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We would like to thank
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Farming for biodiversity with the Sustainable Rice Platform in Cambodia

Objectives:

The rice fields of the Tonle Sap are vital for the biodiversity, especially for the Bengal Florican, a Critically Endangered bird. Poor agricultural practices are putting this species at risk, and lowering the potential incomes of farmers. WCS and our local partner Sansom Mlup Prey (SMP) are training farmers to apply the Sustainable Rice Platform Standards, to increase yields, incomes, and Florican populations.

Methodology:



The project is implemented just outside of the Tonle Sap floodplain in Kompong Thom Province, Cambodia. We work in an area that is used by Bengal Florican

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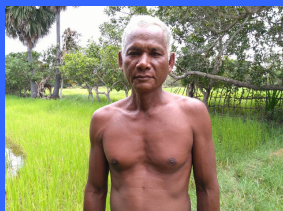


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Synthesis

The Bengal Florican populations are directly threatened by intensive rice production. WCS and SMP encourage local producers to use more environmentally friendly techniques that help them, at the same time, to increase their income.

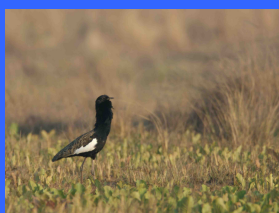
Get more information on the program supported by Fondation Ensemble: [here](#)



See the testimony of Vong Phan, rice grower in the Tonle Sap lake area in Cambodia [here](#)



See the video of the project [here](#)



Male Bengal Florican in Stoung BFCA©WCS



October 2018

during the non-breeding season, when the birds frequently use rice fields.

Typical rice farmers in this area have less than 5 ha of rice. Their fields are uneven, and use of pesticides and fertilizers is sub-optimal. Lethal control of birds is practiced and there are reports that Bengal Floricans have been hunted in the rice fields.

WCS and our local partner SMP are training farmers to apply the Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) Standards. The SRP is a global multi-stakeholder platform to promote resource efficiency and sustainability in trade flows, production and consumption operations, and supply chains in the global rice sector.

SMP have trained the farmers in the use of farmer diaries so that they record their farm management practices. These diaries are used to score the farms against the SRP Standards. **The SRP Standards encompass a range of measures including biodiversity, pest control, women's rights, child labor and green-house gas emissions.** At harvest, SMP links the farmers with a buyer – Mars – that requires SRP rice. Mars pays the farmers a higher price for their SRP rice than they receive from the regular middleman.

We currently have more than 200 farmers growing SRP rice. In the second year that a farmer is taking part in the scheme, SMP use the scores from the SRP Standards to implement measures that increase yields in a way that is beneficial for biodiversity and farmer income. One of the main things that we have done for farmers is land-levelling. Land-levelling makes it easier to control water levels, lowering greenhouse gas emissions and reducing the need for pesticides and fertilizers.

Results:

- 200 farmers in the area where we work are rapidly joining the SRP scheme because they see the benefits it brings to their neighbors. From the first year, they receive a 10% price premium on their rice.
- By levelling a farmer's field, the yield can be increased by up to 30%, because all of the rice grows and matures at the same rate.
- From the second year, they get the assistance of an SMP agronomist who helps them to implement farm improvement techniques such as land-levelling, which increases yields and reduces input costs.
- Level fields require little if any pesticides, so they support a healthy fauna on which the Bengal Florican thrives. Because the SRP Standards mandate no lethal control of birds in rice fields, the Bengal Floricans are safe to forage in the fields.

For more details:

For more information please see:

<https://cambodia.wcs.org/>
<https://programs.wcs.org/smpcambodia/>
<http://www.sustainableice.org/>