

Title *Phnom Penh, Cambodia - Today Giant Ibis Transport company become the first BirdLife Species Champion in Cambodia after providing financial support to prevent the extinction of Cambodia's national bird, the Giant Ibis.* On May 1st 2013, *Giant Ibis Transport* signed an agreement with BirdLife International to provide US\$51,000, which will be used to conserve of Giant Ibis in Cambodia over the next three years. The Giant Ibis, a Critically Endangered Species, was designated by Royal Decree as the national bird symbol of Cambodia in 2005. It is now mostly confined to northern Cambodia, where it is still fairly widespread but extremely rare; with a few birds from the same population observed in extreme southern Laos. Its historical range once spanned southern Vietnam and Thailand, where it has now become extinct. An extremely rapid population decline is suspected to have occurred over the last three generations and unless conservation action is taken urgently it is now projected to continue over the next three generations as a result of hunting, wetland destruction and lowland deforestation. Recent assessment of the available records suggests a minimum estimate of 115 pairs.



This is equivalent to a minimum of 230 mature individuals, and

roughly 345 individuals in total. We understand improved commitment is required by all stakeholders in Cambodia to stabilize and improve the conservation prospects for the Giant Ibis population and we are happy to be part of the Preventing Extinction Programme," said Jacob Montross, Managing Director of *Giant Ibis Transport*.

BirdLife Species Champions are a growing community of companies, institutions and individuals that supports conservation measures aimed at preventing bird extinctions. As well as providing the funding that brings threatened birds back from the brink of extinction, Species Champions also draw attention to the plight of the species they support and all the other threatened species the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme embraces. We are delighted that the first Species Champion in Cambodia is a private company who have fully recognised the symbolism the Giant Ibis represents, This species is a flagship for the plight of all Cambodia's threatened wildlife," commented Bou Vorsak, Programme Manager of the BirdLife Cambodia programme. More involvement by the private sector can only lead to better species conservation and we hope that Giant ibis Transport will be the first of many future corporate supporters in Cambodia," added Vorsak. *BirdLife International* is a global Partnership of conservation organisations that strives to conserve birds, their habitats and global biodiversity, working with people towards sustainability in the use of natural resources. By focusing on birds, and the sites and habitats on which they depend, the BirdLife Partnership is working to improve the quality of life for birds, for other wildlife (biodiversity), and for people. *Giant Ibis Transport* is an "Affordable Luxury" bus service in Cambodia, which was established in May 2012 to provide a luxury commercial vehicle transportation service for local and international passengers. It belongs to the Royal Cambodian Limousine Service Co.,Ltd which provides an exclusive chauffeured driven vehicle service to among other dignitaries, delegates and official guests of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

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