A photograph of ancient stone ruins in Cambodia, featuring large, gnarled tree roots growing over the structures. The scene is set in a lush, green environment with moss and vegetation on the stone surfaces. The text "WORLD MONUMENTS FUND IN CAMBODIA" is overlaid in white serif font on the right side of the image.

WORLD MONUMENTS FUND  
IN CAMBODIA



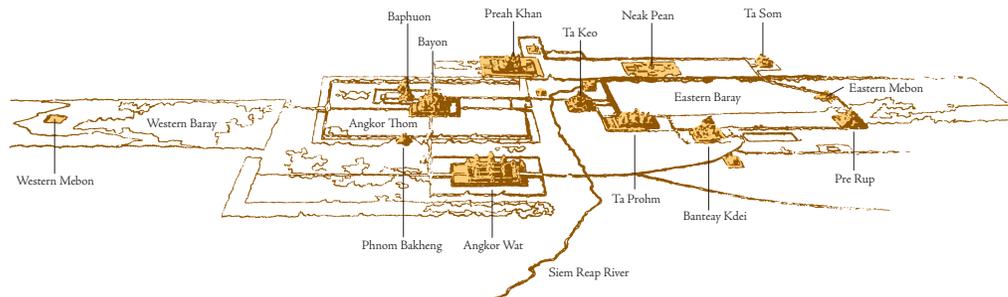
## WMF at Angkor

The Angkor Archaeological Park, an immense Hindu-Buddhist temple complex, lies in the jungles of northwest Cambodia. The temples at Angkor represent the pinnacle of the Khmer civilization, which ruled most of the region between the ninth and 15th centuries A.D. They are considered to be among the great architectural wonders of the world.

The temples at Angkor were relatively unknown to the western world until French archaeologists discovered the complex in the late 1850s. They made an effort throughout the next century to document and conserve portions of the temple complex. In the 1970s, conservators had to leave the site due to the outbreak of civil war. As a result, Angkor went completely without maintenance for nearly 20 years.

Since 1991, the World Monuments Fund's mission in Angkor has been to deploy its expertise to research and document the country's architectural heritage, stabilize and conserve important monuments, and raise awareness of the many contributions

Cambodia's culture has made to the world. WMF's conservation projects have also included educational components, designed to train a new generation of Cambodian conservators to care for the country's remarkable treasures. However, there is still much more to be done, and in order to complete the current phase of our work, WMF must raise \$3 million.





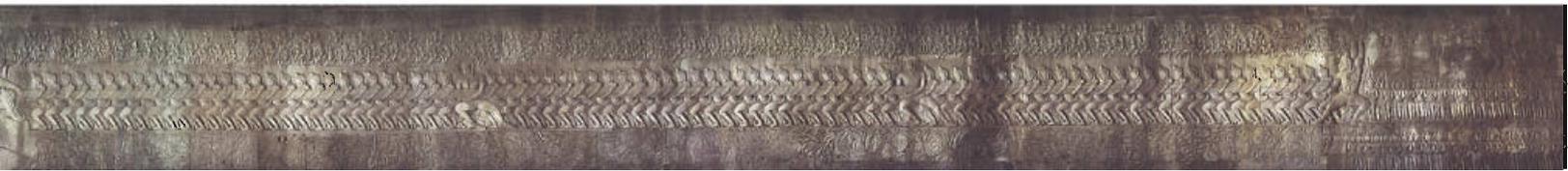


## Churning of the Sea of Milk

The monumental bas-relief known as the *Churning of the Sea of Milk* adorns the east gallery of the iconic Angkor Wat temple complex. A masterpiece of Khmer art commissioned by King Suryavarman II in the early 12th century, the 49-meter-long relief recounts the creation myth, depicting *devas* (gods) and *asuras* (demons) joining forces in churning the primordial ocean, in order to release *amrita*, the elixir of immortality.

Beyond the threats of time and exposure to the elements, the gallery is suffering from the effects of well-intentioned, but improper, restoration work carried out in the 1980s. This earlier restoration has clogged the drainage system and thus, with every rainfall, water seeps into the stone carvings and further destabilizes the fragile frieze. A WMF team of local conservators and international partners is working to dismantle the roofing system, desalinate the masonry blocks, stabilize surfaces, and restore the original drainage system in order to protect the bas-relief from further damage.





# Work at Preah Khan

When WMF arrived at Angkor nearly 20 years ago, the 12th-century temple-city of Preah Khan was so overrun with vegetation that workers were unable to find entire structures beneath the jungle foliage. To this day, the ancient temple struggles to hold itself together amid the crush of the roots and vegetation that have made the buildings their home.



Since WMF's first visit, Preah Khan has been the focus of a field program designed to preserve it as a partial ruin in peaceful coexistence with its natural environment. In addition to the preservation and stabilization of the temple complex structures, WMF's work at Preah Khan has created standardized methodologies and procedures for conservation work that can serve as a model for other projects at Angkor, throughout Cambodia, and beyond.

To complement the conservation work at Preah Khan, WMF is currently preparing for the renovation of the project's on-site interpretation center. The Visitor Center will offer a comprehensive introduction to the site, providing guests with a more engaging experience.



# Challenges at Phnom Bakheng

**B**uilt in A.D. 907, Phnom Bakheng is the oldest temple within the historic city of Angkor. The structure was the earliest example of the mountain-temple style, designed to represent Mount Mehru, the mythical home of the Hindu gods. Situated on the highest point of the Angkor alluvial plain, the temple offers a stunning view of the entire archaeological park below.

During the period of civil strife in Cambodia in the 1970s, Khmer Rouge soldiers occupied Phnom Bakheng, scarring its sacred history with landmines and weapon caches. Still recovering from



the violence of war, the temple faces a new threat: the thousands of tourists who scramble over its ancient walls as they climb to its peak every evening to view the sunset over Angkor.

Phnom Bakheng is further threatened by erosion caused by heavy monsoon rains, compounding the already substantial man-made damage to its historical fabric. Recognizing the urgent need to preserve the temple, WMF has assembled a team of Khmer architects, archaeologists, and conservators who, together with international experts, are implementing temporary structural stabilization measures.





## *Craftsman Training*

**W**hen WMF arrived in Angkor in 1989, fewer than a dozen Cambodian architectural conservators with experience in the care of the temple complexes had survived the nation's bloody civil war. The World Monuments Fund's projects at Angkor have prioritized the development and implementation of education programs that are training a new generation of Cambodian conservators to preserve and care for their cultural heritage. Since 1999, conservation at the temple of Ta Som has been exclusively conducted by WMF-trained Khmer experts.

Since the inception of the training program, WMF has educated young Khmer professionals in the fields of conservation, architecture, archaeology, and engineering. In addition, WMF has helped train over 100 skilled workers in restoration crafts. Today, these artisans, along with local governmental authorities, have become WMF's partners in restoring and protecting the ancient site. The commitment of the staff to the project has been crucial in sustaining the momentum of nearly 20 years of work.

### **WORLD MONUMENTS FUND**

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