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For immediate release

## Earth Hour 2022 theme ‘Shape Our Future’ sparks the need for more collective commitment for a sustainable planet

Powered by people, Earth Hour is one of the largest environmental movements in the world. This year, more people from the Royal Government Ministries, local community, youth, public and private entities, non-governmental organizations, media and households across Cambodia are coming together to demonstrate their actions towards a healthier and better future for all.

As we continue to adapt our lives to the impacts of COVID-19, Earth Hour 2022 calls for prioritising nature-based solutions to build back better post-COVID-19, celebrate the vital role played by the natural world in all our lives – from nourishing us with food, water and fresh air to providing livelihoods for many millions.

“Earth Hour is a great opportunity for all of us, to show how much we care about nature and environment – and to help others understand its vital importance in all our lives on earth as well as taking part in creating solutions to the devastating threats of climate change and ecosystems degradation impacting people, nature and planet. It is a time to celebrate, but also a time to highlight the need for action beyond the hour from all of us on daily basis to protect the environment and natural resources,” said **His Excellency Neth Pheaktra**, Secretary of State to the Ministry of Environment.

Celebrities such as **Ms. Meas Soksophea**, **Ms. Adda**, **Ms. Neang Sovathana** or better known as **DJ Nana**, and **Mr. Sai** have joined the movement to raise greater public awareness about the importance of nature for the health and well-being of human and the environment, and promote the need for shaping a better future for both people and nature.

“Nature calls for our collective action. If we don’t take any action now, humanity, wildlife and the planet we know and love will suffer more than they already have,” said **Ms Meas Soksophea**, Popular Singer of Cambodia. “The time to act is now towards a sustainable society and our planet.”

Cambodia marks its 13<sup>th</sup> Earth Hour this year and saw increasing efforts and actions made by government and people to protect nature. But more collective actions are needed to build a safer, more resilient and more sustainable future. During the lead-up to and on the night of Earth Hour on 26 March 2022, we are asking people to speak up about why nature matters and stand in solidarity to show that they care about the health of nature, planet and people themselves.

“Natural resources and the ecosystem services it supports, is a fundamental life-support for people, wildlife and biodiversity, while it’s also an underpinning of the country’s sustainable economic performance. Safeguarding the natural resources and protecting the earth – our shared home – are our duties,” said **Mr. Seng Teak**, WWF-Cambodia Country Director. “Together, we can shape a future where people and nature can live in a harmony.”

One-hour light out on every last Saturday of March has become a global icon for action since Earth Hour was born in 2007 in Sydney, Australia, to raise awareness about the impact of energy consumption on the environment. By switching off your lights for one hour, you can make a substantial difference in energy consumption, raise public awareness, change behaviours and help reduce the effects of global warming on this planet.

“Earth Hour continues to show us the impact we can achieve when we unite, sparking hope for the future we can shape for generations to come. By reducing our energy consumption and making small changes in our daily lives, we can make an impact on the effect of the



climate crisis. This is the future that we're working towards - and everyone has a role to play," said **His Excellency Pablo Kang**, Australian Ambassador to Cambodia.

Sustainability is an increasingly important issue for people, especially in the business world. The effect of climate change and nature loss are impacting our lives as well as the fate of all other species around the planet. For companies, entrepreneurs, and individuals, sustainable business practices are becoming imperatives.

"Earth Hour is more than just an hour for our planet, it is a movement for our future generations. It is a powerful global symbol of unity, hope, and the collective actions needed to tackle climate change. There are no easy or immediate solutions for this, however we believe public institutions, private sectors, non-governmental organizations, and all of us as citizens of Earth have a role to play in combating climate change urgently now," said **Mr. Samson Wong**, Managing Director of HEINEKEN Cambodia.

Sustainable business philosophies and operations are integral to long-term human development. Clear priorities must be set to ensure that the health of humans and our ecosystems are at the top of the global, national, and business agenda.

"There should be no sacrifices when it comes to our collective wellbeing and prosperity. Companies, governments, and individuals must look beyond short-term profits and place humans and the planet at the core of their actions," said **Mr. Feiruz IKHWAN**, Acting CEO of Smart Axiata. "The future of the planet depends on the choices we make today as a society. It is clear that in confronting humanity's biggest challenge, we all have a role to play."

Young people can play an active role in protecting and improving the environment. They can change their lifestyle and how it affects the environment. They can make their homes, schools and youth organizations more environmentally friendly by adopting environmentally friendly practices, recycling of different materials as well as preserving resources such as water and electricity.

"Youth participation starts with each individual, from cleanliness, water and electricity consumption, planting trees at home and in their community," said **Ms. Chin Sonita**, Team leader of "យុវជននីតិ". "Engaging youth in environmental protection not only creates a direct impact on changing youth behaviours and attitudes, but also help influence their family and community members to be more responsible for the protection of environment and natural resources, for a better society they can help shape," she added.

Economic growth and environmental performance go hand in hand. Protecting nature and environment is critical to socio-economic development and sustainable growth, providing the resources we need to produce goods, services and jobs.

"We need to develop local economy using the forests protection system that will generate incomes through the sale of carbon credits in the international voluntary market, to raise funds for strengthening natural resource conservation and community development as incentive for effective community protected areas management. In parallel, the development of ecotourism creates new jobs, increasing incomes and improving the livelihoods of local people, as a contribution for Cambodia to achieve its sustainable development goals," said **His Excellency Neth Pheaktra**. "Cambodia has been making continuous efforts to protect its natural resources to ensure the sustainability and quality of the natural environment for the benefit of humanity for many generations to come. Cambodia has also been implementing its long-term strategic plan to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050."

"Cambodia is committed to implementing the National Forest Monitoring System and the Environmental and Social Safety Information System in support of the implementation of the Greenhouse Gases Reduction, Deforestation and Degradation (REDD +) project, and the goal to reduce the rate of deforestation by half by 2030 as part of the forestry and land use (FOLU) plans in line with Cambodia's REDD + strategy," he added.

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Notes to the Editor:

- Link to images: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1DNf\\_UY5XA8RYmH7oQHd6nhaaiwbONU3e?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1DNf_UY5XA8RYmH7oQHd6nhaaiwbONU3e?usp=sharing)

About Earth Hour

- In Cambodia, Earth Hour started in 2010 and has become a popular annual event which inspires audiences across the country, especially young people until now. This year, the event has been co-organized by the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Tourism, Provincial Administration of Mondulhiri, WWF-Cambodia, European Union, HEINEKEN Cambodia, Smart Axiata, with the support and collaboration from the Provincial Department of Culture and Fine Arts, Provincial Department of Commerce, The Blue Circle, Unilever, Coca Cola, and with the unwavering commitment from our media partners and youth groups.
- Born in Sydney in 2007, Earth Hour has grown to become one of the world's largest grassroots movements for the environment, inspiring individuals, communities, businesses and organizations in more than 190 countries and territories to take tangible environmental action. Historically, Earth Hour has focused on the climate crisis but, more recently, it has strived to also bring the pressing issue of nature loss to the fore. The aim is to create an unstoppable movement for nature, in the same way Earth Hour helped bring the world together to tackle climate change. The movement recognizes the role of individuals in creating solutions to the planet's most pressing environmental challenges and works hard to harness the collective power of its millions of supporters to drive change.

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