Workshop on National Wetlands Planning

Relationship Between Eco-tourism and Wetlands in the Kingdom of Cambodia

by Mr. Ouk Siphan

I. Introduction

At the end of this decade tourism has identified it is the most advantageous industry in the world. Years ago the universal tourism has greeted tourism more than 625 millions with generating income about US$ 445,000 millions which has increased 2% of annual revenue. Based on this development, in the region of East Asia and the Pacific have greeted tourism more than 100 millions in the forthcoming year of 2000. This region will become a splendid place of tourists arrival in the world.

In particular, in 1999 the ten ASEAN countries have increased 3,053 millions of the tourist number. This number has increased 4% if compare with the year of 1998 which generated 26,037 millions income is equivalent 4.4% of national capital and equivalent to 9.1% of the exportation income.

According to this figure has doubly demonstrated, if compare with the annual average enhancement of the world and will affect this region is the most developed of tourism. It is assumed that in the upcoming year of 2000 will increase 3,207 millions the number of tourists in this region which is equivalent 5% of increase rate will further till the year the 2001, in particular this rate will increase up to 7% in the year 2002 and the number will increase 3, 657 millions and the revenue will be US$ 31,161 millions.

Cambodia possesses an excellent opportunity to develop its tourism sector, which can eventually contribute as an important catalyst to the redevelopment of its social-economic. Endowed with vast tourism assets that are historical, cultural and it natural it provides attraction to both domestic and international tourist a like.

II. Tourism situation

2.1. Geographic characteristics

Cambodia situation in South east Asia between 8 and 12 degrees latitude North of the equator and 102 and 108 decrees east longitude. The country occupies about 181,035 square kilometers including lakes and rivers. Cambodia shares its 2,428 kilometers land border with Thailand on the Northwest, Laos on the north east and Vietnam on the east and South. On the Southwest, the coastline intends for 435 kilometers along the Gulf of Siam.

Cambodia's central position in the South east Asian region is of great advantage for tourism development. The country's proximity to other South east Asia countries, several of which already have well developed tourism sectors and excellent international air access provides the opportunity for tourists visiting the region to include Cambodia on their tours.

The central three-quarters of the country are comprised of the central about 10 to 30 meters above see level. The central plains are surrounded on three sides, on the borders with Thailand, Laos and land of Vietnam, by the more forested and sparsely populated highlands and mountains. Deforestation in some area is of increasing environmental tourism, The forested highland and mountains, some of which have been designated as national Parks and wildlife sanctuaries, provide the basic for natural tourism.

The Mekong river enters the country from Laos in the North, and flows through the east-central part of the country to the Vietnam in the South, the Mekong devises at Phnom Penh, forming the Tonle Bassac branch of the Mekong which also flows South to the Mekong delta.
The other major River in the country is the Tonle Sap which flows from Tonle Sap lake South to join the Mekong at Phnom Penh. Phnom Penh's position at the junction to the Mekong, Sap and Bassac River is a strategic one for navigational and trade purposes and port facilities are developed on the Tonle Sap in Phnom Penh.

The largest freshwater in Southeast Asia, is part of a unique wetland ecosystem of national Socio-economic important, as well as regional and global biodiversity significance. The fish resources of the lake are a significant natural resource for the country, both in terms of the natural economy and for subsistence fisheries for the local population. The wetlands surrounding lake are of much interest to tourists.

The coastline of Cambodia contains numerous bays and beaches. There are several offshore island belonging to Cambodia. These are forested and also possess many bays and beaches. The coastal areas and islands provide the basic for developing beach and marine tourism.

The climate of Cambodia is tropical monsoon which is typically hot and humid. The average temperature an meat temperature is 27 degrees C with a maximum average of 35 degrees C in April and minimum average of 19 degrees C in December. Average an meat precipitation varies from 2000 to 4000mm. The rainy season is from about June to October and the dry season from about November to May. Climate seasonally somewhat affects the sensuality of tourists arrivals with fewer tourists coming during the rainy season. Sunny days prevail during the dry season, however, even during the rainy season, there are many days and parts of days that have sunshine.

2.2. Current Tourism Policy

The political platform of the Royal Government is to encourage developing tourism is cultural and natural tourism. Cambodia's tourism industry is recognized to have a great potential to the country's economic development. Its efforts to promote such tourism have been seen though advocating the security and political stability in order to make the tourism domain become a vital currency income of the national economy. The main tourism policy of Cambodia is to promote the maintenance of the cultural heritage of the nation including the natural environment.

The Royal Government will advocate private and public investment in the aim of rehabilitate tourism infrastructure. New tourism infrastructure in Cambodia.

** Siem Reap

1. International Airport New passenger Terminal prefabricated and to be completed at the end of 2000 and upgrade the old Passenger Terminal to the International Standard (ADB)
2. Road from Siem Reap Airport to Roluos (17 km), Japan Aid.
3. Road from Siem Reap town to Angkor Wat (WB). To start last quarter of 2000.
4. Road inside Angkor Wat complex. Budget from government, feasibility study stage.
5. Power supply
   - 10 MW (Japan) to start end of 2000
   - Plan to buy from Thailand (EGGAT Company)
6. Water supply, Government is working on it.
7. Port Phnom Penh Krom, has not started yet.

** Sihanouk Ville

1. Need new airport, upgrade it to international standard (includes runway 2400m and passenger terminal).
2. Port to begin construction end of 2001 (USD 40 millions loan from Japan)
3. Power supply, 90 MW (Japan) to be completed in 2003 and possible GAS supply project to follow (Japan).
4. Water supply, USD 10 millions from (WB), feasibility study stage.
5. Needs investors for coastal zone management.
**East-West Overland Corridor:**

Road Phnom Penh Hochiminh city (ADB) under construction Performance of Cambodia's tourism industry

1. Hotel in Siem Reap as first Semester 2000. There are 113 Hotel in operation, total rooms 5,841, beds 9,459.
2. Hotel in Siem Reap as first Semester 2000. There are 32 Hotel in operation and 54 Guesthouses, total rooms 1,400, beds 2,527.
3. Hotel in Sihanouk Ville as of first Semester 2000. There are 36 Hotel in operation, total rooms 982, beds 1,768.
4. Other provinces. There are 48 Hotel in operation, total rooms 1,317, beds 1,891.
5. Total Hotels 229, rooms 9,540, beds 15,645.

Tourism and tourism infrastructure developments planned for the next 3 years

- **Airports:**
  1. Pochentong Airport, upgrade passenger Terminal, VIP room, add two Air Bridges, Phase I to be completed in June 2001.
  2. Siem Reap Airport, upgrade terminal to international standard.
  3. Need investor for Sihanouk Ville Airport.
  4. Need investors for local Airports (Koh Kong and Rattanakiri)

- **Access:**
  1. Poipet - Siem Reap
  2. Phnom Penh - Siem Reap
  3. Phnom Penh - Hochiminh City
  4. O'smach - Siem Reap
  5. National road No 57 from Koh Kong to National road No 4

- **Tourism Ports:**
  1. Phnom Penh
  2. Phnom Krom
  3. Sihanouk Ville

- **Railway**
  1. Phnom Penh - Sihanouk Ville
  2. Phnom Penh - Battambang - Poipet

Both lines include a tourist transportation wagon.

- **IMPROVE SERVICE**
  1. Hotel accommodations
  2. Restaurants
  3. Tour guides
  4. Transportation

Need to upgrade all services to international standard.

- **HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**
  1. Marketing strategy and management
  2. Train the trainers in tourism development and management
  3. Train the trainers in hospitality training program
  4. Sustainable tourism development
  5. Statistic and computer management

- **LAW ADN REGULATION:** Final draft in process
PREPARATIONS FOR ATF : MOT will most ATF 2003
MOT’S OVERALL TOURISM MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR CAMBODIA.

1. Joint promotion with Asean
2. MOT wants bilateral cooperation with Singapore for 2001 (cruise ships)
3. MOT wants to sign agreements with South Korea, Japan, Australia and all member countries of Asean.
4. International promotion: trip the U.S next year
5. Sill air direct flight to PNH - SRP - PNH - SIN
6. 5 stars hotel in:
   1. Phnom Penh- Intercontinental and raffles (Le royal)
   2. Siem Reap- Raffles (Grand hotel Dängkor), Sofitel Royal Angkor, Imperial Angkor to begin construction 2000
7. Sihanouk Ville need investors for:
   1. Hotel of international standard
   2. New Airport
   3. Restaurants of international standard
   4. Opportunities for Island resorts

2.3. NUMBER OF TOURIST ARRIVALS FROM 1995/2000 (JAN-JUNE) AND FORECASTS
Number of visitor arrivals to Cambodia by continents between 1995-2000 (Jan-June) are dictated in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Asia &amp; Pacific</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Americas</th>
<th>Africa &amp; Middle East</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>156,978</td>
<td>37,907</td>
<td>21,538</td>
<td>3,257</td>
<td>219,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>178,015</td>
<td>53,761</td>
<td>27,812</td>
<td>901</td>
<td>260,489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>150,205</td>
<td>43,331</td>
<td>24,561</td>
<td>746</td>
<td>218,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>107,421</td>
<td>46,165</td>
<td>21,773</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>186,333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>137,054</td>
<td>60,031</td>
<td>36,233</td>
<td>1,064</td>
<td>262,907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 (Jan-Jun)</td>
<td>78,095</td>
<td>32,963</td>
<td>20,760</td>
<td>35,102</td>
<td>166,920</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although there was a serious decreased of 16% in tourist arrivals in 1997 and 15% in 1998, Cambodia was still able to attract and maintain an average of 30% increased per year in tourist arrivals between 1995 to 1997. The international tourist arrivals to Cambodia by air has reached 262,907 tourists. This shows an increase of 41% from the figure of 1998.

The total number of tourist visiting Cambodia from January to June, 2000 was 166,920 tourists including 105,011 tourists, representing 58% from ASEAN countries, 50,844 tourists representing 6.3% from Asia and oceanic, and 32,963 tourists representing 20% from Europe, 20,760 tourists representing 19% from USA and 706 tourists from middle East and Africa representing 68%. The direct flights of BKK-SRP and HCM-SRP was 34,396 tourists.

The 6 month of Jan, 2000 compared with the same period in 1999 the member of tourists increased 39%.

2.4. TOURISM ASSETS
Throughout the country, presentely it is denitrified and recorder that Cambodia has 1,305 tourist sites which include:
The Kingdom of Cambodia is closely linked to wetlands, both culturally and economically. Most of the population live in wetland area, over 30% of the country is wetland. Following internationally accepted criteria for wetland identification (defined by the Ramsar convention). Over 20% (36,500 km2) of the Kingdom may be classified as wetlands of international importance. This represents over 5% of the Asia's total area of wetlands of international importance. Cambodia's internationally significant wetlands can be divided into four areas:

1. The Mekong river (468 km in length) and its floodplains
2. The great lake Tonle Sap (between 13,000km2) and its floodplains
3. The Stung Sen (C. 3,000 km2)
4. The coastal estuaries of Stung Koh Pao and Stung Kep

In addition, Cambodia has memories offer wetlands, notably steams, ponds, freshwater, swamps and marshes, mudflats and Seagram beds.

Wetland products harvested by local communities include flood (fish, water birds, edible plants, animal), medicine, water and fuel wood.

Wetland areas support rice and fish producing other economic activities utilizing wetlands resources include aquaculture, tourism, inland transport, and energy (hydro-electricity)

Wetlands serve a wide variety of ecological function which support economic activities or are of economic value. Cambodia has many attractions for developing tourism.

**NATURAL FEATURES : 23 AREAS EQUAL 3,273,200HA**

**A. NATIONAL PARKS :** 7 areas equal 742,250ha

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Kirirom</td>
<td>253,750 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Phnom Bokor</td>
<td>140,000 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Kep</td>
<td>5,000 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Ream</td>
<td>21,000 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Botum Sakor</td>
<td>171,250 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Phnom Koulen</td>
<td>37,500 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Virachey</td>
<td>332,500 ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B. WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES:** 10 areas equal 2,030,000 ha

Natural areas where nationally significant species of flora and fauna, natural, communities or physical features require specific intervention for their perpetuation. The following sanctuaries are designated:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Aural</td>
<td>253,750 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Peam Krasop</td>
<td>23,750 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Phnom Samkos</td>
<td>333,750 ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C: PROTECTED LANDSCAPES: 3 areas, equal 97,000ha
(Related to historic and archaeological sites). Nationally significant natural and semi-natural landscapes which must be maintained to provide opportunities for recreation and tourism are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Area Name</th>
<th>Area Size</th>
<th>Province</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Roniem Daun Sam</td>
<td>178,750 ha</td>
<td>Battabang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Koulen Promtep</td>
<td>402,500 ha</td>
<td>Siem Reap, Preah Vihear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Boeung Per</td>
<td>242,500 ha</td>
<td>Kampong Thom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Lumphat</td>
<td>250,000 ha</td>
<td>Rattanakiri, Mondulkiri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Phnom Prich</td>
<td>222,5000 ha</td>
<td>Mondulkiri, Kratie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Phnom Namllyr</td>
<td>47,5000 ha</td>
<td>Mondulkiri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Snoul</td>
<td>75,000 ha</td>
<td>Kratie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. MULTIPLE USE MANAGEMENT AREAS: 3 areas, equal 403,950 ha
(Related to ecosystems). Areas which for sustainable use of water resources, timber, wildlife, fish pasture and recreation with the conservation of nature primarily oriented to support these economic activities. They include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Area Name</th>
<th>Area Size</th>
<th>Province</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Ankor</td>
<td>10,800 ha</td>
<td>Siem Reap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Bateay Chhmar</td>
<td>81,200 ha</td>
<td>Bateay Meanchey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Preah Vihear</td>
<td>5,000 ha</td>
<td>Preah Vihear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Dang Peng</td>
<td>27,700 ha</td>
<td>Koh Kong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Samlot</td>
<td>60,000 ha</td>
<td>Battambang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Tonle Sap</td>
<td>316,250 ha</td>
<td>Kampong Thom, Kampong Chhnag, Siem Reap, Pursat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5. MAIN PLACES OF ATTRACTION CAMBODIA
1. Phnom Penh and its surroundings
2. Siem Reap (small and big circuits, outside circuits, ...)
3. Kampong Thom (sambo prey kuk, ...)
4. Preah Vihear (temle, koh ker, preah khan, mlou prey prehisorical station)
5. Rattanakiri, Mobdulkiri (eco-tourism)
6. Stung Treng and Kratie (mekong dolphins river, ramsar site, ...)
7. Sihanouk Ville (pristine beaches, islands, natural parks, ...)
8. Tonle Sap (floating villages, bird habitat, biodiversity, ...)
9. Kam pot (bokor, tuck chhou, caves, ...)
10. Mekong river
11. Other provinces

III. Eco-tourism and wetlands in the kingdom of Cambodia
A. CAMBODIA ECO-TOUR

1. CONCEPT OF ECO-TOURISM
The definition and meaning of eco-tourism are various, however, has concluded that "eco-tourism" is tourism in natural areas, based on the knowledge about and responsibility for the ecological system of area as well as the management of eco-tourism.
2. DEFINITION
Eco-tourism is the responsible tourism in an identify natural areas including any cultural and historical component related to the ecosystem, which geared to raise the ecological and environmental awareness of related units by mean of joined learning process and the community participatory under sustainable tourism and environmentally managed.

3. MAJOR COMPONENTS OF ECO-TOURISM
The can be discussed in terms of tourism area, tourism activities, concerned persons and management system as follows:
Area : Eco-tourism takes place in natural tourism activities, have endemic characteristics, including cultural and historical resonates that closely connected to the ecosystem in the areas. These components can be called natural-based tourism.
Activities and processes : Eco-tourism provides an opportunity for learning about the environmental condition and ecosystem functioning of the tourism resources area. This results in increased knowledge, experience, appreciation and deeper awareness by tourists, local people and concerned entrepreneurs of the need to promote conservation values. This can be referred as environmental education based tourism.
Management system : Eco-tourism involves responsible travel that has no or low impact on the environment and society. The management system is comprehensive and addresses issues of resource conservation, environmental management, pollution control and disposal, and the control of tourism development. This can be called sustainable managed tourism.

4. PARTICIPATION
Eco-tourism emphasizes the involvement of local communities, including local government, in the organization and for management of eco-tourism programs so that they might directly benefit from them.
The benefit include in come generation, the enhancement of the people quality of life and economic returns that can be used in maintaining and managing tourism resources. Finally, the local community would participate in supervising the tourism development of the tourism development of the areas and ensuring that is was appropriate. This can be referred to as community participation based tourism.
From the above 4 major components of eco-tourism, the definition of eco-tourists derives as a group of tourists who demand for activities that enhance new intellectual experiences from learning with awareness of conservation of natural resources.

5. ECO-TOURISM SITUATION IN CAMBODIA
Cambodia with diversity of its unique cultures and various forms of natural attraction can be claimed as a high potential for tourism

A. ECO-TOURISM POTENTIAL : The potential of eco-tourism in Cambodia's protected areas suggests that the Angkor temple complex, has the highest tourism value followed by the national parks, the north east of the country coastal areas waterfall and geography unique areas all of which are likely to be interesting to both national and international tourists wild life in Cambodia also provides opportunities for eco-tourism service activities. The potential eco-tourists sites in Tonle Sap lake include Prek Toal, KampongKkleang, Boeung Toule Chhmar, Stoeung sen and area along the Mekong river between Kratie Provincial and Sambor district till Laos Border.

In order to protect Cambodia's natural resources environmental management should be incorporated into all tourism plans and a national programs should be established to identify and develop eco-tourism in Cambodia. Eco-tourism presents a possible a approach to wetland management. Since the success of eco-tourism project is based on environmental quality, there is a strong incentive for environmental protection. As tourism and recreation related to wetlands becomes more established, suitable management guidelines for tourism activities related to wetland areas will be needed.

B. ECO-TOURISM MARKET
TOURIST TYPES: These are defined according to the activities, which the tourists engaged in which are:
1. Intensive eco-tourism activities include nature study forest trekking, forest touring bird-watching, cave exploring, coral viewing, rafting, canoeing and camping.
2. Semi-intensive eco-tourism activities include astronomical study, mountain climbing mountain biking, safari touring and fishing.

C. ECO-TOURISM SERVICES
The significant services in eco-tourism are accommodation, food tour guide and other services, which still need to be improved and managed in a proper way.

D. NATIONAL ECO-TOURISM POLICY
The natural eco-tourism policy is a strategy policy, bases on policies, laws and other national policies such as environmental, forest management policy, sustainable tourism policy and leman development and participation policy.

E. PRIVATE SECTORS PARTICIPATION
- To promote and develop eco-tourism and adventure business systematically
- To coordinate among related governmental and private sectors involved in eco-tourism and adventure travel.

B. CAMBODIAN WETLANDS

1. INTRODUCTION
The majority of Cambodia's freshwater wetlands are found around the Tonle Sap lake and along the Mekong river and its tributaries. They comprise the Tonle Sap lake, other permanent lakes and Swamps and annually inundated flood plains. The total wetland area increases nearly ten-fold from about 0.5 millions ha in the dry season to 5 millions ha in the wet season (July to September) in an average year. The Tonle Sap along increase four-fold in area from 250,000ha (2,500hakm2) in dry season to about 1,000,000ha (10,000km2) in an average year and to about 1,350,000ha (13,500km2) in wet year. The total wetland area in an average year represents nearly 28% of the total area of the country 9181,035km2) and in a wet year it could be as high as 33%.
Many communities in Cambodia depend on wetland for their livelihood. The maintenance of wetland as functioning ecosystem is important for the conservation of wetland as it is for their development.

2. WHAT IS WETLANDS
The term wetland means different things to different people. This is partly because of the enormous variety of wetland types and partly also because it is sometimes to define their boundaries precisely.
Wetland is relatively new term in the English language, too. Around the world these are more than 50 definitions of wetlands use wetland classifications rely on biological, hydrological, soil or geomorphological characteristics.

3. DEFINITION
Wetlands may be defined as ......... Areas of marsh, fen, peat land or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static, flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water, the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six Metrecs (Ramsar convention).

4. CURRENT SITUATION
The Kingdom of Cambodia is rich in wetland environments. Over 30% of the country is wetland. Following internationally accepted criteria for wetland identification (Ramsar Convention). Over 20% (36,500km2) of the Kingdom may be classified as wetland if international importance. This represents over 5% of the Asia's total area of wetland of international importance.
- Cambodia's internationally significant wetland can be divided into 4 areas:
1. Mekong river 468km in length and its floodplain
2. The great lake Tonle Sap (between 13,000km^2 and 2,500km^2) and its floodplain.
3. The stung Sen (c. 3,000km^2)
4. Coastal estuaries of Stung Koh Pao and Stung Kep
   - In addition, Cambodia has numerous other wetland, notably streams, ponds, freshwater. Swamps and marshes, mudflats and seagrassbeds.
   - The Kingdom of Cambodia is chastely linked to wetland, both culturally and economically. Most of the population live in wetland areas for centuries. Wetland products harvests by local communities include food (fish, water birds, edible plants, animals), medicine, water and fuel wood. Wetland area support rice and production. Wetland provide nutrient-rich and sheltered habitats for adults and there fore play a central role in the supply of animal protein in Cambodia.
   - Wetland serve a wide variety of ecological function which support economic activities or rare of economic value. In addition to supporting agriculture and fisheries they play a vital role in maintaining water cycles and protecting inland area from flooding, coastal wetland act as barriers against storm surges and protect coastlines from erosion. Many wetland are important as filtering systems clearing up polluted water and removing silt, encouraging plant growth and further improving water quality. Cambodia's wetland are important sanctuaries for birds and other species of wildlife not commonly found on other country in the world.
   - Wetland are also important for research, educational purposes, tourism.
   - Cambodia's unique within southeast Asia in that retains large areas of wetland untouched by development.
   - However Cambodia's wetland are threatened by a variety of human activities including drainage for agriculture, run-off carrying pesticides and fertilizer, deforestation and forest clearing for firewood and charcoal, especially in the flooded forest, domestic water and mining activities. Although industrial pollution does not pose a problem at moment, it is expected to increase with the development of paper and textile mils, chemical factories and food processing industries. The Royal Government of Cambodia has no formal policy the management of its wetlands.

5. THE BENEFITS OF WETLANDS
Wetland are generally highly productive ecosystems which provide many important benefits. These benefits may be wetland functions (eg. ground water recharge, flood control), use of the wetland or its products (eg. site for wood collection or research site) or special qualities of the wetland (eg. aesthetic component of the landscape or cultural significance). Many of the benefits of wetland are essential to communities, and to industrial and agricultural activities:
- Water supply
- Flow regulation (primary flood control)
- Prevention of salt water intrusion:
  * Ground water
  * Surface water
- Protection from natural forces
- Sediment retention
- Nutrient retention
- Removal of toxic substances
- Source of natural products
- Energy production
- Water transport

IV. REQUIREMENTS OF TOURISM
- International tourists are attached by unique or are experiences. Wetland areas in Cambodia are able to offer such experience. However for eco-tourism to be sustainable, environmental quality. On which it is bases, needs to be maintained, therefore government guidelines on eco-tourism activities are required.
- Tourists are also influenced by government policies on the environment (and other issues such as human rights).
- Promotion of wetlands as tourist destinations is further required to increase international and national awareness of
Cambodia's nature tourism assets.

V. POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACTS OF TOURISM
- Eco-tourism is an attractive approach to wetland management in that it provide an economic rationale for conservation and can develop a sense of stewardship among local communities benefiting from tourism.
- However badly managed eco-tourism projects will damage the environment.
- The environmental costs of tourism, eg. pollution, increased demands on natural resources such as water, and the displacement of local wetland users, should be fully considered in development plans and EIAs.
- Guidelines should be adopted to ensure that eco-tourism in practiced sustainable. This could be supported by issuing concessions (licenses and/or permits) to responsible operators.
- Funds generated through a concession system could be used to support the management and protection of wetland sites and in other areas.
- A multi-disciplinary team is needed to monitor compliant with the license and permits.
- Development of the tourism sector will have a number of impacts on the environment. The contraction of infrastructure such as road and hotels must be planned so as to minimize the negative impacts on wetland and other ecosystem.

VI. MAJOR PROBLEM IN DEVELOPMENT TOURISM
- Lack of human resources and training
- Poor of infrastructure, road, airport, ..... which connect to tourist destinations
- Lack of tourist facilities
- Lack of budget for promotional and implementation projects
- Domestic air transport is coat very high and not always organized
- Lack of integrated team work between the public and private sectors
- Most of tourist sites are not developed yet
- Negative image.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS
- All tourism plans for Cambodia should incorporate environmental management requirements.
- A national program should be established to identify and develop the potential opportunities for eco-tourism and cultural tourism. Seed funding should provided for the establishment of eco-tourism activities.
- Development of recreation facilities close to population centre should include the benefits and opportunities offered by wetlands.
- Local people and communities should be involved in the development, design and management of eco-tourism project. One method of increasing awareness of the opportunities for eco-tourism in Cambodia would be through study tour by representatives of local communities and government agencies to successful projects in the region.
- Development of wetland related tourism activities should designed to include and meet the needs of local people.
- Development guidelines on management of eco-tourism project which will ensure that eco-tourism is practiced in a way that protects the natural environment and does not adversely affect the culture and needs of local communities.
- Promote eco-tourism nationally in order to increase awareness of Cambodia's eco-tourism potential.
- Develop guideline on sustainable eco-tourism practices. These could be promoted through a licensing system for eco-tourism operators. The guideline may, at the first place be simple and provide opportunity for development attraction but should be modified once increasing eco-tourism activities taking.
- Ensure that all proposed large-scale tourism development are subject to a rigorous EIA, which highlights the steps necessary to minimize environmental damage.

VIII. CONCLUSION
Given the crucial importance of wetland areas in Cambodia's sustained development, a coordinated national wetland policy is urgently needed. Such a policy must bring together all the sectors involved in the wetland utilization and
management in order that the full range of products and services offered by Cambodia's many and varied wetland areas may be used and developed optimally.