



Asian Turtle Conservation Network

June 14, 2004

Cardamom Mountain Project Update

The preliminary results of interview-based surveys carried out in the Central Cardamom Mountains showed more than 90% of the interviewees (N=60 households) confirming the presence of three species; *Indotestudo elongata*, *Cyclemys atripons*, and *Amyda cartilaginea*.

The turtle research and conservation project, administered by students from Royal University of Phnom Penh with support from a BP Conservation Award, is surveying tortoises and freshwater turtles in the Central Cardamom Mountains, and planning conservation activities that will help protect wild populations within this biologically important landscape.

The interview-based surveys suggest that other species may be present in the area as well. Between 50-90% of the local interviewees reported *Pelochelys cantorii*, *Malayemys subtrijuga*, and *Heosemys grandis* as being other species native to the area. Fewer numbers of interviewees suggested that *Manouria impressa*, *Cuora amboinensis* and *Hieremys annandalii* could be found there as well.

So far, trapping efforts in the Areng Valley have yielded confirmed records for *Amyda cartilaginea* and *Cyclemys atripons*. Shells belonging to *Indotestudo elongata* and *Heosemys grandis* were also recovered from local villages in the valley, in addition to three live juvenile and adult *Indotestudo elongata* found in surrounding forest.

Conservation International (CI) is providing technical support for the student project, and plans through 2004 involve carrying out additional surveys and trapping in lowland river and marsh habitat, and surveying higher elevations for *Manouria impressa*.

Cardamom field biologist David Emmett of CI noted that future survey efforts would be assisted by two turtle dogs that were recently acquired after they were abandoned by fleeing poachers.

ATCN Staff Report