

9. *Lasianthus kamputensis* Pierre ex. Pit

Taxonomy and Commercial Grade

Cambodian name	: Romleay chheam
Scientific name	: <i>Lasianthus kamputensis</i> Pierre ex. Pit
Family	: Rubiaceae
Commercial Grade-Cambodia	: Unclassified

Distribution and Habitat: Found in dense forest undergrowth from 300 m a.s.l. in Cambodia and Vietnam (Dy Phon, 2000). In Cambodia, the species is found in Kratie and Kampong Thom ((Khorn, 2002; see map).

Gene-Ecological Zone: Central Lowlands (d).

Current Botanical Description: *Lasianthus kamputensis* Pierre ex. Pit, is a shrub, 1-4m high (Dy Phon, 2000).

Seed Collection: Seeds are usually collected from the tree or ground after 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 majority of fruit has changed from green to brownish. Maturity can be confirmed by a cutting test.

Uses: This species is sometimes cultivated for its beautiful blue flowers. The roots are used in traditional medicine to heal haematomas (Dy Phon, 2000).

Status: As the wood is very valuable and in high demand, this species is over-exploited and in danger of extinction if adequate protection measures are not implemented. The species distribution is scattered and its habits have been destroyed by forestland conversions and selective 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 *Lasianthus kamputensis* Pierre ex. Pit as a priority species in need of immediate conservation intervention and appropriate protection.

References:

- FA, 2002 (Draft), List of Trade Names of Commercial Wood in Cambodia, Trade Names of Commercial Wood
- Dy Phon, 2000, Dictionary of Plants Used in Cambodia
- 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.

