



MEDIA RELEASE

Football, films and fun for World Environment Day celebrations

Attapeu, Lao PDR, 31 May 2005 (MWBP) – football, films and fun will all be involved in the World Environment Day celebrations to be hosted in Saisetha District Capital, Attapeu Province, Lao PDR on 1 June 2005.

The celebrations will be officially opened by the Deputy Provincial Governor, Mr. Sinay Mieanglavanh, with the District Governor Mr. Watsadi Kheumphetsavong or his representative and the Head of the Provincial Science, Technology and Environment Office, Mr. Navarath, also speaking at the event.

The celebrations will take place on 01 June 2005 to coincide with Lao Children's Day and Tree Planting Day (World Environment Day is celebrated on 05 June every year) and be attended by up to 200 community members and officials.

Fun and games have been organised to promote World Environment Day and the work of the Mekong Wetlands Biodiversity Programme (MWBP)*, of which Attapeu is the programme's demonstration site in Laos.

"The World Environment Day is a great way for the community to come together. The celebrations have been organised to be fun but also to promote the wider values of the environment, including wetlands", said Mr. Navarath, Head of the Provincial Science, Technology and Environment Office.

Educational entertainment will include a quiz and film presentation as well as environmental awareness materials, and other activities will feature sack racing, tug-of-war, tree plantings and a solid waste clean-up.

Adding to the outcomes of the celebrations will be 30 participants from 15 government departments who will be attending the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) training, hosted by MWBP. The training, which will focus on Environmental Impact Assessment for hydropower, will be hosted from 30 May 2005 to 03 June 2005. Participants will be involved in case studies, group work and field visits as well as attending the World Environment Day celebrations. Members of the training course will also participate in a celebrity football match on the day.

"The Environment Impact Assessment training taking place at the same time as the World Environment Day celebrations provides a great opportunity for government officials to attend the activities and celebrate with the community", Mark Dubois, Wetlands Technical Advisor, MWBP Attapeu. "MWBP is carrying out very interesting and relevant work in the province and is it fantastic for everyone to be involved"

The events are being organised by the Provincial Science, Technology and Environment Office with support from the Mekong Wetlands Biodiversity Programme, as part of the programme's work in the province, alongside contributions from the Science Technology and Environment Agency (STEA) and the public sector.

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For more information about the World Environment Day events, please contact:

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*The Mekong Wetlands Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use Programme (MWBP) is a joint programme of the four riparian governments of the Lower Mekong Basin (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam), managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), IUCN–The World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the Mekong River Commission (MRC), with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), UNDP, The Royal Netherlands Government, MRCS, the Water and Nature Initiative (WANI).

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