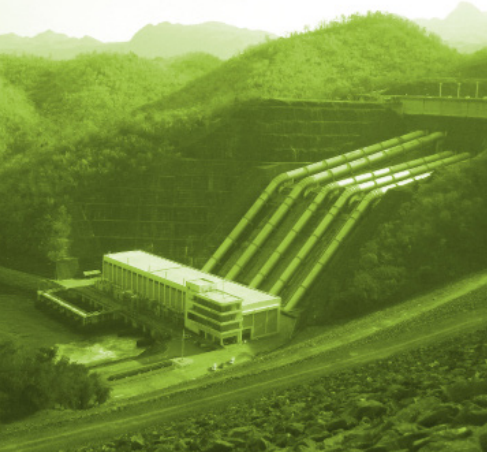




Why EIAs?

When implemented effectively, strong EIAs improve development decisions by including sound planning, solid science and community input – before ground is even broken. As a key tool in the region's development process, it can bring governments, business and civil society together to find mutual policy solutions. Through its partnerships, MPE helps partners improve policies and highlight best practices. While there are many challenges in scoping, implementing and monitoring EIAs, adoption of a regional standard will be a step toward ensuring that development decisions are smarter, more sustainable and have public support.



pact

Pact is an international, non-profit organization with forty years of experience. Our vision is a world where those who are poor and marginalized exercise their voice, build their own solutions, and take ownership over their future. For more information visit pactworld.org



Mekong Partnership For the Environment

SHARED SOLUTIONS FOR RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT

OVERVIEW

As growth accelerates across the region, stronger PARTNERSHIPS, increased PARTICIPATION, and access to INFORMATION – across borders and sectors – are crucial for achieving responsible development. Increasingly, new dams, mines, roads, industrial zones and other projects are connecting communities and countries creating a more integrated region. Integration will distribute both benefits and risks throughout the region. To reduce the risks, inclusive decision-making practices need to be strengthened. Governments need to provide proper oversight. Business needs to be a strong partner. Information needs to be shared. And citizens need their voices heard.

Mekong Partnership for the Environment (MPE) brings together regional governments, civil society and the private sector to support responsible development that makes sense economically, but still protects communities and the environment. Through partnerships, working groups and networks, we promote stronger, better informed public participation around infrastructure development. We support robust Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) policy and meaningful participation of citizens.

Our vision is a Mekong region where social equity and environmental sustainability provide the foundation for regional prosperity.

WHAT IS MEKONG PARTNERSHIP FOR THE ENVIRONMENT?

Mekong Partnership for the Environment is led by Pact, an international NGO, along with a consortium of local partners, including **Internews, Stockholm Environment Institute, Wildlife Conservation Society, East West Management Institute**, and others. We support constructive engagement between stakeholders to facilitate socially and environmentally responsible development decision-making processes in the Mekong region. We work with partners in **Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam**. Our primary donor is the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).



Why responsible investment?

As the region travels along the road to economic integration through the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), regional demand for investment will grow. An opportunity exists to integrate a plan to manage social and environmental risks in project financing. MPE and its banking, business and civil society partners will work to advance best practice frameworks – such as the banking industry’s Equator Principles (EPs) – across the region. Wider adoption of these kinds of standards will help ensure Mekong investments reduce their social and environmental risks.

“All key stakeholders – private sector, government and communities – play important contributing roles to ensure a sustainable environment. We will all need to work together.”
- An MPE civil society partner

“Before interacting with Pact, we had never considered engaging with NGOs, but now we are adding NGOs as a stakeholder as we develop our country strategy.”
- A director at one of MPE’s private-sector partners

WHAT DOES MPE AIM TO ACHIEVE?

MPE supports responsible investment and participatory decision-making practices for regional development. We take three approaches:

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS: We bring together civil society, business and governments because long-term prosperity depends on regional collaboration among all partners. MPE aims to advance social and environmental safeguards through robust EIAs and environmental and social risk management tools for investors. Governments can ensure clear policies and effective implementation. Businesses can work together to support common standards that are clear and fair. Banks can minimize risk by investing responsibly. And civil society can ensure community input. MPE supports, networks and platforms to develop partnerships across stakeholder groups that help them reach these goals.

MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION: We help civil society to constructively engage in development decisions because the impacts are increasingly being felt by citizens and communities across boundaries and borders. Community participation reduces the risk of conflict and can build stronger projects. Through events, research and program grants, and other activities, MPE supports civil society to help improve their capacity to participate.

ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION: MPE helps decision-makers and the public get the vital information they need for smart decisions. Businesses and governments need to know the impacts projects may have on communities and the environment. And the public needs access to that same information. Through networks, workshops, websites, research and other tools, we work with media, civil society and others to ensure information is accurate and available.



WHAT DOES MPE DO?

MPE supports civil society, government and the private sector through our:

Civil Society Network: A “network of networks” of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) from around the region. CSOs access grants, dialogs with business and governments, and training to better participate in development decisions.

Journalist Network: The Mekong Matters Journalism Network, supporting, connecting and training over 100 journalists to report on regional development issues.

Info Portals: MPE supports three innovative regional websites:

- **Mekong Citizen:** local stories, videos, blogs and groups for regional practitioners, youth and other active citizens (www.mekongcitizen.org)
- **The Mekong Eye:** curated and original news from our journalist network and regional media, along with maps, visuals, resources and expert opinion (www.mekongeye.com)
- **Open Development Mekong:** downloadable datasets and interactive maps on development trends, aggregated from across the region (www.opendevdevelopmentmekong.net)

Events, Grants & Info Products: MPE supports regional practitioners through workshops, events, program grants, journalist funds, research grants, analytical reports and other tools.

EIA Working Group: A multi-stakeholder Regional Technical Working Group on EIA to develop regional guidelines on public participation for EIA and advance regional collaboration on EIA policy.

Finance Network: A Mekong Finance Sector Working Group connects with regional banks who are working towards broader adoption of responsible investment practices.

For inquiries please contact:

Mekong Partnership for the Environment
Pact Thailand - Bangkok, Thailand
+66 2 254 7066-8 infompe@pactworld.org
www.mekongcitizen.org/mpe



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

