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Left With Fish Too Small to Sell in Cambodia's Mekong River Basin

Dams are common structures built for many purposes, such as store water, generate electricity, or prevent flooding. In 2018, the Lower Sesan 2 was built with expectations to bring benefits to the country. The Cambodian government expects that the dam will help promote China to other foreign countries. However, the Lower Sesan 2 became the cause of many negative impacts to the surrounding area, which are the ecosystems and the local community who lived near the dam.

First, the Lower Sesan 2 highly disturbed the ecosystems like the fish population. The fish populations in Maekong River Basin decreased significantly. This is because when they constructed the dam, the river was cut off which made it harder for them to travel and continue their reproductive cycle. As a result, the fish started to die off species by species. In addition, many economists opposed the idea of building dams because it will destroy many farm lands, trees, and vegetables that help capture carbon dioxide. Consequently, it can result in having a large amount of carbon footprints. Many fish species had died and a large amount of land was destroyed due to the dam that was built to promote their country.

Second, people in the local community struggled to maintain their standard living conditions. They were forced to migrate away from their homes, which were located far away from the river. This made it almost impossible for them to grow crops because the land was too dry for the crops to grow. In addition, since many fish populations decreased, fishery yields also decreased. So, it really did affect people's lives because their main source of income and food came from growing crops like rice, vegetables, medicinal plants, and fruits, and catching and selling fish. Not only was their main source of income almost gone, but they also struggled because they had to spend extra money on buying drinking water because the groundwater is not suitable for drinking. The Lower Sesan 2 caused a lot of problems to people who originally lived where the dam was built.

In conclusion, the construction of Lower Sesan 2 caused a lot of negative impacts on the environment and the people in the surrounding area. It was not totally worth it compared to the loss that it caused. A lot of time the government only cares about what the whole country could benefit from building dams and they tend to forget about other little things that might be affected by the dam, so, they should reconsider the consequences as well.