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Lower Mekong Mainstream Dams

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Key messages

- Since 2006, eleven mainstream dams have been planned for the Mekong
- Blockage of major fish migrations will affect regional food security and economy
- Impacts to the river's hydrology, sediment transport, ecology and endangered species, and tourism
- There are better ways than mainstream dams to meet regional water and energy needs



11 mainstream dams proposed (or revived)

- Project developers from China, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam
- Two projects at most advanced stage of development: are Xayaboury and Don Sahong
- Electricity largely for markets in Thailand and Vietnam



Chinese companies

- (4 projects)
- Pak Beng Dam (*Datang International*)
 - Pak Lay Dam (*CIEC and Sinohydro*)
 - Sanakham Dam (*Datang International*)
 - Sambor Dam (*China Southern Power Grid*)

Thai companies

- (4 projects)
- Xayabouri (*Ch. Karnchang*)
- Pak Chom (*Ministry of Energy*)
- Ban Kхом (*Ital-Thai Co.*)
- Lat Sua (*Charoen Energy and Water Asia Co.*)

Vietnamese company

- (1 project)
- Luang Prabang (*Petro Vietnam*)

Russian company

- (1 project)
- Stung Treng (*Region Oil*)

Malaysian company

- (1 project)
- Don Sahong (*Mega First Corporation Berhad*)

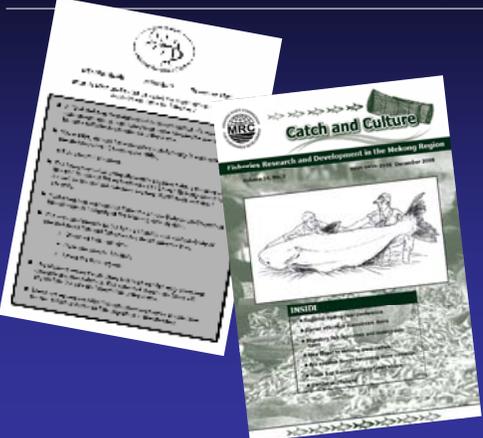
Mekong River's fisheries are central to regional economy and food security



- The Mekong supports the world's largest inland fishery
- First catch value is up to US\$2 -3 billion
- Economic value is up to US\$5.6 - 9.4 billion
- 64-93% of rural households are involved in fisheries
- Consumption of fish/ aquatic animals contributes 47-80% of animal protein intake
- Fish are central to nutrition and food security for the 60 million people in the Lower Mekong basin

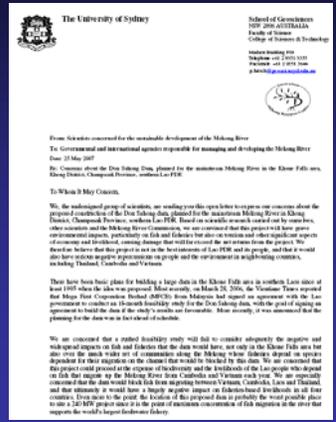
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Mainstream dams will block major fish migrations



- Mainstream dams are a barrier to fish migration
- Dams on middle and lower reaches of Mekong could affect 70% of commercial fish catch
- There are no current technologies that can mitigate the impacts to fisheries

There is already scientific consensus on fisheries impacts from Don Sahong dam



- Letter from 34 globally respected "concerned" scientists stated:
- "the location of this proposed dam is probably the worst possible place to site a 240 MW project since it is the point of maximum concentration of fish migration in the river that supports the world's largest freshwater fishery"

Other likely impacts



- Blockage of sediment flows
- Fragmentation of ecosystems
- Local hydrological impacts and loss of river bank gardens
- Resettlement

Upstream of Sambor Dam site

Endangered species



Mekong Giant catfish



Irrawaddy Dolphin

www.panda.org/greatermekong

The Mekong's Biodiversity is second only to the Amazon River

Civil society concerns




- Academics and civil society have written letters and statements to the Mekong River Commission
- World Fish Center and WWF have published scientific briefs
- Mekong Public Forum (Nov 2008)
- Don Sahong workshop in Cambodia (June 2009)
- Save the Mekong petition (June 2009)

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Better electricity planning is urgently required



Micro hydropower turbine, Thailand

- Balanced assessment of supply *and demand* side electricity options urgently needed
- Energy efficiency potential is huge
- New renewable and decentralized technologies becoming viable
- Public participation crucial

Better electricity planning is urgently required



Biogas pig farm, Thailand

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Combined Heat and Power, Thailand

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Better river planning is needed before projects are developed



Wing trap at Khone Falls

- Poor river planning will lead to development of destructive dams, leading to fewer revenues and unsustainable economic growth.
- Critical resources like the Mekong's mainstream should be protected
- Need to recognize the role wild-capture fisheries and healthy rivers play in ensuring regional food security.

Thank you for your attention

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