Title

The Royal Government of Cambodia has declared the creation of the Siem Pang Protected Forest. Covering an area of 66,932 hectares, the new Protected Forest covers almost half the Western Siem Pang Important Bird and Biodiversity Area.

The declaration of this new Protected Forest on 24 January 2014, comes after several years of lobbying by BirdLife Cambodian Programme and the Forestry Administration. Siem Pang was the missing part of a jigsaw of protected forests that now extends across 700,000 hectares in southern Laos, northern Cambodia and western Vietnam, together making one of the largest protected landscapes in South-East Asia.

“We congratulate the Royal Government of Cambodia for designating part of this unique Important Bird and Biodiversity Area as a Protected Forest”, said Dr Marco Lambertini, BirdLife International’s Chief Executive, “and we look forward to supporting the management of this site in the future.”

BirdLife International and Cambodia’s Forestry Administration have been working together at this site for more than 10 years, conserving its wildlife and habitats, and helping local communities to manage their livelihoods sustainably. Siem Pang is the first new Protected Forest declared in Cambodia for four years.

“Designating Siem Pang as a Protected Forest will not only provide safe refuge to wildlife but it will benefit local communities in the longer term”, said Dr Keo Omaliss, Director of Department wildlife and biodiversity of Forestry Administration. “The Royal Government of Cambodia is committed to establishing more Protected Forest in the near future”

The wider site supports populations of five Critically Endangered bird species, including the world’s largest population of White-shouldered Ibis and one of the largest populations of Giant Ibis, as well as populations of three vulture species.

“We are delighted by this result and it is a crucial step to protect these species”, said Bou Vorsak, BirdLife’s Cambodia Programme Manager. “To secure the globally important populations of these Critically Endangered birds, we now must work together to start sustainable management initiatives in the adjacent area”

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Prince Albert II of Monaco foundation, Giant Ibis Transport, Stephen Martin, and the Forestry Bureau of the Council of Agriculture of Taiwan support BirdLife’s work at this site.

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