

1.- Effects of the dam on the people / environment;

- 1.1. - The dam's reservoir will flood a valley (**20.000 ha**) that is densely populated and includes the richest agricultural land in southwest Cambodia as well as some of Cambodia's rarest and most threatened wildlife.
- 1.2. The Araeng inundation zone is presently home to over **1500 people**, many of whom consider the area their ancestral home. These indigenous people, the Khmer **Khmer Jong**, have lived in the area for at least 600 years. The communities living in the Araeng Valley depend on the natural resources of the area for their survival, including productive rice paddies, plantations, fish from the Araeng River and the harvesting of non-timber forest products from the nearby evergreen forests.
- 1.3. These communities are very close-knit, and have links with the environment which are bound to village life by local Buddhist and animist beliefs, such as Neck Ta, who is thought to inhabit the forest, waterways and wildlife of the valley. Any forced migration will break this connection and have deep social repercussions for a people who feel spiritually linked to the forest and the valley.
- 1.4. It should be noted that the inhabitants of the upper Areng Valley suffered severely during the Khmer Rouge period and in the years immediately after the fall of this regime. In 1979 most of the villagers in the valley, for example, were forced out of the area by the Vietnamese army and were moved to Chi pat. The villagers have slowly returned to the valley in the last 10-15 years; Any activities that result in their forced migration, again, will result in the re-traumatisation of a people who have already suffered tremendously over Cambodia's recent past.
- 1.5. The effects of this dam on the downstream biome will also be extremely severe. This has the potential to drastically reduce rice yields in approximately 1500 ha of paddy in the coastal zone (Tropeang Rong commune). This will directly affect the livelihoods of at least 1800 people.
- 1.6. The construction period will lead to a massive arrival of workers into the Areng Valley for the duration of the dam's construction, (4/5 years). This will lead to vastly increased levels of illegal fishing and hunting, especially within the Central Cardamoms Protected Forest (CCPF). In addition, legal tree removal within the inundation zone is likely to lead to additional, illegal logging in areas surrounding the inundation zone. There will also be high levels of hunting around the inundation zone during this period, which is a very serious concern as the surrounding forests are a sanctuary for rare and threatened species.
- 1.7. This will lead to vastly increased levels of illegal logging and hunting within the CCPF which will put many rare species (e.g., clouded leopards, bears, gaur) at increased risk. Access roads for the dam will also provide easy routes for hunters and illegal loggers to use. This dramatic increase in access to the CCPF is certain to have serious consequences for its wildlife and forests.
- 1.8. Transmission lines connecting the dam with the power station in Pursat province will cut straight through the

2.- Voice of the affected communities;

- 2.1. People have never been consulted about this project and have never been asked whether they want the dam to be built or not;
- 2.2. Communities say that the relocation site (Veal Thom) is too far from any major body of water, thus they will be unable to obtain any fish from the Araeng River;

2.3. The relocation site is, communities allege, far too small to accommodate all of the families. The land allocated to each family, (3 hectares) will not be enough to sustain all family members. This problem will be exacerbated when families begin to expand in numbers;

2.4. Communities are afraid that life in the relocation site will be potentially dangerous as this area is known to be a busy elephant corridor, with proven presence of several herds of elephants that are frequently destroying people's plantations in nearby villagers;

2.5. Many of the animals that make the Araeng valley their home are sacred, (e.g. Siamese crocodiles) and villagers are afraid that when the dam is built and these sacred animals go extinct, the people of the area will suffer from misfortune and serious health problems or even death.

2.6. Two of the three roads that will be built to access the Araeng valley will be built through Chi Phat and Tropeang Rong communes and across the Southern Cardamom Protected Forest. These two communes are running a highly successful eco tourism project in the area, which will be severely affected by the construction of the dam.

2.7. The communities of Araeng want to promote responsible tourism, both national and international in the area by linking with nearby projects going on in the province of Koh Kong (Chi Phat, Tropeang Rong, Ta Tay Kraum, ..etc) They believe that this will not be possible if they are thrown out of the valley;

2.8. During the construction of the dam, communities will be affected severely by the presence of construction trucks going through the relocation site on a daily basis. Also, they will be affected by explosions and other noises related to the construction of the dam;

3.- Communes affected by the Araeng hydroelectric dam:

3.1. Jumnoab; Prolay and the lower part of Thmo Daun Peuv (Thmo Bang district) will be flooded by the reservoir of the dam;

3.2. The upper part of Thmo Daun Peuv (Thmo bang District) will be used to accommodate hundreds of workers as well as construction materials during the construction of the dam;

3.3. Roussey Chrum (Thmo Bang District), Chi Phat (Andoung Teuk District), Tropeang Rong (Tropeang Rong District) will also be potentially affected as access road to the valley will likely be built straight through these communes.