

How a China-Built Destroy an ecosystem and livelihoods

It is debatable whether the large dams, the Lower Sesan 2 should be built which would lead to vital immigration of native fish species and thousands of people had to leave their homes and set up elsewhere. To begin with, the impact on the environment was caused by creating a huge artificial reservoir by cutting off rivers that were major tributaries to the Mekong. As a result, the natural pathways of fish were blocked causing interruptions in their life cycles that limited their abilities to reproduce. Nowadays, fishery yields have dropped owing to irreversible environmental impacts. Continuing now to consider a 2008 environmental impact that had anticipated this was ignored. Also, local communities' vows against dam construction were identified as troublemakers..

In addition, thousands of people belonging to Indigenous communities or ethnic minorities who lived in those areas survived by catching fish for food and selling fish to purchase necessities, growing rice and vegetables in the floodplains, and collecting forest products but everything were submerged by the dam. Some people refused to resettle because the area where they were resettled was unfit for them to survive. As previously stated, people were poor and their only source of income from the river was gone. The communities that resettled in another area were either offered prefabricated houses or about US\$6,000 to build new homes but the amount of compensation they received did not match the value of their losses. These residents were moved to areas with soil ill-suited to farming. Many received inadequate compensation and they were not offered new skills that would help them to earn money to survive. It could be more understandable if they were offered some skills such as welding, woodwork, or electronic repairs, thereby enabling them to work at their resettlement area.

As regards, the effects of the dam had become evident. Damaged aquatic ecosystems created socio-economic risks to communities dependent on rivers and lakes for their livelihoods. Moreover, comparing losses to fishery income and the cost of displacement caused by the dam it was not worth it. Also, the geography of Cambodia is not suited for hydroelectric power. They constructed the dam to generate hydroelectric power due to insufficient electric supply in Cambodia but resulting in worse conditions not only short supply but lead to emitting large amounts of carbon dioxide and methane from dead vegetation. However, the dam is a part of the Chinese government's large-scale "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI). Its objective is to motivate development and advance Chinese policy globally. The Chinese government may provide loans for infrastructure development but still set the stage for widespread to ensure the companies are concerned about environmental and social impacts and also offered adequate compensation for affected communities, the former village of Srekor in northeastern Cambodia.

Thus far, the revelation of these abuses might lead the Chinese government to reassess and renegotiate resettlement and compensation. BRI is not only developed for foreign policy but meant to make Beijing look good on the global stage. However, the Huaneng Group should ensure that abuses are sorted out and ICBC should handle the dam project's finances. After all, the Cambodian government needs to re-evaluate and handle impact estimates for infrastructure projects such as developing a road, sufficient electricity, or a power plant and also offer appropriate compensation and launch more programs and opportunities for people to learn new skills in aquaculture or fish stocking opportunities for the reservoir. And lastly, in the next coming years, Cambodia's energy policy cannot be dependent on hydropower, thereby the government will have to explore other possible sources