

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

The Lower Sesan 2 is the dam that is considered as a part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Its completion was on December 17, 2018. The purpose of building this dam is for the development and making a better image of Beijing to the world. However, after the completion of the Lower Sesan 2 dam, there are lots of consequences occurring by the local communities.

The local Cambodians' people that lived by the Mekong River earned their living by three sources. First, they catch fishes and sell them. Second, they usually grow their crops along the river. Lastly, they collect forest products such as herbs. After the dam was built, they lost it all. Apart from what I have mentioned, the Cambodian people not only lost their source of income but their home also being submerged.

Moreover, the economists also have doubts about this dam as a source of energy. By comparing the opportunity cost of ruining the local people's way of living to the energy the dam can generate. In addition, some hydroelectric dams have carbon footprints as much as fossil fuel plants produce. In my opinion, the reason why the government decided to build the dam is because the environment, itself, doesn't give as much return as transforming it to something else that could give better return.

In conclusion, the dam is being opposed by many people, not only the ones who have been affected by it. I think the government should find the solution that satisfies both the people and the government. Moreover, the government should have more awareness about the environment too.