

Cambodia Reef Conservation Project (CRCP)

Monthly Project Update

January 2013

Location:

Prek Svey Village, Koh Rong, Sihanoukville, Cambodia

Project Manager / acting Science Officer Sophie Clay



Ministry of Agriculture,
Forestry and Fisheries
Fisheries Administration

CRCP Project Aim

The Cambodia Reef Conservation Project (CRCP) is a collaborative project surveying the coral reefs of Koh Rong and Koh Rong Samloem Islands in the Municipality of Sihanoukville. The programme provides training and conservation education opportunities for local Cambodians as part of an integrated programme to develop local capacity, and to ensure the long-term protection and sustainable use of marine resources throughout the region. Coral Cay Conservation (CCC) is working at the invitation of and in partnership with the Fisheries Administration of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

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Latest News

Following a project hiatus at the end of 2012, the Cambodia Reef Conservation Project has been relaunched in 2013 with a busy schedule ahead. Since the New Year staff and volunteers have been working hard to make the project site in Prek Svey village ready for the coming year. There has been a lot to do on site, including setting up the house to be ready for more volunteers, cleaning our beach area, preparing equipment and getting the boat ready for divers.



CCC Project Site - Prek Svey Village

Volunteers have also been hard at work completing dive training and the skills development program; and with these nearly finished we aim to begin conducting monitoring surveys in the coming days! The data collected in our ongoing monitoring surveys will contribute to informing management decisions for the implementation of a multiple use Marine Fisheries Management Area (MFMA) with conservation zones and protected areas as key priorities.

Story of the month

January has been a busy month in Prek Svey, and we have been fortunate to meet a number of government officials and project partners on visits to Koh Rong. Since our arrival on the island there have been Fisheries Administration (FiA) and Fauna and Flora International (FFI) meetings. CCC staff have met with staff from the FiA and FFI, as well as members of the local community. We are starting to put together an action plan for community awareness of the benefits of sustainably managed marine resources to complement an ongoing stakeholder consultation program. We plan to start by getting both staff and volunteers involved in raising levels of awareness in children by putting on puppet shows with a marine conservation message for children from Prek Svey.



Sophie Clay, CCC; Mr Kim Soka, Director, Conservation Fisheries Office; Mr Keav Tha, FiA Sihanoukville; Mr Berry Mulligan, FFI; Mr Hout Vuthy, Deputy Director, Conservation Fisheries Office; Logan Sullivan, CCC; Mr Chea Pallin, FFI; Thaung Ret, RUPP & CCC Scholar; Teang Phallin, RUPP & FFI; Louise Baldwin, CCC (left to right).

Survey Update

Survey background: Our baseline-surveying programme is designed to gather data about the biological and morphological standing of Koh Rong and Koh Rong Samloem Islands. This data is combined with information on human and natural impacts on the reefs, along with oceanographic data, to ultimately produce a Geographical Information System 'map' of the various habitats of the islands. It is like a 'stock-take' of the current marine resources. This will provide policymakers and concerned institutions with information necessary to effectively manage those resources. We are also monitoring the reefs for signs of bleaching, following the mass bleaching event in 2010.

Cambodia Reef Conservation Project January 2013



New volunteers arrived on site from the first week of January and have worked hard to complete dive training and the skills development program. This has encompassed learning about coral reef ecology and biology, and how to identify the target indicator species we use in our coral reef survey methodology. This includes identification of various corals, invertebrates, fish, and also assessment of a range of impacts on survey sites. We are now just about to start surveying for the first time this year and the volunteers are keen to put their newly learned skills into practice!

We aim to start by surveying the sites close to our new project site in Prek Svey village and moving further afield for overnight camping trips to reach other sites in due course.

On our way to skills development training!

Marine Creature of the Month

Noble Volute *Cymbiola nobilis* Family Volutidea

Our marine creature this month is commonly seen in the waters around Koh Rong! The noble volute is found across South East Asia and we have been lucky enough to encounter a few of them on dives. However they are not always as they seem, for we have also found giant hermit crabs occupying these beautiful shells! With an appearance similar to that of a cone shell but larger, these gastropods have featured in our skills development program to enable volunteers to differentiate between the noble volute and our target indicator species, the cone shell. This one was over 30 cm long!

