



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

“Improvement of the Disposal Capacity of Plastic Litter in Urban Provinces” Project Launching

Phnom Penh, 27 February—The Ministry of Environment, the Embassy of Japan, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched the project “*Improvement of the Disposal Capacity of Plastic Litter in Urban Provinces*” at the Ministry of Environment. The project, funded by the government of Japan, aims to prevent and minimize plastic waste pollution on land and in the ocean through the promotion of the 4R framework (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle). During the next 3 years, the project will work with stakeholders in urban areas (namely, Phnom Penh, Tbong Khmum, Siem Reap, and Preah Sihanouk) and coastal provinces (namely, Kep, Kampot, and Koh Kong).

The launching event was presided by **H.E. Dr. EANG Sophalleth**, Minister of Environment, and counted with the presence of **H.E. Mr. UENO Atsushi**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Kingdom of Cambodia, and **Ms. Alissar CHAKER**, UNDP Resident Representative in Cambodia.

H.E. Dr. EANG Sophalleth explained that the rapidly growing volume of plastic waste is adding immense pressure on both our waste management system and the environment. He added, “Plastic now constitutes 20% of the municipal waste stream. There is, therefore, an urgent need to reduce the volume of plastic use in Cambodia and create an environment where waste is properly managed, recovered, reused, and/or recycled. This project will contribute significantly to the National Circular Strategy on Environment 2023-2028 and will complement the corresponding campaigns – ‘Today I don’t use plastic bag’, ‘Clean up Cambodia, Khmer can do’, and ‘National Roads Plastic-Free.’

Echoing the Minister of Environment, H.E. Mr. UENO Atsushi said, “Cambodia has achieved rapid economic growth, and this has greatly improved people’s lives across the country. On the other hand, such rapid economic growth has inevitably led to a rapid increase in solid waste, especially plastic waste. To respond to this challenge, the government of Japan is providing a grant for the value of 378 million Japanese yen, to promote effective production, consumption, and waste management of plastic in Cambodia.” He added, “UNDP has a strong record of supporting host governments in the achievement of environmental sustainability and inclusive development around the world, including in Cambodia. I believe that, with Japan’s experience and UNDP’s expertise, we can support Cambodia’s efforts in plastic management.”

Ms. Alissar Chaker said, “The science has been clear for many years now, plastic pollution is deteriorating our environment and threatening our health and wellbeing. The effects of marine plastic are concerning, with forecasts indicating that there could be, in 2050, more plastic than fish by weight in the ocean if no collective action is taken. UNDP has been partnering with the Ministry of Environment and the Embassy of Japan since 2021 to establish the foundations for reducing plastic pollution in Cambodia. Building on past achievements and leveraging UNDP’s regional and global expertise, we hope that this project will trigger behavioural change at scale and engage the private sector to drive innovation and leverage finance for scaling up proven circular economy business models, facilitating networking, sharing of experience and lessons learned, and capitalizing on women and youth engagement throughout its interventions.”

Ends

For media inquiries, please contact Ms. Chhunmuoy Ath, UNDP Cambodia’s Communications Analyst at communications.kh@undp.org

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