



## Lao PDR Report on the State of Conservation of the World Heritage Property of Vat Phou and Associated Ancient Settlements within the Champasak Cultural Landscape

- 2016, December 27<sup>th</sup> -

This report has been realised by the World Heritage Site Office of Vat Phou Champasak for the National Commission for UNESCO to establish the response of the Lao State Party to the World Heritage Committee's decision 39COM7B, adopted at its 39<sup>th</sup> session in Bonn (UNESCO, 2015).

Having considered and examined the above decision, the Lao State Party, would like to clarify each item as follows:

Decision 39COM7B	Lao PDR Report on the State of Conservation
<p>The World Heritage Committee,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Having examined</u> Document WHC-15/39.COM/7B.Add,</li> <li>2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision <b>38 COM 7B.17</b>, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),</li> <li>3. <u>Takes note</u> of the findings and recommendations of the joint World Heritage/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property;</li> <li>4. <u>Urges</u> the State Party to formulate and implement an effective and efficient road system before the unmade section of Route 14A is completed and opened to traffic, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Limit the use of 14A to light vehicles, residents and</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p>4. The road network project (routes 14A and 14B) and the traffic management requirements adopted by local and national authorities are in line with the recommendations of World Heritage Committee Decision 39.COM 7B, adopted in 2015.</p> <p>In order to ensure compliance, an updating of the area roadmap was carried out</p>

visitors only; with Route 14B being used as the international connection for heavy vehicles between southern Lao PDR, Cambodia and Thailand,

2. Arrange for tourist coaches to park in designated areas at the northern and southern perimeters of the property,
  3. Limit the use of the district road through Champasak town and the Ancient City to light traffic generated by the villagers themselves,
  4. Analyze and justify the need for proposed additional local roads,
  5. Complete Route 14A according to the original alignment 24 metres from the north-west corner of the fourth enclosure wall of the Ancient City, rather than according to the proposed realignment 100 metres from the corner;
5. Regrets that in spite of previous recommendations a number of new constructions have been undertaken in the monumental complex, without overall site planning, thus contributing to the haphazard densification of the main monumental complex;

(see document attached as Annex 1 dated 20/10/2015), on the basis of the decision of the Interministerial meeting which was held in Pakse on 10 October 2015 and confirmed by the Interministerial meeting at the national level held at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport in Vientiane on 11 March 2016.

This road network and traffic management scheme was incorporated into the final document of the Champasak Cultural Landscape Master Plan approved by the provincial Government on 18 February 2016 and endorsed by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport on 19 May 2016.

5. Light and temporary buildings intended for the reception of visitors were installed as a matter of urgency following the fire that devastated the Vat Phou Monument reception hall (sala) at the beginning of 2015. This building had been built in 2002. Following the fire, the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism decided to not rebuild the sala, considering that its central position in the axis of the baray was not appropriate for the preservation of the cultural landscape.
- A new landscape study of the area of the monument was then launched. This resulted in a new monument zone plan (see documents dated 07/11/2016, attached in Annex 2a and 2b). This plan for the development of the monument area was approved by the local Heritage Committee on 8 November 2016. The proposal was endorsed by the provincial Heritage Committee on 22 December 2016.

6. Reiterates its requests to the State Party to develop, as a matter of urgency, a Master Plan based on landscape approach, taking into consideration the nature of the property as a cultural landscape and the buried archaeology, and the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), and to
1. Ensure that the local land use zoning plans conform to the Master Plan,
  2. Provide within the Master Plan an overall strategic landscape protection and development framework addressing long-term planning issues,
  3. Ensure co-ordination with emerging wider territorial plans,
  4. Submit copies of the Master Plan to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to final approval;
7. Also urges the State Party ensure the provisions of the management plan are put in place and reflect the OUV of the property, as well as to render it more practical and operational by including, among other things, an improved monitoring framework;

6. In accordance with what had already been announced in the previous report on the property's state of conservation sent by the State (report dated 24/02/2015), the Master Plan has been studied since 2012 and received significant support from international experts, scientific research organisations and various universities. The landscape dimension is at the heart of the study of this Master Plan which takes into account a vast territory, three times larger than the classified site, going from Ban That to Pakse.

The Master Plan was carried out in conjunction with the realisation of construction and zoning regulations, designed at a level of precision 4 times more accurate than of the Master Plan. Consistency between the various documents was ensured throughout the procedure and is explained in the third part of the Master Plan report.

The development process has seen several phases marked by intermediate approvals in 2014 and 2015, so as to ensure urgent safeguard measures, while leaving time for the consultation process of the concerned villages and the various public services. This process, which is summarised on page 85 of the Master Plan report, is attached in Annex 3. The complete final document was approved by the Provincial Government on 18 February 2016 and endorsed by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport on 19 May 2016.

7. The provisions of the Management Plan were specified in the Action Plan, to make them more practical and ensure that the actions reflect the site's Outstanding Universal Value. This Action Plan was carried out under the supervision of the UNESCO Bangkok Office, with the contribution of the UNESCO expert Mr. Christopher Young (2005) followed by an update proposed by Mr. Masao Nishimura (2011).

The latest update was completed by the Vat Phou Champasak World Heritage Site Office and discussed with the UNESCO representatives at the International Coordination Meeting held on 4 & 5 November 2013. The approved version, dated 22 April 2014, was presented to the participants at the following International

8. Notes the need for a clearer definition and understanding of the physical and other attributes of the property that convey its OUV, particularly in relation to the wider cultural landscape and Champasak town. Such consideration should involve meaningful consultation with the local community;

Coordination Meeting, held on 29 December 2014.

The building regulations were accompanied by a decision entitled "Governor's Decree Concerning Implementation of Regulations for the Administration of Construction for the Land Use Plan of the Vat Phou Champasak World Heritage Site", included in all documents approved by the Provincial Government on 18 February 2016. The purpose of this decision is to clarify and render management of the Classified Site and control of the work more operational. This is set out in the third part of the Master Plan report. The validated regulatory documents have been the object of a new explanation and dissemination campaign in the Classified Zone villages, which is scheduled to intensify in 2017.

8. An intensification of the study and definition of the Site's Outstanding Universal Value benefited from the contribution of experts and scientists to the exhibition's content development subsidised by the World Heritage Centre, with support from Japan and placed in the new Vat Phou Heritage Museum Showroom, in 2013. As a result of this work, a proposal for an amendment to the revision of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the Property was drawn up by the Vat Phou Champasak World Heritage Site Office, drawing on the work of ancient Khmer heritage and landscape experts. This proposal was approved by the Minister of Information Culture & Tourism and the Deputy Prime Minister, President of the National Heritage Committee, on 24 October 2014. It was forwarded to the World Heritage Centre by the National Commission for UNESCO on 5 December 2014. The attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value of the site and their relationship to the cultural landscape and the town of Champasak are set out in detail in the report of the Master Plan approved by the Provincial Government on 18 February 2016.

9. Recommends to the State Party to further enhance and strengthen inter-agency cooperation, including between provincial and national level authorities, in order to continue to address the conservation and management issues at the property by the Lao PDR National Committee for World Heritage and to ensure that the various committees concerned with the World Heritage property should be convened regularly and their decision-making processes reinforced through provision of greater technical support;

10. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, and the remaining recommendations of the reactive monitoring mission, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 41st session in 2017.

9. All decisions regarding the management or development of the Classified Site were systematically submitted to the local Heritage Committee and the Provincial Heritage Committee for discussion and approval. This was particularly the case at all stages of the Master Plan revision process and the regulatory documents. The Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, which is the supervisory department of the Vat Phou Champasak World Heritage Site Office, takes these decisions into account on the national level.

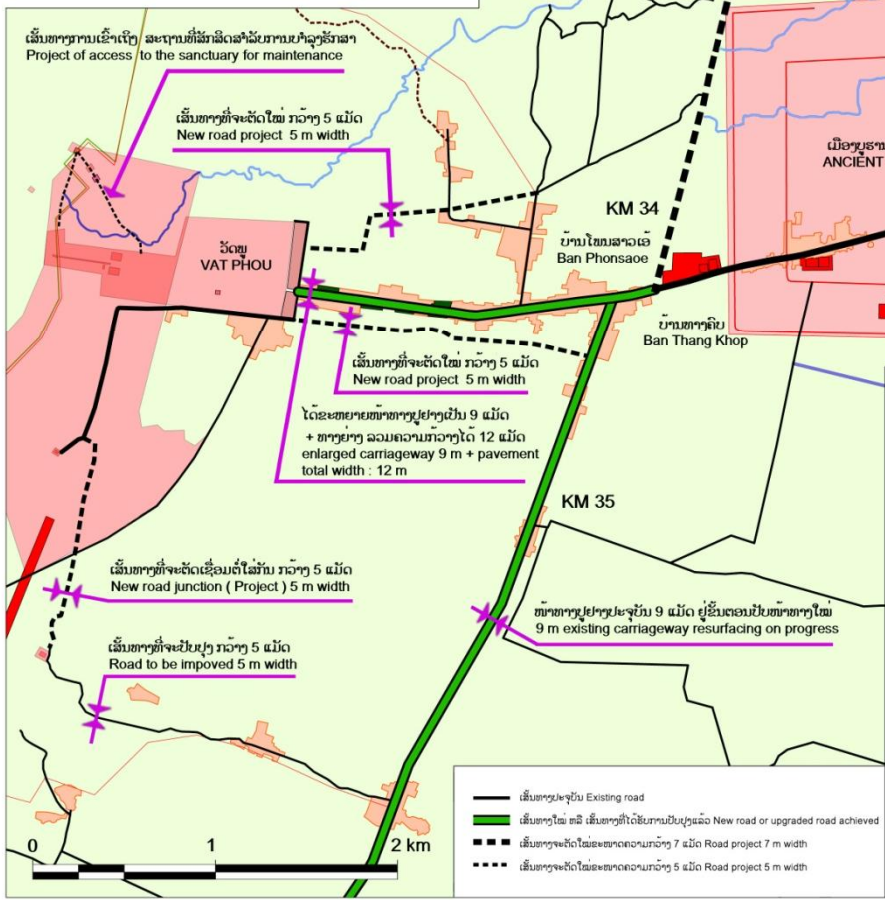
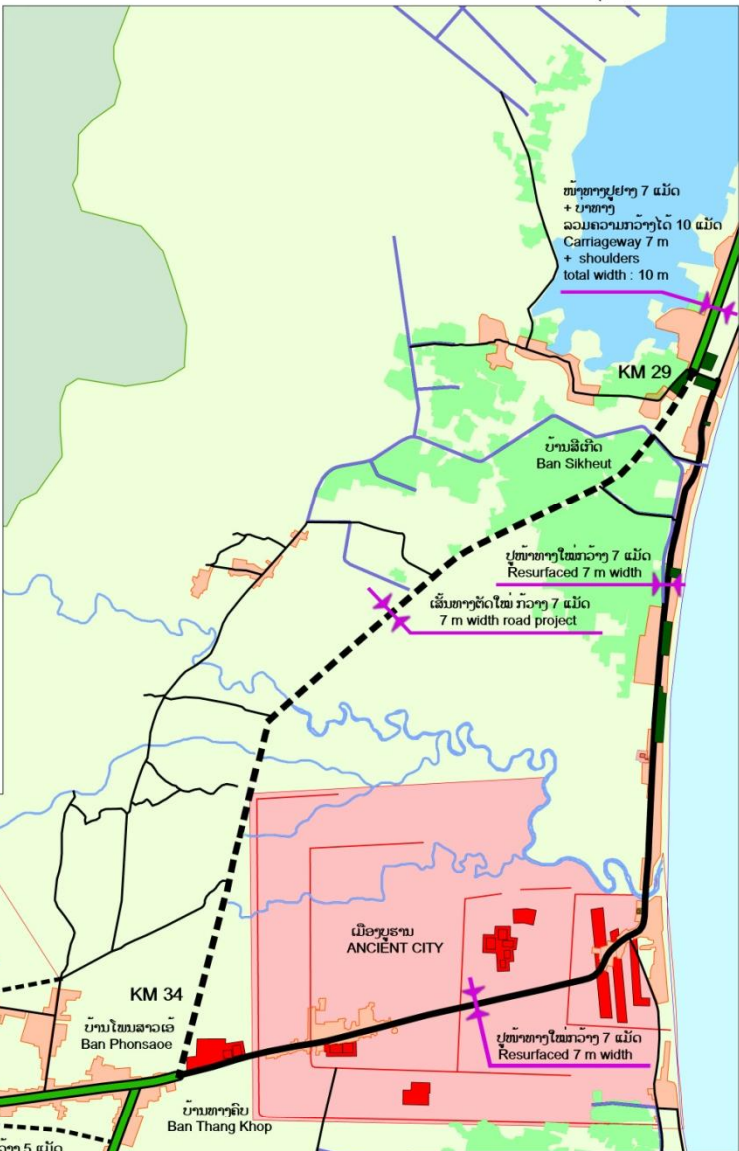
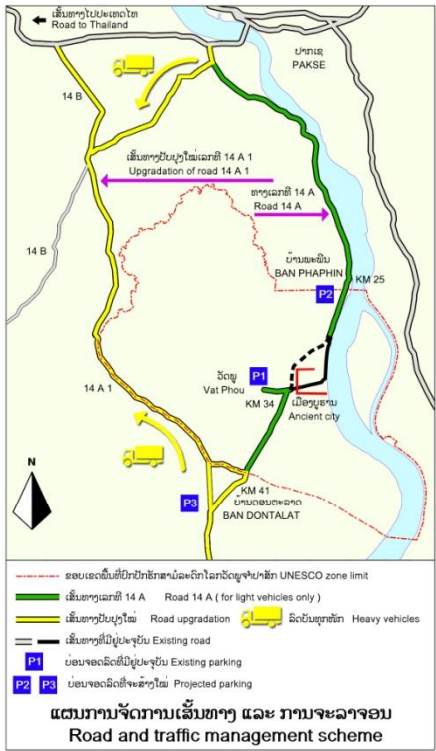
A point is publicly made concerning the coordination between the Lao stakeholders and the various foreign cooperations that contribute to the classified site's protection and enhancement on the occasion of the International Coordinating Committee of the classified site of Vat Phou Champasak. This committee meets at least once a year and is subsidised in turn by one of the cooperation programmes. The last International Coordination Committee, held on 16 and 17 November 2016, under the dual presidency of the Governor of Champasak Province and the Ambassador of the Republic of South Korea to Laos expressed, in its conclusions, the wish to continue to strengthen in particular the scientific coordination between the different stakeholders.

Annexes:

- Annex 1: Road network of the Vat Phou Champasak World Heritage Area
- Annex 2a: Monument zone plan (part 1)
- Annex 2b : Monument zone plan (part 2)
- Annex 3: Process of the Vat Phou Champasak urban planning review

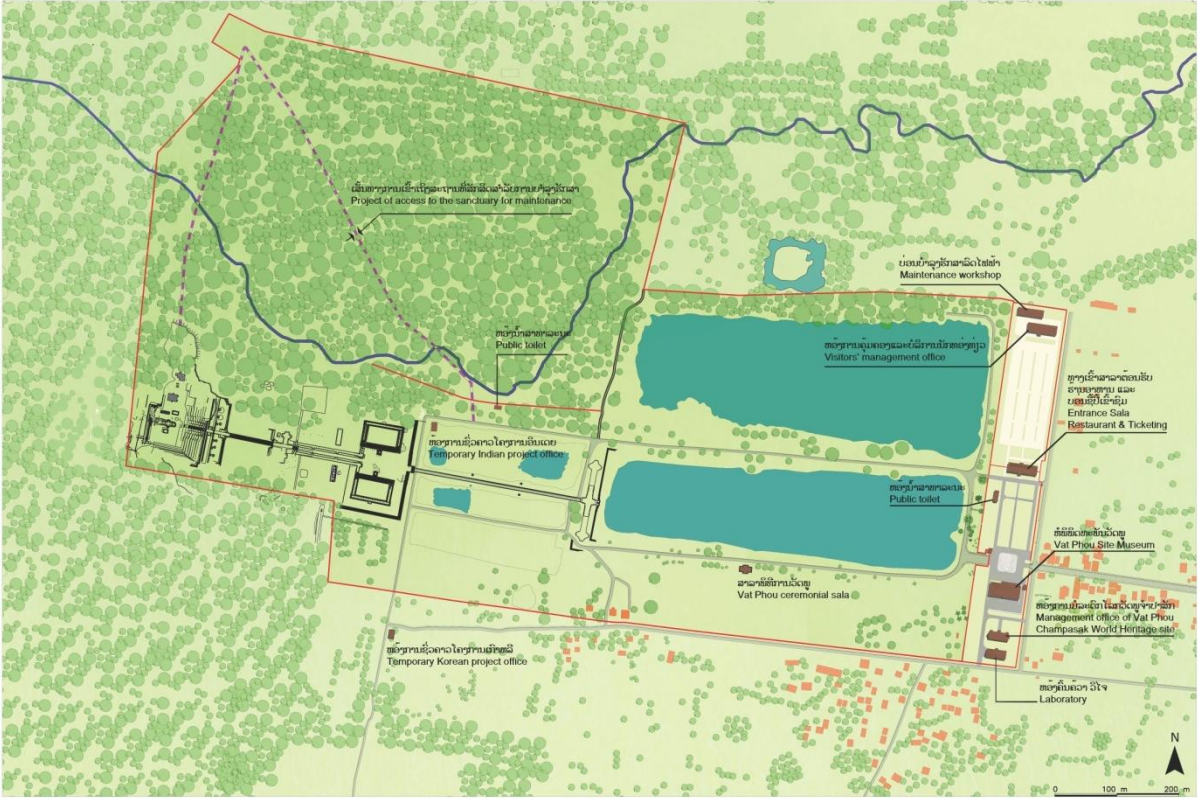
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Road Network of the Vat Phou Champasak World Heritage Area

ປັບປຸງ Updated 20.10.2015



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Monument zone facilities management plan

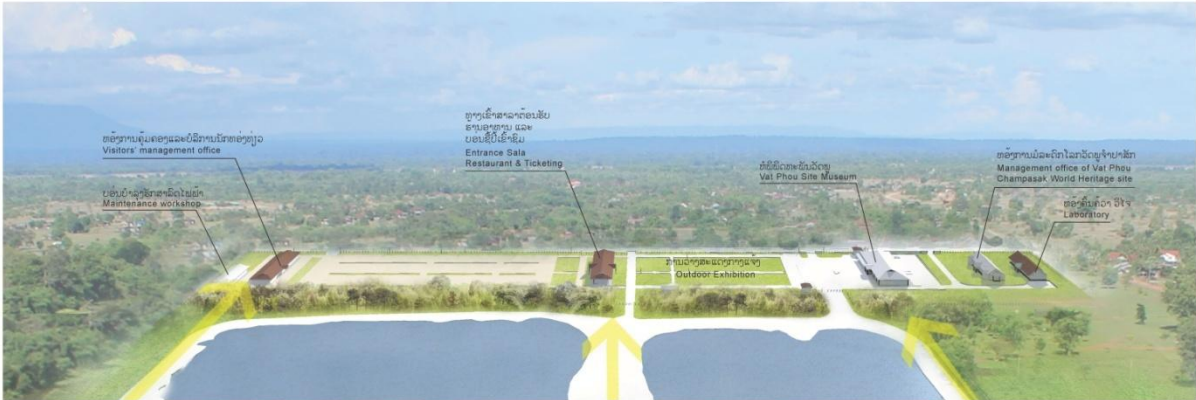
ປັບປຸງ Updated 07.11.2016



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Master plan of the entrance of the Vat Phou world Heritage site

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Monument zone landscape management plan

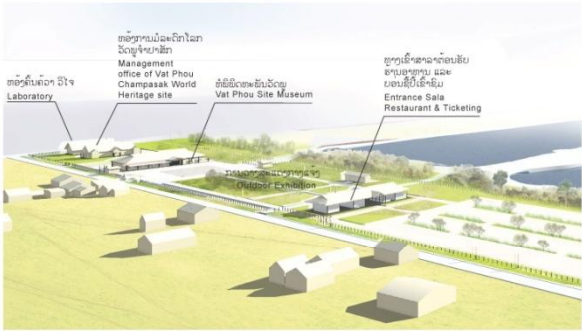
ປັບປຸງ Updated 07.11.2016



ສັດສະນີຍະພາບ  
Perspective



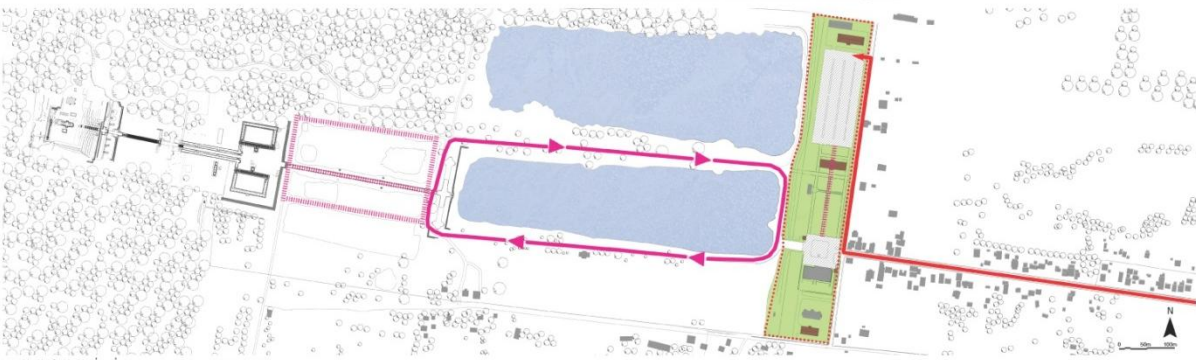
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Perspective



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Perspective



ແຜນຜັງການເຂົ້າສາລາດອນສິບ  
Master plan of the entrance of Vat Phou world Heritage site



ການຈັດສັນສຳລັບບໍລິຫານອຳນາດ  
Visitors flow management

<b>1st phase: Emergency protection measures and 1st phase of urban planning</b>	
18/05/2010	Provincial Government approval on draft proposal
10/07/2011	Launching of the first phase of architectural inventory with the support of National University of Laos and Brittany Region (France)
05/04/2013	Interministerial coordination meeting in Pakse and Provincial Government Decision on the setting up of the team organisation for urban planning review
17/12/2013	Provincial heritage committee approval of the 1st phase of the Champasak World Heritage Site (WHS) urban planning review
06/01/2014	Provincial government decision on approval of 1st phase of the Champasak WHS urban planning review
<b>2nd phase: Consultation process of villagers &amp; public bodies and second phase of urban planning</b>	
30/04/2014	Launching of the outreach program for schools
15/05/2014	Launching of the outreach information and consultation programme to villagers
12/06/2014	Opening ceremony for the implementation of urban planning in Champasak district
20/08/2014	Interministerial coordination meeting in Vientiane on the Champasak WHS urban planning project
22/09/2014	Second Provincial Government approval for enforcement of the planning review and building codes
24/10/2014	Approval of the proposal for the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value review by the Vice Prime Minister
23/12/2014	National approval of the Champasak WHS urban planning review by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport
<b>3rd phase: Achievement of the road project plan, urban planning documents update and implementation decree</b>	
01/06/2015	Beginning of the tourism development program in cooperation with AFD and Swiss Contact
10/10/2015	Interministerial coordination meeting in Pakse on the Champasak WHS urban planning project
23/11/2015	Provincial heritage committee approval
18/02/2016	Provincial government approval of the updated Master Plan and Land Use Plan & approval of the implementation decree to enforce the regulation control
11/03/2016	2nd Interministerial coordination meeting in Vientiane on the Champasak WHS urban planning project
19/05/2016	National approval of the Champasak WHS urban planning review by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport