formation of Sansom Mlup Prey Organization (SMP), a local Cambodian NGO that works with farmers and create access to markets through the Ibis Rice scheme. In 2017, the Ibis Rice Conservation

Company, Ltd., (IRCC) was incorporated to fulfil the potential of the concept. IRCC now exports rice to buyers in Europe, North America, Singapore, and Hong Kong and pays farmers a 40% premium for following compliance to the wildlife-friendly and organic standards. SMP continues to work with Ibis Rice farmers to deliver on this mission and support wildlife-friendly and climate change resilient agricultural livelihoods in these communities.

There is a need to build on the strength of Ibis Rice model to become a comprehensive business partner for valuable and wildlife-friendly agricultural production in the community zones. Building on this success requires ensuring agricultural diversification for products beyond rice, and addressing climate change resilience for both farmers and wildlife.

## **B. Participatory implementation**

The initial activities of the implementation of Chamkar crop experiment will involve participatory meetings and consultations with the communities where the project has proposed. These consultations will be used to gather input about the implementation of the project and to determine the criteria for selecting the sites where the pilot plots will be located. These consultations will also help to provide input for the updating of compliance and determine ICS manual for Chamkar crops.

The project will work closely with the target communities and relevant stakeholders including local authorities to introduce them to the project activities and collect community input. Such consultations will contribute to the updating compliance manual.

## **C. Criteria for eligibility of affected persons**

The persons primarily affected by implementation of Chamkar crops experiment will be members with adjacent farmland who will agree to having the pilot experiment located in their fields.

However, there are others who may be negatively affected by the project implementation. This may include community people who are accustomed to using the pilot areas for grazing cattle, but are restricted from doing so after experiment plot installation of perimeter fences.

Other negative impacts may also include feelings of resentment or jealousy, or perceptions of favoritism over the location.

The criteria of affected persons would include:

- An individual or group who has expressed complaint through the project grievance mechanism.
- Any individual or group who has made a complaint through a community stakeholder group, project staff or local authority.

## **D. Measures to assist the affected persons**

After receiving notification of any complaint, query, or concern from an affected individual, the project will hold a meeting or call with the affected persons to discuss and understand their complaint and determine a personalized measure to help alleviate the issue and any negative effects. For example, if someone is concerned about restrictions on cattle grazing, the project might ask for a delay in grazing until cover crops are well established, and then help facilitate some carefully supervised and minimal grazing on certain areas. In short, any measure to assist affected persons who have made a complaint

through the aforementioned channels would be done in close consultation and agreement with the affected persons in order to find the best solution to the issue.

#### **E. Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism.**

- Sansom Mlup Prey Organization (SMP) – Executive Director, Tel: 086 55 00 27
- CEPF Regional Implementation Team:  
**Organization:** International Union for Conservation of Nature, Asia Regional Office  
**Phone:** +66 2 662 4029  
**Email:** [CEPF-Indoburma@iucn.org](mailto:CEPF-Indoburma@iucn.org)  
**Mailing Address:** 63 Sukhumvit Soi 39, Wattana, Bangkok 10110, Thailand
- The project has planned for appropriate grievance mechanisms in the project activities and has budgeted for these activities and materials. Notification of the grievance mechanisms will take a few different forms and will use Khmer language. Firstly, these will include outdoor signboards with the required information in the to be installed at the location of each project sites.

At all target villages where the pilot field experiment will operate, SMP has helped support the formation of Village Marketing Network (VMN) groups and Community Protected Area (CPA) committees. These groups usually meet at the group leaders' house. In addition to the outdoor signboards, posters and letterboxes with the required information will be printed and placed in visible locations at these meeting points for convenient access existing community management entities. Posters and letterboxes will also be installed at the two respective Commune Halls that house the offices and administrative services of local government authorities of the villages.

Additionally, the project will fully explain the grievance mechanism verbally at the beginning of the project implementation and during specific phases of the project progress.

“We will share all grievances — and a proposed response — with the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director within 15 days. If the claimant is not satisfied following the response, they may submit the grievance via the CI Ethics Hotline (toll-free telephone line: +1-866-294-8674 / secure web portal: <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/10680/index.html>).”

#### **F. Implementation Arrangements**

The project intends to implement the pilot in villages where SMP already operates and has prior established relationships with farmers, local authorities and other stakeholders such as park rangers and provincial level environmental officials, and CPAs.