



It's more fun in the
Philippines



MEDIA RELEASE

10 April 2013

DOT receives \$7.1M grant from ADB, CIDA

The Department of Tourism (DOT) is set to receive a \$7.1 million technical assistance grant intended to help boost industry competitiveness from 2013 to 2016 from the Government of Canada, through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as the administering agency. The launch of the *ADB-CIDA Technical Assistance on Improving Competitiveness in Tourism* was formalized in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signing ceremony held on 10 April 2013 at the Bayleaf Hotel in Intramuros, Manila.

Among the projects proposed under the grant are skills training programs for the private sector, local government units, civil society, and DOT agencies. Also included is the pilot implementation of the new system of accreditation and the development of standards for service quality. The technical assistance will be piloted in Cebu, Bohol, Palawan, and Davao.

The ADB-CIDA program is envisioned to create more employment opportunities and advancement for the local workforce, as well as provide local government units with better capacity to improve their regulations in attracting more investments and tourism activities.

The technical assistance comes on the heels of the World Economic Forum recognizing the Philippines as the “most improved country” in its 2013 Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index. The Philippines is up 12 spots from 94th in 2011 to 82nd in 2012 out of 139 countries. The index measures the factors and policies that contribute to the attractiveness to develop the travel and tourism sector in different countries.

“While we continue to receive recognitions from global organizations and publications, the challenge for all of us in the tourism sector is to ensure that the promise of FUN is complemented on the ground with competitive physical and social infrastructure: from our products to the cost of doing business and human resources. This gesture of the Government of Canada and the ADB is a recognition of the role of tourism as a key driver of economic development in the country.” Tourism Secretary Ramon R. Jimenez Jr. said.

Secretary Jimenez added that the ADB-CIDA technical assistance is in line with the strategic directions of the National Tourism Development Plan to improve tourism institutional governance and human resource capacities. The technical assistance will result in three key outputs over a four-year period: a) regulatory review b) service standards improvement c) skills development.

“This comes at an opportune time when we need to scale up the development of tourism towards our bid of 10 million international visitor arrivals and 56.1 million domestic travellers by 2016. We should be ready to improve the tourism plant and enhance the quality of our services to ensure higher visitor satisfaction levels, which will trigger word-of-mouth marketing. Through this undertaking, the Philippines will be more competitive with the rest of the destinations in the Asia-Pacific,” Secretary Jimenez concluded.

#

CONTACT: EVELYN A. MACAYAYONG
Office of Marketing Communications
525-1805