



Annual Report 2025



Annual Report

2025



Table of Content

| | |
|--|-----------|
| • Foreword | 4 |
| • About us | 5 |
| • Our new direction from 2026 | 7 |
| • Biodiversity Research and Monitoring in 2025 | 9 |
| • White-cheeked Gibbons (<i>Nomascus siki</i> / <i>N. leucogenys</i>) distribution | 10 |
| • Gibbon survey methods development | 11 |
| • Asian Elephant (<i>Elephas maximus</i>) population survey | 12 |
| • Conservation of the Endangered <i>Luciocypinus striolatus</i> | 13 |
| • Community sustainable livelihoods in 2025 | 15 |
| • Conservation awareness in 2025 | 24 |
| • Capacity Building in 2025 | 26 |
| • Communication and publications in 2025 ... | 35 |
| • Meetings, conferences and events in 2025 . | 37 |
| • Financial report for 2025 | 41 |
| • Workplan 2026 | 43 |
| • Acknowledgements | 45 |
| • New Year's greetings | 48 |

Foreword

For the past twelve years, our organisation has had the privilege of working on the ground in Nakai–Nam Theun National Park, supporting conservation efforts in one of Laos’ most ecologically significant landscapes. During this time, our work has focused on practical, field-based interventions—conducting biodiversity research to inform conservation planning, supporting community rangers, strengthening community-led alternative livelihood programmes, and building local capacity to protect biodiversity over the long term.

These efforts would not have been possible without the dedication, knowledge, and leadership of Lao nationals working alongside us. From field researchers and rangers to community members and local partners, their commitment has been the foundation of every achievement reflected in this report. Working together in often challenging conditions has been both demanding and deeply humbling, and it has continually reaffirmed our belief that lasting conservation success is rooted in local ownership and expertise.

The year 2025 marks an important transition. It is the final year of our direct, on-the-ground intervention within Nakai–Nam Theun National Park. While this chapter comes to a close, our commitment to conservation in Laos remains steadfast. From 2026 onwards, we will shift our focus toward capacity building for Lao youth—encouraging and supporting the next generation to pursue careers in conservation, environmental management, and stewardship of their country’s natural heritage.

This new direction reflects a long-term investment in people: in the skills, confidence, and leadership of those who will ultimately shape the future of conservation in Laos. We believe that empowering young Lao professionals is one of the most meaningful ways to contribute to lasting environmental change.

As we look back on twelve years of field-based action with gratitude and respect, we also look ahead with optimism. We are proud of what has been built together, and we are excited to accompany a new generation of conservation leaders as they step forward from 2026 and beyond.

Association Anoulak Director (2014–2025)

Camille.





About us

Association Anoulak (**conservation** in Lao language) is a French-registered association dedicated to the long-term nature conservation in the Annamite Mountains of Laos and the support of human local communities for resilient livelihoods.

Our mission is to develop and implement innovative, multidisciplinary and sustainable approaches to the long-term conservation and study of the biodiversity and ecosystems in the Annamite Mountains of Laos, with a skilled, passionate and dedicated team of nationals and internationals.

Our Team in 2025

In 2025, Association Anoulak employs **7 persons (6 women): 1 foreigner and 6 Lao nationals:**

- Ms. Dr. Camille Coudrat - Association Anoulak's Founder and Director
- Ms. Dr. Lampheuy - Community Program Manager
- Ms. Sisamay - Community Program local leader
- Ms. Laythong - Community Program officer
- Ms. Latdaphone - Community Program officer
- Mr. Khongphet - Community Program officer
- Ms. Meesouk Phetsomphou - Accountant



Since 2014, Association Anoulak have been intervening in the Nakai – Nam Theun National Park, located in east central Lao PDR within the Annamite Mountains on:

- **Biodiversity research and monitoring for conservation**
- **Community anti-poaching patrols (taken over by National Park in 2023)**
- **Conservation awareness**
- **Community sustainable livelihoods**
- **Capacity building**

In 2025, we officially closed our Memorandum of Understanding with Nakai-Nam Theun National Park

Since the signing of the MoU in 2019, the organization has worked closely with Nakai-Nam Theun National Park to implement integrated programs in biodiversity research, anti-poaching efforts, community development, and conservation education.

Key Achievements Over the 7-Year Partnership

1. Biodiversity Research and Monitoring - Association Anoulak has led and supported a wide array of scientific research projects, contributing valuable data and insights into the park's rich biodiversity. These include: primate research on red-shanked doucs and gibbons; Gibbon distribution and population monitoring; Botanical surveys across diverse habitats; Otter distribution surveys; A pioneering arboreal camera-trap program; Large-scale systematic ground camera-trap surveys to monitor mammals and ground birds; Research and conservation of the Large-antlered muntjac, a highly threatened endemic species; Environmental DNA (eDNA) surveys; Elephant population monitoring and research; Research and conservation activities for the Endangered Worf Barb (*Luciocyprinus striolatus*)

2. Anti-Poaching Patrol Support - In coordination with NNT NP, the association supported regular forest patrols aimed at reducing illegal hunting and wildlife trade, helping to safeguard the park's most threatened species.

3. Conservation Education and Awareness - Awareness-raising efforts reached various levels of society through: Village-level educational activities and the creation and dissemination of conservation education resources and books

4. Community Livelihood Development - To support the resilience of local communities living in and around the park, Association Anoulak initiated sustainable income-generating activities, notably the development of handicraft value chains and marketing strategies, empowering villagers—especially women—to gain economic independence through traditional skills.

5. Capacity Building and Training - The project invested significantly in building the technical skills of local partners, including NNT NP staff, researchers, and community members involved in conservation programs.

6. Technical Advising to Park Authorities - Association Anoulak played an advisory role to the Nakai-Nam Theun National Park Authority, particularly in the design and implementation of biodiversity research and monitoring protocols.

Our NEW DIRECTION initiated in 2025

Looking Ahead

As the MoU chapter with Nakai-Nam Theun National Park comes to a close, Association Anoulak remains fully committed to its mission in Lao PDR. The organization's future focus will center on strengthening the capacity of Lao civil society in the conservation sector through three core programs:

- 1. Youth Engagement** – Inspiring and empowering young Lao individuals to explore and pursue careers in nature conservation through educational outreach, mentorship, and exposure to field-based opportunities.
- 2. Professional Development for Lao Conservationists** – Enhancing the skills and knowledge of Lao professionals working in environmental protection and biodiversity through tailored training such as the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation
- 3. Scholarships for Lao Students** – Supporting Lao students through academic scholarships to undertake higher education in the fields of environmental science, biodiversity conservation, and related disciplines, fostering the next generation of national conservation leaders.

Through these initiatives, Association Anoulak will continue to invest in building a resilient, skilled, and passionate Lao conservation community to ensure long-term stewardship of the country's natural heritage.



Biodiversity research and monitoring in 2025

The Distribution of White-Cheeked Gibbons *Nomascus siki* and *Nomascus leucogenys* in Central Lao PDR

Project technical partner:



In 2025, our research on the distribution of White-cheeked Gibbons in Lao PDR was published in the International Journal of Primatology

Methods and Key Findings

- **Acoustic Analysis for Species Identification** – We analyzed 90 gibbon songs from the wild in Lao PDR and Vietnam, along with 32 recordings from identified species obtained from zoological facilities. Our analysis of vocalizations from zoological facilities identified significant differences in male and female vocalizations, which we applied as training data in a machine learning classification analysis (Random Forest analysis), achieving an accuracy of 97% for males and 89% for females. This method proves to be a valuable tool for species identification in conservation programs.
- **Geographic Overlap of Species** – The study found both species present on both sides of the Nam Theun-Nam Kading River, challenging the previous assumption that this river serves as a strict geographical barrier between them. This new evidence suggests a more complex distribution pattern and possible interactions between the two species.
- **Implications for Conservation** – The presence of both species in overlapping ranges raises concerns about hybridization, which could impact conservation efforts. The findings emphasize the need for careful species identification before engaging in reintroduction or translocation programs to prevent genetic mixing and ensure effective management.
- **Policy and Future Research** – This study highlights the importance of conducting further genetic and ecological assessments to refine conservation strategies. Governmental and conservation organizations must consider these findings in ongoing biodiversity monitoring and protection initiatives in Nakai-Nam Theun National Park and surrounding areas.

A Call for Action

The research underscores the necessity of informed conservation planning to protect the distinct populations of *Nomascus leucogenys* and *Nomascus siki*. With the threat of habitat loss and hunting, efforts must be reinforced to safeguard these endangered primates and their ecosystems.

International Journal of Primatology
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10764-025-00491-5>

The Distribution of White-Cheeked Gibbons
Nomascus siki and *N. leucogenys* in Central Lao PDR

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Abstract

Identifying genetically unique primate populations is crucial for guiding conservation efforts. The northern white-cheeked gibbon *Nomascus leucogenys* and southern white-cheeked gibbon *Nomascus siki* have restricted global ranges and are endemic to Lao PDR and Vietnam. However, the boundary between the two species in central Lao PDR is unclear. It has been hypothesized that the Nam Theun-Nam Kading River is the major geographical barrier between the two species. To investigate the distribution of *N. siki* and *N. leucogenys*, we analyzed 90 gibbon songs, known to be species-specific, from sites in central Lao PDR and Vietnam. We also analyzed 32 recordings of gibbons in European zoological facilities that were known to represent each species, based on karyotype. Overall, the recordings included 737 male calls and 229 female calls. In the captive gibbon recordings, we found a statistically significant difference between the species in 12 acoustic parameters for males and in 10 acoustic parameters for females. We used these acoustic parameters for both males and females as training data to perform a Random Forest species classification analysis of vocal recordings of unidentified species from the wild. Our classification accuracy was 97% for males and 89% for females. We detected both *Nomascus siki* and *N. leucogenys* on both sides of the Nam Theun-Nam Kading River in Nakai-Nam Theun National Park and surrounding areas in Central Lao PDR and Vietnam. These results do not support the hypothesis that the Nam Theun-Nam Kading River is a geographical barrier between the two species in central Lao PDR, which was based on a few samples from central Lao PDR, and none from Nakai-Nam Theun National Park. These findings must be taken into consideration as part of potential reintroduction, rehabilitation or translocation programs for both species in this region.

Keywords White-cheeked gibbon · Geographic range · Vocalization · Species identification · Hybridization

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Gibbon survey methods development

Project technical partners:  University of St Andrews

Rationale: Gibbons are some of the most threatened primates in the world, due to habitat loss, illegal pet trade, and hunting for food and traditional medicine. All twenty species of gibbons are threatened with extinction on the [IUCN Red List of Threatened Species](#): five are Critically Endangered, fourteen are Endangered, and one is Vulnerable. Effective conservation measures and actions to mitigate threats to gibbon populations require accurate and precise estimates of their abundance, distribution, and population trends. However reliable survey methods are lacking.

Acoustic surveys are the most applicable method for gibbon, as they produce territorial calls that can be heard from large distances. Acoustic survey methods (with human detectors) have commonly been used to survey gibbons but there is subjectivity in the data from these surveys as they require surveyors to estimate gibbon locations without ever seeing them, resulting in unreliable abundance estimates. **There is also no existing standardized survey protocol and/or analysis method, which prevents long-term population monitoring across time and space.**

In 2020, we initiated a new **collaborative project between Association Anoulak, The Centre for Research into Ecological and Environmental Modelling (CREEM), University of St Andrews in Scotland** with the aim to produce and test affordable, easily deployable **acoustic recorders** that generate data designed for use with cutting-edge statistical abundance estimation methods, to **estimate gibbon abundance**.

In **2025**, this research was continued by colleagues from the University of St Andrews to analyse the data that was collected in the field in 2024 in Xe Sap National Park in Collaboration with WWF-Laos.

In addition we connected colleagues from WCS-Laos to our colleagues from St Andrews University to pursue the development of this technology in one of the sites where WCS-Laos works. This field research will be implemented in 2026.



Asian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*) population survey

Project technical partners:



Rationale: One of the largest elephant populations of Laos is in Nakai-Nam Theun National Park and surrounding areas. In 2008, the Nam Theun 2 hydroelectric dam resulted in the flooding of a large part of the resident elephant population's habitat. Prior to the impoundment, the population was estimated at 132 elephants, likely the largest and genetically most diverse in Laos at the time. But it was suggested that the elephant population would be affected and disperse due to the habitat loss. Since the impoundment, elephants have moved closer to villages and human-elephant conflicts have increased across a wide region, spanning several provinces. The size of the elephant population has not been systematically monitored. Association Anoulak therefore initiated and is leading the study of the current status, genetic diversity and movement patterns of the elephant population, which has implications for the national and global conservation of the species.

The aims of this study are to provide an **estimation of the current elephant population size on the Nakai Plateau and surrounding areas**, as well as its **genetic diversity, social structure and dynamic**. For this elephant survey, we apply **non-invasive fecal DNA-based capture-recapture population survey methods**.

Recap since 2022:

- The **field data collection** was conducted from 2022 to 2023 in the Nakai-Nam Theun National Park region. Overall, a total of **652 samples of elephant dung** were collected.
- In 2023, **DNA was extracted from the samples** in Vientiane under the supervision of the **Institut de Recherche pour le Developpement (IRD-Laos)**
- In 2023, we officialized a collaboration between Association Anoulak, the **Royal Zoological Society of Scotland** and the **Centre d'Ecologie Fonctionnelle & Evolutive** to perform **(1) laboratory analysis for genotyping and sexing** the 652 DNA samples and **(2) modelling results to estimate population size and movement patterns**
- In 2024, the 652 DNA samples were analysed at the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland.



Progress in 2025:

Throughout the year 2025, the **genotyping of the samples** continued.

We experienced significant delays due to issues in the analysis but we are on **track to get final results by early 2026**

Survey and distribution of the Endangered *Luciocyprinus striolatus*

Rationale: *Luciocyprinus striolatus* (Local names: Pa Khouan-Zai, Pa Kang, Pa Sak) is a species of endangered cyprinid native to parts of Laos and China. The species is believed to be already extinct from China, which make Laos the only country to protect the species. The distribution of the species in Laos remains little known, as well as the threats it faces where the species has been confirmed. There are currently only two locations in the country where the species has been recorded: Nam Pak river, a tributary of the Nam Ou river in Oudomxay Province, northern Laos; and Nam Kading/ Nam Theun river, a tributary of the Mekong river, in Khammouan Province, central Laos. Confirming the confirmation status of the species in Laos is crucial to inform conservation planning for the species.

In **2025**, **Association Anoulak and FISHBIO** continued their collaboration for the conservation of the population of Wolf Barb *Luciocyprinus striolatus* in Nakai-Nam Theun National Park, with establishing Fish Conservation Zones (FCZs), and monitor populations of other globally/nationally important species, including *Tor ater*, *Scaphognathops theunensis*, and *Poropuntius carinatus*.

In **2023-2025 (Phase 1)**, our project activities focused on priority areas in the Nam Theun and Nam Noi Rivers for research and conservation actions. In **2026-2028 (Phase 2)**, the project will expand to include Nam Xot and Nam Mon.

With the **financial support of Association Anoulak**, FISHBIO conducted **two field trips in 2025**:

The first field trip took place **from April 22 to May 1, 2025**:

- The surveys successfully documented Wolf Barb population in both the Nam Theun and Nam Noi River basins.
- Eleven Wolf Barb specimens and one Blue Mahseer (*Neolissochilus stracheyi*) were captured, tagged, and released.
- Community engagement activities involved stakeholders from four villages, laying a strong foundation for future participatory FCZ commitments.
- The study identified 15 deep pools in the Nam Theun River and 6 in the Nam Noi River as potential FCZ sites.
- Strong local participation and local ecological knowledge provide encouraging indications of the potential effectiveness of species conservation, monitoring, and sustainable fisheries management.



Survey and distribution of the Endangered *Luciocyprinus striolatus*

The second field mission took place **from 15 to 26 December, 2025**: The field trip allowed to **successfully transitioned the Wolfbarb conservation project from preliminary mapping and species assessments to the establishment of community-led management and the validation of critical life-cycle habitats**:

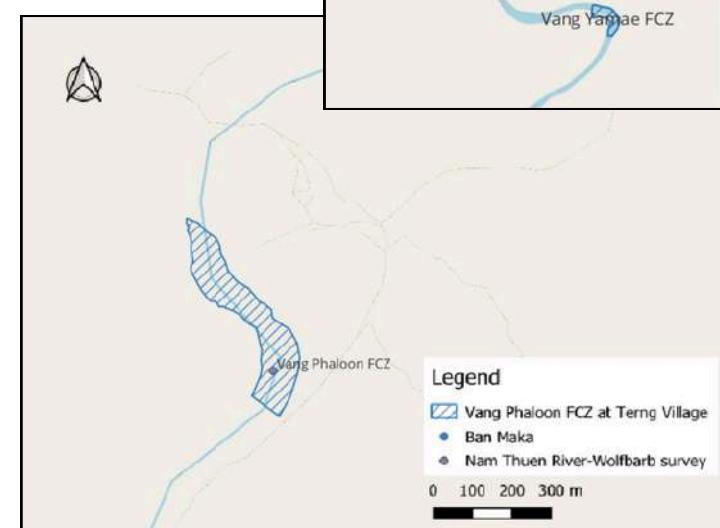
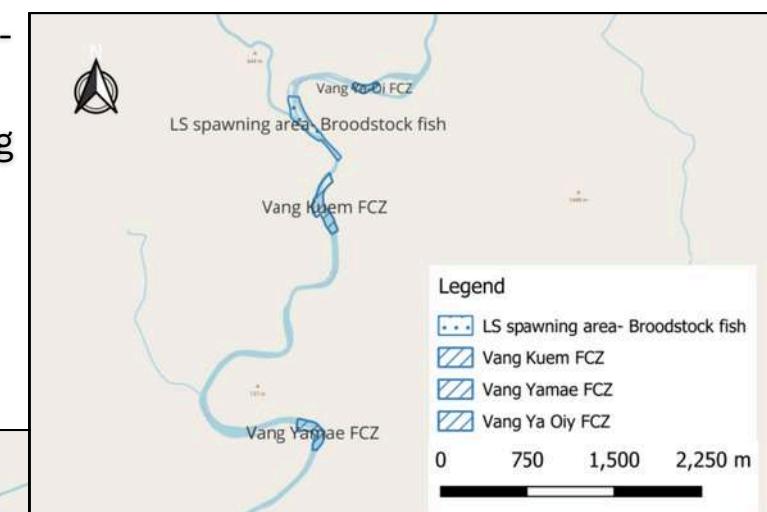
Community Governance & Legal Framework

- Stakeholder engagement: Formal consultations were conducted with 68 participants from two villages in the Nam Theun and Nam Noi Basins to secure community consent and finalise site selections.
- Strategic site selection: Based on habitat quality and adult population density, three sites in the Nam Theun River (Vang Ya Mae, Vang Kuem, and Vang Ya Oi) and one site in the Nam Noi River (Vang Phaloon FCZ at Ban Tern Village) were designated as high-priority locations for Fish Conservation Zones (FCZs).
- Regulatory enforcement: Regulations for the FCZ were drafted with the communities. These are pending official approval from the district authorities (planned in 2026)

Technical Discovery & Biological Integrity

- Spawning habitat identification: A landmark discovery was made at a rocky confluence in the Nam Theun River; the presence of milting males confirms this site as an active spawning ground for the species and likely an essential habitat for juvenile recruitment.
- Population demographics: To date, 34 individual fish have been tagged. An analysis of Length-Weight Relationship (LWR) yielded a growth coefficient of 2.91, confirming that the population maintains a healthy body condition despite environmental pressures.
- Adaptive management: In the Nam Noi River, high interspecific competition from *Hampala macrolepidota* was recorded. Consequently, the Vang Somphad site was deemed unsuitable for specialized Wolfbarb protection and will instead be managed for local food security.

Three critical deep-pool FCZs and one identified spawning area in the Nam Theun River basin



Vang Phaloon Fish Conservation Zone (FCZ) at Terng Village



Community consultation for FCZ priority site Selection and draft regulations



Community sustainable livelihoods in 2025

Community resilience and biodiversity conservation in Nakai District

Rationale: Local communities in Nakai District (1) are highly reliant on natural resources for their livelihoods, (2) their food security often is dependent on foods collected in the wild; (3) their income generation often is dependent on unsustainable natural resources harvest, (4) often practice unsustainable agriculture; (5) are lacking of entrepreneurship capacity, and technical capacity. This project aims to address some of these issues to provide alternative income to local communities

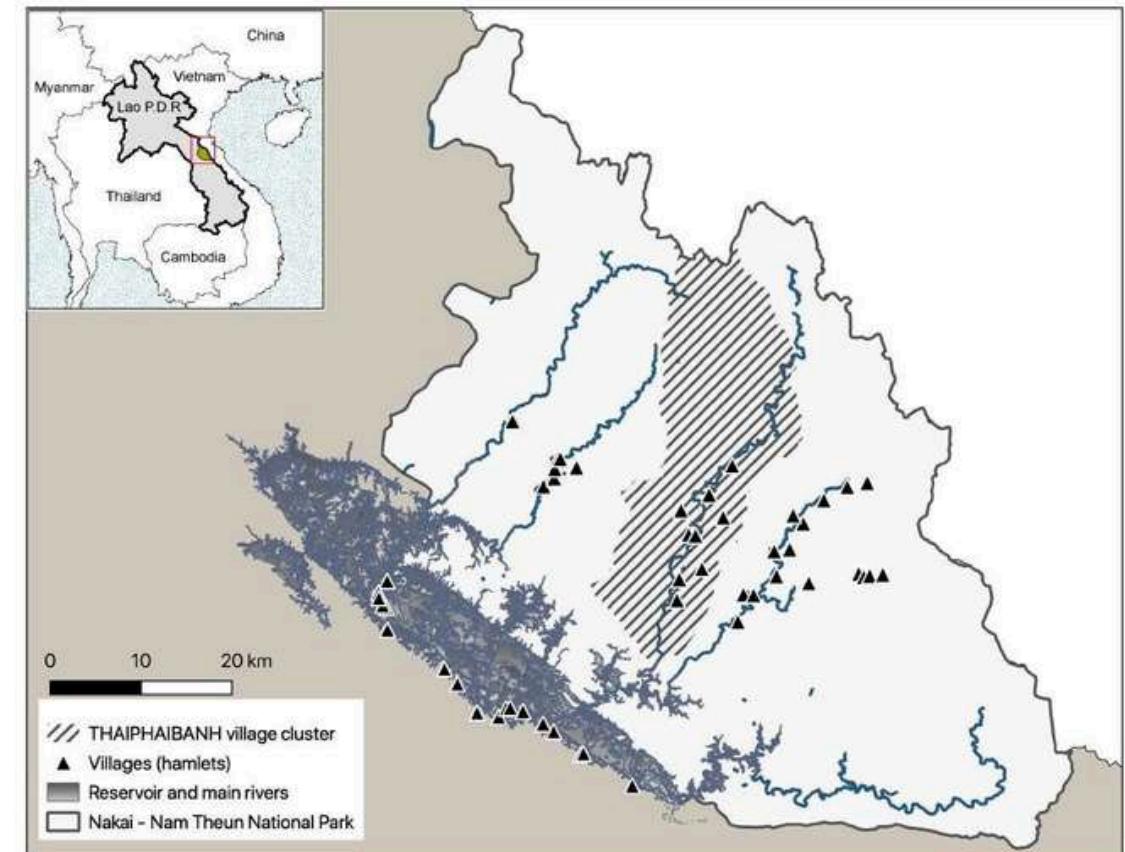
Since 2019, Association Anoulak initiated the program *Resilient Communities for Healthy Natural Ecosystems in the Annamites Mountains of Laos*

Project overall aims

- Support the local communities in implementing innovative and sustainable approaches to bring alternative incomes and to preserve local traditional craftsmanship and cultural integrity
- Reduce the illegal and unsustainable use of natural resources (including plants and wildlife) in Nakai-Nam Theun National Park to contribute to biodiversity conservation in the region

Project location

All the activities are based in Thaphaibanh village cluster (one of the three village clusters within the Nakai – Nam Theun National Park), where villagers are the most reliant on natural resources for their daily livelihoods. Villagers from this cluster have also been identified as the most vulnerable in terms of food security and income. Thaphaibanh village cluster includes 4 villages (further divided into nine hamlets), 520 households and >1200 people.



Location of Thaphaibanh cluster in Nakai – Nam Theun National Park where the project activities are implemented

Project approach

We focus on technical capacity building of the local community and local stakeholders to provide them the knowledge, confidence and power to become the leaders in the projects they initiate to eventually meet the goal of a self-functioning alternative income generation for local communities based on sustainably sourced and harvested forest products with added value.

LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROGRAMME OVERALL: OUR EXIT IN 2025

In 2025, we continued PHASE 2 of the program with two Objectives, to follow-up from the first phase of the program:

- **Objective 1:** Transition to a sustainable community-based Handicraft production group at the village cluster level for Thaphaibanh cluster (4 villages)
- **Objective 2:** Natural Resources Management for sustainable collection of raw material for handicraft production, at the family (household) level in Thaphaibanh cluster (4 villages)

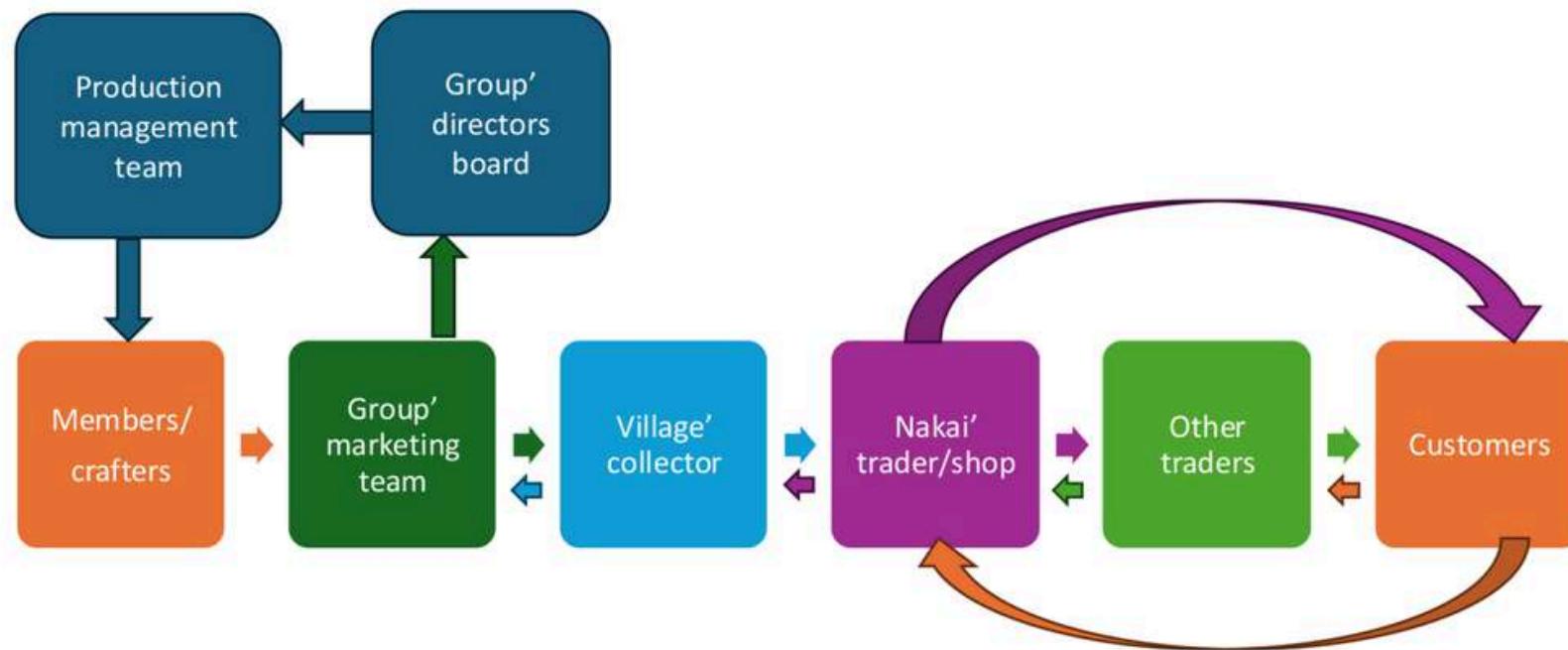
Five years ago, our community sustainable livelihoods program was initiated with a vision: to empower local communities in the Nakai-Nam Theun National Park by integrating them into the value chain of their traditional handicrafts. This initiative was designed not only to preserve cultural heritage but also to provide economic opportunities through sustainable practices.

A Value Chain Rooted in Tradition and Sustainability

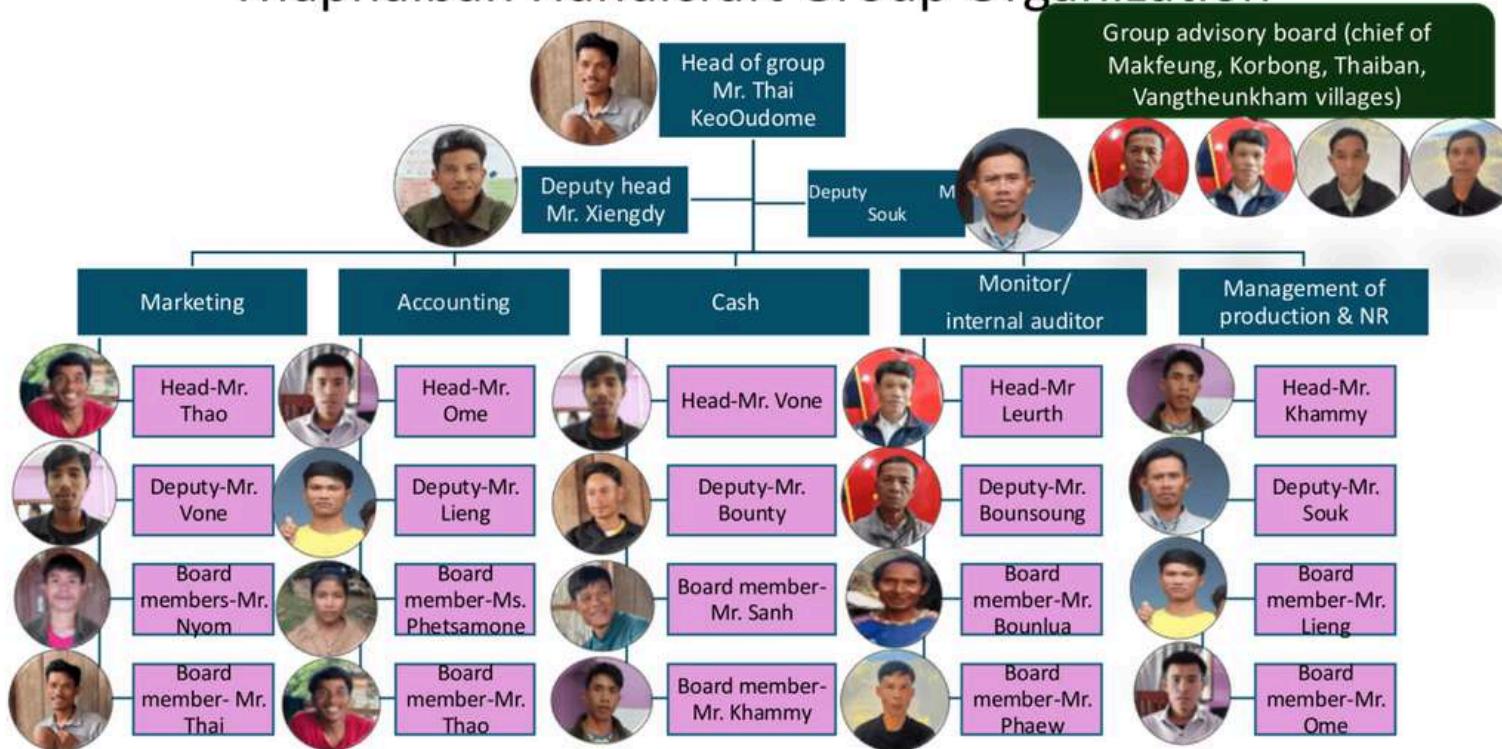
The journey of each handicraft begins with the sustainable harvesting of raw materials such as rattan, bamboo, and pandan leaves. These materials are carefully collected to ensure minimal environmental impact while maintaining a steady supply for artisans, coupled with a program of raw material restoration in family forests started in 2024.

Once gathered, the raw materials undergo a transformation process to prepare them for weaving. This includes techniques passed down through generations, ensuring that the knowledge and skills of traditional crafting remain intact. The artisans then weave these materials into various intricate designs, each reflecting the cultural identity of the region and the market demand. The finished products are transported to Nakai, where they are sold at the Thaiphabanh Handicraft Production Group shop, reaching both individual customers and businesses.

The handicraft product value chain of Thaphaiban handicraft Production group from 2025 onwards



Thaphaiban Handicraft Group Organization



Formal Recognition and Market Expansion

A significant milestone in the program's progress was achieved in **December 2024**, when the Office of Industry and Commerce officially registered the Thaiphabanh village cluster, comprising four villages, at the district level as the **Thaphaibanh cluster Villages Handicraft Production Group**. This recognition as an artisan group provided the villages with a formal framework, establishing a set of rules and responsibilities overseen by elected representatives.

Building on this achievement, **January 2025 marked another breakthrough** when the handicrafts received the **One District One Product (ODOP)** label, approved by the central Lao Government. The ODOP initiative is a national-level development program aimed at increasing the economic potential of local households by promoting **unique district-level products**. This recognition aligns with the Lao National Socio-Economic Development Plan for poverty reduction, offering the artisans in Thaiphabanh village cluster enhanced visibility and broader market access.



Ensuring Long-Term Sustainability

In **February 2025**, we reached another major milestone by **handing over a handicraft fund** to the Thaphaibanh cluster's four villages and the **Thaiphabanh Handicraft Production Group**. This fund, based on the added value of handicraft sales, ensures the long-term sustainability of the program by providing financial support for purchasing handicrafts from crafters and reselling them to customers. By reinvesting in the local artisans, the fund secures a continuous cycle of production and sales, allowing the community to thrive independently beyond Association Anoulak's support from 2026. By the end of 2025, the total amount of the Thaiphabanh Handicraft Production Group is **89,244,000 Lak (4,100 USD)**.

Alongside these efforts, we have worked on **long-term natural resource management** with the the set-up of 85 family gardens plots owned by 70 families and the **plantation and monitoring of non-timber forest product plants**. In **2024-2025**, a total of **3,107 seedlings** (including 21 different plant taxa) were planted by villagers for crafting and food purposes, with a survival rate of **55% as of October 2025**.



A Future of Growth and Sustainability

The ODOP label presents a remarkable opportunity for the artisans of Nakai-Nam Theun National Park. With increased visibility and access to markets, the livelihoods of local communities are set to be improved with this alternative income. Furthermore, government partners have expressed their commitment to supporting the initiative through annual audits and marketing assistance, ensuring continued progress and long-term sustainability.

In 2025, we supported the **opening of the artisans group shop in Nakai**, lead by two women from the community of Nakai. The shop is the focal point and intermediary between the crafters and the customers.

In 2025, the **total income generated by all crafters** (47 households with active crafters in 2025) involved in the programme was **72,520,000 Lak (3340 USD)**.

Our program was dedicated to fostering sustainable economic opportunities while preserving the rich cultural traditions of the region throughout the program's period. **The success of the Thaiphabanh Handicraft Production Group serves as an inspiring example of how community-driven initiatives, supported by government and conservation programs, can create lasting positive change.**



Promotional videos about this programme

In 2025, we released three new videos that highlight key achievements from this programme.

These videos (in Lao and English versions) showcase the inspiring work carried out by communities in the Thaiphabanh village cluster—one of the three clusters within Nakai-Nam Theun National Park—where villagers are most dependent on natural resources for their daily livelihoods and are among the most vulnerable in terms of food security and income.

The three videos focus on the following themes:

- **The Handicraft Value Chain**

A behind-the-scenes look at how local handicrafts are made and marketed, following the entire process from harvesting raw materials to the sale of finished products. The video highlights the creation of a sustainable village-level value chain that brings income to local households.

- **Sustainable Harvesting and Traditional Techniques**

This video demonstrates how local artisans apply traditional, low-impact harvesting methods to gather forest materials. These practices are rooted in cultural knowledge and play a crucial role in conserving forest biodiversity.

- **Restoration of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs)**

Highlighting the village-based restoration programs, this video shows how communities are actively planting and regenerating important NTFP species to ensure long-term sustainability of the raw materials used in their crafts.



Value Chain of the Thaphabanh Handicrafts



ເຕັກນິການເຕັດວັດຖຸດີນ
ແລະ ເຮັດວັດສານ “2ອງກຸມ”
Cutting materials and crafting technique
of “Thaphabanh group”



Non-Timber
Forest Product garden

[ENGLISH VERSION] Value Chain of the Thaphabanh Handicrafts

[ENGLISH VERSION] Cutting material and crafting technique of the Thaiphabanh Handicraft Group

[ENGLISH VERSION] Non-Timber Forest Product Gardens

Social science research on our programme

In 2024, we conducted a social science research to assess communities wellbeing using the **Wild Happiness Index**. The Wild Happiness Index was developed by OneNature, designed to assess life satisfaction based on many domains of well-being (including health, community, economy, social support, etc.), as well as how individual and community value wildlife around them. **The results of this research were published in 2025.**

Nature and culture are deeply intertwined. Indigenous communities hold vital knowledge and a strong connection to their environment. Empowering them as stewards benefits both biodiversity and human well-being. Programs that respect local values and improve livelihoods—like education or health—build trust and inspire lasting environmental engagement. However, assessing the true impact of such efforts remains a challenge.

That's why we partnered with OneNature to apply the Wild Happiness Index, a tool measuring links between well-being and conservation, in our program in Nakai-Nam Theun National Park, Laos: Resilient Communities for Healthy Natural Ecosystems in the Annamites Mountains of Laos (2020-2025) program.

Our program in Nakai-Nam Theun National Park, Laos, has built upon the rich ecological knowledge and traditional handicrafts of local communities to create alternative income opportunities, natural resource management and the preservation of cultural heritage. Together, these initiatives lay a solid foundation for community well-being and biodiversity conservation awareness.

By measuring wellbeing across multiple domains, the assessment illuminated the strong foundation for community-based conservation in the region:

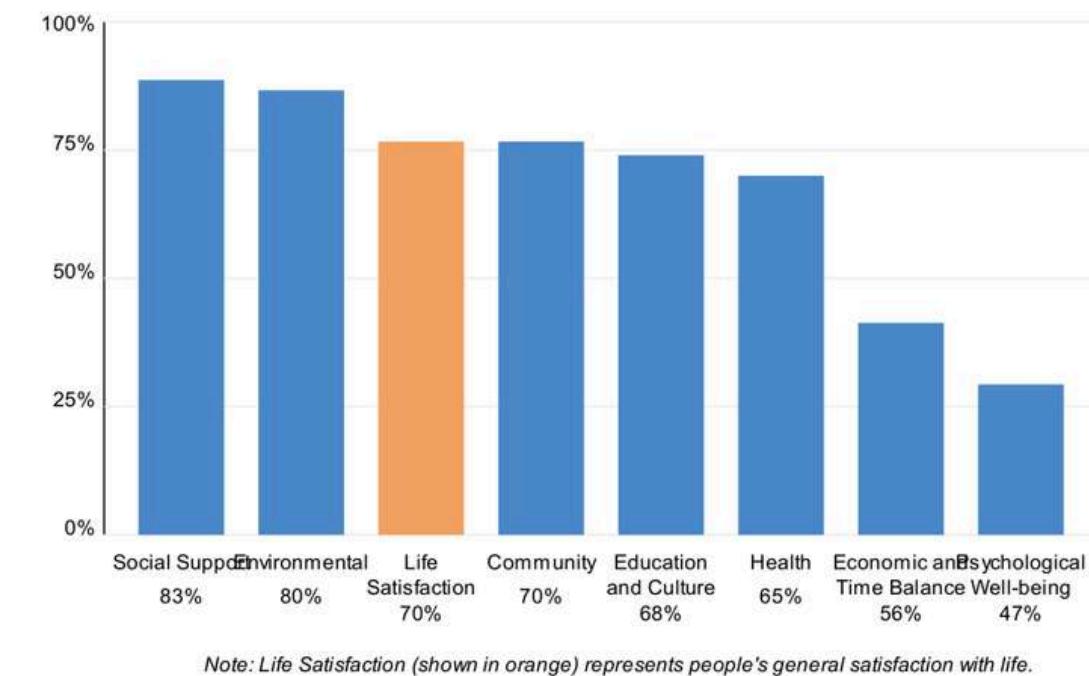
- 80% of respondents reported high environmental satisfaction
- 86% expressed a willingness to participate in conservation efforts
- 83% highlighted strong social support networks
- 70% reported high life satisfaction—exceeding national and regional averages

Project technical partners:

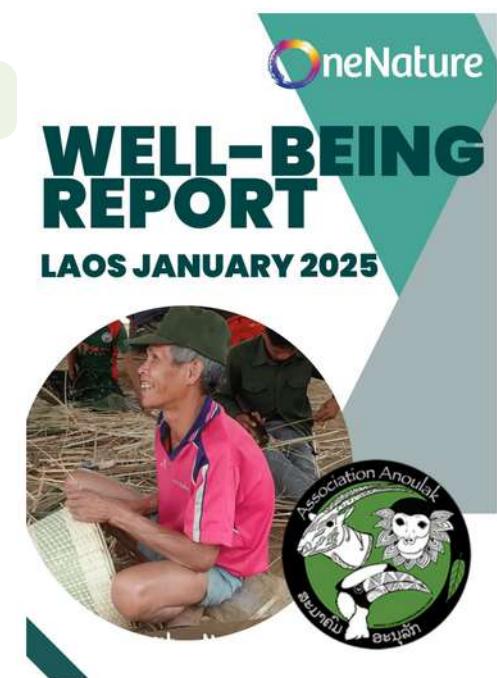


Wild Happiness Report Card

Domain Satisfaction Scores



The results of this research is published in a report on our website





Conservation awareness in 2025

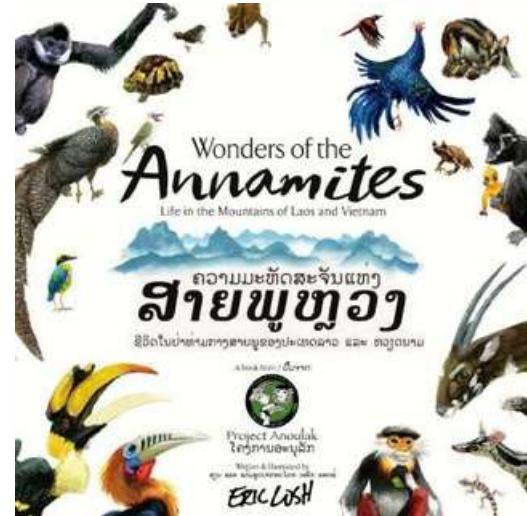
Conservation awareness published books and posters

Rationale: There is a general lack of knowledge by the national and international community of the rich biodiversity from the region and the critical threat it is facing. Knowledge is one of the key components to protect biodiversity. Association Anoulak has made one of its numerous missions to raise awareness of young and older humans, from the region and abroad, of the beautiful nature of Laos, and the importance of biodiversity conservation. Art and storytelling are great ways to do so, and notably through the publication of attractive and informative books about animals and nature.

Wonders of the Annamites

Wonders of the Annamites is written illustrated by Eric Losh and Camille Coudrat. It was first published in 2016-2017 by Association Anoulak in three editions: English-French; English-Lao; English-Vietnamese.

We re-printed the English-Lao version in 2023.



Spirit of the Saola

Spirit of the Saola is written by Melody Kemp and illustrated by Dao Van Hoang. It was first published in 2018 by Association Anoulak in English-Lao edition.



Pangolin Life of a scaly anteater

Pangolin Life of a scaly anteater is written and illustrated by Joséphine Billeter. It was first published in 2019 by Association Anoulak, Pha Tad Ke Botanical Garden and Comité de Cooperation aves le Laos in English-Lao edition



We re-printed the English-Lao version in 2023.

Protect Your Health - Protect Wildlife

Protect Your Health - Protect Wildlife is a bilingual Lao-Eng poster/ brochure to raise awareness in Laos of the human health risks of consuming wildlife created in partnership with graphic designer Josephine Billeter. It was published by Association Anoulak in 2020.



In 2025, these publications continued to be disseminated through different channels and at several events.



Capacity Building in 2025

Lao Youth on a Mission for Nature Conservation

Project partner: econox

In Lao PDR today, only a few Lao nationals will consider—or have opportunities to pursue—a career path in nature conservation. This lack of local engagement is one of the many factors preventing better conservation standards in the country, a concern shared by all conservation partners and practitioners in Laos.

To address this challenge, in 2024 we launched ***Lao Youth on a Mission for Nature Conservation***—a training course designed to inspire a new generation of Lao conservationists. Targeting youth aged 20 to 35, **our aim is to encourage and equip them to pursue meaningful careers protecting the country's extraordinary biodiversity.**

In **2025**, we implemented the **second edition of the programme**, in **partnership with Econox Laos**, building on the successes and lessons from the pilot year. The result was an even more impactful and inspiring experience for participants.

A diverse group united by passion

This year's programme brought together **26 participants** (15 females, 9 males, 2 undisclosed gender) from across Laos, representing universities, conservation NGOs, government agencies, and the private sector. The average participant age was 24 years old.

Lao Youth on a Mission for Nature Conservation

Project partner: econox

Learning, skills, and inspiration

The training combined technical conservation knowledge with practical skills and networking opportunities. Highlights included:

- **Conservation knowledge** – Species-specific conservation (e.g., Saola, elephants, wetlands), wildlife rescue, anti-trafficking work, and the role of technology in research.
- **Practical skills** – Project planning, leadership, community engagement, research methodologies, and conservation campaigning.
- **Career insights** – Clearer understanding of conservation pathways beyond science, including education, communications, and policy roles.
- **Inspiration** – Motivational talks and direct interactions with leading conservation organisations such as Saola Foundation, WCS, WWF, IUCN, LCTW, ECC, and Free the Bears.



A Project from: econox

Partnership with:

Sponsored by: Wilhelma
Zoologisch-Botanischer Garten Stuttgart

Partnership with:

A Project from: econox

Partnership with:

Sponsored by: Wilhelma
Zoologisch-Botanischer Garten Stuttgart

Partnership with:

Measurable impact

The evaluation results speak for themselves:

- **96%** reported **learning new things**.
- **Over 85%** agreed or strongly agreed with **all tested learning outcomes**.
- **100%** would **recommend the programme** to others.
- **At least 85%** felt **better prepared for a conservation career**, and **77%** expressed **interest in volunteering or interning** with participating organisations.
- **89%** felt confident to contact organisations for opportunities following the training.
- Participants described the programme as a turning point—helping them **clarify career goals, boosting confidence**, and showing that conservation needs people from many backgrounds, not only scientists.

Beyond the classroom

The programme's **field visit** to the Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife was among the most inspiring experiences, giving participants a firsthand look at wildlife rescue and rehabilitation. Structured **networking sessions and panel discussions** allowed them to connect directly with professionals, role models, and peers in the conservation community.

Building a conservation movement

By providing **knowledge, skills, inspiration, and professional connections**, *Lao Youth on a Mission for Nature Conservation* is helping to build a stronger, more resilient generation of Lao conservation leaders. With continued support and collaboration, we can ensure more young Lao voices are at the forefront of protecting the country's unique natural heritage.

Lao Youth on a Mission for Nature Conservation

Project partner: econox



Lao Youth on a Mission for Nature Conservation

Project partner: econox



Lao Youth on a Mission for Nature Conservation

Project partner: econox



Lao Youth on a Mission for Nature Conservation

Online Course for Lao Conservation practitioners: getting Started with the Conservation Standards

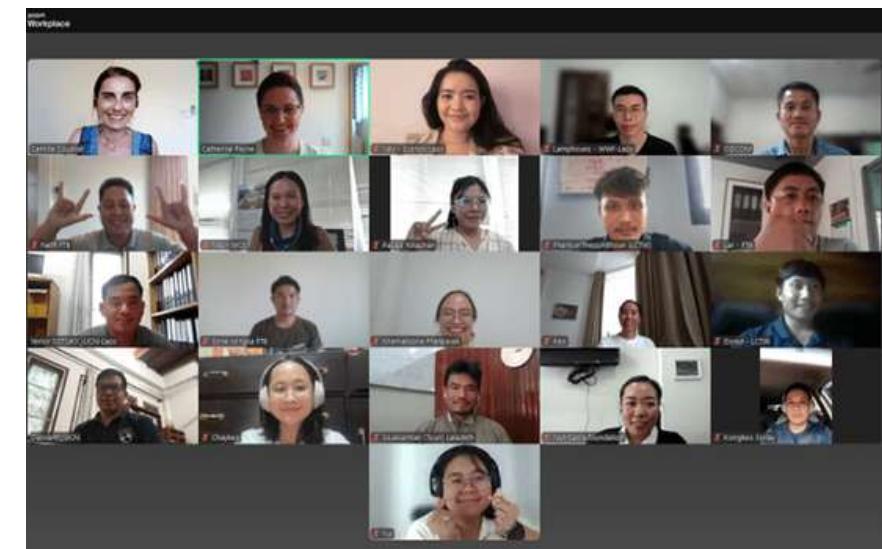
In June and July 2025, 19 conservation practitioners (11 men and 8 women) from across Lao PDR came together for an engaging and empowering online training course on the [Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation](#). Representing key organizations such as WWF, WCS, IUCN, Free the Bears, Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife, The Saola Foundation, and EconoxLaos, the participants joined forces to strengthen their capacity in designing, managing, and evaluating conservation projects that deliver real impact.

Organized by Association Anoulak in collaboration with [Alcedo Conservation](#), the course was delivered over a three-week period, totaling five days of interactive sessions (4 hours per day). Catherine Payne (Alcedo Conservation) led the course as the main trainer, with expert coaching support from Camille Coudrat (Association Anoulak) and Lavernita Bingku from WWF-Malaysia. The course was offered free of charge to participants in Lao PDR, part of a broader commitment by Association Anoulak to promote best practices and local leadership in biodiversity conservation.

What Did Participants Gain?

A post-course evaluation highlighted a range of transformative impacts:

- **Strategic Mindsets:** Participants reported a shift from activity-based thinking to strategic, outcome-driven approaches. They emphasized that tools like the Theory of Change and Strategy Selection provided critical structure for effective project design, stakeholder communication, and long-term conservation success.
- **Confidence and Capability:** Many practitioners noted increased confidence in using measurable and adaptive planning methods, helping them better align biodiversity goals with community needs and long-term sustainability.
- **Understanding Integration:** A recurring takeaway was a greater appreciation for integrating human well-being with biodiversity outcomes – a core element of effective conservation.



Studentships to Lao Nationals for Professional Development



In **2025**, it was the second year Association Anoulak awarded **scholarships to three exceptional former team members** to support their academic journeys and empower them for future careers in conservation.

In **2025**, Lao students Mr. **Ouphakhone Souvandee** and Ms. **Laythong Sythongbay** Graduated with their **Bachelor's degree in Forestry at the National University of Laos**.



In **2025**, Association Anoulak also supported for her second academic year an annual stipend for her living costs Lao student Ms. **Keomany Leuangthi** who is pursuing a **Bachelor Program in Wildlife Management Engineering from the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Science in Hungary** (for which she received Stripendium Hungaricum Scholarship).



In **2025**, Association Anoulak supported Lao student Mr. **Ouphakhone Souvandee** to **study English at the Vientiane College** in Laos during the year 2025.



Communication and publications in 2025

On our Website and Email Subscribers List

Number of Blogposts
in 2025 =

12



January 9, 2026

Wolf Barb Luciocyprinus striolatus conservation project in Nakai-Nam Theun National Park

In 2025, Association Anoulak and FISHBIO continued their collaboration to conserve the population of the Wolf Barb Luciocyprinus striolatus, in Nakai-Nam Theun National Park, with establishing Fish [...]

[Read more](#)



January 8, 2026

Wishing you a happy new year 2026 and announcing our new direction from 2026

Association Anoulak wishes you the best for the New Year 2026! We hope the year 2026 will be joyful, exciting, adventurous, peaceful and kind to all with meaningful [...]

[Read more](#)



November 24, 2025

Our new promotional video is out! Lao Youth on a Mission for Nature Conservation

We are pleased to share our promotional video about our programme Lao Youth on a Mission for Nature Conservation, implemented in collaboration with EconoxLaos. An annual [...]

[Read more](#)



August 21, 2025

Inspiring the Next Generation of Lao Conservationists: Lao Youth on a Mission for Nature Conservation 2025

In Lao PDR today, only a few Lao nationals will consider—or have opportunities to pursue—a career path in nature conservation. This lack of local engagement is [...]

[Read more](#)

Number of
Anoulak Newsletters sent
in 2025 =

6



Anoulak Newsletter

Discover in this email the 3 last news from our blog



Association Anoulak
Attends the International Congress for Conservation Biology 2025 in Brisbane, Australia

Earlier this month, Association Anoulak was proud to be represented at the International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB) 2025, held in Brisbane, Australia. With around 1,500 conservation professionals, researchers, and students from across the globe in attendance, ICCB continues to be one of the most important gatherings for the global conservation community, offering a platform [...]

[Read more](#)

Three New Videos Released Showcasing Community Resilience and Biodiversity Conservation in Nakai District, Lao PDR

We are proud to announce the release of three new videos that highlight key achievements from our project, "Community Resilience and Biodiversity Conservation in Nakai District, Lao PDR", which we have initiated and supported since 2020.

These videos (in Lao and English versions) showcase the inspiring work carried out by communities in the Thaipheab...
[Read more](#)

Celebrating 7 Years of Conservation Impact:
Association Anoulak and Nakai-Nam Theun National Park Conclude MoU Partnership

On 13 May 2025, Association Anoulak hosted a closing meeting to mark the successful conclusion of a seven-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Nakai-Nam Theun National Park (NNT NP), running from 2019 to 2025. The event brought together distinguished representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National University, ...
[Read more](#)

36

A photograph of a pangolin, a scaly mammal, walking on a forest floor covered in fallen leaves. The pangolin is facing towards the right of the frame. The background is dark, suggesting a shaded or wooded area.

Meetings, conferences and events in 2025

Meetings, Conferences and Events

On the **4th of February 2025**, we convened all Association Anoulak's **government partners from central, provincial, district, and village levels** to present the **achievements** of Association Anoulak's programs in Nakai-Nam Theun National Park of **year 2024**

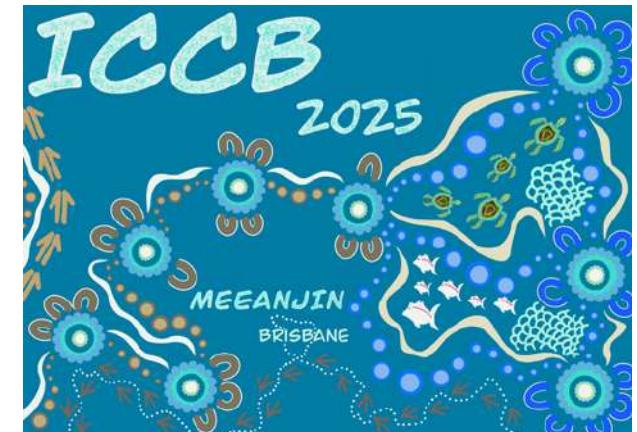


On 13 May 2025, Association Anoulak hosted a closing meeting to mark the successful conclusion of a seven-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Nakai-Nam Theun National Park (NNT NP), running from 2019 to 2025. The event brought together distinguished representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National University of Laos, Khammouan Province, Nakai District, and local villages to reflect on a fruitful partnership dedicated to biodiversity conservation and community resilience in the Annamite Mountains of Lao PDR.



Meetings, Conferences and Events

From 15 to 20 June 2025 Association Anoulak director Camille Coudrat attended the **International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB) 2025**, held in Brisbane, Australia. With around 1,500 conservation professionals, researchers, and students from across the globe in attendance, ICCB continues to be one of the most important gatherings for the global conservation community, offering a platform to exchange ideas, share experiences, and forge new collaborations.



Association Anoulak sponsored student Oupakhone Souvandee to attend a consultation and training workshop on Establishing **Lao PDR's First National Red List**. On **12 November 2025** in Vang Vieng, IUCN facilitated a national consultation meeting to advance the creation of Lao PDR's first National Red List of Threatened Species.

This training workshop focused on Understanding the IUCN Red List process; Defining roles and governance mechanisms; Identifying priority taxa groups; and a Roadmap for drafting the first National Red List Book



Meetings, Conferences and Events

From 27 to 30 October 2025, Director Camille Coudrat participated in the training workshop **“The Art of Stakeholder Collaboration”** as part of the *Collective Leadership Specialist* training programme provided by *The Collective Leadership Institute based in Germany*. This contributes to professional development and evolution of Association Anoulak.

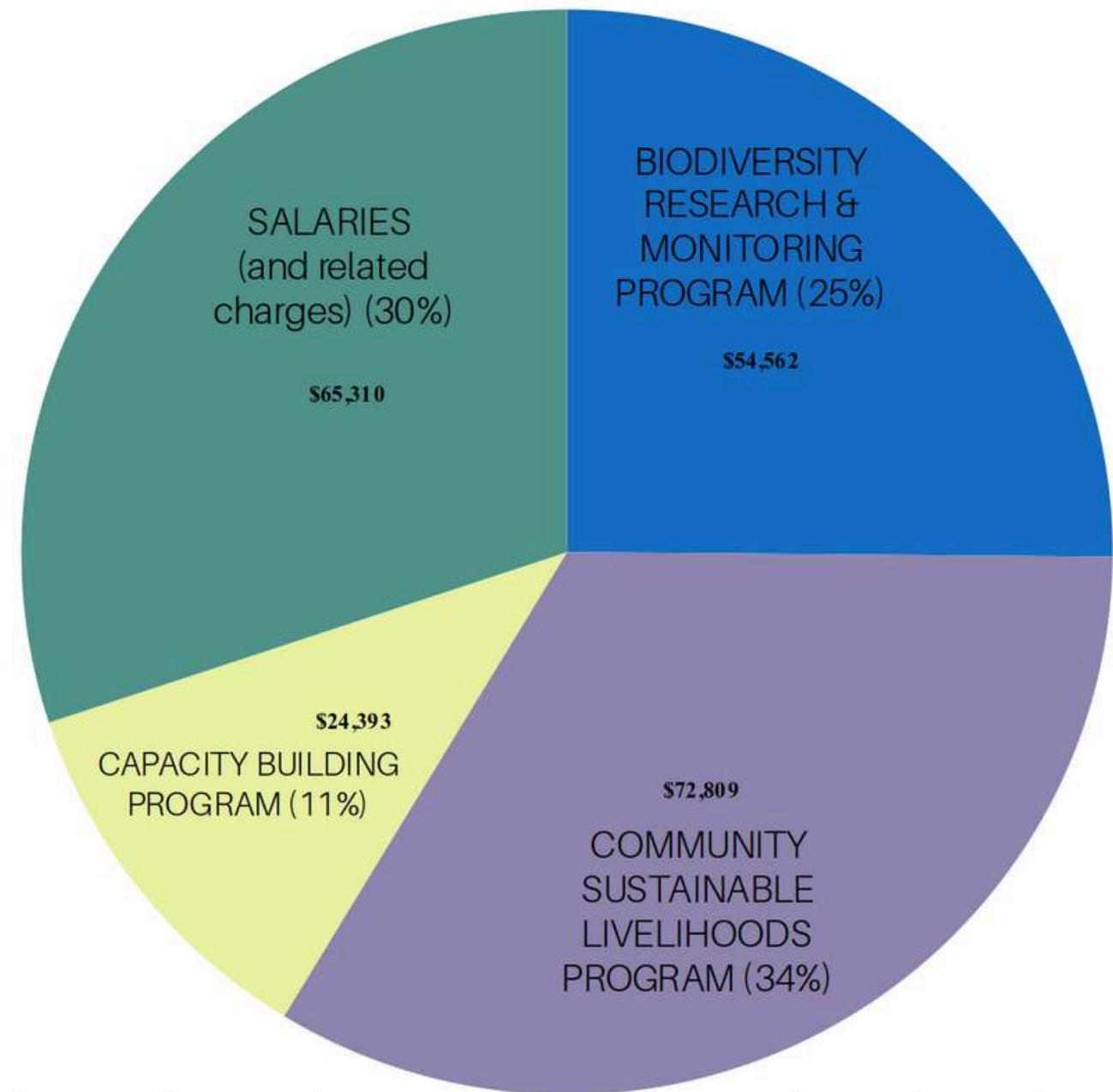




Financial report for 2025

Expenses in 2025

| Category | Total (USD) |
|--|-------------------------|
| Biodiversity Research and Monitoring PROGRAM | \$54,562 |
| Community Alternative Livelihoods PROGRAM | \$72,809 |
| Capacity Building PROGRAM | \$24,393 |
| Staff Salaries (+ related charges: private insurance, taxes) | \$65,310 |
| Total* | <u>\$217,074</u> |

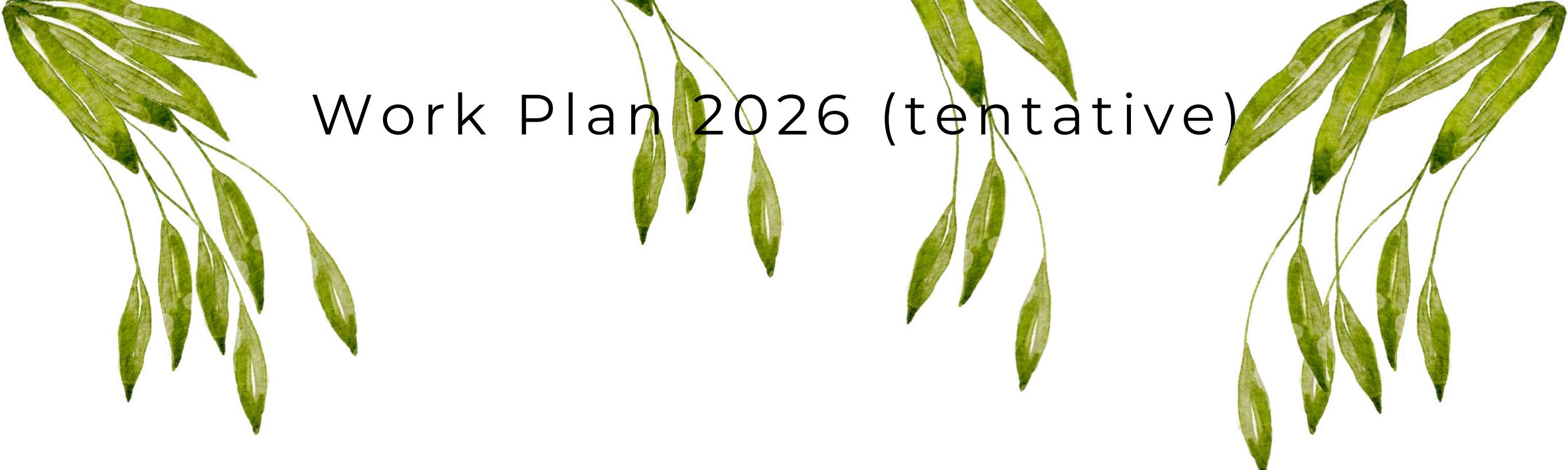


*some administrative costs in France are yet to be included



Workplan for 2026

Work Plan 2026 (tentative)

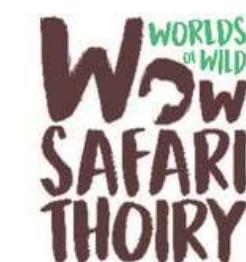


| Association Anoulak | | 2026 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Project/Program | | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |
| Biodiversity research and monitoring in Nakai-Nam Theun National Park | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1) Elephant survey research: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| - Finalizing genotyping and modelling data analysis | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| - reporting and dissemination | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| - Publication in peer-reviewed journal | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2) Publications on previous projects (Manuscripts on Owston's civet; Crested Argus) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Capacity Building in Laos | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3) Lao Youth on a Mission for Nature Conservation - 1-week Training Program | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4) Conservation Standards for Lao conservation practitioners - 3-week Training Program | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5) 1-day outreach to conservation managers in Laos on the use of the Conservation Standards | | | | | | | TBC | | | | | | |
| 6) Studentships to Lao Students (already on-going with 2 students) - ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-2027 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Training courses for Association Anoulak's development and new direction | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7) Conservation Standards Coach Training | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8) Collective Leadership Specialist training programme | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Visit of Laos by the administrative board of Association Anoulak | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9) Visit of Laos to mark the new direction of Ass Anoulak from 2026 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |



Acknowledgements

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO DONORS WHO SUPPORTED OUR ACTIVITIES IN 2025



THANK YOU TO OUR PROJECT PARTNERS IN 2025



Institut de Recherche
pour le Développement
FRANCE





New Year's Greetings



HAPPY NEW
YEAR 2026

Contact:
camillecoudrat@conservationlaos.com

SUPPORT US



Association Anoulak

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www.conservationlaos.com

