

Assignment 1

The article is about the Lower Sesan 2 dam, a hydroelectric power dam. The dam is a part of the Chinese government's large-scale "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI) which is a huge project. The Cambodia government suggested that the dam will help them generating the electricity for the area and decrease the amount of fuel usage. However, there are lists of problems caused by building the dam including environmental problem and economic problem as well. Environmentalists, economists, and others were on the different side to the dam. They warned the government about their concerns that the consequences wouldn't worth the benefits.

Before the dam was built, People in the villages got their income from 3 sources. First is fish from the river and sell them for household supply. Second is from rice, vegetables and fruit they grow along the river. Last is from the forest, they all got benefitted from the river which is why the river is so important to them. Now that the dam was built, their lives became thousand times harder than it used to be, as the dam took away most of their lives. The dam blocked the fish from travelling up and down along the river, the reproductive and feeding area is now disrupted making the species die, lives in Mekong River is dying. If they want to fish, they have to travel to somewhere else. Now one of their income is cut off. Yet, it doesn't stop there, the dam blocks the soil and minerals from getting to people's farms causing the soil to be dry and rocky which is problematic to farm. People were asked to leave and forced to take the compensation which is not worthy enough. Most of them lives in the area for a long time, their whole life is here so people do not want to leave. Moreover, they only have skills on what they usually do, but now that it isn't enough for everyone in the family, they would need new skill set to go out and get new job, but there is no one who provides them the training which is why they are struggling so much.

As it is mentioned in the article, economists and environmentalists were saying that the dam is not worth the loss and consequences that would follow. Saying that the country's geography is not suitable for the hydroelectric power. The dam covers a large area of the land, there will be large amount of carbon dioxide and methane which create the carbon footprints that is equal to fossil fuel plants. Moreover, the opportunity cost from building the dam is even more than the benefit that the country got. For example, fishes are dying, people can not fish as much anymore, the market will soon lack of fish product, and the economy will not be the same.

To conclude, this dam is just causing problems from the local level to the state level. The government did not think about the consequences thoroughly and did not listen to the experts which caused them even more damages.