



News Release

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Cambodia's Tourism Gets Boost from Regional Stakeholders, ADB

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA (29 August 2008) – Regional stakeholders in Cambodia's tourism industry have agreed in principle to work closely together to ensure that the country's famous temples, such as Angkor Wat, as well as its beaches, mountains and other natural attractions, are protected.

Policy makers from the Tourism, Environment, Planning, and Land Use ministries met with their counterparts from other Greater Mekong Subregion countries, as well as consultants from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), in Phnom Penh last Thursday to discuss the course of action to improve tourism in the country.

As a result of the discussions — at which a draft framework for tourism development was presented — stakeholders agreed on the need to work in tandem to develop the industry.

"As tourism continues to play an important role in the development of Cambodia, it is essential to secure a framework that allows for dialogue across the instrumental sectors of tourism, environment and the private sector. I am very encouraged to see that steps are being taken to further strengthen this collaboration," said Arjun Goswami, ADB's Country Director for Cambodia Resident Mission.

Tourism is one of the leading contributors to Cambodia's economy. Increasing numbers of visitors are looking beyond the country's temples to explore natural attractions such as beaches and national parks. However, Cambodia's growing popularity as a tourist destination comes with the danger of over-development and damage to the environment.

Preserving the environment and growing eco-tourism will be critical to the industry's future, Cambodia's Tourism Minister Thong Khon said.

"Today, tourism delivers a substantial contribution towards Cambodia's achievement of the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals. In the future, eco-tourism is an area that will be further developed and it is pivotal that all stakeholders understand the important link (of tourism) to the environment," he said.

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