

CAMBODIA'S MEKONG RIVER BASIN



IN SHORT

Thousands of Cambodians have lost their homes and livelihoods since the Mekong River Basin was created by the government with the BRI project of China. They are destroying the ecosystem and economy. It has attracted many people, including economists, wanting to know the problems and reasons for their impact on the environment. the Cambodian government will struggle to get funding from them in the future. It also affected in economy.

PROBLEM

The local communities were reluctant to relocate which is dry or in the forest with a bad environment to do some agriculture or fishing. The main income is gone. Life is more difficult. The village with their memories was submerged. The compensation cannot be compared to their old income. Basin destroyed the ecosystem. Fish slowly die. Moreover, they find contamination in it. Compare losses to fishery income and the cost of creating electricity from this dam. it wasn't worth the costs. Plus, electricity is still in short supply and unreliable in Cambodia. Also, it is about global warming, hydroelectric power, and greenhouse gas issues.

BRI of China

The dam is part of the Chinese government's large-scale "Belt and Road Initiative" a trillion-dollar investment and development. Chinese government money usually comes without safeguards or obligations to protect the rights of vulnerable communities. it is also meant to make Beijing look good on the world stage. BRI covers 68 countries around the world. It accounts for 65% of the world's population or 40% of global GDP in 2017.

CAUSE

On biodiversity, cutting off two rivers for the basin make the water cycle changed which disrupting their feeding and reproductive cycles. On deforestation, the green area is gone. Also, the country's geography is not suited for hydroelectric power. The dam had to be so wide because it lacks large mountains and gorges that could act as reservoirs and ensure the falling water creates sufficient pressure to power hydroelectric turbines. The BRI of China and the government were invested without thinking enough about the environment.

ECONOMY

In the microeconomy, there is a lot of problems that income of household about fishing and framing are gone. It will become a scarcity of resources. In the macroeconomy, there is some benefit in it because the basin is a part of the Mekong river that connected many countries in ASEAN. So, it will be easy to trade the product of the country. But, when increase trading, will increase pollution is from production and transportation. Moreover, there is the opportunity cost. The government decided to create a basin and give up some production.