



Executive Summary, Oudomxay Province

Oudomxay Province is in the heart of northern Laos. It borders China to the north, Phongsaly Province to the northeast, Luang Prabang Province to the east and southeast, Xayabouly Province to the south and southwest, Bokeo Province to the west, and Luang Namtha Province to the northwest. Covering an area of 15,370 km² (5,930 sq. ml), the province's topography is mountainous, between 300 and 1,800 metres (980-5,910 ft.) above sea level. Annual rain fall ranges from 1,900 to 2,600 millimetres (75-102 in.). The average winter temperature is 18 C, while during summer months the temperature can climb above 30 C.

Muang Xai is the capital of Oudomxay. It is connected to Luang Prabang by Route 1. Oudomxay Airport is about 10-minute on foot from Muang Xai center. Lao Airlines flies from this airport to Vientiane Capital three times a week.

Oudomxay is rich in natural resources. Approximately 60 rivers flow through its territory, offering great potential for hydropower development. About 12% of Oudomxay's forests are primary forests, while 48% are secondary forests. Deposits of salt, bronze, zinc, antimony, coal, kaolin, and iron have been found in the province.

In 2011, Oudomxay's total population was 307,065 people, nearly half of it was females. There are 14 different ethnic groups living in the province. Due to its mountainous terrains, the majority of Oudomxay residents practice slash-and-burn agriculture, growing mountain rice. Other main crops include cassava, corn, cotton, fruits, peanut, soybean, sugarcane, vegetables, tea, and tobacco. Major exports include corn, onions, watermelons, and tobacco. Animal husbandry is widely practiced in rural Oudomxay. The province's meadows and valleys are ideal for livestock breeding.





Oudomxay has been enjoying spillover tourists from surrounding provinces, mainly from Luang Prabang. Foreigners stop by, yet the average length of stay is short. There have been efforts to boost tourism, especially ecotourism, in the province. In 2007, the Tourism Department was established in Oudomxay. According to the Lao National Tourism Administration, in 2008, approximately 102,000 tourists visited Oudomxay. In 2012, the province had 15 hotels, 62 guesthouses, and 158 restaurants, most of which were located in Muang Xai and Pak Beng (a riverine traffic junction town). In 2006, the province's tourism authority became aware of Chom Ong Cave, about 45 km from Muang Xai. With a length of more than 16 km and up to 50 metres in height, it is the largest cave found in northern Laos and one of the top 10 in Southeast Asia. In the future, when infrastructure allows, the cave will become a main tourist attraction in the sub-region.

The local government is honored to extend an open invitation to domestic and foreign business people to explore potential environmentally and socially sustainable investments in this beautiful province.

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