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Press Release

For Immediate Release

WWF commends all rangers for their dedication and sacrifice

As the world celebrates World Ranger Day today, WWF recognises and celebrates the accomplishments and work done by rangers, especially those who are giving their lives to protect natural and cultural resources in the Cambodia's Eastern Plains and Mekong Landscapes.

WWF works very closely with the Royal Government of Cambodia and its relevant Ministries of Environment and Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to support protected areas management and build capacity for law enforcement and provide necessary equipment to a total of 271 rangers and river guards for regularly patrolling both protected landscapes.

"WWF honours all of the dedicated rangers who risk their lives every day at the forefront of conservation and commends them for their commitment to the safeguarding of wildlife, their natural habitat, and the forest and river ecosystems upon which we all depend," said **Mr Seng Teak, WWF Country Director**.

Rangers work tirelessly, but are exposed to difficult and hazardous environmental conditions such as floods, fires, illnesses or dangerous animals, while also running the risk of being targeted because they stand up to illegal hunting, logging and fishing.

"A ranger's life is not easy, and rangers often work in life-threatening situations," said **James Peter Lourens, a Law Enforcement Technical Advisor with WWF**. "But because of their passion and love for nature, these rangers have the endurance and perseverance it takes to fulfil the duties of protecting the magnificent wildlife and its natural habitat."

As a recognition of the high-level commitment, this year, WWF selected from among many ranger profiles worldwide and presented **Mr Sin Satha** –a ranger from the WWF's supported Srepok Wildlife Sanctuary – the Dr Rimington Award for exceptional contributions to the conservation of the forest that is home to many endangered wildlife such Asian Elephants, Indochinese Leopard, Banteng, Guar, Eld's Deer and Muntjac. This international award also honours his achievements at great risks to help save the ecosystems that local communities depend on for their livelihoods.

On the occasion of this year World Ranger Day, WWF also honour four rangers who sadly made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duties and others who were injured while at work in encounters with the very animals they protect. Of those loss within the past five years: one tragically died in accident associated with the dangerous nature of their work, and three other succumbed to illnesses encountered while at work.

"Today, we also commemorate the rangers who have lost their lives in the line of duty, and our heartfelt condolences and thoughts are with their families," **Mr Teak** said.

Law enforcement is a key component for protected areas in the Eastern Plains and Mekong Landscapes under the management of Ministries of Environment and Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. WWF-Cambodia has over the past two decades been providing active support in the implementation and enforcement of the forestry and fishery laws, complementing other WWF initiatives on community engagement and biodiversity research, thanks to the continuous support from USAID, EU, DGD, SDC, BMZ, GEF/UNEP/MOE, H&M, WWF-BE, WWF-US, WWF-SE and WWF-NL.

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Notes to editors:

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

About WWF

WWF is an independent conservation organization, with over 30 million followers and a global network active in nearly 100 countries. Our mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which people live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

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