

**ProCEED**  
Promotion of Climate-related Environmental Education

ProCEED is a Lao-German development cooperation project implemented by the Lao Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The project aims at improving knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding environmental and biodiversity protection as well as climate change adaptation in Laos.

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**7 Unsustainable hunting causes imbalanced ecosystems**



Wildlife populations in Laos are in serious decline due to over-exploitation for subsistence and trade. The loss of species, however, has a great impact on the balanced functioning of ecosystems. Wildlife plays an important role in the movement of seeds away from the parent plant, which is important for species diversity. The loss of small predators such as civets and snakes will cause their prey to grow in large numbers, e.g. rats which may pose a major threat to human health and post-harvest storage. A balanced ecosystem safeguards pest control and over-population of particular species.

**8 Wildlife hunting and trading are regulated by law**



There is a number of laws and decrees addressing wildlife protection in Laos that provide a framework for hunting and trading, e.g. Lao Wildlife Law. The laws define wildlife as a state property managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Import and export of all wild animals and plants is regulated. Hunting by means of mass destruction such as explosives, poison or electricity is prohibited. Laos is a signatory of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, an international agreement to ensure that international trade of wildlife does not threaten their survival.

**9 Wildlife conservation is based on habitat preservation**



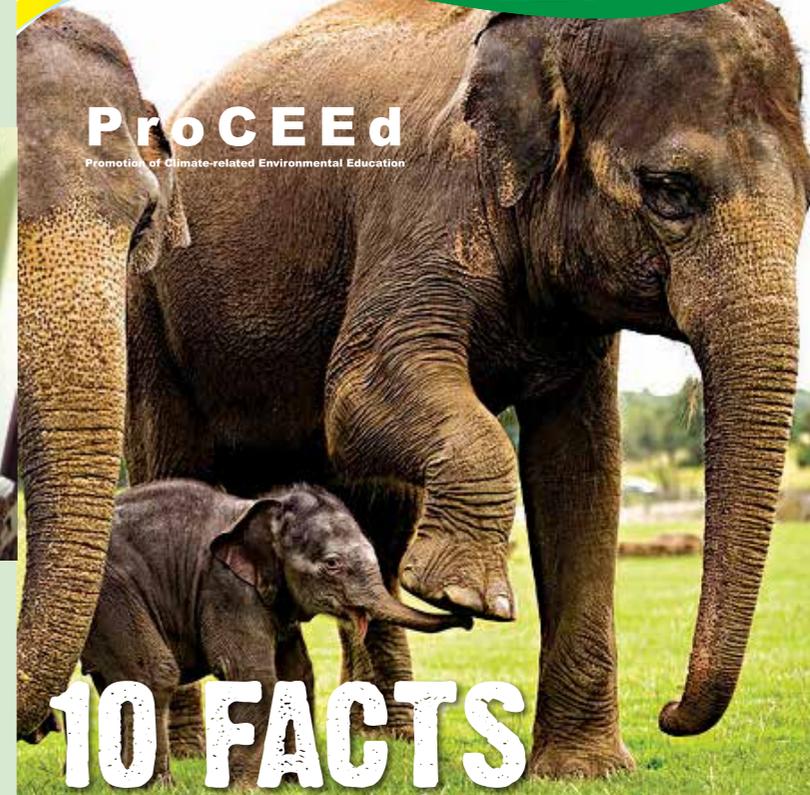
National Protected Areas provide habitat sanctuaries where year-round hunting and harvesting is restricted or banned. Therefore it is important to further expand this system to areas that are currently not under conservation management, e.g. wetlands. Corridors linking protected areas should be designed and well managed as this increases the diversity of species. The government should foster law enforcement for National Protected Areas, where no extractive use is permitted. A policy that regulates commercial use of wildlife with fair leeway for local communities would help in this respect.

**10 Strong regulations can protect wildlife**



One of the key documents providing regulations regarding protected animals in National Protected Areas (NPA) is Decree No. 0524/2001 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry on the Management of National Protected Areas, Aquatic Animals and Wildlife. The decree categorizes protected animals as (1) restricted animals inside NPA restricted zones and corridors that are illegal to hunt or trade, and (2) controlled animals that can only be hunted during a specific season from 1 November to 30 April each year.

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**10 FACTS ON WILDLIFE CONSERVATION IN LAO PDR**

A Lao-German cooperation project

# 1

## Wildlife means non-domesticated animals and plants



Wildlife refers to non-domesticated animal species such as elephants, tigers or monkeys, and also birds and insects. Plants, mushrooms and other organisms growing or living in areas untouched by humans are also included. Domesticated animals, e.g. cows, buffalos or dogs, have been bred and manipulated in their development over time by humans. For example, dogs have been bred for house protection, herding or hunting. Wildlife can be found in all ecosystems from deserts and plains to forests and grasslands.

# 2

## Laos offers habitats for a variety of wild animals



An estimated 700 bird and 90 bat species can be found in Laos in addition to 166 species of reptiles and amphibians, and more than 247 species of mammals. Three of the latter can only be found in Laos and Vietnam: giant flying squirrels, goat-like saolas and Laotian rock rats. Laos also has one of the largest remaining populations of Asian elephants in Indochina. Moreover, the Mekong and its tributaries in Laos are home to about 500 endemic fish species.

# 3

## Lao people cherish wildlife for many reasons



Wildlife is an essential source of food and nutrition for most people in Laos. Fish, mostly supplied from lakes and rivers, is one of the major food staples in the country. Wildlife provides people with tools, clothes and medicine. For many rural families, selling wildlife meat, fur and other products generates income and helps them meet their economic needs. The observation of abundant wildlife attracts eco-tourism which has a high income generation potential for park management and the services sector.

# 4

## Wildlife in Laos is in danger



Many species in Laos are already extinct or close to extinction. For example, once called the 'Kingdom of One Million Elephants', Laos has less than 1,000 wild elephants left today. Problems caused by humans put wildlife in danger: deforestation, poaching, and the expansion of human settlements, large-scale development projects and agriculture are major factors. As a result, over-exploitation of natural resources through commercial logging, overfishing and trans-border wildlife trafficking causes habitat loss and damages ecosystems. Local hunting for consumption plays a less important role.

# 5

## Wildlife trade is illegal and a threat to many animals



Wildlife trafficking is one of the most profitable illegal trades worldwide. In 2011 and 2012, wildlife inspections in Laos led to the confiscation of 1,218 wild animals of 39 species, over a ton of wildlife parts and 287 tons of non-timber forest products. As in other countries, Laos shows strong links between infrastructure projects, natural resources extraction and wildlife trafficking. Many loggers supplement their income with hunting and transport wildlife meat to traders and markets. More sophisticated smuggling networks and easier access to remote habitats contribute to the loss of wildlife species.

# 6

## Loss of wildlife affects people's livelihoods



The decrease of wildlife poses problems for the majority of rural households. Wildlife overhunting and trade contribute to the decline of common species as important staple food. Large-bodied mammals, birds and reptiles have been reported to become rare. Today, wildlife products for consumption and trade mainly rely on small-bodied animals with less than two kilogram in size. The loss of species has an impact on agricultural production, too. Insects, bees and bats transfer pollen between plants and trees which leads to crop pollination. Without them agricultural production is impossible.