



Australian Embassy

Cambodia



(Energy)^{Lab}

Joint Press Release

24 November 2023

TOAST TO CLEAN ENERGY CLOSES CLEAN ENERGY WEEK 2023

23 November 2023 marked the closing of Cambodia's Clean Energy Week 2023. Set in the residence of Australian Ambassador to Cambodia H.E. Justin Whyatt, the final event – a Toast to Clean Energy – gathered Cambodia's leading energy stakeholders to celebrate Cambodia's continued clean energy progress.

Underscoring the importance of clean energy to the country's development, H.E. Whyatt and Mr. Natharoun Ngo Son, EnergyLab Country Director, were joined by leading figures including H.E. Vongsey Vissoth, Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister in Charge of the Office of the Council of Ministers; H.E. Keo Rottanak, Minister of Mines and Energy; H.E. Hem Vanndy, Minister of Industry, Science, Technology, and Innovation; and Ms Alissar Chaker, Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Cambodia.

Clean Energy Week began with a clear focus on the role that Clean Energy must play in delivering Energy Security for Cambodia. Solar and wind power hold enormous potential for Cambodia and could drastically reduce the importation of fossil fuels and electricity from overseas. New investments in clean energy can also avoid building new unnecessary fossil fuel generation, which will force Cambodia to continue to rely on the international fossil fuel markets for decades to come.

This continued throughout the week, with the country's clean energy leaders, practitioners and entrepreneurs across 22 events exploring this year's theme, "Energy Security and Cambodia's Clean Energy Future."

Sessions tackled major challenges such as decarbonising industries, identifying technologies that will be needed as clean energy generation increases, and exploring how new business models will be developed to achieve the Kingdom's energy efficiency aspirations. Clean energy and development space actors – ranging from Tonle Sap communities to secretaries of state – shared domestic, regional and global perspectives.

The week also saw thousands of people take part in public events, including the inaugural Run for Clean Energy, the Clean Energy Week Exhibition and the Clean Energy Documentaries Screening night. The events gave the public an opportunity to directly experience the technologies that will drive Cambodia's clean energy development.

Now in its sixth year, Clean Energy Week is the largest clean energy event in size and reach in Cambodia. The lessons learned from the week will be taken forward to power the clean energy progression in the Kingdom.

Minister for Mines and Energy, H.E. Keo Rottanak said, "Cambodia is embracing clean energy to fuel sustainable economic growth and strengthen energy security. We are incorporating principles of CARE -

Clean, Affordable, Reliable, and Equitable energy - into our strategy. This approach is key to ensuring an inclusive energy landscape, one that powers our nation's development, protects our environment, and uplifts our people.”

Australian Ambassador Whyatt said, “This week has been a remarkable success. We have brought together policy makers and experts to share insights and experiences. Together, we are supporting Cambodia to deliver a clean, affordable, secure energy grid and achieve its climate goals.”

New Zealand Ambassador to Cambodia, H.E. Jonathan Kings said “New Zealand is proud to have been able to support this year’s Clean Energy Week in Cambodia. From what we have seen it is been productive and successful in raising awareness regarding energy security and clean energy ambitions here in Cambodia. Cambodia has potential to navigate the energy transition, and New Zealand is pleased to be able to support Cambodia in achieving these goals.”

Kings went on to comment: “One key challenge identified is the limited skilled clean energy workforce. The Skills for the Energy Transition session showcased opportunities available to Cambodia, offering valuable insights for the development of the country's human resources in the energy sector.”

The Resident Representative of UNDP Cambodia, Ms. Alissar Chaker, commented, “Clean Energy Week 2023 reconfirmed that energy transition and development can no longer be viewed as competing priorities.” However, while we are celebrating a successful week, we should remember that efforts should continue to accelerate Cambodia’s energy transition. Opportunities do not happen. They are created! Together we can create them to ensure sustainable, equitable, and just energy transition for all, she added.

EnergyLab Cambodia Country Director Mr Natharoun Ngo Son said, “The full potential of solar must be seized before too late. Cambodia has room to push boundaries, with a wealth of opportunities to decarbonise its grid while meeting economic goals and improving the country’s energy security.”

Clean Energy Week Cambodia 2023 was organised by EnergyLab Cambodia, in partnership with co-founders Australia and UNDP, and with co-funders CAPRED, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and SWITCH to Solar Project, funded by European Union through the SWITCH–Asia Programme and the Czech Development Agency.

About EnergyLab Cambodia

EnergyLab Cambodia is a Cambodian non-profit whose goal is to significantly increase the amount of clean energy in Cambodia, while delivering Cambodia on its 2030 development trajectory to upper-middle income status. For more information and details, please visit <https://cleanenergycambodia.org/cleanenergyweek>.

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