



RepRisk Special Report

ASEAN Series: Lower Mekong Basin: Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam

February 2016

About RepRisk

RepRisk is a leading business intelligence provider, specializing in environmental, social, and governance (ESG) risk analytics and metrics.

Harnessing a proprietary, systematic framework that leverages cutting-edge technology and hands-on human intelligence in 15 languages, RepRisk curates and delivers dynamic risk information for an unlimited universe of companies.

Since 2006, RepRisk has built and continues to grow the most comprehensive ESG risk database that serves as a due diligence, research, and monitoring tool in risk management, compliance, investment management, corporate benchmarking, and supplier risk. The database currently includes risk profiles for over 60,000 public and private companies, 15,000 projects, as well as for every sector and country in the world.

Headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland, RepRisk serves clients worldwide including global banks, insurance providers, investment managers, and corporates, helping them to manage ESG and reputational risks in day-to-day business.

RepRisk provides the transparency needed to enable better, more informed decisions.

For more information, please visit www.reprisk.com or follow us on Twitter.

Foreword RepRisk



I am pleased to announce the release of the RepRisk Special Report on the Lower Mekong Basin, the second in our series on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), an economic and political organization of ten countries. The creation of the ASEAN Economic Community to allow a free exchange of goods, capital, and skilled labor between the ten member states highlights the determination of this dynamic region to compete in the global economy.

In our first ASEAN report we assessed the ESG risks facing [Indonesia](#), the largest economy in the ASEAN bloc. Thailand, the second largest economy of the ASEAN region, is among the four countries located in the Lower Mekong Basin, along with Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. This report highlights the ESG challenges facing all four countries, as many of the issues are trans-boundary. Over the coming year, we will be publishing special reports on the other countries that form the ASEAN bloc.

Traditionally, the economies of Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam, the four countries located along the lower reaches of the Mekong River, have been closely linked to the abundance of water resources. However, as the region moves away from an agrarian-based economy and embraces industrial development, the four countries face the challenges of balancing economic growth with environmental and social concerns.

This special report on the Lower Mekong Basin takes a look at some of these challenges, and highlights the risks posed by industrial development on the region's fragile ecosystems and traditional communities.

RepRisk's aim is to provide transparency and business intelligence that supports the systematic and effective management of ESG and reputational risks in day-to-day business. We hope that this report draws attention to the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues facing the Lower Mekong Basin, which ultimately have an impact on the whole of the ASEAN bloc.

Philipp Aeby CEO, RepRisk AG



Produced by RepRisk AG

Authors: Stella Kenway (RepRisk AG)

Editors: Robin Scott (Robin Scott Translations); Gina Walser, Alexandra Mihailescu Cichon, Jennifer Magsino (RepRisk AG)

Graphic designer: Rosa van Wyk (Dirty Works)

Maps: Trevor Boundford (Boundford.com)

Contact information

For more information about the RepRisk ESG Risk Platform or this Special Report, please contact media@reprisk.com or visit www.reprisk.com.

RepRisk AG, Stampfenbachstrasse 42, 8006 Zurich, Switzerland.

Tel. +41 43 300 54 40

www.reprisk.com

Table of Contents

About RepRisk	2
Foreword RepRisk	3
Introduction	6
Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam: Utilities	8
Thailand: Food and Beverage	18
Thailand: Mining	21
Vietnam: Construction	23
Vietnam: Chemicals	25
Cambodia: Forestry	27
Cambodia: Food and Beverage	30
Disclaimer	32
Methodology	33

Introduction

In our second report on the member countries of the ASEAN Economic Community, which was created on November 22, 2015, we take an in-depth look at Cambodia, Lao PDR (Laos), Thailand, and Vietnam, the four countries located along the Lower Mekong River.

In recent decades, these countries have experienced considerable economic growth, which has fueled a demand for electricity. Data gathered by RepRisk shows that Utilities is the sector most exposed to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) risks in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam; in Thailand, it is the second most exposed sector after Food and Beverage.

Most of the criticism of the Utilities sector in the four countries revolves around plans to construct hydroelectric power plants in the Lower Mekong region. Scientists, NGOs and civil society groups have warned that building dams on the Mekong River and its large network of tributaries will impact countries downstream. In this report, we have therefore grouped together these four countries in our analysis of the Utilities sector.

Thailand is the largest economy in the Lower Mekong Basin, followed by Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. As mentioned above, the Food and Beverage is the most controversial sector in Thailand, mainly due to allegations of slavery in the Thai seafood industry. Thailand's mining sector is exposed to ESG risks due to repeated accusations of human rights abuses and severe environmental degradation.

The Construction sector and the Chemicals sector are the second and third most exposed sectors in Vietnam, while in Cambodia, it is the Food and Beverage and Forestry sectors that are most exposed to ESG risks. Regarding Laos, RepRisk has not detected any major ESG risk exposure in the country outside of the Utilities sector.

Countries of the Lower Mekong Basin



Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam: Utilities

The Mekong River rises in the plateau of Tibet and flows almost 5,000 kilometers through China, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam before it reaches the South China Sea. However most of the Mekong's river flow comes from its tributaries in the Lower Mekong Basin.

Around 60 million people live in the Lower Mekong Basin and the local economies are highly dependent on the river flow of the Mekong and its tributaries, which provides drinking water, nutrients for agricultural land, as well as an abundance of fish resources.

International scientists and environmental groups have repeatedly warned that building dams on the Lower Mekong River and its tributaries could cause an ecological disaster. The various hydroelectric power projects have also met with strong opposition from riparian communities, who fear forced evictions, loss of livelihoods, and loss of food security.

The president of the Bangkok-based Freeland Foundation warns that the construction of hydroelectric power plants stops the flow of sediment and therefore prevents natural agricultural fertilizers from reaching the lower reaches of rivers. He also warns of increased salination, as sediment can no longer form a natural barrier against seawater. Reportedly, over 70 percent of protein in countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam comes from freshwater fish, whereas in Thailand, where most of the rivers are dammed,

90 percent of protein is derived from farmed animals and aquaculture.

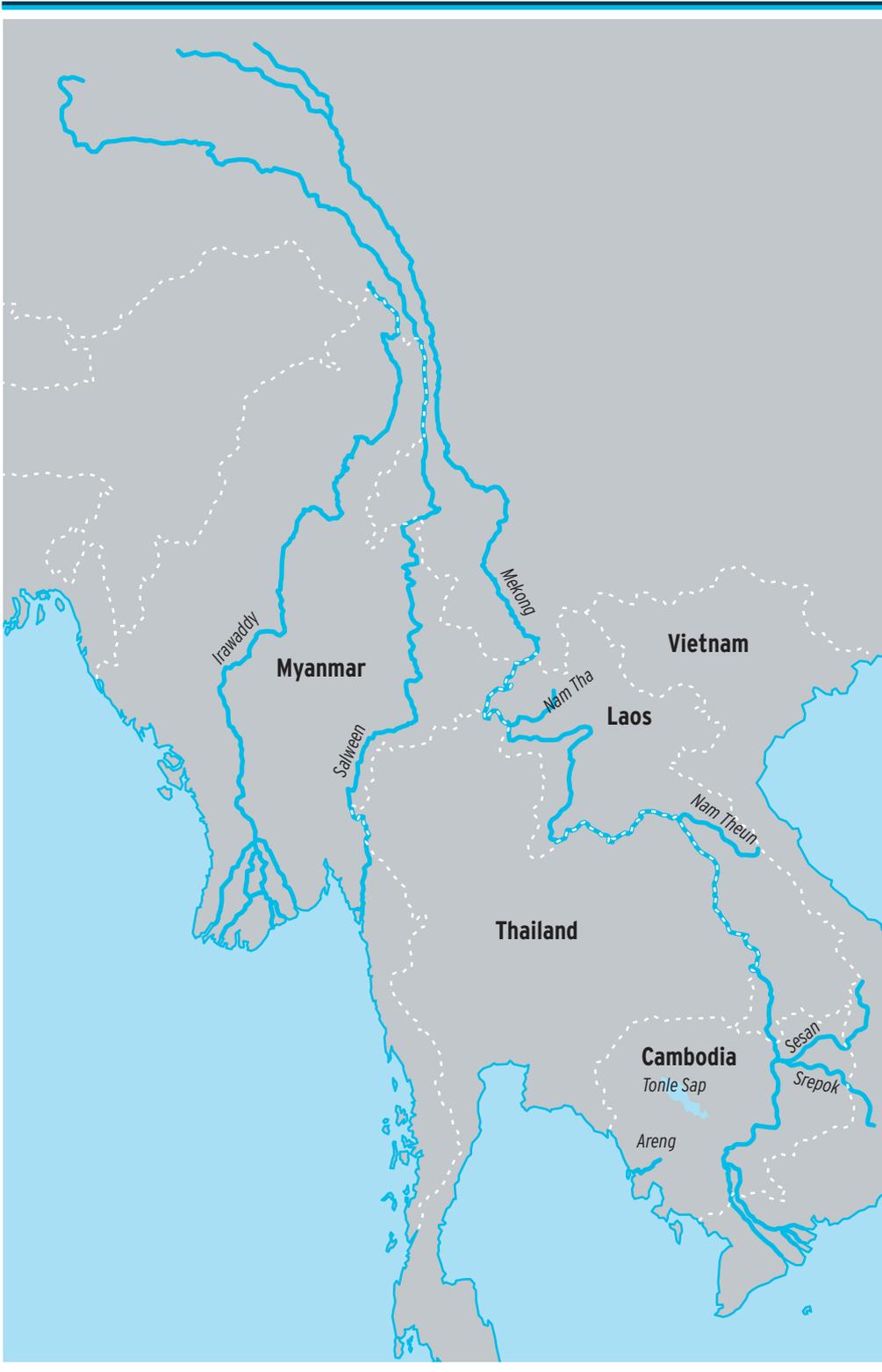
Companies most associated with the Utilities sector in the Lower Mekong Basin:

1. Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) (Thailand)
2. Mega First Corporation Berhad (Malaysia)
3. Hydro Power Lower Sesan II Co Ltd (Cambodia)
4. China Hydraulic and Hydroelectric Construction Group (Sinohydro) (China)
5. Nam Ngiep 1 Power (Laos)

Projects most associated with the Utilities sector in the Lower Mekong Basin:

1. Xayaburi Hydropower Plant (Laos)
 2. Don Sahong Hydropower Project (Laos)
 3. Lower Sesan 2 Hydropower Dam (Cambodia)
 4. Stung Cheay Areng Hydroelectric Dam (Cambodia)
 5. Nam Theun 2 Hydroelectric Project (Laos)
-

Rivers of the Lower Mekong Basin



The Mekong River Commission, an inter-governmental agency that works with Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam, aims to ensure that the water from the Mekong and its tributaries is developed in a manner that allows all countries in the Lower Mekong Basin to benefit from the water resources. A Strategic Environmental Assessment, commissioned by the commission in 2010, recommended a 10-year moratorium on the construction of dams on the Mekong to allow time for further studies.

Vietnam has also called for a 10-year moratorium on all hydropower projects on the mainstream Mekong, claiming that dams on the Mekong River have already disrupted water flows and caused flooding and increased salinity. In June 2015, the Vietnamese Prime Minister, Mr. Nguyen Tan Dung, warned that 27 percent of his country's GDP, 60 percent of its seafood exports, and 90 percent of its rice exports were at risk because the sediment flows in the Mekong Delta were being disrupted.

Hydropower to fuel economic expansion

Cambodia has traditionally relied on an agrarian economy, with over 85 percent of the population dependent on farming and fishing. The United Nations reports that less than nine percent of rural houses are connected to the electrical grid and the government therefore

wants to develop its hydropower resources as part of its electrification program.

Laos is also anxious to develop hydroelectric plants. In October 2014, the Vice Minister for Energy stated that the country was pushing ahead with plans to export electricity — mostly derived from hydropower — to Thailand, in order to secure the necessary capital investment to develop the country's energy resources. The Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) has stated that it plans to import 7,000 megawatts of hydropower from Laos.

Thailand, which gets more than half of its electricity from natural gas, is looking to construct hydroelectric power plants as an alternative source of energy. According to Kraisaak Choonhavan, a former member of the Thai Senate, EGAT has partnered with the state-owned oil company PTT (formerly known as Petroleum Authority of Thailand) to build hydroelectric dams. He also claims that Thailand is focusing on the construction of hydroelectric plants and coal-fired plants outside Thailand, as such projects inside the country have faced strong resistance from civil society.

The NGO International Rivers has expressed concern about EGAT's plans to build environmentally damaging dams in Laos and Myanmar, alleging that there is oppression and limited transparency in both these countries.

Vietnam is pushing ahead with an ambitious hydropower plant construction program in order to secure much-needed supplies of electricity. Although these plants are not located along the Mekong River, NGOs warn that the country's boom in hydropower has had a devastating effect on rivers and ancient woodland, as well as the water sources of local communities. In 2013, the Vietnamese authorities reported that 268 hydropower projects were in operation and a further 205 projects were expected to be operational by 2017. Hydropower projects in Vietnam have displaced tens of thousands of people, mostly ethnic minorities. The Green Innovation and Development Centre claims that dam construction technology in Vietnam is often substandard, and says that little attention is paid to potential seismic problems.

Controversial Hydropower Plants in the Mekong River Basin

Xayaburi Hydropower Plant: Laos (Mekong River)

EGAT is funding the Xayaburi Hydropower Plant being built on the Lower Mekong River in northern Laos, a project identified by RepRisk's data as being one of the most controversial projects in the Lower Mekong Basin. The USD 3.5 billion project is located approximately 30 kilometers east of the town of Xayaburi (Sainyabuli). According to International Rivers, the Laotian government has agreed that more than 90 percent of the

electricity generated by the dam will be purchased by Thailand. An international coalition of opponents under the banner "Save the Mekong" is seeking an injunction in the Thai courts to suspend EGAT's financing of the dam on the grounds that EGAT has ignored safety standards and has failed to consult the affected Thai communities.

In January 2015, representatives of eight Thai Mekong riparian provinces called on the Thai authorities to protect their livelihoods. A villager from north-eastern Thailand's Nongkhai province claimed that as construction on the Xayaburi Dam had progressed, the flow of the Mekong had become irregular and was seriously affecting the lives of riparian residents.

The UK's Guardian newspaper has claimed that the Xayaburi Dam could affect an important delta in Vietnam that feeds half of the nation's 90 million population and supports its massive rice export industry.

Don Sahong Hydropower Project: Laos (Mekong River)

The Don Sahong Hydropower Project, being built by Malaysia's Mega First Corporation Berhad (Mega First) has also been identified as being highly controversial. The project is located in the Champasak Province of Laos, less than two kilometers from the Laos–Cambodia border. Don Sahong Power, a subsidiary of Mega First, is constructing the dam, and the electricity gen-

erated will reportedly be sold to Thailand and Cambodia.

The dam is being opposed by local fishing communities in both Laos and neighboring countries. Reportedly, the Laotian National Assembly approved the project without the consent of the Mekong River Commission and other countries that will be affected by the dam. Earth Rights International has also warned that the dam will displace thousands

of people living in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.

The NGO Tonle Sap Fisher Network fears that the Don Sahong Dam could entirely block the Mekong water flow to Tonle Sap Lake, the largest body of fresh water in Southeast Asia, which provides fish and food security for around 6 million people in Cambodia. The NGO also claims that the dam would threaten the survival of the entire Tonle Sap community, who fully depend on fishing.

The NGO International Rivers has warned that the Dong Sahong Dam will block fish spawning routes, destroy the ecosystem of the Lower Mekong, threaten the livelihoods and food security of millions of people, and affect the population of the critically endangered Mekong Irrawaddy Dolphin.

Surveys conducted by Vietnam Rivers Network and other NGOs have allegedly shown that only 26 out of the 1,196 scientists approached are in favor of building the Don Sahong hydropower plant.

Lower Sesan 2 Hydropower Dam: Cambodia (Sesan River, Mekong tributary)

RepRisk has identified the 400-megawatt Lower Sesan 2 Hydropower Dam in the Stung Treng Province in north-eastern Cambodia, as being highly exposed to ESG risks. The dam is being built on the Sesan River, near its confluence with the Srepok River, and will allegedly threaten the biodiversity of these two main tributaries of the Mekong. Approximately

Issues most associated with the Utilities sector in the Lower Mekong Basin:

1. Impacts on communities
2. Impacts on ecosystems and landscapes
3. Local participation issues
4. Human rights abuses and corporate complicity
5. Local pollution

Topic Tags most associated with the Utilities sector in the Lower Mekong Basin:

1. Hydropower (dams)
2. Endangered species
3. Illegal logging
4. Indigenous people
5. Water scarcity

5,000 people, many of whom are from ethnic minorities, would have to be resettled to make way for the dam's massive reservoir.

The Rivers Coalition of Cambodia has estimated that the project would cause 80,000 fishermen to lose their livelihoods, negatively affect 20,000 people living in villages along the two rivers, and cause a reduction in fish stocks that are a significant source of food for hundreds of thousands of Cambodians across the Mekong River Basin. Cambodia's Royal Group, and Hydrolancang International Energy, a company owned by China's Huaneng Corporation, are developing the complex.

Scientists warn that the Lower Sesan Dam 2 project would destroy close to 10 percent of the region's fish population, push more than 50 fish species to the brink of extinction, and change the hydrological flows of the Mekong River. The NGO International Rivers has warned that the impacts would be felt upstream in Laos and Thailand, and that rice fields downstream in Vietnam would be affected by the Mekong's reduced sediment flow.

In October 2014, 18 NGO groups issued a joint declaration urging the Cambodian government and the dam's developers to suspend the project and re-evaluate its environmental impact. In December 2014 and in March 2015, hundreds of villagers from the Stung Treng and Ratanakiri Provinces participated in protest marches against the construction of Lower Sesan Dams 2 and 3, and the Lower Srepok 3 Dam, another dam being constructed on the Srepok River.

Stung Cheay Areng Hydroelectric Dam: Cambodia (Areng River)

The Stung Cheay Areng Hydroelectric Dam, to be built by China Hydraulic and Hydroelectric Construction Group (Sinohydro) on Cambodia's Areng River, is being staunchly opposed by the Chong indigenous community. The dam would allegedly flood 104 square kilometers, displace over 1,500 people, and threaten the habitat of 31 endangered species in the Central Cardamom Protected Forest. In February 2015, the Cambodian government allegedly deported and blacklisted a Spanish activist who had led a campaign against the USD 400 million Stung Cheay Areng Dam project. It has been claimed that a senator of the Cambodian People's Party and his wife brokered the deal between Sinohydro and the Cambodian government in order to benefit from logging contracts to clear the construction site.

Nam Theun 2 Hydropower Project: Laos (Nam Theun River)

The Nam Theun 2 Hydropower Project on the Nam Theun River in Laos has also attracted a great deal of criticism. In May 2015, the NGO International Rivers denounced the World Bank and Asian Development Bank for granting loans worth approximately USD 335 million for the development of the dam. Critics have estimated that more than 6,300 people from the Nakai Plateau have been displaced by the project and that an additional 110,000 individuals living along the Xe Bang Fai River have been adversely affected. The dam has been linked to high greenhouse gas emissions, decimation of fish stocks, and

restricted access to clean water sources for local communities.

Stung Treng Hydroelectric Project: Cambodia (Mekong River)

In the north of Cambodia the Stung Treng Hydroelectric Plant, another project being financed by China, has also provoked strong opposition. According to the coordinator of the 3S Rivers Protection Network, some 5,000 people, mainly from minority ethnic groups, could be displaced. The local community claims that it has not been consulted, and says that villagers have faced pressure to accept the project.

Stung Russie Chrum Hydropower Project: Cambodia (Stung Russei Chrum River)

A June 2015 report by International Rivers criticized China Huadian Corp. For its Stung Russie Chrum Hydropower Project in Cambodia's Koh Kong province. The report claimed that the company had not properly consulted local communities, was constructing the project without having carried out an environmental impact assessment, and

that workers – especially migrants – were being exposed to occupational risks and poor working conditions.

Nam Tha Hydropower Project: Laos (Nam Tha River)

In October 2015, RepRisk detected renewed criticism of the Nam Tha Hydropower Project proposed by China Southern Power Grid on the Nam Tha River in Laos, around 60 kilometers upstream from a confluence with the Mekong. RepRisk first identified social issues concerning the project in 2007, when a Canadian consulting company warned of technical problems due to turbidity in the flow of the Nam Tha and estimated that 50 percent of the local population would need to be resettled. Allegedly, the construction of the dam has now caused the water flow in the Nam Tha to fall by 30 percent and up to 10,000 people will need to be relocated.

Stung Atay Hydropower Plant: Cambodia (Atay River)

China Datang Corp's Stung Atay Hydropower Plant, located near the Stung Cheay Areng Hydroelectric Dam, also garnered a good deal of negative stakeholder attention during its construction phase. Four workers reportedly died in 2012 when the poorly constructed dam collapsed. There were claims that more than 15,000 cubic meters of valuable rosewood were logged for the construction of the dam, netting profits of close to USD 220 million for timber companies. International Rivers blamed the Cambodian government for failing to properly

**Construction
of the Nam Tha
Hydropower Project
has caused the water
flow of the Nam Tha
River to fall by 30%.**

oversee the project, which was inaugurated in March 2014.

Pak Lay Dam: Laos (Mekong River)

The governments of Cambodia and Vietnam are objecting to the Pak Lay Hydroelectric Project to be built on the Mekong River in Laos. International Rivers has harshly criticized the project, which is being financed by China Hydraulic and Hydroelectric Construction Group (Sinohydro).

Nam Ngiep 1 Hydropower Project: Laos (Ngiep River)

In August 2014, critics of the Nam Ngiep 1 Hydropower Project being built on the Ngiep River in Laos urged the Asian Development Bank to stop funding the project, claiming that if it were built, it would force the resettlement of at least 3,000 ethnic people. Critics currently warn that the project's dam, located around 40 kilometers upstream from a confluence of the Mekong River, will negatively impact communities downstream and have claimed that its design could significantly increase greenhouse gas emissions. The dam is being developed by Nam Ngiep 1 Power, a company jointly owned by Thailand's EGAT International, Japan's Kansai Electric Power, and Lao Holding State Enterprise.

Other Controversial Hydroelectric Power Plants

Not all the dams under construction in the four countries will affect the flow of the Mekong

River. However, environmentalists have linked other hydroelectric power plants in the region to major environmental and social risks.

Hua Na and Cua Dat Hydropower Plants: Vietnam

The deputy chair of the Thanh Hoa Provincial People's Committee has raised concerns about the potential collapse of the Hua Na and Cua Dat hydropower plants in Vietnam. He warned that unregulated water discharges in combination with natural floods could cause massive flooding in Thanh Hoa Province, where several million people reside. Nearby communities claim they have lived in fear since a ruptured dyke at the Krei 2 dam in August 2014 caused flooding that destroyed hundreds of hectares of crops and USD millions of assets.

Song Hinh, Krong Nang, Ba Ha Hydropower Plants: Vietnam

During a Vietnam Rivers Network forum in November 2014, the delegates claimed that hydropower plants had caused flooding and landslides in the country's lowlands, and had triggered severe droughts. Allegedly, over 1,000 hectares of forest were cut down for the construction of the Song Hinh, Krong Nang, and Ba Ha hydropower plants, and only Ba Ha has replanted trees in line with a governmental decree. The Ba Ha plant was blamed for unusually fierce flooding in October 2013. The Dak My 4 and the Binh Dien hydropower plants have both reportedly polluted the environment, and the Song Tranh 2

Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam: Utilities

plant has triggered a series of earth tremors that have caused grave concern among residents in Quang Nam Province.

Da Dang-Da Chomo Hydropower Plant: Vietnam

There have also been concerns about worker safety on hydropower construction sites. In December 2014, a dozen men were trapped underground after a section of a tunnel collapsed during the construction of the Da Dang-Da Chomo Hydropower Plant in the hilly Lam Dong Province of Vietnam. Some 200 rescuers had to strengthen the roof of the tunnel, which was in danger of further collapsing due to heavy rain.

Son Tra 1, Dakdrinh 2, Tra Khuc 1 Hydropower Plants: Vietnam

Residents of the Son district in Vietnam's Quang Hai province have protested against plants to build three new hydro-electric plants: Son Tra 1, Dakdrinh 2, and Tra Khuc 1. They claim that the three facilities could cause flooding in all four of Son Ha's communes, destroy 18,000 hectares of forest, and impact the lives of 20,000 people as deforestation would allow rain water to flood down the mountains and inundate lower residential areas.

Theun-Hinboun Expansion Project: Laos (Nam Gnouang River)

The Theun-Hinboun Expansion Project in Laos, funded by companies including PROPARCO, is designed to increase the power output of the existing Theun-Hinboun Hydropower Project (THHP) on the Nam

Gnouang River in order to supply power to Thailand's EGAT. Local communities vehemently opposed the original Theun-Hinboun plant, completed in 1998. More than 30,000 people living downstream claim that the project's dam has eroded agricultural land and riverbanks. They also blame the project for flooding, a decline in fish, and loss of cattle. THHP was built by Theun-Hinboun Power, a company owned by the Laotian government, the Norwegian company Statkraft, and Thailand's GMS Public Power Company. The project was partly financed by the Asian Development Bank.

The Theun-Hinboun Expansion Project will allegedly breach the Equator Principles, as it displaces roughly 4,200 people and has negatively impacted the same communities downstream that were affected by the original plant.

Controversial Coal Projects

The construction of coal-fired power plants in Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam has also sparked controversy. The Thai government has announced plans to construct nine coal power plants in the south of the country over the next two decades and Thai companies are also involved in the construction of coal-fired power plants in Laos, which will provide electricity to Thailand. In Vietnam, local communities have complained that coal-fired power plants have caused dust pollution and have contaminated water sources.

Krabi Coal Complex: Thailand

In March 2015, more than 100 members of the Save Andaman from Coal Network (SACN)

protested in Bangkok against the government's plans to build an 800-megawatt coal-fired power plant and coal port in the Krabi Province near southern Thailand's Andaman coast. Local villagers warn that the Krabi Coal Complex, to be built by EGAT, will impact the local fishing industry, which is worth THB 300 million (USD 8.3 million) a year. The Krabi Fisheries Association has claimed that dredging activities for the port will harm the ecosystem, and that ships carrying coal could pollute the important fishing areas of Tambons Koh Sri Boya and Taling Cha. There are also concerns about the impact of the project on beaches that are one of Thailand's main tourist attractions. In August, the authorities reportedly agreed to suspend the Krabi project after two SACN activists took part in a two-week hunger strike. The activists claimed that soldiers had threatened their families in a bid to persuade them to end their protest.

Thepha Coal-Fired Power Plant: Thailand

Similarly, residents in Thailand's Songkhla Province are fighting EGAT's proposed 2,200-megawatt coal-fired power plant in the Thepha district. Farmers and fishermen, who avoid using chemicals in accordance with Islamic halal regulations, claim it will devastate the area's organic food industry and provide few jobs for the local community. Residents boycotted a recent public hearing due to alleged heavy military and police presence.

Hongsa Coal-Fired Plant: Laos

The Hongsa Coal-Fired Plant in Laos, located 30 kilometers from the Thai border, is due to be fully operational by early 2016. The project

is owned by the Thai-based companies, Banpu Public Co. Ltd and Ratchaburi Electricity Generating Holding Public Company, as well as state-owned Lao Holding State Enterprise. The plant will burn lignite coal from nearby mines, leading to concerns about the environmental impact on areas across the border in Thailand.

Vinh Tan Power Park: Vietnam

In April 2015, thousands of local people stopped traffic on Vietnam's 1A national highway for 30 hours to protest about coal dust from Shanghai Electric's newly built Vinh Tan Thermal Plant No 2 in the central province of Binh Thuan. The provincial People's Committee had instructed the plant to spray water on its coal ash dumps but the plant failed to comply, despite a USD 70,000 fine for pollution. The Deputy Prime Minister, Hoang Trung Hai, then instructed the plant's owner, Electricity of Viet Nam (EVN) Corporation, to immediately put in place measures to ensure environmental protection. There are also pollution concerns about the Thai Binh Power Station as well as three more approved power plants in the country's Vinh Tan Power Park.

Quang Ninh Coal Mines: Vietnam

In August 2015, heavy rainfall caused the holding ponds of three coal-fired power plants to overflow and flood water to run off at 16 open-pit coal mines in Quang Ninh Province. Thousands of people had to be evacuated, and there were fears that the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Ha Long Bay, an important tourist destination, would be contaminated. The Vietnamese military helped to rescue an estimated 1,500 tourists who were affected.

Thailand: Food and Beverage

Seafood Sector

According to the marketing company Social Walk, Thailand is among the world's top ten producers of food products, and the country's Food and Beverage sector includes the production of rice, sugar, seafood, poultry, and processed fruits and vegetables. Food processing is one of the country's biggest manufacturing sectors.

However, in the last few years the sector has faced repeated reports of forced labor and other human rights abuses associated with the USD multi billion seafood industry. The Environmental Justice Foundation has linked the Thai fishing industry to illegal fishing practices, corruption, violence and death threats, destruction of the fragile marine environment, and conflicts with local fishing communities. In 2014, as a result of the reports, the US Department of State downgraded Thailand to Tier 3, the lowest possible ranking in its Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report.

In January 2015, there were claims that the Thai Ministry of Labor was offering prisoners the chance of working on fishing vessels in order to cope with overcrowded detention facilities. However, some prisoners claimed they were forced to work over 100 hours a week with almost no salary, and that in some cases they were "sold on" by the ship captains. Migrant workers reported torture and executions on board "ghost ships," unregistered vessels that work in the fishing industry. The Thai government withdrew its proposal

to use prisoners on fishing vessels following complaints by Greenpeace and more than 40 other organizations.

In April 2015, the Guardian reported that the EU had threatened to impose a trade ban on Thai fish, unless the government tackled the abuses. The government responded by closing down trafficking camps, imposing new regulations on ship registration, and ordering ship owners to register migrant workers.

However, in July 2015, the Asian division of Human Rights Watch warned that conditions on the fishing boats were getting worse. The New York Times also reported that many workers were being sold to Thai fishing boats, and that the authorities, including Thailand's Royal Armed Forces, accepted bribes from traffickers and did not take steps to stop the abuse.

Companies most associated with the Food and Beverage sector in Thailand:

1. Wal-Mart Stores Inc
 2. Charoen Pokphand Group Co Ltd (CP Group)
 3. Thai Union Group Plc (formerly Thai Union Frozen Products)
 4. Costco Wholesale Corp
 5. Natural Fruit Co Ltd
 5. Tesco Plc
-

Thai Union Manufacturing was cited by an Associated Press (AP) investigation in March 2015, which linked several cat food brands sold in New Zealand to a slavery ring in Southeast Asia. AP, who had conducted a year-long investigation, also cited the supply chains of several companies, including Countdown, and the retail franchises Pak 'n Save and New World, owned by the New Zealand group Foodstuffs.

In a June 2015 report, the NGO Finnwatch claimed that although the Thai Union Group and Unicord, a subsidiary of Sea Value Group, had made some progress in improving working conditions, the companies continued to discriminate against migrant workers from Myanmar and Cambodia. Human Rights Watch claimed that both Thai Union Group and Unicord were failing to identify possible human rights violations in their supply chains.

In July 2015, the New York Times linked Mars, Nestle, and Songkla Canning Public Company, a subsidiary of Thai Union Frozen Products, to sourcing fish from vessels linked to human trafficking and slave labor. One victim claimed that he and other migrant workers had been taken aboard a ship in Thailand and that he had then been shackled and held captive for three years. The US Customs and Border Protection linked the pet food brands including Iams, Meow Mix, and Nestle's Fancy Feast to seafood supplied by Thai Union Frozen Products. Both Mars and Nestle have claimed that they are trying hard to eradicate forced labor in their pet

food supply chains, and Mars has already begun replacing fishmeal in its pet food.

Greenpeace also expressed concern about Thai Union's purchase of Bumble Bee's tuna brand, claiming that both companies had been linked to human rights abuses and severe environmental degradation.

Issues most associated with the Food and Beverage sector in Thailand:

1. Human rights abuses and corporate complicity
2. Forced labor
3. Poor employment conditions
4. Child labor
5. Corruption, bribery, extortion and money laundering

Topic Tags most associated with the Food and Beverage sector in Thailand:

1. Migrant labor
 2. Abusive/Illegal fishing
 3. Protected areas
 4. Endangered species
 5. Land grabbing
-

Thailand: Food and Beverage

The Environmental and Justice Foundation also linked Boonlarp Fishing Company to human trafficking, forced labor, torture, murder, and physical abuse in a February 2015 report. Fourteen victims were allegedly rescued from one of the Boonlarp vessels in 2013, but since March 2014, at least another six victims have reportedly been rescued from boats operating from facilities owned by Boonlarp's owner.

In August 2015, a complaint was filed in a San Francisco federal court against Costco Wholesale for allegedly selling shrimp from farms in Thailand linked to widespread slave labor and human trafficking. CP Food Products, a US shrimp distributor that supplies shrimp to Costco, and its parent Charoen Pokphand Foods, were named as defendants in the lawsuit.

Allegations of slave labor, human trafficking, and child labor in Thailand's seafood industry continued throughout the autumn of 2015 and Aldi, Carrefour, Woolworths, Coles, the Co-operative Group, Tesco, Wal-Mart, Whole Foods, Petco Holdings, Kroger, Red Lobster, Colruyt, and Cora, were criticized for sourcing seafood from suppliers linked to human rights abuse.

Poultry Sector

In November 2015, a SwedWatch and FinnWatch joint report accused various companies in Thailand's poultry sector of violence, child labor, and other issues faced by

migrant workers from Cambodia and Myanmar. At Charoen Pokphand Foods factories, 48 migrant workers complained of intimidation and debt bondage, and at a plant owned by Centaco Group and operated by Sky Food Company, workers complained of forced overtime and "extortionate" recruitment fees. Workers at Laemthong Poultry expressed similar complaints.

Fruit Sector

The Thai fruit sector also faced criticism in 2015. In August, the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders urged the Thai authorities to intervene in the "judicial harassment" of a journalist who is facing multiple lawsuits filed by Natural Fruit. The charges could result in a seven-year prison sentence and a fine of over EUR 10 million (USD 11.2 million).

In 2013, the journalist apparently contributed to a Finnwatch report that uncovered serious labor rights abuses at Natural Fruit's Pranburi factory. Apparently, Natural Fruit's CEO also heads the Thai Pineapple Industry Association, which was criticized by FinnWatch for failing to urge the company to drop the charges against the journalist.

Thailand: Mining

Mining is the third most controversial sector in Thailand. The country has important deposits of tungsten, gypsum, tantalum, lead, zinc, gold, iron, and stibnite, as well as considerable resources of other industrial minerals, but the sector has repeatedly faced allegations of human rights abuses and severe environmental degradation.

Mae Sot Zinc Mines

Villagers in Thailand's Tak's Mae Sot district have claimed that zinc-mining operations have been contaminating their community for over 40 years. The local community has complained of severe health problems, and has blamed Padaeng Industry and Tak Karnchanaburi's Mining Group for contaminating soil and water supplies with cadmium.

Phuthapfa Gold Mine

In October 2014, the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) urged a Thai court to drop defamation charges against two human rights activists of the Kohn Rak Ban Kerd group, an association of local villages in Loei Province in northeastern Thailand. For over eight years, the group has been opposing the development of the Phuthapfa Gold Mine, managed by Tungcum Ltd (TKL), a subsidiary of Tungkah Harbour Public Company, claiming that it was polluting local waters with arsenic, cyanide, manganese, and chromium. Villagers claim that the mine has caused illnesses, deaths, and disability, and complain that TKL has refused to compensate them. Reportedly, on May 15, 2014, close to 300 armed thugs attacked and

beat residents of Nanhongbong village after they blocked a road in protest at the mine. Apparently, TKL sued two human rights activists for defamation in August 2014 after they claimed that TKL had been complicit in the attack that injured 40 villagers.

Akara Mine (Chatree Mine)

In January 2015, the Akara Mine, also known as the Chatree Mine, was temporarily shut down after over 200 villagers in the provinces of Phichit, Phitsanulok, and Phetchabun, complained they had become sick due to arsenic and manganese contamination. The Justice Ministry's Central Institute of Forensic Science (CIFS) had already reported in December 2014 that as many as 6,000 people living near the mine had shown traces of heavy metals in their blood.

Akara Resources Public Company, a subsidiary of Sydney-based Kingsgate Consolidated, operates the gold mine.

However, in February 2015, the Thailand Department of Primary Industries and Mining allowed the mine to re-open without commis-

Around 6,000 people living near Akara Mine show traces of heavy metals in their blood.

Thailand: Mining

sioning an external environmental and social impact assessment of the project.

Following complaints from the residents of seven provinces, villagers called for a new investigation into the mine in May 2015 after disputing the company's claims that it followed international environmental management standards. The villagers have also criticized the company for failing to provide medical treatment to those affected. In December 2015, the Department of Primary Industries and Mines ordered Akara Resources to cease operations at the Akara Mine for 44 days due to health and environmental concerns.

Udon Thani Potash Project

The Udon Thani Potash Project being developed by Asia Pacific Potash Corp is also facing strong opposition from local villagers in the districts of Muang and Prachak Silapakom. The villagers claim that the mine will seriously affect the health and the environment of five communities, and allege that the company's mining application was flawed.

Companies most associated with the Mining sector in Thailand:

1. Akara Resources Plc (formerly known as Akara Mining Co Ltd)
2. Lead Concentrates Co
3. Kingsgate Consolidated Ltd
4. Tungcum Ltd (Thung Kham Ltd Co; TKL)
5. Padaeng Industry PCL

Issues most associated with the Mining sector in Thailand:

1. Impacts on communities
2. Impacts on ecosystems and landscapes
3. Local pollution
4. Local participation issues
5. Human rights abuses and corporate complicity

Topic Tags most associated with the Mining sector in Thailand:

1. Indigenous people
 2. Land grabbing
 3. Endangered species
 4. Protected areas
 5. Negligence
-

Vietnam: Construction

Vietnam's drive toward industrialization and urbanization has fueled a boom in the construction sector. An influx of foreign manufacturers has strengthened the demand for industrial properties such as industrial parks, warehouses, and logistic facilities. The Vietnam Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) estimates that the country will be investing USD 200 billion in infrastructure development between 2010 and 2020. However, corruption allegations and incidents concerning worker safety have caused the industry to be ranked as the second sector in Vietnam that is most exposed to ESG risks.

In July 2015, the Louis Berger Group agreed a settlement of USD 17.1 million with the US authorities after admitting that the company had violated the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act by paying USD 3.9 million in bribes to officials in India, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Kuwait between 1998 and 2010 in order to secure government contracts.

Noi Bai-Lao Cai Highway Project

Throughout 2015, the Korean company POSCO was linked to allegations that it created a massive slush fund related to Vietnam's Noi Bai–Lao Cai Highway project. The Asian Development Bank has financed the first phase of the highway. Eight “lots” were reportedly put out to tender and POSCO won the bid to build lots A1, A2, and A3.

In September, the Seoul Central District Court sentenced the former executive director of POSCO Engineering & Construction (POSCO

E&C) in Vietnam, a subsidiary of POSCO, to two years and six months in prison for inflating the construction fees paid to subcontractors between 2009 and 2013, and using the money to creating a KRW 10 billion (USD 8.3 million) slush fund. The slush fund was allegedly used to pay kickbacks to the company's partners in Vietnam or misappropriated by senior staff. Prosecutors suspect that the slush fund could have been used by POSCO to lobby government officials.

Heungwoo Industrial Company Ltd, a subcontractor of POSCO E&C between 2009 and 2015, was suspected of using shell companies to help the company create the slush fund. In addition, the chairman of Heungwoo was accused of embezzlement.

Song Duong Sea Port

Workers' safety has also allegedly been an issue in the construction sector in Vietnam. In March 2015, rescuers helped search for survivors after scaffolding collapsed at the

Companies most associated with the Construction sector in Vietnam:

1. POSCO (formerly Pohang Iron and Steel)
 2. Louis Berger Group
 3. Heungwoo Industrial Company Ltd
 4. Samsung Group
 5. Xuan Thanh Group
-

Vietnam: Construction

Son Duong Sea Port in the Vung Ang Economic Zone in Ha Tinh province.

The accident reportedly killed 14 workers and injured 30 others. The workers were apparently hired by Samsung Construction & Technology (Samsung C&T), a subsidiary of the Samsung Group, to work on a seawall project, which is part of a seaport complex owned by the Formosa Group. In December 2015, a Vietnamese People's Court sentenced two managers of Samsung C&T to prison for safety violations that caused the accident.

Saigon Sunbay Tourist Project

In October 2015, experts warned that the Saigon Sunbay Tourist Project near Ho Chi Minh City could cause irreparable damage to a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve located close to the construction site. Investors in the USD 374.6 million project, which is due to be completed in 2022, include the CanGio Tourist City Corp and Vingroup.

Pollution from Cement Companies

Local populations are also complaining about pollution from cement companies and quarries.

In October 2014, more than 10,000 residents criticized the Xuan Thanh Group, Hoang Long, and the Thanh Thang Group for causing excessive dust pollution in the village of Bong Lang in Ha Nam Province. Critics, including a deputy head of the Environment Management Department of the country's Ministry of Health, linked the pollution to an increase in

respiratory diseases and lung cancer, which have caused more than 10 deaths since 2012. Cosevco Song Gianh Cement Company and Vicem Hai Van Cement in Binh Province have also been accused of causing severe local pollution. The residents allege that the companies have been releasing hazardous dust during night hours for 10 years, which causes the sky to turn yellow, kills fish, and causes respiratory diseases in the region. Furthermore, the companies' stone-crushing operations are apparently extremely loud, and stones have damaged several nearby houses.

Issues most associated with the Construction sector in Vietnam:

1. Corruption, bribery, extortion and money laundering
2. Impacts on communities
3. Local pollution
4. Fraud
5. Impacts on ecosystems and landscapes

Topic Tags most associated with the Construction sector in Vietnam:

1. Negligence
 2. Protected areas
-

Vietnam: Chemicals

Vietnam has seen considerable growth in its chemical industry, and the production of detergents, cosmetics, paint, and rubber products has rapidly expanded. The government sees chemicals as a key industry and one that should be prioritized. The Ministry of Industry and Trade recently approved the restructuring plan for the chemical industry in order to support the country's industrialization, modernization, and sustainable development goals by 2020.

However, according to Vtown, a Vietnamese business portal, the chemical sector has caused a loss of natural resources and environmental pollution. There are also fears that the country has a low awareness of chemical risks.

In September 2014, three workers at a Hoa Hiep Hung rubber latex factory in southern Tay Ninh Province died after inhaling toxic gas. The company offered a support package worth VND 70 million for the workers affected by the incident.

Agricultural chemicals are an extremely sensitive issue in Vietnam as the population is still suffering from adverse effects of Agent Orange, Monsanto's toxic defoliant that was used during the Vietnam War. There is considerable opposition to GMO crops, as activist groups fear that the approval of such crops could lead to the import of dangerous pesticides such as Monsanto's Roundup, which is believed by some to cause birth defects.

In February 2015, Monsanto co-sponsored a workshop in Ho Chi Minh City, supposedly to interest young people in sustainable farming. However, critics were suspicious of Monsanto's motives, and Chuck Palazzo, a founding member of the Vietnam chapter of Veterans for Peace, claimed that the company should first compensate Vietnamese who suffered birth defects from Agent Orange.

A September 2015 report by the NGO Grain reported that the Norwegian chemical company Yara and other food and agribusiness multinationals had launched a major public-private partnership with the Vietnamese government under which they had been given exclusive responsibility over the "value chains" of the country's main export commodities. Vietnam was reportedly chosen for a "climate-smart agriculture" pilot project of the World Economic Forum, and Yara was put in charge of coffee and vegetables.

Companies most associated with the Chemicals sector in Vietnam

1. Monsanto Co
 2. Vedan International Holdings Ltd
 3. Yara International A SA
 4. Fotai Enterprise Corp Ltd
 5. Jorn Technology Co Ltd
-

Vietnam: Chemicals

However, civil society organizations have complained that they were marginalized during the discussions, and that their opposition to the concept of “climate-smart agriculture” was ignored.

Germany has also faced criticism for its development policy in countries such as Vietnam, The Philippines, and Kenya. The German Food Partnership, which focuses on rice, potatoes, and oilseed products in these countries, has already begun. Bayer CropScience, BASF, and the seed producers Syngenta and Yara are apparently helping to fund the project, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation along with Germany’s Federal Ministry for Development and Economic Cooperation will also contribute to the fund. However, Oxfam has accused the project of helping agricultural corporations to find new markets, rather than helping poor local people.

Issues most associated with the Chemicals sector in Vietnam:

1. Impacts on communities
2. Local pollution
3. Impacts on ecosystems and landscapes
4. Waste issues
5. Human rights abuses and corporate complicity

Top Topic Tags most associated with the Chemicals sector in Vietnam:

1. Genetically modified organisms (GMO)
 2. Water scarcity
-

Cambodia: Forestry

In 2005, the International Tropical Timber Organization estimated Cambodia's forest cover at 9.33 million hectares. Since then, deforestation has seen a marked increase, however, mainly due to illegal logging, and the expansion of infrastructure and plantations.

In 2013, the Coalition of Cambodian Farmers Community, and the Cambodian Youth Network claimed that illegal deforestation had taken place in nine different provinces. The Ministry of Environment, the National Police, and the Cambodian People's Party have also been accused of facilitating the illegal wood trade.

China is becoming a major importer of wood from Cambodia. An analysis of Chinese customs data, carried out by the UK Environment Investigations Agency, reportedly shows that Cambodian exports of Hongmu – a category of high-value wood for making furniture – to China were three times higher in 2013 compared with those of the year before.

In October 2014, Forbes Asia linked the Pheapimex Group, whose owners allegedly have close ties to the family of Cambodia's Prime Minister, to land grabbing for logging activities. The NGO Global Witness has alleged that Pheapimex controls approximately seven percent of Cambodia's land, which they claim is in violation of the country's property laws. The Cambodia Center for Human Rights has linked Pheapimex to forced evictions and human rights abuses.

The Try Pheap Group has also been harshly criticized for illegal logging activities in the country. In October 2015, the UK Environmental Investigation Agency accused Try Pheap Group and MDS Import Export of earning USD 220 million through “timber laundering.” Reportedly, over 16,000 cubic meters of protected timber species have been illegally logged in the Phnom Samkos Wildlife Sanctuary. Armed men, who were thought to work for MDS Import Export, allegedly chased a reporter investigating the matter.

In November 2014, The Prey Lang Community Network (PLCN) strongly criticized the Cambodian government for granting logging concessions to Try Pheap Import Export (TPIE) and the Vietnamese-owned, CRCK Rubber Company (CRCK) in protected forest areas such as the Prey Lang and the Boeung Per wildlife sanctuaries. Prey Lang is an area of biodiversity that hosts dozens of endangered plants and animal species and supports

Companies most associated with the Forestry sector in Cambodia:

1. Vietnam Rubber Group (VRG)
 2. Hoang Anh Gia Lai Group JSC (HAGL Group)
 3. Samling Global Ltd
 4. MDS Import Export Co. Ltd.
 5. Try Pheap Group
-

Cambodia: Forestry

10,000 families, most of whom belong to the Kuy indigenous people.

The Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association alleges that the Ministry of Environment has granted nearly half of the Boeung Sanctuary's 242,500 hectares to TPIE and other logging companies. CRCK and TPIE have been further criticized for extending their logging operations beyond the official concession boundaries and for transporting the felled trees back to their respective concessions in order to conceal illegal logging.

The Try Pheap Group was again harshly criticized in February 2015, when a Global Witness report accused the company of illegally logging rare timber from Cambodia's protected areas, including the Virachey National Park. The report states that the company and its affiliates seek out luxury-quality wood such as the Siamese Rosewood, which is protected under international law and listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Global Witness claims that Try Pheap exports up to 900 cubic meters of timber daily, and reports that "illegal" timber shipments were made by the Forestry Administration on behalf of the Try Pheap Group to the Hong Kong firm Kin Chung Transportation. The report further claimed that a complex system of cronyism and collusion between industry players, the military, police, and government bodies, including officials of the Ministry of Environment, have facilitated the company's activities.

The Cambodian government has also been criticized for awarding logging concessions in the Botum Sakor National Park in Koh Kon Province, which is the habitat of 49 rare species of mammals including the Asian elephant, leopard, and gibbon. The area is being logged to make way for projects such as the Dara Sakor Seashore Project, being developed by the Tianjin Union Development Group.

Issues most associated with the Forestry sector in Cambodia:

1. Impacts on ecosystems and landscapes
2. Impacts on communities
3. Human rights abuses and corporate complicity
4. Corruption, bribery, extortion and money laundering
5. Local participation issues

Topic Tags most associated with the Forestry sector in Cambodia:

1. Illegal logging
 2. Land grabbing
 3. Indigenous people
 4. Protected areas
 5. Endangered species
-

The Ly Yong Phat Group has also been granted a concession within the Botum Sakor Park and has allegedly burned tropical forest to make way for a tapioca plantation. The Chinese firm, Green Rich/Elite Group, owned by Asia Pulp and Paper, has also been criticized for expanding palm oil and Acacia plantations within Botum Sakor Park.

In September 2015, villagers from the Phnong community claimed that illegal logging by Dau Tu Saigon-Bin Phouc had destroyed the forest and affected the livelihood, culture, and customs of the community. Apparently, a local court interrogated five villagers who opposed the logging. The NGO Khmer Kampuchea Krom claimed that Dau Tu Saigon-Bin Phouc had likely filed a complaint against the villagers.

In October 2015, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) stripped Vietnam Rubber Group of FSC certification following allegations that its operations in Cambodia and Laos have involved human rights violations and illegal land grabbing. The FSC claims that Vietnam Rubber has seized land from local villagers without their consent, destroyed their livelihoods without paying compensation, forcibly displaced indigenous communities, and allowed Cambodian government-backed military police to threaten protesters.

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has stripped Vietnam Rubber Group of FSC certification.

Cambodia: Food and Beverage

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that agriculture accounted for 37 percent of Cambodia's GDP in 2012, and employed roughly 67 percent of the workforce. Rice cultivation reportedly provides the main source of income for the majority of farmers, while fish provides the population with a key source of protein.

However, much of Cambodia's pristine forest has been logged to make way for large sugar and palm oil plantations. The rapid expansion of such projects has been allegedly driving tree and animal species to extinction and causing loss of livelihoods for indigenous and forest-dependent peoples.

In December 2014, the European Commission announced an investigation into claims by 500 Cambodian families that they were forcibly evicted to make way for sugar plantations owned by Phnom Penh Sugar Company, which is majority-owned by the Ly Yong Phat Group. Phnom Penh Sugar came under scrutiny in 2013, following allegations that children as young as seven years old worked in abusive conditions on its plantations. The company was criticized again in February 2015 for hosting a child labor seminar in Kampong Speu Province, after clearing child workers from its sugarcane plantations before the event.

In August 2015, the activist groups Inclusive Development International and Equitable Cambodia denounced Phnom Penh Sugar for land grabbing that took place in 2011, and

called for compensation for households who had lost land.

In January 2015, Human Rights Watch demanded compensation for 2,000 villagers who they say were violently evicted from their land in 2006 to make way for the Koh Kong Sugar Plantations. The plantation reportedly supplied Tate & Lyle Sugars, now owned by ASR Group. The Bonsucro Trade Association has lodged a complaint against Tate & Lyle. The US national contact point for the OECD has also filed a case against Tate & Lyle's American Sugar Refining, while the Thai National Human Rights Commission has lodged a complaint against Khon Kaen Sugar, the majority owner of the Koh Kong plantations.

A May 2015 report by Actionaid and Oxfam highlighted the social impact of the activities of Angkor Sugar, Cane and Sugar Valley

Companies most associated with the Food and Beverage sector in Cambodia:

1. Phnom Penh Sugar Company
 2. Tate & Lyle Plc
 3. Khon Kaen Sugar Public Co. Ltd.
 4. Bollore Group
 5. Mitr Phol Sugar Corp Ltd
 5. Société Financière des Caoutchoucs (Socfin Group; formerly known as Socfinal SA)
-

Company, and Tonie Sugar in Cambodia's Oddar Meanchey Province, and claimed that the companies have violated both Cambodian laws and international standards. Investigations by Thailand's National Human Rights Commission revealed similar findings. Mitr Phol Sugar, whose main shareholder is Mid-Siam Sugar Company, owns all the companies. The three companies were granted land concessions for sugarcane plantations and sugar processing plants in 2008.

However, instead of engaging in the production of sugarcane, the companies allegedly ordered contractors to clear approximately 3,000 hectares of forest within the concession area and then exported the wood to Thailand. An estimated 2,000 local families claim that they were forced to give up 9,000 hectares of fertile agricultural land to make way for the sugar plantation project and that some were violently evicted by military police who destroyed their homes. The families complain that they are now living in poverty as they have lost their livelihoods.

The communities are holding Coca-Cola responsible for the incident as Mitr Phol is said to be one of the company's key suppliers. However, in early 2015, Mitr Phol pulled out of the Oddar Meanchey Province after Coca-Cola announced that it would terminate business relations with any company involved in land grabbing.

The French-owned, Bollore Group, has also faced criticism for land grabbing in Cambodia

as the company is a shareholder of Société Financière des Caoutchoucs (Socfin), which has been expanding its palm oil and rubber plantations. In October 2015, representatives of the Cambodian Bunong community filed a civil action lawsuit against Socfin KCD, a subsidiary of Socfinasia, demanding that the company return 7,000 hectares of their ancestral lands.

Issues most associated with the Food and Beverage sector in Cambodia:

1. Impacts on communities
2. Human rights abuses and corporate complicity
3. Child labor
4. Impacts on ecosystems and landscapes
5. Local participation issues

Topic Tags most associated with the Food and Beverage sector in Cambodia:

1. Land grabbing
 2. Palm oil
 3. Protected areas
 4. Illegal logging
 5. Indigenous people
-

Disclaimer

Copyright 2016 RepRisk AG, Stampfenbachstrasse 42, 8006 Zurich, Switzerland. All rights reserved. RepRisk AG owns all rights to its logos and trademarks used in connection with this report (“Report”).

The information contained in this report is not intended to be relied upon as, or to be substitute for, specific professional advice and in particular, financial advice. No responsibility for loss occasioned to any persons and legal entities acting on or refraining from action as a result of any material in this publication can be accepted. With respect to any and all the information contained in this Report (“Information”), RepRisk makes no representation or warranty of any kind, either express or implied, with respect to the Information, the results to be obtained by the use thereof or any other matter. RepRisk merely collects information from public sources and distributes them in the form of this Report.

RepRisk expressly disclaims, and the buyer or reader waives, any and all implied warranties, including, without limitation, warranties of originality, accuracy, completeness, merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose and warranties related to possible violations of intellectual property rights, trademark rights or any other rights of any third party. This report may be quoted, used for business purposes, and may be shared with third parties, provided RepRisk ESG Business Intelligence www.reprisk.com is explicitly mentioned as the source. RepRisk AG retains copyright and all originators’ rights to the content in this report.
© RepRisk AG

Methodology

RepRisk Special Reports are compiled using information from the RepRisk database, which monitors environmental, social and governance (ESG) risks or companies, projects, sectors and countries. The RepRisk database currently contains risk incidents on over 60,000 public and private companies, as well as over 15,000 projects. RepRisk analysts monitor the issues related to ESG risk across a broad shareholder and other stakeholder audience of NGOs, academics, media, politicians, regulators and communities. Once the risk incident has been identified with advanced search algorithms and analyzed for its novelty, relevance and severity, risk analysts enter an original summary into the database and link it to the companies and projects in question. No article is entered twice unless it has been escalated to a more influential source, contains a significant development, or has not appeared for the past 6 weeks.



Contact information

For more information about the RepRisk ESG Risk Platform or this Special Report, please contact media@reprisk.com or visit www.reprisk.com.