

Cambodia Island Beach Conservation

Become an expert in Cambodia's dazzling marine life, live on an exotic paradise island, and immerse yourself in vibrant Asian culture.

Cambodia's coastal paradise is home to some of the most spectacular diving and gorgeous beaches in the world. The crystal clear waters host a wealth of marine habitats and wildlife, making this a perfect location to snorkel while exploring a magical underwater world. Cambodia's coral reefs support a dazzling array of tropical reef fish and seahorses and provide rich feeding grounds for turtles, manta rays and a wealth of other marine creatures. The deep blue offshore waters support reef sharks and majestic whale sharks, as well as vast shoals of cruising pelagics.

You will be living on a paradise island, fringed with palm trees and white sandy beaches. Join us there for fragrant sun-drenched days and balmy exotic nights, mingled with fabulous snorkeling and fascinating research that helps to support local coastal and marine conservation. Let the spirit of Cambodia bewitch you with its vibrant Asian culture, heavenly beaches and dazzling sea life – the perfect paradise location for your Frontier adventure!

As you explore the exotic seascape around the island you will be getting involved in a real, ongoing conservation project. You will be helping to discover and chart the health of extensive areas of coral, record populations of fish, and survey the huge diversity of inter-tidal animals - from tiny hermit crabs to pastel-hued anemones. On shore you'll learn about the activities of the traditional island fishermen, as well as discovering and reporting which marine organisms are being sustainably harvested and which are being dangerously depleted. You'll also be helping to investigate the long term effects of global warming on Cambodia's corals.

The work you'll carry out will be rewarding, challenging, and hugely beneficial to conservation efforts, as well as being fantastic fun. You will gain immense satisfaction from knowing that your input will help to protect this precious marine wilderness for future generations.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Help to monitor & conserve marine wildlife in Cambodia
- Snorkel crystal clear waters
- Make lifelong friends

FAST FACTS

Location	Cambodia, on the island of Koh Rong Samloem in Kom Pom Som Province
Activities	Learn to map coral reefs

	Help with environmental education in local communities Explore & record living organisms - in the ocean and on shore Underwater visual census of reef & commercial fish Assessment of algae and coral cover to determine the extent of coral damage Line intercept transects for benthic life & indicator invertebrate species Record observations of the feeding habits & behaviour patterns of a range of marine life Report the effects of global warming on marine communities Observe the impact of fishing and other harvesting on the life of the reef
Transport	Airport pick-up (extra cost applies if you require this service and should be booked in advance) Bus from Phnom Penh to Koh Rong Samloem which takes approximately 2 hours and then a ferry ride to the island of Koh Rong Samloem, Kom Pom Som Province
Accommodation	Beach camp

WHAT DOES THE PROJECT DO?

The aim of the Frontier-Cambodia island beach conservation project is to better understand the country's marine resources, and to provide teaching and training to local island communities to enable them to make informed decisions regarding the management of their coastal ecosystems.

To achieve this mission, you will conduct scientific baseline data surveys of reef areas, including mapping the health of the reefs. We also identify patterns of resource use, and we work with local communities to support environmentally responsible development.

Some of Cambodia's corals were recently damaged by a bleaching event caused by high sea temperatures. Global warming is believed to be to blame, as well as the new development upon the mainland. Your project aims to chart the extent of this damage and to monitor how the reefs are recovering. We hope that this information will help to support management of damaged coral reefs around the world.

The island itself is little studied and the local people are keen to be involved in protecting their biodiversity, making this a perfect location for both research and practical conservation activities. You could have the opportunity to work on all sorts of tangible conservation and research, both land-based and marine. As well as marine work, you could be doing bird counts or vegetation surveys, or you might have the chance to join the local community rangers as they patrol the island and protect its resources. You will also have the chance to teach the local children of the island due to the poor economy of the island, some do not get the chance to learn English, after this not only will you feel very rewarded but will help the locals in later life.

WHAT WILL I BE DOING?

The project's work aims to provide local stakeholders, research organisations and government

bodies with the information they need to design and implement management plans for the future protection of key marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

To gather the data needed you will be snorkelling to locate and map the extensive coral reefs and study their various wildlife communities. You will also explore and record the organisms that inhabit the inter-tidal zones and the island's inland areas. To do this you will deploy a wide range of newly learned research skills and scientific techniques including: underwater visual census of reef and commercial fish such as triggerfish and parrotfish, assessment of algal and coral cover to determine the extent of coral bleaching and damage, and line intercept transects for benthic life and indicator invertebrates such as nudibranchs. You will record observations of the feeding habits and behaviour patterns of a range of marine and terrestrial life. You may even get to study the impact of artisanal fishing on the coral reefs or report the effects of global warming on marine communities.

Whilst snorkelling, you'll see an extraordinary array of animals from stunning angel fish to the shy porcupine fish, sea cucumbers to feathery starfish, spiny urchins to octopus and seahorses. By the end of your project you will be expert at identifying hundreds of colourful and patterned reef fish as well as being an experienced and competent snorkeler. Although the work is intense and challenging you'll get immense satisfaction from having survived and from having made a valuable contribution to the conservation of this precious marine wilderness. You will return home with the new friends you've made and a wealth of fascinating stories and memories.

As well as taking part in snorkelling and marine conservation work you'll help with scientific data entry and daily camp maintenance, taking turns to cook, tidy and clean the camp, rinse snorkel kit, collect firewood, collect and treat water, and help with a wide variety of other essential camp duties.

You'll find your team to be a fun, dynamic mix of ages and experiences, with members who all share a passion for travelling in developing countries and saving endangered wildlife. Your staff will be young, friendly individuals who are highly experienced in their field and may have volunteered on a Frontier project earlier in their career.

Sample Itinerary*

8:00 a.m. – Breakfast at the volunteer house, prepared individually by the volunteers.

9:00 a.m. - The workday starts. During training, this is usually a lecture followed by independent study and a fun snorkel. After training, work generally consists of surveying fish, coral and invertebrates at one of the transects along House Reef or Sunset Rock Reef.

12:00 p.m. – The lunch team prepares lunch for the group, while others enter data from the morning surveys.

2:00 p.m. - Volunteer work continues at either House Reef or Sunset. Volunteers travel by foot, either a 10 minute or 20 minute walk.

4:00 p.m. – The working day comes to an end. Volunteers are free to catch up on anything, plan for the next day's work and socialise.

6:00 p.m. – Dinner at the Volunteer house prepared by volunteers!

7:00 p.m. - Evening activities decided by the group. Movie nights, card games, pub quizzes, and night swims in the bioluminescence have all been popular in the past. Of course, everyone likes party night best. There are a few bars to choose from in town, or we go down to the beach and have a bonfire!

**This itinerary should only be considered as an example of the kind of activities and timescales to expect. Actual itineraries may vary depending on the season and the requirements of the project.*

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I ARRIVE?

If you are arriving with other volunteers on Monday morning you will be welcomed at the meeting point in Sihanoukville by Frontier field staff or Frontier representatives. From here, you'll travel to the island of Koh Rong Samloem by boat before being welcomed to the Frontier beach camp on the island. If you want to be collected from Phnom Penh airport and transferred down to the meeting point at Koh Rong Samloem this service is available at extra cost (US\$170GBP / \$150USD). If you want to be collected from Phnom Penh airport and transferred down to the meeting point at Sihanoukville and also accompanied back to Phnom Penh at the end of your project then this service is available at extra cost (US\$230GBP / \$250USD).

If you are an independent traveller arriving on another day of the week you are welcome to join the project, but please be aware that you will have to make your own travel arrangements to Koh Rong Samloem (though we can of course provide advice and easy to follow travel instructions before you go).

WHERE WILL I BE STAYING?

During the project you'll live in a locally built volunteer house on a beach, on a gorgeous paradise island. We aim to provide you with a unique and memorable living experience and to make minimal impact on the environment. This means that the camp is simple and mostly consists of impermanent structures. All building materials used on camp are sourced from local tradesmen who use environmentally friendly practices. Camp life is very simple, unsophisticated and fun. Your "shower" may be a jug or a bucket of water – perhaps even a shower of rain – and some nights you'll cook over an open campfire: so prepare for the basic, unencumbered, virtually footprint-less lifestyle! On occasion you may have to travel further from your beach camp to reach a distant dive site, and then you might stay in a "satellite camp", usually a mosquito net pitched on a beach.

The dry season from December to May is predominantly sunny, with temperatures ranging from a fairly pleasant 28°C to 40°C+ in April and May. The main rainy season from June to November and is usually cloudy most days with heavy rains (thunder storms) throughout the day with occasionally breaks every hour or so. Daily temperatures remain high during the early part of the rainy season but tend to drop off to the low 30°Cs towards the end of the year.

As well as taking part in snorkelling and marine conservation work you'll help with scientific data entry and daily camp maintenance, taking turns to cook, tidy and clean the camp, clean and oil the compressor, rinse dive kit, collect firewood, prime hurricane lamps, collect and treat water, and help with a wide variety of other essential camp duties.

WHAT WILL I BE EATING?

Camp food is basic but nutritious and consists largely of rice, vegetables, beans and noodles, all of which are purchased locally in order to help support the local economy. Luxuries such as chocolate, peanut butter and drinking chocolate are only available from Phnom Penh or Kep, so make sure you stock up before heading to the island.

Part of your role on camp will be to help with the cooking, so get your cookbooks out now and start practicing! Also, with luck you'll be invited to local celebrations, holidays and festivals - a great way to meet locals and experience local culture.

COSTS

2 weeks	US\$ 1,145
4 weeks	US\$ 1,545
5 weeks	US\$ 1,795
6 weeks	US\$ 2,145
8 weeks	US\$ 2,845
10 weeks	US\$ 3,495

DEPARTURE DATES

Weekly on a Monday

DURATION

2 weeks+

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

- Pre-departure support
- Travel & medical advice & documentation
- Equipment advice
- Discounted medical kit
- Free Frontier t-shirt

In-country

- Accommodation & three meals a day
- Local orientation & comprehensive project training
- Project equipment
- Research materials
- 24 hour in-country support
- International HQ emergency support & back-up
- Boat transfer from meeting point in Sihanoukville to the island of Koh Rong Samloem every Monday morning
- Use of Frontier project equipment
- Discounted PADI dive courses with local dive school (please discuss this with a Travel Advisor and will need to be booked in advance of your project)

AIRPORT INFORMATION

Nearest airport(s): Phnom Penh (PNH)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Call us on 020 7613 2422 (UK) / 1 949 336 8178 (US)

Mail us on info@frontier.ac.uk

Check out our social media here:

Project details were correct at the time this document was generated. Price, dates and other details are subject to change. Please see our website for current details for this project.