**WWF and the General Directorate of Rubber​ officially launched**

**a multi-actor partnership on sustainable rubber value chains**

WWF-Cambodia and the General Department of Rubber of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on their first cooperation to build a multi-actor partnership for transparent and sustainable natural rubber supply chains in Cambodia.

Funded by the German Government’s Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through **Welthungerhilfe,** the multi-actor partnership cooperation is also implemented in other countries in Southeast Asia, including Thailand and Myanmar.

In Cambodia, the three-year cooperation has engaged and worked with relevant key actors from the Royal Government, private sector, NGOs, and rubber smallholders in Mondulkiri to promote sustainable rubber production, contributing to the livelihoods improvement of the rubber smallholders, indigenous people and workers.

“Promoting the sustainable and responsible smallholder rubber plantations through application of best management practices in Cambodia will not only create jobs and incomes for the local communities, but it will also help to reduce pressures on natural resources by optimal use of existing land of rubber plantation and prevent illegal forest land encroachment,” said Mr. Seng Teak, Country Director of WWF-Cambodia, adding that the MoU signing ceremony today has opened a new Charter of WWF-Cambodia for its effort to work in partnership with relevant technical and responsible government agencies.

This MoU supports the joint commitment in a multi-actor partnership platform where all parties involved share knowledge and information on sustainable rubber production, and can contribute to the policy on natural rubber supply chains. The MoU also provides opportunities for capacity building for sustainable natural rubber production practices, fostering the participation of rubber smallholders in protecting the community’s natural resources.

**H.E. Pol Sopha, Director of General Department of Rubber** said “Building capacity and providing technical skills to rubber smallholders and the technical officials in the rubber sector in addition to active participation from all key stakeholders in rubber sector will contribute to sustainable development of Cambodia’s rubber sector.”

To help guide sustainable rubber practices, the General Department of Rubber, Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, WWF and Cambodia Rubber Research Institution (CRRI) together published and distributed a technical guidebook for Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in latex harvest techniques and provided necessary trainings, coupled with practical demonstration and hands-on experience at rubber plantation sites to a total of 60 rubber smallholders and government officials combined from 20 provinces across the country.

Currently, 100 rubber smallholders from five Community Protected Areas adjacent to the WWF’s supported Srepok Wildlife Sanctuary, were already engaged with the aim to reach 300 rubber smallholders by 2022.

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**Notes to editors:**

Link for downloading images: <https://bit.ly/2K7aRcx>

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