

## Why Tasang should not be in the Mekong Power Grid:

The Tasang project will involve a very large dam on what is now the longest free-flowing river in Southeast Asia. In addition, it will bring serious human rights abuses to an area that already suffers from the effects of forced relocation and other acts of violence by the Burmese military.

### Tasang hydropower project

**Location:** Mainstream Salween River in southern Shan State

**Proposed dam height:** Over 180 meters

**Estimated capacity:** 3600 megawatts

**Expected environmental impacts:** Destruction of forest, siltation, loss of biodiversity and livelihood

**Expected social impacts:** Further forced relocation, conscription of forced labor and porters for the military, sexual violence and increase in violence against local residents.

### PROPOSED MEKONG POWER GRID

The ADB initiative would create a regional electricity grid powered by some of the most controversial hydropower projects in China, Burma and Laos. This map highlights just a few of these projects.

- 1,2 - Upper Mekong Dams, China  
Threaten communities downstream whose livelihoods depend on the Mekong's flood-drought cycle and nutrient-laden sediment.
- 3 - Tasang (Shan State, Burma)  
Would devastate the lives of ethnic people living along the Salween, mainland Southeast Asia's last major free-flowing river.
- 4 - Nam Theun 2 (Laos)  
Would displace 4,500 indigenous people and severely impact a Mekong tributary on which over 120,000 people depend for their livelihoods.

*Adapted from Asian Development Bank Map*



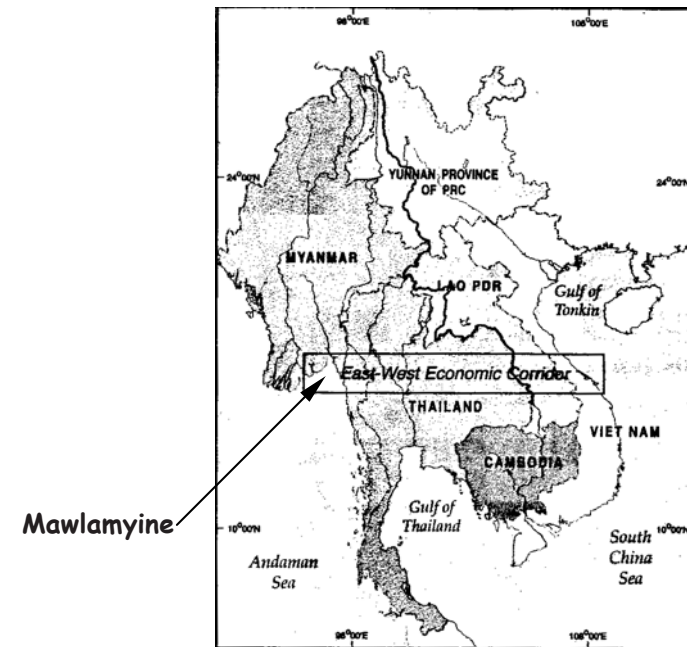
Tasang is the sole hydropower project in Burma included in the Mekong Power Grid. While acknowledging that Tasang is considered "very controversial from an environmental point of view," the Mekong Power Grid nevertheless describes it as one of "the most promising interconnection projects investigated during the master plan study," and goes on to identify Tasang as one of the sources of electricity to be exported to Thailand. The ADB has yet to address allegations of human rights abuses, such as forced labor, in relation to the Tasang project.

## Evidence #2: Deep-sea port on the Andaman Sea

The ADB labels the building of an industrial port at Mawlamyine (Moulmein) in southern Burma on the Andaman Sea, as well as a road leading to it from the east, eventually connecting to Da Nang on the South China Sea in Vietnam, as "high priority" components of the **East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC)**.

### What is the East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC)?

The EWEC is one of the priority programs in the Greater Mekong Subregion. A key goal of the EWEC is to reduce significantly travel time and transport costs between the Andaman Sea and the South China Sea by establishing a land route through Burma, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam.



Adapted from Asian Development Bank Map

For more information on Burma and the ADB, see:  
Burma's status in the MDBs (Bank Information Center)  
[www.bicusa.org/asia/Burma\\_project/Burma\\_status\\_in\\_mdbs.htm](http://www.bicusa.org/asia/Burma_project/Burma_status_in_mdbs.htm)

For more information on Burma and the Mekong Power Grid, see:  
Trading Away the Future: The Mekong Power Grid (International Rivers Network)  
[www.irn.org/programs/mekong/030620.powergrid-bp.pdf](http://www.irn.org/programs/mekong/030620.powergrid-bp.pdf)

• • • • **Connecting the dots: ADB, GMS and Burma** • • • •

Burma is part of the **Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS)** economic cooperation program, which is strongly supported, facilitated and largely financed by the ADB. Six countries comprise the GMS: Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and China. The objective of the GMS scheme is stronger economic integration in the region, backed by physical infrastructure development. Projects involve the building of highways, bridges, and power lines to connect cities, ports, and sources of electricity.

The GMS scheme provides a convenient cover for the ADB to extend technical assistance and other support to Burma. As a full member of the GMS, Burma participates in GMS-related meetings and seminars, as well as GMS-wide projects financed by the ADB. Given the current political situation in Burma, the ADB does not provide any direct financial assistance to the Tasang project or to the deep-sea port. The ADB's facilitation and promotion of the Mekong Power Grid and the EWEC does, however, encourage the construction of the components with support from other institutions.

**Our demands:**

1. The Asian Development Bank must immediately stop ALL forms of assistance to Burma until there is irreversible democratic reform in the country.
2. The Asian Development Bank must stop promoting and soliciting funds for development projects in Burma, including the Tasang dam in Shan State and the deep-sea port at Moulmein.
3. Given the illegitimacy of Burma's military regime and its disastrous economic record, the Asian Development Bank should immediately expel the regime's representative from its Board of Executive Directors.

Information provided by Burma Project, Bank Information Center (BIC),  
International Rivers Network (IRN), and  
The NGO Forum on ADB

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## STOP ADB Support to Burma

by

**Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN)**



*The villagers living along the Salween River in Shan State, Burma*

The only thing Burma does not receive from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is *direct* financial assistance. But the ADB is actively engaging with Burma's military regime in many different ways. The ADB sends consultative missions to Burma to make findings and advice on macroeconomic and other reforms. The ADB also issues Country Assistance Plans for Burma. A representative of the ruling military regime sits on the ADB's Board of Executive Directors.

The most significant method of engagement, however, probably is done through the **Greater Mekong Subregion** economic cooperation program. Under this cover, the ADB is promoting plans for a deep-sea port, highways and a large dam to be built in Burma.

### **Evidence #1: Tasang Dam on the Salween River**

The controversial Tasang project in ethnic Shan State, Burma is included in the ADB's "Regional Indicative Master Plan on Power Interconnection in the Greater Mekong Subregion" (**Mekong Power Grid**).

### **What is the Mekong Power Grid?**

The Mekong Power Grid lays out a power connection scheme in the greater Mekong River region. The ADB strongly promotes this scheme. Under the scheme, broadly put, electricity generated by large-scale hydropower plants in China, Laos, and Burma will be exported and consumed in Thailand and Vietnam.