

Private Sector Tourism Investment Opportunities

# Laving-Lavern National Protected Area

**Investment Highlights 2025**

- Nam Thone-Pha Bang-Lavern Trekking (Phou Sang and Huai Sa-Ngi Waterfalls and Xe Bang Hieng River Camping)



**Issued:** September 2025

**Site Visit:** Contact [laosnationalparks@gmail.com](mailto:laosnationalparks@gmail.com) for a site visit

**Notification of Intent Due:** First-come, first-served

**Proposals Due:** According to the MOU after receiving initial approval to move forward



**Laving-Lavern National Protected Area**  
Lao PDR  
[laosnationalparks@gmail.com](mailto:laosnationalparks@gmail.com)  
[www.laoparks.la](http://www.laoparks.la)



If you wish to know the divine, feel the wind on your face and the warm sun on your hand.

**Buddha**



## CONTENTS

Foreword .....	2
Tourism Potential .....	3
Key Attractions .....	4
Markets & Accessibility .....	5
<b>Investment Opportunities</b> .....	<b>6</b>
📍 <b>Nam Thone-Pha Bang-Lavern Trekking</b> (Phou Sang and Huai Sa-Ngi Waterfalls and Xe Bang Hieng River Camping) .....	<b>7</b>
📍 <b>Other Areas</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Zoning & Guidelines for Responsible Investments .....	9
Matching Funds Available .....	10
Terms & Conditions .....	11
Proposal Instructions & Process .....	12

PHOTOS: SAMANKHET PAFO/SW ROBERT MARC LEHMANN



## Lao Landscapes and Livelihoods



The Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) is developing sustainable, private-sector driven nature-based tourism (NBT) as one of the pillars of its 5-Year National Socio-Economic Plan and 2030 National Green Growth Strategy (NGGS). With an impressive diversity of natural capital, Lao PDR's comparative advantage in NBT is a reflection of its expansive national protected area (NPA) network, which covers roughly 20% of the country's total land mass. The Lao protected area system plays an essential role in protecting endangered wildlife species, including endemic species of the Annamite Mountain range, a global biodiversity hotspot. It is also home to a diverse group of ethnic minority peoples, whose history, culture and religious traditions are intertwined with nature.

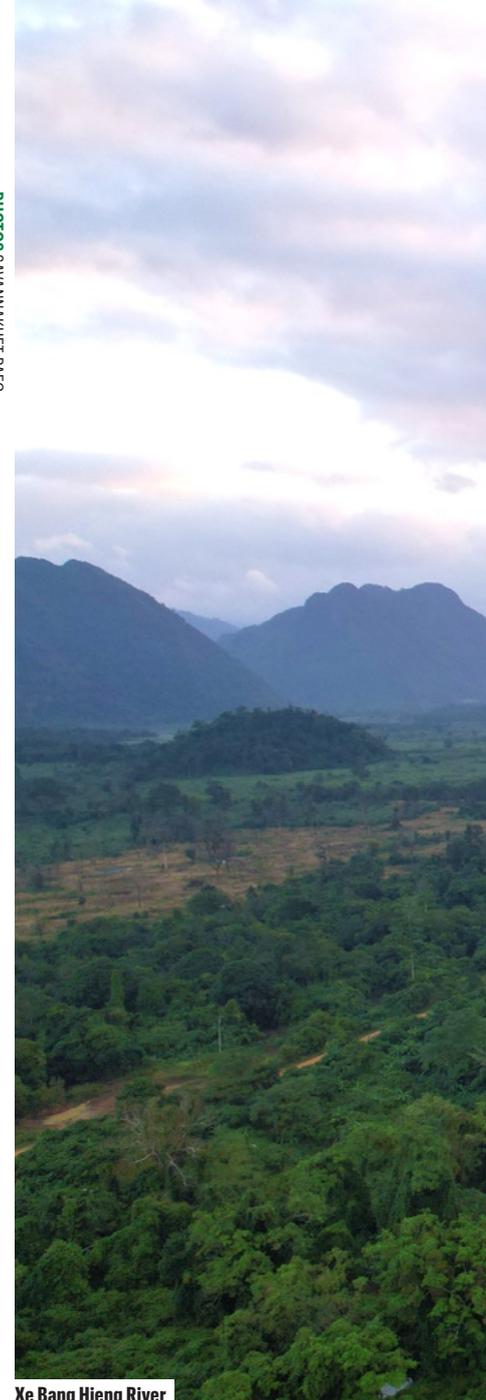
Laos has been making a name for itself as an international and regional destination for NBT, adventure tourism, ecotourism, and community-based tourism. Tourism has the potential to become Laos' top export and revenue earner, but this will require sustainable private sector investment and proactive public-private partnerships (PPP). With the right planned investments, tourism in protected areas has the potential to be positive force for lasting economic growth, local employment, and sustainable conservation financing. The Lao Landscapes and Livelihoods (LLL) Project is working towards promoting inclusive private sector investment to leverage the natural assets of Lao PDR for sustainable tourism growth that benefits investors, local people, and conservation.

Located in Savannakhet Province's Vilabouly and Xepon Districts, Laving-Lavern NPA represents 86,000 hectares of biodiverse Annamite Mountain habitat. It is one of the country's most recently gazetted parks and is unique for rare, endemic wildlife species, forested mountain views and majestic waterfalls. The park is part of a network of conservation areas straddling the Lao-Vietnam border. Entrepreneurs with a love of nature, a long-term vision for sustainable ecotourism development and an eye for an investment opportunity are sought to promote this unique area.



**Associate Professor Dr. Somvang Phimmavong**  
**Director General, Department of Forestry, Lao PDR**

PHOTOS SAVANNAKHET PAFO



Xe Bang Hieng River



Pha Bang Village



**Laving-Lavern National Protected Area**  
**Lao PDR**  
[laosnationalparks@gmail.com](mailto:laosnationalparks@gmail.com)  
[laoparks.la](http://laoparks.la)



#### TAPPING INTO THE TOURISM POTENTIAL

## Savannakhet Tourism Network Linking with Laving-Lavern



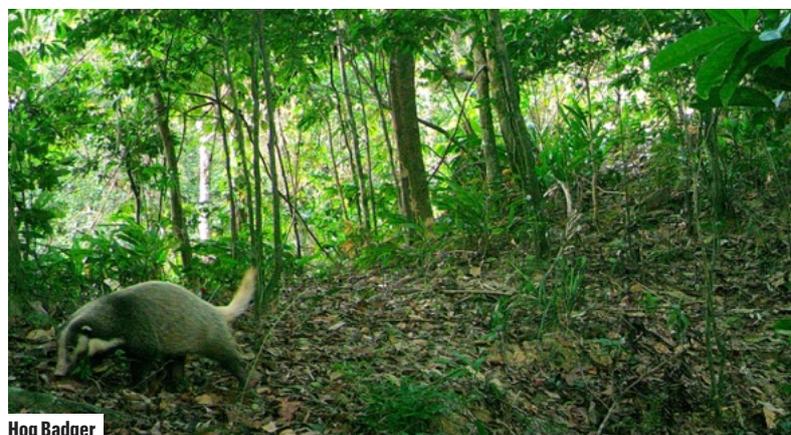
- ➔ Laving-Lavern NPA (LLV) is located near the most popular border crossing with Vietnam, Dansavanh, in Central Laos, which is frequented by international, regional and domestic tourists traveling overland through Savannakhet Province between Thailand and Vietnam.
- ➔ As one of the most accessible Annamite wilderness areas, the area offers excellent opportunities for an investor to develop wildlife- and nature-based tours that can be marketed to a wide range of visitors traveling this popular overland route.
- ➔ The park has not been developed for tourism yet so the opportunities for investment are wide open for first movers.
- ➔ Savannakhet Province's other natural, cultural and historical attractions are part of a network that links LLV with historic Savannakhet, the Eld's Deer Sanctuary, Champhone Wetlands, Dong Phou Vieng and Phou Xang Hae NPAs, the Monkey Forest and other attractions in the region.



## KEY ATTRACTIONS

### Laving-Lavern - The Annamite Mountains of Savannakhet Province

- Mountainous landscape with varied elevations between 450m to 1268 meters that provide important Annamite habitat, including the mountains of Phou Phak Phu Chang (743m) and Phou Pha Dang (504m).
- Annamite specialist species include the crested argus, coral-billed ground cuckoo, hog badger, large Indian civet, Owston's civet, large-antlered muntjac, saola, Annamite striped rabbit and more.
- Wet evergreen and semi-evergreen forests of global significance given the status and threats to other Annamite forests.
- Phou Xang and Huay Sa-Ngi waterfalls.



Hog Badger





Pha Bang Village

**MARKETS & ACCESSIBILITY**

**Key Markets**

- Thai weekend travelers entering Laos via Mukdahan border crossing.
- Travelers en route to or from Vietnam via the Dansavanh border crossing.
- Vietnamese travelers looking to discover the natural beauty of Laos with easy accessibility.
- FITs or small groups traveling to Savannakhet Province by motorbike, bicycle or private car.
- Visitors going to nearby natural attractions in Savannakhet Province including the Eld's Deer Sanctuary and Siamese crocodiles at the Xe Champhone Wetlands.
- Visitors traveling further south to Pakse and seeking some activities to experience on a stopover in Savannakhet.

PHOTO SAVANNAKHET PAFO

**Accessibility**

**Located within a half-day drive to border crossings with Vietnam and Thailand with times and distances to Ban Laving as follows:**

- **Dansavanh Border Crossing with Vietnam:**  
2.5 hours (85km) on an all-weather road.
- **Savannakhet Town, Laos:**  
6 hours (290 km). Daily flights from Vientiane to Savannakhet (1 hour).
- **Mukdahan, Thailand:**  
7 hours (320km). Daily flights from Bangkok to Mukdahan (1 hour).
- **Vientiane, Laos:**  
One-day drive (630km) via Seno.

PHOTOS SAOLA WORKING GROUP SWM-ROBERT MARC LEHMANN



Large antlered muntjac



Owston's civet



## INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Phou Tin Xang Waterfall level 1 (Ban Namthone)

## Featured Opportunities

**There are several featured private sector tourism investment opportunities based on park management and stakeholder input:**

- **Nam Thone-Pha Bang-Lavern Trekking** (Phou Sang and Huai Sa-Ngi Waterfalls and Xe Bang Hieng River Camping)

### **Other Opportunities:**

Other Opportunities: Investors are free to propose other activities or areas inside or around the park that have high potential and follow park regulations and guidelines.

Phou Tin Xang Waterfall - level 3





## INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

# •Nam Thone-Pha Bang-Lavern Trekking

Phou Tin Xang Waterfall level 1 (Ban Namthone)

**Nam Thone and Lavern Village Areas**, Xepon District, Savannakhet Province, **Controlled Use Zone** of Laving-Lavern

### The Investment Opportunity

The Nam Thone-Lavern area of Laving Lavern NPA provides a variety of attractions, including two waterfalls, camping on the Xe Bang Hieng River, trekking, mountain biking, ethnic minority villages and wildlife viewing potential with planned itineraries. Trekking can be done in 2-3 days, depending on the trail options. A private-sector operator is desired to develop the first tour in the park, which could include either all or a subset of the listed attractions based on interest and market potential.

### Unique Selling Points

- Untamed wilderness accessible just a few hours from Savannakhet town and the Lao-Vietnam border;
- Diverse attractions in a short trip that include wildlife, wet evergreen forests, waterfalls and ethnic minority Lao Teung villages;
- Opportunities to observe endemic Annamite species with the right itineraries.

### Investment Needs

- Develop tour itineraries for the park;
- Develop visitor facilities at Nam Thone or Pha Bang villages;
- Campsites at several key forest locations.
- Construct viewing tower at the Xe Bang Hiang River;
- Equipment for trekking, camping, and bird watching;
- Train local guides to interpret natural attractions;
- Develop sustainable waste management facilities.

### Accessibility

- Paved roads lead to the two proposed park entry points, but the laterite roads inside the park are challenging in the wet season;
- Trekking limited in the wet season due to river crossings.

### Partner Communities

- Lavern village (Jri ethnicity)
- Nam Thone village (Makong ethnicity)
- Pha Bang Village (Jri ethnicity)

## Other Areas

**There are many other areas with tourism potential in Laving-Lavern National Protected Area, which investors may also consider:**

- 📍 Wildlife viewing around Lavern Village
- 📍 Standing stones

**Investors are also welcome to propose for investment and development other attractions in Laving-Lavern NPA not listed in this manual.**

Endless mountains

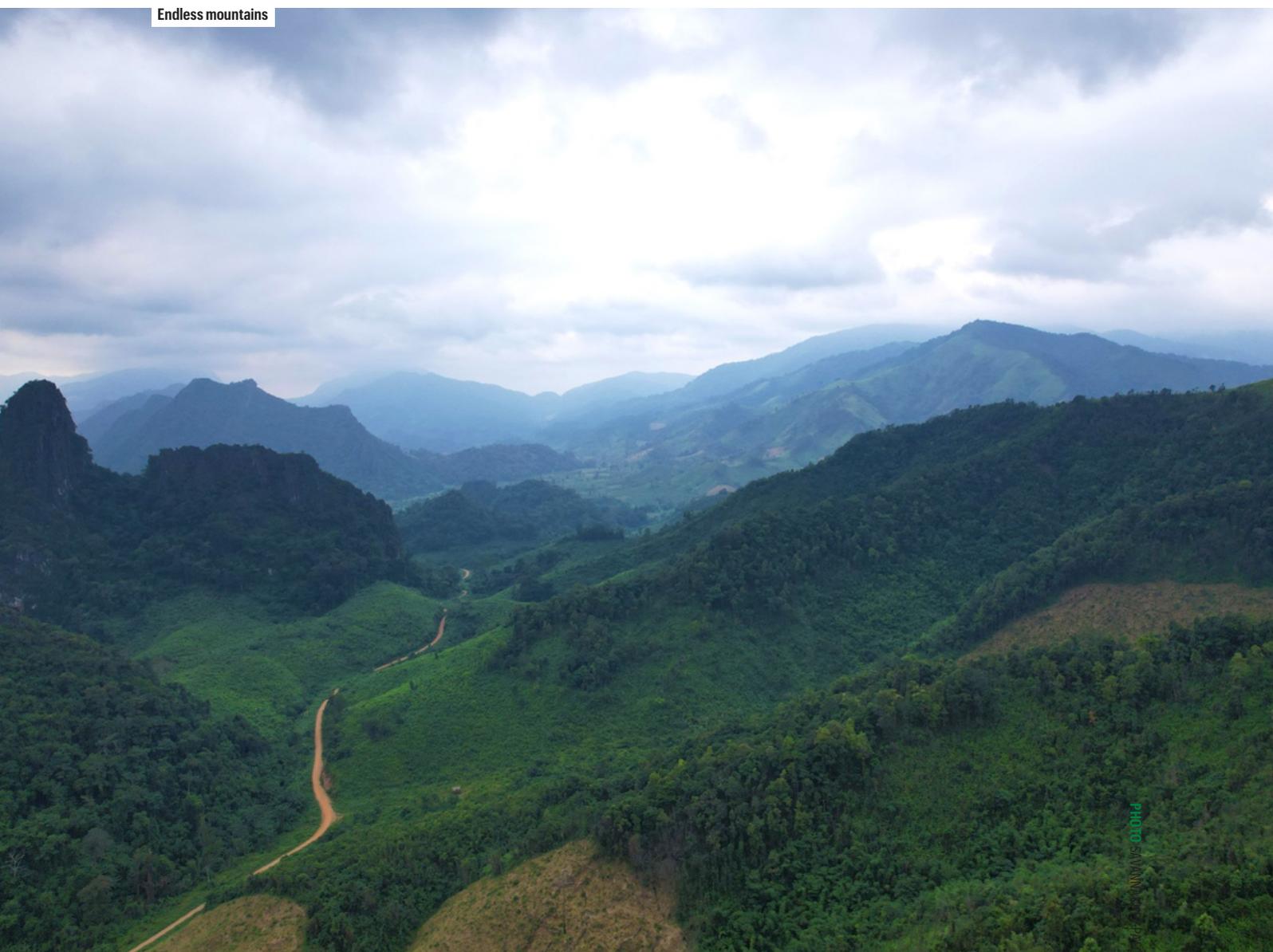


PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



# Environmental & Socially Responsible Investment

## Zoning

- For investments inside the **Totally Protected Zone (TPZ)**, no permanent infrastructure is allowed. Only campsites, toilets, trails, zip lines, boating, viewpoints & picnic spots are allowed.
- For investments inside the **Controlled Use Zone (CUZ)**, no large infrastructure such as hotels and resorts are allowed. Only low-impact infrastructure such as ecolodges, community guesthouses, and semi-permanent tented camps are permitted.
- For investments in the **buffer zone**, other tourism infrastructure types are allowed, including hotels and resorts.

## Sustainable Capacity

- The capacity of any tour area will depend on the sensitivity of the area and zoning.
- For trekking and camping tours inside the totally protected zone groups should be limited (e.g.: one group per area per day with approximately 10 visitors per group plus guides). Actual limits will be mutually agreed with the investor based to an impact assessment and needs of the investor.
- Investment proposals should provide details on the capacity requirements of the tour, and proposed facilities, balancing impact management, tour experience, and sustainable benefit sharing for all partners.

## Environmental Guidelines

- For tours inside the TPZ, strict waste management procedures are required. All waste must be carried out, and no burning

or burying waste allowed. For facilities in the CUZ and buffer zone, waste must be managed according to district waste management regulations, with maximum effort to reduce overall waste and to promote responsible recycling.

- Investment proposals that do not propose large infrastructure are not required to conduct a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) but must pass an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) according to MAE regulations. Proposals for lodging and larger infrastructure may be required to conduct an EIA.
- All investments must be designed to limit impacts on the environment, landscape, water resources, and biodiversity. Architectural and landscape designs should demonstrate that potential impacts have been addressed.
- Infrastructure and tours should also ensure no loud noises or disturbances in natural areas or villages and surrounding communities.
- All materials used for infrastructure inside the park must be reviewed by the authorities in advance to ensure that no prohibited wood or other materials are used.

## Social Guidelines (Community Participation)

- Communities must be partners in developing and managing the investment.
- Communities must be consulted during the proposal and negotiation process
- Villagers must be trained and hired by the investor as local guides, cooks, camp managers, lodge or resort staff, and other roles in the hospitality sector.

PHOTOS SAMNANKHET PAFO

Enjoying the Xe Bang Hieng River



Bouldering possibilities



## Nature-based Tourism Business Leveraging Facility

**The Lao Landscapes & Livelihoods (LLL) Project supports the Nature-based Tourism Business Leveraging Facility (BLF), which has matching funds available to support investments in tourism and tour service management cooperative contracts. Prospective investors can apply for matching funds as needed. The facility has three types of financing available:**

**Planning and feasibility work:**

This will have no minimum amount per selected application, no matching required and a maximum contribution of US\$2500 to support surveys, consultations with communities and other field work required for preparation of proposals. Such funds will account for no more than 10 percent of the total funds available through the BLF.

**Challenge Funds:**

These will target investment in particular areas or for more specific investments, typically to attracting concession investments or public

private partnerships identified by the project as high priorities. Maximum contribution of US\$200,000 per challenge to support investments of US\$400,000 or more. Such funds will account for roughly 50 percent of the total matching grants (approximately nine challenge grants) available through the BLF.

**Matching funds for MSMEs:**

For product development and marketing work for businesses located in and around the project protected areas of up to US\$20,000 per application and a maximum of two applications per MSME (Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises). This type of funding will account for no more than 50 percent of the total matching grants (approximately 90 MSMEs). Businesses selected for challenge grants can recommend financing for its partner MSMEs in order to develop NBT value-chains. The following matching requirements can include in-kind contributions. Matching requirements will be as follows:

Type of work	Project funds up to:	Applicant will contribute:
Construction of new facilities/buildings	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b> (can include in-kind contributions of materials and labor)
Upgrade existing facilities and equipment	<b>70%</b>	<b>30%</b> (can include in-kind contributions of materials and labor)
Staff/Community Training	<b>90%</b>	<b>10%</b> (can include in-kind contributions of accommodation/food/travel for trainers and trainees)
Development of new or improved activities, attractions and tours (including upgrade to boats)	<b>70%</b>	<b>30%</b>
New or improved websites, brochures, marketing campaigns, marketing materials/advertising campaigns	<b>90%</b>	<b>10%</b> (can include in-kind contributions of accommodation, food and travel)





Promoting local handicrafts

PHOTO SAMANNAKHET PAFO

**Agreement types**

- For large investments that include significant infrastructure investments, concessions agreements are encouraged, which can be made for up to 30 years according to the Investment Promotion Law.
- For smaller investments that have only small-scale infrastructure, Cooperation Agreements with partner communities and the protected area authority are allowed, which can be made for up to 20 years.

**Maintenance & Conservation Fees**

- The company is responsible for all maintenance costs of facilities, trails and other infrastructure or equipment used to manage and operate their tour services.
- Entry fees per visitor must be paid in addition to negotiated annual concession or cooperation agreement fees, unless otherwise specified in the agreement.

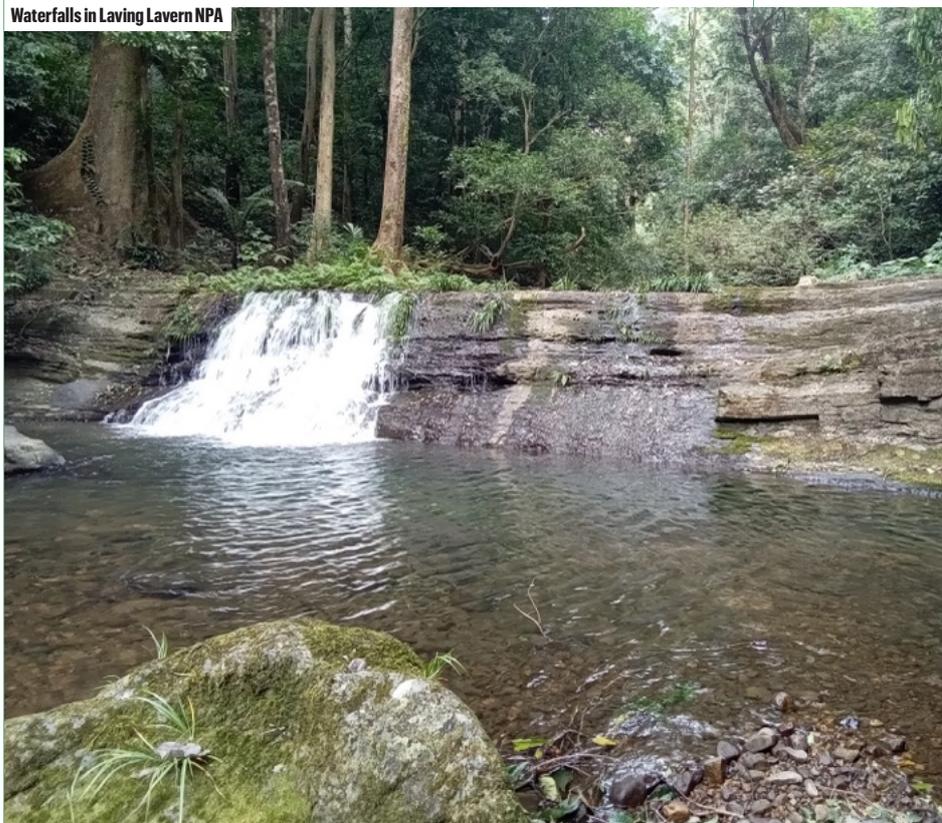
**Taxes & Other Fees**

- Relevant taxes including 10% VAT are required according to VAT and other tax laws.
- Labour Law must be followed, including the payment of Labor taxes and fees.
- Investments in remote areas (Zone 1) are entitled to a profit tax exemption for up to 10 years.

PHOTOS SAMANNAKHET PAFO



Riverine landscapes



Waterfalls in Laving Lavern NPA

## PROPOSAL INSTRUCTION AND PROCESS

**According to the Agreement on Tourism in Forest Areas of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, No. 1926, 03/06/2025, steps for cooperative agreements are as follows:**

### 1. Send Letter of Intent

Send a letter of intent to the National Protected Area Management Division (PAMD), Lao Department of Forestry.

**E-mail: [laosnationalparks@gmail.com](mailto:laosnationalparks@gmail.com)**

### 2. Forms to Complete:

Fill out application forms:

- Application form (Form #1) that includes technical and financial proposal  
**E-mail: [laosnationalparks@gmail.com](mailto:laosnationalparks@gmail.com)**
- Business Registration and Tax ID
- Company description and CVs of owner, manager and experts
- Please submit the application to the National Protected Area Management Division (PAMD) in hard copy directly to the PAMD office. Your documents will be stamped and you will receive a receipt slip.

### 3. Evaluation of Proposals

- Proposals will reviewed by relevant departments and evaluated using the application Evaluation Form (Form #1).

- Within 10 working days, you will receive a response on the initial proposal evaluation.

### 4. Criteria for Proposal Evaluation

- Ecotourism experience (company profile & expert staff) **20%**
- Business vision, marketing strategy and itineraries/packages **20%**
- Involvement of local communities **20%**
- Benefits for conservation & environment **20%**
- Financial Plan & Terms & Conditions **20%**

### 5. Village Consultations, Site Visit and IEE

If the proposal is agreed to in principle, an MOU will be signed and a site visit, village consultations (Form #2), initial environmental examination (IEE), and feasibility study must be completed.

### 6. Final Approval & Contracting

- Final approval will be announced 10 working days after receiving the final proposal.
- Contracting will follow a standardized form (Form #3).





You can cut all the flowers, but you can't keep spring from coming.

**Pablo Neruda**

**Contact us for further enquiries about private sector tourism investment opportunities**

**Protected Area Management Division,  
Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment,  
Khouvieng Road, Vientiane, Lao PDR**

✉ [laosnationalparks@gmail.com](mailto:laosnationalparks@gmail.com)

📘 [@parkslaos](#)

☎ +856-021-215000

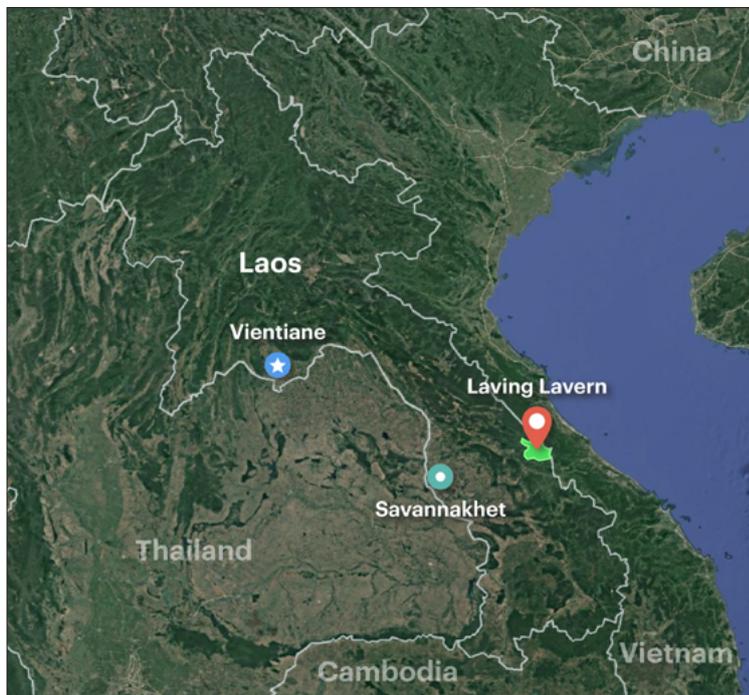
🌐 [laoparks.la](http://laoparks.la)

### **Laving-Lavern National Protected Area**

**Location: Southern Laos**

**Province: Savannakhet Province**

“Located in Savannakhet Province’s Vilabouly and Xepon Districts, Laving Lavern NPA represents 86,000 hectares of biodiverse Annamite Mountain habitat. It is one of the country’s most recently gazetted parks and is unique for rare, endemic species, forested mountain views and majestic waterfalls. The park is part of a network of conservation areas straddling the Lao-Vietnam border with Khoun Xe Nong Ma to the north and Phong Nha Ke Bang National Park to the east in Vietnam.”



Supported by the Lao Landscapes & Livelihoods Project, funded by the World Bank with contributions from the Global Environment Facility and the Canada-World Bank Clean Energy and Forest Climate Facility.