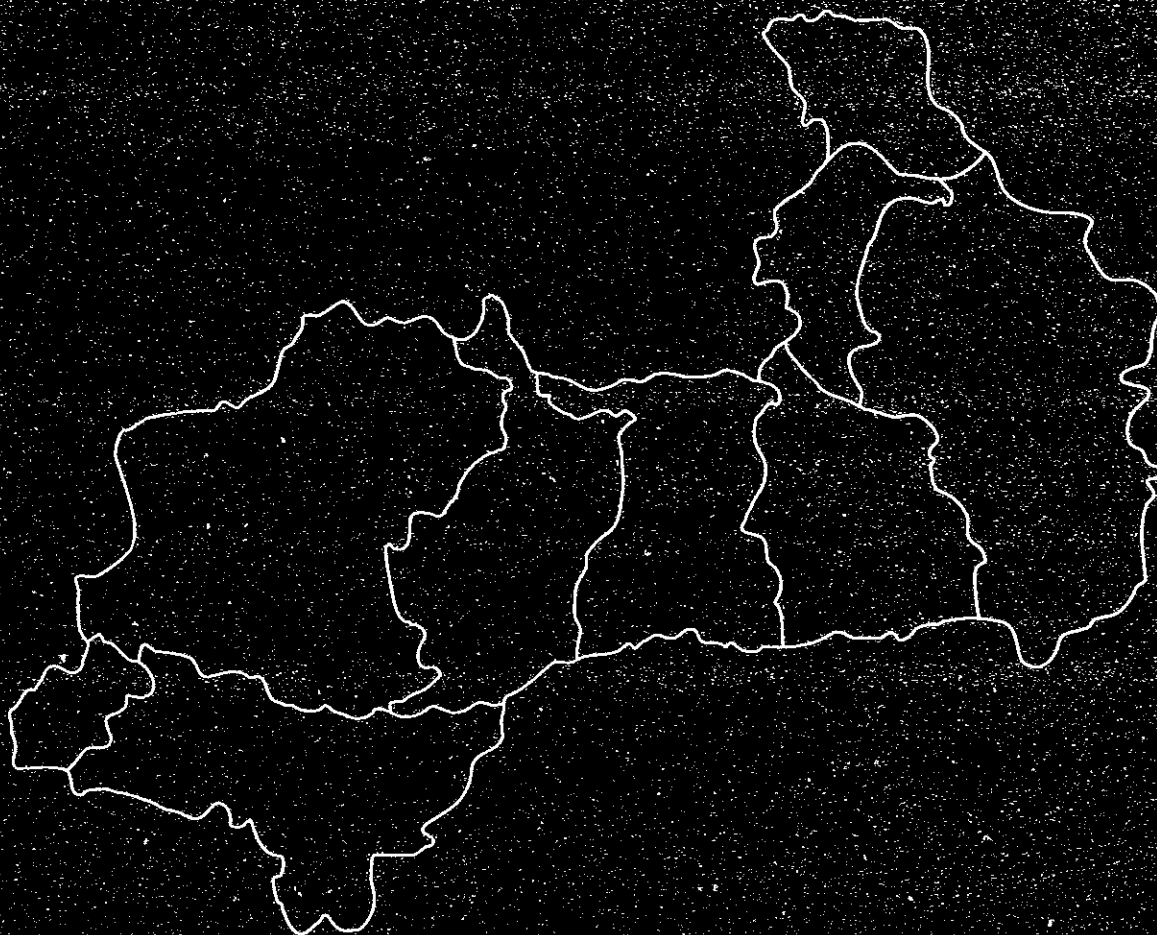


JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND  
NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD

THE STUDY ON THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
FOR THE LOWER NORTHEAST AND  
THE UPPER EAST REGIONS  
IN THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND

FINAL REPORT



3. Tourism

September, 1993

NIPPON KOEI CO., LTD.

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## List of Reports

Executive Summary Report

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1. Agriculture
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  - Dairy Industry
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  - Animal Feed Manufacturing
14. Geographic Information System (GIS) and Regional Planning

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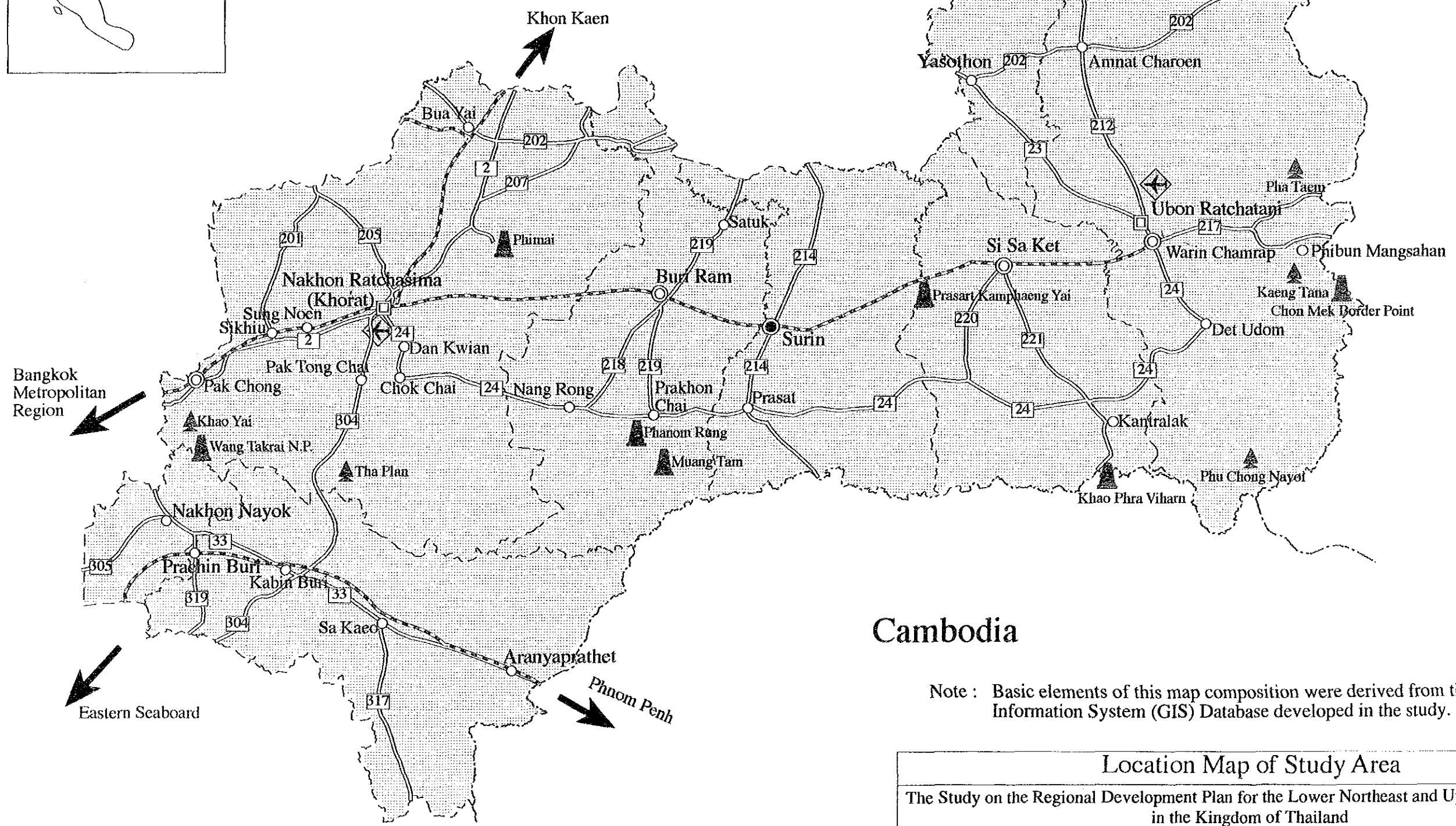
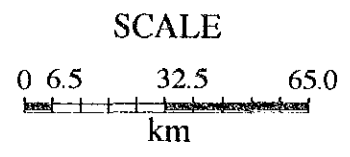
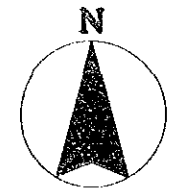
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**LEGEND**

- International Boundary
- - - Provincial Boundary
- 202— National Highway (Number)
- +— Railway
- ◆ Airport
- ▲ National Park
- ▲ Major Tourism Attraction
- Major City (Population)
- ◻ 100,000~500,000
- 50,000~100,000
- 25,000~ 50,000
- 10,000~ 25,000



Note : Basic elements of this map composition were derived from the Geographic Information System (GIS) Database developed in the study.

**Location Map of Study Area**  
 The Study on the Regional Development Plan for the Lower Northeast and Upper East Regions  
 in the Kingdom of Thailand



**Final Report**  
**Sector Report 3. Tourism**

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## Abbreviations

AAT	Airports Authority of Thailand [MOTC]
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AED	Agricultural Extension Department [MOAC]
BAAC	Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives [MOF]
BMA	Bangkok Metropolitan Area
BMR	Bangkok Metropolitan Region
BOB	Bureau of the Budget [OPM]
BOI	Board of Investment [OPM]
BOT	Bank of Thailand
CAO	Changwat Administration Organization [MOIT]
CAT	Communication Authority of Thailand [MOTC]
CDD	Community Development Department [MOIT]
CPD	Cooperatives Promotion Department [MOAC]
CRDP	Coordinating Committee for the Royal Development Projects
DFPOT	Dairy Farming Promotion Organization of Thailand [MOAC]
DOA	Department of Aviation [MOTC]
DOH	Department of Highways [MOTC]
DOLA	Department of Local Administration [MOIT]
DRDC	District Rural (or Regional) Development Committee
DTEC	Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation [OPM]
EGAT	Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand [OPM]
ESBC	Eastern Seaboard Committee [NESDB]
ERTAT	Expressway and Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand [MOIT]
ETOT	Express Transportation Organization of Thailand [MOTC]
FIO	Forest Industry Organization [MOAC]
GCST	Government Cold Storage Organization [MOAC]
IEAT	Industrial Estate Authority of Thailand [MOID]
IFCT	Industrial Finance Corporation of Thailand
IPD	Industry Promotion Department [MOID]
ITD	Internal Trade Department [MOC]
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JPPCC	Joint Public / Private Consultative Committee [BOI]
LDD	Livestock Development Department [MOAC]
LNE-UE	Lower Northeast - Upper East
LTD	Land Transport Department [MOTC]
MOAC	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
MO	Marketing Organization [MOIT]
MOC	Ministry of Commerce
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFF	Marketing Organization for Farmers [MOAC]
MOID	Ministry of Industry
MOIT	Ministry of Interior
MOPH	Ministry of Public Health
MOTC	Ministry of Transport and Communications
MOUA	Ministry of University Affairs
MSTE	Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment
NEB	National Environment Board [MSTE]
NESDB	National Economic and Social Development Board [OPM]

NESDC	National Economic and Social Development Committee
NHA	National Housing Authority [MOIT]
NRDC	National Rural (or Regional) Development Committee
OARD	Office of Accelerated Rural Development [MOIT]
OCSC	Office of the Civil Service Commission [OPM]
OECF	Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (Japan)
OPM	Office of Prime Minister
OPP	Office of Policy and Planning [MOIT]
PDA	Provincial Development Committee
PEA	Provincial Electricity Authority [MOIT]
PRDC	Provincial Regional Development Committee
PRDCC	Provincial Rural (or Regional) Development Coordination Center
PWA	Provincial Waterworks Authority [MOIT]
PWD	Public Works Department [MOIT]
PWO	Public Warehouse Organization [MOC]
RFD	Royal Forest Department [MOAC]
RID	Royal Irrigation Department [MOAC]
SNRDC	Office of the Secretary to the National Rural (or Regional) Development Committee
SRT	State Railway of Thailand [MOTC]
TAT	Tourism Authority of Thailand [OPM]
TCPD	Town and Country Planning Department [MOIT]
TOT	Telephone Organization of Thailand [MOTC]
TRDC	Tambon Rural Development Committee
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
USAID	United State Agency for International Development

## Abbreviation of Measures

### Length

mm	=	millimeter
m	=	meter
km	=	kilometer

### Area

ha	=	hectare
km <sup>2</sup>	=	square kilometer

### Volume

l	=	lit = litre
m <sup>3</sup>	=	cubic meter
MCM	=	million cubic meter

### Weight

mg	=	milligram
g	=	gram
kg	=	kilogram
t	=	ton = MT = metric ton

### Time

sec	=	second
hr	=	hour
d	=	day
yr	=	year

### Money

US\$	=	U.S. dollar
B	=	Baht

### Energy

kcal	=	kilocalorie
J	=	joule
MJ	=	megajoule
HP	=	horsepower
TOE	=	tons of oil equivalent
kW	=	kilowatt
MW	=	megawatt
kWh	=	kilowatt-hour
GWh	=	gigawatt-hour

### Others

%	=	percent
°	=	degree
'	=	minute
°C	=	degree Celsius
cap.	=	capita
md	=	man-day
mil.	=	million
no.	=	number
pers.	=	person
PCU	=	passenger car unit
ppb	=	parts per billion

### Unit Conversions

1 rai	=	0.16 hectare
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## CHAPTER 1

### TOURISM IN THAILAND

#### 1.1 The International Setting and Thailand's Competitiveness

##### 1.1.1 Expansion of international travel

Tourism to Thailand has profited directly from the boom in international travel across Asia in recent years. This expansion has been caused by rapid economic growth in the East and Southeast Asian countries, increased leisure time in these nations as well as in industrialized economies, the consistently falling real cost of air travel, the deregulation of commercial aviation by many governments, and technological innovations in tourism information management. These factors have been responsible for growth in travel in some years exceeding 15%, during the decade of the 1980s. The worldwide drop in travel in 1991 and part of 1992 was caused by atypical conditions, largely related to hostilities in the Persian Gulf region, and by economic downturns in some major economies. There are indications that recuperation in travel is beginning in some markets.

##### 1.1.2 Competitiveness of Thailand

Thailand has skillfully taken advantage of the vigorous growth in Asian tourism to remain a fully competitive destination. The following factors indicate why the nation remains competitive.

###### 1) Diversity of Attractions

The Kingdom offers a broad variety of attractions which draw different segments of tourism. It has seaside resort areas and mountain ones, numerous archeological and historical sites, cultural variety, varied entertainment, broad shopping opportunities, and a growing capability to handle conventions, conferences, seminars and trade shows.

###### 2) Peaceful Conditions

Despite the turmoil that has hurt the neighboring countries in the region, and despite the military takeover of 1991, Thailand generally has maintained a reputation of stability and security, essential for tourism. Tourism appears to be rebounding quickly from the drop after the May 92 events.

###### 3) Good Infrastructure

The public sector has provided good transportation and urban services in tourist areas, with the major exception of Bangkok's traffic environment. The Thai government has also provided splendid historical and cultural attractions of great interest to foreigners.

Similarly, the private sector has developed the hotel, entertainment and shopping infrastructure which now extends to most areas of the Kingdom.

#### 4) Adequate Institutional Support

The planning and promotion of tourism has been effectively undertaken by the Thai government, particularly by agencies such as TAT and the Fine Arts Department (Ministry of Education). TAT maintains close relations with the travel trade both in Thailand and abroad.

Two measurements of tourism, tourist arrivals and nights spent by tourists in a destination, are presented in Table 1.1. It is apparent that in the Asia-Pacific region, after Australia, Thailand is the most important tourist destination in terms of nights spent.

## 1.2 Tourism Activity in Thailand

### 1.2.1 Foreign tourism to Thailand

Since 1980 the count of foreign visitor arrivals has grown from 1.9 million to 5.3 million (1990) averaging 11% annual growth (Table 1.2). Tourist days and revenue have expanded 15% and 20% respectively over the decade, and by all measures, growth accelerated in the second half of the decade, 1985-1990 (Table 1.2). The year 1991 showed declines in visitor arrivals of 4% and in revenue of 10%. Partial year data for 1992 indicate that visitor arrivals may return to the 1990 level of 5.3 million.

Arrivals from East Asian and Pacific regions grew somewhat faster than total arrivals, 18.1% versus 16.8%. The increase in average length of stay from under 5 days in 1980 to over 7 days in 1990 is very significant, and indicates a rise in long stay visitors : a major achievement for Thai tourism.

#### Ports of entry and exit

Bangkok International Airport is the main entry point for tourists to Thailand, with all other points relatively minor. The airports at Phuket, Hat Yai, Chiang Mai and Patthaya represent secondary entry points, as well as the road and rail crossings along the Malaysian border to the south. The land crossings with Laos and Cambodia carry minimal traffic.

#### Seasonality

There is a significant pattern to monthly arrivals as indicated by visitor arrivals over the past several years. The peak period extends from November to January which corresponds to the winter months in the Northern Hemisphere, and to the season of coolest weather in Thailand.

The weak seasons include May-June and September-October, falling just before and after the summer vacation peak season [July and August]. Many tourist destinations around the world have a similar seasonal pattern. The April-June period in Thailand is generally the hottest time of the year. In 1991, the month of lowest arrivals was May with 7% [368,000] of the year's arrivals, and the strongest December with nearly 10% [530,000].

### **1.2.2 Distribution of tourism by region in Thailand**

The Northeast captures a small share of tourism activity in the Kingdom as is apparent in Table 1.3. The upper half of the figure presents the distribution of tourist visits by region, while the lower half presents expenditure. The Central Region is defined to include Bangkok, and it captures nearly half of the visits and expenditure of the national total.

With respect to foreign tourism, it is the South, East and North regions that attract foreigners. The strongest are the South and East, which both offer primarily seaside tourism (respectively 21% and 14% of visits). Together they receive about 70% of all expenditure outside of the Central Region. The North, offering primarily cultural attractions and scenic beauty, is a significant third. The natural and cultural attractions found in these areas are what draw foreigners to Thailand. The shares of foreign visits and expenditure for the Northeast are minimal, amounting to less than 1%. The region's share for local tourism, however, is higher (respectively 14.7% and 7.6%).

### **1.2.3 Accommodations in Thailand**

The country's lodging supply has been increasing at an average 10% yearly in 1986-91 and has reached 190,000 rooms. The largest increases occurred in the Southern and Eastern regions, accounting for 36% and 28% of the total increase in the period. By 1991 there was a total of 190,453 rooms of lodging in the Kingdom, up by nearly 22,000 from the year before (168,593 rooms in 1990). The private sector has invested heavily in hotels as tourism grew in many parts of Thailand during the 1980s. The BOI prior to 1992 gave more substantial incentives than at present with provincial projects awarded the most generous conditions. The Northeast gained 1,509 rooms in 1991, an increase of 11% in its lodging supply. Table 1.4 summarizes the regional distribution of lodging.

### **1.2.4 Outlook**

The long term outlook for tourism to Thailand is quite positive. The Asian region will most likely remain the fastest growing region in the world, and transport infrastructure across the region, as well as within Thailand, is improving. Inside the Kingdom, a result of the wave of hotel construction is increased competition and price cutting, making Thai travel cheaper and more competitive still. Table 1.5 presents long term forecasts for Asia-Pacific destinations prepared by EIU. It shows Thailand as achieving among the strongest growth in visitors and visitor-days of any destination with annual growth falling in the 8%-13% range.





## CHAPTER 2

### PRESENT CONDITIONS OF TOURISM IN THE LOWER NORTHEAST AND UPPER EAST REGION

#### 2.1 Tourist Statistics

##### 2.1.1 Foreign tourist arrivals

The Study Area represents part of Isan, which on the whole is the least visited area of Thailand by foreign visitors. The statistics in Table 2.1 indicate clearly that the Central (including Bangkok), Eastern and Southern regions capture the vast majority of tourists and of tourist-days. BMA alone is by far the most popular destination for tourists (drawing over one half of all visitors) followed by the Southern region. Less than one percent (0.7%) of tourists indicated any visit to Isan. The findings of this survey are approximate, but are believed to accurately reflect the main flows of tourists within the Kingdom.

Available data suggests that for 1992 the nine province Study Area will attract approximately 80,000 tourists having an average length of stay of 2 days, resulting in total tourist-days of 160,000. This represents 0.5% of the estimated national total of 33.5 million tourist-days, which is approximately equal to the 1990 level. On an average day there are approximately 9,200 tourists in Thailand, of which only 438 are in the Study Area. There is evidence this year of a rebound in tourism after the downturn suffered in 1991. The average expenditure per tourist-day is 1,400 baht according to the survey data for the Nakhon Ratchasima and Ubon Ratchathani areas on Table 2.1.

Surveys conducted by TAT, Score, and by Chula Unisearch for this study indicate that most tourists are European, many traveling in groups on guided coach tours linking the Khmer sites with other points of natural or historical interest. Phimai and Khao Phanom Rung are foremost on these itineraries, and these circuits typically continue to points in Khon Kaen, Nong Khai or in Northern Thailand. Some tour operators have suspended tours into the Study Area for lack of interest, while others have increased programs to Isan.

At present tourists enter or leave the area from Bangkok or from Khon Kaen. There are no entry/exit points yet to Laos or Cambodia. However, the Nong Khai crossing point to Laos is included on many tours that cross the Study Area. Some behavioral findings regarding the profile of tourists visiting the Study Area are presented in Table 2.2. These data were compiled by Chula Unisearch, the Thai consultant after conducting the survey in the period April to June. A major finding of prior surveys that is confirmed by this survey is the lack of interest in Isan by Asian travelers.

##### 2.1.2 Domestic tourist arrivals

Table 2.1 also presents data on domestic tourist activity, measuring 17.6 million visits, double the total for foreign tourists. The Northeast captures 15% of total domestic visits (2.6 million out of 17.6 million) with Nakhon Ratchasima by far the most visited place. Thai tourists, especially to the Lower Northeast, consist of persons visiting friends and relatives, commonly staying at their homes rather than in commercial

lodging. Probably most of these tourists live in the BMA or on the Eastern Seaboard. Their average daily spending is substantially lower than that of the foreign tourist. It is these tourists together with their local hosts, that represent the visitor volumes recorded at the region's parks, museums and forests.

### **2.1.3 Visitor volumes at specific locations**

#### National parks

Visitor statistics for parks in the Study Area are presented in Table 2.3 for six different parks. Khao Yai National Park (NP) draws by far the largest number of visitors especially during July-September and November and December during school holidays and with the cool climate. This park is within the 100 km radius of BMA and it fulfills a vital function of recreation and education for city dwellers, along with the parks lying to the west of BMA such as Erawan, which records the highest visitor volume in the Kingdom. Khao Yai is the flagship park of the park system because of its natural attractions of waterfalls, mountain scenery and wildlife, as well as because of its close proximity to the Kingdom's capital city.

The other parks generate much lower visitor volumes and function primarily for recreational purposes. It is noteworthy that Pang Sida is not developed with visitor facilities so that despite its proximity to BMA, it draws few visitors. In Ubon Ratchathani province both Kaeng Tana and Phu Pa Taem parks have visitor facilities, and are accessible from Ubon Ratchathani City within 90 minutes by a good road.

In Thailand on the whole, the number of visitors to parks is high during July and August and November to April. In this latter period there are many major holidays such as New Year's Day, Chinese New Year and the Songkran Festival. However in the Study Area the hot and dry season is March-July and visitor volumes at some parks are weak for this reason.

#### Historical parks and museums

Visitor levels for six of the locations operated by the Fine Arts Department are contained in Table 2.4. The two Khmer historical parks are the region's prime attractions for tourists and locals alike, and they generate visitor levels far higher than any of the museums. Khao Phanom Rung reached a daily average of nearly 1,000 persons per day in 1990 despite its relatively remote location 90 minutes by road from Nakhon Ratchasima city. No published statistics were yet available for the newly opened ancient Khmer sanctuary at Khao Phra Viharn in Cambodian territory on the border at Si Sa Ket, but initial figures indicate visitor volume of several hundred persons per day. These historical parks draw groups and bus tours from long distances.

#### Forest parks

Information regarding visitor volumes to forests is only partial, and is presented in Table 2.5. These properties are the responsibility of the Royal Forestry Department. By far the most heavily visited location is Jed Sao Noi, a forest and waterfall located in Nakhon Ratchasima near Pak Chong, an 80 minute drive from Korat City. These forests generally serve recreational needs of the local population. There are additional locations such as reservoirs that also serve recreational needs of the local population.

## **2.2 Tourism Resources**

### **2.2.1 Inventory of resources**

An inventory of tourism resources has been compiled by a Thai consultant (Chula Unisearch) as part of this Study. A basic tourism profile of each province as to visitor volume, hotel supply, local souvenirs, events and reputation is summarized in Table 2.6. An inventory of the major tourism resources in each province is presented in Table 2.7. It contains only the most interesting of the existing archeological sites in the region and omits many additional ones which are of minor importance. Table 2.8 presents the composition of the lodging supply in each province by type of lodging as of 1990. Figure 2.1 presents a map showing key attractions.

### **2.2.2 Attractions relevant for foreign tourism**

The Study Area has numerous sites with Khmer ruins and other archeological, historical and religious points of interest. However, it has no flagship attraction of outstanding appeal to attract many foreigners. The Phimai Historical Park is the one place coming closest to being a flagship attraction, with the Khmer sanctuary at Khao Phanom Rung coming in second place. Surin's Elephant Roundup is also a major attraction of international note, but is only a two day event. Reports on visitor volume at the newly opened Khao Phra Viharn in Si Sa Ket indicate that it also may develop into a major attraction for that province.

Attractions of lesser importance for foreign tourists include:

- Pak Thong Chai silk village (Nakhon Ratchasima),
- Dan Kwian pottery village (Nakhon Ratchasima),
- Kong Chiem village at the Mekhong-Moon river junction (Ubon Ratchathani),
- Pha Taem ancient cliff paintings (Ubon Ratchathani), and
- Khao Yai National Park (mainly Prachinburi).

### **2.2.3 Recent developments in the Study Area**

In recent years there have been a number of important initiatives to improve the tourism resources in the Study Area. They include the following:

- major restoration of Khmer ruins at Phimai, Panomwan (Nakhon Ratchasima) and Phanom Rung and Muang Tam (Buri Ram),
- improvement of historical museums at Nakhon Ratchasima, Phimai, Ubon Ratchathani and Prachinburi,
- the formal opening to visitors in January 1992 of the ancient Khmer sanctuary at Khao Phra Viharn on the Cambodian border (Si Sa Ket),
- construction of resort hotels, golf courses and other sporting facilities in the Khao Yai area (Nakon Nayok and Nakhon Ratchasima), and
- improved craftsmanship and presentation of arts and crafts at locations such as Pak Thong Chai and Dan Kwian.

These and other efforts have been made through the work of agencies such as TAT through its coordination and promotion of project, BOI through awards of incentives, FAD and the National Parks Division of the Royal Forestry Department, through their work at historical sites and national parks. A setback to tourism in the

region is the closure by government decree of overnight accommodation in Khao Yai NP making stays any longer than one day in the area impractical.

#### **2.2.4 Development of golf courses**

Although no user statistics for golf courses are compiled, they do represent a significant resource attracting high income Thai tourists and some foreigners. In the Study Area, several courses either in operation or under construction are located in the vicinity of Khao Yai National Park in Nakon Nayok or in Pak Chong district, and also along the Mitraphap Highway between Pak Chong and Korat City. Nearly all are private developments linked to country clubs, resort hotels or housing developments. A few are run by the military. The areas in the environs of Khao Yai National Park offer both scenic beauty and proximity to Bangkok and Korat City making them ideal for country clubs and resort development.

### **2.3 Accommodation**

Table 1.4 above indicates that all of Isan (both Upper and Lower Isan) contains 15,407 rooms or only 8% of the Kingdom's total supply. In the Study Area of nine provinces the 1990 supply amounted to 7,034 rooms of which 6,630 are contained in hotels and the balance in other types of lodging (Table 2.8). Over half this capacity is contained in Nakhon Ratchasima and Ubon Ratchathani provinces because of their urban centers.

There has been recent construction of new hotels at several locations including Aranyaprathet, Pak Chong and Nakon Nayok in the Khao Yai area, and at the provincial capital cities of Nakhon Ratchasima, Prachinburi, Buri Ram, Surin, Ubon Ratchathani and Mukdahan. It is noteworthy that two major hotel companies have started operations in the region, both in Korat City. These are the Sheraton Corporation of America and Thailand's Royal Princess Hotels (Dusit Thani Group). The arrival of these companies will bring an improved standard of service and marketing to the region including use of their international reservations systems. Although precise data are not available, annual room occupancies for hotels in the region are reported to fall in the 50%-70% range, which indicates that there is plenty of available capacity for expansion in travel to the region.

It is significant that new capacity of an international standard is also being built in Upper Isan at cities of Khon Kaen and Udon Thani, which will facilitate tourism for foreigners throughout Isan. It is also significant that there is no international standard accommodation near the key Khmer ruins of Phimai, Phanom Rung or Phra Viharn. The nearest suitable lodging for foreign tourists is located in the provincial capital cities some 45-90 minutes away.

### **2.4 Transportation**

The region's road network is in quite good condition and is generally easily motorable for coaches as well as automobiles. Improvements to the Mitraphap Highway (Route 2) and to the Rangsit-Nakon Nayok-Prachinburi road (Route 305) will further improve access from the BMA to the region. An additional improvement is a new road between Pang Sida and Tha Plan national parks in Prachinburi.

In contrast, air services in the region are minimal, generally limited to one daily Thai International round trip flight between Bangkok and the two urban centers of Korat

City and Ubon Ratchathani. For both independent tourists and tour groups, after road travel, air travel is the most practical mode of transport. A key reason for the isolation of Isan from the country's main tourist routes is the total lack of direct air service from airports at Korat and Ubon Ratchathani to popular tourist points in the north or south of the Kingdom such as Chiang Mai, Phitsanulok or Phuket. Key areas of cultural interest such as Chiang Mai or Sukhotai are a day's drive away by coach, often proving too uninteresting and time-consuming for foreign tourists in the country for a limited time. Some tour operators have suspended circuits to Isan for lack of easy links to other interesting destinations. As regards international air service, there is none from any point in Isan to any city in the neighboring countries.

Rail travel is used by few tourists, since it is generally as slow as or slower than road travel. Recent service improvements however may result in higher use by foreigners. There is no riverboat service along the Mekhong River except for ferries crossing to points on the Laos side (at Nong Khai, Mukdahan, numerous other minor points).

## **2.5 Institutional Support**

TAT until recently had not been heavily promoting the Northeast in general as an important tourist destination, preferring to use its limited promotional resources efficiently to support the expanding, better established areas of the country. However, as the appealing archeological attractions of the region are developed through restoration, museum improvements and visitor facilities, TAT is promoting Isan more actively.

TAT is managing tourism related projects throughout the Kingdom funded by OECF in recent years and providing for beautification of tourist areas and improvement of related infrastructure. There are similar efforts by foreign governments and international agencies, particularly of UNESCO, of assistance to the Lao and Cambodian governments. These include restoration activities in areas adjacent to the Study Area such as Champasak in southern Laos opposite Ubon Ratchathani, and Angkor Wat in Cambodia south of Surin. TAT is also providing preliminary assistance to the tourism agencies of these governments to jointly support tourism in the region. TAT is fully aware that if such initiatives facilitate cross border travel for tourists in both directions, the Study Area would benefit greatly.

The Fine Arts Department has also been instrumental in accomplishing all work on the historical parks, monuments and national museums. It has organized official assistance from foreign nations such as France and India for restoration of antiquities.

The National Parks Division of the Royal Forestry Department is responsible for an enormous territory with relation to its resources, and has only limited resources available for the development of new facilities and for formulation of comprehensive master plans for its parks. The Royal Thai Government has recently solicited directly from provincial governments proposals for new tourism projects of up to 20 million baht each to motivate provincial governments to actively support tourism.

## **2.6 Strengths and Weaknesses for Tourism in the Study Area**

The region's strengths can be summarized as follows.

- The ancient Khmer ruins at Phimai, Khao Phanom Rung and Khao Phra Viharn constitute attractions of strong appeal to culturally oriented tourists,

both foreign and Thai. With some work they could each provide an outstanding experience for visitors and function as regional anchor or flagship attractions.

- The region's proximity and good road links to Bangkok and the Eastern Seaboard is an advantage since these two areas contain well over half all hotel capacity in the Kingdom.
- Good road conditions for autos and coaches make travel within the region easy for both independent travelers and for groups.
- The Study Area's proximity to the exotic lands of Laos and Cambodia in the long run is an advantage for the culture oriented tourist as well as for the adventurer. Once easy cross border arrangements are established circuits linking Thailand to points of interest in the neighboring countries will prove popular.

The constraints that the region faces can be summarized as follows.

- There is no outstanding attraction that functions as a flagship or anchor attraction that symbolizes the region favorably. As of yet, no site yet fulfills this role although obvious candidates are the historical parks of Phimai and Khao Phanom Rung.
- The region is an enclave because for political reasons it is still impossible to link it to the nearby points of interest in Laos and Cambodia (namely Vientiane, Suvannakhet, Champasak in Laos, and Angkor Wat in Cambodia). For lack of direct air links, it is difficult to link it with the nation's prime tourist areas in the north and in the south of Thailand.
- The countryside of the Study Area features generally flat terrain with limited hills and valleys. Much of the area is monotonous, particularly during the lengthy dry season when it becomes parched and is visually of little interest.
- The strong heat during the March-June period is oppressive for many visitors, Thai and foreign alike. The droughts dry up many of the waterfalls in the national parks eliminating part of their interest to visitors.
- There is great ignorance about the region as confirmed by the visitor survey of both Thai and foreign travelers conducted for this study as well as by prior surveys (by TAT, Score, PATA). Word of mouth being of vital importance for tourism, clearly promotional measures are needed to overcome this hindrance.

## CHAPTER 3

### TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN

#### 3.1 Objectives and Strategy

##### 3.1.1 Objectives

Objectives for the tourism sector have been formulated in recognition of the general objectives of the Seventh Development Plan of the Kingdom, of the sectoral ones contained in the same Plan, and of those defined for the LNE-UE Master Plan. They are as follows:

- 1) To provide main or supplemental sources of income for local people by means of employment directly or indirectly in various tourism-related activities;
- 2) To contribute to the enhancement of environmental quality by providing economic incentives for tree planting, city beautification and similar activities; and
- 3) To give local people a sense of participation in regional development as well as interaction with international society.

##### 3.1.2 Basic Strategy

Basic strategy for this region has been developed in recognition of the region's strengths and weaknesses as explained above. A crucial factor is the region's proximity to Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam which each have major tourist attractions. The key for solving the Isan's enclave problem of isolation from established tourism flows is to create new flows across her territory linking it with attractions nearby in the bordering countries. All four of the circuits shown in Figure 3.1 do this. Realization of this major potential in full can be expected in the mid to long term future, as these countries open up not only politically but also socially, and as their basic infrastructure is developed to establish effective links with the Study Area. In the meantime, tourism development in the Study Area must preserve and upgrade valuable tourism and cultural resources to serve the ever increasing leisure and recreational needs of the Thai population, and to prepare for the growing flow of foreign tourists as these neighboring nations open up.

Along this basic strategy, the lack of an outstanding attraction in the Study Area can be remedied by upgrading existing attractions of major appeal in the area, by creating anchor attractions, and by linking them to areas of interest in neighboring countries (Angkor, Phom Penh, Vientiane, Danang). The Area's location in the heart of Indochina is in this way used to its advantage, and the enclave problem is overcome.

##### 3.1.3 Specific strategy

According to the basic strategy, more specific strategy is defined with the following three components.

- 1) To arrest deterioration of the most valuable historical and natural resources so that they can be preserved and improved for future use for tourism and



recreation purposes. Some can serve as flagship or anchor attractions on which to structure tourism circuits.

- 2) To create circuits appealing to tourists motivated by cultural interest and by wanderlust (adventuresomeness). In this way the travel trade will draw both Thai and foreign tourists through the Study Area, and most importantly, stimulate positive word-of-mouth within the Kingdom and abroad.
- 3) To assist the neighboring countries in organizing themselves to plan for tourism. They need expert assistance to plan for a viable tourism industry that can work in coordination with Thailand's travel industry.

Each of the measures proposed in the Study in some way addresses at least one of the above and at least one of the constraints. It is noteworthy that recent surveys of tourists indicate that the main segment of foreign tourists visiting Isan is made up of travelers motivated by cultural interest in antiquities or by an interest in seeing another way of life. This segment is normally much smaller than the sun-seeking segment of international tourism which travels to seaside points on the Eastern Seaboard or to the South of Thailand. The cultural tourist generally is an itinerant one, i.e. one who travels overland or by air visiting several locations to see various points of interest. The sun-seeking tourist is more often sedentary, i.e. he will stay based at one resort location visiting few or no other areas. This distinction is crucial to defining a strategy for Isan's tourism development since Isan must plan to attract mainly the cultural tourists to whom it can offer a satisfactory travel experience. All three of the above directly improve conditions for cultural tourism.

### **3.2 Projection of Foreign Tourism**

An approximate forecast of the volume of foreign tourism to the Study Area has been prepared for the reference years of 1996 (end of 7th Plan), 2001 (end of 8th Plan) and 2010 (Tables 3.1 and 3.2). This projection is based in part on assumptions of this Study Team used to modify an econometric forecast prepared by the Economist Intelligence Unit. Table 3.1 presents the results of the forecast, for both the entire Kingdom and for the nine province Study Area alone.

This projection assumes the opening of borders to Laos and Cambodia to foreign tourists, through the successful promotion of travel circuits as those depicted on Figure 3.1. This figure shows four different overland circuits (numbered) crossing the Study Area and entering a neighboring country. They will prove to be strongly appealing to cultural travelers because of the key attractions that they include.

Such travel patterns will result in greatly increasing border counts of entering and exiting tourists. For Route 3, the Angkor-Isan Loop, tourists can originate and terminate at Bangkok (or alternatively on the the Eastern Seaboard) and each one will be recorded in Thai statistics as two tourists, once at the original point of entry into the Kingdom (typically Bangkok Airport), and once again at the second entry point of Kap Chong in Surin (or at Aranyaprathet for those traveling clockwise). For this reason tourist counts can be expected to rise quickly in this region. The forecast volume of tourists rises from 80 thousand in 1992 to 603 thousand by 2001. The percent increases are high because the absolute numbers are so small.

What is more relevant for economic purposes is the volume of tourist days spent in the region. Because of the itinerant nature of cultural travelers, the shortest average

length of stay in the region of 2.0 days is assumed not to vary so that tourist-days can rise only if tourist arrivals rise. The region's share of total tourists and of tourist-days for the entire Kingdom remains quite small, in 2001 respectively 6.2% and 1.5%. This is the result of tourists following circuits that criss-cross the heartland of Indochina. The forecast foresees many more tourists but about the same average stay for each. The pace of growth from 2002 onward is assumed to increase in absolute terms (223,000 additional tourist-days per year versus 116,000 beforehand), but fall in percentage terms (11.5% from 2002 versus 36.0% and 17.1% beforehand).

Table 3.2 presents an estimate of related foreign currency spending in the reference years, expressed in constant value baht and in US dollars. The central assumption in this forecast is the constant daily expenditure per foreign tourist of 1,400 baht. This is a reasonable level of spending for the segment of tourists targeted in this strategy. It is significant that because the anchor attractions of the Study Area are rural sites of Khmer ruins not located in its major cities, a fair portion of initial expenditure will enter the economy at rural locations, which corresponds to a spatial objective of rural development.

As regards the adequacy of the hotel capacity in the region, undergoing expansion would result in shortage of rooms for the projected volumes, since foreigners make up so little of the total clientele for hotels. As foreign tourism increases, there should be plenty of capacity available from refurbishment and new construction over the coming years.

### **3.3 Future Routes for International Tourism**

Figure 3.1 shows a dynamic view of typical routes to develop for foreign tourists across the region as its tourism industry expands. Comments on each follow.

1) **Route 1: The Main Route to Laos [short term potential]**

This is the only route open to foreigners at present leading into Indochina. It has the finest highway and also a railroad line. Once Phimai is developed as an anchor attraction, much of the Laos bound traffic will stop there for 1-2 days. The city of Korat will also benefit from this traffic as a minor stop.

2) **Route 2: Khmer Heritage Trail [short term potential]**

This can be defined to start at Phimai, or alternatively at Lopburi or Ayutthaya to the west, and extend across to Phanom Rung, Khao Phra Viharn ending at Champasak in Laos. Tourists can stay overnight at the provincial capital cities or right at the historical parks once lodging is built in them. Ubon Ratchathani and Si Sa Ket provinces already offer some popular attractions, both natural and cultural, as detailed in Tables 2.7 and 3.3. In addition, it is probable that the Lao government will open the Chong Mek border point to foreign tourists in the near future enabling them to continue into Pakxe to visit the Khmer sanctuary at Champasak. A possible variation of this circuit is to travel into Laos by riverboat from Kong Chiam. This eastern zone, which can be called the Ubon Ratchathani/Mekhong zone, contains several major attractions that can be included in this Heritage Trail. The proposed project no. 5 of road signs and related literature and promotion is designed to draw tourists eastward as far as Ubon Ratchathani where they otherwise might not travel.

This project can be undertaken in the short term since the required infrastructure is in place.

3) Route 3: The Angkor-Isan Loop [mid term potential]

Once conditions in Cambodia are suitable for tourism, including construction of infrastructure at Siem Reap and adequate roads leading there from Aranyaprathet and Surin, this route should prove to be extremely popular with cultural tourists. It links the best known archeological site in Indochina, Angkor Wat, with the best Khmer sites in Thailand, Phanom Rung and Phimai. It can probably be developed in the mid to long term. Aranyaprathet will become the most important crossing point for travelers between Cambodia and Thailand, and will function efficiently as a tourist base for the ruins of Angkor Wat, some 150 km to the east, if Cambodia is too slow to develop its own infrastructure at Siem Reap. If short haul international air service is promoted, air links between Angkor and Bangkok, Korat and Ubon Ratchathani can be opened at some point in the mid to long term.

4) Route 4: The Route to Vietnam [long term potential]

Another link of great tourist appeal would be a bridge across the Mekhong River at Mukdahan to provide road access to Vietnam. Tourists could travel from Bangkok to Phimai and across Isan to Mukdahan and eastward. Tourists from the Eastern Seaboard could cross the Study Area on the planned artery highway that will cross the Green Wedge, and continue to the new crossing to Laos and Vietnam. However, this tourist route cannot develop strongly until after the bridge is opened.

The corridor from the BMA to Nakhon Ratchasima province is vital to all of these routes because they can all originate or terminate there. The transportation infrastructure in this corridor is being improved, both road and rail. It contains the Green Belt of national parkland, highlighted by the Khao Yai National Park and its surrounding resort areas with hotels and golf courses. This zone has no major attractions for foreign tourists and serves the weekend and recreational needs of middle and upper income inhabitants of the BMA. However, because of its natural beauty and good hotel supply, hotels in this zone can also serve as good stopover points for tourists on any of the described tourist routes. It is critical to preserve and improve the environment in this zone for the benefit of both Thai and foreign tourists.

### **3.4 Support Measures and Development Projects**

A profile of the characteristics of the demand (tourists to Isan) is presented in the prior chapter (Table 2.2). Figure 3.1 also represents demand in the form of appealing travel circuits. On the supply side, Tables 2.6 to 2.8 describe existing resources and Figure 2.1 provides a map of key resources. In addition, a critical profile of 38 resources in the Study Area is presented in Table 3.3 including evaluations as to the character of each, type of appeal, and the time frame in which each would be most effectively developed.

Evaluation of both these supply and demand characteristics forms the basis of the strategy outlined above, and the result of this evaluation is represented by the set of 12 measures and projects contained in Table 3.4 and depicted on Figure 3.2. Key elements of the strategy are summarized below.

- 1) ANCHOR ATTRACTIONS are four and include the three Khmer sites of Phimai, Phanom Rung and Muang Tam, and Khao Phra Viharn. The fourth is the village of Kong Chiam on the Mekhong River serving as the easternmost anchor.
- 2) All four of the defined circuits pass through Phimai. Phimai will fulfill a role of regional anchor, and is to be developed as a small Sukhothai, possibly nicknamed "ISAN'S ISLAND CITY" because it is surrounded by water.
- 3) The strategy accentuates the region's archeological treasures, makes use of its good road system, and uses the scattered location of anchors to DRAW TOURISM ACROSS THE REGION.
- 4) It also relies on the OPENING OF BORDERS to foreign tourists by means of good roads, functional border checkpoints, and relatively simple visa procedures.
- 5) The BURI RAM/SURIN SUBZONE containing the Green Wedge and Khao Phanom Rung anchor is also crucial, lying on both the Angkor-Isan Loop and Khmer Heritage Trail (routes 2 and 3).
- 6) The Khao Yai zone is included in the GREEN BELT OF PARKLANDS (Khao Yai, Tha Plan and Pang Sida parks) and also the environs in Nakon Nayok, Prachin Buri and Korat provinces where much resort development by the private sector is under way. This zone is crucial for recreational purposes for the BMA.
- 7) The easternmost zone is UBON RATCHATHANI/MEKONG ZONE that also includes Khao Phra Viharn and Champasak in Laos. The zone is suited to cultural tourism and general sightseeing by both Thai and foreign visitors.

In the appendix to this report, a project profile describing the main elements of each project is provided. Comments regarding significant characteristics of this set of projects follow.

#### Welcome plazas

The projects at the border crossings in Mukdahan, Chong Mek and Aranyaprathet (numbers 6, 10 and 11) are designed to provide general services to travelers at one convenient location when entering or exiting the Kingdom. The neighboring countries will take some years to develop good quality commercial services, so these plazas are intended to offer great convenience to travelers at the borders. They can be privately developed under government supervision.

#### Restoration of antiquities

Projects 3, 7 and 8 consist of restoration programs at well known archeological sites. Khao Phra Viharn will require the most work, and Khao Phanom Rung the least. Some international transfer of technology is desirable. Furthermore, experts from Cambodia and Laos can participate in these programs within the framework of international cooperation.

### Urban planning

Projects 1, 8 and 12 contain important elements of urban planning. In the case of Phimai, a new town is proposed, as well as major expansion of the historical park, which will transform the area into an appealing park and village dramatically different from the present town. The village of Kong Chiam will be improved to undergo growth as a focal point of the Ubon Ratchathani zone. Some beautification of Buri Ram City and possibly Surin City can be conducted as part of the Green Wedge development.

### Private sector involvement

Private sector parties can participate in some of these projects, especially in the development of Welcome Plazas, hotels and inns, and for the Elephant Park (numbers 2, 4, 6, 10, 11, and 12). Guidance may be provided to interested parties by the proposed Project Management Unit (subsection 6.5.2, Main Report) through local administrations.

### Training

Training of local population in aspects of forestry, elephant training, hotel and restaurant operations, and restoration of antiquities is included in different projects (numbers 1, 2, 4, and 7). In all cases the skills learned can be used in other projects or locations. In addition, the establishment of skill training centers is proposed for trade, tourism and other service fields (Sector Report 11, Socio-Economy and Social Systems).

### Environmental improvement

The Green Wedge project and the development of Phu Chong Nayoi into a national park are the two projects with clear environmental elements.

Of great importance for recreational and educational purposes for the BMA is Khao Yai National Park. This park can be developed as a nature-oriented destination for "ecotourism" preserving its flora and fauna while offering opportunities for trekking, camping, horseback riding and excursions for wild animal viewing and bird watching. It could also be used to diversify the attractions of the Study Area for foreign tourists, and to reduce the monotony of their trips. The lack of lodging in this park is a problem hindering full enjoyment of the park and it is one of the first locations where one or more inns or lodges (project no 4) should be developed since the demand is totally unserved at present. Similar development of overnight facilities in other parks can also be attempted once suitable legal and technical arrangements can be worked out.

In parallel with the restoration/upgrading of tourism resources and the improvement of the tourism accommodation and infrastructure, marketing activities need to be geared up systematically. Tourism marketing is particularly important for the tourism network in LNE-UE, as the cultural tourism appeals only to specific segments of tourists.

### **3.5 Initiatives with Neighboring Countries**

In addition, there are initiatives that the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) can pursue immediately, that will benefit tourism not only to the Study Area, but throughout the Kingdom.

1) International promotion

One area includes promotional programs with neighboring countries in Indochina. All of Indochina is suitable for cultural tourism, and joint promotion stressing the opportunity to visit two or more countries could be effective and economical.

2) Technical assistance

Another area is one of technical assistance that Thai tourism authorities could provide to counterparts in the neighboring countries for them to organize their tourism agencies and collaborate with each other.

3) Coordination of visa formalities

A third area for assistance is that of visa formalities in the region. In order to facilitate the flow of tourists across the borders an adequate legal framework is necessary, including multiple visas to allow re-entries for completing various tourism loops. Also proper training and operation of consular services are needed.

### **3.6 Related Projects from Other Sectors**

1) Khao Yai resort and research development

This project, proposed for development in the Khao Yai area, will meet needs for conference tourism related to research and development activity (Sector Report 2. Industry). Resorts and hotels will be located in the same vicinity, or even in Khao Yai National Park itself.

2) Regional Artery Highway

This road will greatly improve access from the Study Area to the Eastern Seaboard and to Laos and Vietnam.

3) Lam Nam Chi/Lam Plai Mat multipurpose water resources development

This will support the Green Wedge afforestation project (no 1) which will rely on sufficient water resources.

4) Buri Ram international airport

Since tourists frequently rely on air services to travel around a region over long distances, the addition of scheduled air services to any new points in the Study Area will improve access to and from the region by giving it a new gateway.

5) Second Mekhong bridge

If built in Mukdahan, it will provide excellent access to Laos and Vietnam.

6) Railway improvements

Improvements resulting in faster train timings will make rail travel more attractive to foreign tourists and improve access across the Study Area. Extension of the railway into the Indochina countries will strengthen/diversify the tourism network in midium to long term.

7) Local air services network development

Because air services in the region are currently available to only Bangkok, improvements in frequency and in developing new routes will greatly improve access to and inside the region.

## Tables





**Table 1.1 Visitor Arrival at Asian Destination in 1988 and 1991**

Country	Arrivals 1988 (million)	Visitor nights (million)	Index (Thailand=100)	Arrivals 1991 (million)
Thailand	4.2	29	100	5.1
Australia	2.2	58	200	NA
Indonesia	1.3	17	59	2.6
Hong Kong	4.5	16	55	6.0
China	1.6	15	52	NA
Japan	2.4	14	48	3.5
New Zealand	0.8	14	48	NA
Singapore	4.2	14	48	5.4
South Korea	2.0	12	41	2.9
Taiwan	1.9	12	41	1.9
Phillipines	1.0	9	31	1.0
Malaysia	1.3	8	28	5.5

Note : Excludes quasi-domestic travel flows such as between Hong Kong and China/Macau, and between Malaysia and Singapore.

NA means not available

Sources : Economist Intelligence Unit, Far East and Pacific Travel in the 1990s (1988 data).  
TAT Statistical Report 1991 (1991 data)

**Table 1.2 International Visitors to Thailand, 1960-1991**

Year	Number of Visitor Arrivals (000)	Average Length of Stay (Day)	Visitor Days (millions)	Revenue from Tourism (billion baht)	Visitor Arrivals EAST-ASIA & PACIFIC (000)
1960	81	3.0	0.2	0.2	*
1970	629	4.8	3.0	2.2	*
1980	1,859	4.9	9.1	17.8	*
1985	2,438	5.6	13.6	31.8	1,436
1986	2,818	5.9	16.7	37.3	1,696
1987	3,483	6.1	21.1	50.0	2,125
1988	4,231	7.4	31.1	78.9	2,583
1989	4,810	7.6	36.7	96.4	2,956
1990	5,299	7.1	37.4	110.6	3,306
1991	5,087	7.1	36.1	100.0	3,190
	(Average	Annual	Growth	Rates (%/year)	
1960-1970	22.7	4.8	28.6	27.2	*
1970-1980	11.5	0.2	11.7	23.4	*
1980-1990	11.0	3.7	15.2	20.1	*
1985-1990	16.8	4.8	22.4	28.3	18.2
1990-1991	(4.0)	0.4	(3.5)	(9.6)	(3.5)

\* Data not available

Source: Thailand Tourist Statistical Reports 1990 and 1991

**Table 1.3 Tourist Arrivals and Expenditure by Region****Tourist Arrivals**

Region	Thai (in thousands)	(%)	Foreign (in thousands)	(%)	Total (in thousands)	(%)
North	2,696	15.3	897	9.1	3,593	13.1
Northeast	2,585	14.7	65	0.7	2,650	9.6
Central	7,133	40.6	5,178	52.3	12,311	44.8
East	1,466	8.3	1,348	13.6	2,814	10.2
West	1,472	8.4	335	3.4	1,807	6.6
South	2,217	12.6	2,077	21.0	4,294	15.6
Grand Total	17,569	100.0	9,900	100.0	27,469	100.0

**Tourist Expenditure**

	(million baht)	(%)	(million baht)	(%)	(million baht)	(%)
North	12,092	20.6	6,188	7.1	18,281	12.6
Northeast	4,472	7.6	256	0.3	4,728	3.2
Central	27,965	47.7	44,446	51.2	72,411	49.8
East	2,305	3.9	15,557	17.9	17,862	12.3
West	1,887	3.2	1,876	2.2	3,763	2.6
South	9,941	16.9	18,529	21.3	28,471	19.6
Grand Total	58,662	100.0	86,852	100.0	145,516	100.0

Source : Study analysis of TAT survey results 1989/1990

Note : The above data are drawn from TAT surveys in the main tourist regions.

**Table 1.4 Thailand Lodging Supply by Region**

(unit : rooms)

Region	1986	1990	New rooms per year	1991	Change 91/90	Share 1991 rooms
Bangkok	33,089	41,085	1,999	45,548	4,463	24%
Central	10,578	14,012	859	15,202	1,190	8%
Eastern	18,397	32,929	3,633	37,880	4,951	20%
Northern	19,083	24,566	1,371	28,140	3,574	15%
Southern	23,311	42,103	4,698	48,276	6,173	25%
Northeast	12,539	13,898	340	15,407	1,509	8%
Total	116,997	168,593	12,900	190,453	21,860	100%
Change		10%			13%	

Source : TAT Statistical Report 1991

**Table 1.5 Forecasts of Asia-Pacific Travel by Destination, 1988-2000**

Destination	Arrivals (000)			Nights spent (mn)		
	1988	2000	% Annual growth 1988-2000	1988	2000	% Annual growth 1988-2000
Australia	2,250	5,900	8.5	58	98	4.5
China (a)	1,575	3,950	8.0	15	41	8.5
Hawaii (b)	1,850	7,500	12.5	10	36	11.0
Hong Kong (a)	4,500	7,600	4.5	16	24	3.5
Indonesia	1,300	4,500	11.0	17	63	12.0
Japan	2,350	5,050	6.5	14	27	5.5
South Korea	2,050	3,050	3.5	12	16	2.5
Malaysia (a)	1,275	3,300	8.5	8	24	9.5
New Zealand	775	2,300	9.5	14	34	7.5
Philippines	1,050	2,050	6.0	9	17	5.5
Singapore	4,175	7,400	5.0	14	25	5.0
Taiwan	1,925	2,750	3.0	12	15	2.0
Thailand	4,225	12,050	9.0	29	100	11.0
Other destinations (a)	3,150	4,900	3.5	22	46	6.5
Total	32,500	72,100	7.0	252	565	7.0

NB: i Data are rounded and may not add up to totals shown.

ii Forecasts include effects of anticipated constraints

(a) Excludes the quasi-domestic and other special flows projected separately in Table 1.3.

(b) Excludes arrivals from North America.

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, Far East and Pacific Travel in the 1990s.

Table 2.1 Tourist Arrivals, Length of Stay, Daily Expenditure per Tourist and Total Expenditure by Major Tourist Areas

REGION/ AREA	Tourist Arrivals (visits-thousands)			Length of stay (days)		Daily expenditure per tourist (baht)		Total Expenditure (thousand bahts)		
	Local	Foreign	Total	Local	Foreign	Local	Foreign	Local	Foreign	Total
<b>NORTH</b>										
CHIANGMAI	1,803	584	2,387	4.2	5.0	1,270	1,694	9,690,128	4,936,273	14,626,402
CHIANGRAI	300	213	512	3.4	3.7	1,221	1,063	1,237,118	824,478	2,061,595
PITSANULOK	593	90	683	1.8	1.6	1,150	2,233	1,246,709	323,968	1,570,678
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,696</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>3,583</b>					<b>12,173,956</b>	<b>6,084,719</b>	<b>18,258,675</b>
<b>NORTHEAST</b>										
NAKORN RATCHASIMA	737	44	781	1.8	3.2	657	1,392	881,575	193,950	1,075,525
UBOL RATCHATHANEE	510	3	513	2.5	2.8	956	1,521	1,223,891	11,182	1,235,073
KHONKAEN	559	9	568	2.0	1.7	715	1,457	811,136	23,077	834,213
UDONTHANEE	640	9	648	2.8	2.6	730	1,095	1,313,308	24,803	1,338,111
NAKORN PANOM	139	1	140	2.3	3.2	758	846	242,228	2,958	245,186
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,585</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>2,651</b>					<b>4,472,137</b>	<b>255,971</b>	<b>4,728,109</b>
<b>CENTRAL</b>										
BANGKOK	7,133	5,178	12,310	4.7	3.5	843	2,460	27,965,147	44,446,012	72,411,158
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,133</b>	<b>5,178</b>	<b>12,310</b>					<b>27,965,147</b>	<b>44,446,012</b>	<b>72,411,158</b>
<b>EAST</b>										
CHOLBURI(PATTAYA)	476	1,276	1,751	2.1	6.2	918	1,917	899,227	15,092,323	15,991,550
RAAYONG	825	55	880	1.7	2.2	814	2,284	1,127,850	281,524	1,409,374
TRAD	165	17	183	1.6	3.4	1,044	3,170	278,065	183,304	461,369
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,466</b>	<b>1,348</b>	<b>2,814</b>					<b>2,305,142</b>	<b>15,557,151</b>	<b>17,862,293</b>
<b>WEST</b>										
KARNCHNABURI	801	71	872	1.5	2.3	717	1,318	872,465	211,975	1,084,440
PECTHBURI(CHA-AM)	436	116	553	1.9	4.3	834	1,749	680,834	876,466	1,557,299
PRAJUBKIRIKAN(HUA-HIN)	235	147	381	1.7	2.8	822	1,952	333,788	788,325	1,122,113
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,472</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>1,807</b>					<b>1,887,087</b>	<b>1,876,766</b>	<b>3,763,853</b>
<b>SOUTH</b>										
SONGHKLA(HAAD-YA)	1,011	730	1,741	3.8	3.8	1,548	2,539	5,993,154	7,077,180	13,070,333
PHKET	483	752	1,235	4.4	5.4	1,070	1,556	2,281,236	6,264,517	8,545,753
NARATIWAT(SU-NGAI-KOLOK)	100	255	355	2.2	2.0	854	1,295	183,856	657,938	841,794
SURATTHANEE(URBAN)	477	8	485	2.6	1.9	1,070	1,556	1,342,062	24,392	1,366,455
SAMUI	146	332	478	2.6	8.8	1,070	1,556	411,598	4,536,971	4,948,569
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,217</b>	<b>2,077</b>	<b>4,295</b>					<b>10,211,906</b>	<b>18,560,998</b>	<b>28,772,903</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>17,569</b>	<b>9,889</b>	<b>27,458</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>59,015,373</b>	<b>86,781,617</b>	<b>145,796,990</b>

Note : (1) Samui & Suratthanee Expenditures are Estimated.

(2) There is some double counting in the above data since one tourist visiting two or more areas will declare more than one area.

Source : Survey of Internal Tourism 2533/1990; TAT.

**Table 2.2 Highlights of Survey of Foreign Tourists 1992**

Key markets for Isan	
W Europe (France, UK, Germany)	61%
N America (USA, Canada)	28
E Asia & Pacific	11
Transportation to region	
travel agency arranged (car/bus)	56%
private car	30
other	14
Type of trip organization	
group/agency	80%
independent	20
Main purpose of trip	
vacation	45%
work related	38
visiting friends & relatives	15
other	2
Type of accommodation	
hotel	84%
guest house	6
other	10
Information source	
tourism literature	45%
travel agency advice	27
friends & relatives	26
radio/TV/press	2
Shares visiting other regions in Kingdom	
Bangkok & Central	99%
Eastern Seaboard	23
North	14

Notes: These are findings of the April-June survey of 320 foreign visitors to the Study Area performed for this Study by Chula Unisearch. Percentages are based on this sampling of tourists to the Study Area.



Table 2.3 Visitors to National Parks in the Study Area, 1989-1990

PLACE	Nakhon Nayok		Prachin Buri		Ubon Ratchathani				Mukdahan			
	Khao Yai		Pang Sida		Kaeng Tana		Phu Chong-Na Yoy		Phu Pha Taem			
	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990		
JANUARY	37,584	58,705	-	-	14,816	7,244	2,958	-	-	29,944	11,284	12,460
FEBRUARY	46,977	43,762	1,853	-	15,578	4,950	2,561	7,378	-	19,833	13,128	10,196
MARCH	23,586	40,531	2,804	-	15,898	5,842	2,876	6,170	-	17,289	7,476	7,149
APRIL	36,276	56,367	2,469	-	40,516	26,095	2,496	5,859	-	49,124	10,533	11,462
MAY	36,572	45,982	2,077	-	16,608	21,715	2,814	5,998	-	13,762	8,319	5,303
JUNE	40,906	44,990	4,604	-	16,936	20,300	2,945	5,924	-	9,225	9,274	4,264
JULY	101,351	75,335	4,808	5,718	20,627	20,011	3,566	5,966	-	21,201	6,925	5,870
AUGUST	74,891	93,278	5,564	3,166	14,935	21,270	5,063	6,160	-	21,636	6,592	6,347
SEPTEMBER	68,320	71,007	2,295	5,124	14,767	20,933	6,929	6,177	-	24,417	6,809	6,347
OCTOBER	79,452	46,450	2,792	8,249	4,436	20,215	6,933	4,596	-	28,234	9,031	11,069
NOVEMBER	47,523	84,362	-	1,950	5,164	19,810	-	4,687	39,067	14,759	7,244	6,488
DECEMBER	56,961	91,709	-	1,647	7,670	19,415	-	4,355	10,730	22,428	7,803	9,169
TOTAL	650,453	752,478	29,266	25,854	187,951	207,800	39,147	63,270	49,797	271,852	104,418	96,124

Note : (-) means not available.

Source : National Parks Division

Table 2.4 Visitors to Historical Parks and National Museums in the Study Area, 1990-1991

PLACE	Prachin Buri		Nakhon Ratchasima				Buri Ram		Surin	
	Prachin Buri National Museum		Phimai Historical Park		Phimai National Museum		Phanon Rung Historical Park		Surin National Museum	
	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991	1990	1991
JANUARY	2,252	1,775	47,296	24,043	6,777	2,482	56,911	40,308	1,236	570
FEBRUARY	1,748	933	23,226	27,916	4,323	+	30,028	36,624	1,042	447
MARCH	305	277	22,837	22,834	2,159	+	31,100	15,715	919	679
APRIL	388	861	37,975	22,834	2,625	+	53,630	46,682	650	1,194
MAY	350	374	19,077	17,154	2,328	+	27,055	22,787	837	822
JUNE	487	310	14,205	13,546	1,543	+	15,765	14,248	936	355
JULY	505	397	14,305	19,122	3,079	+	17,569	8,179	395	453
AUGUST	410	682	16,736	12,221	2,201	+	14,273	3,916	725	485
SEPTEMBER	259	280	11,904	12,729	1,570	+	14,777	6,413	887	331
OCTOBER	216	-	31,739	-	2,416	-	39,201	-	795	-
NOVEMBER	301	-	18,581	-	3,216	-	31,268	-	865	-
DECEMBER	794	-	28,143	-	2,949	-	26,521	-	570	-
TOTAL	8,015	5,889	286,024	172,399	35,186	2,482	358,098	194,872	9,857	5,336

Note : (+) means temporarily closed.

(-) means not available.

Source : Fine Arts Department

**Table 2.5 Tourist Visits to Forest Parks in the Study Area, 1989-1990**

PLACE	Nakhon Ratchasima		Buri Ram		Surin				Yasothon	
	Jed Sao Noi		Khao Ka Dong		Khao Phanon Savay		Pa Son Nhong Ku		Phu Mu	
MONTH	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990	1989	1990
JANUARY	53,724	54,526	13,646	11,670	3,051	2,927	436	928	2,438	-
FEBRUARY	61,890	96,134	11,887	10,473	5,792	2,053	495	1,115	3,093	-
MARCH	36,079	38,418	20,291	9,574	639	1,337	704	1,189	1,218	-
APRIL	67,022	49,858	24,285	-	1,572	1,296	506	847	3,762	-
MAY	31,442	30,098	16,374	-	1,110	841	633	891	2,647	-
JUNE	-	26,204	13,739	-	600	155	689	610	2,331	-
JULY	41,782	27,893	15,181	9,827	1,539	1,696	343	736	2,942	-
AUGUST	32,483	26,275	14,749	9,695	545	723	484	985	1,398	-
SEPTEMBER	28,192	27,695	12,126	-	258	1,740	871	863	1,089	-
OCTOBER	59,078	47,991	-	8,866	895	1,084	1,173	1,313	-	-
NOVEMBER	40,416	30,557	-	7,171	679	717	1,156	920	-	-
DECEMBER	27,393	33,992	9,593	10,157	393	1,145	770	1,166	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>479,501</b>	<b>489,641</b>	<b>151,871</b>	<b>77,433</b>	<b>17,073</b>	<b>15,714</b>	<b>8,260</b>	<b>11,563</b>	<b>22,918</b>	<b>-</b>

Remark : (-) means not available.

Source : Royal Forestry Department

**Table 2.6 Basic Tourism Information by Province**

Provinces	Rooms hotels	Thai visitors (000)	Foreign visitors (000)	Souvenirs	Slogans	Local events
Nakhon Nayok	244 12	508	0	marble items bamboo items ceramics, food preserves	Ancient fort town Weekend escape from Bangkok	Phra Putta Chai Fair
Prachinburi	735 25	313	0	fruits & fruit items	Ancient fort town	Rocket Festival Agricultural Fair (features local fruits)
Nakhon Ratchasima	2,432 50	1,467	48	silks, ceramics, food items	Home of Heroine Suranaree Khmer heritage country Land of fine silk, pottery	KhunYing Mo Fair Candle Procession Phimai Boat Races (major)
Buriram	583 20	312	4	tie-dye silk goods, basketry	Khmer heritage country Ancient volcanic mountains	Phanom Rung Fair (major) Kite Festival, Boat Races
Surin	722 15	358	30	silk, silver items, basketry, food items	Khmer heritage country Elephant country Fine silk, rice, carrots	Elephant Roundup (major)
Sisaket	337 8	149	0	silk, basketry, garlic	Khmer heritage country Land of flowers, onion, garlic	Lamduan Flower Blossom Festival (twice yearly)
Ubon Ratchathani	1,287 31	727	3	silk, silver, wood, metal bronze, basketry items	Land of the Lotus Candle Festival, Emerald Triangle Land of the Two Color River	Candle Festival, Songkran in April, October Boat Races
Yasothon	172 6	61	1	silk, basketry, khit pillows & cushions	Land of Rocket Festival, Khit cushions & sweetwater melon	Songkran Festival Rocket Festival
Mukdahan	118 5	72	0	silk, khit cushions	Mekhong R country Land of mountainous beauty	Ruam Phao Thai (native tribes fest) Sweet Tamarind Fair
Total rooms	6,630					
Total hotels	172					

Notes : Visitor volumes are for 1987 except Ubon & Korat (1990).

Sources : Chula Unisearch survey, TAT surveys

**Table 2.7 Inventory of Major Tourism Resources**

**NAKHON NAYOK PROVINCE**

Golf Courses : Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy, PrimeCity, Royal Hills,  
Bangkok Royal, Bho-Ngam, Khao Changok.  
Resort : Wang-Ree Conference Resort Hotel

**PRACHIN BURI PROVINCE**

**Khao Yai National Park**

- largest in area and 2nd most visited park in Thailand
- 2,169 sq km area, 344 km perimeter (in 4 provinces)
- highest peak 1,351 m, in Dongrek Mountain Range
- attractions of vegetation, wildlife and cool climate
- 3 hour drive from central Bangkok, 115 km
- scheduled bus service from Bangkok's Northern Terminal
- road entrances from Korat (north) Nakon Nayok (south)
- adjacent to Tha Plan National Park
- partially developed with visitor facilities
- motor lodge and cabins closed to the public
- 18 hole golf course closed to the public
- underused potential for nature oriented activities  
(trekking, wildlife watching, nature walks, horseback riding, etc)
- over 700,000 visitors 1990, management plan available
- plan for irrigation dam at Thung Ngu Luam in south area to create 1,800 ha reservoir (Hew Narok Waterfall)

**Border Market at Poipet (Cambodia) crossing**

- 6 km east of Aranyaprathet
- 5 km from border crossing
- basic visitor facilities, ample parking
- goods from numerous countries including China, Vietnam, Cambodia
- 200 m from railroad line to Bangkok
- used by retailers, wholesalers
- twin market on Cambodian side of crossing
- 4 hour drive from central Bangkok, 250 km

**Tha Plan National Park**

- second largest park in area but with low visitation
- 2,236 sq km area, 360 km perimeter (in 2 provinces)
- in Dongrek Mountain Range
- minimal visitor facilities and roads available
- located between Kao Yai & Pang Sida National Parks
- contains groves of talipot palm trees
- mountainous topography, highest peak 992 m
- one third of area requiring reforestation
- 3.5 hour drive from central Bangkok, 180 km

**Pang Sida National Park**

- 844 sq km area, 245 km perimeter
- in Dongrek Mountain Range, highest point 850 m

- known for waterfalls
- adjacent to Tha Plan & Ta Phraya National Parks
- 4 hour drive from Bangkok, 225 km
- low visitation per remoteness and lack of facilities

#### Ta Phraya National Park (proposed)

- proposed park along Cambodian border in Ta Phraya tambon
- 4.5 hour drive from Bangkok, 290 km
- purpose unclear, development plan to be prepared
- km area

#### Prachin Buri National Museum

- in center of Prachinburi City

### **NAKHON RATCHASIMA PROVINCE**

#### Phimai Historical Park

- Khmer sanctuary built in 12 century AD
- restoration of central structures accomplished with French assistance highlighting architectural finery
- 4.5 hr drive from Bangkok, 300 km
- 40 min drive from Korat, 60 km
- surrounded by village development, population 1,000
- national museum under construction to open mid 1993
- in a village surrounded by branches of the Moon River
- significant foreign visitor volume especially European

#### Pak Chong resort area

- 3.5 hr drive from Bangkok, 125 km
- adjacent to north border of Kao Yai National Park
- surrounded by mountains of Dongrek Mountain Range
- featuring resort hotels, vacation homes, golf courses
- focus of private sector development oriented to high income Bangkok market of Thai and foreign residents

#### Pak Thong Chai silk village

- showcase village for processing of silk into products
- 25 km south of Korat City, 281 km from Bangkok
- featuring complete visitor facilities (museum, information, shopping, restaurants, silk workshops, etc)
- some foreign visitor volume

#### Dan Kwian pottery village

- showcase village for pottery workshops using ancient styles and techniques
- numerous unique displays of products in open air shops
- 4 hr drive from Bangkok, 270 km
- 14 km south of Korat City on Route 24

#### Maha Veeravongse National Museum

- in center of Korat City

- Golf Courses : Golden Valley, Pakchong Highland, Khao Yai NP, Suranaree (more under development)  
 Resorts : Green Valley, Juldis both in Pakchong

## **BURI RAM PROVINCE**

### **Khao Phanom Rung & Muang Tam Historical Park**

- ancient Khmer sanctuary built in 10-13 centuries AD
- restored condition highlights architectural finery
- dramatic hilltop location of Prasat Hin Khao Phanom Rung
- nearby Muang Tam location next to a baray (ancient pond)
- fair visitor facilities and exhibits
- 5 hr drive from Bangkok, 375 km
- 1.5 hr drive from Pimai, 110 km
- some foreign visitor volume

## **SURIN PROVINCE**

### **Elephant Roundup at Surin City (annual event)**

- annual 2 day event with over 100 elephants, cast of hundreds
- 5 hr drive from Bangkok, 460 km
- some foreign visitor volume in attendance of several thousand
- possibly Thailand's best known event abroad

### **Surin National Museum**

- in Surin City

Golf Course : Royal Thai Army Surin

## **SI SA KET PROVINCE**

### **Khao Phra Viharn Historical Park**

- unrestored Khmer sanctuary situated on the Thai-Cambodian border in Cambodian territory
- dramatic clifftop location 547 m above Cambodian plain
- 2 hr drive from Ubon City, 120 km
- imminent improvement of basic visitor services by Thailand
- heavy visitor volumes including some foreign visitors

### **Additional temples & ruins**

- numerous ancient and modern cultural points of interest along the road Surin City-Sisaket City-Ubon City
- including working temples and restored antiquities

## **UBON RATCHATHANI PROVINCE**

### **Pha Taem National Park**

- prehistoric rock paintings on cliffs overlooking Mekhong R
- 2 hr drive from Ubon City, 90 km
- striking panorama of river and Laos
- no visitor facilities available

### Kong Chiem Village

- elevated location over Mekhong R with panorama of Laos and junction of Moon and Mekhong rivers
- 1.5 hr drive from Ubon City, 70 km
- departure point for river cruises

### Kaeng Tana National Park

- rocky rapids and forested area near mouth of Moon R
- cliffs and rock formations with some views
- 1.5 hr drive from Ubon City, 75 km
- 80 sq km area, 60 km perimeter
- located downriver from Pak Moon Dam under construction
- offering limited visitor facilities including bungalows

### Phibun Mangsahan town

- pleasant village on Moon River upriver from Pak Moon Dam
- 1 hr drive from Ubon City, 40 km
- panorama of river and its Kaeng Saphue rapids
- location of bridge to north shore attractions of Kong Chiem and Pha Taem National Park

### Ubon Ratchathani city

- location of numerous temples, riverside city center, museum
- 10 hr drive from Bangkok, 629 km
- transportation hub with long distance bus, rail & air service
- full visitor services (lodging, information, banks, etc)

### Chong Mek border market

- location between Thai and Lao checkpoints
- offering goods from Laos, Thailand and other countries
- 1.5 hr drive from Ubon City, 90 km
- pleasant wooded environment with little vehicle traffic

### Phu Chong Nayoi National Park (Emerald Triangle)

- unique location at junction of three nations in Dongrek Mountain Range
- 686 sq km in area, 203 km perimeter
- pleasant panorama over Cambodian plain to south
- waterfalls and rock formations
- 2.5 hr drive from Ubon City, 100 km
- currently in military security zone with limited public access

### Ubon Ratchathani National Museum

- location in center of Ubon City

## **YASOTHON PROVINCE**

### Rocket Festival (Soeng Bung Fai, annual event)

- 2 day event falling in mid May
- of interest to regional population
- 9 hr drive from Bangkok, 531 km



## **MUKDAHAN PROVINCE**

### **Mukdahan City**

- Mekhong R location with panoramas of river, Lao shore
- crossing point by ferry to Suvannakhet in Laos
- 10 hr drive from Bangkok, 642 km
- market with items from neighboring countries

### **Mukdahan National Park**

- .5 hr from Mukdahan City, 16 km.
- 48 sq km in area, 60 km perimeter
- unusual rock formations and Bhuddist sites
- some cliffs and panoramas

**Sources :** Chula Unisearch survey, TAT materials inspections

**Table 2.8 Hotel Capacity in Study Area in 1990**

Region	Ho tels		Guest houses		Bun galows		Ot her		To tal		%
	Places	Rooms	Places	Rooms	Places	Rooms	Places	Rooms	Places	Rooms	
Prachin Buri	25	735	-	-	4	67	-	-	29	802	11.40
Nakhon Nayok	12	244	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	244	3.47
Nakhon Ratchasima	50	2,432	2	103	4	59	1	58	57	2,652	37.70
Buri Ram	20	583	-	-	1	20	-	-	21	603	8.57
Ubon Ratchathani	31	1,287	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	1,287	18.30
Mukdahan	5	118	-	-	2	35	-	-	7	153	2.18
Yasothon	6	172	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	172	2.45
Surin	15	722	-	-	3	40	-	-	18	762	10.83
Sisaket	8	337	-	-	1	22	-	-	9	359	5.10
<b>Study Area</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>6,630</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>7,034</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Northeast</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>13,269</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>13,898</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Whole Kingdom</b>	<b>2,578</b>	<b>146,118</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>9,148</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>12,811</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>3,671</b>	<b>168,593</b>	<b>-</b>

Source : TAT.

**Table 3.1 Kingdom and Study Area Tourist Forecast to 2010**

unit: thousands tourists

	Kingdom tourists	Kingdom T-days	LNE&UE tourists	share	LNE&UE T-days	share
1992	4,723.7	33,538.0	80.0	1.7%	160.0	0.5%
1996	7,195.1	54,682.9	273.4	3.8%	546.8	1.0%
2001	9,680.4	80,347.1	602.6	6.2%	1,205.2	1.5%
2010	19,351.1	160,614.1	1,606.1	8.3%	3,212.3	2.0%
growth rates:						
1992-1996	11.1%	13.0%	36.0%		36.0%	
1996-2001	6.1%	8.0%	17.1%		17.1%	
2001-2010	8.0%	8.0%	11.5%		11.5%	

note: T-days (tourist-days) represent one tourist staying one day in the region.

source: JICA Study Team analysis, EIU Far East and Pacific Travel in the 1990s.

**Table 3.2 Forecast of Foreign Exchange Earning for LNE-UE**

unit: 1992 value baht

	LNE&UE T-days (000s)	daily spend	total earning (mn)	average annual increase	US\$ total earning (mn)
1992	160	1,400	224	-	9
1996	547	1,400	766	36.0%	30
2001	1,205	1,400	1,687	17.1%	66
2010	3,212	1,400	4,497	11.5%	176

notes:

Constant 1992 baht are assumed (ie 0 inflation).

US\$ equivalent in 1992 of 1,400 baht is US\$55 (US\$1=25.5 baht).

source: JICA Study Team analysis

**Table 3.3 Evaluation of Potential of Major Tourist Resources (1/2)**

Name	Type	Spec	Road Distances		Timing	Appeal	Comment
			Agency Access	BMA nearest city			
Nakon Nayok Province:							
1. golf courses-several	sport	pri		90	10	short	minor L high income Thai & foreigners
2. Resort Hotel	resort	pri		90	10	short	minor LF high income Thai & foreigners
3. waterfalls	nature	npd		100	10-25	short	minor L in/near Kao Yai Nat Pk
Prachinburi Province:							
* 4. Khao Yai Nat Pk	nature	npd		115	25	all	major LF overnight lodging required focal point for nature tourism
* 5. Border Market at Aranyaprathet	retail	pri	rail	250	6	short/ mid	major LF main gateway to Cambodia
* 6. Tha Plan Nat Pk	nature	npd	rail	192	92	mid	major L requires all visitor facilities
7. Pang Sida Nat Pk	nature	npd	rail	225	65	mid	minor L requires all visitor facilities
8. Ta Phraya Nat Pk	nature	npd		290	40	long	minor L proposed
9. Prachinburi Nat Museum	culture	fad	rail	120	0	short	minor L --
Nakhon Ratchasima Province:							
* 10. Phimai Hist Pk	culture	fad		300	60	all	major LF sanctuary restoration completed, adjacent townscape unsuitable focal point for cultural tourism
11. Pak Chong resort hotels	resort	pri	rail	125	110	short	minor LF high income Thai & foreigners
12. Pak Chong Thai silk village	culture	pri		281	25	short	minor LF OECF funding for past work
13. Dan Kwian pottery village	culture	pri		270	14	short	minor LF numerous pottery workshops
14. Maha Weerawongse Museum	culture	fad	rail	250	0	short	minor LF a national museum of FAD
15. Phanomwan Sanctuary	culture	fad		276	20	mid	minor LF Khmer restoration in progress with French assistance
16. various golf courses	sport	pri		125-200	0-110	short	minor LF spread between Kao Yai NP & Kora
Buriram Province:							
* 17. Khao Phanom Rung Hist Pk	culture	fad		375	64	mid	major LF related Muang Tam Ruin nearby focal point for cultural tourism
* 18. Muang Tam Sanctuary	culture	fad		390	70	mid	major LF restoration in progress
19. Ban Kruat Ancient Kilns	culture	fad		350	60	short	minor L ruins preserved for public viewing
Surin Province:							
* 20. Elephant Roundup (event)	culture	tat	rail	460	0	mid	major LF annual event 2 days long
21. Prasat Sikhoraphum Sanctuary	culture	fad		487	30	short	minor LF restoration completed
22. Ban Ta Klang Elephant Village	culture	tat		514	57	mid	minor LF remote location, no visitor facilities
23. Prasart Ta Muen Group	culture	fad		526	102	long	minor LF requires restoration, border location
Sisaket Province:							
* 24. Khao Phra Viharn Hist Pk	culture	fad		570	120	short	major LF ruins in Cambodian territory focal point for cultural tourism
25. Sa Kampang Yai Sanctuary	culture	fad		600	26	short	minor LF restoration in progress

**Table 3.3 Evaluation of Potential of Major Tourist Resources (2/2)**

Name	Type	Agency	Specil Access	Road Distances BMA	nearest city	Timing	Appeal	Comment
Ubun Ratchathani Province:								
* 26. Pha Taem Nat Pk	culture	npd		770	140	mid	major LF	near Kong Chiem village
* 27. Kong Chiem village	nature	--		740	120	mid	major LF	regional center for visitor services overlooking Mekhong & Moon river junction focal point for tourism
28. Kaeng Tana Nat Pk	nature	npd		720	120	mid	minor LF	at Mekhong & Moon river junction EGAT dam construction nearby upriver
30. Phibun Mangsahan	varied	--		710	45	short	minor LF	pretty village at Moon R rapids
31. Ubun City	varied	--	rail/air	630	0	short	minor LF	numerous cultural attractions riverside old quarter
32. Ubun Rat Nat Museum	culture	fad		630	0	mid	minor LF	on edge of old city center
* 33. Nong Pa Pong Temple	culture	rad		620	12	short	major L	pilgrimage destination for Bhuddists
34. Phu Chong Nayoi Nat Pk	nature	npd		630	100	long	minor LF	to be developed as international park
Yasothon Province:								
35. Rocket Festival	culture	--		531	0	short	minor L	2 day annual event mid May
Mukdahan Province:								
36. Mukdahan City	nature	--		642	0	mid	minor LF	gateway to Laos
37. Rim Khong Frontier Market	retail	--		642	0	mid	minor LF	goods from neighboring countries
38. Mukdahan Nat Pk	nature	npd		658	16	mid	minor L	--

codes:

pri	private sector	minor	attractions of minor importance	short	7th Plan
npd	National Parks Div	major	attractions of major importance	mid	8th Plan
tat	Tourism Authority of Thailand	L	of interest to local population	long	after 8th Plan
rad	Religious Affairs Dept	F	of interest to foreign tourists	*	major tourist attractions

notes:

All points are accessible by road.

Timing indicates time frame for any major work/projects for improvement.

source: JICA Study Team evaluation

**Table 3.4 Proposed Projects for Tourism Sectoral Development**

Project	Related Sectors	Location Province	Executing Agency	Comments
1. Green Wedge	forestry environmt	Surin Buriram	rfd	formulation of plan with land use controls to create green zones for farmlands, villages and historical areas of Panom Rung & Muang Tam
2. Elephant Park & Training Center at Surin	environmt	Surin	tat	semi-natural habitat in the Green Wedge for elephant reserve, training center and museum forming an all year tourist attraction
3. Khao Pra Viheam International Historical Park Master Plan	cultural preservation	Sisaket	fad	formulation of long term development plan for high volume visitor services, preservation of antiquities and environs
4. Development of Inns/Lodges at National & Historical Parks		various	pri	private sector development of inns and lodges at historical and national parks under official supervision of design and operation
5. Khmer Heritage Trail (highway markers)	transport	various	tat/doh	erection of road signs and promotional measures to publicize a route linking key archeological sites across the Lower Northeast
6. Aranyaprathet Welcome Plaza at the border crossing		Prachinburi	moi/tat pri	shopping center, parking, bank, visas, tourist information all combined in a landscaped plaza to meet all needs of travelers except lodging
7. Khmer Ruins Improvement & Restoration Program	cultural preservation	Buriram Surin	fad	improvements in road access, public utilities, ancient ponds, beautification for Khao Phanom Rung, Muang Tam and Tam Miang ruins and environs
8. Phimai Historical Park and New Town Master Plan	urban	Nak Ratch	fad	plan organizing long term development of new town and expanded ancient area, urban including historical park, nearby new town for village resettlement, and environs
9. Phu Chong Nayoi National Park Master Plan (Emerald Triangle)	environmt	Ubon	npd	peace park at border point with Laos & Cambodia, all visitor services access roads, trails & attractions to be designed and built
10. Ubon Ratchathani Welcome Plaza at Chong Mek border crossing	urban	Ubon	moi/tat pri	shopping center, parking, bank, visas, tourist information all combined in a landscaped plaza to meet all needs of travelers except lodging
11. Mukdahan Welcome Plaza at Mekhong River Bridge	urban	Mukdahan	moi/tat pri	shopping center, parking, bank, visas, tourist information all combined in a landscaped plaza to meet all needs of travelers except lodging
12. Kong Chiam River Village Improvement Program	urban	Ubon	tat/pri	riverbank stabilization, construction of dock and belvedere, public parking, open air amphitheater, utilities for urban commercial expansion

agencies:

cdd: Community Development Dept  
fad: Fine Arts Department  
doh: Dept of Highways  
moi: Ministry of the Interior

nps: National Parks Division  
pri: private sector  
rfd: Royal Forestry Department  
tat: Tourism Authority of Thailand

source: JICA Team evaluation



## Figures





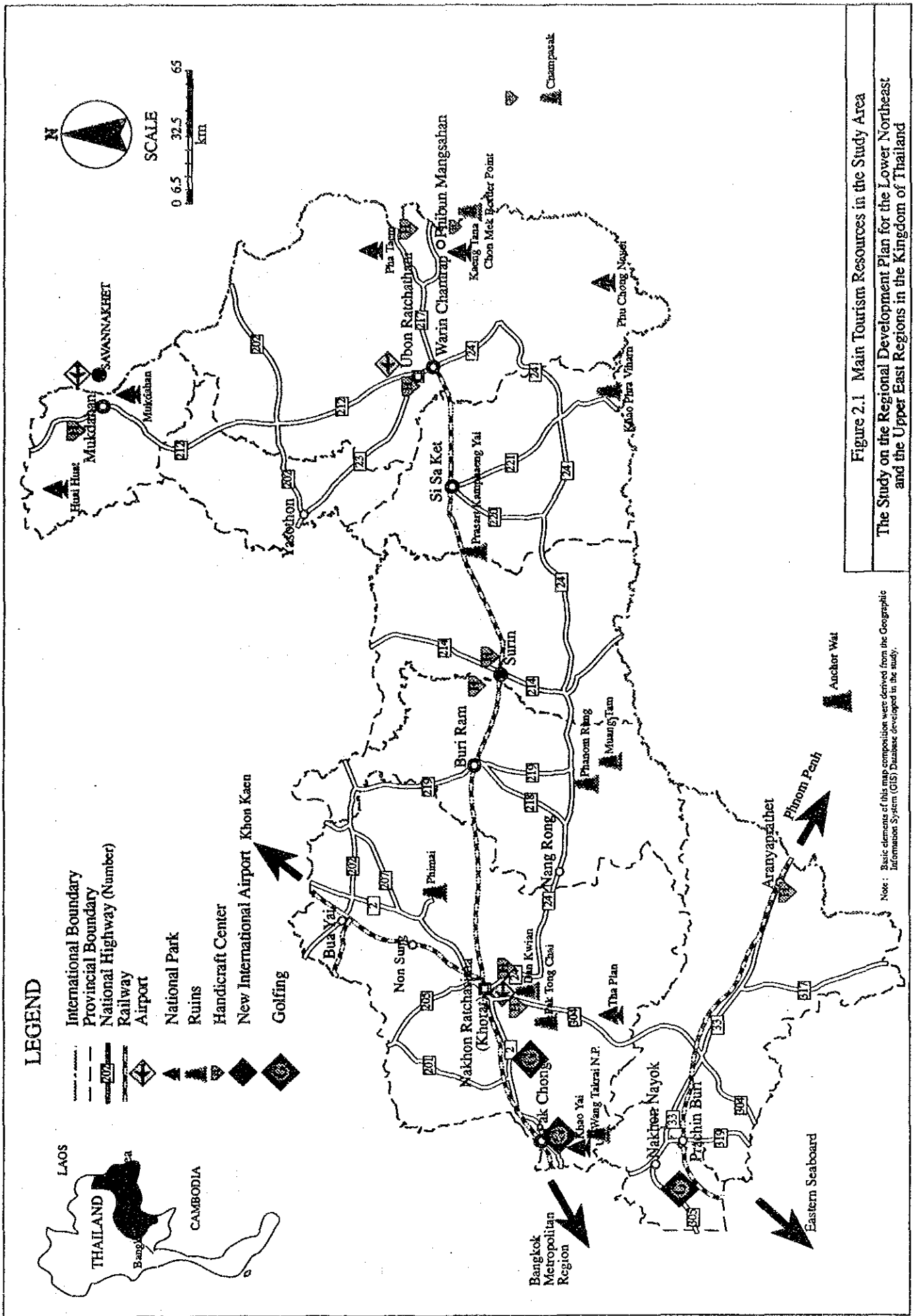


Figure 2.1 Main Tourism Resources in the Study Area  
 The Study on the Regional Development Plan for the Lower Northeast and the Upper East Regions in the Kingdom of Thailand

Note: Basic elements of this map composition were derived from the Geographic Information System (GIS) Database developed in the study.

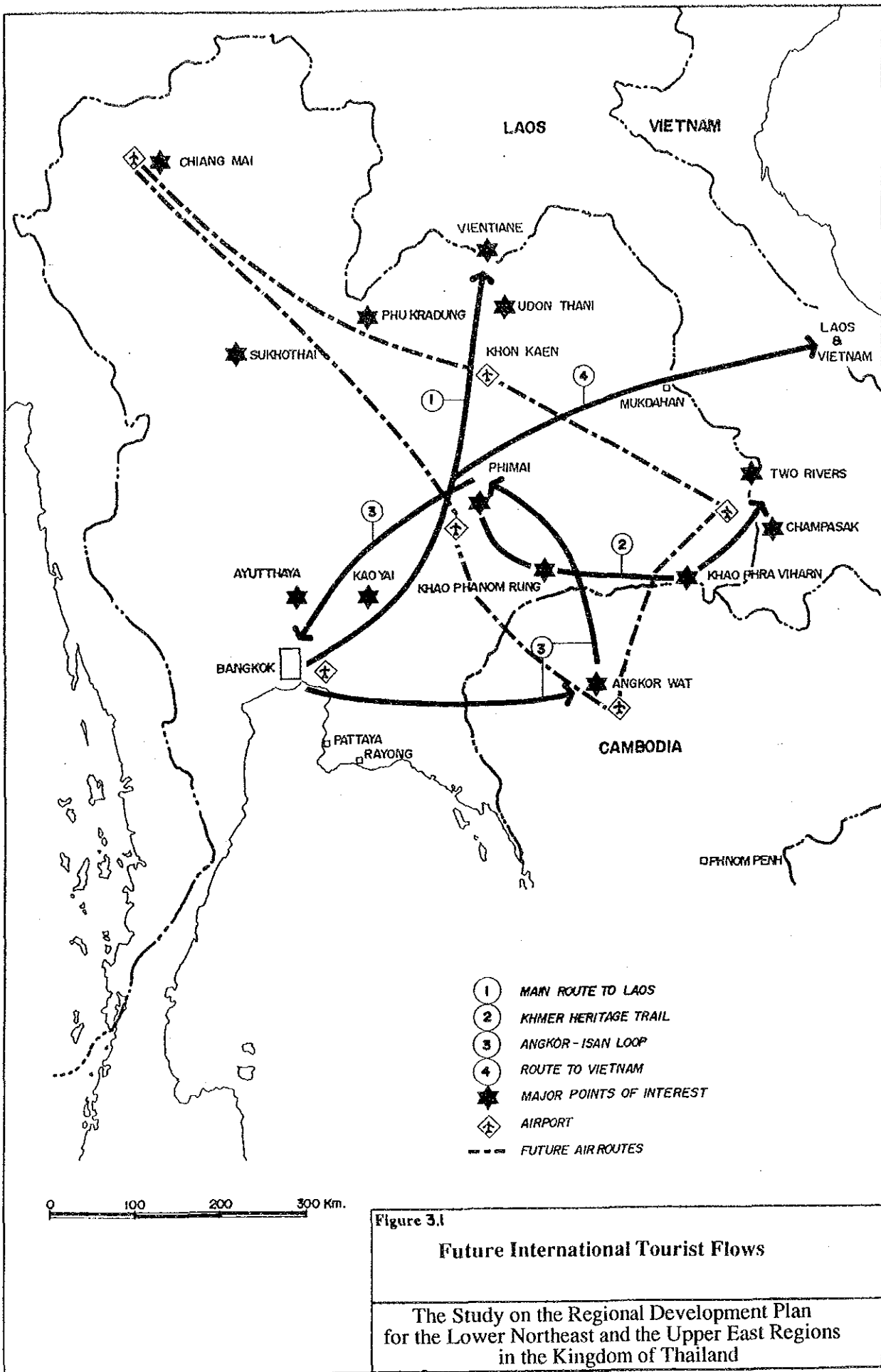
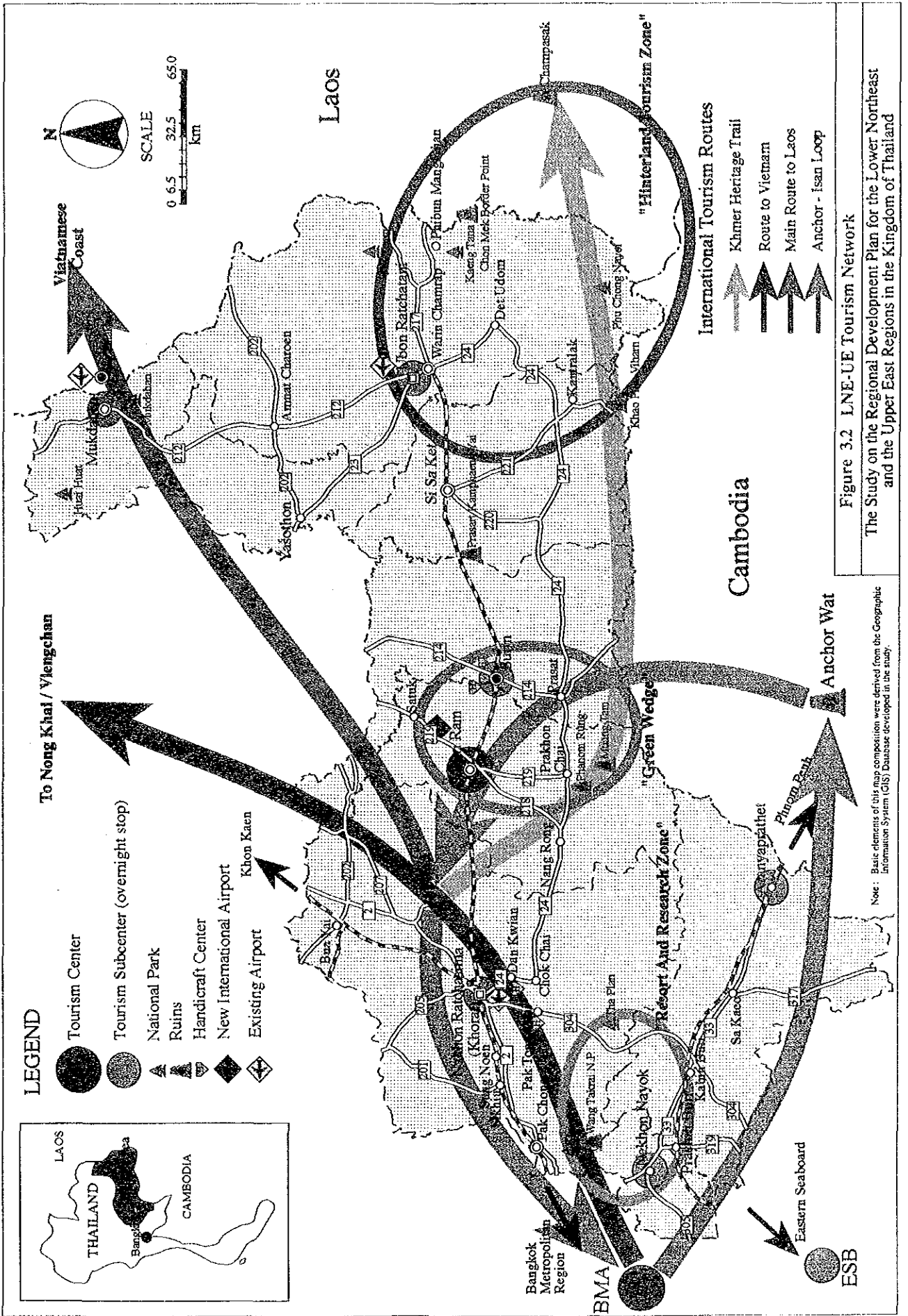


Figure 3.1

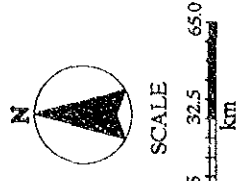
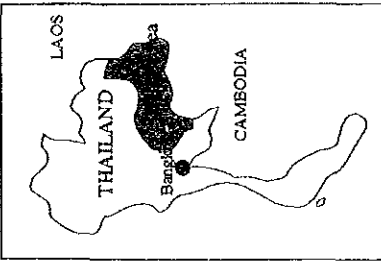
**Future International Tourist Flows**

The Study on the Regional Development Plan for the Lower Northeast and the Upper East Regions in the Kingdom of Thailand



**LEGEND**

- Tourism Center
- Tourism Subcenter (overnight stop)
- National Park
- Ruins
- Handicraft Center
- New International Airport
- Existing Airport



- International Tourism Routes**
- Khmer Heritage Trail
  - Route to Vietnam
  - Main Route to Laos
  - Anchor - Isan Loop

**Figure 3.2 LNE-UE Tourism Network**

The Study on the Regional Development Plan for the Lower Northeast and the Upper East Regions in the Kingdom of Thailand

Note : Basic elements of this map composition were derived from the Geographic Information System (GIS) Database developed in the study.





**APPENDIX**

**PROJECT PROFILES**





**Project Name:** Green Wedge[1]

**Location:** Buri Ram, Surin Provinces

**Agency:** Royal Forestry Department

**Objectives:**

- to improve the quality of life of local inhabitants in the zone through development of a reforested natural environment
- to improve the conditions for water resource management to benefit drinking water supply and irrigation
- to improve the natural environs of tourist attractions of Khao Phanom Rung Historical Park, Muang Tam and Tam Miang sites
- to provide a refreshing natural environment for development of a new Elephant Park as a tourist attraction

**Description:**

- development of a reforestation program covering selected districts in central and southern parts of the provinces
- design and implementation of an educational program for affected populations to improve their water consumption habits
- urban beautification of Buri Ram City, Nang Rong
- preparation of a riverside location as an elephant habitat to accommodate the Elephant Park

**Phasing:** undetermined, possibly on a spatial basis by district

**Timing:** 7th and 8th Plans

**Financing:** public sources

**Comments:** Coordination with the Green Isan project is essential. Also, the possibility of improving any of the ancient ponds and canals in the zone for modern use for purposes of beautification, irrigation or water storage, will be explored. Success of this project will lead to its application in other parts of Thailand (or Indochina) as a pilot project.

**Project Name:** Elephant Park and Training Center[2]

**Location:** Surin Province Surin City/Ban Ta Klang

**Agency:** TAT

**Objectives:**

- creation of year round tourist attraction focusing on elephant life and local history
- creation of a better environment for elephants

**Description:**

- training center (classrooms, dormitory)
- small museum with permanent exhibit
- viewing deck at the river's edge for tourists to view elephant swimming sessions
- coordination of planning with the Green Wedge project

**Phasing:** No phasing needed.

**Timing:** 8th Plan

**Financing:** TAT possibly with private investor

**Comments:**

- Project could be combined with commercial sponsoring of annual Elephant Roundup event to attract private investment.
- This project can be combined with lengthening of Roundup to include additional local cultural content (parades, cultural events).
- The feasibility of including as secondary attractions other themes in this development (other animals, historical or cultural themes) will be considered.

- Project Name:** Khao Pra Viharn International Historical Park Master Plan[3]  
[urgent]
- Location:** Si Sa Ket Province, Cambodian border
- Agency:** TAT, Fine Arts Department
- Objectives:**
- formulation of a master plan to guide development of the entire site including the antiquities (Cambodian side) and parkland and visitor facilities (Thai side)
  - plan of phased preservation and restoration of antiquities
  - plan for development of related visitor and park services
  - plan for early definition and protection of environs to enable policing of activities within the park area
- Description:**
- Team of international experts to include archeologist for restoration of Khmer antiquities park management expert environmentalist/land use expert architect for recreational facilities civil engineer/cost expert international tourism specialist economist/financial expert
  - The plan will define the optimal framework for development of physical resources of the park and for the proper operation of the park. It will set forth a framework for private sector participation in the park's development.
  - It will also define permissible and compatible land uses for the environs of the park.
  - It will also define improved legal and financial arrangements for the participation of Cambodian authorities.
  - The ancient temple and pond of DON TROYN is also to be restored under this program.
- Phasing:**
- 7th Plan for park facilities (Thai territory)
  - as soon as possible for antiquities (Cambodian territory)
- Timing:** Seventh Plan.
- Financing:** TAT, FAD, UNESCO, UNDP/WTO, other foreign source
- Comments:**
- Because of location on the Cambodian border, Cambodian participation may take years to organize. However because of the strong appeal of the sanctuary in its current state, any work on the Thai side can proceed at once.
  - Because of the border location, security considerations are crucial and participation of a Thai security agency may be needed.
  - This park will form a major component of the proposed Khmer Heritage Trail, functioning as an anchor attraction of the Trail, and boost tourism to Si Sa Ket.

- Private partners could develop food, beverage, lodging and conference facilities on site.
- Because of the heavy visitor volumes, this project is urgent

**Project Name:** Development of Inns/Lodges at National and Historical Parks[4]

**Location:** National and historical parks

**Agency:** Private sector, Royal Forestry Department or Fine Arts Department

**Objectives:**

- to provide good quality lodging in the vicinity of cultural attractions facilitating creation of tour circuits for Thai & foreign tourists
- to equip parks with suitable overnight accommodation enabling full use of them by the public for recreational and educational purposes
- to reinforce each location as a focus of cultural activity available to both Thai and foreign tourists

**Description:**

- construction of one or more lodges to a specification harmonious with the special character of the park subject to approval by responsible government authority
- provision of lodging, food & beverage and services for functions as profit-making activities
- negotiation of a land lease providing for regular payment to the relevant authority of rent or land rights and stipulating conditions and limitations of usage

**Phasing:** unnecessary

**Timing:** undetermined - depending on each project

**Financing:** private sector

**Comments:** A private developer can be selected through a competitive bidding process to negotiate a contract/land lease on parkland property.

- This contract will stipulate design and operational conditions and specify complete conditions of contract including land rental formula.
- Cost of providing utilities to the site (power, water, telephone, etc) is subject of negotiation.
- Annual income to the government agency can be applied to improvement of facilities at the same park or at other parks.
- Selection of developer will depend on quality of architectural design, offered lease terms, and overall contribution his proposal can make to improve the environment of the park.
- Possible locations include Khao Yai, Tha Plan, Pha Taem, Kaeng Tana national parks and Phimai, Khao Phanom Rung, Muang Tam and Khao Phra Viharn historical parks. The Mekhong River village of Khong Chiem is also a prime location.

- Project Name:** Khmer Heritage Trail[5]
- Location:** Korat, Buri Ram, Si Sa Ket, Lopburi, Laos
- Agency:** TAT, Fine Arts Department, Department of Highways
- Objectives:**
- to create a flow of foreign and Thai tourism across Lower Isan to some remote areas
  - to increase awareness of importance of Khmer heritage in Thailand among both foreign tourists and Thai people
- Description**
- Initial research by the Fine Arts Department can establish the sites for inclusion along the route. TAT can design the required road signs and both agencies can produce printed materials intended for the traveling public.
  - The trail will consist of a route lying along existing roads with the erection of special road signs to guide travelers from west to east linking Khmer sites such as Lopburi, Pimai, Panomwan, Panom Rung & Muang Tam, Khao Pra Vihearn and Wat Phu in Southern Laos.
  - TAT can produce promotional materials for the travel trade and traveling public about attractions and events along the Trail.
- Phasing:** not necessary [Trail can be created through standard road maintenance programs.]
- Timing:** short term preferable
- Financing:** internal [Cost possibly could be borne by agencies involved such as TAT, Fine Arts Department, Department of Highways.]
- Comments:**
- The project will benefit both foreign tourists, and Thai tourists as well as school groups.
  - In particular it could stimulate self-drive tourism for which this region is ideal, because of good roads and low traffic volumes.
  - An additional north-south trail can be created such as the Angkor trail linking Sukhotai-Pimai-Angkor, using a theme such as the "Angkor Silk Road".

- Project Name:** Aranyaprathet Welcome Plaza[6]
- Location:** Poipet, Prachin Buri Province
- Agency:** Ministry of Interior, Tourism Authority of Thailand
- Objectives:**
- creation of a functional service plaza at the border to ease flow across the border of tourist traffic to/from Angkor Wat (for both individual travelers and groups in coaches)
  - provision of extensive services to all tourists in the region at a convenient and strategic location
- Description:**
- location adjacent to the crossing point to Cambodia
  - minimum 4 hectare plot making possible later expansions
  - physical components:
 

parking for coaches	handicrafts, apparel, etcetera
TAT information office	pharmacy
Cambodian consulate	restaurants
comfort facilities	gasoline station
post office	banks & money changers
international telephone	barber shop
medical clinic	travel agency
  - extensive bazaar with Thai/Cambodian/Vietnamese goods
  - creation of expedited customs clearing for coaches of tourists including computerized preclearing from Bangkok
  - assistance to Cambodian customs agents
  - attractive landscaping, monuments reflecting local history
- Phasing:**
- adoption of a flexible design enabling expansion of facilities as traffic grows
- Timing:** Planning can begin once tourist bus traffic into Cambodia develops with peaceful conditions.
- Financing:** joint public/private sector
- Comments:**
- Private sector participation (for example a property developer) could consist of a ground rent payable to the government for use of the unique and privileged property in close proximity to the border. All/part of the construction cost can be borne by the partner.
  - Selection of private partner could be made by competitive bidding procedure to obtain the best possible design and legal and financial conditions for the government.
  - Phase I could begin in 1993 once peace is established and once the road to Sisophon is improved enabling international traffic to grow.
  - This project could be combined with the border trade center proposed elsewhere in the report.

**Project Name:** Khmer Ruins Improvement and Restoration[7]

**Location:** Buri Ram and Surin provinces

**Agency:** Fine Arts Department, Department of Highways, TAT

**Objectives:**

- to improve access between these three sites and the new artery highway to pass through this area
- to prepare and equip these sites to receive large volumes of visitors without any damage
- to perform renovation work on an archeologically valuable site of Khmer ruins near the Kap Chong border crossing into Cambodia

**Description:** At Khao Phanom Rung Historical Park (Buri Ram):

- expansion of visitor facilities as required by increased visitors and motor vehicle traffic and also of public utilities (power, water, drainage, waste disposal, etc)
- improvement and beautification of reservoirs and construction of walkways
- improvement of the light & sound show

At Muang Tam (Buri Ram):

- further landscaping and improvement of grounds and of pond
- improvement of public utilities for hotel, restaurant development

At Tam Muang (Kap Chong District, Surin)

- restoration of ruins, provision of visitor facilities and utilities, construction of access roads

At all three sites:

- road improvements for good access from nearby highways

**Phasing:** undetermined

**Timing:** Eighth Development Plan (completion of artery hwy)

**Financing:** undetermined

**Comments:**

- Khao Panom Rung Historical Park will function as an anchor attraction along the Khmer Heritage Trail and the Angkor Loop. This area lies within the Green Wedge. The Tam Muang group is noteworthy because of its jungle location, its interesting combination of old buildings, and its close proximity to Khao Phanom Rung, and to the future Kap Chong border crossing into Cambodia.



**Project Name:** Phimai Historical Park and New Town Master Plan [8]  
[urgent]

**Location:** Phimai, Nakhon Ratchasima province

**Agency:** Fine Arts Department, Department of Town & Country Planning

**Objective:** - to create an historical community that will function as an anchor or flagship attraction for Isan as Sukhothai Historical Park does for central Thailand, and that will provide a cultural showcase for Isan, serving Thai and foreign visitors for tourism, educational and recreational use

**Description:** - formulation of a long term master plan for the historical park of .5 sq km planning renovation of antiquities including the moat, walls and minor remains and construction of additional facilities inside the ancient wall (where the existing village is)  
- formulation of a master plan for the nearby new town where the resettled population (of approximately 1,000) is to go and definition of legal procedures and an action plan for orderly resettlement  
- implementation of the new town master plan through completion of infrastructure and public utilities, including design and construction of a waterside cultural center  
- formulation and enforcement of a land use plan for the broad area encompassing the Park, new town and surrounding bodies of water  
- improvement of selected ponds and riverbanks lying outside the Historical Park and the new town for beautification of the environs

**Phasing:** phase 1 : master plans, land use plan  
phase 2 : new town preparation  
phase 3 : resettlement and historical park completion

**Timing:** 7th, 8th and 9th Plans

**Financing:** undetermined (foreign & local)

**Comments:** This project will create a regional attraction "Isan's Island City" that will be a major component of tour circuits crossing Isan to the neighboring countries. It is intended to create a functional new town with complete visitor services that will support the neighboring Historical Park and complement it esthetically in a compatible manner. Effective enforcement of the land use plan will assure harmonious commercial and recreational development in close proximity to the historical area. The archeological work successfully completed so far is the essential core of this project which will preserve, expand and complement this outstanding core.

- Project Name:** Phu Chong Nayoi National Park Master Plan[9]  
(also known as Emerald Triangle)
- Location:** Cambodian & Laotian Border of Ubon Ratchathani Province
- Agency:** National Park Division
- Objective:** - Formulation and implementation of a master plan for development of this park.
- Description:** - The plan is to develop preservation and development guidelines reflecting the optimal framework to meet objectives of environmental preservation, wildlife management, recreational usage by tourists, sustainable economic activities such as hunting or agriculture, protection of antiquities, national security in border regions, and other objectives.  
- Evaluation of a possible monument at the tri-frontier point in the park, and of developments at the scenic viewpoints is necessary.  
- The preservation of an ancient rock carving at Lam Dom Noi is to be included in this plan.  
- The role of the private sector in park improvement and management will be defined. Private parties can provide lodging, food and beverage and possibly other services under contractual arrangements with park management.
- Phasing:** phase 1 : master plan preparation in coordination with Lao & Cambodian officials as necessary  
phase 2 : construction of park facilities, roads
- Timing:** Eighth Plan (security conditions permitting)
- Financing:** undetermined
- Comments:** - It will be prudent to await completely peaceful conditions in Cambodia before proceeding with implementation of any master plan.  
- The tri-frontier point could be developed into an important attraction for both Thai and foreign tourists. It is well located inside the Ubon Ratchathani tourism zone near the anchor attraction of Khao Phra Viharn Historical Park one hour's drive to the west.

- Project Name:** Ubon Ratchathani Welcome Plaza [10]
- Location:** Chong Mek, Ubon Ratchathani Province
- Agency:** Ministry of Interior, Tourism Authority of Thailand
- Agency:**
- creation of a functional and attractive service plaza at the border to ease flow across the border of tourist traffic and general travelers to/from Laos (for both individual travelers and groups in coaches)
  - provision of extensive services to all travelers in the region at a convenient and strategic location
- Description:**
- location adjacent to the crossing point to Laos
  - minimum 4 hectare plot making possible later expansions
  - physical components:
 

parking for coaches	handicrafts, apparel, etcetera
TAT information office	pharmacy
Lao consulate	restaurants
comfort facilities	gasoline station
post office	banks & money changers
international telephone	barber shop
medical clinic	travel agency
  - extensive bazaar with Thai/Lao/Vietnamese goods
  - creation of expedited customs clearing for coaches of tourists including computerized preclearing from Ubon Ratchathani
  - assistance to Lao customs agents
  - attractive landscaping, monuments reflecting local history
- Phasing:**
- adoption of a flexible design enabling expansion of facilities as traffic grows
- Timing:** 8th or 9th Plan
- Financing:** joint public/private sector
- Comments:**
- Private sector participation (for example a property developer) will consist of a ground rent payable to the government for use of the unique and privileged location at the border. All/part of the construction cost can be borne by the private partner.
  - Selection of private partner will be made by competitive bidding procedure to obtain the best possible design and legal and financial conditions for the government.
  - This project will greatly expand and improve the border facilities that the provincial government intends to construct there in the near future.

- Project Name:** Mukdahan Welcome Plaza at Mekhong Bridge [11]
- Location:** Mukdahan Province
- Agency:** Ministry of Interior, Tourism Authority of Thailand
- Objectives:**
- creation of a functional and attractive service plaza at the bridge to ease flow across the border of tourist traffic and general travelers to/from Laos (for both individual travelers and groups in coaches)
  - provision of extensive services to all travelers in the region at a convenient and strategic location
- Description**
- location adjacent to the bridge landing
  - minimum 4 hectare plot making possible later expansions
  - physical components:
 

parking for coaches	handicrafts, apparel, etcetera
TAT information office	pharmacy
Lao, Vietnam consulates	restaurants
comfort facilities	gasoline station
post office	banks & money changers
international telephone	barber shop
medical clinic	travel agency
  - extensive bazaar with Thai/Lao/Vietnamese goods
  - creation of expedited customs clearing for coaches of tourists including computerized preclearing from Ubon Ratchathani
  - assistance to Lao customs agents
  - attractive landscaping, monuments reflecting local history
- Phasing:**
- adoption of a flexible design enabling expansion of facilities as traffic grows
- Timing:** 8th Plan or later as traffic volume develops
- Financing:** joint public/private sector
- Comments:**
- Private sector participation (for example a property developer) will consist of a ground rent payable to the government for use of the unique and privileged location at the border. All/part of the construction cost can be borne by the private partner.
  - Selection of private partner will be made by competitive bidding procedure to obtain the best possible design and legal and financial conditions for the government.
  - As of late 1992 a final location for the bridge had not been selected, and a site in Nakhon Panom is under consideration.

**Project Name:** Kong Chiam River Village Improvement Program[12]

**Location:** Kong Chiam Village, Ubon Ratchathani Province

**Agency:** TAT, private sector

**Objective:** - creation of a functional village to serve as focal point for international & domestic tourism in the Mekong Valley east of Ubon Ratchathani City

**Description**

- formulation of development plan and guidelines for utilities, new construction, improvements of streets and public services
- construction of belvedere and riverbank stabilization
- construction of hotel and dock for river traffic
- provision of urban utilities for limited commercial expansion
- construction of open air amphitheater for cultural events
- construction of a marketplace with local goods

**Phasing:** phase 1 : development plan  
phase 2 : implementation

**Timing:** Eighth Development Plan

**Financing:** planning and infrastructure - public  
hotel and commercial building - private

**Comments:**

- Kong Chiam can serve as a focal point for river tourism for both Thailand and Laos (Pakxe, Champasak, Khone waterfalls, 4,000 islands). Inclusion of a small customs office will make possible customs clearing of travelers to/from Laos by river.
- The full opening of the Laos border to foreign tourists will increase international tourism to this area which is on the eastern end of the Khmer Heritage Trail.





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