JD- Senior Biodiversity Research Officer – EPL

Position title: Senior Biodiversity Research Officer – EPL
Reports to: Biodiversity Research and Monitoring Manager - EPL
Supervises: Research Officer, Research Assistants and Research Rangers
Location: Mondulkiri Province, Eastern Plains Landscape. Cambodia
Date: September 2020

Background:
WWF-Cambodia was established in 1995, as part of the WWF-Greater Mekong Programme. Our mission is to ensure that there will be strong participation and support from all people to conserve the country’s rich biological diversity. Through the encouragement of sustainable use of natural resources, WWF-Cambodia promotes new opportunities for the benefit of all people, enhancing local livelihoods and contributing to poverty reduction in the Kingdom of Cambodia. In the Eastern Plains Landscape (EPL), we focus on a WWF Global ecoregion, one of Earth’s most outstanding terrestrial habitats: The Lower Mekong Dry Forest. For over a decade, WWF-Cambodia has committed to supporting local communities, government partners, and other stakeholders in protecting their wealth of natural resources in the EPL.

The Eastern Plains Landscape in Eastern Cambodia and central Vietnam, comprises one of the largest remaining expanses of a severely threatened forest type: lowland Deciduous Dipterocarp Forest. Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary (PPWS) and Srepok Wildlife Sanctuary (SWS) are located in the heart of the EPL, and the core focus by WWF Cambodia in the EPL, covering almost 6,000 km², and providing agriculture and NTFP-based subsistence livelihoods to 30,000 people including 8,000 indigenous people. These formally protected areas harbour globally significant populations of endangered wildlife including the largest global population of wild Banteng (Bos javanicus) in its native range, Cambodia’s largest population of Asian elephants (Elephas maximus); a diverse birdlife including critically endangered vulture and ibis species, the only remaining population of Indochinese leopards (Panthera pardus ssp. Delacouri) in Indochina, and some of the last remaining Eld’s deer (Rucervus eldi) and critically endangered Siamese crocodiles (Crocodylus siamensis) in the country.

In order to implement conservation strategies effectively, managers require robust information on species presence and abundance. Obtaining these basic datasets poses a significant challenge across the globe, especially for threatened species occurring at low densities. WWF-Cambodia is at the forefront of using innovative technologies as well a community-based data collection methods and a number of valuable long-term dataset exists with ongoing monitoring in place. In addition, there is scope for developing and implementing additional research projects as needed.
Position Summary:

The Biodiversity Research & Monitoring (BRM) Technical Advisor (TA) will support and assist the Biodiversity Research and Monitoring Manager (BRMM) in implementing the biological research and monitoring program in the Eastern Plains Landscape (EPL), Mondulkiri Province, Cambodia. The post holder will oversee research work in the field and is responsible for ensuring high-quality implementation of existing and new data collection protocols, he/she will assist in collecting, verifying, and formatting/processing data, and in database management. The post holder will also assist in developing the capacity of the Biodiversity Research and Monitoring team. This position requires a significant amount of time (up to 70%, depending on season) in the field to conduct biodiversity surveys and other research. The position holder will also assist in administrative tasks, operational and financial oversight, preparing reports or other forms of dissemination, coordination between thematics, and any ad hoc tasks related to the BRM thematic.

Major function:

Major Duties and Responsibilities:

- Overseeing and organising the implementation of research and monitoring programmes in the field in coordination with the research team and with support from the BRMM, these will include long-term existing protocols for established methods such as distance sampling based line transect surveys, bird counts, and camera trap surveys, but may also include newly developed protocols;
- Assist in collecting biodiversity data and ensure that data collection protocols are accurately and reliably implemented by field staff;
- Ensures all data are inputted accurately and on a timely basis, perform data verification, and identify and correct any emerging issues, ensure data is managed and stored according to data management systems following international standards;
- Support the compilation of technical materials, literature search, data compilation if and when needed;
- Assist in building capacity and the delivery of technical training and on-the-job coaching to local and government staff, research rangers, and BRM staff on biodiversity monitoring techniques, analysis and interpreting results;
- Reporting and information dissemination to the BRMM, the EPL programme, the communications team, government counterparts, local communities, and the Cambodian public;
- Support maintaining and further developing existing relations with government partners, community stakeholders, conservation and research partners as well as donors;
- Support the development of new components of the BRM-EPL programme;
- Support financial and administrative duties as per WWF policy, including budget oversight;
- Ensure responsible management, maintenance, and tracking of technical equipment in coordination with the research team;
- Other tasks assigned according to organizational needs.

Qualifications

Education and experience

- Minimum Bachelor Degree, Master Degree strongly preferred, in the field of environmental sciences, zoology/ecology, species conservation, conservation science or related subject;
- At least 3-year field-based biodiversity research experience, applying biodiversity monitoring methods;
Experience in leading teams and managing work plans;
Experience living and working in remote and challenging settings;

Skills, knowledge, & Abilities
- A good understanding of and experience in research methodologies of biodiversity surveys;
- Understanding of relevant statistical concepts (e.g. distance sampling, mark-recapture, occupancy etc.);
- Data base management skills;
- Fluency in written and spoken English, Khmer desirable;
- Fluency in MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), preferably in Python or R Statistical Software and/or DISTANCE as well, GIS skills desirable;
- Technical and donor report writing;
- Leadership and team management skills;
- Presentation and communication skills;
- Experience with technical research equipment (GPS, camera trap, range finder, compass etc.);
- Planning and organisation skills;

Personality
- Interpersonal, team-player, supportive, coaching, patient;
- Working well with and contributing effectively to a multicultural team;
- Working independently in remote areas and spending periods of time in the field under challenging environmental conditions, physically fit;
- Well-organised, punctual, attention to detail, adaptive, and forthcoming;
- Responsible, working on own initiative with minimum supervision and staying on task;
- Passionate about wildlife conservation and dedicated to the mission of WWF Cambodia;
- Engaging and Role models WWF's behaviours of Listening Deeply, Innovating Fearlessly, Collaborating Openly, and Strive for Impact.

Internal: He/she will coordinate with all relevant departments in the EPL-office and Phnom Penh including but not limited to: Protected Area and Law Enforcement, Community Engagement, Finance, Administration, Procurement, Spatial Planning, Private & Public Sector Management, and Communications

External: All relevant stakeholders, with emphasis on major government partner institutions (especially Ministry of Environment); with other conservation NGOs in Cambodia, , for coordinated research and monitoring across the landscape.

This job description covers the main tasks and conveys the spirit of the sort of tasks that are anticipated proactively from staff. Other tasks may be assigned as necessary according to organizational needs.

Prepared by Supervisor: Milou Groenenberg Date: 25-June-2020
Reviewed by next line manager: Mey Phalla Date: 4-Sep-2020
Reviewed by HR Manager: _________________________ Date: ____________
Approved by Country Director: _________________________ Date: ____________
Accepted by Staff member: _________________________ Date: ____________