**PRESS RELEASE - October 2017 Pha Tad Ke launches second phase fundraise drive**

**Pha Tad Ke Botanical Garden is excited to announce the fundraising campaign for the second phase of our development: the installation of our Research and Education Facilities accompanied by an intensive 5-years capacity building and research program. We are proud to announce that Chris Woods has been appointed Director for International Development and will be working together with us towards this important new milestone in our development.**

On November 7th 2016 the Pha Tad Ke Botanical Garden opened to the public, and over eight thousand people from Laos and all over the world visited and enjoyed the beautiful as well as the educational. Founded by curator and publisher, Rik Gadella, Pha Tad Ke is located in Luang Prabang and is the first garden of its kind in Laos. It has taken seven years of developing botanical collections, scientific research, landscaping, and employee capacity building to create this unique botanical garden with a deep focus on ethno-botany.

Pha Tad Ke is setting new standards in sustainable and environmentally responsible tourism, giving back to Lao communities, preserving local culture and the environment. The garden provides jobs to local villagers and creates a nurturing platform for young talent to develop new skills from gardening to science, education and hospitality. Publications and manuals in Lao language have been written by the staff and provide learning opportunities for Lao communities through workshops and student trainings.

**With the installation of our Research and Education Facilities Pha Tad Ke will be able to take a major step towards the realization of our important goals.**

**Rik Gadella**

Worked in the art world in Amsterdam, Paris and New York for over 25 years and is the creator of world-renowned events such as Paris Photo and Parcours des Mondes. In 2008 he visited Luang Prabang for a short holiday and fell in love with this UNESCO heritage town, and its natural surroundings, and decided to move here to create the first botanical garden of Laos.

**Chris Woods**

Was born in England but has lived in the United States since 1981.He has worked in the garden world as gardener, executive director, designer and consultant for 45 years. He was the first executive director of Chanticleer, a world famous garden in Pennsylvania, and director of the Van Dusen Botanical Garden in Vancouver, Canada and executive director of the Mendocino Coast Botanical Garden in California.

He was a member of the board of the Fairmount Park Conservancy in Philadelphia and a founding member of the Business Advisory Board for the Flora of North America Project. While traveling the world researching, interviewing, and photographing for a book on contemporary global gardens, he visited Pha Tad Ke, fell in love with its beauty and became passionate about its science.

**Here’s some of what we have achieved at Pha Tad Ke Botanical Garden since we began our project in 2008 to create the first botanical garden of Laos:**

* 14 books published and 3 educational manuals;
* 30.000 copies of our books distributed free of charge to Lao schools and libraries;
* 2.400 school children have visited PTK as part of organized garden excursions, and over 1.200 university and college students;
* 12 school gardens installed with teacher training programs;
* 130 plus botanical fieldtrips undertaken;
* 1.500 different plant and tree species in our living collections;
* 2.500 staff training days organized in Laos; over 980 staff training days completed internationally;
* 8 scholarships given to Lao students;
* 74 workshops given to Lao college and university students in Field botany, Green horticulture, Ecology, Management coaching, Photography and Botanical Drawings;
* 22 art exhibitions organized in Laos and internationally;
* 38 articles in the press, 22 blogs, 5 radio interviews and 3 TV documentaries featuring PTK;
* 52 staff working in the garden;
* 10 hectares of garden open to the public, 2 hectares of work area/nurseries and 25 hectares of mountain reserve.