

Anantara Reports Nature Conservation Success for Wild Elephants in Cambodia via Charitable Foundation The GTAEF

The GTAEF works in partnership with local communities around the world to reinforce its commitment toward environmental, social and cultural conservation.

BANGKOK, THAILAND, December 21, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Anantara's charitable foundation, the Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation (GTAEF) works in partnership with local communities around the world to reinforce its commitment toward environmental, social and cultural conservation. One such initiative, The Cardamom Tented Camp in Cambodia, has recorded the return of a small herd of wild elephants to its conservation area, after an absence of five years as well as a large group of at-risk native smooth coated otters. Forest rangers discovered and photographed elephant footprints and droppings inside the 18,000-hectare forest concession, which the camp protects with help from Wildlife Alliance and funds raised by Anantara guests.



The Return of a Small Herd of Elephants



Rangers Cross Prek Tachan River

Since 2014, the concession of land on which the camp is located has been funded via The Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation (GTAEF) as one of several philanthropic causes supported worldwide by Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic Anantara guests, via the GTAEF, continued to support the ongoing maintenance of the camp and its team of rangers despite borders being closed to tourism. Anantara Angkor Resort in Siem Reap also donated supplies directly to the eco lodge throughout the past year.

"From the size of the dung and the number of footprints, it seems that this is a herd of nine elephants comprising four adult females, their calves and one juvenile," said John Roberts Director of the Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation (GTAEF) and Group Director of Sustainability & Conservation for Anantara, which has been fully funding the ranger effort since the pandemic shut down tourism across the globe. "They have also been caught on camera traps in the area south of our concession."



The Cardamom Tented Camp

"There is human traffic and a non-ideal environment all around us," continued Roberts. "But whether the elephants are on a long migration or looking for a new home we are pleased to welcome them to our forests and grasslands. It's an environment they prefer, and we ensure it comes with zero harassment."

Lodge manager Allan Michaud, who is a wildlife photographer and conservationist, reports the return of a group of otters to the Preak Tachan river beside the camp. "There are around 15 to 18 of them, ranging over 20 kilometres of river, with the camp being pretty much at the centre of their territory," said Michaud. This species of otter is native to Cambodia and is one of three species that are globally threatened and at risk of extinction due to human activities, this development could be significant for Cambodia's role in the global conservation of otters

The Cardamom Tented Camp, nestled in Southern Cambodia's Cardamom Mountain range is a non-profit eco lodge resting within 18,000 hectares of pristine land, and opened in late 2017. Proceeds from the camp are used to fund rangers that patrol the concession, protecting against deforestation and illegal poaching. Since funding began, a vibrancy has returned within this corridor haven and wildlife is thriving, while beyond the boundaries the forest is being clear-cut and lost to deforestation to enable the construction of destructive rubber plantations and a deep-sea water port, hotel and airport.

Since this area of land was protected, wildlife has returned in abundance and guests often see otters, macaque monkeys, kingfishers and hornbills from their boat when they travel to the camp, which is only accessible by river. The camp offers multiple hiking trails which enable adventurous guests to join the rangers on guided wildlife and bird spotting hikes through up to 8km of forest before returning via kayak with rest stops at the main ranger station in each direction.

In addition to coping with adverse effects of climate change, Cambodian forests have been

ravaged by illegal loggers, poachers and sand dredgers. The Cardamom Tented Camp entrusts carefully vetted organisations both the right and responsibility to protect and manage designated "concessions" of forest.

In October, Cardamom Tented Camp was included in the Green Destinations' Top 100 Destination Sustainability Stories in the world. In 2019 the camp won the PATA Gold Award for Ecotourism and was a top three finalist in the World Travel & Tourism Council's Tourism for Tomorrow Awards. In the same year, it was listed in National Geographic UK's invitation-only listing of top 36 eco-hotels around the world which are leading by example.

Cardamom Tented Camp is once again open and operating with a unique business model. Part of the income from the lodge's operation goes towards the funding of 12 forest rangers who protect the area from loggers, poachers and river sandbank dredgers. The camp therefore has the slogan, "Your Stay Keeps the Forest Standing."

Fully vaccinated travellers can now enter Cambodia and it has nearly 90% of its 16 million population fully vaccinated, one of the highest inoculation rates in Asia. The ideal time to visit this idyllic corner of the world is between December to April as the southwest Cambodia region near the Thai border enjoys blue skies and rain free days. "It is a perfect time for hiking, kayaking, bird spotting or relaxing on our river pontoon with a good book," said Michaud.

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