



Unofficial Translation

NS/RKT/0305/149

ROYAL DECREE

on

Designation of Animals and Plants as National Symbols of the Kingdom of Cambodia

We

*Preah Karuna Preah Bat Samdech
Preah Boromneath Norodom Sihamoni
King of the Kingdom of Cambodia*

- Having seen the constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia;
- Having seen the Preah Reach Kret No. NS/RKT/0704/124 of July 15, 2004 on the appointment of the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia;
- Having seen the Preah Reach Krom No. 02/NS/94 of July 20, 1994 the promulgation of the Law on the organization and functioning of the Council of Minister;
- Having seen the Preah Reach Krom No. NS/RKM/0196/13 of January 24, 1996 the promulgation of the Law on the establishment of the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries;
- Having seen the Preah Reach Krom No. NS/RKM/1296/36 of December 24, 1996 the promulgation of the Law on the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Management;
- Having seen the Preah Reach Krom No. NS/RKM/0802/016 of August 31, 2002 the promulgation of the Law on Forestry;
- Having seen the proposal of the Samdech Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia, pursuant to the approval of the Council of Ministers at its plenary session on February 25, 2005.

Hereby Order

Article 1: This Royal Decree is made for the purpose of designating names of animals and plants that have existence and special benefit as national symbols of the Kingdom of Cambodia to demonstrate her precious natural heritage and promote national pride.

Article 2: The national animals and plants symbols of the Kingdom of Cambodia are listed below:

- 1- Mammal : Kouprey (*Bos sauveli*)
- 2- Bird : Giant Ibis (*Pseudibis gigantea*)
- 3- Reptile : Royal Turtle (*Batagur baska*)
- 4- Fish : Giant Mekong Barb (*Catlocarpio siamensis*)
- 5- Tree : Sugar Palm (*Borassus flabellifer*)
- 6- Flower : Rumdul (*Mitrella mesnyi*)
- 7- Fruit : Chicken Egg Banana (*Musa aromatica*)

Pictures and characteristics of the species listed above are attached in Appendix 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the Royal Decree.

Article 3: The animals and plants mentioned in article 2 above should be protected and conserved for their sustainability, and awareness of them should be widely raised.

Article 4: The Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia is in charge of the implementation of this Royal Decree.

Article 5: This Royal Decree comes into effect from the date of its signature.

The Royal Palace, Phnom Penh, 21 March 2005

Submitted to His Majesty the King
for Signatory
Prime Minister

Signature and Seal,
Norodom Sihamoni

Hun Sen

No: 124 Chor-Lo
For circulation
Phnom Penh, 25 March 2005
Secretary General of the Royal Government

Nady Tan

Appendix 1

of the Royal Decree No. NS/RKT/0305/149 dated March 21, 2005 on the Designation of Animals and Plants as National Symbols of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

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#### **1- គោក្រៃ - Kouprey (*Bos sauveli*): The National Mammal of the Kingdom of Cambodia**



The Kouprey, an original Khmer species, has been recognized worldwide and named in Khmer version by international biologists even though English, Spanish and French call it Kouprey. Its scientific name is "*Bos sauveli*" with a size: HB: 2100mm-2300mm; H: 1700mm-1900mm and W: 700-900 kg. The Kouprey is similar to the gaur or banteng but they are unique in having a very long dewlap hanging from the neck, in old males almost reaching the ground. The bull and cow horns are distinctly different. In the bull Kouprey, the horns have cores which are closer

together and considerably larger; the horns form a convex curve for the basal half of the horns, dropping below the base, then rising upward and forward, extending slightly above the head with split at the tips. The horns in the female are lyre-shaped, corkscrewing upward, the tips are never shredded, and the cores are thinner and farther apart than in the male. The lower legs of the Kouprey are white or grayish and dark grayish at old age. In the pre-war period, hunting of the Kouprey was prohibited by declaration No. 191 dated January 20, 1960. After the Pol Pot regime, hunting was again prohibited by declaration No. 359 dated August 01, 1994, issued by Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries. Kouprey was classified as a critical endangered species according to the IUCN Red List. International Trade of this species is banned, following Appendix I of the CITES Convention and Migratory Species Convention. In the 1960s, the King of Cambodia identified and declared the Kouprey as the Cambodia natural heritage symbol. It has been written about in popular Khmer songs, especially some melodies, describing the richness of nature and the important of comparability of human, animals, and nature for peace and prosperity. Kouprey were often found in herds of 20 or more and also found with gaur, banteng or sambar deer. They are more intelligent, more industrious and more easily frightened than other species in their family and they are strong, agile, and good at smelling and fast moving. Kouprey can tolerate sunlight, low quality food and Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (SBP) diseases.

## Appendix 2

### **of the Royal Decree No. NS/RKT/0305/149 dated March 21, 2005 on the Designation of Animals and Plants as National Symbols of the Kingdom of Cambodia.**

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2- ព្រីប៊ីប៊ី - Giant Ibis (*Pseudibis gigantea*): The National Bird of the Kingdom of Cambodia



The Khmer common name is “Tror Yorng or Kangor Yak or Aov Loeuk”. The scientific name is “*Pseudibis gigantea*” and English common name is “**Giant Ibis**”. Giant Ibis has dark grey-brown plumage, light red legs, curved downward bill and 104cm in body length. Hunting of Giant Ibis was prohibited by declaration No.359 dated August 01, 1994 issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. It was classified as a critical endangered species according to the IUCN Red List. Giant Ibis is one of the species that in the past distributed almost throughout Southeast

Asia, but at present time it can only find in the North and Northeast parts of Cambodia. It has been written about in popular Khmer songs and Khmer traditional tales. Cambodia people had believed that Giant Ibis is very intelligent, if a fail hunting on them in any places, they will never come to those places for ever. Their bloods were traditionally used for malaria treatment in the isolated villages. It is a popular bird, people like them a lots, especially it's morning calls that connected to the heart of Cambodian farmers for love introduction as well as for remaining that it is time for going to the fields. Giant Ibis feeds on many species of invertebrates such as shell, earth warm, crab...etc. It likes to inhabit in dried open forest with many wetland (ponds, lakes, rivers). It walks slowly on the ground for feeding and rest on trees for hiding from its enemies. Giant Ibis is a new rediscovered species in Cambodia, after the world wondered it might be extinct. A total number of it population founded in Prah Vihear Province is not lease than a 100 birds, which is one of the largest population of the world. Cambodia is the first country for providing the first wild Giant Ibis photos for the world and now photographs were published in the National Geographic Magazine. The Government of Cambodia issued a sub-degree for wildlife and genetic resource conservation in Prah Vihear is also the main reason to protect Giant Ibis. Because it is a critical endangered species so many international conservation organizations are interesting to protect them. However, because it is a beautiful and good looking bird, especially it was a new rediscovered species in Cambodia; it is great potential for eco-tourism initiative.

Appendix 3

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#### 3- ក្រូចក្រូច - Royal Turtle (*Batagur baska*): The National Reptile of the Kingdom of Cambodia



The Khmer common name is “Andoeurk Sarsai or Andoeurk Lung”. The scientific name is “*Batagur baska*” and English common name is “**Royal Turtle**”. Royal Turtle has white eyes and hooked nose. The carapace has up to 60 cm long with gray or black color. The front digits are large and covered with webbed skin similar to duck feet. It has 4 digits in contrast to other species that have five digits.

International trade of Royal Turtle is prohibited as it is included in appendix I of the CITES convention. Royal Turtle is classified as globally threatened species in the IUCN Red List. For year ago, the species has been protected by the royal decree and has been regarded as royal property in Cambodia. The turtle eggs were collected from January to March solely for offering to royalty to eat. For this reason people gave it name "Royal Turtle" which resists today. Later, whenever people captured this species then always decorated it and invited monks to pray for peace before releasing it. Royal Turtle prefers marine estuaries of small streams with mangrove forest or other aquatic plants along the sea beach. Royal Turtle feeds on a wide range of foods including plant leaves, sprouting plants, mangrove fruit and insects. In the 1980 and 1990s, this species was thought to be extinct in Cambodia. Then in 1995 this species was found in Sre Ambil district, Koh Kong province and in 2002, the Department of Fisheries in collaboration with WCS hatched 32 turtles and released them into nature. This is a nearly extinct species which international conservation agencies and non-governmental organizations are concerned about, and they are financial support to protect and conserve it. On the other hand, together with beautiful mangrove forest habitat it has the potential to attract tourism.

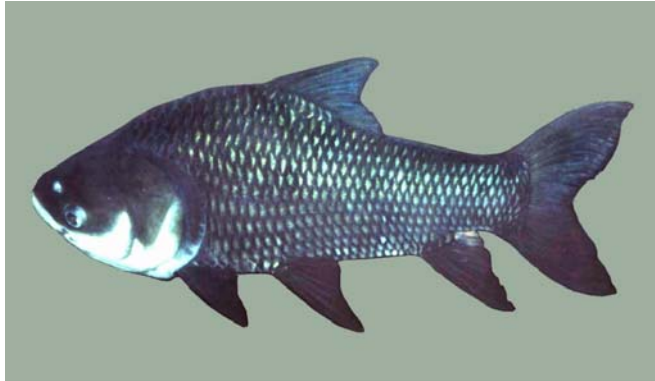


## Appendix 4

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4- ត្រីកង្កែប- Giant Mekong Barb (*Catlocarpio siamensis*): The National Fish of the Kingdom of Cambodia



The Khmer common name is “Trey Kahor or Trey Kbal Lan or Trey Koalreang”. The scientific name is “*Catlocarpio siamensis*” and English common name is “Giant Mekong Barb”. Giant Mekong Barb is largest freshwater fish of the Kingdom of Cambodia. It weighs 150-300 Kg, has body length of 2-3 m, has large scales covering the

whole body, except the head and fins. The body has two different colors, scales above the lateral lines are clear grey, and under the lateral line are silver. This species is protected by Article 18, Chapter II, of Royal decree No 33 on Management of the Fisheries Sector. At present, the Department of Fisheries has encouraged hatcheries and breeding stations to conduct research and experimentation on breeding and incubation in order to stock the fish in natural water bodies and use for aquaculture. Since 2000, the Department of Fisheries has cooperated with the Project for the Management of the Freshwater Capture fisheries of Cambodia of the Mekong River Commission to tag and release into the wild barbs captured in bagnet fisheries in the Tonle Sap River, in order to study its migration and growth. The giant barb is a freshwater species endemic to the Cambodian Mekong River system. The fish is found in the Mekong River, especially in the Tonle Sap Lake. In ancient times the bard was carved on the wall of temples at Angkor. Its scales are popularly used for making a type of shuttlecock (used in a game in which a group stand in a circle and kick the shuttlecock from person to person) for a Khmer popular sport. Compared with other freshwater fish species, it is the largest, and is not aggressive. It is tasty and a popular Cambodian food. The reasons for encouraging hatcheries and breeding stations to carry out breeding and incubation experiments are to disseminate the findings to fish farmers because the fish feeds on natural foods, grows fast, and the brood stock can be maintained. At the same time, its important habitat is deep pools that has been established as protected areas along the Cambodian Mekong River to conserve this endangered species. It is a commercial fish species, and is an endangered species which the World Conservation Union and non-government organizations are interested in providing assistance to protect and conserve.

Appendix 5

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#### 5- ម៉ែមត្តោត - Sugar Palm (*Borassus flabellifer*): The National Tree of the Kingdom of Cambodia



The Khmer common name is “Thnoat”. The scientific name is “*Borassus flabellifer*” and English common name is “**sugar palm**”. Sugar palm is a type of plant classified as palm tree with a single stem, large stump, and cylindrical trunk with height of 10-25m. Their roots have lateral characteristics and no main root. The trunk is rough and dark in color with diameter of 20-60cm and varies according to the quality of soils. The bunch of leaves is a fan form and clustered on the top of the tree. Midrib of palm tree is thick and smooth; has yellow-green color when it is young; yellow-brown color when it is older; and has thorns along both edges in the form of chainsaw teeth. Male and female flowers of sugar palms are differentiated morphologically. Male flower of sugar palm has long and rounding form with size of 2-4 cm and length of 30-50 cm, whereas female flower has a form of rounding fruit with the length of 50-70 cm which yield fruits from 20 to 50. Sugar palm fruit is round and dark-brown color on the bottom part and green color on the top; and changes the color to dark-yellow when it ripens. The diameter of the palm fruit is 13-20 cm which varies according to the quality of the soil, the exploitation for sugar palm juice, and the age of the

trunk. Sugar palm is a popular plant representing

Khmer society, it provides many advantages to Khmer nation since the early build of the Kingdom; and it is an identity that Khmer people recognize as a view of their territory since the ancient time until present with an expression that “sugar palm tree is a shelter of Khmer house”. In 2003, His Majesty, the King of the Kingdom of Cambodia requested the Royal Government of Cambodia to examine and take actions to control and prevent destruction of natural resources such as forest and sugar palm trees; and later on the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries issued advice circulation letter no. 481 dated on September 5, 2003 to take prevention measures of transport and exploitation of sugar palm trees. In Khmer society, sugar palm tree has many advantages which include roots and male flowers of sugar palm used for traditional medicine to cur malaria, sexual diseases, anesthesia of hand and leg. Palm tree can be used for construction of houses, shelter for animals, boats, or construction materials. Currently, palm tree has been used as valuable crafting production in the market. Leaves for roof and wall of the houses, braiding mats, hats, boxes or trunks; and sometime can be used for inscribing or writing in replacement of *Carypha umbraculifera* too. Palm tree fruit and juice has delicious taste and it is popular within Khmer society. The production of sugar from palm tree juice is a tradition of Khmer People since ancient time until present.

## Appendix 6

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### 6- ត្រីវិជ្ជា - Rumdul (*Mitrella mesnyi*): The National Flower of the Kingdom of Cambodia



The Khmer common name is “Rumdul”. It has a scientific name “*Mitrella mesnyi*”. Rumdul is a type of plant with height of 8-12 m and has stem diameter of 20-30 cm. The bark of the stem is yellow-brown. Leaf is single alternate without spur. Leaf is flat and long in form with the size of 2-4cm x 6-10cm. Flowers of Rumdul are white-yellow color and have fragrant smell for a long distance during the late afternoon and evening. Fruits are cluster with dark-red color when it ripens; and it is edible. Rumdul grows in the nature and can be seen almost everywhere in Cambodia. Cambodian people

like to grow it for decoration of houses and public parks. Due to fragrant smell of Rumdul flower, ancient time of Khmer people like to use it for material to produce lip waxes for women. Stem of Rumdul can also be used for supplement construction materials and firewood. In the season of maturing of Rumdul fruit, people who live close to the forest is always collecting the Rumdul fruits to sell for living. Due to attraction of fragrant smell, therefore, Khmer women have been compared to the Rumdul flower, and also some Khmer’s author has written some song such as Rumdul Kraties and Rumdul Pursat...etc.

### 7- ចេកពងមាន់ -Chicken Egg Banana (*Musa aromatica*): The National Fruit of the Kingdom of Cambodia



The Khmer common name is “Chek Pong Moan”. It scientific name is “*Musa aromatica*” and English common name is “Chicken Egg Banana”. Banana is popular for eating and used by every Cambodian people. They can eat the matured banana fruit or preserved fruit, flat drying, and drying banana...etc. Other than that Cambodian people like to use banana for offering to the spirit or for present in many ceremonies and also used for offering to Thevada every Buddhist Saintday too. In Khmer expression “ when sick use elephant to pray and when sickness gone

even chicken egg banana is repented”. This is indicated that banana has been used for general purpose because it is cheap and can be found everywhere. Most chicken egg banana grows along the Mekong River, especially on the new emerging islands. Banana has been grown in Cambodia for a long time even though it originated from India. As an example, in ancient Khmer story “Grand Child of Banana Sheath” is an evident. Other than grow for fruit to generate income of the farmer’s family, banana crop can also be used for many purposes such as stump is source of flour (starch or carbohydrate), especially during temporary scarcity of food, stem can be cut for pig feed, cows, and buffalos...etc. It also can be used as tie string, material for offering to spirit, leaf used for pack or wrap cake or other foodstuff; and banana flowers can be used as fresh vegetable or for cooking.