

Summary of “How a China-Built Dam Destroyed an Ecosystem and Livelihoods”

The Chinese government’s large-scale “Belt and Road initiative (BRI)” built a project called “The Lower Sesan 2” which is a dam that cut off two rivers in Cambodia’s Mekong River, the main freshwater ecosystem. This is an enormous problem that affects sea creatures, villagers, and also farmers in these communities in many aspects: ecosystem, livelihood, society, and environment.

Building the dam is the root cause that kills many species of fish which is the main food and income of people in Cambodia for consumption and selling. This changes the behavior of thousands of people to gather and find more food in far places. Plus, other consumptions such as fruits, vegetables, forest products, and water are also affected because the environment has changed and it is hard to plant these sources. So, all villagers have struggled to live and all effects reduce their income from selling and living. The given compensation is not also compensated and enough for the huge losses and damages of this situation.

Large storage hydropower plants can block and change the natural river system and it will release the greenhouse gas due to the decomposition of material from reservoirs. It causes negative implications for human food stocks and water contamination for people. The demand for consumption will be higher than before and people want them more to sustain their lives. The government should intervene to help people in the county. In this case, there is a trade-off between the overall stability of the environment of building the dam and damaging the livelihood of people in the country.