



Ramsar's Secretary General sees progress in Laos' accession to the Convention

2 December 2004



Ramsar visit To Laos, 22 November 2004

On 22 November, the Convention's Secretary General, Dr Peter Bridgewater, visited the Lao People's Democratic Republic for discussions with government authorities and a seminar on the need for the Lao PDR to accelerate the progress of its accession to the Convention. Meetings were held with the Vice-Minister for Agriculture and Forestry, Mr Sithaheng, and the Deputy Permanent Secretary of his department, Mr Xaypladeth; the Vice President of the Science, Technology and Environment Agency, Mr Noulinh; and the Director General of the Environment Department of that agency, Mr Soukata. These meetings were positive in tone with an indication that the country is moving steadily forward on accession.

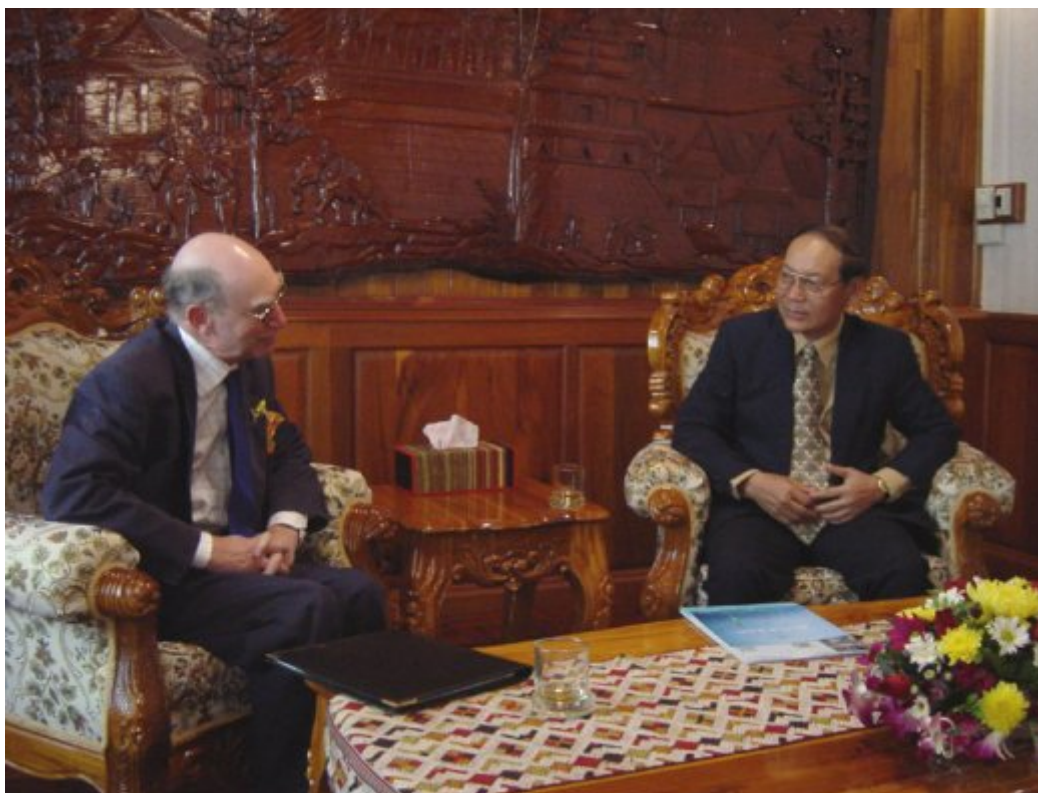
A seminar was held for members of government departments, civil society, and NGO, during which the Secretary General presented the present status of the Convention and the reasons for pursuing accession. This seminar was co-

chaired by the Director General of the Department of the Environment and the



Deputy

Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Opening the seminar, Mrs Latsamay Sylaveng emphasized the value that IUCN sees in having the Lao PDR become a full member of the Convention, now the only country in Southeast Asia that is not a Contracting Party or in the process of acceding. The day finished with a dinner hosted by the Lao PDR office of IUCN, to whom also go thanks for organising the whole day's events.



Peter Bridgewater (left) and the Vice-Minister for Agriculture and Forestry, Mr Sithaheng.



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