

**PRESENTATION GIVEN AT THE TRANSLINKS NATURE,
WEALTH AND POWER WORKSHOP**

QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES

JUNE 20 – 21, 2007

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TMATBOEY IBIS TOURISM SITE

Two pairs of White-shouldered Ibis nest near the village. These are the only nests known in mainland Asia.



The giant ibis is a critically endangered species, with perhaps only 250 birds remaining in the wild.

Tmatboey Ibis Tourism Site, Northern Plains, Cambodia



the landscape and many features can still be seen. These include ancient cities and roadways. Angkorian tanks or trapenags are now favoured feeding pools for ibises and other large waterbirds, whilst ancient ricefields, since abandoned, provide nesting sites for cranes.

- Nesting White-shouldered Ibis (only known site in mainland Asia) and Giant Ibis

- Two of the rarest bird species in the world

- High interest from global bird-watching tourism market (high-paying)

- Relatively easy access from Siem Reap (4 hours)



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1. Tmatboey

TMATBOEY
IBIS
TOURISM SITE

But, tourism ≠ local benefits

■ 1. How to engage local people?

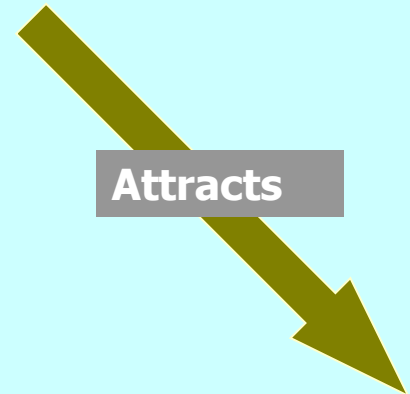
- Site tourism is managed by an elected village committee (9 people)
- They manage the “village development fund” on behalf of the community
- Each tourist pays a \$30 donation, if they see the birds

- Individual families benefit by providing services: guides accommodation, food and cooking, selling drinks, transport, etc

Wildlife

Attracts

**Bird-
Watchers**

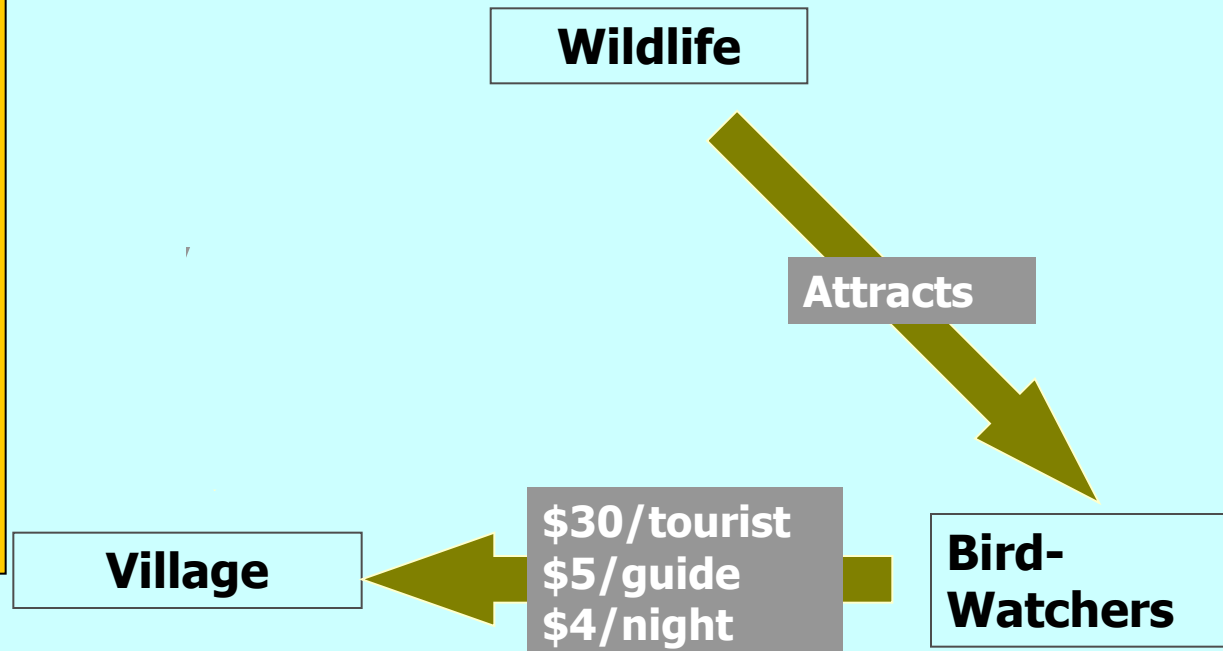


But, tourism ≠ conservation

■ 2. How to ensure conservation?

- All villagers sign up to a “no-hunting” policy w/ WCS and the PA
- The community agrees a “land-use plan” with the Government
- This includes core protected areas for the birds

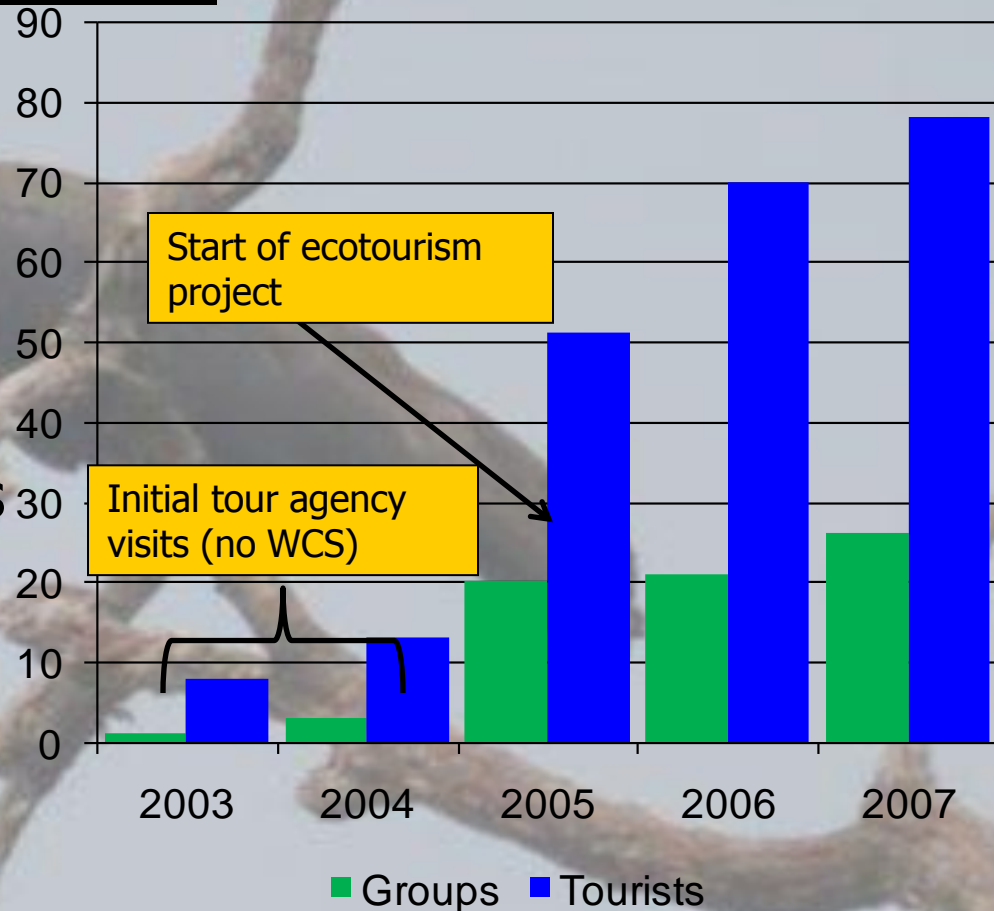
- Tourism benefits are contingent upon maintenance of these agreements
- Agricultural assistance to keep within agreed land-use zones



Does it work?

Tourism

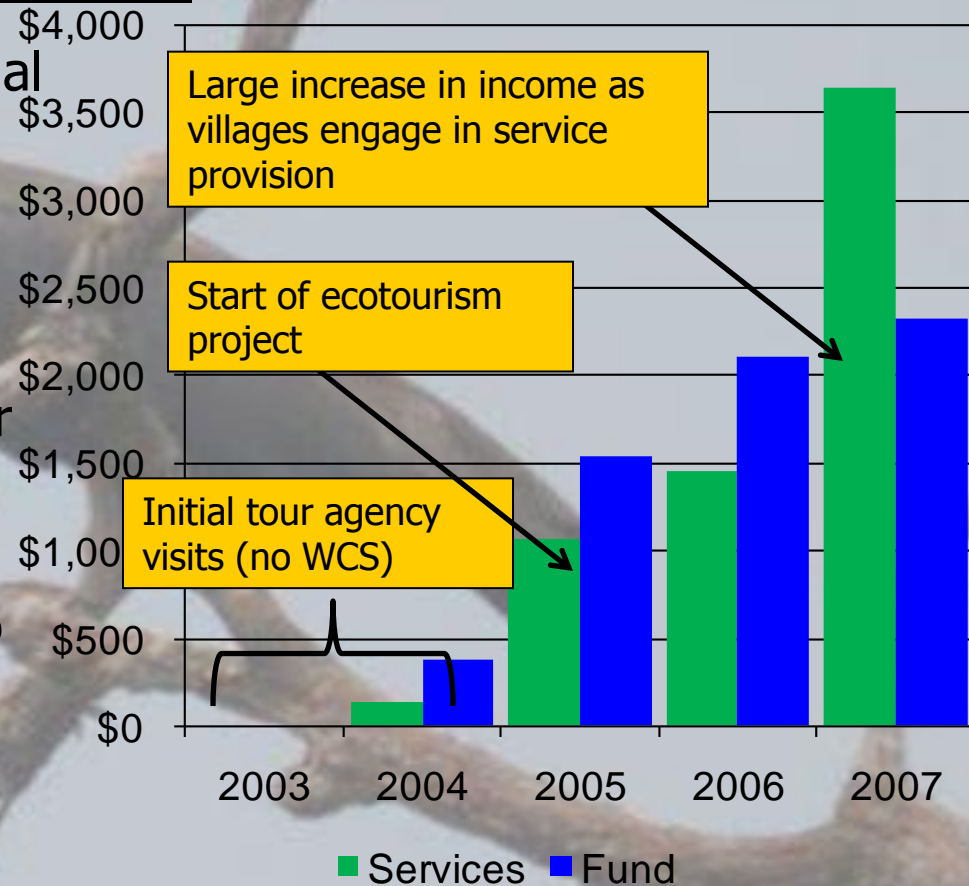
- Number of tourists is increasing annually
- Tourists are staying longer and visiting more sites
- Potential exists to replicate the model at other locations (e.g. Vulture Restaurants, White-Winged Wood Duck)
- **Key Challenge:** to build a tourism market



12-35% annual growth
(depending on site)

Does it work? Local Development

- Community fund used for communal construction projects, benefits village but not individuals
- How to make a livelihood from tourism? Increase incomes
- In 2006/7 the committee took over responsibility for all aspects of tourism management
- Tourist numbers increased by 11% but service payments increased by 150%
- 24 individuals made ~\$20/month
90 individuals were involved
- New guesthouse will increase service payments by 50% more in 2007/8

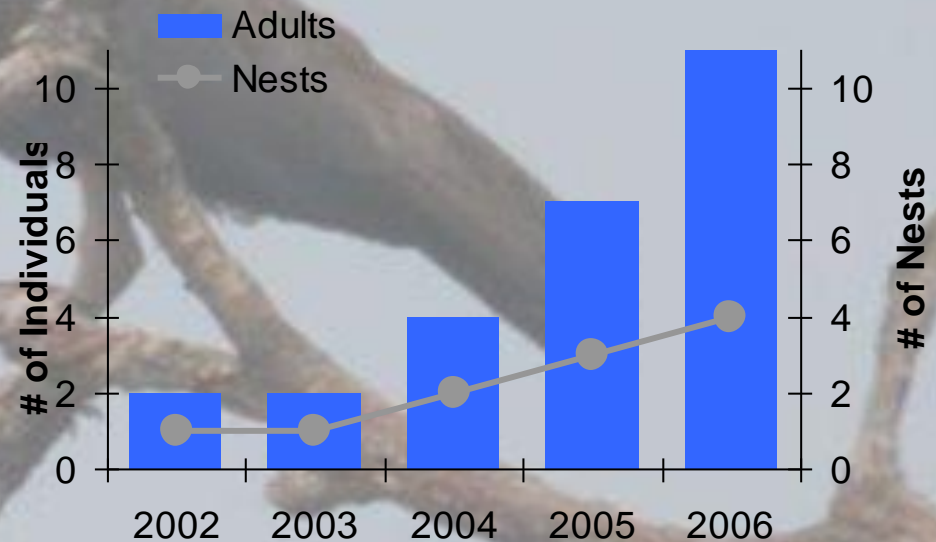


Provide a genuine livelihood from ecotourism

Does it work? Conservation

- 'Pride' associated with having foreigners visiting and sleeping in their village – powerful education tool
- Villagers have improved awareness of key species and their importance
- No hunting agreement kept
- Successful at building Political and Donor support
- Wildlife is increasing!!

White-shouldered Ibis population is increasing (4 pairs now, up from one)



Giant Ibis population has stabilised (5 pairs)

Questions – ecotourism & conservation

- Villagers have 'given up' hunting of key species, but not land conversion to agriculture, in exchange for the current tourism benefits, i.e. benefits partly **additional** rather than a **substitute**
- Benefits were also mainly communal (until 2006) rather than individual
- Challenging: wildlife is cheap, land is worth \$75-125/ha/year for rice.
- Cultivation area increasing by 50-100 ha/year (\$11,250). Need enforcement
- Potential incomes must be raised to allow **individuals** to make a 'livelihood switch' to ecotourism
- **Key Future Challenges**
 - Community wildlife management funded by tourism income (patrolling, wildlife monitoring, set-aside land)
 - Further increases in service provision to allow individuals to make 'livelihood switch' to ecotourism



Will require significant increases in local management capacity

WCS will have invested c. \$100,00 in building a community management system