An Overview of the Ecotourism Sector in Lao PDR

Presented by:
Thatpanya MANIVONG
Tourism Development Department
Lao Ecotourism Resources

- National Protected area system (22 sites)
- World Heritage Sites (Luang Prabang, Vat phou)
- Plain of Jars world Heritage nomination in preparation
- Traditional culture, Indigenous Knowledge and ethnic minorities
- Handicrafts and local products
- Wildlife
- The Mekong and its tributaries
- Mountains, caves and plate
Lao Tourism Trends

- Over 1 million arrivals in 2005
- More than half of arrivals are coming for culture and nature based activities
- Growing ASEAN and long-haul markets
- Laos is now more connected to the GMS by air and road links than any time in history
Lao Tourism Strategies and Plans

- National Tourism Strategy and action plan has been updated and is under the government approval process.
- National Ecotourism Strategy and Action Plan drafted in 2005. Some key objectives identified under the Strategies include:
  - Service quality upgrades, tourism education and training.
  - Product diversification based on Laos' unique cultural and natural attractions.
Lao Tourism Strategies and Plans

- Equity considerations and spreading benefits to remote communities
- Promotion of Laos and Laos products to the global marketplace
- Emphasizes regional and international cooperation
Major Recent Infrastructure Investments

- Upgrades to airports in Vientiane, Luang Namtha, Luang prabang and pakse
- Routes 8, 9 and 12 linking Lao PDR, Viet Nam and Thailand
- Route R-3 North – South economic linking Yunnan to N. Thailand via Luang Namtha and Bokeo provinces
- Route 7 linking N. Viet Nam
- Route 18B linking S. Laos and Central part of Viet Nam
Major Recent Infrastructure Investments

- five Mekong Bridge under construction in Borkeo
- Nam Heuang bridge from loei to Xayabouli
- New road to Konglor Cave in Khammouane
- New road to Kuangsi waterfall in luang Prabang
Lao PDR is in 3 GMS Economic Corridors

- **North-South:** Yunnan, PR China - Laos - to N. Thailand
- **East – West:** Thailand - Laos - Vient Nam
- **Southern:** Thailand – Laos – Viet Nam
Main Ecotourism Development Partners

- ADB in Luang Namtha, Luang Prabang, Khammouane, Savannket, Champasak.
- SNV In Vientiane, Houaphanh, Luang prabang, Khammouane and Savannket
- DED in Bolikhamxay, Oudamxay and Xieng khouang
- JICA in Sanannakhet
- EU in Luang Namtha and Lunang Prabang,
Main Ecotourism Development Partners

- WCS in Luang Namtha and Houaphanh
- GTZ in Muang sing
- NZ in Bolikhamxay, Xieng Khouang, Khammouane and Luang Namtha
Featured Tours Products

- Trekking in the North
- Mekong River Cruises in Luang Prabang and Pakse
  - Heritage Tours in Luang Prabang, Xieng Khouang/ plain of Jars and Vat Phou/ Champasak
  - Houaphanh Province and Viengxay cave Complex
  - Caves in Khammouane
  - Eco-tours in National Protected Areas
Featured Tours Products

- Kayaking, rafting, biking, caves,
- birding, wildlife, camping, trekking,
- weaving and special interest tours
Marketing & Promotion

• Mainly targeting international long-haul market
• Now promoting more heavily to the regional market
• Publication and maintenance of www.ecotourismlaos.com website
• Familiarization tours with media, tour companies, universities
• Print advertisements in travel magazines
Marketing & Promotion

- Printing and distribution of brochures, maps, guidebooks, calendars, etc.
- Construction and operation of visitor information centers
- Representation at international travel shows
- Correspondence with guidebook writers
- Trial tours
- 2007 Lao Ecotourism Forum
Training Manuals
Training & Workshops
Marketing & Promotion

Lao Ecotourism Forum
“Bridging the Mekong Region”

July 26-29, 2007
Vientiane, Lao PDR

www.ecotourismlaos.com
Marketing & Promotion

The Elephant Festival
February 17th-18th 2007
Hongsan Sayaboury Province, Laos
Marketing & Promotion
Marketing & Promotion

VISIT LAOS

Trekking in Luang Prabang
Province

LONG LAO to
KHUANG SI

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Level of Difficulty & Safety
Moderate-Difficult: Steep climbs make this trail challenging. Trekkers must be in good physical shape.

What to Bring
One change of clothes, good shoes, sandals, a lanyard for bathing (for women), mosquito repellent, flashlight, hat or sun screen, camera and money to buy handicrafts.

Village meal
A typical meal includes chicken, soap, sticky rice, vegetables and rice. Vegetarian food is available upon request.

Do’s and Don’ts for cultural sensitivity
- Please dress modestly and wear shirts that cover the shoulders and pants that cover your knees. Skirts with a low neck line are not appropriate.
- Please respect local traditions when visiting a village. Do not touch anything that may have religious significance such as Buddha statues, altars or burial grounds. Please take off your hat and shoes when entering temples.
- Please ask people before taking photographs.
- Please do not give money to children as this encourages begging.
- Please respect the environment. Do not litter. Please do not buy wildlife or wildlife products.
- Please support local producers by buying new handicrafts. Do not buy antique or family heirlooms.
- Please avoid drugs. Drug tourism does damage and sets a bad example for Laotian youth.

CHOMPHEMET
2 DAY TREK

www.tourismlaos.gov.la
www.ecotourismlaosi.com
Gender & Tourism Strategy
LNTA-ADB Mekong Tourism Development Project in Lao PDR

Village Open Museum in Long Lao

Clean Water Wells

Signage on Vat Phou Heritage Trail

Toilets and Sanitation at Major Sites
Champasak Visitor Center

Khammouane Visitor Center

Luang Namtha Visitor Center

Visitor Center - Khoun Kham, Khammouane
LNTA-ADB Mekong Tourism Development Project in Lao PDR

LNTA-GMS Tourist Information Center in Vientiane
Visitor Center – Muang Sing, Luang Namtha
Elephant Camp – Kiet Ngong Village, Champasak
Tree Planting - Elephant Camp, Kiet Ngong Village, Champasak
Nam Dee Waterfall Improvements – Nam Dee Village, Luang Namtha
Kalorm Cultural Center - Luang Namtha
Night Market in Luang Namtha
Handicraft Market – Sapai Village, Champasak
Village Guesthouse & Restaurant – Don Daeng Island, Champasak
Accommodation

- Wide range of accommodation from family guesthouses to 5-star hotels in Vientiane and Luang prabang
- Over 4,891 room in Vientiane
- Over 1,722 room in Luang prabang
- Over 1,616 room in Pakse
- Featured to day are some exceptional ecologies, guesthouse and fine hotels in major tourism centers
Border Facilities

- ASEAN visa exemptions
- 30-day visa-on-arrival soon to be available, US$ 30, Most nationalities
- 30 day advance tourist visa US$ 7-25
- Visa extension US$ 1 per day
- Visa-on arrival available at international border checkpoints in Vientiane, Luang Prabang, Savannakhet, Bokeo, Luang Namtha, Champasak, Bolikhamxay, Xieng Khouang and Khammouane
Border Facilities

- Border-pass available for neighboring countries
- Friendship bridge now open from 6.00 am to 10.00 pm
- Other checkpoints open 8 am – 6 pm
- International border check point 23
Doing business in Lao PDR

- Is better than ever
- New Tourism law permits foreign ownership in tour companies
- Tax incentives for developing accommodation facilities in remote areas
- Lao government actively promotes foreign investment in large hotels and international partnerships in smaller boutique properties
Thank You