

# Business

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## The first Dialogue on Pakbaeng Hydropower Project “Open Up the Mekong’s Historic Moment”

Advertorial Desk

The first dialogue meeting of the Pakbaeng Hydropower Project on the Mekong River yesterday took place to further react with the recommendations raised by the Mekong River Commission in regards to the PNPCA process of the project.

Officials from the Thailand National Mekong Committee Secretariat (TNMCS) and Lao National Mekong Committee Secretariat (LNMCS), met with participating parties from Thailand’s Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and Laos’ Ministry of Energy and Mines for a dialogue held at the base of the “Love Chiang Khong” organisation in Chiang Khong, Chiang Rai province, northern Thailand.

A team of independent consultants presented and popularised modern hydropower development, construction technology, and environmental protection measures. They explained their role in local social and economic development and responded to the concerns of local people about the potential effects that the project development may have on the surrounding environment.

This is the first time in the history of the Mekong’s development that it has drawn much attention and it was praised highly by local communities, non-government organisations and people as “a historic moment”.

Director General of the Department of Energy Policy and Planning, Ministry of Energy and Mines of Laos, Dr Chansaveng Bounngong, responded to the questions raised by local residents.

The dialogue meeting



Officials exchange information during the meeting.

was also attended by Thanit Satiennam, an analyst from the Thailand National Mekong Committee Secretariat, Mr Phonpaseuth Phoulphanh, Deputy Secretary General of the Lao National Mekong Committee Secretariat, and staff, the Thai National Mekong Committee and Thai Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) as well as representatives from Datang (Lao) Pakbaeng Hydropower Co., Ltd., an affiliated company of China Datang Corporation, one of the world’s Fortune 500 companies, and experts from a third-party consultancy NCG and NorConsult.

The dialogue was conducted in a friendly atmosphere and covered the relevant issues of the Pakbaeng Hydropower Project and the active role of the project in optimising the industrial layout and stimulating economic development along the riverbank and promoting the economic development of Laos and Thailand.

The experts, with rich data and examples, showed that the Pakbaeng Hydropower Project would greatly promote the development of Mekong shipping navigation and achieve large-scale shipping,

and enhance the development of communications, transportation, tourism and other industries.

The dialogue was also introduced to the participants from the perspective of environmental protection, such as fish passage, sediment transport and inundation, the thorough study and advanced and harmonious design of the Pakbaeng Hydropower Project, to show that there are no environmental problems restricting the construction of the project but have significant social benefits, and its development and construction are of great significance.

More than 50 people from local communities, inhabitants, NGOs, and experts from Udon Thani University and Mae Fah Luang University listened to the presentation and conducted in-depth communication and exchange with representatives from Laos’ Ministry of Energy and Mines and third-party consultant experts



Meeting participants share information.

on issues of concern, and got a deeper acquaintance and understanding of the Pakbaeng Hydropower Project.

Mr Niwat Roykaew, the head of the “Love Chiang Khong” organisation, said at the presentation that the dialogue would make a great contribution to the rational development and utilisation of Mekong resources.

Many national and local media reported widely on the presentation.

The third-party experts believe that, as the transformation of renewable energy promotes global development to a new stage and under the background of accelerating the process of “ASEAN Power Grid Integration” with Laos as the main electricity supplier and Thailand as an important hub, the presentation based on the development and

construction of the Pakbaeng Hydropower Project provides a new model and new idea for cooperation in large-scale hydropower construction across countries and regions, which is conducive to more transparent development of the Mekong, and conducive to both the development of the Mekong and environmental protection, and promoting in-depth cooperation in Mekong development among the Mekong regions.

The Pakbaeng Hydropower Project, invested by the China Datang Corporation, is the first cascade hydropower project on the mainstream of the Lower Mekong Basin. The project has a total installed capacity of 912MW and investment of more than US\$2.5 billion.

On June 27, 2017, it became the first hydropower project for which all Mekong

member countries signed the Joint Statement in accordance with the Prior Consultation for a 6 month period under the Procedures for Notification, Prior Consultation and Agreement (PNPCA).

The task of Pakbaeng Hydropower Project is mainly for power generation, taking into account shipping navigation meanwhile, with average annual generating capacity of 4.784 billion kWh, and an annual utilisation time of 5,236 hours.

According to the Laos-Thailand bilateral power supply cooperation plan, 10 percent of the power generated by the Pakbaeng Hydropower Project will be supplied to Laos and 90 percent of the electricity will be made available to Thailand to increase the proportion of clean energy in Thailand.



Officials and company representatives discuss the hydropower project.

Exchange Rate		LAOVET Bank	
as of January 15, 2018			
Foreign Currencies	Buying	Selling	
US Dollar	8,272	8,309	
Vietnamese Dong	0.3662	0.3735	
Thai Baht	259.89	261.84	
Euro	10,052	10,104	
Renminbi Yuan	1,257	1,282	