

STATUS OF *NOMASCUS* GIBBONS IN CAMBODIA

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Unlike all other range countries with *Nomascus* gibbons, Cambodia is currently recognized as having only one confirmed species of the genus; *N. gabriellae*. The possibility remains that an additional taxon may occur in the northeast of the country however, with analysis of vocalisations suggesting that this population groups more closely with *Nomascus siki*, although in pelage they resemble *N. gabriellae*. Listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and 'Rare' under Cambodian law, the yellow-cheeked crested gibbon's distribution is limited to east of the Mekong River. Cambodia undoubtedly contains the largest populations of yellow-cheeked crested gibbons throughout their range due in part to the country's relatively large protected areas and low human population density. Robust population data exists for several sites in Cambodia and most protected areas have preliminary population data based on limited survey effort. Of key importance for long-term population persistence are the remaining relatively large areas of intact evergreen/semi-evergreen forest. The most important of these include Seima Protected Forest, and likely Virachey National Park and surrounding landscape. Despite the relatively large numbers of gibbons remaining in Cambodia, it is likely that most populations are in decline. Little data exists on the extent of hunting of *Nomascus* gibbons in Cambodia, however there is a pet trade although its impact on populations is unknown. Of more pressing concern is habitat degradation and loss and ongoing development in the country, with economic land concessions and mining concessions covering much of the species range, even within protected areas.

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