

Applied Economics for Natural Resources and Environment Assignment 1

From the article "How a China-Built Dam Destroyed an Ecosystem and Livelihoods". The cause of the problem mentioned in this article is that Cambodian government officials and the Chinese state are building the dam in Cambodia's Mekong River Basin. For this reason, it affected too many people and animals in that area. Moreover, it also affected the environment and the economic system.

Firstly, based on the article, the main cause of the problem that affected the Cambodian community was the "Lower Sesan 2" dam, which was built in Cambodia's Mekong River Basin. The Chinese state-owned power generation company and the Cambodian government are the ones responsible for building the dam. Many people in local communities had opposed the dam because they feared that it would affect their habits and income, but the purpose was ignored.

Therefore, these causes of problems can be affected in many parts. First, thousands of people were forced to leave their homes because their village was going to be the place to build a dam. It not only affects people but also leads to migrating fish species. Since the dam is starting to be built, it has affected their income a lot because millions of people live by catching fish to sell. Moreover, their income and food are from three sources, which are fish, which is the main source of income. Second, rice, vegetables, and fruit that they have planted for a long time. The last is forest products. So, the income from these things is gone.

Moreover, for the interaction between the economy and the environment, the environment provides the natural resources input of raw material, which are land, water, and forest. These raw materials are used to build dams, which are part of a Chinese infrastructure project to spur the economy globally. And the dam creates pollution and waste. For example, the dead forest trees that are submerged emit a lot of CO₂, methane, and carbon footprints that have large amounts equal to fossil fuel plants.

The key economic insight from this article is that economic growth may contribute to environmental problems. Thus, the reason that the Cambodian government and Chinese state invest a trillion dollars in building dams is to create power because Cambodia still has a shortage of electricity, which the dam may be intended to stimulate economic growth and make Beijing look good in the world economy. But as it is mentioned in the previous paragraph, this dam creates a lot of environmental problems. So, I think that the organizations that are responsible for this project need to deal with the pollution problem that is created by the dam by reforesting the trees to replace the dead trees. Also, the government has to provide new energy sources because hydroelectric power is not suited to the country's geography.

In conclusion, Chinese state-owned power generation and the Cambodian government are building the dam to generate electricity to stimulate economic growth. However, the dam affected thousands of fish migrating, leading to people's income loss since catching fish is the main source of income for villagers. The dam creates pollution such as CO₂ and methane. Lastly, it can be concluded that economic growth can cause environmental problems.