

17. *Cinnamomum cambodianum* Lecomte

Taxonomy and Commercial Grade

Cambodian name	: Tep porou
Scientific name	: <i>Cinnamomum cambodianum</i> Lecomte
Family	: Lauraceae
Commercial Grade-Cambodia	: Unclassified

Distribution and Habitat: This species is distributed in wet, dense, piedmont forests from 600-700 m a.s.l. (Dy Phon, 2000). It is also plentiful on the upper slopes of the Bokor and Cardamom Mountains. It has disjunct populations in Ratanakiri and Kampong Thom, as illustrated on the map. This species is endemic to Cambodia (FA, 2000). It is a shade-demanding tree when young, growing well in deep soil. It usually grows in clusters of 5 – 10 trees in the primary of secondary forest, at altitudes below 1,500 m above sea level (Khorn, 2002).

Gene-Ecological Zone: Central Annamites (G).

Botanical Description: *Cinnamomum cambodianum* Lecomte is a large tree from 15-25 m high, producing boles from 30-80 cm in dbh. Its trunk is usually straight, cylindrical, and with a beautiful form. The sapwood and heartwood are not always distinctive, although the sapwood is pale gray and heartwood reddish-gray. The inner bark is 2-4mm thick, and grayish-white in colour. Simple alternate, rounded leaves are 6-15 cm long and 3-8cm wide (FA, 2000). All parts of the stem are aromatic.

Flowering and Fruiting Habit: The flowers are bisexual, and arranged in sub-terminal or axillary stalks.

Fruit and Seed Description: The fruit is egg-shaped and 6-8 mm in diameter. The colour of young fruits is gray-yellow, turning to red-brown when mature.

Seed Collection: Seeds are usually collected from the tree or from the ground by shaking the branches. In seed source areas, the ground is usually cleared and sometimes burnt to prepare for seed collection. To ease collection, a cover can be spread out on the ground. The optimal time of collection is reached when the fruits have changed in colour from green to brownish. Maturity can be confirmed by a cutting test.

Uses: Timber of this species is used in house construction and as fuelwood (FA, 2000). The bark can be chewed with betel, or used in the kitchen. In traditional medicine, it is used against a variety of diseases, such as indigestion, tuberculosis, and regulation of periods (Dy Phon, 2000).

Current Status: As the wood is very valuable and in high demand. This species is under high pressure from over-exploitation and is in danger of extinction unless measures are taken to provide adequate protection illegal logging. The number of mature trees has been reduced significantly and it is now difficult to find significant sources of germplasm.

In 2002, the second CTSP meeting on the Forest Gene Conservation Strategy defined *Cinnamomum cambodianum* Lecomte as a priority species in need of immediate conservation intervention and appropriate protection.

References:

- Department of Forestry & Wildlife, 2000, Forestry and Wildlife Magazine, No.23, Cambodia
- FA, 2002 (Draft), List of Trade Names of Commercial Wood in Cambodia, Trade Names of Commercial Wood
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- Khorn, S, 2002, Distribution of Selected Tree Species for Gene Conservation in Cambodia
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and fisheries, 1986, Decision No. 050 SSR.KSK: Wood Classification and Minimum Diameter for Allowable Cutting, 12th September.
- CTSP Seminar, 29 Jan. 2002 on Forest Gene Conservation Strategy

