

3 Major Observation by Singaporean Mission Members

3-1 Tourism Investment Overview

3-1-1 Visitor Arrivals into Laos

The National Tourism Authority (NTA) is projecting a total of 650,000 tourist arrivals into Laos by end 1999, a 23.07% increase compared to 500,200 tourists in 1998. The arrival figures include both arrivals by air and through the borders. Out of the 500,200 visitors, about 121,000 or 24% are international tourists, and about 301,000 (or 60%) are visitors with border pass. Majority of the border traffic comes from Thailand, Vietnam and Chinese.

Table 14. Classification of Visitors into Laos in 1998 (source: NTA)

Category	No of visitors & % share	% increase from 1997
International Tourists	120,923 (24.3%)	33.2%
Regional Tourists		
With passport	71,488 (14.3%)	-24.1%
With border pass	300,395 (60.1%)	11.2%
Thailand Visa Extension	7,414 (1.5%)	-8.4

Major Inbound Visitor Markets into Laos (Jan-Jun 1999):

Thailand	158,941
Vietnam	58,322
France	9,631
UK	5,769
Greece	4,461

France is the largest international visitor source market, followed by UK and Greece. For regional visitor traffic, Thailand contributes the largest number of "visitors"; many of who are on 1-2 day visit for trading and business. Hence, the increase in overall visitor arrivals is due mainly to the high number of Thai repeat border traffic (facilitated by the opening of the Friendship Bridge between Thailand and Vientiane).

3-1-2 Visit Laos Year 1999-2000

Laos is planning to launch the Visit Lao Year (VLY) 1999 on 18 Nov 99.

According to NTA, promotion of the event is currently on the internet. However, the lack of funds and expertise had limited the promotion of the VLY as a national event within Laos where banners pro-

moting VLY were visibly seen in Vientiane and Luang Prabang (post-trip note: STB is facilitating a Channel News Asia journalist to film a documentary of Laos in conjunction with the Visit Laos Year 1999).

Some of the steps taken by NTA to promote VLY are:

- Issuance of 15-day tourist visa upon arrival (at US\$30 each) at the Wattay International Airport and the Friendship Bridge, and at Luang Prabang Airport.
- Issuance of 15-day Border Passes at US\$20 each for group tours from neighbouring countries.
- Official website for Visit Laos Year 1999-2000 (www.visit-laos.com) has been launched since April 99.
- Opening of two new border checkpoints, Champassak Province at Chong Mek/Vang Tao and in Kammouan Province at Thakek/Nakon Panoum.

3-2 Evaluation of Lao Tourism

3-2-1 Vientiane

(1) Arrival & Immigration

Vientiane has a newly-renovated and expanded Wattay International Airport (developed under JICA funding). Design of airport looks clean, very white and spacious which makes it look somewhat empty. Air-conditioning in the arrival and departure hall but not in the "welcoming/waiting" hall.

Immigration procedures are fast and smooth. In view of the VLY 1999/2000, visas upon arrival have been approved. The airport has basic visitor facilities such as 1 visa upon arrival counter, one duty free shop selling only cigarettes & liquor, one Carona Chicken restaurant (Singapore-owned and managed), clean toilet facilities near customs & immigration and one baggage claim belt.

The old Wattay Airport is now used for domestic flights. The airport looks run-down, screening machine for luggage was available but was not in use. Custom clearance was very easy for domestic flights with hardly any luggage checked. The departure waiting room was non-air-conditioned. It was interesting to note that the old Silkair poster was still displayed although Silkair stopped their opera-

tions for almost two years (1 year 8 months).

Vientiane Wattay International Airport is the primary gateway into Laos for international tourists. Since Silkair and Malaysian Airlines System have suspended their direct flights to Vientiane, Bangkok is now the major hub to Laos with a total of 14 flights weekly to Vientiane, serviced by Thai Airways and Lao Aviation (flight time: approx. 55 minutes). Vientiane is also serviced by direct flights from Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, Phnom Penh and Kunming. There are no direct flights from major visitor source markets such as Europe or USA. Only 4 airlines (Thai Airways, Lao Aviation, Yunnan Airlines and Vietnam Airlines,) service Vientiane, which is insufficient to stimulate tourism growth. Laos therefore remains land-locked and isolated due to limited air access.

(2) Flight Schedules:

Thai Airways	7 flights a week from Bangkok
Lao Aviation	7 flights a week to and from Bangkok, 1 weekly flight from Ho Chi Minh City 6 flights a week from Hanoi 2 flights a week from Phnom Penh 1 flight a week from Kunming 2 flights a week from Chiang Mai (via Luang Prabang province)
Vietnam Airlines	6 flights a week from Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi
Yunnan Airlines	1 weekly flight from Kunming

Embassy of Japan Counsellor in Laos, Mr Hiroshi Manabe, indicated that Silkair would resume direct flights into Vientiane. However, Silkair officials in Singapore had earlier indicated that there was no immediate plan to resume direct flights.

Domestic air travel is serviced solely by state-owned Lao Aviation. Lao Aviation flies to 8 domestic points (Luang Prabang, Pakse, Savannakhet, Sayabouri, Xieng Khouang, Namtha, KM20/Thakhek and Vieng Xai). Lao Aviation has 5 China-made aircraft (2Y7 & 3Y12), 1 ATR72 and 1 Russian-made MI-8. Domestic air travel is hampered by the sole monopoly of Lao Aviation. Limited number of flights, concerns over aircraft quality and air safety. Foreign visitors are recommended to take the ATR 72 service only.

(3) Land Access

Laos shares borders with Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, China and Vietnam. Entry from Thailand is via Nong Khai, using the Friendship Bridge and Chong Mek (from Thailand's Ubon Ratchathani province) to Champasek. Entry from Vietnam by land is via Lao Bao on the Vietnamese-Lao border to Sepon, and then, takes a bus to Savannaket. These border entry points are open to foreign tourists. The Lao-Cambodia border entry point is restricted to Laotians and Cambodians only.

(4) River Access

While it still legal for foreigners to take the Tha Deua ferry in Nong Khai (Thailand) to Laos, this form of river transportation has been superceded by the opening of the Lao-Thailand Friendship Bridge since 1994.

(5) Accommodation

There is a shortage of international class hotels in Vientiane and Luang Prabang. There are only 2 international class hotels in Vientiane, 142-room Lao Plaza Hotel (Thai-owned) and 223-room Novotel Belvedere Hotel (100% Singapore-owned) which was the 1st international hotel in Laos. Average occupancy rate is 40% during the May - Oct high season. Room rates for these hotels are in the range of US\$55-69. There is no official hotel ranking system in Laos. Laos, as a whole, has a total of 81 hotels and 2780 hotel rooms.

As the Visit Laos Year is drawing nearer, the country will face problems in accommodating tourists' demand for good hotel facilities, even though local-owned and managed guest-houses are in abundance.

(6) Attractions

i) Entrance fees

A two-tier pricing system for locals and foreigners is practised in Laos. Tourists pay more for entrance fees to attractions and airfares. For example, Lao Aviation charges US\$13 for locals and foreigners US\$113 for return flight between Vientiane and Luang Prabang.

ii) Key Attractions

Vientiane lacks outstanding quality attractions to sustain more than an overnight stay. It is essentially a capital for business and political administration. Major attractions such as Pha That Luang,

Patouxai, the Central Market and view of the Mekong River can be visited within 3-4 hours. Riverside dining by the Mekong River has some tourism potential and currently, dining-by-the Mekong River is patronised by locals. The small local makeshift stalls and restaurants provide basic facilities such as colourful plastic chairs and low dining tables on unpaved ground.

Pha That Luang (the Great Stupa) is an important national monument in Laos, a reminder of once-magnificent 17th Century Lan Xang kingdom. Located at the end of the long Thanon That Luang road, the Great Stupa looks imposing and grand at a distance.

Patouxai (Old Monument) - shaped like the Arc de Triomphe in Paris but close-up, Lao designs dominate. A stairway leading to the top level of Patouxai allowed tourists to snap a view of the city.

Many temples surround Vientiane but unfortunately, many were not well maintained. Broken wooden roofs and run-down paintings in need of restoration are visible. Riverside dining by the Mekong River is a favourite activity for locals. Plans are said to be underway to develop the riverbank into a recreational and dining area.

Ta Laot Sao (Morning Market) - located at the intersection of Thanon Lan Xang and Thanon Khu Vieng. A good place to look for fabrics. The stalls run by Pakistanis and Indians usually sell modern style fabrics. While the Lao-style textiles, are run by Lao vendors. Utilitarian items such as shoulder bags, cushions and pillows are also available in the morning market. A favourite local shopping area.

(7) Affordability

In Vientiane, the hotel rates are between the range of US\$ 22-60 for single occupancy and US\$ 29-69 for twin sharing. Prices are usually quoted inclusive of American Buffet Breakfast. Entrance fees to various attractions are range from 1,000 -4,000 kip which is equivalent to S\$ 0.20 - S\$ 0.80. For a US\$ 50 accommodation in Vientiane it is value for money. A well-furnished interior decor with first class facilities such as Business Centre, Recreation Centre, Swimming Pool, Health Centre, 24 hrs Café, French Restaurant, Beer Garden and Discotheque.

(8) Services

There are a total of 15 registered travel agents in Lao PDR: 5 wholly-owned by government, 2 Joint Venture between government and foreign companies and 8 are private companies. All except

one are headquartered in Vientiane. Luang Prabang Travel & Tour is headquartered in Luang Prabang. The top 3 travel agents in Laos are:

- Inter-Lao Tourism (JV between Lao Government and a French company)
- Lane Xang Travel & Tours (private)
- Diethlem Travel (JV Lao government and Swiss company)

To supplement the compulsory tour guiding training provided by the NTA, the bigger Lao travel agents said they would conduct additional training. Foreign Language skill training in French and English are in high demand.

Standards of tour guiding, according to foreign hoteliers, are hampered by the poor language skills, but they are competent in providing very basic guiding.

No tourist information service centre is available at the airport or at the NTA office. Travel agencies provide information.

(9) Overall Assessment of Vientiane

Vientiane is a slow-moving business and political capital. As a tourist destination, there are no star attractions in the capital city to sustain more than a one-day visit. Leisure, visitor and medical facilities are inadequate. There are only a handful of good restaurants selling Lao, Indian Cuisine as quality medical care is limited, the country is not suited for the lucrative senior market yet. Laos has a good range of local handicrafts which, can be marketed as souvenirs but quality is poor. Shopping facilities in Vientiane are limited to the local markets and one major shopping centre.

3-2-2 Luang Prabang

(1) General Introduction

Luang Prabang Province has a stronger tourism appeal than Vientiane, thanks to its designation by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1995. The province is rich with teakwood, and out of the total population of 370 000, 60,000 stay in Luang Prabang town.

Mr Soukanh Bounnhong, Chief of Luang Prabang NTAL, said promotion of Luang Prabang is hampered by lack of funds and although there is an increase in number of guesthouses in Luang

Prabang, there will be a demand for better quality hotels during the Visit Laos Year 1999-2000. NTAL LPB is looking for foreign investors to build better class hotels. Currently, only Lao citizens are allowed to own or invest in guesthouses; foreigners are, however, allowed to invest in hotels.

The reconstruction of Luang Prabang Airport runway will be completed in May 2001, approximately 20 months from the date of signing of agreement.

(2) Arrival & Immigration

Luang Prabang Airport has very basic facilities - there are 1 souvenir shop, 1 post office and 1 foreign exchange counter. Customs and immigration procedures are very relaxed which benefit the province's slow and leisurely pace of life and countryside atmosphere.

(3) Accommodation

Out of the 12 hotels listed in Luang Prabang; only one, the Phouvao Hotel is considered of acceptable international standard (US\$60/night). The 59-room Phouvao Hotel is furnished with swimming pool, conference room, vehicle rental service, restaurant and satellite TV. Most hotels are priced between US\$25 and US\$40 per night. There are a total of 58 guesthouses, offering room rates of between 12,000 kip and 20,000 kip (US\$1.28 to 2.14). Telecommunication charges are very expensive in Luang Prabang; for e.g., a hotel IDD call to Singapore costs US\$12.65 for first 3 minutes excluding a hefty 25% service charge.

(4) Accessibility

Luang Prabang is accessible by flights from Vientiane and Chiangmai. Currently, Lao Aviation runs 21 flights from Vientiane to Luang Prabang; 2 weekly flights from Chiangmai (Thursdays and Sundays) and another 2 weekly flights from Chiangrai.

The Laotian and the Thai governments signed an agreement to expand the Luang Prabang airport runway to accommodate 737 aircraft (source: NTA LPB Chief of Tourism) With expansion of airport runway, number of arrivals into Luang Prabang will increase.

More checkpoint borders were set up for easy access to Luang Prabang for the neighbouring countries. The checkpoints are as follows Sainyabuli (Thailand), Udom Sai (China) Sam Neua (Vietnam)

(5) Attractions

The exotic appeal of Luang Prabang lies in its relaxed, laid-back and friendly atmosphere. The main streets of Luang Prabang town are lined with small family-run shop-houses selling Laotian hand-embroidered silk, a rougher quality than Thailand's but designs can be intricate, local restaurants and provision shops. There are significantly more services catering to the tourists than in Vientiane.

There are several tourist attractions in and around Luang Prabang town.

i) Kuangsi Waterfall

The attraction is 40 minutes from the centre of Luang Prabang town. Unpaved roads make travelling quite bumpy and uncomfortable.

This beautiful waterfall, situated 29km south of town, is a wide multi-tiered waterfall tumbling over limestone formations into a series of cool, turquoise-green pools. Picnic tables, benches and changing rooms were made available for local picnickers but these are in very poor condition. Kuangsi Waterfall is surrounded by ethnic villages, the Mong and Khamu,

Assessment:

The potential of this very good tourist attraction is hindered by inadequate infrastructural facilities such as:

- Lack of clean toilets and other facilities for visitors.
- Safety concern: Teakwood planks were used to construct a low unsteady bridge linking the foot of the waterfall to the forest trail. Wooden bridge was very slippery and as parts of the bridge were covered with pools of water and mud, it posed serious safety concerns for the visitors. Not suitable for senior travellers.
- Unmarked forest trails make the climb up the hill another safety concern.
- Inadequate signage and only in Lao language.

ii) Tat Sae Falls

Multi-level limestone formations are similar to those at Kuangsi Waterfall except that the pools are more numerous. Shorter falls in height and 30 minutes drive to Ban Aen Village. From the vil-

lage, 10-15 minutes boat ride to reach the fall. There are rest houses near the fall.

Assessment:

Infrastructure and visitor facilities surrounding the Tae Sae Falls are inadequate:

- No proper man-made footpaths (could be slippery during rainy season).
- Visitor facilities for activities such as camping are not allowed in order to prevent: "social and environmental problems", according to an NTAL official.
- No life jackets are provided for boat rides to Tat Sae Falls

Tat Sae Falls is not as majestic and imposing as the scenic Kuangsi Falls

iii) Pak Ou Caves

The caves are only accessible by boat along the Mekong River from Luang Prabang (about one-hour boat ride). Divided into lower and upper limestone cliffs, this cave "stores" 4000 Buddha images of all styles and sizes. The lower cave is called Tam Ting and the upper cave is Tham Phu. Tourist entrance fee: 1000kip.

Assessment:

Interior of the Tam Ting Cave is not as attractive as Mulu Caves. The stalactites and stalagmites are not as impressive as Mulu Caves. Images of Buddha were not well preserved. Signages are only in Lao language. Walking into the cave is prohibited.

The Tham Phu cave is situated 220 steps higher than the Tam Ting Cave. Visitors are allowed to walk into the cave which, is being lit by the candlelight left by pilgrims. The Buddha images were not visible as the caves were in almost complete darkness.

Generally, Pak Ou Caves' appear to be in derelict condition, Buddha images are not well preserved, and poor lighting conditions may pose safety concerns as inside of the caves is very slippery and wet. Basic resting facilities such as a simple river-view restaurant provide relief for domestic visitors but foreign visitors would expect better facilities. Boat trips to the caves are not equipped with life jackets. Interior lighting of the caves and signages (in English instead of only in Lao) could

be improved. Current conditions are not suitable for senior travellers.

iv) Royal Palace Museum

It opens from Monday to Friday from 8.00 am to 11.00 am. No cameras, shoes and handbags are allowed. It was built in 1904-1909 by King Sisavang Vong. A beautiful interior design with coloured glass and historical pictures decorated on all the walls. Unfortunately, there are no English labels and translation on the museum collections and story behind the decorated walls. A glass Buddha with a golden was part of the exhibit.

Museum is divided into several rooms. Protocol Room at the main entrance of the museum with several embroidered sofas for seated guests. There are separate bedrooms for the King and Queen. Bed sets were made of Teakwood, from Luang Prabang. In the Queen Reception room, there were two flags presented to Prince Sisavang Vatthana by Vietnam and China in 1963 as a symbol of friendship between two countries. Entrance fee: Locals/1000kip; Tourists/ 5000kip.

Assessment:

An impressive museum with interesting artifacts and wall-to wall paintings made of glass pieces, depicting Laotian legends and stories. However, the museum does not provide any in-house guide but guide can be hired from the travel agents. Signages and descriptions are all in Laotian. Tourists were only able to make their own perception of the collective items in the museum. Guides are available through Luang Prabang Travel Services.

v) Pha Tat Chomsi (Phousi Hill)

To reach the top of the hill to view the excellent scenery of Luang Prabang, tourists had to climb "330" steps. Chief of Luang Prabang NTAL, Mr Soukanh Bounnhong highlighted that a new 4 star resort will be built in the foothills. It is a 30/70 joint-venture between a Thai company and the Laotian government.

vi) Wah Xieng Thong

It was built in 1559 by King Saisetthathirat, and has different colour combination comparing to Myanmar pagoda. The roofs of the temple swept low to the ground and rear wall of the sim features an impressive tree of life mosaic. Unlike any other temple, Wah Xieng Temple is rich in black and

gold, and richly decorated with black wooden fencing with golden coloured lotus as part of the architecture. The temple stores a rare reclining Buddha that dates from the construction of the temple. Lion statues are used as guardians to the temple and the lotus symbol is used at the second entrance to the temple.

It was only 5 minutes drive to Wah Xieng Temple from Phousi Hotel. Entrance fee for tourists: 3000kip.

(6) Overall Assessment of Luang Prabang

Undoubtedly, the star attraction of Laos offers good potential to be further developed and promoted to the international markets. Need for more international flights into Luang Prabang, improve the infrastructure and accessibility of major attractions in Luang Prabang (e.g. Kuangsi Falls), other tourism activities which can be developed are cultural tourism with visits to the ethnic villages, trekking, religious (Buddhism), educational, Cruise on Mekong River.

3-3 Assessment of Tourism Potential

The main appeal of Laos is that it is the last and most undiscovered Indochina country, the mystique of the Mekong River (which passes through 70% of Lao) and the World Heritage Site of Luang Prabang. Tourism development in Laos is relatively limited and slow-paced compared to Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar. However, Tourism was ranked top in 1998 by the Ministry of Commerce with revenue of US\$ 79.9 million against other Lao major industries such as mining, agri-business, forestry and light industry Lao.

Good potential exists for river-line tourism (e.g. Mekong River Boat Cruises in the likes of the Road-To-Mandalay luxury cruise from Yangon to Mandalay in Myanmar), development of a 5-star hotel in Luang Prabang, and cultural tourism (visits to the different Laotian ethnic villages).

Laos will need substantial international aid and foreign investors to jumpstart the development of its economy and the tourism sector. An improving Thai economy will augur well for Laos since the latter is much reliant on inter-border trading with Thailand to stimulate growth. The return of Thai tourism investors will be a sign to watch.

The UNDP officials the study team met said the Laotian government is very cautious about which

players are developing the tourism sector, and the pace of tourism development. Preservation of the Laotian culture and the moral fibre of the society are a major concern. Assessment is that the Laotian government would prefer manageable niche tourism.

NTA does not appear to be taking the lead in promoting the destination; which could be attributed to the lack of promotional funds, the NTA officials' limited or lack of knowledge and expertise in international marketing and promotions although a number of public government officials are sent on training overseas by donor countries.

3-4 Tourism Manpower Training Needs

STB had conducted a survey on the tourism manpower training needs of the Lao hotel industry. Below are the findings:

(1) Level proficiency

- Limitation in speaking, understanding, expressing ideas and feeling clearly in English.
- Very limited knowledge of Foreign Language. Foreign languages of immediate importance are Japanese, French, Chinese and German.
- Limited communication with guests
- Limited knowledge of telephone etiquette skills
- Lack of prompt feedback and action on guests complaints
- Limited knowledge of basic principles in kitchen organisation
- Limited knowledge of banquet operations
- Limited knowledge of Food and Beverage cost control

(2) Sales and Marketing

- Limited in English Language
- Very limited knowledge in Presentation Skills
- Very limited knowledge of international travel industry needs and travelling agency
- Very limited knowledge of travel agency operations

(3) Most immediate hotel and tourism-related training skills

- English language skills
- Tourism Studies

- Sales and Marketing
- Tourism Statistics
- Front Office Management
- Human Resource Development and Development
- Interpersonal communication Skills
- Food and Beverage Management and Promotions
- Kitchen Operations

(4) Major problems faced by Lao tourism industry as a whole

- No reliable industry statistics available and if available, statistics are not accurate.
- Lack of skilled and semi-skilled staff
- No precise co-ordinating body to oversee the tourism industry
- Lack of definite direction and will to develop tourism industry
- Lack of technical knowledge and organisation skills in relevant authority to push forward the tourism industry which is a main foreign currency earner
- Lack of human resource development
- Lack of training
- Lack of sales and marketing system

4. Recommendations

4-1 Development Needs

The Team received the following request proposals from the NTA.

- Personnel Training on hotel, guesthouse and restaurant services in order to serve the growing tourism industry in the Lao PDR
- Assistance in implementation of the National Tourism Development Plan, especially the development of eco-tourism and the establishment of tourist villages.
- Assistance in building the Hotel and Tourism Training Center
- Assistance in making a Regional Master Plan: Northern, Middle and Southern Parts
- Assistance in making promotional materials
- (Dispatching Experts and volunteers to conduct training in the Japanese language for tour guides)

4-2 Possible Assistance

The Team observed that the Lao PDR has a high potential for tourism, however human resources development is needed, especially in training, marketing, and promotion.

The joint study team thinks the following assistance would be possible by the Governments of both Singapore and Japan:

4-2-1 Joint Training in Singapore for Train-the-Trainers in Tourism Development

- The purpose of this course may be to improve training management of the NTA.
- The main activity of this course may be to train about 5 NTA trainees.
- Site observation of key tourist attractions in Singapore and education of English may be included.
- The existing joint training program in Singapore of train-the-trainers in tourism development for Asian countries may be utilized or customized for the Lao PDR.

4-2-2 Joint Short-Term Training in Hotel, Guesthouse, and Restaurant Operational Skills

- The purpose of this course may be to develop human resource in the tourism industry.
- It may be preferable to conduct this course in Laos where more people could participate.
- The activity of this course may be to train NTA staff and front-line personnel in the Lao tourism industry in basic operational skills.
- Instruction of English may be included.

4-2-3 Joint Seminar in Laos on Developing Effective Tourism Marketing and Development Strategies

- The purpose of this course may be to improve the skills and knowledge of senior NTA officials and key stakeholders in the Lao travel and tourism industry in the areas of destination marketing.

4-2-4 Joint Seminar in Laos on Promoting of Foreign Investment in the Tourism Sector

- The purpose of this course may be to widen the knowledge of NTA and other relevant government officials on the promotion of foreign investments in the Lao tourism sector.

4-2-5 Dispatching a Japanese Technical Cooperation Expert for Provision of Advice to the NTA

- The purpose of dispatching this expert may be to assist NTA officials in developing human resources in the public and private sector.
- This expert may assist in improvement of training courses in the NTA, facilitate project(s) and find new project ideas under JSPP21.
- A long-term expert may be preferable.
- An expert to provide advice on tourism promotion may be needed, too. This expert may assist NTA officials in improving management of the tourist center and public relations.

4-2-6 Dispatching Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer(s)

- The purpose of dispatching this volunteer(s) may be to improve tourism information of Laos in English and Japanese.
- The activities of this volunteer(s) may be;
 - (1) To assist NTA officials in management of web-sites in English and Japanese;
 - (2) To assist NTA officials in creating promotional materials in English and Japanese;
 - (3) To assist NTA officials in elaborating monthly reports in English and Japanese;
 - (4) To assist NTA officials in creating signboards and/or explanatory signs;
 - (5) To teach the Japanese language to NTA officials and other relevant personnel.

4-3 Partnership between Singapore and Japan

The "Joint" study under JSPP21 was welcomed to the concerned authorities of the Lao PDR and other donor organizations. The Team recommends that both Governments plan to realize the cooperation ideas presented in 5.1 above as a primary result of the joint study.

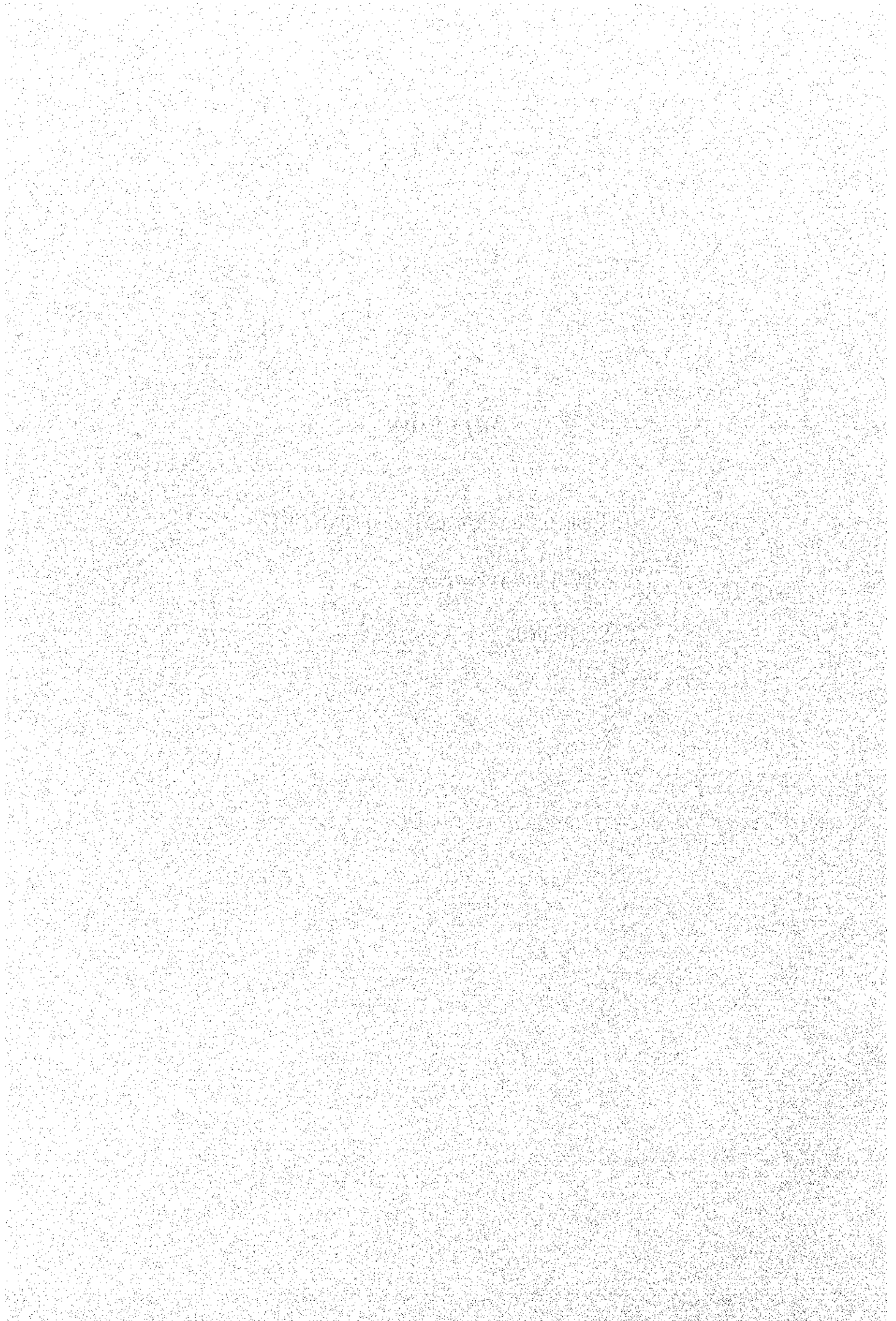
As for the partnership between Japan and Singapore, it will be stronger through the Study and formulation of projects based on it. It was the first joint formulation study team organized by Japan and

Singapore, and was very useful to both sides in considering how to make the best use of each other's resource from the project formulation phase.

The Team suggests that both Governments dispatch other joint project-finding study teams to conduct fact-finding for possible joint technical cooperation projects, especially in human resources development.

Appendix

- 1. Topic of the Project Proposal (by NTA)**
- 2. List of Interviewees**
- 3. References**



Appendix 1: Topic of the Project Proposal (by NTA)

Since 1990 the government of Lao PDR has officially adopted a policy of encouraging tourism. According to statistics compiled by the National Tourism Authority of Laos, international tourism activities in Lao PDR between 1990 and 1998 has constantly increased with an impressive annual growth rate of 45%. In 1990 only 14,400 person visited the Lao PDR, by 1997 this figure had risen to 463,200. Statistics for 1998 show a continuation of this trend with a total of 500,200 tourists arrivals.

Therefore, in order to develop sustainable tourism and to respond to the needs of the tourism industry in the Lao PDR the National Tourism Authority of Lao PDR would like to request some aid as follows:

- 1 Personnel Training on hotel guest house and restaurant services in order to serve the growing tourism in Lao PDR.
- 2 To realize implementation of Master Plan on development and promotion according to the situation, condition and priority of tourists site in the country, especially the development of eco-tourism and the establishment of tourism villages, etc...
- 3 Assist to build the Hotel and Tourism Training Center (HTTC) as an important part of human resources development in tourism industry for long term, aim for to build up tourism personnel to meet the regional and international standard.
- 4 Assist in making Regional Master Plan: northern, middle and southern parts.
- 5 Dispatching Experts and JOCV volunteers to NTA and help to train Japanese language Tour Guide and to promote Japanese market widely.
- 6 Assist the promotional material.

Appendix 2: List of Interviewees

Laotian Government

National Tourism Authority

Mr.Cheng SAYAVONG	Chairman
Mr.Sannya ABHAY	Executive Advisor
Mr.Sounh MANIVONG	Director, Statistics, Planning, Cooperation and Marketing Div.
Mr.Khamley SIPASEUTH	Tourism Planning Unit
Mr.Sundara KETTHASONE	Hotel Management & Training
Mr.Vixith XATAKOUN	Representative, Champassak Province
Mr.Shoukan	Representative, Luan Prabang Province

Foreign Investment Management Cabinet

Mr.Bounmaly VILAVONG	Director, Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Inspection Div.
----------------------	--

Committee for Investment and Cooperation

Dr.Soulasith OUPRAVANH	Deputy General Director, Bilateral Cooperation
------------------------	--

Science Technology and Environment Agency

Mr.Sitha PHOUYAVONG	Acting Director General of the Cabinet
---------------------	--

Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction

Mr.Xay	Director of Inland Waterways Div.
Mr.Phphana	Deputy Director of Inland Waterways Div.
Mr.Bounsoum SOMSIHAKHOM	Deputy Director, Department of Transport

Lao National Mekong Committee

Mr.Linseng Douangsavanh	Deputy Director General
-------------------------	-------------------------

Luan Parabang Province

Mr.Khamdua YIAKUANOHEUVANG	Vice Governor
----------------------------	---------------

Champassak Province

Mr.Sisamut	Vice Governor
------------	---------------

Vientiane City

Vientiane Municipality Tourism Office

Mr.Baylatry KHAMKHOUN	Head of Statistics, Planning, Marketing & Promotion
Mr.Khamphua PHAENGPHANHAK	Deputy Chief

Airline

Lao Aviation

Mr. Vanheung VISAVANE	Deputy General Director
Mr. Vilakane MALAVANH	Marketing Manager
Ms. Amphonesavath KINGSADA	Ticketing Reservation Manager

International Institutions

UNDP

Ms. Yvonne Helle	Assistant Resident Representative
Ms. Virachit VONGSAK	Programme Officer

ESCAP, Bangkok

Mr. Ryuji Yamakawa	Chief, Tourism Unit
--------------------	---------------------

Mekong Project Development Facility

Mr. Peter Michener	Senior Investment Advisor
Mr. Curtis Hundley	Project Officer

Hotels

LAO HOTEL PLAZA

Mr. Junichiro Matsuyama	Sales Manager
-------------------------	---------------

SETTHA PALACE HOTEL

Ms. Nilaphay SOUVONG	Sales Executive
----------------------	-----------------

NOVOTEL

Ms. Angie Yamaji	Sales Manager
------------------	---------------

Travel Agencies

LAO Tourism Company

Mr. Humpheng SONTACHIT	Executive Council Member & Director
------------------------	-------------------------------------

Phoudoi Travel

Mr. Samlane BOUYASANE	General Director
Ms. Khounkham Vongphachanh	Marketing Manger
Mr. Makoto Kawabata	Manager

LAO Travel Service

Mr. Siene SIHAVONG	Managing Director
--------------------	-------------------

Inter-Lao Tourism

Mr. Khamtanh KEUNGPANHNHA Deputy General Director

D.A.F.I. Travel & Tours

Mr. Thanomhak CHANTHAPHONH Deputy General Director

SODE Tour

Mr. Davone Souvannaphong General Manager

LANE XANG Travel & Tours

Ms. Phoutsady KEOXAYACHAK Assistant Sales & Marketing Manager

Appendix 3: References

- 1 Amex,1996, Jewels of The Mekong
- 2 ESCAP,1998, Seminar on Developing Ecotourism in the Asian Region
- 3 ESCAP,1998, The Role of ESCAP in Tourism Development in the Asian and Pacific Region
- 4 ESCAP,1999, Seminar on Expansion of Tourism in the Greater Mekong Subregion through Improved Air Transport
- 5 FIMC, 1994, Law on the Promotion and Management of Foreign Investment in the Lao PDR
- 6 FIMC, 1999, Foreign Investment in the Lao PDR
- 7 NTA ,1994,List of Foreign Travel Companies Promotions Tourism of in the Lao PDR
- 8 NTA,1998, Welcome to Champassak
- 9 NTA,1998, Welcome to LAOS (Program of Events & Festivals)
- 10 NTA,1998, Welcome to Luan Prabang
- 11 NTA ,1999,Laos through Provinces (Tourist Guide)
- 12 NTA,1999, Laos-"Your New Love"
- 13 NTA,1999, Muong Lao (Travel Guide)
- 14 NTA,1999, Other Donor's Assistance
- 15 NTA,1999, The Hidden Heart of Asia
- 16 NTA,1999, Training List
- 17 NTA,1999, 1998 Statistical Report on Tourism in Laos Feb-99
- 18 UNDP, 1998, National Tourism Development Plan for the Lao PDR
- 19 UNDP, 1999, Support for Tourism Development and Eco-Tourism/National Tourism Marketing Plan for the Lao PDR

JICA