



48th

MEETING OF THE GMS TOURISM WORKING GROUP (TWG-48)

17 SEPTEMBER 2021
VIRTUAL MEETING
VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL (ZOOM)

DRAFT SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS



Introduction

1. The 48th GMS Tourism Working Group Meeting (TWG-48) was held on 17 September 2021 via videoconference (Zoom). It was chaired by the Department of Tourism (DOT) of Thailand, co-chaired by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and organized/moderated by the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO). It was attended by senior and mid-level officials representing the National Tourism Organizations (NTOs) of the six Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) countries (Cambodia, People’s Republic of China [PRC], Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam), MTCO, ADB, the World Bank, and other GMS development partners. (List of participants is in [Appendix 1](#).)

2. TWG-48 was convened to (i) discuss selection of the new Executive Director of MTCO; (ii) discuss the COVID-19 and tourism situation of GMS countries; (iii) discuss and agree the final draft of the Mekong Tourism Recovery Communications Plan 2021–2023; (iv) provide updates on MTCO activities; (v) discuss the outcomes of the 7th GMS Summit, (vi) discuss the Southeast Asia Sustainable Tourism Facility proposed regional technical assistance, and (vii) learn about World Bank and other development partner-supported GMS tourism initiatives.

Agenda Item 1

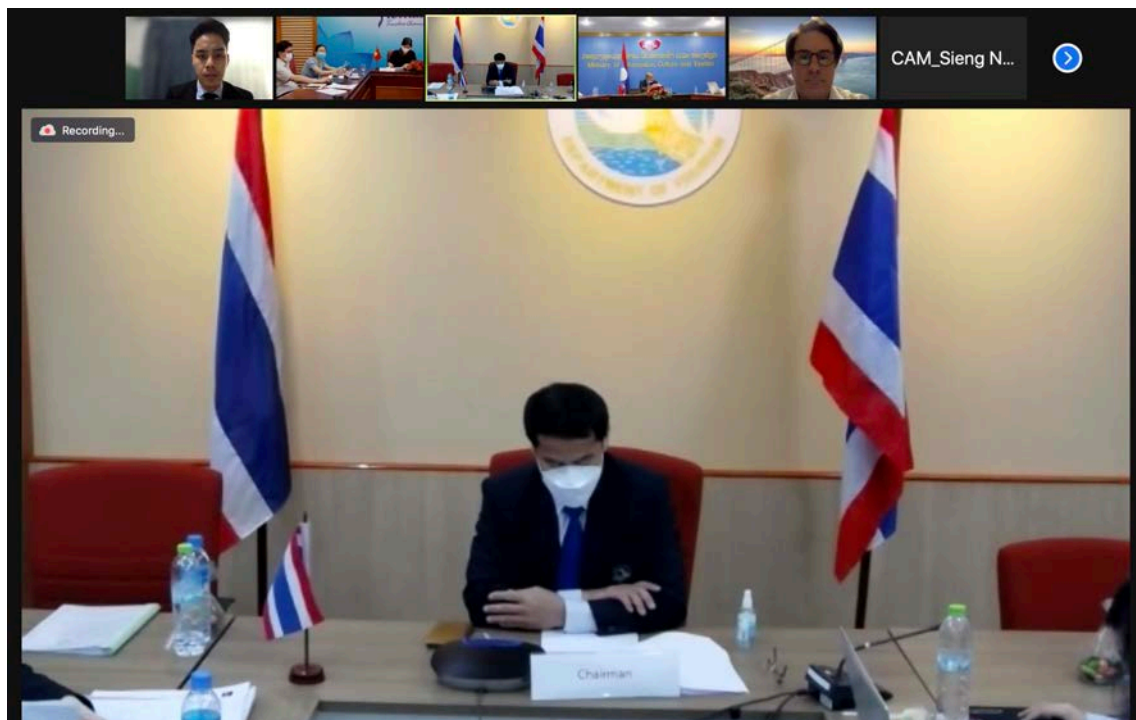
Housekeeping Notes

3. The MTCO, as moderator of the meeting, gave some housekeeping and time management reminders. MTCO then opened the floor for comments on the meeting agenda. TWG-48 agenda was deemed approved after consideration of Viet Nam request to include the review of the MTCO formalization documentation process under Agenda Item 15 in the subsequent MTCO Board Meeting. (A copy of the provisional agenda is in [Appendix 2](#).)

Agenda Item 2

Opening Session

Opening Remarks by the Meeting Chair, Department of Tourism, Thailand:



4. On behalf of Mr. Boonserm Khunkaew, Deputy Director General, DOT, Ms. Patthanasiri Salyasiri Ewtoksan, Director, Division of Tourism Professional

Development, DOT, welcomed all the delegates to the TWG-48 and thanked MTCO for organizing the meeting. She pointed out that nearly two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism industry has suffered heavily with business

closures and widespread unemployment. Citing a UNWTO assessment, she highlighted that the Asia and the Pacific region experienced the largest decline in tourist arrivals at 95% for January-May 2021 versus the comparable period in 2019. During the same period, tourist receipts likewise contracted by 50% year-on-year. To survive the crisis, all stakeholders tried to find ways to mitigate the impact and adapt as can be seen in the different measures undertaken by GMS countries, such as vaccination of tourism workers, loans to support liquidity, and travel bubbles. She acknowledged the initiatives of MTCO, ADB and World Bank to support the recovery of the GMS tourism industry. She believed the meeting would be a good opportunity to exchange best practices and initiatives on tourism recovery to prepare for reopening of countries. She expressed confidence that the discussions would yield insights on how to make the GMS a safe and healthy destination once again.

Remarks from Asian Development Bank

5. Mr. Steven Schipani, ADB representative, thanked GMS country delegations and development partners present for the continuing support to the tourism industry, and MTCO for organizing the meeting and coordinating the various initiatives of the Tourism Working Group (TWG). He extended a special thanks to Mr. Jens Thraenhart for his outstanding years of service as

MTCO Executive Director. He suggested it is important for the TWG to continue to convey optimism to the world—that the GMS has not lost what makes the subregion a special place to visit, to build on its strengths, and address lingering structural problems that undermine sustainable tourism. He pointed out that conveying optimism and trust-building are key objectives of the GMS Tourism Recovery Communications Plan, which will be discussed at the meeting. He was pleased to report that tourism features prominently in the new GMS Economic Cooperation Program Strategic Framework 2030 (GMS-2030) and the GMS COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan (GMS COVID-19 Plan), which have been adopted by the GMS Leaders at the recent 7th GMS Summit. These documents aligned with the GMS Tourism Sector Strategy prepared by the TWG.

Remarks from Executive Director, Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office

6. Mr. Jens Thraenhart, Executive Director, was grateful to the DOT of Thailand for hosting the TWG-48. He mentioned that it is the fourth TWG meeting to be held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic and also his last. He thanked the TWG for trusting him for almost eight years as Executive Director of MTCO and hoped to stay involved in regional Mekong tourism collaboration. He said the pandemic has highlighted the global importance of travel and

tourism economically, their vast connectedness with other industries, and together with the devastating weather extremes hitting the region, exposed the magnitude of the climate crises. In view of these, he urged all concerned to rethink business models and strategies and suggested some actions, including: (i) reassessing and defining new success metrics to transform tourism and travel into environmentally and socially sustainable industries; (ii) adapting to and capturing the opportunities in the face of radically changed lifestyle of people for both leisure and business customers; (iii) delivery of more sustainable options by the tourism industry, which will become the main driving force of recovery and future of tourism; (iv) alignment by the destination management

organizations (DMOs) of the different interests of stakeholders; and (v) taking into consideration the local community, always bearing in mind the ultimate goal of a better quality of life for all. In sum, he reminded that in rebuilding tourism, the key objectives must be achieving balanced tourism to maintain sustainability and well-being of all stakeholders, and that the future of the industry depends on its ability to handle changes, being smart and innovative, and unity among stakeholders in the process. He concluded his remarks by calling everyone to urgent action, not individually, but collectively, for a resilient, responsible, and sustainable tourism.

7. Copies of the opening remarks in this session are in [Appendix 3](#).

Agenda Item 3

Welcome to the new Executive Director of the MTCO





- 8.** The Chair thanked Mr. Thraenhart, outgoing MTCO Executive Director, for his eight years of excellent leadership and dedication in developing and promoting tourism in the GMS through various initiatives. She also welcomed the incoming Executive Director, and expressed optimism that through her knowledge and experience, she will ably carry on with the duties of developing and promoting tourism in the GMS.
- 9.** In response to the Chair, Mr. Thraenhart expressed gratitude for the trust and confidence of the GMS countries during his eight-year tenure. Regretfully, he is unable to thank everyone physically in person due to the pandemic, but he looks forward to joining future TWG meetings and Mekong Tourism Forums. He then briefly explained the comprehensive, thorough, and competitive process of recruiting the new MTCO Executive Director. He proudly noted that applications for the position came from all over the world, which is a testament to the global recognition of the GMS tourism sector's programs and initiatives achieved through the hard work of the TWG and MTCO.
- 10.** In her remarks, the incoming MTCO Executive Director was thankful for the warm welcome. She was also grateful to MTCO for entrusting her with the important position of Executive Director and looked forward to working closely with the MTCO family. She congratulated Mr. Thraenhart and Mr. Nattakorn Asunee Na Ayudhaya for MTCO's successful programs and initiatives in the last eight years.
- 11.** The countries took turns welcoming and extending best wishes to the incoming MTCO Executive Director. They expressed a common message of confidence and optimism that her knowledge and professional experience will benefit MTCO and the GMS tourism sector, especially in accelerating recovery from the pandemic. They all look forward to working with her in the next two years.
- 12.** Each of the countries also thanked Mr. Thraenhart for his years of leadership and service at MTCO. They acknowledged his valuable contributions in building good working relationships among the NTOs and other stakeholders in the GMS as well as in developing and promoting sustainable tourism in the GMS through many initiatives. They also congratulated and wished him success in his new job.
- 13.** Mr. Thraenhart reciprocated the warm wishes of success and expression of gratitude by the countries and ADB with assurances of continued friendship and support to MTCO and the TWG. He proposed that the official announcement of the incoming MTCO Executive Director's appointment be made at the Destination Mekong Summit on 21-22 October 2021. He wrapped up by conveying special thanks to Mr. Asunee Na Ayudhaya for his hard work and

excellent support at MTCO and to Mr. Schipani of ADB for his invaluable advice all throughout the eight years, which enabled him to perform well on the job.

Agenda Item 4

GMS NTO Interventions

- 14.** NTO representatives of the six GMS countries gave presentations on their COVID-19 situation and tourism industry updates, with focus on two key areas, namely, reopening plans and government support for tourism businesses and workforce.
- 15.** *Cambodia* reported a further decline in tourist arrivals by 91% year-on-year during the first half of 2021. This significant drop in tourist arrivals translated to a loss of more than 60,000 direct tourism jobs, more than 3,000 tourism-related businesses, and countless thousands of indirect tourism jobs.
- 16.** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government adopted a national COVID-19 vaccination policy as a key strategy that aims to achieve countrywide herd immunity by end-2021 through vaccinating 75% or 12 million people (aged 12 years and above) out of the country's 16 million population. Achieving herd immunity will become the basis for reopening the country in the context of a new normal. As of mid-September 2021, the number of vaccinated people has reached more than 90% of target, thereby positioning Cambodia to achieve its vaccination goal as early as end-October 2021. The government also recently enhanced its vaccination program by introducing a policy on COVID-19 booster doses for fully vaccinated people (aged 12 years and above) to ensure reinforcement and effectiveness of the herd immunity. This vaccination program was further enhanced to cover children aged 6 to 11 years.
- 17.** With the country on track to meet the goal of herd immunity by yearend, the Ministry of Tourism continues to support initiatives to prepare for reopening the country to international tourists: (i) application of safety and hygiene protocol as well as the standard operating procedures (SOP) for tourism businesses and facilities; (ii) supporting unemployed tourism professionals through online upskilling and retraining program and providing \$40 assistance payment per month as part of the government's ninth round of stimulus rescue package; (iii) improving and developing new tourism products in line with growing trend toward ecotourism, community-based tourism and adventure tourism; and (iv) implementing recently approved tourism plans, namely, the Roadmap for Recovery of Cambodia Tourism during and post COVID-19 2021-2025 and the Siem Reap Tourism Development Master Plan 2021-2035. Although Cambodia is still mulling a yearend reopening, it is gearing to welcome the international travel trade and tourists at the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2022 in Sihanoukville on



16-22 January 2022 as next year's host country.

18. *PRC* reported no confirmed local COVID-19 cases in the mainland for much of 2021 until July. Total number of local COVID-19 cases peaked at a little over 100 cases in August 2021 but have been successfully controlled through the implementation of new measures by the government. In August 2021, in response to the emerging Delta variant cases, the National Health Commission of China issued the “Guidelines on Mask-Wearing for the Public and Key Occupational Workers” and “Guidelines for Prevention and Control of COVID-19 Epidemic among Key Population Groups, Places and Units”. Separately, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT) issued the latest guidelines for tourism agencies, theaters, internet service providers, and entertainment venues. The MCT also temporarily suspended air tickets plus hotel services and group tour services of tourism agencies and OTAs for tourists going to the provinces with medium and high-risk regions until these regions return to low-risk status.

19. In terms of vaccination progress, 2.16 billion doses of vaccines have been given to the population in the mainland as of 15 September 2021. Over 1 billion people or 70% of the total population have been fully vaccinated. Relatedly, President Xi Jinping announced that the PRC will donate an additional 100 million COVID-19 vaccines to developing countries this year on top of the US\$100 million donation to the COVAX Facility.

20. Although the tourism industry in the PRC remains heavily affected by the pandemic, domestic tourism is showing recovery with domestic tourists and tourism revenues growing by more than 100% year-on-year during the first half of 2021. Railway and domestic air passengers have likewise increased by 63% and 76% year-on-year, respectively, during January-July 2021. The MCT continues to host international tourism events, which are open to tourism agencies and representatives of the diplomatic missions of GMS countries in the PRC.

21. *Lao PDR* informed that the COVID-19 cases have reached 18,059 as of 16 September 2021, of which 4,108 remained active cases and 16 have died. To address the growing number of COVID-19 cases, vaccine procurement has become a priority for the government. It has administered the first dose of COVID-19 vaccines to 2,676,337 people. Fully vaccinated people stood at 1,867,025.

22. Tourist arrivals have dropped by 82% year-on-year in 2020. International borders are closed, except for health emergency, experts, charter flights, and authorized transportation of goods. Issuance of all types of visas is suspended.

23. To support the tourism industry, the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism (MICT) collaborated with the UNDP to develop the Lao PDR Tourism Recovery Roadmap for 2021-2025. The roadmap covers three themes: (i) economic relief to protect jobs and interventions to revive the tourism sector; (ii) build confidence among travelers and strengthen the sector; and (iii) upgrade, expand and diversify tourism products, services, and markets. The roadmap also presents three strategic options in the short, medium, and long-term: (i) domestic tourism as an immediate response to border closures and compensate for decline in international tourist arrivals; (ii) travel bubble, backed up with strong health protocols and market intelligence, as a source of immediate cash flow for the sector; and (iii) greening and sustainable tourism as a medium to long-term priority. Additionally, the MICT is preparing a yearend launch of the pilot project, Lao Golf Holiday Packages, which will cater to fully vaccinated Korean tourists travelling by charter airplane for a golf holiday in Vientiane Capital.

24. *Myanmar* recorded 438,951 COVID-19 cases as of 15 September 2021, with 388,596 recoveries and 16,784 deaths. The government is focusing on its vaccination program to contain the spread of COVID-19. Over eight million vaccine doses have been deployed and close to five million people have been vaccinated.

25. Visitor arrivals have dramatically dropped to only about 83,000 by July 2021. International flight operations to and from the Yangon International Airport and entry of foreign nationals through any border checkpoint between Myanmar and neighboring countries remain suspended to prevent importation and spread of COVID-19.

26. The government has developed a number of plans to mitigate the impact of the pandemic and support the recovery of the tourism industry. A COVID-19 Tourism Relief Plan is integrated into the broader COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan that was rolled out in April 2020 and has an allocation of 3%-4% of the national budget. Measures to assist the tourism sector include relaxation of taxes and fees, human resource re-skilling, travel facilitation, and investment incentives. Based on the previous Tourism Master Plan (2013-2020), the Myanmar Tourism Strategic Recovery Roadmap 2021–2025 (MTSRR) was later released to have a COVID-19 response that is aligned with the UNWTO Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism. The MTSRR provides 18 strategies broken down into 93 specific actions designed to achieve immediate, medium, and long-term goals. In August 2021, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism launched the Enchanting Myanmar Health and Safety Protocols to ensure that tourism-related business (i.e., hotels, guest houses, restaurants, transport, travel and tours, etc.) follow health and safety protocols in restarting tourism.



27. Ongoing tourism initiatives include developing community-based tourism sites, implementing community-based tourism standards, creating destination management organizations (DMOs) at district and township levels, and stepping up online and digital marketing and promotions (websites, social media channels, virtual tours). The government is also working on plans to revive travel and accelerate tourism recovery in the subregion, which include travel bubbles, special insurance packages for tourists, and targeted tourism campaigns.

28. *Thailand* plans to administer 100 million vaccine doses in 2021 to arrest the surge in COVID-19 cases which have reached 1,400,000 by September 2021. COVID-19 recoveries and fatalities are estimated at 1,200,000 and 15,000, respectively. As of September 2021, 42 million vaccines have been deployed and 21% of the population have been fully vaccinated.

29. Aside from vaccination, the government supports the anti-COVID-19 measures of DMHTT - distancing (D), mask wearing (M), hand washing (H), testing (T), and Thai Chana app (T). The government calls on the cooperation of people to take these precautions seriously to prevent the spread of COVID-19. A range of relief measures is also in place to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on people: (i) "Ying Chai Ying Dai" (The More You Spend, The More You Get) scheme, which gives cashback e-vouchers for domestic purchases; (ii) "Khon La Khrueng" (Let's Go Halves – Phase 3), a co-payment scheme giving participants a 50% daily discount at participating establishments; (iii) financial aid package of 13.5 billion Baht for employers and insured employees in the 10 provinces placed under lockdown; and (iv) utility subsidies for businesses and households.

30. Thailand has been cautiously reopening to revive the tourism sector and spur the economy. Lockdown measures in 29 provinces have been eased starting 1 September 2021, lifting some restrictions on retail, dining, and personal services sectors, among others. A phased approach to reopen Thailand to international tourists is being implemented under a so-called "Sandbox" model piloted in Phuket. In phase 1, foreign travelers who have complied with all requirements have been allowed to enter Phuket resort island starting on 1 July 2021. The Phuket pilot project has been successively expanded on 15 July 2021 and 16 August 2021 to include other designated areas under the Samui Plus and Phuket Sandbox 7+7 Extension programs. The second and third phases planned for 1 October 2021 and 15 October 2021 will involve programs that cover more destinations. Thailand is set to proceed with the fourth phase in January 2022, with 12 border provinces to reopen under travel bubbles with neighboring countries.

31. *Viet Nam* recorded 645,640 COVID-19 cases as of 16 September 2021, of which 412,650 have recovered and 216,804 remain under treatment. COVID-19 fatalities have reached 16,186.

32. The government is accelerating its vaccination campaign launched in March 2021. Aside from stepping up procurement of vaccines from foreign sources, the government is supporting domestic manufacturers of vaccines. Currently, four Vietnamese vaccines are in development (Nanocovax, Covivac, Vabiotech, VBC-COV19-154 COVID-19), of which one may be in use as early as October following successful three clinical trials. The government aims to have about 70% of the population fully vaccinated by end-2021. As of 16 September 2021, 33.65% of the population have been inoculated with the 33,0877,984 vaccine doses deployed.

33. Another important part of the government's COVID-19 prevention strategy is the observance of the Ministry of Health's 5K measures: *khau trang* (face masks), *khu khuan* (disinfection), *khoang cach* (distancing), *khong tu tap* (no gatherings), and *khai bao y te* (health declarations).

34. The government continues to support to the tourism industry through ongoing financial-monetary policies, subsidies, reduction in mandatory fees (e.g., travel agents' guarantee deposits cut by 80%), and welfare measures. Also, the Prime Minister of Viet Nam has endorsed an international tourism reopening plan to be piloted in Phu Quoc island under a vaccine passport program. Under the plan, Phu Quoc will receive fully vaccinated international tourists who have satisfied all requirements and conditions starting in October 2021. The pilot plan will be extended and scaled up based on the outcome. Travel bubbles with other countries are also being considered as part of the reopening plan.

35. Copies of country reports/presentations are in [Appendix 4](#).

Agenda Item 5

Mekong Tourism Recovery Communications Plan

36. Having shared the latest version of the Mekong Tourism Recovery Communications Plan (the Plan) ahead of the meeting, Mr. Thraenhart gave a quick presentation on some sections of the Plan (situational analysis, cover and table of content pages, principles, and key messages). He also went over the Plan's timeline, starting from the initial consultations in December 2020 up to

the intended publication date and launch at the Destination Mekong Summit. (A copy of Mr. Thraenhart's presentation is in [Appendix 5](#).)

37. Mr. Schipani thanked Mr. Thraenhart for his hard work on the Plan, which was well received and recognized by the Leaders at the 7th GMS Summit. He commended the bottom-up and inclusive approach used wherein the TWG and MTCO showed ownership of the process and inputs while bringing in different public and private stakeholders to contribute. There was also an efficient feedback mechanism that allowed GMS countries to provide verbal and written comments throughout the preparation process. He further noted that the Plan is closely aligned with the GMS Tourism Sector Strategy and other regional/national tourism planning documents. He appreciated the layout and design of the Plan, which were consistent with the quality and branding of other TWG reports published by MTCO.

38. Mr. Schipani also pointed out that even though the latest version of the Plan has reflected country updates and developments as well as feedback received so far, further minor comments from the countries may still be accommodated in the next few weeks prior to copy editing and eventual release of the Plan in end-October 2021. He gave assurance that countries will be notified of any structural or sensitive adjustments before finalizing the Plan. He ended his intervention by stating ADB could help support the implementation of some communications activities in Plan as prioritized by the TWG starting Q4 2021 to 2022.

Discussion:

39. *Cambodia* did not have any objections or comments on the timeline of the Plan. They, however, raised for consideration the inclusion of sports tourism as another component or driver of tourism recovery in the Plan. They believe that sports tourism, such as the Southeast Asian (SEA) Games of ASEAN, has an untapped potential to promote and restart travel and tourism in the GMS. They informed that Viet Nam will host the SEA Games in 2022, Cambodia in 2023, and Thailand in 2025.

40. *PRC* agreed in principle on the content of the Plan and thanked ADB and MTCO for incorporating their previous proposals in the Plan. They requested clarification on how NTOs will be funding some of the projects as mentioned in the Plan.

41. *Myanmar* fully supported the Plan as it is intended for a safe and sustainable tourism recovery in the GMS. They expressed appreciation to MTCO and ADB for their work and support to the Plan.

42. *Lao PDR* thanked Mr. Thraenhart and ADB. They requested correction of the timeframe of the Lao PDR Recovery Plan as written on page 15 to 2021-2025 (from 2022-2029).

43. *Thailand* was grateful to MTCO and ADB for their hard work in helping to develop the Plan. They agreed and had no further comments on the content of the Plan. On the timeframe of activities in the MTCO Communications Plan 2021-2022, they proposed that the Q2 or Q3 2022 starting period of some activities be revised to Q4 2021 instead since the MTCO Communications Plan is expected to be finalized and implemented by Q4 2021. Furthermore, Thailand sought explanation on the toolkits mentioned in the Plan.

44. *Viet Nam* appreciated the support of ADB, and the coordination work done by MTCO to develop the Plan. They were pleased with how the latest version of the Plan looked. They were also glad to hear about ADB's confirmation of financial support to help implement the Plan. They echoed the request of PRC for clarification on the contributions requested from the countries to implement the Plan.

45. Mr. Thraenhart responded to the comments of Lao PDR and Thailand. The timeframe of Lao PDR's Recovery Plan will be corrected as requested. He agreed with Thailand's point to adjust the starting period of some of the activities in the MTCO Communications Plan to Q4 2021 and will make the adjustments as suggested. On the production and use of toolkits, he explained that toolkits are a critical implementation tool to ensure that there is consistent branding and messaging from the various stakeholders (public and private sectors). A consistent messaging will make collaboration among stakeholders more powerful and effective, resulting in a successful execution of the Plan.

46. Mr. Schipani supplemented Mr. Thraenhart's response by first thanking the countries for their review, agreement in principle, and further feedback on the Plan. On Cambodia's proposal to include sports tourism in the Plan, he agreed and will coordinate with MTCO and MOT Cambodia on the additional text. To address PRC's and Viet Nam's question on implementation funding, he suggested MTCO to prepare a separate document detailing the financing plan, which can be shared within the TWG and the MTCO Board. He further noted that some of the activities, particularly those under MTCO, are already funded by MTCOs operating resources, others could be supported by the private sector, NTOs using in-kind or other government contributions, ADB, and other development partners. Turning to Lao PDR, he confirmed that correction on the timeframe will be made as pointed out. In addition to Mr. Thraenhart's response to Thailand's query on the toolkits, he mentioned that a sample communications toolkit is being prepared by the firm that desktop-published the communications plan and will be shared with the TWG around the middle to end-October 2021. He also concurred with Thailand's comment to have the implementation period

of some activities start in Q4 2021. He closed his intervention by paying compliments once again to the TWG and MTCO for preparing the quality Plan.

47. As a follow up intervention, Mr. Thraenhart proposed to include sports as one of the tourism themes or experiences identified on page 10 of the Plan. This would address Cambodia's request to integrate sports. *(At the beginning of the afternoon session, Cambodia made an intervention to express concurrence with Mr. Thraenhart's proposal. Specifically, they suggested that the word "sports" be inserted in the section of Wellness).*

48. The Chair rounded up the discussion by thanking MTCO and ADB for their support in developing the Plan to ensure a safe and sustainable tourism recovery in GMS. At the same, he requested them to consider the comments raised by the countries during the session to make the Plan more comprehensive and practical.

Agenda Item 6

MTCO Activities Updates

A. GMS Performance Scorecard

49. Mr. Thraenhart presented once more the GMS performance scorecard for 2020. In 2020, international visitor arrivals dropped to 13.5 million (2019: 73.6 million) while tourism receipts fell to \$27.7 billion (2019: \$101 billion) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The decline in these key indicators has been considered already in the Mekong Tourism Recovery Communications Plan.

B. COVID-19 Updates

50. Mr. Thraenhart reported on the MTCO channels for providing COVID-19-related information in the region.

51. *Coronavirus Resource Page.* Recognizing the importance of keeping stakeholders informed, MTCO created the Coronavirus Resource Page in the Mekong Tourism website as early as March 2020. MTCO is a forerunner in this initiative, being one of the first tourism boards to set up a platform for providing current information on the COVID-19 situation in the region (e.g., country policy updates, travel situation). The Resource Page remains to be the only one of its kind focusing on GMS data. Mr. Thraenhart acknowledged the countries for their contributions in terms of providing timely data to continually update the Resource Page.

52. GMS COVID-19 Travel Situation Infographics. Since May 2020, the MTCO has published 14 issues. The infographics, which are also accessible from the Mekong Tourism website, have been received well in the industry as they give a snapshot or quick overview of travel situation in all GMS countries. The infographics are particularly useful for people who may not have time to scour the Mekong Tourism website for such information.

53. GMS COVID-19 Newsletter. This initiative remains in the pipeline as some countries have yet to submit inputs. To proceed with the newsletter, Mr. Thraenhart called on countries to agree on a submission timeline. Timely submission of information by all countries is vital for the release of the newsletter on schedule. MTCO proposes to come out with a newsletter every two weeks. The newsletter will be issued on a Tuesday with the deadline for submitting inputs to be set one day before (Monday).

C. Digital Performance Update

54. Using various metrics that tracked the performance of the Mekong Tourism website since 2014, Mr. Thraenhart noted positive developments in a span of the past year (e.g., increase in the library of documents by another 30 documents, additional 350 website posts, uptrend in Facebook likes). Even without advertising budget to help drive traffic, the website is able to generate a lot of traffic from its online library which is recognized globally by the academia, travel trade, and media. Mr. Thraenhart also cited the increased engagement in Facebook due to the content published by the expert groups. In terms of website visitors, the United States, PR China, Thailand, Cambodia, and Singapore were the top five sources. The top rank of the United States may be misleading, though, as it may have resulted from the increased use of virtual private networks (VPNs) whose default countries of origin include the United States.

D. Destination Mekong Update

55. Mr. Thraenhart provided updates on the establishment of Destination Mekong (DM) as well as ongoing and planned related initiatives, programs, and events. He explained that the reason why MTCO supported the establishment of Destination Mekong as a private-sector led tourism board, independently managed and operated and separate from MTCO, was to execute the mandate of MTCO to foster public-private collaboration and executing the Mekong Tourism strategic plans.

56. Cambodia, host country. Cambodia will host the offices of DM at the new building of the Ministry of Tourism in Phnom Penh. With the assistance of the



Ministry of Tourism and related agencies, the process for incorporation is moving forward, albeit at a slower pace than normal due to the pandemic.

57. Mr. Thraenhart underscored the benefits of having a GMS country as host of DM (i.e., coordination between the GMS TWG and private sector, fostering close relationship between MTCO and DM, provision of legal structure and governance with official office, and commitment of government support). He once more acknowledged Cambodia for demonstrating strong support to the public-private partnership framework by offering to host DM. He also broadly explained DM's governance structure and the processes (Board elections, appointments) that will take place after being incorporated. He highlighted the significance of the public-private partnership framework in executing the Mekong Tourism Recovery Communications Plan. Information on the public-private partnership framework, DM, and programs and initiatives are in the Mekong Tourism booklet (<http://bit.ly/MekongTourism2021>).

58. *Mekong Innovations in Sustainable Tourism (MIST)*. For MIST 2021, 32 out of 41 nominated projects/initiatives were accepted and will be subject to a public voting. Selected finalists will pitch to 20 judges from the Mekong Tourism Advisory Group (MeTAG) on 6-7 October 2021 at the World Tourism Day Forum.

59. *Experience Mekong Collection*. A number of well-participated webinars were conducted wherein small businesses shared experiences and insights about coping and struggling to survive the pandemic.

60. *Experience Mekong Showcases*. Finalists for 2021 have been chosen. They will pitch at the World Tourism Day Forum as well. The winners of the Experience Mekong Showcases 2021 and MIST 2021 will be announced at the Destination Mekong Summit. The successful public voting that garnered over 6,000 votes meant global exposure for small businesses, the Experience Mekong Collection brand, and the Mekong Region as a whole.

61. *Mekong Heroes*. The second hero under the program that was launched in 2020 is Mr. Lokru Srey Bandaul. He is the co-founder of the Phare Cambodian Circus, which was one of the winners of the 2018 Experience Mekong Showcases. Before Mr. Bandaul's death in August 2021 due to COVID-19, he played an important role in restoring, preserving, and protecting Khmer heritage and culture and helped many kids get off the streets through the arts. Mr. Thraenhart requested to keep the winner of the Mekong Hero 2021 confidential until its official announcement at the World Tourism Day Forum by Ms. Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul, former Minister of Tourism and Sports of Thailand and chair of the Mekong Heroes Selection Committee this year.

62. Mekong Stories. Development of the first Mekong Stories book and its complementary website is underway. Mr. Thraenhart gave a preview of the book's design. The first publication will have over 300 pages of stories from people and businesses under various programs (e.g., Mekong Faces, Mekong Heroes, Experience Mekong Collection, MIST), which are aimed to inspire people to visit the Mekong Region. This initiative is envisioned to become a powerful tool in promoting regional tourism destinations as it looks to create partnerships with hotels, airlines, and international media for co-branded versions of the book and as important distribution channels.

63. Mekong Tourism Events. Mr. Thraenhart promoted upcoming virtual events, namely, the Mekong *World Tourism Day Forum (6-7 October 2021)* and the *2nd Destination Mekong Summit (21-22 October 2021)*. The Mekong World Tourism Day Forum is already publicized in the UNWTO website and soon in the destinationmekong.com website as well. Registration for this event will go live soon.

64. Mr. Thraenhart also noted that the Mekong Region was well-represented in the recently held *54th Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for East Asia and the Pacific* wherein he and some of the GMS countries made interventions. In the meeting, Mr. Thraenhart presented the Mekong Tourism public-private partnership framework as an innovative way to recover from the pandemic. One of the highlights of the meeting was the introduction of the UNWTO COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance Package, which is supported by various development partners, including ADB. Mr. Thraenhart also pointed out that the Mekong Tourism Recovery Communications Plan is aligned with the top priorities for the next three years identified by the UNWTO members from East Asia and the Pacific (e.g., sustainability and green transition; boost investments, attract donors, create national tourism fund; branding and re-positioning to get new markets; product development and diversification).

E. MeTAG Update

65. Mr. Thraenhart acknowledged the MeTAG as a source of relevant and valuable content that resulted in better engagement in meetings. MeTAG has around 120 members across the current active expert groups (Health & Wellness, Research & Academia, Food & Agritourism, Arts & Culture, Wildlife Tourism & Conservation, and Child Protection). He then gave a quick rundown of the initiatives and activities of some of the expert groups.

66. Mr. Thraenhart gladly announced an initiative whereby representatives of expert groups will be given opportunity for short interventions during TWG meetings. This initiative which aims to bridge the public and private sectors and leverage the work of expert groups, was endorsed by all countries. To kick off

this initiative that is planned to be carried on in succeeding TWG meetings, Ms. Gabriela Kuhn, Head of Programme of ECPAT International and Chair of the Child Protection expert group, was invited to share the expert group's work.

67. Ms. Kuhn, with her experience at ECPAT International that has a network of over 100 organizations working to end sexual exploitation of children across the globe, leads DM's Child Protection expert group in pursuing a more resilient and sustainable GMS tourism industry through addressing child protection issues. She stressed that to make tourism in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, child protection needs to be prioritized because children's rights are a cross-cutting issue. She also briefly discussed the expert group's areas of work to support the public and private sectors (e.g., organize webinars and events, share knowledge, identify areas of concerns, promote globally good practices from the region). She highlighted the webinar held in August 2021 to raise awareness on the issue of unregulated voluntourism. The webinar was attended by over 200 participants and launched The Code Voluntourism Policy published by the Child Protection expert group.

68. The Chair expressed gratitude to MTCO for initiating many activities to promote and help GMS tourism recover from the pandemic. He also appreciated the numerous activities of MeTAG and thanked the Child Protection expert group for organizing the webinar that encouraged stakeholders to focus on children in tourism and protect the future generation from unethical actions. He agreed that voluntourism plays an important role in sustainable and responsible travel and tourism development in the region.

69. A copy of Mr. Thraenhart's presentation is in [Appendix 6](#).

Agenda Item 7

Updates from the Asian Development Bank

70. *Report to the Leaders on Recent Outcomes of GMS Cooperation (GMS Achievements Report) and Leaders' Statement (Joint Summit Declaration).* Mr. Schipani reported that tourism was featured prominently at the 7th GMS Summit hosted by Cambodia and attended by the GMS Leaders and Senior Officials, ADB President and Senior Management, and development partners. In both the GMS Achievements Report presented by the GMS Minister of Cambodia, H.E. Sok Chenda Sophea, and the official Leaders' Statement issued by the Leaders for the Summit, tourism was recognized as an important sector in the GMS that served as a strong engine of growth and prosperity throughout the region. The Leaders commended the work of the TWG and MTCO and the various projects and initiatives that drove growth and boosted the strength and competitiveness of GMS tourism. The Leaders also

acknowledged the severe impact of the pandemic on tourism, but at the same expressed great appreciation for the TWGs mitigating and relief measures and proactive responses, including the Mekong Tourism Recovery Communications Plan, to support and revive tourism.

71. *GMS-2030 and GMS COVID-19 Plan.* The two important Summit documents endorsed by the Leaders set out the directions for the GMS tourism sector. Mr. Schipani stressed that these plans adopted the current GMS Tourism Sector Strategy and largely drew on the work and recommendations of the TWG. The documents may be accessed from the GMS website (<https://greatermekong.org/7th-greater-mekong-subregion-gms-summit-1>).

72. *GMS Regional Investment Framework (RIF) 2022.* Mr. Schipani informed that the current RIF would end in 2022. The GMS Secretariat, together with the GMS Senior Officials, will be working on the next RIF, which would have refinements, including new selection criteria for projects, emphasis on COVID-19 recovery, more co-financing, and increased private sector participation. The new RIF, including the projects that countries would like to prioritize, will be discussed in future TWGs.

73. The RIF has been an important tool to help mobilize resources from the government, development partners, including ADB, and the private sector to support the pipeline of tourism projects in the GMS. Overall, the RIF has more than 200 projects covering many sectors. Out of the \$78 billion total cost of the projects, 76% of financing required has already been identified. Mr. Schipani congratulated the TWG for the good performance of the tourism sector as reflected in the \$430 million financing mobilized for 16 out of the 32 tourism investment/TA projects in the RIF. Mr. Schipani also highlighted that there are tourism projects in the pipeline (about \$500 million) for approval in 2021 or early 2022.

74. One of the forthcoming tourism projects is the ***Southeast Asia Sustainable Tourism Facility Technical Assistance***. This is a proposed \$1.73 million TA project in response to countries' request for more assistance and engagement from ADB in the tourism sector due to many challenges (pre-pandemic and new or pandemic-induced). The TA is expected to support investment project preparation, smart tourism ecosystem development, tourism public-private partnership structuring, and online short-term rental policy development as a means to support small entrepreneurs and mobilize domestic resources needed to boost sustainability. Its approval is planned for the end of 2021 and implemented in 2022 to 2024.

75. Mr. Schipani concluded his presentation by reiterating ADB's continued support to GMS countries to build back tourism more sustainably, more inclusive, and more prosperous than it was before the pandemic. (A copy of Mr. Schipani's presentation, including annexes, is in [Appendix 7](#).)

Agenda Item 8

Updates from the World Bank

76. Ms. Jessie McComb, Global Tourism Specialist at the World Bank, presented World Bank's integrated approach to ecotourism development in the Lower Mekong Region with three key projects: *Cambodia Sustainable Landscapes and Ecotourism Project (CSLEP)*, *Lao PDR Landscapes and Livelihoods (LLL) Project*, and *Bringing Sustainable Forest Landscapes to Scale in the Lower Mekong Region (LMR)*. The CSLEP and LLL Project are lending operations focused on sustainable landscape management and ecotourism. She emphasized that that these projects were developed after carrying out rigorous analytics, assessments, and studies, which is consistent with World Bank's approach of ensuring sound research foundation for investments. CSLEP supports investments in protected areas (PAs) to strengthen management and build infrastructure, while addressing enabling environment challenges to mobilize private sector engagement and investment in ecotourism. Similarly, the recently approved LLL Project supports investments in PAs, specifically looking at PAs management, sustainable forestry, and improved livelihood opportunities.

77. Both the CSLEP and LLL Project are paired with a regional advisory and analytics project, *Bringing Sustainable Forest Landscapes to Scale in the LMR*, which supports cross-border sustainable forest management. One of the areas of focus of this advisory project is identifying regional and cross-border opportunities to develop ecotourism and nature-based tourism. It is funded by PROGREEN, which is a World Bank multi-donor trust fund supporting sustainability with a specific focus on forest management. Ms. McComb gave insights on the key elements as well as the investigation process and methodology of an ecotourism research under this project, which aims to help governments and the industry have an evidence-based decision making on how to increase the value of tourism (e.g., product development, marketing, infrastructure investments, policies). She ended her presentation by thanking the TWG and MTCO for the opportunity to engage with them as key stakeholders of the project. She encouraged feedback to ensure that their research benefits the TWG, government, destinations, and the industry as a whole. (A copy of Ms. McComb's presentation is in [Appendix 8](#).)

Agenda Item 9

GMS Tourism Infrastructure for Inclusive Growth Project I and II

- 78.** Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam reported on the implementation status of the GMS Tourism Infrastructure for Inclusive Growth Projects I and II (TIIG I and II). As of June 2021, overall progress of TIIG I for Cambodia and Lao PDR has reached at least 90%, with all construction works nearly completed. Ongoing activities are on track to be completed by loan closing date (31 December 2021). For Viet Nam, construction works have been completed by the time the loan closed on 30 June 2021.
- 79.** Aside from accomplishments and lessons learned in the implementation of TIIG-I proposed measures to strengthen implementation of TIIG II were also presented. All three countries reported good progress in implementing TIIG II so far. (Copies of the presentations are in [Appendix 9](#).)
- 80.** Mr. Schipani congratulated Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam on their candid report on the achievements, challenges, and lessons learned from TIIG I. He is pleased to see that the three countries are on track to meet the objectives of the project and commended the countries for a job well done in difficult circumstances. The overall good performance of the project is made more remarkable in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which compounded the usual project challenges (e.g., natural disasters, cumbersome and changing government rules and regulations).
- 81.** Mr. Schipani also suggested deferring the TIIG-I self-evaluation for at least one year after financial closure and once project assets have been put into full operation after tourism re-starts. He informed that ADB is open to extending projects to enable full utilization of available resources. He also echoed the point made by Ms. McComb of World Bank about doing sound analytical work in preparing projects. He stressed the importance of taking stock of the universal and country-specific lessons learned from TIIG I and doing more rigorous preparation and due diligence in designing future projects.



Agenda Item 10

Other Matters & Closing

82. The Chair opened the floor for any interventions and hearing none, proceeded with his closing remarks.

83. The Chair expressed his sincere appreciation to all the participants for their valuable contributions in making TWG-48 a success. He was pleased to note the pipeline tourism projects mentioned during the meeting. He also expressed optimism that the tourism recovery strategies and initiatives being implemented by all countries will provide much needed support for businesses to be ready once the borders reopen. He thanked and wished all participants well and declared TWG-48 closed.

A 15-minute virtual break was made before proceeding to the closed-door session of the MTCO Board. MTCO Board members were requested to reconnect by 3:15 p.m. (Bangkok Time).



Cambodia



China



Laos



Myanmar



Thailand



Viet Nam

48th

MEETING OF THE GMS TOURISM WORKING GROUP (TWG-48)

17 SEPTEMBER 2021

VIRTUAL MEETING

VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL (ZOOM)

DRAFT SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS



Cambodia



China



Laos



Myanmar



Thailand



Vietnam

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

List of Participants
The 48th GMS Tourism Working Group Meeting
On September 17, 2021, via video conference call (Zoom)

No	Title	First Name	Last Name	Position	Organization	Department	Note
NTOs OF GMS COUNTRIES							
Thailand							
Department of Tourism (DOT)							
1	Mr.	Boonserm	Khunkaew	Deputy Director General	Department of Tourism	Tourism Development Department	Head
2	Mrs.	Patthanasiri Salyasiri	Ewtoksan	Director	Department of Tourism	Division of Tourism Professional Development	Delegate
3	Ms.	Nalanthorn	Panumpun	International Affairs Officer	Department of Tourism	Division of Tourism Professional Development	Delegate
4	Ms.	Sukunlaya	Singhaphan	International Affairs Officer	Department of Tourism	Division of Tourism Professional Development	Delegate
Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MoTS)							
1	Ms.	Tadinee	Phongroob	International Affairs Officer, Practitioner level	Ministry of Tourism and Sports	International Affairs Division	Delegate
2	Ms.	Promporn	Promrat	International Affairs Officer	Ministry of Tourism and Sports	International Affairs Division	Delegate
Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT)							
1	Ms.	Sarima	Chindamat	Director	Tourism Authority of Thailand	Secretariat and International Relations Division	Delegate
2	Ms.	Phantajit	Promkutkaew	Chief	Tourism Authority of Thailand	International Cooperation Section	Delegate
3	Ms.	Thanyamon	Kerdphol	International Relations Officer	Tourism Authority of Thailand	International Cooperation Section	Delegate

4	Ms.	Ploychompooh	Thitiyaporn	International Relations Officer	Tourism Authority of Thailand	International Cooperation Section	Delegate
Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC)							
1	Mr.	Thutthai	Keeratipongpaiboon	Director	Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC)	International Strategy and Coordination Division	Delegate
2	Mr.	Vudthidech	Chamnikij	Plan and Policy Analyst, Senior Professional Level	Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC)	-	Delegate
3	Mr.	Wishchapol	Techawiwattanarkarn	Plan and Policy Analyst, Professional Level	Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC)	-	Delegate
4	Mr.	Kittisak	Lertpermphol	Plan and Policy Analyst, Practitioner Level	Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC)	-	Delegate
Cambodia							
1	H.E. / Mr.	Chantha	Tith	Permanent Secretary of State	Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia	-	Head
2	Mr.	Puthvory	Koout	Under Secretary of State	Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia	-	Delegate
3	Mr.	Sokun	Sok	Deputy Director General	Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia	Tourism Development and International Cooperation	Delegate
4	Mr.	Sieng	Neak	Deputy Director General	Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia	Tourism Development and International Cooperation	Delegate
5	Mr.	Ratana	Choub	Director	Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia	Department of Tourism Planning and Development	Delegate
6	Mr.	Sinoun	Hout	Director	Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia	Tourism Planning and Development	Delegate

7	Mr.	Sarin	Chhoeurn	Chief of GMS Office	Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia	Tourism and Planning Development	Delegate
PR China							
1	Mr.	Xi Long	Zhang	Director General	Ministry of Culture and Tourism, China	Bureau of International Exchange and Cooperation	Head
2	Mr.	Xin Ming	Wang	Director, Asia Division	Ministry of Culture and Tourism, China	Bureau of International Exchange and Cooperation	Delegate
3	Mr.	Jun	Yang	Deputy Director, Asia Division	Ministry of Culture and Tourism, China	Bureau of International Exchange and Cooperation	Delegate
Lao PDR							
1	Mr. / H.E.	Ounethuang	Khaophanh	Vice Minister	Ministry of Information and Culture	-	Head
2	Mr.	Khom	Douangchantha	Director General	Ministry of Information and Culture	Tourism Marketing Department	Delegate
3	Mrs.	Phonemaly	Inthaphome	Director	Ministry of Information and Culture	Tourism Development Department	Delegate
4	Mr.	Somxay	Sipasueh	Deputy Director General	Ministry of Information and Culture	Tourism Development Department	Delegate
5	Mr.	Phouthone	Dalalom	Deputy Director of Division	Ministry of Information and Culture	Institute of Mass Media, Culture and Tourism	Delegate
6	Mr.	Saypasong	Vongsak	Deputy Director	Ministry of Information and Culture	Ecotourism and Administrative Division, Tourism Development Department	Delegate
7	Mr.	Bounthav	Sisava	Deputy Director	Ministry of Information and Culture	Statistic Division, Tourism Development Department	Delegate



8	Mrs.	Phonemany	Sukhathammavon	Deputy Director	Ministry of Information and Culture	Tourism Planning and Development Division, Tourism Development Department	Delegate
9	Ms.	Alounny	Phanyasith	Deputy Director of Division	Ministry of Information and Culture	Tourism Management Department	Delegate
10	Mr.	Somxay	Chonghumeoua	Officer	Ministry of Information and Culture	Tourism Marketing Department	Delegate
11	Mr.	Aloun	Boundanngmanosouk	Officer	Ministry of Information and Culture	Tourism Development Department	Delegate
12	Ms.	Kituna	Santhivong	Officer	Ministry of Information and Culture	Institute of Mass Media	Delegate
Myanmar							
1	Mr.	Htay	Aung	Union Minister	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	-	Head
2	Mr.	Hlaing	Oo	Director General	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Minister Office	Delegate
3	Mr.	Maung Maung	Kyaw	Director General	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Directorate of Hotels and Tourism	Delegate
4	Mr.	Hla	Myint	Deputy Director General	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Minister Office	Delegate
5	Ms	Khiang Mee Mee	Htun	Director	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Directorate of Hotels and Tourism	Delegate
6	Mr.	Lynn Htut	Oo	Deputy Director	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Directorate of Hotels and Tourism	Delegate
7	Mr.	Tin Myo	Aung	Deputy Director	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Directorate of Hotels and Tourism	Delegate

8	Mr.	Myo Min	Oo	Assistant Director	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Directorate of Hotels and Tourism	Delegate
9	Mr.	Kyaw Swar	Win	Assistant Director	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Directorate of Hotels and Tourism	Delegate
10	Mr.	San Win	Aung	Assistant Director	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Directorate of Hotels and Tourism	Delegate
11	Ms.	San San	Win	Assistant Director	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Directorate of Hotels and Tourism	Delegate
12	Ms.	Hnin Lei	Wai	Staff Officer	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Directorate of Hotels and Tourism	Delegate
13	Ms.	Phyu Pyar	Yin	Staff Officer	Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	Directorate of Hotels and Tourism	Delegate

Viet Nam

Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT)

1	Mr.	Nguyen Trung	Khanh	Chairman	Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT)	-	-
2	Ms.	Thi Phoung Nhung	TRAN	Deputy Director General	Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT)	International Cooperation Department	Head
3	Mr.	Phong Binh	TRAN	Deputy Director General	Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT)	Tourism Marketing Department	Delegate
4	Ms.	Ngoc Bich	Vu	Official	Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT)	International Cooperation Program	Delegate
5	Ms.	Thi Minh Que	LE	Senior Official	Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT)	Travel Management Department	Delegate
6	Ms.	Thi Ha Thanh	Luong	Official	Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT)	Travel Management Department	Delegate

ADB							
1	Mr.	Alfredo	Perdiguer o	Director, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division	Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Southeast Asia Department	Head
2	Mr.	Steven	Schipani	Unit Head, Project Administration	Asian Development Bank (ADB)	ADB Viet Nam Resident Mission	Delegate
3	Ms.	Alma	Canarejo	GMS Secretariat Consultant	Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Delegate
4	Mr.	Nida	Ouk	Senior Project Officer	Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Delegate
5	Mr.	Asadullah Khan	Sumbal	Principle Regional Cooperation Specialist	Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Delegate
6	Mr.	Siti	Hasanah	Urban Development Specialist	Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Delegate
7	Ms.	Elizabeth	Jung	Young Professional	Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Delegate
8	Ms	Judie Ann	Militar	Senior Operations Assistant	Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Delegate
9	Ms	Giang	Thanh Nguyen		Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Delegate
10	Mr.	Dominic	Mellor		Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Delegate
11		Phoxay	Xayyavon g		Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Delegate
12		Allison	Woodruff		Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Delegate
13		Hoang Nhat	Do		Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Delegate
14	Ms.	Tran Bich	Dung		Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Delegate
15	Mr.	Wouterus	Schalken	Senior Sustainable Tourism Specialist	Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department	Delegate
The World Bank							
1	Mr.	Werner	Kornexl	Senior Natural Resource	The World Bank		Head

				Management Specialist			
2	Mr.	Rawlins	Maurice	Senior Environmental Specialist	The World Bank		Delegate
3	Ms.	Steinmayr	Elosabeth	Junior Professional Officer	The World Bank		Delegate
4	Ms.	Jessie	Mccomb	Tourism Specialist	The World Bank		Delegate
5	Ms.	Kate	Philp	Environmental Engineer	The World Bank		Delegate
6	Mr.	Baral	Sumit	Consultant	The World Bank		Delegate
MTCO							
1	Mr.	Jens	Thraenhardt	Outgoing Executive Director	MTCO		Head
2	Mr.	Nattakorn	Asunee Na Ayudhaya	Operations Manager	MTCO		Delegate
3	Ms	Suvimol	Thanasarakij	Incoming Executive Director	MTCO		Delegate



Cambodia



China



Laos



Myanmar



Thailand



Vietnam

APPENDIX 2

PROVISIONAL AGENDA



**48th GMS TOURISM WORKING GROUP & MEKONG TOURISM
COORDINATING OFFICE BOARD MEETING**

Friday – 17 September 2021
Virtual Meeting via Video Conference Call (Zoom)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Friday, 17 September 2021: GMS Tourism Working Group Meeting	
09:00-09:30	Online Check-in
Item 1 09:30-09:35	Housekeeping Notes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MTCO: Video Conference Call Instructions ➤ Call will be moderated by MTCO ➤ ALL: Adoption of Agenda
Item 2 09:35-09:55	Welcome by Host: Department of Tourism, Thailand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remarks from Meeting Chair, Department of Tourism of Thailand (DOT) ➤ Remarks from Asian Development Bank (ADB) ➤ Remarks from Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO)
Item 3 09:55-10:15	Welcome to the new Executive Director of the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remarks from Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO): Mr. Jens Thraenhart, Executive Director, MTCO ➤ Remarks from new Executive Director of the MTCO: TBD ➤ Welcome remarks from NTOs & ADB <p>Group Photo</p>



**48th GMS TOURISM WORKING GROUP & MEKONG TOURISM
COORDINATING OFFICE BOARD MEETING**

Friday – 17 September 2021
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PROVISIONAL AGENDA

<p align="center">Item 4</p> <p align="center">10:15-11:20</p>	<p>GMS NTO Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ GMS Situation Updates: 10 minutes for each national tourism organization to give an update on progress implementing tourism recovery initiatives and strategies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cambodia (10 min) ○ PR China (10 min) ○ Lao PDR (10 min) ○ Myanmar (10 min) ○ Thailand (10 min) ○ Viet Nam (10 min) ➤ Focus on 2 key areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Re-opening plans after COVID – 19 (planned dates, how & priorities) ○ Government support program for tourism businesses and public-private marketing efforts
<p align="center">Item 5</p> <p align="center">11:20-11:40</p>	<p>Mekong Tourism Communications Recovery Plan: MTCO / ADB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Presentation of Final Report (5-minutes) ➤ Country Feedback (roundtable discussion) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cambodia ○ PR China ○ Lao PDR ○ Myanmar ○ Thailand ○ Viet Nam
<p align="center">Item 6</p> <p align="center">11:40-12:00</p>	<p>MTCO Activities: MTCO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ GMS Scorecard: A yearly summary of Greater Mekong Subregion Tourism performance data via key indicators overview providing insights by aggregating statistics from NTOs, third-party statistics. ➤ Coronavirus Updates: A platform initiated by MTCO to provide timely update information to the travel industry and the public about the travel situation in the



**48th GMS TOURISM WORKING GROUP & MEKONG TOURISM
COORDINATING OFFICE BOARD MEETING**

**Friday – 17 September 2021
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PROVISIONAL AGENDA

	<p>GMS. The update includes two parts which are Coronavirus Resources Pages on MekongTourism.org and Infographics summarizing the situation every month.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Digital Update (MekongTourism.org & social media): Summary update on digital performance of MekongTourism.org website and various social media platforms via several key metrics. <p>Destination Mekong Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Programs & Initiatives: A comprehensive update of ongoing public-private partnership initiatives and programs. ➤ Cambodia Host Country: The update about the progress of establishing Destination Mekong, hosted by the Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia. <p>MeTAG Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Initiatives & Programs: A periodic update of ongoing Mekong Tourism Advisory Group (MeTAG) initiatives and programs, managed by Destination Mekong and facilitated by MTCO. ➤ Expert Groups: Progress update of the Mekong tourism Expert Groups implementing activities and initiatives to align with MTCO strategies.
12:00-13:30	Lunch Break
Item 7 13:30-14:00	<p>Updates from the Asian Development Bank (ADB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Briefing on Outcomes of 7th GMS Summit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Leader’s statement (tourism directions) and Summit documents adopted. Timeline and process for formulating the new GMS Regional Investment Framework tourism projects.</i> ➤ Southeast Asia Sustainable Tourism Facility Technical Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Present the technical assistance concept to support (i) regional tourism investment project preparation, (ii) strengthen ongoing ADB-financed GMS tourism operations, and (iii) support sustainable tourism</i>



**48th GMS TOURISM WORKING GROUP & MEKONG TOURISM
COORDINATING OFFICE BOARD MEETING**

**Friday – 17 September 2021
Virtual Meeting via Video Conference Call (Zoom)**

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

	<p><i>policy development and other knowledge work. Seek the working group's feedback on the proposed scope, key activities, implementing arrangements, and timeline.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Other new regional travel and tourism initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TBD
<p>Item 8 14:00-14:15</p>	<p>Updates from the World Bank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Eco-tourism & conservation projects and knowledge work that they are supporting in Lao PDR and Cambodia</i>
<p>Item 9 14:15-14:45</p>	<p>GMS Tourism Infrastructure for Inclusive Growth Project (TIIG 1 & 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Briefly summarize key TIIG 1 project accomplishments and lessons, including proposed and actual measures to strengthen implementation of the ongoing TIIG 2.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cambodia: Ministry of Tourism (10 min) ○ Lao PDR: Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism (10 min) ○ Viet Nam: Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (10 min)
<p>Item 10 14:45-15:00</p>	<p>Other Matters & Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All: Open Discussion/Other Issues ➤ Chair: Closing Remarks & Thank You
<p>15:00-15:15</p>	<p align="center">End of GMS TWG-48 Meeting</p> <p align="center"><u>Following 15-minute break:</u> Closed MTCO Board Meeting Restricted to MTCO Board Members only</p>
<p>Item 11 15:15-15:45</p>	<p>Union Minister of Hotels & Tourism of the Republic of Myanmar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Union Minister to give update on current situation in Myanmar ➤ All: Discussion



**48th GMS TOURISM WORKING GROUP & MEKONG TOURISM
COORDINATING OFFICE BOARD MEETING**

Friday – 17 September 2021
Virtual Meeting via Video Conference Call (Zoom)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

<p>Item 12 15:45-16:00</p>	<p>MTCO Operations & Finances: MTCO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ MTCO presents 2021 GMS TWG Workplan Progress ➢ MTCO presents MTCO Finances (2021 Q1 & Q2 Financial Statement) ➢ Board feedback and guidance on the workplan and finances
<p>Item 13 16:00-16:10</p>	<p>Mekong Tourism Forum & TWG / MTCO Board Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Update by Viet Nam on TWG-49 / MTCO Board meeting arrangements (Viet Nam chairs) May/June 2022 ➢ Update by Viet Nam: MTF 2022
<p>Item 14 16:10-16:20</p>	<p>New MTCO Executive Director Recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ MTCO summarizes recruitment process
<p>Item 15 16:20-16:40</p>	<p>MTCO Legal Status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Update from PR China: Ministry of Culture and Tourism of PRC may wish to brief the MTCO Board on its proposed amendments to the draft MTCO Charter, based on intervention at TWG-47. ➢ Update from member countries on the proposed amendments to draft final Agreement on Establishment of MTCO. ➢ Roundtable discussion on proposed amendments to draft Charter
<p>Item 16 16:40-17:00</p>	<p>Other Matters & Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ All: Open Discussion/Other Issues ➢ Chair: Closing Remarks & Thank You



Cambodia



China



Laos



Myanmar



Thailand



Vietnam

APPENDIX 3

SPEECHES

Opening Remarks at 48th Meeting of GMS Tourism Working Group

By Mr. Boonserm Khunkeaw

Deputy Director General, Department of Tourism, Thailand

on 17th September 2021

Virtual Meeting via Video Conference Call (Technology: Zoom)

- Delegates from GMS and MTCO,
- Representatives from Asian Development Bank and World Bank,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning,

First of all, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all of you to the 48th GMS Tourism Working Group Meeting. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank MTCO for their excellent support in facilitating the organization of this meeting.

It has been nearly 2 years since we have faced with unexpected disaster called COVID – 19 and the tourism industry has been heavily affected by this pandemic, resulting in business closures and widespread unemployment.

According to UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, Asia and the Pacific regions continued to suffer the largest decline with a 95% drop in international arrivals in the first five months of 2021 compared to 2019. The barometer also revealed that tourism receipts have been recorded 50% declines in January to May this year.

To survive in this crisis, all stakeholders need to find their ways to adapt to the “new normal”.

For our subregion, each member tries their best to mitigate those cruel impacts with different measures such as vaccination for tourism workers, loan to support liquidity and travel bubble in some areas. Moreover, there are a lot of initiatives from MTCO, ADB and World Bank to help recover tourism industry in GMS countries.



For today's meeting, it will be a good opportunity for respective GMS members to exchange best practices and initiatives on tourism recovery and to be ready for reopening their countries. I am confident that with our contribution and hard work we will definitely come up with valuable discussion and collaboration that will eventually make GMS a safe and healthy destination.

Thank you

Opening Remarks at 48th Meeting of GMS Tourism Working Group

**By Mr. Steven Schipani,
Principal Tourism Industry Specialist,
Southeast Asia Department, Asian Development Bank
on 17th September 2021**

Virtual Meeting via Video Conference Call (Technology: Zoom)

On behalf of the Asian Development Bank, we thank Thailand's Ministry of Tourism and Sports for hosting the 48th GMS Tourism Working Group meeting – and for chairing today's discussions.

ADB also sincerely thanks all GMS country delegations and GMS development partners for your active participation in the meeting – and for your continuing efforts to support the tourism industry while the fight against COVID-19 continues. We also appreciate the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office's assistance to organize the meeting and for its effective support in leading and coordinating the tourism working group's various tourism marketing, communications, and value-adding knowledge services.

I would also like to extend a special thanks to Mr. Jens Threanhart for his outstanding 7 years of service as MTCO Executive Director, and warmly welcome the MTCO's new Executive Director, Ms. Suvimol 'Dee' Thanasarakij.

As we approach the COVID-19 pandemic's two-year milestone GMS countries are progressing national vaccination programs and some GMS destinations are beginning to cautiously open to international visitors. In parallel, many important GMS source markets in Europe, North America and Asia have high vaccination rates and show strong interest to start travelling again. While we recognize that there will be continuing difficulties this year, and it will be some time before GMS tourism regains prominence as an engine of prosperity, I think it is important that the tourism working group continues to convey optimism and reminds the world that the GMS has not lost what makes it a special place to visit. We should also use the downturn to build on our strengths and address lingering structural problems that undermine socially and environmentally sustainable tourism.



Conveying optimism and trust-building are key objectives of the GMS Tourism Recovery Communications Plan that will be discussed at today's meeting. Optimism and trust-building measures, backed by concrete joint initiatives to beat the pandemic, were strongly communicated by GMS Leaders and the ADB President at the 7th GMS Summit.

Tourism features prominently in the GMS Economic Program's new Strategic Framework 2030 and GMS COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan 2021-2023, which were both adopted by the 7th GMS Summit and closely align with the still-relevant GMS Tourism Sector Strategy.

Later today I will summarize the tourism priorities in these plans and welcome the meeting's feedback on how ADB and other development partners could help support their implementation.

Again, on behalf of ADB, we sincerely thank Thailand's Ministry of Tourism and Sports for hosting and chairing this meeting and thank the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office for moderating. ADB highly values the active participation of all GMS country delegations and GMS development partners.

Thank you, I wish us a fruitful and optimistic meeting.

TWG 48th Opening Speech

By Jens Thraenhart

Executive Director, Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office

48TH MEETING OF THE GMS TOURISM WORKING GROUP

17th September 2021

Virtual Meeting via Video Conference Call (Technology: Zoom)

- Mr. Boonserm Khunkaew, Deputy Director General, Department of Tourism of Thailand
- Ms Patthanasiri EWTOKSAN, Director of the Department of Tourism of Thailand
- Heads of Delegation of the GMS Member Countries
- Mr. Steven Schipani, ADB Representative
- Distinguished Delegates of the GMS Member Countries,
- Participants from the World Bank
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning to all of you. I am happy to see everybody being healthy. On behalf of the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office, I would like to thank the Department of Tourism of Thailand for hosting the 48th GMS Tourism Working Group & MTCO Board Meeting. This is the 4th GMS TWG Meeting that we are forced to conduct virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and my last GMS TWG Meeting and MTCO Board Meeting.

After almost 8 years as Executive Director of the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office, I would like to thank the GMS Tourism Working Group for their trust in acting on their behalf. I will be sad to leave, but I will remain a friend and hope to stay involved in regional Mekong Tourism collaboration and look forward to visiting you in the respective member countries again soon.

In the last 18 months we have witnessed pandemic's unprecedented and brutal impact on travel and tourism. It has on the one hand highlighted the global importance of the travel and tourism economically, as well as its vast interconnectedness with other industries – and on the other hand exposed the vital importance of travelling for the freedom and health of human nature. Alongside the pandemic devastating weather extremes have hit regions across the world and have exposed the magnitude of climate crises. Scientists have long predicted extreme weather will become more intense and frequent as a result of industrial activity, dirty



energy, deforestation and other human activities – but the last month’s scenes have shocked even them.

In light of these cataclysms – which further intensify numerous other economic and social problems – we urgently need to re-think our business models and strategies:

1. If we want to transform tourism and travel into a more environmentally and socially sustainable, climate smart, resilient as well as fair industry, across its supply chain, we need to reassess and define new success metrics.
2. Covid-19 has brought a significant change in the lifestyle of hundreds of millions of people across the globe and travel priorities have changed radically for both leisure and business customers. We all need to adapt to capture the opportunities in this new industry landscape and to address the new consumer expectations.
3. If there is a silver lining to this pandemic, it is the sustainability, which will become the main driving force of recovery and especially the future of tourism. People will become more concerned and conscious and will search for more responsible travel practices. Travel will become more inclusive and smaller communities will play a bigger role. We all, as an industry, will have to deliver more sustainable options.
4. Some businesses have responded to the pandemic by restructuring for greater efficiency and come up with new business models, some are merely getting through, many have not been able to keep afloat. Recovery will be uneven, with most dramatic consequences for airlines and business travel. Adaptability and re-set of the industry might be just the most importance skills in the new normality.
5. In a vastly changing and unstable tourism environment DMO’s job have become the most complex and important tourism jobs. It’s not only about the shift from marketing to management, but taking this a step further: DMO as a director of an orchestra composed of a complex and delicate mix of stakeholders, each with different interests. Today it’s about aligning these often-conflicting interests, each of us taking on new responsibilities and about stewardship of a destination – today for tomorrow.
6. And we need to make room in the negotiating room for the most important stakeholders in the process – the local community on the one hand and people working in the industry on the other. We know that local community has to be involved in policy and decision making. And we know that we cannot operate in tourism without dedicated and fairly paid people. Our ultimate goal should become better quality of life.

7. The scientists say human civilization is “in a perilous state” due to the highly interconnected and energy-intensive society and that a global societal collapse could arise from shocks, such as a severe financial crisis, the impacts of the climate crisis, destruction of nature, an even worse pandemic than Covid-19. Or a combination of these. Tourism has in the pandemic shown to be one of the most fragile industries – so it’s even more so our undertaking to lead the green and digital (!) transformation.

When we chose “Achieving Balanced Tourism in the Mekong Region” as the theme of the 2020 Mekong Tourism Forum in Bagan, Myanmar, over-tourism was the key buzz word of the industry, and the industry was out of balance. Just a few months later, the pendulum swung to the other extreme, and the industry faced another extreme – no tourism at all. As we are rebuilding tourism, “achieving balanced tourism” must be the key objective to maintain sustainability and wellbeing for all stakeholders.

The future of the industry pretty much depends on our ability to handle these shifts today – we need to be innovative, smart and united in this process to guarantee a more resilient, responsible and sustainable tourism. I believe we can do it. But we need to do it today. Each and every voice and deed counts. But we can do better if we do it together.

Thank you!



Cambodia



China



Laos



Myanmar



Thailand



Vietnam

APPENDIX 4

GMS COUNTRY REPORTS



Tourism Update

Presented by:
Asia Division
Bureau of International Exchanges and Cooperation
Ministry of Culture and Tourism, China

GMS TWG-48 & MTCO BOARD Meeting

目录



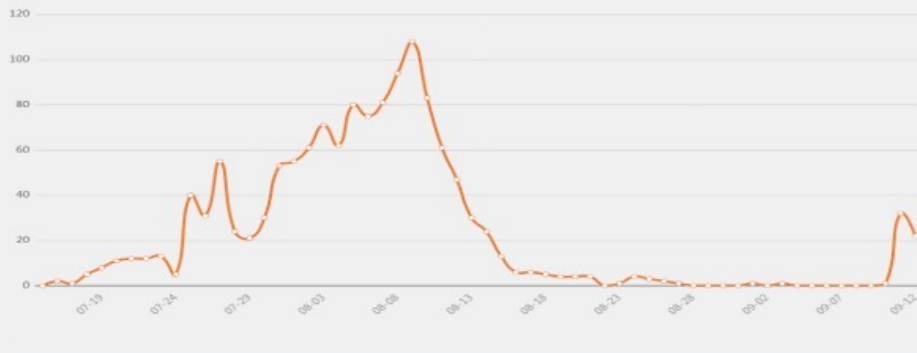
1 Part 01 COVID-19 pandemic prevention & control 疫情防控形势

2 Part 02 Newly introduced measures
Tourism Recovery
旅游复苏情况

3 Part 03 Events to come
计划中的活动



Daily new confirmed cases in Chinese Mainland



Data and graph from: <https://news.qq.com/zt2020/page/feiyun.htm#/>

Measures in response to Delta Variant

In August, 2021, National Health Commission of China issued "Guidelines on Mask-Wearing for the Public and Key Occupational Workers" and "Guidelines for Prevention and Control of COVID-19 Epidemic among Key Population Group, Places and Units (August 2021 edition).

In August, 2021, Ministry of Culture and Tourism issued the latest guidelines separately for tourism agencies, theaters, internet service providers and Entertainment venues for Prevention and Control of COVID-19 Epidemic (August 2021 edition).

In order to tackle the newly emerged confirmed cases of COVID Delta variant, in August, 2021, MCT temporarily suspended the Airtickets+Hotel service and Group tour service of tourism agencies and OTAs for the tourists to the provinces with medium and high-risk regions until the regions return to low risk status.

Vaccination Process



Until September 4th, 2021, 2.1 Billion shots of Vaccine had been given to the population on the Chinese Mainland. The vaccination is free of charge for all Chinese citizens.

Tourism Recovery

Domestic Tourists First Half of 2021	Growth Rate (compared to the same period of 2020)
1.87 Billion	100.8%
Domestic Tourism Revenue	Growth Rate (compared to the same period of 2020)
1.63 Trillion Yuan	157.9%



Traffic Data

Railway Passengers (January to July of 2021)	Growth Rate (compared to the same period of 2020)
1.67 Billions	63.3%
Domestic Air Passengers (First half of 2021)	Growth Rate (compared to the same period of 2020)
245 Million	76.1%

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Events to come

Asia Conference on Marine Tourism 2021

Place: Ningbo, Zhejiang

Date: September 22-24th, 2021

Intelligent Asia-Forum on Digital

Tourism Development

Place: Xi'an, Sha'anxi

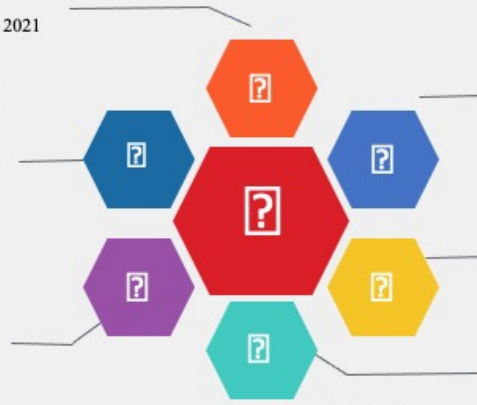
Date: Oct. 28-30th, 2021

Lancang- Mekong Mayors' Forum

on Culture & Tourism

Place: Chongqing

Date: Oct.20-22, 2021



China-ASEAN Culture and Tourism

Week

Place: Changsha, Hunan

Date: Nov.1 to 5, 2021

Culture and Tourism Week, Year of China

Laos Friendship

Place: Shanghai, Kunming

Date: Nov. 9-12, 2021

Asia Conference on Mountain Tourism

Place: Guiyang, Guizhou

Date: Nov. 15-17, 2021

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The 48th Meeting of the GMS Tourism Working Group 17 September 2021



Topics



-  **Tourism Current Situation**
-  **Covid-19 situation in Laos**
-  **Lao PDR Tourism Recovery Roadmap for 2021-2025**



Tourist Arrivals to Laos



Year	Tourist Arrivals	Change (%)
2011	2,723,564	+ 23.0
2012	3,330,072	+ 22.0
2013	3,779,490	+ 13.0
2014	4,158,719	+ 10.0
2015	4,684,429	+ 13.0
2016	4,239,047	- 10.0
2017	3,868,838	-8.7
2018	4,186,432	8.2
2019	4,791,065	14.4
2020	886,447	-81.5
2021 (Jan-Aug)	N/A	N/A

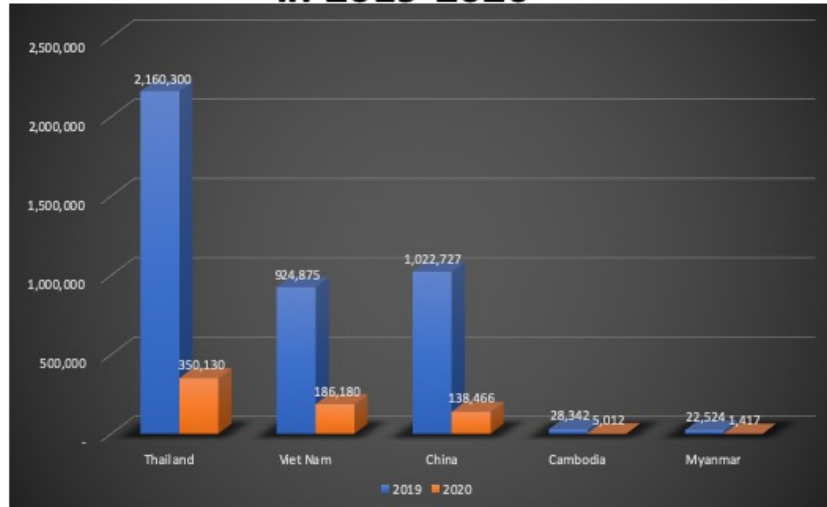


GMS Tourists Arrival in Laos in 2018-2019





GMS Tourists Arrival in Laos in 2019-2020



Covid-19 Situation Updated



COVID-19 Vaccinated for 1st dose: 2,676,337

COVID-19 Vaccinated for 2nd dose: 1,867,025



Travel advisory to the Lao PDR

Every individual must have a negative COVID 19 test certification using RT-PCR of no more than 12 hours before departure to Lao PDR.

14 days self-quarantine at a venue designated by the Task Force Committee only.

Immigration: Closing international borders checkpoints for individuals, except for health emergency, experts, charter flights, and authorized transportation of goods;

Suspension of the issuance of all types of visas, including visa-on-arrival, e-visa as well as a tourist visa, for all nationalities.

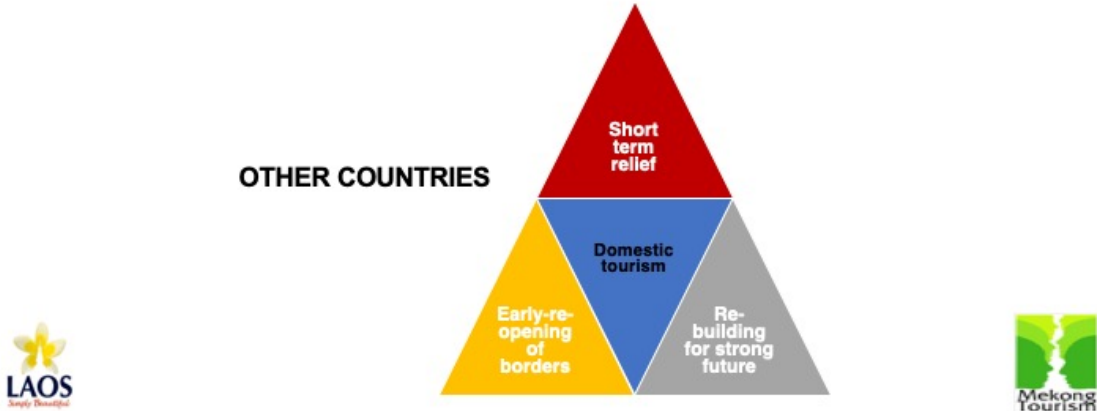
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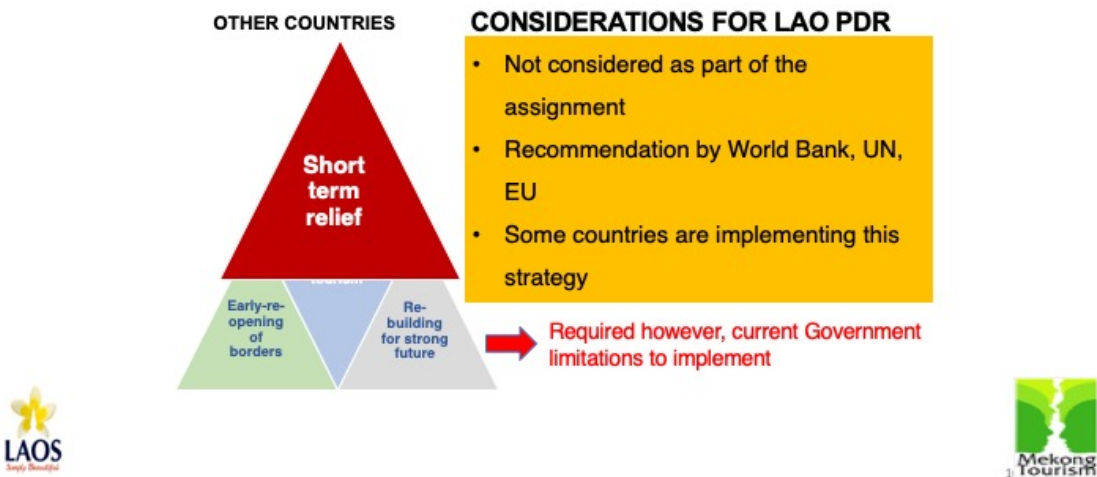
LAO PDR TOURISM RECOVERY ROADMAP FOR 2021-2025

Lao PDR Tourism Recovery Roadmap for 2021-2025

STRATEGY CONSIDERATIONS



STRATEGY CONSIDERATIONS ^{ct'd}



STRATEGY CONSIDERATIONS ^{ct'd}

OTHER COUNTRIES



CONSIDERATIONS FOR LAO PDR

Successful for countries with:

- **Domestic tourism segment pre-COVID**
- **Substitution options** for air based travel
- **Sufficiently strong economy** so tourism spend will continue

Domestic travel spend is likely focusing on **business travel, VFR and vacation rentals**

➔ Domestic tourism is unlikely to resolve business cash flow issues in short term



STRATEGY CONSIDERATIONS ^{ct'd}

OTHER COUNTRIES



CONSIDERATIONS FOR LAO PDR

TRAVEL BUBBLE:

- Driven by **economic incentives & trust**
- Boosts **international travel both ways**

ADB modelling:

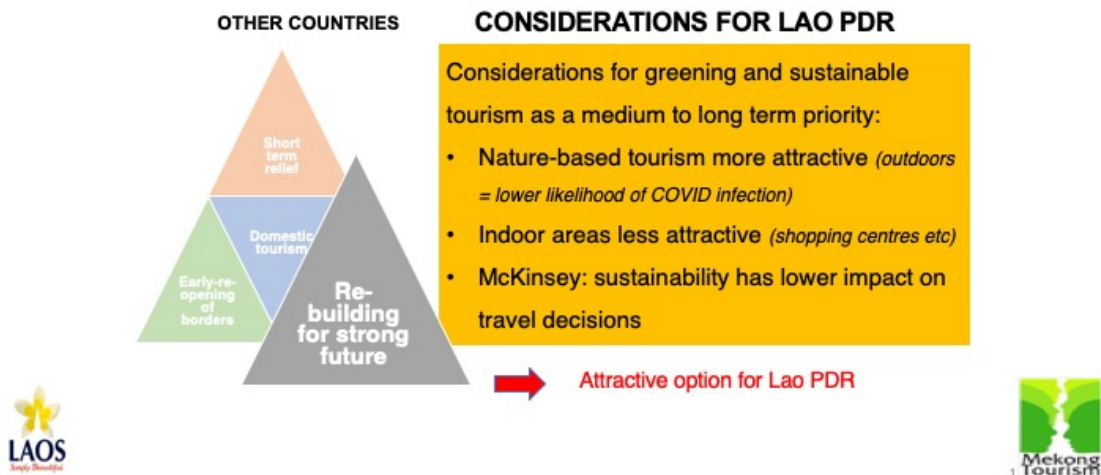
Thailand – Laos: **tourism loss from -70% to -30%**

➔ **Attractive option - needs focus on:**

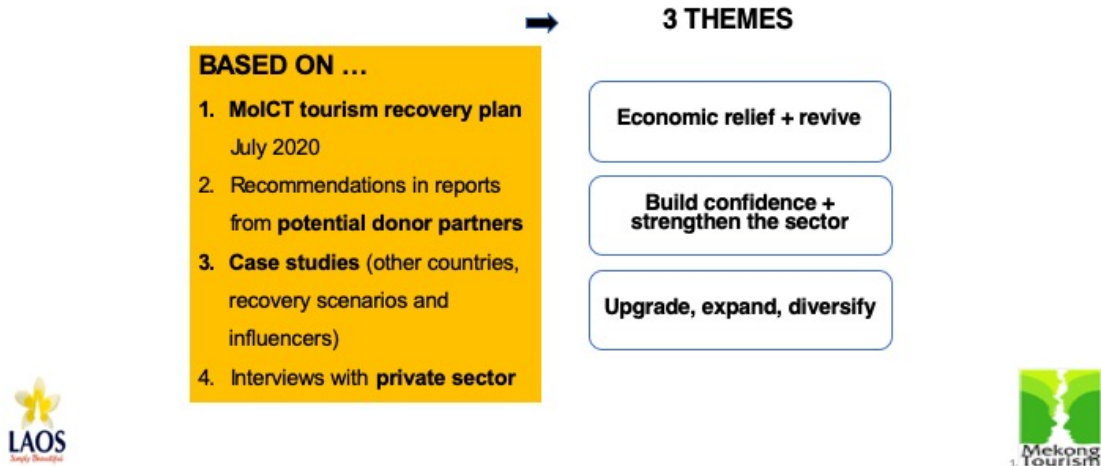
- Health protocols
- Capability to respond quickly to changes
- Market intelligence on travel sentiment, travel & product preferences



STRATEGY CONSIDERATIONS ct'd



PROPOSED RECOVERY PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS



PROPOSED RECOVERY PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS ct'd

3 THEMES, 8 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Theme	1. Economic relief to revive the tourism sector	2. Build confidence in travel and strengthen the sector	3. Upgrade, expand and diversify
Strategic priority	1. Intensify strategic engagement between Government and private sector 2. Deploy tourism support package and provide businesses with liquidity (tourism relief fund, incentivize job retention and protect vulnerable groups)	3. Implement health protocols and communication strategy 4. Invest in market intelligence (market research, data collection & analysis), training and digital tools & platforms 5. Strengthen brand and boost marketing to re-ignite travel (domestic, top source markets through bubble)	6. Stimulate capital investment (renewing of assets) 7. Diversify products (specific focus on greening and sustainability) 8. Diversify markets (secondary source markets)



PROPOSED RECOVERY PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS ct'd

3 THEMES, 8 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, 46 ACTIONS

- Tourism board activated for marketing
- Tourism relief fund for subsidies on utility bills, suspension of VAT until borders open, low interest loan for capital investment, low or no interest loan with grace period for 'crisis' payments of wages
- Operational protocols for health & safety, travel bubble etc
- Market research on domestic and regional source markets
- Training programs for the sector
- Awareness raising and cash back scheme to stimulate domestic spend on travel
- Investment in facility upgrades
- Incentive program for greening of tourism, with associated marketing budget for promotion of Lao PDR as a nature based tourism destination
- E-commerce strategy





Pilot project – Lao Golf Holiday Packages

- Vientiane capital
- Group tour-Korean Tourists (vaccinated certification)
- Quarantine for 14 days in the arranged places.
- Strictly follow the travel advisory of Laos.



Thank you



The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Hotels and Tourism

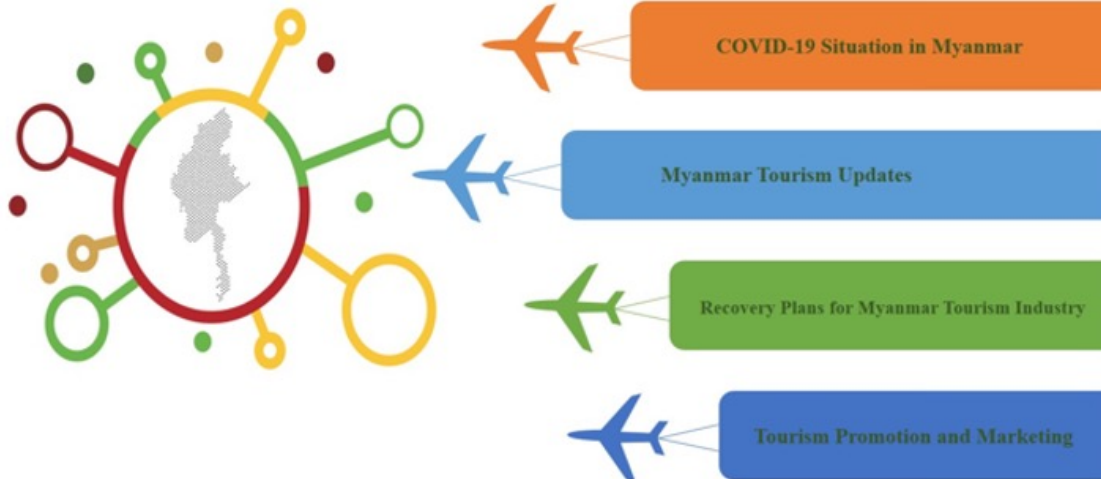


GMS Situation Update

Presented by,
Ms. Khaing Mee Mee Htun
Director
Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, Myanmar
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Fax: +95 67 3 406104
Email: irc@tourism.gov.mm ,
irc.moht@gmail.com



Contents





COVID-19 Situation in Myanmar



• Total Specimens Tested	- 4,027,210	• Cumulative fully vaccinated people	- 3,365,915
• Total Person Under Investigation(PUI)	- 15,581	• Cumulative one dose vaccinated people	- 1,624,843
• Laboratory Confirmed Cases	- 438,951	• Cumulative vaccinated people	- 4,990,758
• Death among Laboratory Confirmed Cases	- 16,784	• Cumulative vaccinated doses	- 8,356,673
Recovered	- 388,596		

(As of 15-9-2021, 8:00 P.M.)
Source: <https://mohs.gov.mm/Main/content/publication/2019-ncov>

(As of 14-9-2021)
Source: <https://www.mohs.gov.mm/page/16462>



Myanmar Tourism Updates



Accommodation and Tour Services (Up to July 2021)	
> No. of Hotels	- 2,209
> No. of Hotel Rooms	- 89,934
> No. of Tour Operators	- 3,372
> No. of Registered Tour Guides	- 9,445

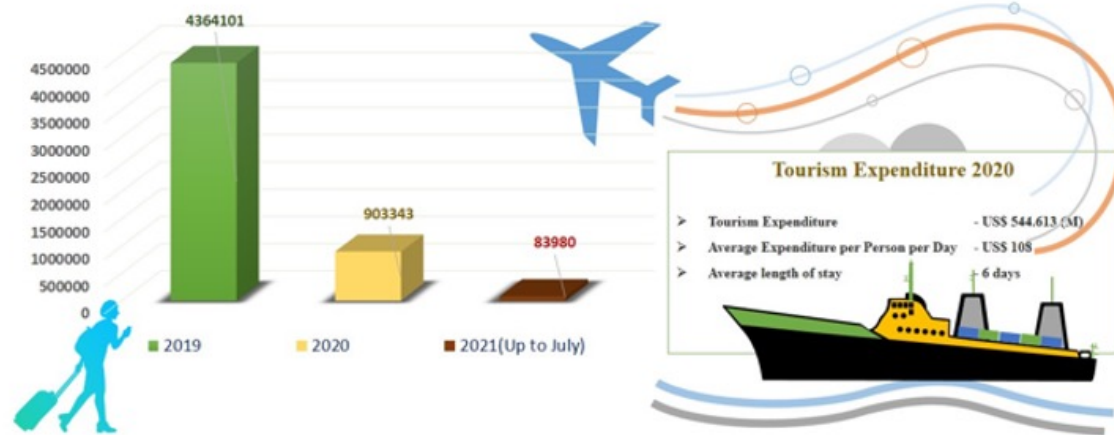
No.	Region & State	Hotels		Quarantine	
		Licensed	Opened	Hotels	Rooms
1	Nay Pyi Taw	91	52	4	500
2	Kachin	53	37	6	169
3	Kayah	34	-	-	-
4	Kayin	49	49	3	66
5	Chin	13	10	-	-
6	Mon	71	55	1	38
7	Rakhine	98	55	7	177
8	Shan	409	309	30	635
9	Sagaing	58	34	-	-
10	Thanintharyi	52	42	4	236
11	Bago	88	74	4	78
12	Magway	50	50	-	-
13	Mandalay	540	202	17	702
14	Yangon	483	256	47	4709
15	Ayeyarwady	120	105	-	-
Total		2209	1330	129	7549



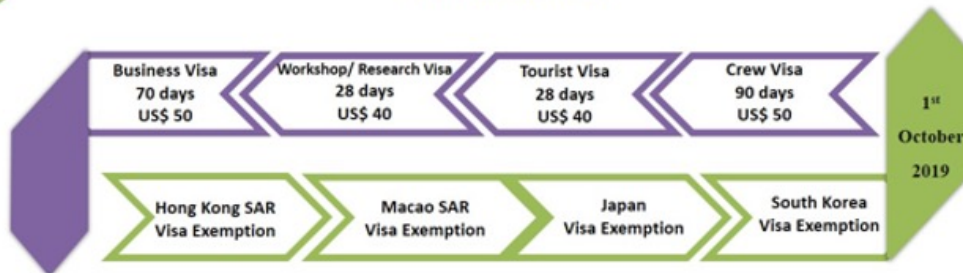
Visitor Arrival



- Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, tourism industry in Myanmar has been severely affected and the number of visitor arrivals to Myanmar in 2021 was dramatically decreased compared to the same period of the year.



Visa Relaxation



Visa on Arrival	
● China	1-10-2019
● Italy, Spain, Australia,	1-10-2019
● Switzerland, Germany, Russia	
● India	1-12-2019
● Austria, Czech,, Hungary, Luxemburg, New Zealand	1-1-2020

Visa Facilitation	
● Visa Exemption	
● Visa on Arrival (VOA) (54 countries and Taiwan)	
● Tourist e-Visa (100 countries)	
● Business e-Visa (50 countries)	
● Pre Arrangement Visa on Arrival (for tourists with cruise liner)	



Airlines	Immigration	Hotels & Restaurants
<p>Suspension Of International Flights Operation</p> <p>According to the notice from the Department of Civil Aviation issued on 31 August 2021, the earlier restrictions for all international airlines operating air services to and from the Yangon International Airport have been further extended up to 30 September 2021, 2359 Hours MST.</p> <p>Domestic Travelers</p> <p>According to the Standard Operation Procedure - SOP (Version-2.2), domestic travelers can purchase the domestic air ticket at local ticketing agents, airlines, or online ticketing agents and is no longer required to submit a health certificate.</p> <p>www.yangonairport.aero/index.php/en/media-ygn-airport-news</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With a view to preventing importation and spread of COVID-19, the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has temporarily suspended entry of any foreign nationals through any border check point being opened between Myanmar and its neighboring countries. - The entry and exit of local population on both sides of the border through the existing check points concerned will not be restricted. - They will be subject to health check and temperature screening at the entry of the border check points. - Any foreign national with valid entry visa may enter and exit to/from Myanmar only at Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw International Airports in accordance with the existing rules and regulations. - Temporary Suspension for all new e-Visa applications (will take effect on Friday, 20th March 2020, 23:59 Myanmar Standard Time (GMT +6:30) till 30 September, 2021) - Number of Countries able to obtain visa on Arrival-55 <p>https://evisa.moip.gov.mm/</p> 	<p>Hotels</p> <p>A total of (1330) hotels have been inspected and reopened across Regions and States.</p> <p>Yangon - 256 Mandalay - 202 Shan State - 309</p> <p>(As of July)</p> 

Recovery Plans for Myanmar Tourism Industry





The Myanmar Tourism Strategic Recovery Roadmap 2021-2025



- The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism developed “The Myanmar Tourism Strategic Recovery Roadmap” to mitigate the impact of pandemic and to support the integrated and sustainable re-launch of tourism in Myanmar.



Enchanting Myanmar Health and Safety Protocol (HSP)

(Launched on 11 August 2021)



- Ministry of Hotels and Tourism developed the Tourism National Guidelines for COVID-19 Safe Services (Beta Version VI) in accordance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Health.
- According to the following actions of COVID-19 tourism start-ups, “Enchanting Myanmar Health and Safety Protocol” has been implementing in line with the guidelines from MOH and WHO to restart the tourism in post-COVID-19.

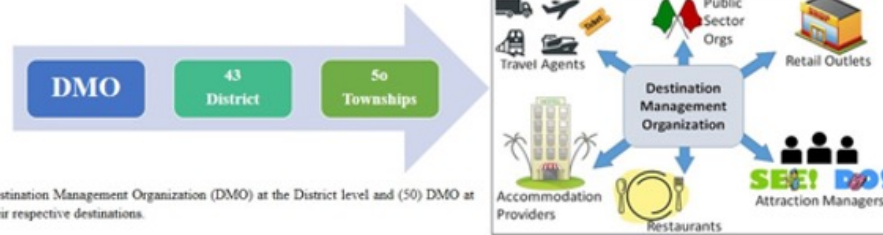




Sustainable Tourism Development



Myanmar Community Based Tourism Standards : Launched on 27 September 2019



We have already formed (43) Destination Management Organization (DMO) at the District level and (50) DMO at the Township level to manage their respective destinations.

Tourism Promotion and Marketing



Tourism Materials and offline Marketing



Tourism Materials and online Marketing





Website



Official Site

Launched on 10th April 2019

<https://tourism.gov.mm>

G2C

G2B

G2V

EN, MM, CN, JP, KR, TH, VN, IT, ES, RU & DE – 11 Languages

Tourism Web Portal

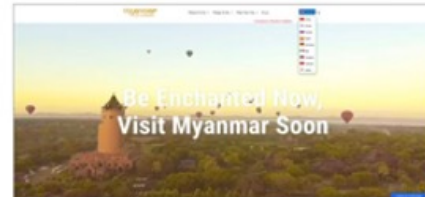
Launched on 31st July 2019

<https://tourisminmyanmar.com.mm>

B2B

B2C

EN, CN, JP, KR, TH, VN, IT, ES, RU & DE – 10 Languages



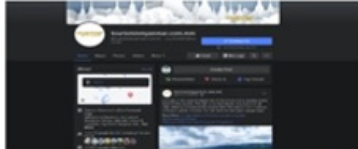
Social Media Channels



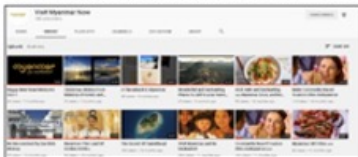
<https://www.facebook.com/tourisminmyanmar.com.mm/>



English



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYYysRno81dDb7TyhXz3OEQ>



<https://www.instagram.com/tourisminmyanmar.com.mm/>



<https://www.facebook.com/visitmyanmar.mm>



Myanmar



<https://www.pinterest.com/tourisminmyanmar/>



https://twitter.com/VisitMyanmar_MM

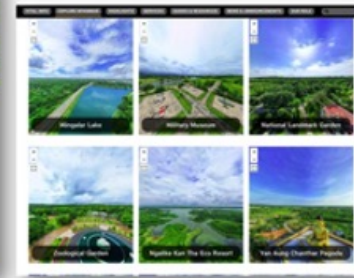




360° Virtual Tours



<https://tourism.gov.mm/nay-pyi-taw-virtual-tour/>



360° Virtual Tours

Facebook Page - <https://www.facebook.com/visitmyanmar.mm>





Tourism Marketing and Promotion Activities after COVID-19



- To carry out the travel bubble at the border crossing.
- To arrange the travel bubble program for easing the transitions of the entry and transit at the International Airport.
- To launch the domestic campaign to attract more tourists to visit to the non-popular destinations.
- To coordinate the relevant organizations to make the COVID-19 Special Insurance Packages for the visitors who will visit to Myanmar.
- To upload the current information of the hotels, tour companies and restaurants and other necessary information for the international visitors in Ministry's official website www.tourism.gov.mm
- To do a plan for the reopening of the Myanmar Tourism after COVID-19 by Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.
- To introduce the existing and emerging destinations of Myanmar to the targeted markets through the digital marketing channels for the revitalization of domestic, regional and international tourism in the post COVID-19 period.





GMS SITUATION UPDATES

MEASURE AGAINST COVID-19



COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan

100
Million doses
in 2021



FEB

Feb - now

→ **42** million doses

SEP

Sep. → Avg. **600,000 - 700,000** doses/day

DMHTT to prevent COVID-19

- D - Distancing**
- M - Mask wearing**
- H - Handwashing**
- T - Temperature scanning**
- T - Thai Chana**

<https://thailand.prd.go.th> | PR Thai Government | PRD

MEASURES TO BOOST ECONOMY



“Ying Chai Ying Dai”
(The more you spend, the more you get)



- **Cashback e-vouchers** for purchasing of merchandise, food, beverages & services
- **10-15 %** on spending of up **60,000 THB/person** (= 1,834 USD) with a cashback limit of **7,000 THB/person** (= 214 USD) “Pao Tang”



“Khon La Khrueng”
(Let's Go Halves)
(3rd Phase)



- **Government co-payment scheme** – launched in the 3rd quarter this year
- **Get 3,000 THB** (= 95 USD) “Pao Tang”
- **Government pay for half of the purchase** July - December 2021






A Budget of **13,500** million THB

(= 411 million USD)



➤ To heal labours groups & entrepreneurs in 10 provinces & in 9 business sectors

➤ Employees under Section 33 of the SSA →  Get **2,500 THB** (= 76 USD)

➤ Employers receive compensation →  Get **3,000 THB/head** (= 91 USD)
up to max 200 employees

MEASURE TO ASSIST BUSINESS OPERATORS





The reduction in electricity bill

(July & Aug 2021)



Small businesses

➤ Receive free 100 units used



Medium, Large, Specific businesses, non-profit org. & agricultural projects

➤ Entitle to extended exemption of minimum charge from Jul to Dec 2021

9



The reduction in water bill

(Aug & Sep 2021)



Small businesses

➤ **10 %** discount

(Except government and state enterprises)

10



MEASURE TO ASSIST THE TOURISM SERVICES



27 Aug 2021

Easing of Lockdown Measures

(29 dark-red zones provinces)

Effective on 1 Sep 2021



CURFEW

9 pm. – 4 am.



Interprovincial travel

- > Allow if necessary
- > Public transport **75%** of capacity



Restaurants

- > **50%** capacity in air-conditioned
- > **75%** with outdoor seating



Department stores

- > Open until **8 pm.**

11

12

12

...

Easing of Lockdown Measures (cont.)

(29 dark-red zones provinces)

Effective on 1 Sep 2021

- Beauty salons**
 - Appointment & limited 1 hr./client
- Health & massage services**
 - Appointment & only foot massage
- Beauty clinics**
 - Only sell products
- Public parks & sport squares**
 - Open until 8 pm.

RE-OPENING THAILAND



13

14

1st PHASE

26,400 visitors
1,634 million THB

Ko Samui
Ko Pha-ngan
Ko Tao

918 visitors
37.6 million THB

Phuket Sandbox 7+7 Extension Programme



**Krabi
Phang-Nga
Surat Thani**



Launched on 16 Aug 2021

2nd PHASE

1 Oct 2021

4 Provinces

**Chiang Mai, Chon Buri
Prachuap Khiri Khan, &
Phetchaburi**



3rd PHASE

15 Oct 2021

22 Provinces

**Bangkok, Mae Hong Son,
Chiangrai, Prae, Nan, Lamphun,
Sukhothai, Udonthani, Nongkhai,
Bueng Kan, Ubon Ratchathani,
Loei, Rayong, Chantaburi, Trat,
Ratchaburi, Kanchanaburi,
Ranong, Trang, Satun, Songkhla
& Ayutthaya**





4th PHASE

1 - 15 January 2022

**TRAVEL
BUBBLE**



Nakhon Phanom, Nongkhai & Mukdahan



Surin, Sa Kaeo & Trat



Chiang Rai & Ranong



Yala, Narathiwat, Songkhla & Satun



**THANK
YOU**



20

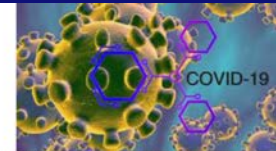


MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS AND TOURISM
VIETNAM NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION OF TOURISM

Updated Information about Vietnam Tourism and COVID-19

*The 48th GMS TWG Virtual Meeting
17th September 2021*

Key contents

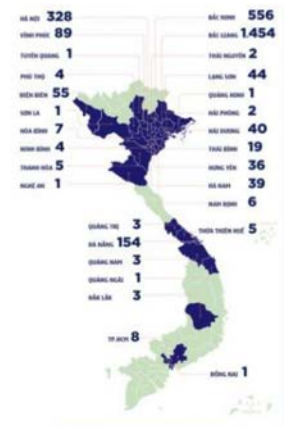


- 1- Covid-19 situation in Vietnam
- 2- Government support program for tourism businesses
- 3- International tourism reopening plans: Reopening Plan of Phu Quoc island to foreign tourists on a pilot basis



1. Covid-19 situation in Viet Nam

- **Confirmed cases:** 645,640 (0,6% of population)
- **Recoveries:** 412,650
- **Being treated:** 216.804
- **Deaths:** 16,186 (2,51% of confirmed cases)
- **Prevention measures:**
 - Partial social distancing in 30 provinces/cities (Da Nang, 19 southern provinces, Hanoi and some other provinces in the North and the Center)
 - Follow 5K: Facemask – Disinfection – Keep 2-m Distance - No gathering - Health declaration
 - Vaccination Campaign

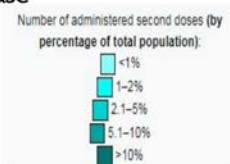


Map of 4th wave of covid-19 (from 27 April to 16 September 2021: 642.788 confirmed cases)



Vaccination Program

- 28.213.392 doses (5,2% population): 5.056.325 have been vaccinated (02 doses); 23.157.067 (vaccinated first dose) (as of 13 September 2021).
- Target: Viet Nam aims to reach herd immunity by the end of 2021 with about 70% of the Vietnamese population being vaccinated with 2 doses of COVID-19 vaccine.
- Vaccine production: 04 domestic manufacturers
 - NanoCovax vaccine of NANOGEN Company has completed 2 trail phases & implementing 3rd phase trial at wide range from June-September 2021.
 - The COVINAC vaccine produced by IVAC started the second trail phase from August 2021.
 - The vaccines of the No. 1 Vaccine and Biological Company (VABIOTECH) implemented the first trail phase in April 2021.
 - VBC-COV19-154 COVID-19 vaccine started the first trail phase in August 2021.



2. Government support programs for tourism

- Continued financial-monetary policies and social welfare measures aimed to support the tourism businesses, tourism workers losing their jobs and the disadvantaged and vulnerable group of the society.
- Recently, the Government decided to allow travel agents to reduce their guarantee deposits by 80% until the end of 2023.



3. International tourism reopening plans

- Starting Date: From October 2021
- Pilot destination: Phu Quoc Island
- The target: Attract 2 to 3 million visitors by the end of 2021.
- Traveler's requirements:
 - + Vaccination certificate or certificate of COVID-19 recovery;
 - + Negative test result for COVID-19;
 - + Registered to package tour of travel agents;
 - + Have a contract of health insurance and travel insurance(Children under 12 years old are allowed to accompany their parents)
- Mutually recognized the vaccination certificate form: 44 countries and territories.
- The targeted markets: Beach vacation tourists, golf players, tourists from potential markets and safety from pandemic.
- Ha Long, Hoi An, Nha Trang and Da Lat will be considered at next steps.





THANK YOU



Visit us at www.vietnam.travel
Mobile App: VietnamGo
www.facebook.com/VietnamTourismBoard



Cambodia



China



Laos



Myanmar



Thailand



Vietnam

APPENDIX 5

MEKONG TOURISM RECOVERY COMMUNICATION PLAN



SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS



- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, **international tourist arrivals dropped by 82%** in 2020 from 74 million in 2019. **Tourism receipts dropped by 73%** from \$100 billion in 2019.
- **Tourism contributed 3.3%–19.6% to the GDP** of GMS countries in 2019. The current tourism downturn significantly undermines GMS prosperity.
- **Internationally, the COVID-19 infection rates are decreasing**, and vaccination rates are increasing in many source markets, providing a generally positive outlook into tourism recovery towards 2022.
- **In the GMS countries COVID-19 vaccination campaigns are accelerating** and substantial percentages of people are expected to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 during 2021–2022. GMS responses to the pandemic make compelling stories that the world should hear.





Contents

Forward	2
Introduction	3
Principles	6
Aligned Content	7
Engaging Conversations	8
Connect Stakeholders	9
Source Markets	10
Scenarios	11
Key Implementation Roles	12
Monitoring	13
Greater Mekong Subregion Tourism Recovery Plans	15
Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office Communications Plan 2021-2022	16



OBJECTIVE



To guide dissemination of accurate and engaging information to support a safe and sustainable GMS tourism recovery.





RECOVERY COMMUNICATIONS PRINCIPLES

To frame activities of the communication plan



1. Generate **aligned content** and messages that match GMS countries' relevant COVID-19 recovery policies and the GMS Tourism Sector Strategy objectives to promote inclusive, sustainable, and resilient tourism. Make abundant, quality content openly accessible in suitable digital formats.
2. Facilitate **engaging conversations** among public and private GMS tourism stakeholders and consumers using tools that foster two-way communications. Use inspiring storytelling, tone of voice, and languages best suited for intended audiences.
3. Proactively **connect stakeholders** electronically and in-person using appropriate channels, to build trust and relationships that cost-effectively broaden information dissemination and exchange.



KEY MESSAGES



1. Building trust.

We are managing COVID-19, caring for our visitors, and are putting appropriate health and safety measures in place.

2. Welcoming.

We are opening for business and welcome domestic and international tourists.

3. Promoting sustainability.

We are managing tourism more sustainably for people and the planet.

4. Inspiring experiences.

We offer diverse and authentic experiences, including family beach holidays, pristine nature, city trips with friends, couples' retreats, and gourmet cuisine. Remember your last visit – relaxing, food, discovery, friends – and tell us what you would like to do now.

TIMELINE



3 December 2020	Initial consultations with TWG-46 to define tourism recovery communications plan scope and objectives
April-May 2021	Country consultations to gather inputs to the plan
27 May 2021	TWG-47 reviewed and provided feedback on working draft report
June 2021	MTCO organized Mekong Tourism Advisory Group Consultation to obtain feedback on the plan and foster implementation partnerships
July-September 2021	NTOs provided feedback on refined plan and photos for publication
13 September 2021	Final-draft plan shared with TWG for final review
17-30 September 2021	MTCO invites TWG-48 to provide final comments and adopt the plan



Jens Thraenhart | jens@tourismmekong.org





Cambodia



China



Laos



Myanmar



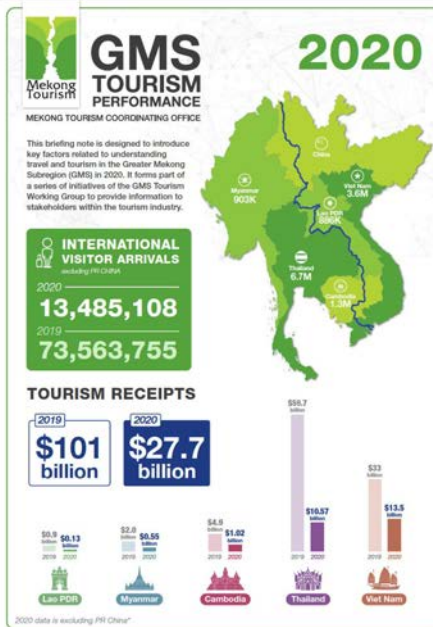
Thailand



Vietnam

APPENDIX 6

MTCO ACTIVITIES UPDATES



2021

MEKONG TOURISM COORDINATING OFFICE

ITEM 6
B: Corona Virus Updates

MTCO CORONAVIRUS UPDATE (last updated September 12)

CORONAVIRUS RESOURCE PAGE (LAST UPDATED SEPTEMBER 12)

GMS COUNTRY UPDATES

Please see below for updates about travel requirements in each of our six GMS member countries:

CAMBODIA
CHINA PR
LAO PDR
MYANMAR
THAILAND
VIET NAM

Official Tourism Department Website

Last updated on September 12:

Siem Reap province has been issued a decision to close for a week in an effort to eradicate COVID-19 transmission in the community.
[Read more](#)

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CORONAVIRUS POLICY UPDATES

GMS COUNTRY UPDATES

CAMBODIA CHINA PR LAO PDR MYANMAR THAILAND **VIET NAM**

[Official Tourism Department Website](#)

On August 31, 2021:

Hanoi has so far offered financial aid worth nearly 750 billion VND (nearly 33.05 million USD) to 2.34 million disadvantaged households and people who are struggling to make ends meet because of COVID-19 impacts. [Read more](#)

GMS COVID-19 Travel Situation Infographics

GMS COVID-19 Newsletter



Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office

ONE RIVER SIX COUNTRIES
Shared Experiences

Weekly summary of COVID-19 situation on the GMS tourism industry

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Travel Situation

- May 17:** The Phnom Penh Municipal Administration will restrict through May 19 the capital's three-colour-coded system.
- May 9:** Siem Reap will extend its curfew for another 2 weeks from 8 pm-5 am.

Policy Updates

- Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) can expect to receive financial relief in the near future from two recently announced projects backed by the United Nations in Cambodia and the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF).

Travel Situation

- May 14:** All inbound passengers arriving in Beijing are required to receive nucleic acid tests and undergo 14-day centralized quarantine by boarding the relevant lines themselves. After the centralized quarantine, passengers are required to quarantine themselves for further 7 days at home or the quarantine hotel and carry out the self-health monitoring for 7 days afterwards.

LATEST UPDATED STATUS ON 16 MAY 2021

COUNTRY	LOCKDOWN	INBOUND TRAVEL RESTRICTION	QUARANTINE
	Partial	Visa restrictions	14 days
	No Lockdown	No visa restrictions	14 days
	Lockdown	Visa restrictions	14 days
	Partial	Visa restrictions	14 days
	Partial	Visa restrictions	21 days
	Partial	Visa restrictions	21 days



MTCO DIGITAL CHANGE

	NOV 14	NOV 15	NOV 16	NOV 17	NOV 18	NOV 19	NOV 20	AUG 21
ALEXA SCORE	4,253,969	2,618,093	1,690,661	1,276,129	851,087	976,003	1,263,288	1,281,859
WEBSITE VISITORS	733	1,898	5,071	6,159	6,810	6,571	6,602	6,616
WEBSITE VIEWS	1,684	4,038	9,578	10,582	11,573	11,431	12,324	12,037
USERS / DAY	20	140	319	353	394	324	326	347
FACEBOOK LIKES	175	850	1,350	2,006	2,517	2,779	3,474	3,652
LIBRARY DOCS	0	150	390	430	464	514	598	631
WEBSITE POSTS	75	200	380	850	1,961	2,571	3,218	3,575

Top Website Data Insights

- **Top Keyword:** Sihanoukville Tourism Industry Trends (Share of Voice: 16.55%)
- **Top Referral Sites:** MekongTourismForum.org; GreaterMekong.org; Retreatours.com; exoticvoyages.com

Facebook: Top Visited Posts

Post ID	Text	Image	Video	Link	Like	Comment	Share	Engagement
1000000000000000	How do you feel about the new...?				10	5	2	17
1000000000000000	Addressing Concerns in...?				15	8	3	26
1000000000000000	The 2021 Global...?				20	10	4	34
1000000000000000	This is an interesting and very...?				30	15	6	51
1000000000000000	Let's be honest, we...?				40	20	8	68
1000000000000000	On this meaningful occasion, for...?				50	25	10	85
1000000000000000	Thank you to the Mekong...?				60	30	12	102

Facebook: Social Media Engagement

Page	Total Page Likes	From last week	Posts This Week	Engagement This Week
1. Visit Southeast Asia	140,200	+100%	5	1.4K
2. Mekong Tourism Council...	3,200	+100%	5	300
3. PATA Pacific Asia Travel Asso...	5,800	+100%	0	400

MekongTourism.org: Origin of website visitors

Country	Users	% Users
1. United States	1,996	43.21%
2. China	1,092	23.64%
3. Thailand	415	8.98%
4. Cambodia	312	6.75%
5. Singapore	94	2.04%
6. France	87	1.88%
7. United Kingdom	69	1.49%
8. Vietnam	65	1.41%
9. Australia	58	1.26%
10. Indonesia	58	1.21%



KEY BENEFITS OF DESTINATION MEKONG HOSTED BY A GMS MEMBER COUNTRY

- Alignment of GMS TWG with Private Sector
- Working relationship between MTCO & DM
- Legal Structure & governance with official office
- Commitment of government to support PPP

























The Ministry of Tourism Cambodia steps up to offer hosting the offices of Destination Mekong, in order to support a regional tourism public-private partnership framework.

Destination Mekong will be incorporated in Cambodia, with offices at MoT in Phnom Penh.

Interim Board of Directors

<p>Chair</p>  <p>Willem Nijmeijer Chairman Tours Vnoamr/Mani Travel Tours</p>	<p>Vice-Chair</p>  <p>Michael Marshall Chief Commercial Officer Mincor Hotels Accommodation</p>	 <p>Jens Thraenhart Executive Director Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office MTCO</p>	 <p>Achim Munz Myanmar Resilience Chief Hanns Seidel Foundation Development Organization</p>
 <p>Don Ross Editor TTR Travel Weekly Asia Media</p>	 <p>Harlan Zhang Professor Gullin Tourism University Academia</p>	 <p>Inthy Deuansawan CEO & Founder Green Discovery Laos Tours</p>	 <p>Janina Bikova Ecotourism Advisor Laos Wildlife Conservation Society NGO</p>
 <p>Jutamas Wisansing (Dr.) CEO PerfectLink Consulting Consulting</p>	 <p>Kulikar Setho Homeman Travel/Homeman Films Audiovisual</p>	 <p>Mia Signs Communications Manager Illegal Wildlife Trade WWF – Greater Mekong Tours</p>	 <p>Peter Richards Responsible Tourism Expert EMC Members Representative</p>
 <p>Peter Wiesner Aviation Expert Aviation</p>	 <p>Sophie Hartman Regional Platform Coordinator Asian I&C Education</p>	 <p>Sumate Sudasna President Thailand Incentive and Convention Associations MICE</p>	 <p>Thoun Sinan Chair FATA Cambodia Association</p>
			 <p>Gerrit Kruger Managing Director Chamrebon Strategies Destination Mekong Administrator</p>



PROGRAMS

Destination Mekong is operating a number of programs in multiple areas to create health communities through tourism, build capacity in sustainable tourism practices as well as social media marketing and traveler engagement capabilities.

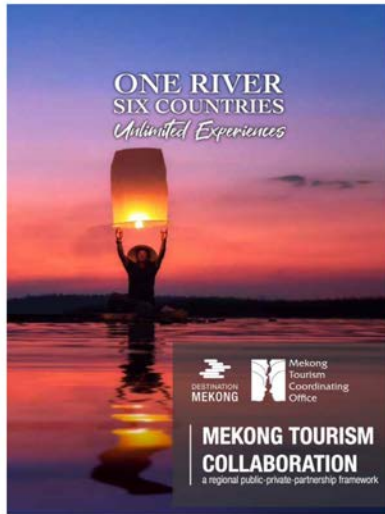
This is done through events, such as the Destination Mekong Summit or seminars, best practice showcases such as the Experience Mekong Collection and Experience Mekong Showcases, the Mekong Innovations in Sustainable Tourism (MIST) program, as well as targeted intelligence reports and workshops through Mekong Trends snapshots and events.

Award-winning initiatives to foster customer engagement and promote customer experiences are the Mekong Moments platform, which hosts the Mekong Mini Movie Festivals as well as Mekong Heroes, covering engaging stories about people who made an impact in the Mekong Region. These are integrated in the Mekong.travel portal, which is in the centre of all consumer-facing initiatives.

The Mekong Tourism Recovery System includes Mekong Memories, Mekong Deals, and Mekong Secrets.

We also work on joint initiatives with partners, such as InspiringLaos.com and the Mekong Coronavirus Innovations.





Mekong Tourism booklet: <http://bit.ly/MekongTourism2021>



MEKONG INNOVATIONS IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
 Help strengthen sustainability and resilience for a balanced tourism recovery

The Mekong Innovations in Sustainable Tourism (MIST) program is seeking innovative initiatives and projects from anybody, including from students, startups, social enterprises, SMEs, corporates to governments - with the goal to strengthen sustainability and resilience in travel and tourism in the member countries of the Greater Mekong Subregion.

- I MIST is open to any organization
- II We accept any project that can drive sustainability and resilience in the Greater Mekong Subregion.
- III Any initiative regardless of age can be submitted to MIST.
- IV We accept nominations from member countries of the Mekong as well as from all over the world.
- V The nominated project must promote at least one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SGDs)
- VI MIST is open for any nominations that drive impact, sustainability, and resilience for a balanced tourism recovery.

NOMINATE NOW ON MIST.ASIA

HIGHLIGHTS:

- 32 accepted nominations (out of 41 received nominations)
- 11 nominations in the Growth Track (startup ventures)
- 14 nominations in the Project Track (initiatives of existing companies)
- 7 nominations in the Launch Track (registered businesses)
- 20 judges from MeTAG

AN INITIATIVE BY **DESTINATION MEKONG**

SUPPORTED BY **Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **ADB** * **seedstars**

ORGANIZED BY **CHAMELION STRATEGIES** | **UNWTO**



Experience Mekong Collection
Webinar on July 14, 2021

“Practical Actions and Learning on
How to Survive COVID-19 and
Prepare for Recovery”



HOW TO SURVIVE COVID-19 AND PREPARE FOR RECOVERY - PRACTICAL ACTIONS AND LEARNING

PANELISTS:

- MS. KRITSANA TONGRUAL, Education Manager, Hospitality and Learning, Training Center, Thailand
- MS. LAUTA VASASIL, External Relations and Careers Manager, Hospitality and Learning, Training Center, Thailand
- MR. RENAUD FICHET, Director, S&P for Hotel and Restaurant School, Cambodia
- MS. SOPHE HARTMAN, ASSET-H&C Network Coordinator, Viet Nam

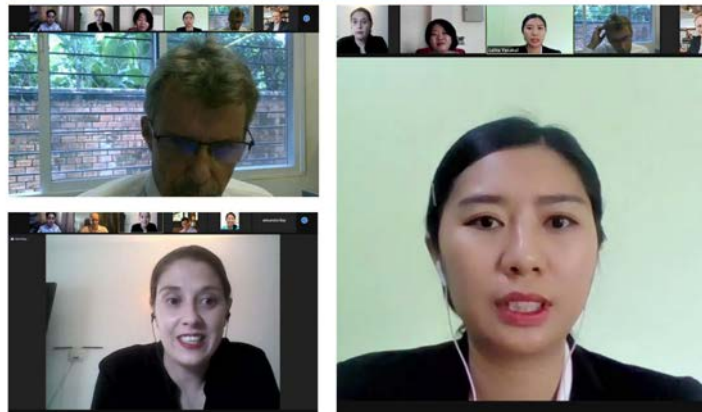
MODERATOR:

- MR. NATTAKORN ABUNEE (TON), Operations Manager, Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office, Thailand

JOIN US LIVE WEBINAR
14 JULY 2021 | 2.00PM - 3.30PM (BANGKOK TIME)

More info about EXPERIENCE MEKONG COLLECTION: www.experiencemekongcollection.com

Logos: Mekong Tourism, Destination Mekong, ASSET-H&C, DestinationMekong.com, MekongTourism.org





EXPERIENCE MEKONG SHOWCASE FINALISTS 2021

Country	City	Name	Category
Cambodia	Battambang	Phare Ponleu Selpak	DO
	Siem Reap	Sala Bai	STAY, TASTE
	Koh Kong	Wildlife Alliance Release Station	STAY, TOUR
PR China	Dali, Yunnan	Lanxu Eco-Culture Development Center	DO, SHOP
	Lijiang, Yunnan	The Bivou	STAY
	Yunnan	Xintuo Ecotourism	TOUR
Lao PDR	Nam Et	Nam Et-Phou Louey National Park	TOUR
		Wildlife Tours	
	Luang Prabang	TAEC	DO
	Vientiane	TaiBaan Crafts	SHOP
Thailand	Chiang Mai	Elephant Pooppaper Park	DO
	Bangkok	SiamRise Travel	TOUR
	Bangkok	STEPS with Theera	TASTE
Viet Nam	Ha Noi	Omamori Spa	DO
	Ho Chi Minh City	Mekong Quilts	SHOP
	Bac Kan	Mr. Linh's Homestay	STAY

Public Votes: Over 6,000 votes

1st Mekong Hero 2020

On 25 August 2020, the first Mekong Hero was announced at the Destination Mekong Summit 2020. Chosen from a list of nominated individuals and reviewed by members of the Mekong Tourism Advisory Group as well as the Mekong Governments, Ms. Potjana Suansri is the first Mekong Hero.

Ms. Potjana Suansri
 Founder, Thailand Community Based Tourism Institute (CBT-I)



2nd Mekong Hero 2021

Remembering Lokru Srey Bandaul,
Co-Founder of Phare Ponleu Selpak





MEKONG TOURISM

Events

October 2021

WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION
A UNITED NATIONS SPECIALIZED AGENCY

UNWTO

ABOUT US OUR FOCUS RESOURCES NEWS COVID-19

FOLLOW US EN

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Sustainable and inclusive growth for the Lancang-Mekong Region

Promoting the Lancang-Mekong Region, comprising of Cambodia, PR China (Guangxi and Yunnan provinces), Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam as a single destination.

**WORLD TOURISM DAY FORUM – OCTOBER 6-7
2021 MEKONG INNOVATIONS IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**



2ND DESTINATION MEKONG SUMMIT


VIRTUAL | 21-22 OCTOBER 2021










MORE INFORMATION: <https://www.destinationmekong.com/event-directory/>



REPORT OF REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

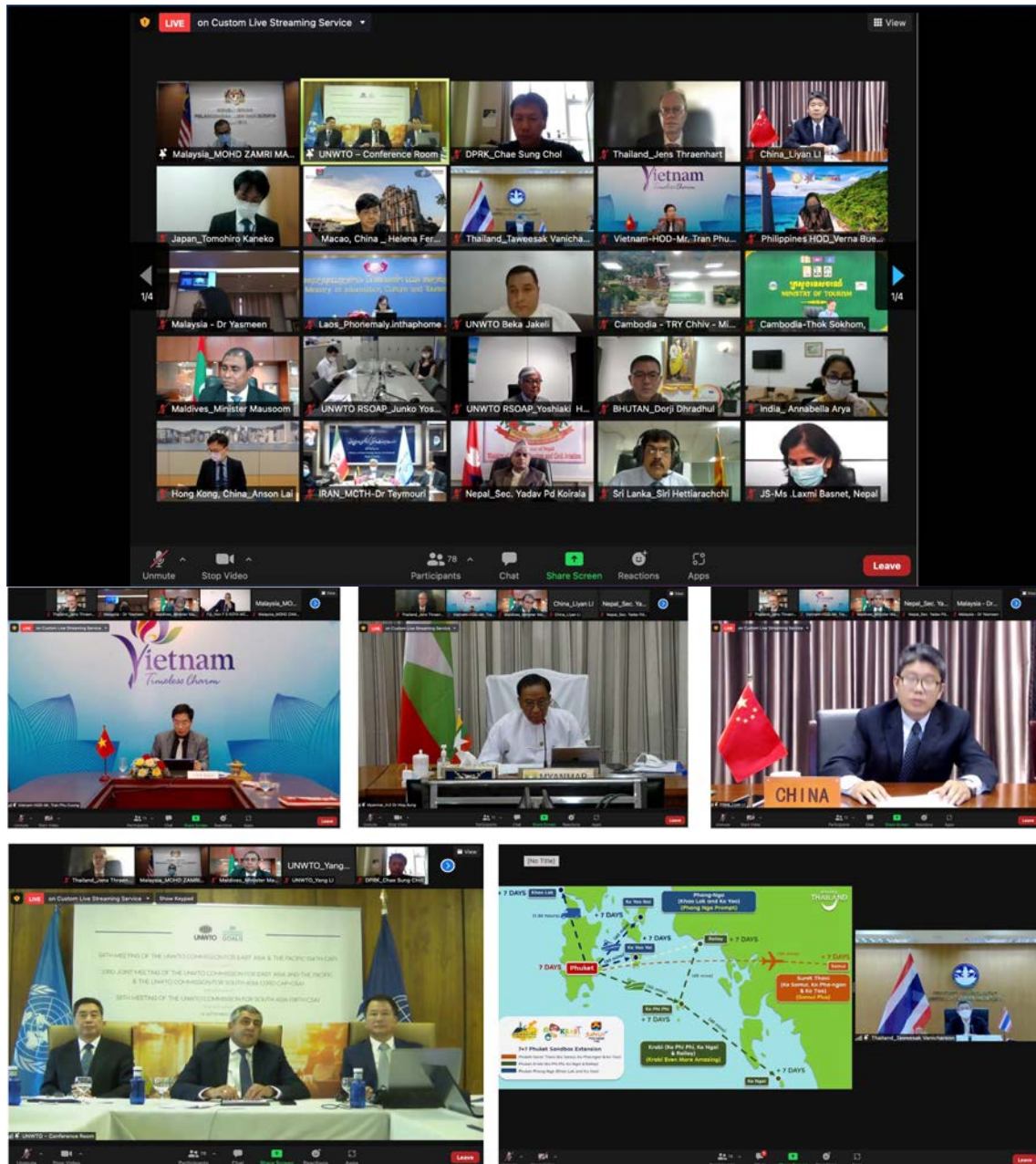


Harry Hwang, Director
Regional Department for Asia and the Pacific



UNWTO - Conference Room

Unmute
Start Video
Participants
Chat
Share Screen
Reactions
Apps
Leave



#StrongerTogether
#JuntosMasFuertes

Thailand_Lens Thraenhart
2nd Vice Chair of the BOARD of the UNWTO Affiliate Members

“As the role of Destination Marketing Organizations evolves, so must its business model. The public and private sectors must collaborate. Together, these two forces can achieve greatness. This is especially vital preparing for a sustainable tourism recovery.”

Unmute
Start Video
Participants
Chat
Share Screen
Reactions
Apps
Leave

TCSR Briefing – COVID 19 Tourism Recovery

In May 2020, TCSR launched the UNWTO COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance Package
<https://www.unwto.org/news/unwto-releases-a-covid-19-technical-assistance-package-for-tourism-recovery>

Mailed out to all Member States (MS) and presented through various fora including webinars and Regional Commission Meetings, interest in the TA package poured in and received 25 requests from MS* and 7 Donor Organizations

*Africa: 9 | Americas: 8 | Asia and the Pacific: 6 | Europe: 1 | Middle East: 1

The Package is structured around three main pillars:

- 1) **Economic Recovery**
- 2) **Marketing and Promotion**
- 3) **Institutional Strengthening and Building Resilience**

- TCSR Briefing – COVID 19 Tourism Recovery
- OBJECTIVES OF THE THREE PILLARS**
- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Quantify and Qualify the impact of Covid-19 on the tourism sector of Member States and provide strategic recommendations to stimulate economic recovery through tourism and support tourism MSMEs | 2. Develop targeted marketing and promotion strategies based on the unique characteristics of each Member State and Destination | 3. Strengthen capacities of institutions and private sector to adopt and adapt protocols for provision of tourism services in a new, post Covid-19 era, in terms of health, hygiene, safety and security for both tourists and employees alike. |
|---|--|--|

TCSR Briefing – Donors Outreach

Implementation of the UNWTO COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance Package (ii)

- **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Organization of American States (OAS):** Support provided to the development of harmonized Biosafety Protocols in the Tourism Sector for Latin America and Caribbean Countries.
- **Asian Development Bank (ADB):** Technical assistance offered to implementing COVID-safety protocols and establishing a travel bubble between Almaty (Kazakhstan) and Bishkek (Kyrgyz Republic).
- **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP):** Socio-economic impact assessment carried out of COVID-19's impact on Zambia's tourism sector.

In total, in the past year, UNWTO has already launched **15 COVID-19 tourism recovery projects** with the resources mobilized through the EBRD, JICA, UNDP and ADB. Dialogue on collaboration in COVID-19 tourism recovery is on-going with other donors and development partners.

- Top Priorities for the next 3 Years**
- Sustainability and green transition: protect nature, develop nature-based and rural tourism
 - Boost investment, attract donors, create national tourism fund
 - Branding and re-positioning: new markets
 - Product development and diversification



Mekong Tourism Advisory Group (MeTAG)

Advisory Group of the regional tourism collaboration in the Mekong Region

Description

Managed by the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO), MeTAG is a voluntary advisory group of passionate travel and tourism professionals, active in the member countries of the Greater Mekong Subregion (Cambodia, PR China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam).

About This Network

- 77 Members
- Visit Our Website
- Bangkok, Thailand
- A Secret Mighty Network

Top Posts

Geothe

As a quick reminder, please don't forget our 4th MeTAG Meeting, this coming Thursday, June 4th, at 4pm Bangkok time, with Ms. Anna Pollock facilitating a...

Anna Pollock

4TH METAG MEETING - STRATEGY SUNDAY...

Here's what

Dear MeTAG members: As we are preparing for...

Blue jeans

QUICK REMINDER: 5TH METAG MEETING - SUNDAY, JUNE...

With the travel ban

announced to be lifted we see bookings coming in again. Up 100% from last week. Looking forward to see a big rise...

Hello MeTAG Members!

We are looking to schedule our 3rd MeTAG Meeting for Tuesday, May 19th at 4pm BKK time. We will be using Zoom. The invitation will be sent...

Members Near You

Topics

- COVID-19
- MeTAG
- Events
- Mekong Heroes
- Experience Mekong Collection
- MIST
- Mekong Minis
- Mekong Moments

RESEARCH & ACADEMIA

Chair | Wisanchalee Wattanacharoensil Mahidol University

ARTS & CULTURE

Chair | Jokee Yee Mekong Business & Travel

WILDLIFE TOURISM & CONSERVATION

Chair | Jarana Blkova Wildlife Conservation Society

FOOD & AGRITOURISM

Chair | Vincent Vichit-Vadskan South China Morning post

CHILD SAFETY & PROTECTION

Chair | Gabriela Kühn ECPAT International

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Chair | Anne Somanas TTG Asia

MeTAG Expert Groups: Wildlife Tourism & Conservation webinar on August 30, 2021



Wildlife Tourism & Conservation group page:
<https://www.destinationmekong.com/expert-group/wildlife-tourism-conservation/>

MeTAG Expert Groups: Current Progress



Wildlife Protection

- Submitted a Project Summary to apply for the National Geographic COVID-19 Science Fund
- The group hosted a thematic webinar to promote Ethical Wildlife Tourism destination
- The group now is looking to involve more members to Wildlife Tourism & Conservation group

MeTAG Expert Groups: Education & Research Survey Project



? HOW CAN TOURISM BUSINESSES AND THE EDUCATION SECTOR COMBINE EFFORTS AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER TO PREPARE FOR A BALANCED TOURISM RECOVERY?

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey.

DESTINATION MEKONG



Project 1: strengthen the connection between the education sector and the TH&E industry – required skills and competencies for TH&E workforce

Objectives

- To develop among education stakeholders a better understanding of the industry's need and determine a range of skills and competencies required for the TH&E workforce especially after the Covid-19 recovery.
- To seek opportunities to enhance collaboration between the TH&E industry and education authorities with a view to address skill mismatch induced by the COVID-19 crisis.



Prior the focus group

Proposed Date: Thursday 23rd September 2021 from 14:00-15:30

- Invitation email will be sent to the list of businesses (shown in the excel spreadsheet)
- The final confirmation date will be on 17th September 2021
- A set of questions will be sent to participants who accept the invitation on 20th September
- Open the floor for MeTAG members' suggestions

Education & Research group page:
<https://www.destinationmekong.com/expert-group/education-research/>

MeTAG Expert Groups: Current Progress



Education & Research

- Organized monthly meetings to update and created task force for projects as well as recruit new members to get engaged with activities
- Proposed the research titled " Preaching vs. Practice: An analysis of the integration of sustainability principles into educational content and institutional operations in the Greater Mekong Sub-region"
- The group now is looking to organize two focus groups on September 23 of consultations with industry stakeholders related to the survey responses.
- The group now is developing the database of educational institutions that offer the Tourism, Hospitality and Event Management Programs (in Higher Education level) in the GMS

MeTAG Expert Groups: Food & Agro-Tourism webinar on September 21, 2021



Food & Agro-Tourism group page:
<https://www.destinationmekong.com/expert-group/food-and-agro-tourism/>

Register to join the event via:
<https://bit.ly/2ZDieOf>

MeTAG Expert Groups: Current Progress



Food & Agro-Tourism

- Planning to create a guide to identifying potential community-based tourism food products
- The group is hosting a webinar on September 21 to highlight best practices in the field from around the region with the title "Appetite for Travel".



DESTINATION
MEKONG

MEKONG TOURISM ADVISORY GROUP

Expert Group on Child Protection

Objective

To increase resilience and drive sustainability for the tourism industry in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) through addressing child protection issues.

Chair



Gabriela Kühn

ECPAT International

CONTEXT

- Sustainable development
- Binding due diligence rules
- Digital and travel & tourism environment
- Domestic, local, rural, experiential tourism
- Conscious customers



@ecpat





DESTINATION MEKONG - SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL & TOURISM
RECOVERY WITH CHILD PROTECTION IN FOCUS



LAUNCH OF THE CODE VOLUNTOURISM POLICY



24 August, 3.00 pm. of Bangkok time



Jens Thraenhart
CEO of Mekong
Tourism



Seila Samleang
Executive Director,
APLE Cambodia



Sophie Hartman,
Regional Platform
Coordinator, ASSET-
H&C



Bertie Lawson, CEO
- Sampan Travel



Nicole Häusler,
Advisor to
Myanmar
Responsible
Tourism Institute



Damien Bronsan,
Manager of The
Code

Moderated by: Gabriela Kühn, Head of Programme, ECPAT International

Areas of work

- Organise **webinars, events**
- Support governments www.ecpat.org/countries
- Share knowledge www.ecpat.org
- Engage with the private sector www.thecode.org
- Identify areas of concerns www.thecode.org/voluntourism
- Engage with institutions (ex. ASSET-H&C, GSTC, MRTI)
- Promote good practices from the region
www.wttc.org/Initiatives/Sustainable-Growth



@ecpat



For more information visit us at
www.thecode.org and www.ecpat.org

The Code
Voluntourism Policy

Does your business
include **voluntourism**
products with children
or visits to orphanages in
its tourism programs?





Cambodia



China



Laos



Myanmar



Thailand



Vietnam

APPENDIX 7

ADB UPDATES



GMS Tourism Updates

48th GMS Tourism Working Group Meeting
17 September 2021
Online, Hosted by Thailand

Steven Schipani
Southeast Asia Department
Asian Development Bank



7th GMS Summit
PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA
9 SEPTEMBER 2021



GMS: Renewed Strength to Face the Challenges of the New Decade

Report to Leaders on Recent Outcomes of GMS Cooperation – Tourism Highlights

- ❖ In the **Tourism** sector, the GMS Program continued to promote secondary tourism destinations, tourism startup firms, tourism technology innovations, and strengthened tourism vocational training. The huge growth in the sector in 2019—reflected by the 80 million international tourist arrivals and \$100 billion in tourist spending—was reversed with a decline of 80% in tourist arrivals in 2020 due to the pandemic. The GMS Program supported a variety of mitigating measures. GMS countries have also agreed in principle to enhance the status of the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office as an international organization. A Mekong Tourism Recovery Communications Plan has also been prepared to guide dissemination of accurate and engaging information to support a safe and sustainable GMS tourism recovery.



7th GMS Summit

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA

9 SEPTEMBER 2021



GMS: Renewed Strength to Face the Challenges of the New Decade

Leaders Statement – Tourism Highlights

- ❖ We are encouraged by the improvement in **competitiveness** of important sectors through well targeted programs...**Tourism** arrivals and incomes have been boosted through promoting the GMS as a single tourist destination, well-coordinated marketing campaigns, and improved tourism infrastructure, while spreading the benefits through secondary tourism sites development, pro-poor tourism projects, and capacity building for tourism workers.
- ❖ We also welcome the rapid cooperative responses in the most significantly affected sectors, such as **tourism**, agriculture, cross border transport and trade, and the environment, not only to mitigate the adverse impact on their activities but also to ensure that recovery is speedy and in accordance with broader, longer-term objectives, such as sustainability and inclusiveness.
- ❖ We will also take measures to stabilize regional and global supply chains to ensure the free flow of essential goods and services; address the needs of the vulnerable and the poor as well as safe and orderly labor movement and management; keep borders open and accelerate economic recovery, with a focus on transport and trade facilitation, investment, **tourism** and agriculture while minimizing health risks.

ADB

7th GMS Summit

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA

9 SEPTEMBER 2021



GMS: Renewed Strength to Face the Challenges of the New Decade



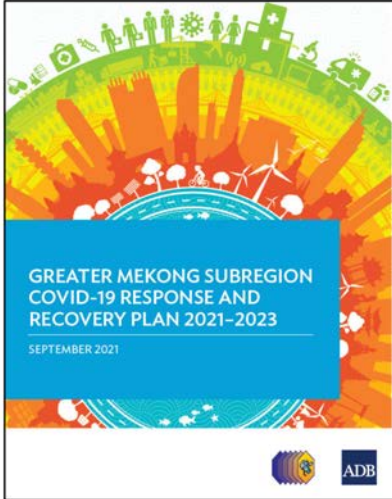
Tourism Directions

- Human resource development
 - Connectivity investments
 - Integrated destination management planning
 - Marketing and promotion, aiming for higher value
 - Equitable gender balanced participation
 - Strengthen public-private linkages
 - Strengthen public management, including revenues
 - Increased cross-sector collaboration
- (see annex for details)

ADB

7th GMS Summit
PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA
9 SEPTEMBER 2021

GMS: Renewed Strength to Face the Challenges of the New Decade



Tourism Directions

- Digital transformation for safe & seamless travel
 - Health and safety protocols for tourism businesses
 - Disseminate timely & accurate travel information
 - Digital marketing, leveraging social media
 - Self-driving, travel bubbles when appropriate
 - Governments continue providing social assistance, liquidity, other relief measures
- (see annex for details)



7th GMS Summit
PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA
9 SEPTEMBER 2021

GMS: Renewed Strength to Face the Challenges of the New Decade



Regional Investment Framework

- Overall RIF 2022 update included 204 projects worth \$78 billion with 76% financing already identified. Of these 63% of the projects are either ongoing or completed with 15% private sector financing up from 42% ongoing or completed projects with 8% private sector financing in 2018
- Tourism: 16 projects/TAs financed (50%) for \$429 million
- Criteria being defined for new RIF by GMS Senior Officials, expect guidance and formulation in 2022. Likely to emphasize COVID-19 recovery, more co-financing and private sector participation





Southeast Asia Sustainable Tourism Facility -Rationale

- Regional technical assistance to support an inclusive and sustainable tourism recovery, focusing on secondary destinations
- Southeast Asia's international visitor arrivals fell 82% in 2020, further in 2021
- Travel and tourism's contribution to regional GDP fell 53% in 2020
- Millions of job losses and widespread business closures
- Tourism downturn is contributing to increasing poverty, slowing progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals, widening fiscal deficits
- Pre-COVID-19, and new challenges: quality infrastructure and service investments, slow adoption of digital technologies, environmental sustainability, health and safety concerns, destination management funding constraints

ADB



Southeast Asia Sustainable Tourism Facility - Proposed Outputs & Activities



Output 1: Sustainable tourism investments prepared. Support project identification and preparation, identify co-financing opportunities.

- Viet Nam: Hoa Binh Tourism Infrastructure Development Project
- Lao PDR: Livable Cities Investment Project
- Cambodia: Livable Cities Investment Project 2



Output 2: Tourism operations implementation strengthened. Develop public private partnerships to operate physical and digital tourism services. Support digital transformation initiatives attached to ongoing ADB-financed projects (CLVT)



Output 3: Sustainable tourism knowledge developed and disseminated. Demand-driven knowledge to support the transition to higher-value tourism, strengthen the business environment for entrepreneurship and innovation; and mobilize domestic resources needed for destination management by developing smart regulatory and tax policies for short-term rentals. Also support knowledge sharing between subregional tourism working groups (GMS & Southeast Asia-wide)

ADB



Southeast Asia Sustainable Tourism Facility -Financing & Implementation

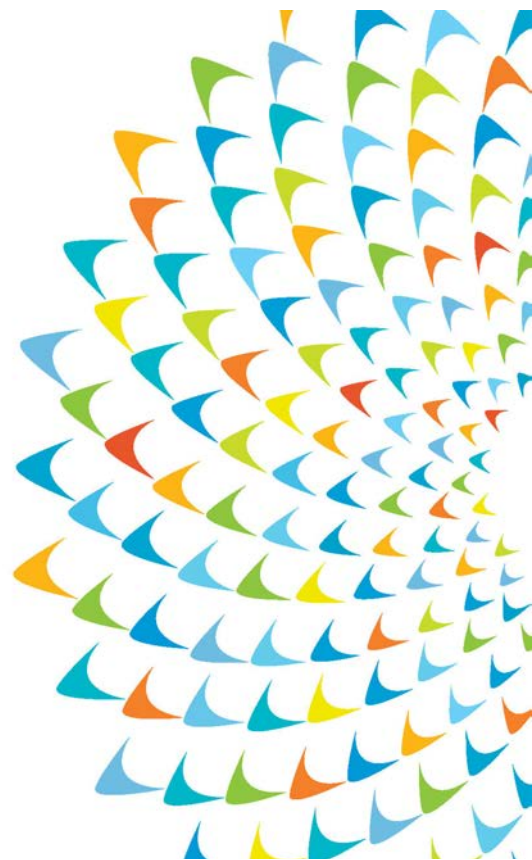
- Proposed \$1.73 million, ADB and co-financing resources
- ADB is TA executing agency, National Tourism Organizations/Urban Management Agencies are proposed implementing agencies
- Expected ADB approval: November 2021
- Implementation period: 2022 – 2024
- Appointment of TA counterpart focals (National Tourism Organizations/Urban Management Agencies) to follow TA approval, following standard practices
- Proposed in-kind counterpart contributions include TA counterpart focals, coordination, and information to support TA implementation



Thank you.

[ADB Strategy 2030](#)

Achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Asia and the Pacific





ADB's Current GMS Tourism Assistance

Investment Projects & Technical Assistance

- [GMS Tourism Infrastructure for Inclusive Growth Projects](#) (C,L,V \$220m)
- [Economic Empowerment of the Poor and Women in the East-West Economic Corridor](#) (MYA, \$3.0 m)

2021 Pipeline

- [Guangxi Guilin Comprehensive Ecological Rehabilitation Project](#) (\$381m, ADB-KfW, government)
- [Cambodia Community-Based Tourism COVID-19 Recovery Project](#) (\$3.0 m)
- Southeast Asia Sustainable Tourism Facility (TA) (\$1.73 m)

2022-2023 Pipeline

- Hoa Binh (Viet Nam) Tourism Infrastructure Development Project (\$75 m)
- Lao PDR Urban Environment Investment Project (\$33 m)

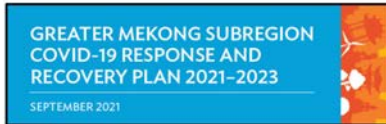
Knowledge Products and Services

- GMS Tourism Recovery Communications Plan & Toolkit
- Lao PDR Agriculture and Tourism Development for Inclusive Growth study
- GMS Tourism Sentiment Index



Tourism Directions

- (i) Human resource development to lift tourism management capacity and improve service quality;
- (ii) Connectivity investments to expand airports, secondary roads, railways, and ports;
- (iii) Integrated destination management planning, including crisis management, secondary destination infrastructure investment, and implementation of common tourism standards to improve resilience;
- (iv) Marketing and promotion of the GMS as a quality and safe multicountry destination to attract high-value travelers;
- (v) Equitable participation of women and men to be assured in high-value product and service delivery;
- (vi) Strengthen public-private linkages in all aspects of tourism, while emphasizing sustainability;
- (vii) Strengthen public sector management to facilitate regional travel, implement air services agreements consistent with the free trade area framework agreement between ASEAN and the PRC, address tourism policy gaps, improve border facilities and management, and establish and enhance systems to collect tourism taxes and fees for reinvestment in inclusive and sustainable tourism initiatives; and,
- (viii) Increase of cross-sector collaboration between tourism and other sectors, including cross-attendance in working group meetings, convening cross-sector thematic groups, and knowledge sharing.



Tourism Directions

55. The Plan will support GMS countries' coordinated tourism recovery efforts and initiatives to build back more resilient, sustainable, and inclusive tourism. This includes developing safe and seamless travel experiences that integrate digital technologies to facilitate reliable and rapid health screening at points of entry and at tourist attractions, adopting contactless payment systems, and introducing digital smart yellow cards to verify COVID-19 immunizations. Tourism destinations and businesses will implement government-endorsed health and safety protocols based on global best practices and develop harmonized regional safety standards and industry training programs for frontline tourism businesses.

56. The public and private sectors will cooperate to implement traditional media and digital campaigns that inform travelers of public health measures being undertaken and provide accurate, up-to-date travel information. Cost-effective digital marketing and promotion campaigns will leverage social media platforms and livestream tourist attractions using virtual reality to maintain GMS destination awareness among consumers worldwide. GMS governments will continue to provide aid and assistance to the sector given the significant shocks created by the pandemic, including social protection for unemployed tourism workers, tax and regulatory relief for tourism businesses, and liquidity to strategically important transport enterprises like airlines.

57. As outlined in the GMS Tourism Sector Strategy 2016–2025, GMS countries will develop green and resilient infrastructure in secondary destinations that are linked to subregional gateways. They will promote independent, self-driven, and small group holidays tailored to domestic and international market preferences. Collaboration between GMS countries' transport ministries and customs authorities will be critical to reestablish intraregional transport links and facilitate cross-border tourism, particularly to create proposed intraregional travel bubbles. GMS governments will also work together to promote flexible working arrangements and/or regional public nonworking holidays to stimulate domestic and subregional tourism demand, when the pandemic prevention and control policies permit, and circumstances allow.



Cambodia



China



Laos



Myanmar



Thailand



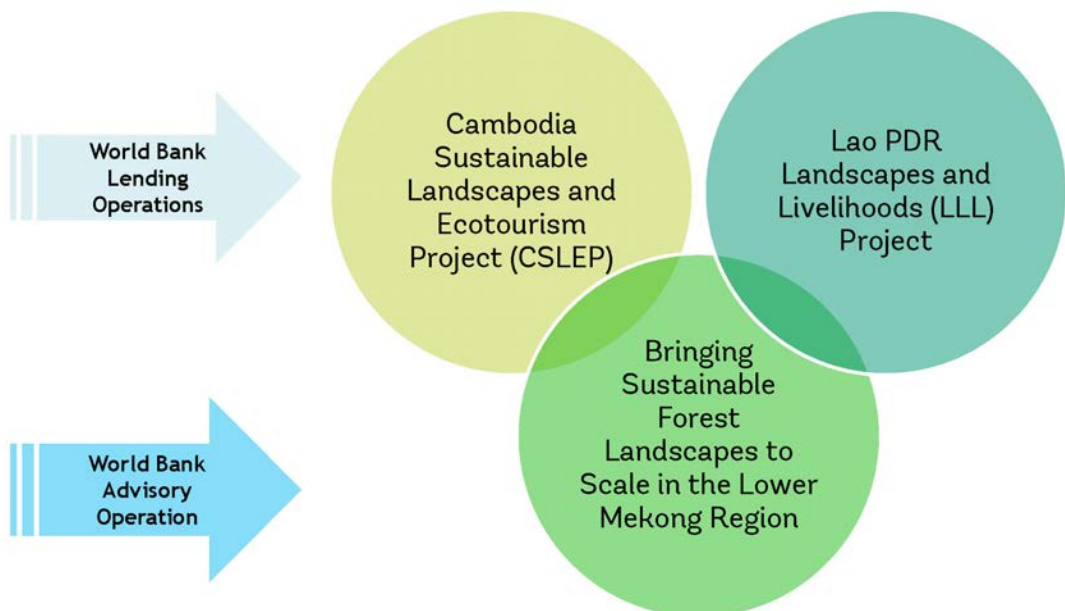
Vietnam

APPENDIX 8

WORLD BANK UPDATES



World Bank's Integrated Approach to Ecotourism Development in Cambodia & Lao PDR





World Bank Ecotourism in Cambodia & Lao PDR

World Bank Ecotourism Activities in Cambodia



ENABLING ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN CAMBODIA

CSLEP: Investment to improve the tourism assets in the PAs including destination vision and investment plans, CBET development, business development support, marketing and promotion

\$50.66 million IDA + \$4.42 million GEF + \$2.5 million RGC

Coastal Ecotourism Advisory: Support to develop a demand driven, cohesive vision and strategy for coastal ecotourism development (potential Project)

CSLEP Ecotourism Anticipated Outcomes



World Bank's ecotourism activities in Lao PDR



Lao PDR Livelihoods and Landscapes Project: \$34 million IDA + \$7.37 million GEF + \$16 million Canadian Clean Energy





LLL Project Ecotourism Anticipated Outcomes



Context – Forest Landscapes in the Lower Mekong Region

The Lower Mekong Region (LMR) is home to the third largest contiguous forest area in the world, with forests covering 46% of the region and critically important ecoregions for biodiversity and livelihoods.

- **Cultural diversity:** 100+ distinct indigenous groups, most reliant on forests and forest products to sustain livelihoods.
- **Continued deforestation:** Loss of >2 million ha of natural forest between 2001-19 driven by weak governance, poor law enforcement, poverty, competing land uses, and migration to forest areas.
- **Growing appetite for agriculture and forest commodities** such as rubber, oil palm, coffee, sugarcane, biofuel feedstock, and fast-growing tree species.
- **Poor forest conservation and management:** Despite the broadly recognized importance of forests, their conservation and management remain chronically underfunded.

Regional solutions are needed to help address these challenges

Regional Analytical Activity

PROGREEN

Objective: to inform regional dialogue, policies, and investments for scaling up resilient and productive forest landscapes in the Mekong region

1. **Promoting regional solutions for managing forest landscapes:**
 - Regional trends and scenario development
 - Assessment of interventions and policy recommendations
2. **Strengthening enabling environment for selected value chains:**
 - Regional ecotourism products
 - Assessment of private plantation policies and opportunities





Regional Ecotourism: Key Questions



What is the potential for ecotourism development in Protected Areas in the Lower Mekong countries?

What is the demand from key regional markets for ecotourism and adventure tourism? How can we leverage this?

What regional experiences can be promoted across the region by ecotourism destination managers and operators?

What are the critical enabling conditions to be implemented by countries to promote those regional products, especially in the COVID-19 context?

11



Demand Analysis: Why do we need market intelligence?



Increase Value

- Understand what consumers want
- Drive spend opportunities
- Identify market segments with higher spend levels
- Address destination gaps



Tap New Markets

- Identify and size new market opportunities
- Analyze cost benefit analysis of new markets
- Create informed products and marketing



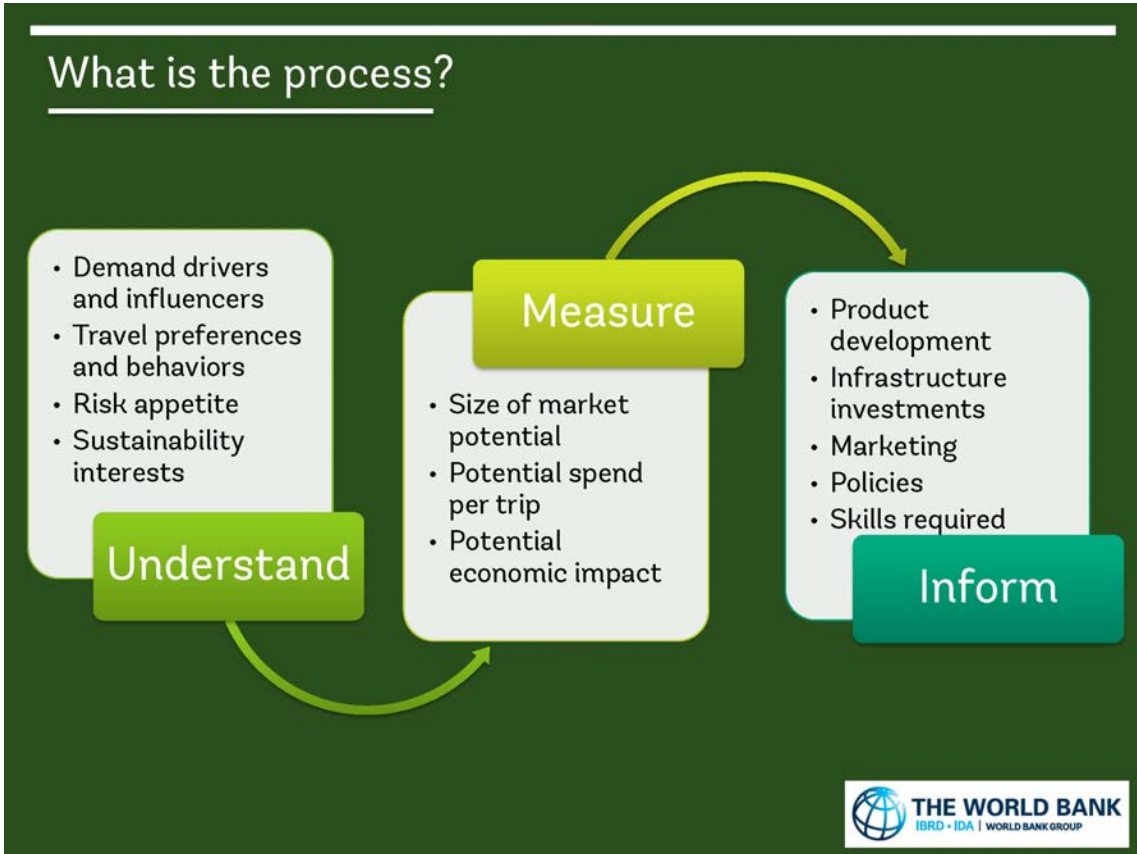
Understand Trends

- Understand where the market is going
- Anticipate and prepare for changes
- Be ahead of the competition

Evidenced based decision making on product development, marketing, infrastructure and policies



NK



Tourism Demand Methodology – 6 Stage Approach





Regional Ecotourism: Demand Analysis Proposed Focus

The demand analysis will provide data and information on:

1. Demand by Chinese tourists and those from other priority source markets for travel to Lower Mekong destinations for ecotourism and adventure tourism;
2. Tourism products and services desired by tourists in a post-COVID-19 operating environment; and
3. Trends in current tourist spending and forecasts of future tourist spending.

The GMS TWG and MTCO are key stakeholders,
and any guidance is welcome!



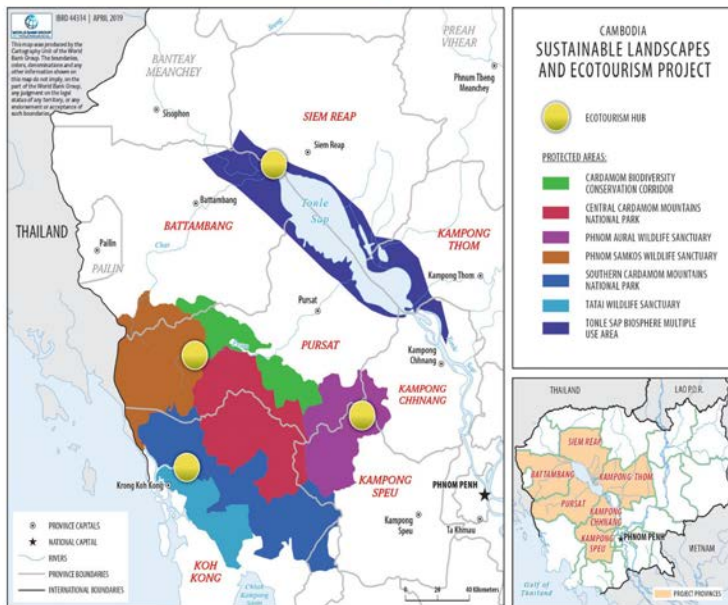
Thank you



Additional Slides



Cambodia Sustainable Landscape and Ecotourism Project (CSLEP)

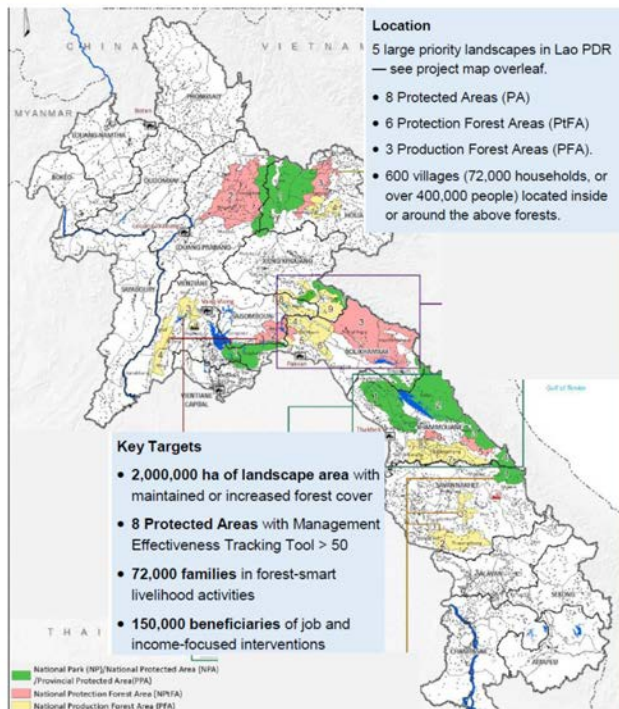


OBJECTIVE:
To improve protected areas management, and to promote ecotourism opportunities and non-timber forest product value chains in the Cardamom Mountains-Tonle Sap landscape

\$50.66 million IDA + \$4.42 million GEF + \$2.5 million RGC



Lao PDR Landscapes and Livelihoods Project Overview



Objective: To promote sustainable forest management, improve protected area management, and enhance livelihoods opportunities in selected landscapes in Lao PDR.

Financiers (Total: 57.37 million)
 World Bank IDA: \$34 million
 Global Environment Facility: \$7.37 million
 Canadian Clean Energy: \$16 million





Cambodia

China

Laos

Myanmar

Thailand

Vietnam

APPENDIX 9

GMS TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH PROJECTS



ADB

GMS Tourism Infrastructure for Inclusive Growth Project

Summary of TIIG 1 key accomplishments and lessons, including actual measures to strengthen implementation of the ongoing TIIG 2

48th GMS Tourism Working Group Meeting
17 September 2021

Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism
Lao PDR

Overview TIIG 1 (L3156-LAO)



ADB Loan L3156-LAO

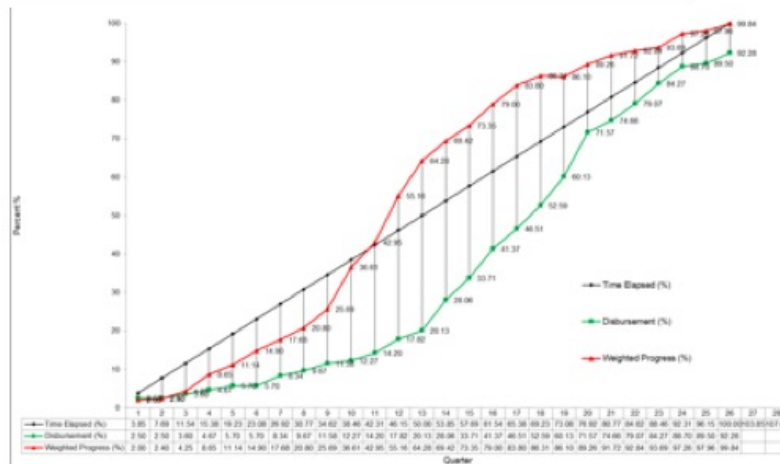
Loan Amount:	USD 40,000,000
Loan Effectiveness:	14 January 2015
Physical Completion Date:	30 June 2021 (extended from 31 Dec 2019)
Loan Closing Date:	31 December 2021

Progress as of 30 June 2021:

- Elapsed implementation period: **100%**
78/78 months (based on implementation period extension to 30 June 2021, and loan closing to 31 December 2021)
- Weighted progress: **98.4%**
- Contract award: **97.5%**
- Disbursement: **98.5%**

Overall progress (as of 30 June 2021)

Time Elapsed, Disbursement and Weighted Activity Progress



3

Output 1 - ICB Works Package	Total contract value (incl. any additional work)	Contractor	Original contract signed	Completion date (incl. any additional work)	Physical Completion as of 30 June 2021
Original ICB Works Packages					
TIIG-LAO-W01: Access and Environmental Improvement at Xang Cave and That Sikhottabong, Khammouane province	\$1,899,815.85	Dala Construction Sole Co. Ltd.	29-May-17	06-Sep-2019	100.0%
TIIG-LAO-W02: Chom-Ong cave access improvements, Oudomxay province	\$9,298,023.72	Chitchareune Construction Co. Ltd.	17-Nov-17	30-Dec-2020	100.0%
TIIG-LAO-W03: Chomphet heritage district access improvements and Ban Xang Hai-Tham Ting cave access improvements, Luang Prabang province (incl. additional work for access to Ban Chan Neuan and Ban Chan Tai, Chom Phet District, and bridges along road to Kuangxi Waterfall)	\$6,176,041.49	R8CE-PKCC-TSC J/V	11-Oct-17	May-2020	100.0%
Subtotal original ICB works packages	\$17,373,881.06				
Additional ICB works packages					
TIIG-LAO-W02a: Ban Birtakai-Ban Chom-Ong junction access improvements, Oudomxay province	\$3,785,448.91	68 Trading Construction and Service Joint Stock Company	25-Sep-19	30-Jun-2021	100.0%
Subtotal additional ICB works packages	\$3,785,448.91				
Total ICB works packages	\$21,159,329.97				



TIIG-LAO-W01: Work Progress Summary



TIIG-LAO-W01: Access and Environmental Improvement at Xang Cave and That Sikhottabong, Khammouane province

Completed: 06-Sep-2019



TIIG-LAO-W03: Work Progress Summary



TIIG-LAO-W03: Chomphet heritage district access improvements and Ban Xang Hai-Tham Ting cave access improvements, Luang Prabang province (incl. additional work for access to Ban Chan Neuan and Ban Chan Tai, Chom Phet District, and bridges along road to Kuangxi Waterfall)

Completed: May 2020

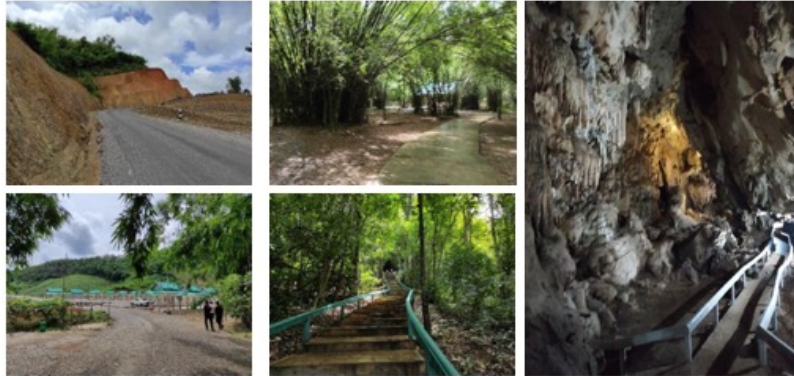


TIIG-LAO-W02: Work Progress Summary



TIIG-LAO-W02: Chom-Ong cave access improvements, Oudomxay province

Completed: 30-Dec-2020



TIIG-LAO-W02a: Work Progress Summary



TIIG-LAO-W02a: Ban Takai-Ban Chom-Ong junction Access Improvements, Oudomxay province

Completed: 30-Jun-2021



Progress of DMF indicators



Outcome Indicator

By 2019: Aggregate annual tourism receipts in the four project provinces equals \$330 million (2012 Baseline: \$160 million)

Province	2014		2016		2018		2019		2020	
	IVA	Receipts (\$ mill)	IVA	Receipts (\$ mill)	IVA	Receipts (\$ mill)	IVA	Receipts (\$ mill)	IVA	Receipts (\$ mill)
Champasak	216,653	45.20	222,178	57.90	446,934	119.80	383,532	177.10	17,807	13.38
Khammouane	472,906	22.10	538,027	28.30	423,830	24.40	295,000	37.80	39,283	n/a
Luang Prabang	473,315	177.50	604,865	226.80	741,385	273.60	638,101	235.40	142,435	107.67
Oudomxay	102,050	10.10	113,834	12.00	130,540	13.50	118,468	13.70	40,817	n/a
Total, project provinces	1,264,924	254.90	1,478,904	325.00	1,742,689	431.30	1,435,101	464.00	240,342	n/a
Total, Lao PDR	4,158,719	641.60	4,239,047	724.10	4,186,432	811.00	4,791,065	934.70	1,490,073	213.37

IVA = international visitor arrivals.
Source: Project's baseline report, Provincial Tourism Departments, 2016, 2017, 2018 Statistical Report on Tourism in Laos.

2019 outcome target has been exceeded.

COVID-19 impacts on tourism sector and has affected 2020 results, and will continue to affect 2021 results.

MICT

Progress of DMF indicators



Outputs 1 and 2:

DMF Output indicator and performance target	Progress as of June 2021
1.1 Xang Cave 4.0 km paved access road and tourism amenities constructed and benefiting at least 1,900 residents	Achieved W01: 100% completed
1.2 Chomphet Heritage District 2.2 km paved access road, ferry terminal, and upgraded river piers constructed and benefiting at least 2,100 residents	Achieved W03: 100% completed
1.3 Ban Xang Hai-Tham Ting Cave 10.0 km paved access road and upgraded river piers constructed and benefiting at least 3,000 residents	Achieved W03: 100% completed
1.4 Chom Ong Cave 54.0 km paved access road and tourism amenities constructed and benefiting at least 8,000 residents	Achieved W02: 38 km: 100% completed W02a 16 km: 100% completed
2.1 That Sikhottabong 2 km internal road and drainage upgrade, solid waste transfer station, tourist information center, and 10 hectares of rehabilitated urban green space with flood protection benefiting 35,000 residents in Thakhek City.	Achieved W01: 100% completed

Progress of DMF indicators

Output 3

DMF Output Indicator and performance targets	Progress as of June 2021
3.1 Eight DMNs (DMO) formed with systems and procedures in place to implement destination management plans (40% of DMN management positions are held by women)	Partially achieved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eight DMNs formed: five DMNs formed by the project, and three through collaboration with other tourism projects. Among the total of 10 chairs and co-chairs ("management committees") of the five DMNs directly formed by the project, 2 (20%) are women.
3.2 At least 80% of newly constructed vendor space allocated to women	Achieved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has constructed space for 66 vendors, out of which 63 (95%) are allocated to women
3.3a Awareness of heritage protection measures, health and safety, and tourism impacts increases among 6,000 people (50% women)	Achieved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People whose awareness of heritage protection measures, health and safety, and tourism impacts increased as a result of the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,831 (55%) out of 6,916 (116% of target). 3,831 (55%) were women (110% of target)
3.3b Trainings to build capacity related to Institutional Strengthening of Destination Management Networks provided to 2,000 people (50% women)	Partially achieved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People whose capacity related to Institutional Strengthening of Destination Management Networks DMN was built: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,454 (121% of target) 39% were women (78% of target)

Progress of DMF indicators

Output 3

DMF Output Indicator and performance targets	Progress as of June 2021
3.4 At least five service enterprises are operating tourist attractions under public-private partnerships	On-going, likely to be achieved <p>O&M plans for project supported tourist facilities include PPP arrangements for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Khammouane: (a) That Sikhottabong multi-purpose building; (b) Xang Cave site operation Luang Prabang: (a) Ban Chan Handicraft Center operation; (b) Pak Ou Tham Ting Cave Operation Oudomxay; Chom Ong Cave site operation
3.5 Operators of 500 small and medium- sized enterprises (50% of whom are women) gain access to professional tourism-related business support services and microfinance	Achieved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 509 tourism and handicraft related SME units received direct support from the project 195 also received financial support and/or equipment in addition to capacity building and training, to upgrade production and product and service quality. 50% of these SMEs are women-led. A high proportion of employees of these SMEs are women.



Progress of DMF indicators

Output 4

DMF Output Indicator and performance targets	Progress as of June 2021
4.1 PCU and PIU staff possess the knowledge, skills, and equipment needed for effective project management (at least 30% of PCU and PIU staff are women)	Achieved - PCU and PIU have sufficient equipment and knowledge and skills have been upgraded - 36% (16 out of 45) of all PCU and PIU staff are women
4.2 12 new knowledge products published to the Lao People's Democratic Republic's web-based tourism knowledge center	Achieved - 32 knowledge products uploaded to date. http://www.tiigo-laos.org/other/html

MICT



Progress of DMF indicators

Output 4

DMF Output Indicator and performance targets	Progress as of June 2021
4.3 20% of tourism enterprises in the four project provinces meet ASEAN tourism standards.	Partially achieved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target for CBT operations has been met. Targets for homestay villages and hotels not fully met 2019/20. Percentage of Spa services certified will also be determined. Achievements will be updated again for project completion report.

Tourism enterprises	Champasak			Khammouane			Luang Prabang			Oudomxay			Target Provinces		
	Total (2019)	ASEAN Standard certified (2020)	%	Total (2019)	ASEAN Standard certified (2020)	%	Total (2019)	ASEAN Standard certified (2020)	%	Total (2019)	ASEAN Standard certified (2020)	%	Total (2019)	ASEAN Standard certified (2020)	%
Homestay villages	3	2	66.7%	4	0	0.0%	1	0	0.0%	3	0	0.0%	11	2	18.2%
CBT operations	5	1	20.0%	2	1	50.0%	3	0	0.0%	2	1	50.0%	12	3	25.0%
Spa services	n/a	0		n/a	0		n/a	2		n/a	0		n/a	2	
Public toilets	n/a	2		n/a	0		n/a	1		n/a	0		n/a	3	
Hotels	59	13	22.0%	30	0	0.0%	69	18	26.1%	22	3	13.6%	180	34	18.9%

MICT

Progress of DMF indicators



Output 4

DMF Output Indicator and performance targets	Progress as of June 2021
4.4 Collection and reporting of tourism statistics by all GMS national tourism organizations in a harmonized format	Partially achieved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MTCO organized a several GMS tourism statistics harmonization workshops in 2017, 2018 and 2019 in which MICT participated, however, a GMS harmonized format is not yet being implemented by the GMS countries. - MTCO tracks 20 tourism performance indicators in the GMS region: https://www.mekongtourism.org/about/tourism-performance/. Data for this is provided by the GMS national tourism organizations, including MICT in Lao PDR.
4.5 At least three joint marketing activities undertaken annually in cooperation with another GMS country (2012 baseline: 1 event)	Not achieved: (Tentative result: a complete review of project activities to identify additional activities presently not yet included to meet target will be undertaken for PCR) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An average of 2.2 joint marketing activities undertaken annually in cooperation with another GMS country events.
4.6 Well-maintained infrastructure in accordance with O&M plans	On-going <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - O&M plans for all subprojects have been prepared and implementation and capacity building scheduled for Q3-Q4 2021.
4.7 PCU and PIU staff effectively implement gender-sensitive PPMS, with sex-disaggregated data	On-going <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 26 quarterly reports and 1 midterm report submitted with sex-disaggregated data - Sex-disaggregated data in nearly all activity reports, fed into quarterly progress reports - Ethnic people's participation also reported for most activities - Project Completion Report planned.

Workplan for remainder of Project (until 31 Dec 2021)



Small activities to complete project investments ("the finishing touch"):

- Complete landscaping, promotional/directional signage and heritage interpretation work at Chom Ong Cave, Oudomxay
- Hospitality and guide service training at subproject sites in Khammouane and Oudomxay
- Follow-up DMN capacity building on DMP implementation
- Training on operation and maintenance of project-supported tourist facilities in Khammouane, Luang Prabang and Oudomxay
- Finalize PPP arrangements, incl. signing of agreements (Khammouane, Luang Prabang and Oudomxay)
- Develop and implement subsidy program for tour packages offered as part of the *Lao-Thiao-Lao* promotional program (in partnership with LNCCI)
- Support tourism SMEs in target areas affected by COVID-19

Completion of civil works packages in Oudomxay:

- Removal of landslides on W02 and W02a in Oudomxay (additional work financed from savings)
- Complete restoration of access to houses along W02 and W02a in Oudomxay
- Facilitate resolution of grievances in Oudomxay Province (outstanding payment by Contractor to villagers, facilitated by Department of Labor and Social Welfare)



Lessons from TIIG 1 & measures to strengthen TIIG 2



Lessons from TIIG 1	Measures to strengthen TIIG 2
Infrastructure subprojects	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed engineering design (DED) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design of tourist facilities without architect often unsatisfactory Review and approval of DED by EA hampered by lack of in-house civil engineering expertise Lack of consideration of climate resilience in the design resulted in high cost for road maintenance after completion Lack of emphasis on O&M options which lead to high maintenance cost Procurement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting by bidders of financials and past experience not always reliable Lowest price is not necessarily best-value for money Construction supervision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak and unsystematic contract management has led to administrative issues and delays Pre-construction surveys and detailed shop drawings were not done properly resulting in problems during construction that were difficult to resolve Communication lines unclear and or not observed causing confusion and administrative errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged architects for detailed design of tourist facilities at Nam Ngum, Kaeng Yui subprojects Various consultations conducted during DED, including with MPWT (landfill subproject), DPWT and OPTW Climate resilience adaption measures fully included in DED O&M considerations fully considered in DED (low maintenance) Rigorous due diligence conducted on bidders and bids to detect inconsistencies or inaccuracies Thorough review of rate analyses, determination of abnormally low bids in accordance with ADB guidelines, and careful due diligence of bidder's capacity to successfully execute work Rigorous supervision in place to identify issues at the construction site, communicate issues with the contractor and provide solutions Pre-construction survey conducted to verify the design survey data and provide solutions and approved shopdrawings in place before starting the works

Lessons from TIIG 1 & measures to strengthen TIIG 2



Lessons from TIIG 1	Measures to strengthen TIIG 2
Infrastructure subprojects	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate screening and lack of close coordination between detailed design and safeguards teams increases risk of not capturing all safeguards issues right at the start causing delays during implementation Weak contractor's environmental management plan (CEMP) and lack of qualified contractor's environmental health and safety officer (EHSO) causing poor reporting and low safeguards compliance Grievances have not always been dealt with adequately and timely, risking non-compliance and causing hardship for affected persons O&M <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting O&M planning only towards the end of construction is a missed opportunity for considering future O&M during DED and leaves little time for systematic consultation with government and local people on sustainable O&M arrangement and to build their O&M capacity Lack of collaboration between tourism consultants, engineers, O&M specialists and safeguards specialists on O&M planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close collaboration between DED engineers and safeguards consultants to identify and jointly resolve issues as early as possible and brief contractor on safeguards requirements and responsibilities to avoid delays during construction. Emphasize the importance of, and ensure a good CEMP and demand contractor employs qualified EHSO Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) in place and awareness activities undertaken with PIUs and affected people on how to file and handle grievances O&M has been considered during DED and O&M planning and capacity building is undertaken alongside construction in close consultation with government and local people Collaboration between tourism consultants, engineers, O&M specialists and safeguards specialists from the start, combined with thorough consultation with stakeholders, increases chances of effective and sustainable O&M mechanisms for subprojects

Lessons from TIIG 1 & measures to strengthen TIIG 2



Lessons from TIIG 1	Measures to strengthen TIIG 2
Gender	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Action Plan (GAP) requirements related to civil works not included in works contracts resulting in underachievement in this area Gender targets not met due to lack of awareness of targets among implementers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GAP requirements included as binding clauses in Works contracts Gender targets clearly identified in annual workplans and awareness raised among implementers
Destination management	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overrepresentation of public sector on Destination Management Networks (DMN) preventing effective public-private sector collaboration DMN structure process heavy, hampering actual action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with smaller public-private-development partner taskforces on joint, concrete initiatives that are mutually beneficial Use positive, concrete results of joint initiatives as basis for restructuring and strengthening DMNs

Project overview



ADB Grant G0599-LAO

Grant Amount:	USD 47,000,000
Grant Effectiveness:	25 December 2018
Physical Completion Date:	31 December 2024
Grant Closing Date:	30 June 2025

Weighted Progress, Contract Awards and Disbursement as of 30 June 2021



Elapsed Grant Period: 30 months/72 months (41.7%)
 Overall Weighted Progress: 34.47%
 Output 1 30.6%
 Output 2 38.1%
 Output 3 23.7%
 Project Management 68.6%

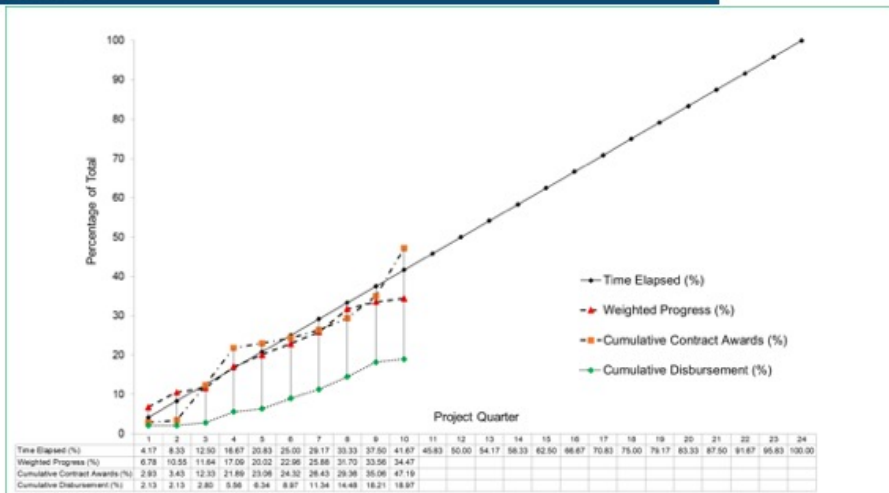
Cumulative Contract Awards: \$22.18 mln (47.2%)

Cumulative Disbursement: \$8.92 mln (19.0%)

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ໄລຍະ 2

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Weighted Progress, Contract Awards and Disbursement against Elapsed Time as of 30 June 2021



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G0599 Progress on DMF indicators



Outcome: Tourism competitiveness of secondary towns increased

Indicator	Baseline (2016)	Target (by 2025)	Progress to date (as of 31 Dec 2020)
a. Lao PDR's share of ASEAN international visitor arrivals increased	3.7%	3.8%	2017: 3.1% 2018: 3.1% 2019: 3.3% 2020: ASEAN data not yet published
b. Annual international visitor arrivals in project areas increased	820,100	1,263,100	2017: no data 2018: 1,210,800 2019: 1,260,000 2020: 289,661 (Covid affected)
c. Aggregate annual visitor expenditure in project areas increased	\$363.9 mln	\$589.0 mln	2017: no data 2018: \$385.5 mln 2019: \$474.3 mln 2020: data not yet available, but likely not over \$100mln (TBC – Covid affected)
d. Women comprise at least 55% of tourism workers in project areas	50%	55%	Statistics on the tourism industry workforce is collected periodically.

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Output 1: Urban-Rural Access Infrastructure and Urban Environmental Services Improved.



Output 1 will upgrade transport infrastructure and improve environmental conditions at tourist destinations to boost tourist arrivals and receipts and catalyze additional private investment in accommodations and other tourism-related enterprises.

It includes the following seven infrastructure subprojects, which packaged into five works packages, as follows:

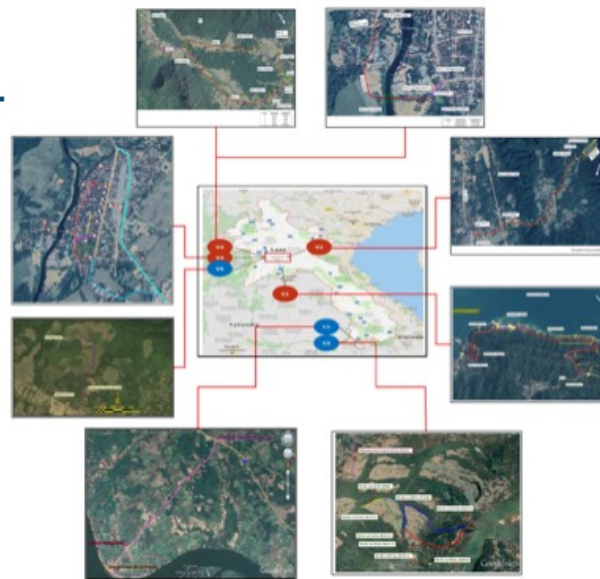
- **Works Package: TIIGP2-LAO-W01: Nakasang and Don Det-Don Khone Access Improvements**
 - Subproject C1: Nakasang Access Road and Port Rehabilitation
 - Subproject C2: Don Det-Don Khone Access Improvements
- **Works Package: TIIGP2-LAO-W02: Nam Ngum Reservoir Access Improvements**
 - Subproject V1: Nam Ngum Reservoir Access Improvements
- **Works Package TIIGP2-LAO-W03: Kaeng Yui Waterfall Access Improvements and Western Loop Rural Access Road and Bridge Improvements**
 - Subproject V2: Kaeng Yui Waterfall Access Improvements
 - Subproject V3: Western Loop Rural Access Road and Bridge Improvements
- **Works Package TIIGP2-LAO-W03a: Vang Vieng Urban Renewal**
 - Subproject V4: Vang Vieng Urban Renewal
- **Works Package: TIIGP2-LAO-W04: Vang Vieng Landfill Improvements**
 - Subproject V5: Vang Vieng Solid Waste Management Improvements

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MAPS

All Sub-projects



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Overall Progress Status



(No.)	(Activity)	Nakasang and Don Det - Don Khone Access Improvements (W01)	Nam Ngum Reservoir Access Improvements (W02)	Kaeng Yui Waterfall Access Improvements and Western Loop Rural Access Road and Bridge Improvements (W03)	Vang Vieng Urban Renewal (W03a)	Vang Vieng Landfill Improvements (W04)
	(Subproject)	C1: Nakasang Access Road and Port Rehabilitation C 2: Don Det-Don Khone Access Improvements	V1: Nam Ngum Reservoir Access Improvements	V2: Kaeng Yui Waterfall Access Improvements and V3: Western Loop Rural Access Road and Bridge Improvements	V4: Vang Vieng Urban Renewal	V5: Vang Vieng Landfill Improvements
1	Prepare civil works design and bidding documents	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Safeguards document approval	✓	✓	✓	→	✓
3	Complete land acquisition and resettlement Compensation	✓	→	✓	Not start yet	✓
4	Civil works procurement	✓	✓	✓	Not start yet Plan for 2021	✓
5	Implement civil works construction, supervision, and supply equipment	→ 43.9%	→ 0.5%	→ 0.0%	Not start yet Plan for 2022	→ 5.1%
6	Safeguard Monitoring	→	→	→	Not start yet	→

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TIIGP2-LAO-W01: Nakasang and Don Det-Don Khone Access Improvements



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TIIGP2-LAO-W01: Nakasang and Don Det-Don Khone Access Improvements



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TIIGP2-LAO-W01: Nakasang and Don Det-Don Khone Access Improvements



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V1 Proposed Map



V1 Existing Location Map

LAOS *Simply Beautiful*

ADB

- Red** temporary business zone (18 structures and 3 toilets),
- Yellow** permanent business zone (32 structures)
- Purple** expansion permanent business zone (4-6 structures)
- Blue** permanent residential zone (20 structures)
- Green** permanent MPS zone (1 parking and 1 office, 1 boat landing)

TIIGP2-LAO-W02: Nam Ngum Reservoir Access Improvements





TIIGP2-LAO-W02: Nam Ngum Reservoir Access Improvements



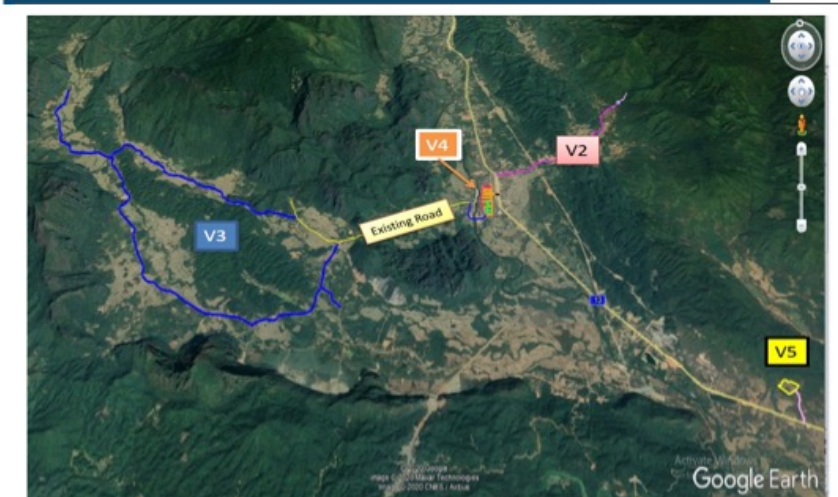
TIIGP2-LAO-W02: Nam Ngum Reservoir Access Improvements



TIIGP2-LAO-W02: Nam Ngum Reservoir Access Improvements



TIIGP2-LAO-W03: Kaeng Yui Waterfall Access Improvements and Western Loop Rural Access Road and Bridge Improvements



TIIGP2-LAO-W03: Kaeng Yui Waterfall Access Improvements and Western Loop Rural Access Road and Bridge Improvements



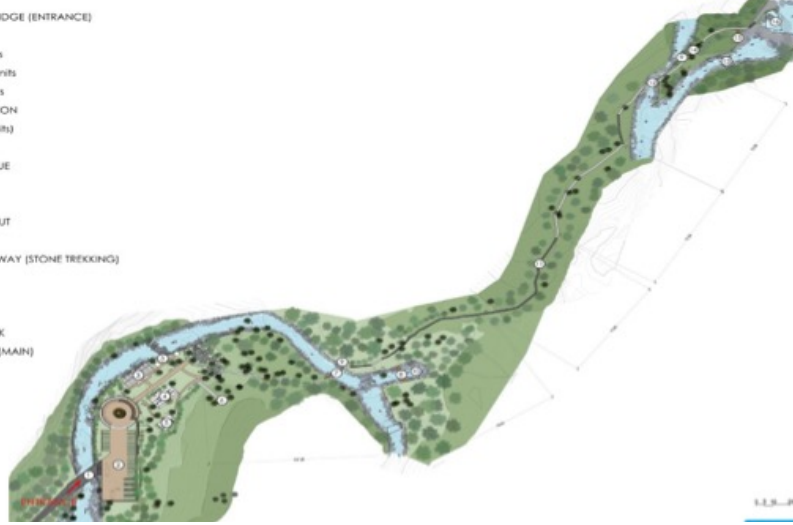
TIIGP2-LAO-W03: Kaeng Yui Waterfall Access Improvements and Western Loop Rural Access Road and Bridge Improvements



TIIGP2-LAO-W03: Kaeng Yui Waterfall Access Improvements and Western Loop Rural Access Road and Bridge Improvements

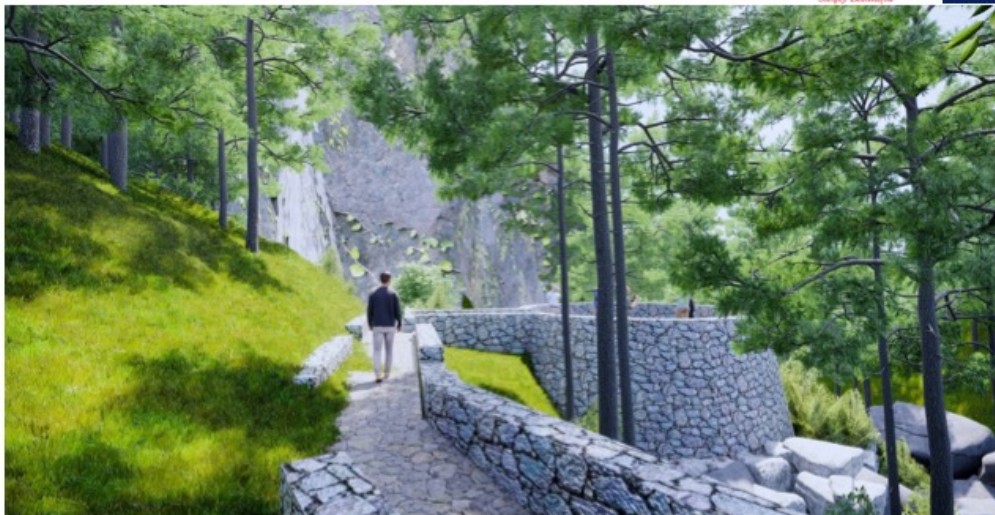


- ① SUBMERGE BRIDGE (ENTRANCE)
- ② PARKING
Car 20 Units
MINIBUS 4 Units
Bike 20 Units
- ③ DINING PAVILION
- ④ KITCHEN (4 Units)
- ⑤ TOILET
- ⑥ BUDDHA STATUE
- ⑦ BRIDGE 1
- ⑧ BRIDGE 2
- ⑨ CHANGING HUT
- ⑩ WATERFALL 1
- ⑪ FOREST WALKWAY (STONE TREKKING)
- ⑫ BRIDGE 3
- ⑬ WATERFALL 2
- ⑭ STAIR
- ⑮ VIEWING DECK
- ⑯ WATERFALL 3 (MAIN)



1:5,000

TIIGP2-LAO-W03: Kaeng Yui Waterfall Access Improvements and Western Loop Rural Access Road and Bridge Improvements



TIIGP2-LAO-W04: Vang Vieng Landfill Improvements



Output 2: Capacity to Implement ASEAN Tourism Standards Strengthened



No.	Activity	1) Homestay	2) CBT	3) Public Toilet	4) Clean Tourist City	5) Green Hotel	6) Spa Services	7) MICE	8) ASTA
ASEAN Tourism Standards									
1	Translation into Lao	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Establish Certification Bodies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3	Trainer and Assessor Training	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
4	Promotion	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
5	Implementation	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
National Tourism Standards									
1	Adapt ASEAN Tourism Standards to national context	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	→	✓	X

✓ = Completed, → = On going, X = Not Applicable

Second GMS Tourism Infrastructure for Inclusive Growth Project

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Output 3: Institutional Arrangements for Tourism Destination Management and Infrastructure O&M Strengthened



- Improve structures
- Work with key public, private sector and DPs
- Tourism Recovery Roadmap



1) DMN Institutional Strengthening

- DMPs prepared
- Used as framework for project annual workplan and DMN activities



2) DMPs Preparation

- Policy work related to re-opening the country based for tourism
- Work with other public and private sectors



3) Policy, Regulation and Master Planning Support

- Conduct market research and develop marketing plan for COVID-19 recovery



4) Destination Marketing & Promotion Support



5) Heritage Interpretation Support

- Product and service improvement based on market research
- Prepare for re-opening the country



6) Tourism-related SMEs Development



7) Establish & Maintain Internet-based Tourism Knowledge Repositories



8) Develop infrastructure O&M Plans



9) Facilitate PPP for O&M



10) Infrastructure O&M Training

Second GMS Tourism Infrastructure for Inclusive Growth Project

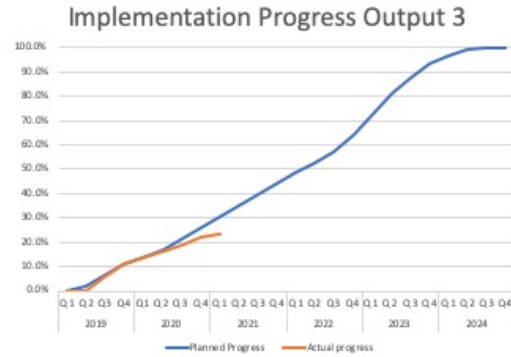
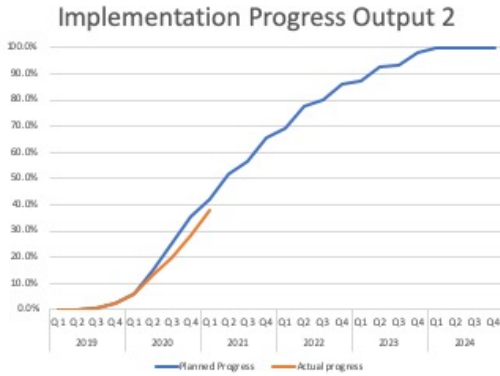
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Site Management and O&M Planning



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Output 2: Capacity to Implement ASEAN Tourism Standards Strengthened
Output 3: Institutional Arrangements for Tourism Destination Management and Infrastructure O&M Strengthened



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Thank you

Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism

GMS Tourism Infrastructure for Inclusive Growth Project

Supported by Asian Development Bank



Asian Development Bank



Mekong Tourism



GMS TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH PROJECT (TIIG)
PROGRESS REPORT
SEPTEMBER 17, 2021

Presentation outlines

- **Project basic information**
- **Project implementation progress**
- **Major Issues and Problems**



PROJECT BASIC INFORMATION

Project Cost:

Component	Appraisal Estimate		Actual	
	ADB financed	Borrower financed	ADB financed	Borrower financed
Output 1: Last Mile Tourism Access Infrastructure Improved	19.06	0.37	14.41	4.64
Output 2: Environmental Services in Cross Boarder Tourism Center Improved	19.79	0.70	11.01	2.94
Output 3: Institutional Capacity to Promote Inclusive Tourism Growth Strengthened	1.90	-	1.28	0.01
Output 4: Effective Project Implementation and Knowledge Management	6.44	0.46	5.52	1.83
Subtotal	47.19	1.53	32.22	9.42
Interest During Implementation	2.10		1.95	
Contingency	4.26		3.98	
Total	55.08		47.58	

3

PROJECT BASIC INFORMATION

Approval Date: 26 September 2014

Effectiveness Date: 30 March 2015

Initial Closing Date: 30 June 2020

Number of extension: 1

Final Closing Date: 30 June 2021

Safeguards Categorization: Environment: B;
Involuntary resettlement: B;
Indigenous peoples: B.

Executive Agencies: MCST and DCST of 5 provinces: Dien Bien, Lao Cai, Ha Tinh, Tay Ninh and Kien Giang

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4

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- According to the latest regulations on implementation of the projects using ODA funds, from 30 June 2020, in TIIG VN project ODA allocation plans are distributed directly from MPI to beneficiary provinces, not through MCST as before.
- PCU, as one of the 6 executive agencies, has received its ODA allocation plan for the contracts under MCST's responsibilities (Consulting Firm, Construction Supervision and Environmental Sampling Contracts), External Auditor contract for fiscal year 2020-2021 shall be funded by CF.
- However, not all PIUs got the required ODA allocation plan for 2021, at least up to now, namely Kien Giang and Dien Bien PIUs.

5

IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 EPIDEMIC ON THE CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES OF THE PROJECT

- As per recently spreading Covid-19 epidemic in Vietnam, our project faces many problems and difficulties:
 - + *The contractors are facing a shortage of manpower due to lockdown and social distancing and other prevention measurements. Parts of workers refuse to come to the sites, especially in the peak of Covid-19 waves in their provinces.*
 - + *Beneficiary provinces are mainly border provinces, in which stricter Covid-19 prevention measurements are applied.*
 - + *Restrictions on travelling are affecting construction activities on sites.*

6

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PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Implementation overview:

- **Number of sub-projects changed:** 01 sub-project was cancelled (Ba Den Mountain Environmental Improvement – TIIG-VIE-W04) => 8 sub-projects remained.
- **Safeguard documents:** 100% uEMP and uIEE approved; 100% EMDP approved; 100% uRP (DDRs) approved;
- **Civil Work Contracts awarded:** 8 of 8
- **Subprojects completed and handed over to exploitation:** 3
- **Subprojects to be handed over to exploitation soon:** 5

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Output 1: Improved Last Miles Tourism Access Infrastructure

Among 5 subprojects under this Output, by the date, 01 subproject (TIIG-VIE-W07 Lao Cai Cultural Exchange and Tourism Information Center) has been fully completed and handed over for exploitation at the end of May 2020.

At other 02 subprojects (TIIG-VIE-W01, TIIG-VIE-W06), construction works completed, under final stage before handing over to exploitation. 01 subproject (TIIG-VIE-W02) – is about to complete soon. At the last one - TIIG-VIE-W05A, due to unsolved land acquisition issue for some small locally land plots, small parts of works items may be kept as existing and deducted from the contract.

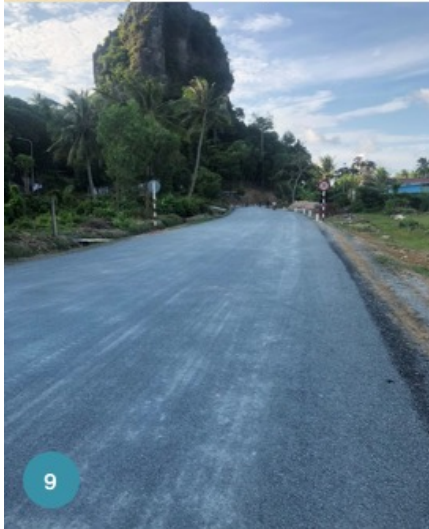
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Output 1: Improved Last Miles Tourism Access Infrastructure

1.1. Da Dung Cave Access Improvement (TIIG-VIE-W05B)

- Original contract value: USD 1.66 million
- Contract award: 29 March 2019
- Completion: 100%



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Output 1: Improved Last Miles Tourism Access Infrastructure

1.2. Lao Cai Cultural Exchange and Tourist Information Centre (TIIG-VIE-W07)

- Contract value: USD 1.69 million
- Contract award: 14 December 2018
- Completion: 100%
- Handing over to the local authorities for exploitation: 29 May 2020



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Output 1: Improved Last Miles Tourism Access Infrastructure

1.3. Ta Phin – Ban Khoang Access Road Improvement (TIIG-VIE-W02)

- Original contract value: USD 4.15 million
- Contract value with additional works approved: USD 5.4 million
- Progress to date: 95%, to be completed fully 100% approved values before 30 October 2021



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Output 1: Improved Last Miles Tourism Access Infrastructure

1.4. Muong Phang Access Road Improvement (TIIG-VIE-W01)

- Original contract value: USD 4.64 million
- Contract value with additional works approved: USD 5.74 million
- Completion: 100%, including additional works



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2

Output 1: Improved Last Mile Tourism Access Infrastructure

1.5. Dien Bien Phu Cultural Exchange And Tourist Information Center (TIIG-VIE-W06)

- Original contract value: USD 1.23 million
- Contract value with additional works approved: 1.44 USD million
- Completion: 100%



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Output 2: Environmental Services in Cross Border Tourism Centers Improved

2.1. Phu Tu Environmental Improvements (TIIG-VIE-W05A)

- Contract value: USD 5.32 million
- Completion: 95%
- Due to unsolved land acquisition issues, some works items may not be fully constructed



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**Output 2: Environmental Services
in Cross Border Tourism Centers Improved**

2.3. Huong Tich Environmental Improvement (TIIG-VIE-W03)

2.4. Nguyen Du Tourism Environmental Improvement (TIIG-VIE-W08)

2.5. Additional works at Huong Tich Environmental Improvement (TIIG-VIE-W10)

2.6. Additional works at Nguyen Du Tourism Environmental Improvement (TIIG-VIE-W11)

Construction Packages	Contract value	Contract award	Completion
Huong Tich Pagoda (W03)	USD 5.32 million	14 Aug 2018	100% 27 Aug 2020
Nguyen Du Memorial (W08)	USD 1.2 million	07 Nov 2018	100% 25 Jan 2021
Additional works at Huong Tich Pagoda (W10)	USD 59,000		100% 30 Jun 2021
Additional works at Nguyen Du Memorial (W11)	USD 66,744		100% 30 Jun 2021

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ALLOCATION AND DISBURSEMENT as of 30 August 2021

No	Item	Original Total Allocation (USD)	Total Allocation After Reallocation (USD)	Disbursed Amount (USD)	Undisbursed Amount (USD)
I ADB Fund					
1	Works	34,705,455	25,419,562	19,003,302	6,416,261
2	Equipment and cars	1,108,182	349,716	338,728	10,988
3	Consulting Services	2,491,980	2,609,680	1,955,298	654,381
4	Capacity Building and training	2,836,500	1,281,666	82,072	1,199,594
5	Recurrent Costs	2,499,600	2,562,030	1,985,680	576,349
6	Interest During Implementation	2,096,185	1,954,133	0	1,954,133
7	Contingency	4,263,229	3,982,800	0	3,982,800
	Total ADB Fund	50,001,131	38,159,586	23,365,080	14,794,507
II Counterpart Fund					
1	Consulting Services		1,072,599	1,045,492	27,107
2	Resettlement	1,076,909	4,866,836	3,766,375	1,100,461
3	Recurrent Costs	420,000	720,146	586,730	133,416
4	Duties and taxes (civil works and equipment)	3,581,364	2,758,661	2,742,196	16,464
18	Total Counterpart Fund	5,078,273	9,418,242	7,095,301	1,250,341
	TOTAL PROJECT	55,079,404	47,577,828	30,460,381	16,044,848



ISSUES AND LESSONS LEARNED

1. ODA Allocation to the Provinces

ODA allocation has been cumbersome, never receiving approval of the plans in most years before March/April. In 2015 it came as late as in December, while in 2016 there even was none. Exacerbated by a procedural change in which PIUs received approval from the PCC rather than MCST. This constrained actual time for project implementation and impacted Consultant's in- and output of activities proposed.

2. Natural Disasters, including Covid-19 pandemic and Climate Change

Implementation procedures have been badly affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2020 and 2021 by government's restricting measures (lock downs, social distancing), as well as increasingly by storms, leading to seriously flooding and landslides ascribe to climate change, some coinciding with the pandemic.

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3. Land clearance and resettlement compensation

Risks initially accrued since progress of quite a few of the infrastructure sub-projects were slowed down by nagging issues of land clearance and resettlement compensation, which harked back, to substantial delays in preparation, approval. and implementation of approved uREMDPs. Not in the least since site clearance is a pre-requisite to the start of construction implementation, in accordance with government and ADB policies. Notwithstanding most major issues being settled in the 2nd quarter of 2020 upon appropriate consultation of PIUs, LFDCs, CARBs, relevant communities and AHs, a handful of protracted issues remained till the extended loan closing date. This especially regards the access road sub projects in Lao Cai and Dien Bien and Kien Giang's subprojects, effecting the pace of construction in earnest.

4. PCU's and PIU's organizational embedding and roles

The roles of the PCU and PIUs in the project are well described in the PAM, but the perceived lines of command work better on paper than the actual lines of command in practice. The predominantly advisory and coordinating role of the PCU has hampered authoritarian action, if necessary. Exacerbated by these were often of higher rank than those of the PCU.

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Q & A

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**Thank you for your attention
and
have a nice day !**

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Cambodia



China



Laos



Myanmar



Thailand



Vietnam