

## **Siem Reap Declaration on Mekong Tourism**

We, the representatives of National Tourism Organizations of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and Yunnan Province, China, meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia, during the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the GMS Tourism Working Group on March 25, 2005, hereby sign this Declaration on Mekong Tourism to express the following undertakings in principle:

1. The Tourism Working Group has agreed to adopt in principle the draft Greater Mekong Subregion Tourism Sector Strategy objective of developing and promoting the Greater Mekong Subregion as a single destination, offering a diversity of good quality and high-yielding subregional products that help to distribute the benefits of tourism more widely; add to the tourism development efforts of each GMS country; and contribute to the Millennium Development Goals of poverty reduction and sustainable development.
2. To implement the Greater Mekong Subregion Tourism Sector Strategy through seven key programmes: (i) marketing and product development; (ii) tourism-related infrastructure development in priority zones; (iii) human resource development; (iv) cultural and natural heritage conservation management and management of adverse social impacts; (v) pro-poor tourism and the equitable distribution of tourism benefits; (vi) private sector participation; and (vii) facilitation of the movement of tourists to and within the GMS. The programmes will be implemented through 25 agreed strategic projects for which country commitments to lead these have been obtained on 25 projects as set out in Annex 1 attached hereto.
3. The Tourism Working Group shall meet at least once every year. To ensure that urgent matters involving policy and strategy implementation can be addressed with dispatch, attendance at the Tourism Working Group Meetings shall be at a high-level i.e. at Director General, Vice-Minister, Vice-Chairman, NTO, or its equivalent rank.
4. A new Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO) will be established to assist the TWG in the implementation of the strategy and the raising of funds from the private sector and development partners to support it. The MTCO will initially be based in Bangkok and could be moved to other GMS countries at a later stage. The estimated contribution towards the cost of maintaining the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO) (including the recruitment of a full time Executive

Director) is \$US 90,000 per annum and we commit<sup>1</sup> to provide an amount of \$US 15,000 per country towards its operational costs covering the period 1 January to 31 December 2006, to be paid by 31 December 2005. Subsequent contributions shall be based on a formula to be worked out by the Executive Director and approved by the TWG

5. It is understood that this agreement will be subject to the approval of the relevant higher authorities in the governments of the six GMS countries.

**Signed on March 25, 2005, at the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the GMS TWG, Siem Reap, Cambodia.**

**H.E Mr. Kousoum Saroeuth  
Director General of Tourism  
Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia**

**Mr. Vang Rattanavong  
Vice Chairman  
Lao National Tourism  
Administration**

**Daw Nyunt Nyunt Than  
Ministry of Hotels and Tourism,  
Myanmar  
Director  
Directorate of Hotels and Tourism**

**H.E. Mr. Sakthip Krairiksh  
Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Tourism and  
Sports, Thailand**

**Mr. Tran Thi Phuong Nhung  
Official, International Cooperation Dept.  
Vietnam National Tourism Administration**

**Mr. Yuan Guangan  
Deputy Director  
Yunnan Provincial Tourism  
Administration, PRC**

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<sup>1</sup> The representative from Vietnam indicated that although she supported the Declaration in principle, she would need to obtain the approval of her higher authorities.

ANNEX 1

LIST OF GMS STRATEGIC PROJECTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Project #	Name of Project	Interested Participating Country	Lead Country	Development Partner Interest
1	Marketing And Product Development	All GMS Through MTO	All GMS Countries	Private Sector
2	GMS Tourism Transportation Study	Cambodia/Lao PDR/Vietnam	No Leader	
3	Middle Level Public Sector Officials Capacity Building	Cambodia/Myanmar/Yunnan PRC /Lao PDR/Vietnam/ Thailand	Cambodia	NZAID, SNV, ESCAP
4	Hospitality Trainer Capacity Development	Cambodia/Myanmar/Yunnan/Lao/Thailand/Vietnam	Cambodia	French Government, SNV, ESCAP
5	Top Senior Level NTO Technical Personnel Capacity Building	Cambodia/Myanmar/Yunnan PRC /Lao/ Thailand/Vietnam	Cambodia	NZAID, SNV, ESCAP
6	Capacity Development For Academic Institutions	Cambodia/Yunnan PRC /Lao PDR/Vietnam	Cambodia	SNV, ESCAP
7	Saving Cultures, Saving Lives	Cambodia/Lao PDR/Vietnam	Cambodia	NZAID, UNESCO
8	Preserving The Soul Of The Ancestors	Cambodia/Lao PDR/Vietnam	Cambodia	NZAID, UNESCO
9	Heritage Site Managers Capacity Building	Cambodia/Myanmar/Thailand/Lao PDR/Vietnam	Thailand	NZAID, SNV, WTO, PATA
10	Creating Ecological Corridors	Lao PDR/Vietnam/Cambodia/Yunnan PRC	Lao PDR	SNV
11	Linking The Ancient Monumental Heritage Of GMS	Cambodia/Lao PDR/Vietnam	Cambodia	French Government
12	GMS Wide Visa For Non-ASEAN Nationals	Thailand/Yunnan PRC/Cambodia	No Leader	
13	Pro Poor Tourism Poverty Alleviation Pilot Project.	Cambodia/Lao PDR/Myanmar/Thailand /Vietnam/Yunnan PRC	Cambodia/Lao PDR/Thailand/Vietnam	NZAID, SNV
14	Promoting Tourism Related SME Development And Investment.	Cambodia/Thailand/Yunnan PRC/Lao PDR/Vietnam	Cambodia	SNV
15	Improving Facilities and Processing At Land Border Checkpoints	Vietnam/Yunnan PRC /Lao PDR/Cambodia	Vietnam	
16	Mekong River Corridor (Endless Stream of Cooperation)	Lao PDR/Thailand/Vietnam/Cambodia/Yunnan PRC	Thailand	
17	Golden Quadrangle	Myanmar/Yunnan PRC/Lao PDR/Thailand	Yunnan, PRC	
18	East-West Economic Corridor	Lao PDR/Vietnam	Lao PDR	SNV
19	Emerald Triangle	Thailand/Lao PDR/Cambodia	Thailand	WTO, UNDP

20	Southern Economic Corridor	Vietnam/Cambodia/ Thailand	Vietnam/Cambodia	
21	The Green Triangle (CLV Development Triangle)	Cambodia/Lao PDR/Vietnam	Cambodia/Vietnam	NZAID
22	Heritage Necklace Circuit	Thailand/Lao/Cambodia/Vietnam/Myanmar/Yunnan PRC	Thailand	NZAID WTO, UNDP, French Gov.t.
23	Houaphanh Northeast Lao PDR/Northwest Vietnam Tourism Zone	Lao PDR/Vietnam	Lao PDR	NZAID, SNV
24	Andaman Coast and Island	Myanmar/Thailand	Thailand	WTO, PATA
25	Tenchong/Myitkyina Tourism Development Zone	Myanmar/Yunnan PRC	Yunnan, PRC	
26.	Red River Valley Corridor	Vietnam/Yunnan PRC	Vietnam	
27	Training of Guides at Heritage Sites	Lao/Yunnan PRC /Thailand/Vietnam/Cambodia	Lao PDR	NZAID, SNV, UNESCO