



START
CAMBODIA

Every Journey Starts with a Single Step



What is STaRT?

STaRT is a campaign to re-STaRT tourism to Cambodia as soon as local conditions allow. Instead of an all-consuming profit-focus approach to tourism, the new post-pandemic travel will focus on a more ethical, integrated approach:

Sustainable Tourism and Responsible Travel (STaRT).



“

We should respond with the same urgency and vigour to the climate crisis as we are to COVID-19

World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)

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Why STaRT? Why Now?

All recent reports and surveys indicate that the tourists and travellers of the future do not want a return to the bad old days of mass tourism and over-tourism.

A World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) [report](#) released in June states, “There has **been growing awareness around climate, environmental and social issues** ... It is increasingly clear that we should respond with the same urgency and vigour to the climate crisis as we are to COVID-19, not only on ethical grounds, but also because **the travellers of tomorrow will demand it.**”

The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report has served as a **CODE RED** for the travel community.

Various reports have revealed that the pandemic has changed the way that people view travel. For instance, [research carried out by Booking.com](#) in March this year indicated that 73% of Americans feel that sustainable travel is vital. Other reports have suggested a similar attitude exists on this side of the opposite side of the Atlantic, with 77% of UK citizens saying they would [consider the environment](#) when choosing their future travel.

The message is loud and clear. Covid-19 is not the only crisis in town. Any recovery plan should account for the climate crisis, which if anything will have greater consequences upon both humankind and the planet than the pandemic.





Cambodia is in a
prime position to
focus on the return
of international
tourism to the
ASEAN region

STaRT Cambodia Study 2021



Why Cambodia?

The Cambodian Government has implemented one of the most impressive vaccination roll-out programmes in Asia. 95% of adults have had a first jab, over 75% of adults are fully vaccinated and 12-17 year olds are now part of this incredible nationwide campaign. Cambodia is the most heavily vaccinated of the lower income countries globally and Phnom Penh is considered to be the most vaccinated capital city in the world. This puts Cambodia in a prime position to focus on the return of international tourism to the ASEAN region, expected in early 2022.

Cambodia is also blessed with an abundance of natural resources and extensive national parks, elements that travellers in the post-pandemic period will be seeking.

Within the country there are many tourism businesses and tour operators that are committed to STaRT practices already. These include ecotourism operators such as Elephant Valley Project, Sam Veasna Centre, Cardamom Tented Camp and Shinta Mani Wild; social enterprises such as Phare the Cambodian Circus, the Mith Samlanh training restaurants and handicraft cooperatives like Artisans Angkor; popular hotels and resorts such as Knai Bang Chatt, Montra Nivesha and Song Saa Private Island; and leading DMCs like EXO, Hanuman Travel and Khiri Travel.

The aim of the campaign will be to coordinate and highlight these STaRT businesses to drive both tourism numbers and revenue in the recovery period.



Help us get
started



STaRT the Campaign

We are looking for support from the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and international organisations to kick off the STaRT campaign, as well as corporate partners.

The campaign will consist of the following phases:

- Recruit STaRT businesses in Cambodia to join the campaign.
- Develop content for Destination Mekong website highlighting Sustainable Tourism and Responsible Travel businesses and organisations in Cambodia.
- Develop a promotional video and brochure to launch the STaRT Campaign, highlighting the great potential for STaRT Cambodia.
- Launch a STaRT Youth Campaign for the most innovative STaRT initiatives.
- Launch www.startcambodia.com website to promote STaRT initiatives.
- Launch the campaign at ATF 2022 in Sihanoukville, Cambodia.
- Take STaRT to ITB Berlin in March 2022 with the Cambodia booth and launch it to a global audience.
- Seek tour operators to join the STaRT campaign offering STaRT itineraries to their clients via www.startcambodia.com.
- Manage an international media campaign inviting journalists to visit Cambodia.





“

A journey of a
thousand li [a
Chinese mile]
starts beneath
one's feet

Tao Te Ching

”

Our Team



Sean Ngu is the founder of Khmer Sight Foundation and the director of Cambodia Teaching Hospital. He is a strong proponent of sustainable travel and keen camper. He believes in the need to re-start Cambodia's tourism industry responsibly.



Kulikar Sotho started Hanuman Travel as a family business back in 1992 and has long been a supporter of responsible tourism in Cambodia. A film director, Kulikar's debut film *The Last Reel* won numerous awards at international festivals.



Jens Thraenhart has worked in senior positions for Mekong Tourism, Dragon Trail China, Canadian Tourism Commission, and Fairmont Hotels & Resorts. Currently Vice Chair of the Affiliate Members Board of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).



Mark Bibby Jackson is a freelance responsible travel writer and founder and editor of website *Travel Begins at 40*. The award-winning author of three thrillers set in Cambodia, Mark published *AsiaLIFE* magazine for more than a decade.



Nick Ray has written ~60 titles for Lonely Planet, including bestselling *Cambodia*, *Laos* and *Vietnam* guidebooks. As well as working as a tourism specialist for leading organisations like the World Bank, Nick is also a Location Scout and Producer.



Joe Ogden is a digital and creative professional based in SEA for over a decade. Joe specialises in brand design and developing web software, is a keen photographer and co-founder of *Travel Begins at 40*.

A wooden boardwalk path winds through a lush mangrove forest. The path is made of light-colored wooden planks and is flanked by dense, intricate tree roots that descend into the water. The foliage is vibrant green, and sunlight filters through the canopy, creating dappled shadows on the path. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

The path to
the future
starts here



This is Just the STaRT

STaRT is a campaign supported by **Destination Mekong** which has agreed to host a section dedicated to STaRT.

This will allow us the ability to roll-out the STaRT programme across the Mekong Region.

Let's STaRT a new vision for tourism in Cambodia now.





Contact us to learn more

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www.startcambodia.com