

CAMBODIA CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT

2023



Ministry of
Environment

MEKONG
FUTURE INITIATIVE



Joint Press Release

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Cambodia Climate Change Summit 2023 Hosts Minister of Environment, Australian Ambassador and U.S. Ambassador to Address Pressing Climate Issues

Today Cambodia's Minister of Environment provided the keynote speech alongside remarks from the Australian Ambassador to Cambodia, U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia, and Chairman of the Mekong Future Initiative (MFI) at the Cambodia Climate Change Summit 2023 (CCCS23) in Siem Reap.

The plenary session underscored the country's climate change challenges and demonstrated the high level of commitment and coordination among governments to climate action in Cambodia and the region.

Minister of Environment H.E Eang Sophalleth said that it is clear that climate change is a grave and mounting threat to a healthy planet.

"Cambodia has committed to achieving greenhouse gas emission reduction targets of 41.7% by 2030, and the government has taken several strategic steps in building a climate change strategy framework, including the adoption of the Environment and Natural Resources code and the launch of the Pentagonal Strategy Phase 1."

The minister also announced the new Environmental Circular Strategy 2023-2028, launching on 15 November 2023.

"We need to focus not only on the formulation of policy and strategy, but also need real action to support the needs of people who are affected by climate change. We need to work together to protect our environment and ensure a sustainable future for all Cambodians," he added.

The session opened the second and final day of CCCS23, which boasts the largest schedule and broadest range of climate discussions in the summit's history. CCCS23 is sponsored by Australia through its flagship economic development program, the Cambodia Australia Partnership for Resilient Economic Development (CAPRED), with further sponsorship by founding partner, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

"Climate change is one of the biggest threats faced by our region. This summit has been an opportunity to discuss practical actions to adapt to the effects of climate change and achieve net zero by 2050," said Australian Ambassador to Cambodia Justin Whyatt.

“Australia is stepping up our climate action cooperation in Cambodia. Through CAPRED we will connect off-grid villages to clean electricity, improve water security through increased access to clean water in rural Cambodia, and support zero-waste business models in agriculture,” he added.

In his remarks, U.S. Ambassador W. Patrick Murphy emphasised the importance of the 2023 climate change event as Cambodia and the world prepare for the 28th Conference of the Parties in Dubai.

“We collectively work to improve our coordination and cooperation in support of Cambodia’s strategy to achieve carbon neutrality,” he said.

“The United States has invested over \$100 million in foreign assistance focused on combating climate change, including facilitating the sale of more than \$40 million in carbon credits to U.S. companies such as Disney and Delta,” added Ambassador Murphy.

Chairman of MFI H.E. Neak Okhna Sear Rithy said the summit underscores the shared understanding that addressing the challenge of climate change is inseparable from the future of the next generation, the nation, and the world.

“At the Mekong Future Initiative, we have examined these issues and have found climate change to be one of the most critical, particularly for those who are most vulnerable,” he said.

MFI Director General H.E. Allen Tan added that this year’s summit has been a resounding success, with more than 330 attendees encompassing climate experts and stakeholders from governments, the private sector and development agencies—as well as prominent youth representation.

An international policy panel was also held, bringing together representatives from the Ministry of Environment, Mekong Future Initiative, British Embassy, French Embassy, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), EnergyLab Cambodia, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The panel examined the critical role of international policies in shaping Cambodia's climate resilience strategies.

Hosted by CCCS23 gold sponsor SDC, a Sustainable Solutions Expo was also open to the public throughout the summit to showcase climate-focused technologies and approaches.

SDC Director of Cooperation in Cambodia Mr. Markus Bürlı said, “We need to make sure that the many already existing technologies and services to mitigate and adapt to climate change are put into practice.”

“The Sustainable Solutions Expo showcases some of them and how they are applied in Cambodia,” he added.

CCCS23 explored climate financing, sustainable agriculture and horticulture, energy entrepreneurship, sustainable tourism, water security, carbon markets and Cambodia’s National Environmental and Economic Plan.

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