

DESTINATION MEKONG – SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL & TOURISM RECOVERY WITH CHILD PROTECTION IN FOCUS

- LAUNCH of THE CODE VOLUNTOURISM POLICY -

24 August
3.00 – 4.30 pm (Bangkok time)

Registration

Biographies of Speakers

Opening



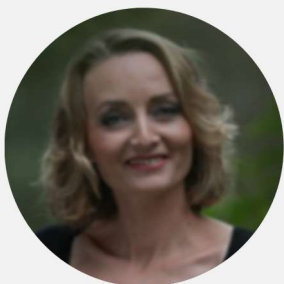
Jens Thraenhart, Vice Chair, UNWTO Affiliate Members, CEO of Mekong Tourism, Strategy Consultant & Entrepreneur

Jens Thraenhart has over 25 years of international travel, tourism, and hospitality experience. In 1999, he founded Chameleon Strategies, an Affiliate Member of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), advising tourism organizations and travel businesses in leveraging digital engagement to drive sustainability. Previously, he co-founded leading China travel marketing agency Dragon Trail, and headed up the marketing strategy and digital departments at Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, Canadian Tourism Commission, and Dusit International, recognized with prestigious awards. He was appointed by the tourism ministries of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, PR China, Thailand, and Viet Nam to head the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO) as its Executive Director in 2014 and has since spearheaded various award-winning initiatives. The governments have extended his contract three times.

Mr. Thraenhart has been recognized as one of the Top 25 Most Extraordinary Minds in Travel and Hospitality three times, and was recognized by Travel Agent Magazine as one of the Top Rising Stars in Travel. An MBA graduate of Cornell University, he is currently pursuing his Doctorate degree in Tourism at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He is currently serving as the Vice Chair of the Affiliate Members Board of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), was the Chair of PATA China, and has been on the board of industry organizations including the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association (HSMIA), and the International Federation of IT and Travel & Tourism (IFITT). He has published various articles and books, lectured at universities all over the world, and is a frequent speaker at industry conferences. His hobby blog www.Trends.travel is widely read and followed.

Mr. Thraenhart is a citizen of Germany and Canada, and resides in Bangkok, Thailand with his wife and daughter, as well as his father.

More information is available at www.thraenhart.com



Gabriela Kühn, Head of Programme, ECPAT International

Gabriela is the Head of Child Protection in Travel and Tourism for ECPAT International and oversees the programme for the global network of CSOs operating in over 100 countries to end the sexual exploitation of children. Gabriela brings over 14 years of experience working on children's rights, including at grass-root NGOs that provide direct psychological and legal help to children and their families. In her current role she works with global and regional intergovernmental bodies, governments, law enforcement and the private sector to improve protection of children in the context of travel and tourism.



Seila Samleang, Executive Director, Action Pour Les Enfants (APLE), ECPAT member in Cambodia

For over the past 14 years, Seila Samleang has been working as an Executive Director with a Cambodian child protection NGO, Action Pour Les Enfants (APLE), that is dedicated to combating the sexual abuse and exploitation of children. APLE was established in 2003 in Cambodia with a mission to strengthen national social and legal systems for the protection of children at risk of, or affected by, sexual abuse and exploitation.

Seila has obtained a Bachelor's degree in Education and Master's degree in Law and received extensive training in victim-centred approach regarding investigation and prosecution of child sexual crime. He's also a certified content analyst working on CSAM and collaborates with foreign law enforcement agencies in matters involving transnational cases.

Seila is a member of the Law Enforcement Working Group of the National Committee for Counter Trafficking and a member of the Technical Working Group to Prevent and Respond to Online Child Sexual Exploitation of the Cambodia National Council for Children.

Panel: The issue with voluntourism products with children and visits to orphanages in tourism programs



Moderator: Damien Brosnan, Manager of The Code

Damien manages The Code's global secretariat (www.thecode.org), based in Bangkok, with 300+ members across the globe. He works with local NGOs, UN agencies and the private sector to raise awareness and promote action on child protection in travel and tourism. He has worked with The Code since 2015, following roles with Care/UNICEF working on emergency relief.



Sophie Hartman, Regional Platform Coordinator, ASSET-H&C, Vice-Chair of Expert Group on Child Protection, Destination Mekong

Over the past decade, Sophie has been working on various capacity building projects targeting vulnerable population with non-profit organizations or in the frame of intergovernmental collaborations in Asia and Latin America. Most notably, she supported the launch and implementation of the Lao National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality's skills training programs. As network coordinator, Sophie currently provides strategic, technical, and operational support to the Association of Southeast Asian Social Enterprises for Training in Hospitality & Catering (ASSET-H&C), a regional network of innovative vocational training centers that promote social and economic inclusion of vulnerable people in Southeast Asia. The association brings together 12 educational institutions willing to work hand in hand to better fulfil their common mission of making a positive impact on the lives of disadvantaged youths and adults across Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.



Bertie Lawson, CEO - Sampan Travel, Member of Expert Group on Child Protection, Destination Mekong, Member of The Code

Bertie is the CEO of Sampan Travel, a boutique tour operator based in Yangon creating tailor-made journeys through Myanmar. Sampan Travel is one of just three tour operators based in Myanmar to have achieved Travelife Certification recognizing excellence in sustainability.



Hon. Prof. Dr. Nicole Haeusler, Responsible Tourism Consultant, Member of Expert Group on Child Protection, Destination Mekong

Since more than 20 years Nicole Haeusler works as a Responsible Tourism Consultant, mainly in Southeast Asia and has been focusing her work on Responsible Tourism Management and Training, the implementation of 'Corporate Social Responsibility – CSR' and Tourism & Poverty Reduction. She holds a Master Degree in Social Anthropology and a PhD in Responsible Tourism. Additionally, she is a licenced Change Management consultant focusing especially on cultural due diligence.

Nicole had been living and working in Myanmar since 2013 (since March 2020 connected online on a daily basis from Berlin). She had been working mainly for the German Cooperation – GIZ, International Trade Centre and Hanns-Seidel Foundation as a short- or long-term expert in; furthermore, she supports the locally registered NGO 'Myanmar Responsible Tourism Institute - MRTI' as adviser. MRTI and ECPAT did undertake a situational analysis of the sexual exploitation of children online and in Travel and Tourism in 2017 and 2018 in Myanmar with Nicole as lead researcher (unfortunately, MRTI did never get the permission to publish the report).