

Strategic Environmental Assessment and AECEN



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Outline

1

Introduction

2

Role of Strategic Environmental Assessment in Compliance and Enforcement

3

SEA in the Greater Mekong Subregion

4

Conclusions

Introduction

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)



Environmental compliance and enforcement in Asia



Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (AECEN)

About AECEN

AECEN is a regional network of environment agencies dedicated to promoting improved compliance with environmental legal requirements in Asia through regional exchange of innovative policies and practices.

Members: 20 environmental agencies from 18 countries.



AECEN Principal Activities

- Facilitating and replicating twinning partnerships that strengthen implementation and enforcement of environmental policies, laws, regulations, etc.
- Building capacity through specialized training and skills development;
- Knowledge management including website, publications and applied research; and
- Networking building, regional cooperation, and communities of practice via AECEN.

AECEN Programming Approach

- AECEN has a step by step basic programming approach:
 - (i) Periodically assess priorities of AECEN members;
 - (ii) Conduct studies/surveys to update the status of priority issues;
 - (iii) Validation workshop on priority topic and selection of twinning partners;
 - (iv) Establish “twinning” partnerships – preferably south-south cooperation;
 - (v) Dissemination of results/background information; and
 - (vi) Replication and scale-up.

Role of Strategic Environmental Assessment in Compliance and Enforcement

Why would AECEN be interested in SEA.....?

Viet Nam – contaminated soil monitoring

Twinning partnership between MoNRE, Vietnam and KMoE, Korea



Area: Da Nang and other hotspots

Outcome:
Technical guidelines on soil contamination monitoring and enhanced technical capacity.

Thailand – river basin public participation

Twinning partnership in the context of the New Zealand – Thailand Closer Economic Partnership



Area: Tha Chin River

Outcome:

Increase community participation in management and rehabilitation of the river.

India – voluntary compliance in the sponge iron sector

Counterpart agencies in the Philippines, Thailand and the United States



Area: West Bengal

Outcome:
Pollution reduction



Photo: www.livemint.com

Thailand – soil contamination policy

Twinning partnership between PCD, Thailand and MoEJ, Japan



Outcome:

New framework for preventing soil contamination and rehabilitating contaminated land.



AECEN's compliance and assistance work deals with **polluted water, air and soil**, often as a legacy of poor industrial planning and management.

AECEN would like to become more involved in **upstream planning** to prevent environmental pollution before it occurs. Compliance and enforcement become much simpler if potential pollution problems are avoided from the outset.

...SEA...

SEA in the Greater Mekong Subregion

SEA of the Tourism Sector in Cambodia

Number of international tourists have increased from 1.7 million in 2006 to 4.5 million in 2014.

Growth rates of 20 – 30% are now imposing pressures on the most popular destinations, necessitating a broad diversification strategy.



SEA

The SEA, inter alia, included detailed environmental assessment of

- (i) the draft Tourism Law;
- (ii) the draft national ecotourism policy and strategy;
- (iii) tourism development plans for the northeast triangle (Mondulkiri, Ratanakiri, Kratie, and Stung Treng Provinces);
- (iv) the K4 (Krong Kep, Kampot, Kampong Som , and Koh Kong) coastal tourism strategy and plans.



Photo: <http://www.tourismcambodia.com>

National policy level..

“Serious potential risk to the environment”

Cancellation, suspension, or downgrading of tourism license, along with subsequent processes to deal with the risk.

Defining the **environmental standards and criteria** to award a tourism license.

Tourism **license fees** for an emergency **clean up or rehabilitation environment**.



Photo: www.visitcambodiatravel.com

Ecotourism policy recommendations

Create a **multi-stakeholder body for ecotourism** with the mandate to tackle and resolve conflicts with other sectoral activities such as mining and logging.

While the environmental laws and regulations should be sufficient (if fully complied with), the reality is that powerful interests are involved in the mining and logging sectors and the **Department of Nature Conservation and Protection, MoE** could usefully use some additional counterweight support from the **tourism industry**.

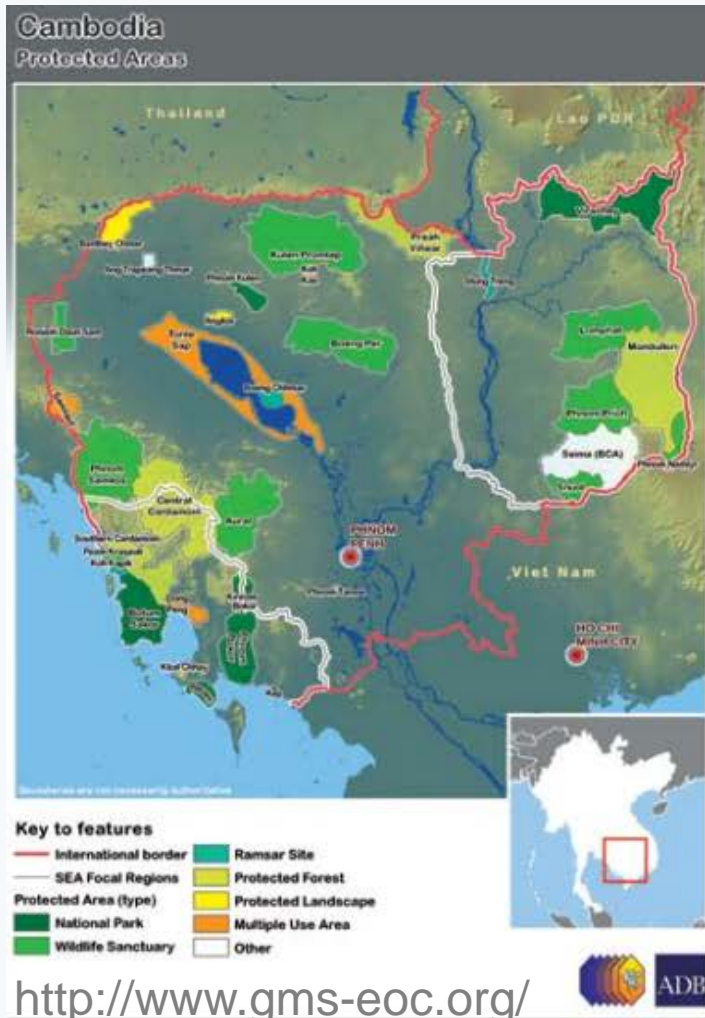


Photo: <http://ejatlas.org>



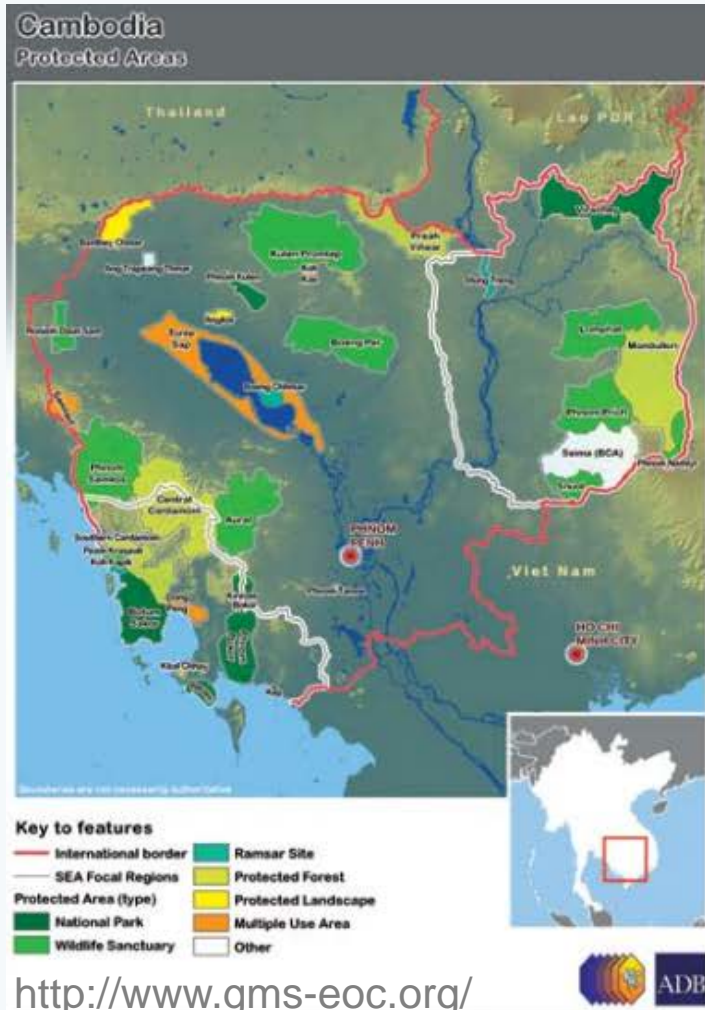
Photo: www.phnompenhpost.com

Northeast environmental threats from tourism development



- (i) Continuing threats to the rare and endangered Irrawaddy dolphin
- (ii) Road construction through forests and protected areas
- (iii) Proposed tourism developments inside protected areas
- (iv) Airport improvement
- (v) Liquid and solid wastes management in sensitive areas
- (vi) Promotion of free zones for tourism development at border crossing points
- (vii) Urban growth in tourism gateway areas

Northeast environmental threats from other sectors



- (i) Logging concessions
- (ii) Mining and mineral exploration
- (iii) Agricultural encroachment into forest areas
- (iv) Fishing
- (v) Hunting and illegal wildlife and plant collection
- (vi) Hydropower development
- (vii) Electricity transmission lines

Northeast environmental threats from tourism development



- (i) Border tourism development on both the Thailand and Viet Nam borders
- (ii) Excessively rapid urban growth without adequate infrastructure or attention to climate change impacts
- (iii) Excessive development of offshore islands beyond their carrying capacity
- (iv) Beach resort development with exclusionary, private access to beaches
- (v) Highway development from Thailand to Viet Nam, with feeder roads to new tourism sites
- (vi) Airport development

By identifying **these environmental threats** from the tourism sector as well as to the tourism sector from other national development activities, the **MoE** (and other stakeholders) can begin to recognize where **baseline monitoring** should be carried out and what kind of **environmental parameters** need to be monitored.

For example, in the southern coastal zone, potential oil contamination of coastal mangroves and beach areas needs to be monitored; while in the northeast, fisheries and endangered species need to be monitored.

Some of the specific avoidance measures proposed

- Improved **environmental management at border** crossings including sanitary landfills for solid waste, safe and treated water supplies, wastewater treatment, and control of trade in toxic or hazardous waste materials and illegal wildlife;
- For **airport development**, banded aviation fuel tanks and aircraft repair facilities; and safe recycling or disposal of bitumen drums (used for tarmac sealing);
- Design of **eco-tourism buildings** to aim at zero net energy use, zero emissions, and 100% recycling of building materials);
- On **offshore islands**, solid waste collection and return to the mainland for disposal and/or recycling;
- **Composting or waterless toilets** in areas with minimal freshwater supplies;
- In **mangrove areas**, prohibiting commercial capture of juvenile fish and crabs in mangrove areas that serve as nurseries for young aquatic organisms;

- For **beach areas** environmental control measures proposed included “
 - (i) installation of effective **wastewater treatment** systems in hotels, restaurants, residences, and public buildings close to the beach;
 - (ii) protection of upland **water supply sources** and strict controls on exploitation of groundwater;
 - (iii) litter control and **beach grooming**;
 - (iv) **zoning nearshore** waters for various uses, so that swimming and power boats, for example, are not using the same areas;
 - (v) an **oil spill contingency plan**, stockpiling equipment and chemicals, and training personnel;
 - (vi) strict **control of vendors**, changing rooms and toilets, restaurants and other environmentally damaging activities on the beach, by beach inspectors employed by the local government;
 - (vii) preventing **linear development** by preparing town development plans for all beach areas; and
 - (viii) prohibiting **private beaches** and exclusive access to tourist resorts”.
- Institutionally, the SEA proposed coordinated monitoring programs and data collection for feedback into future tourism plans.

Conclusions

- SEA provides the ideal planning approach for avoiding many of the environmental issues that could emerge from inadequate sector and area planning.
- From Cambodia case study;
 - Efficient SEA results in avoiding a common problem of EIA that are conducted after a firm decision has been made to implement a specific project.
 - The SEA process allows multiple agencies that rarely communicate with each other to sit together and jointly plan the environmental management of an economic sector or development area.
 - Adequate public participation in the SEA can help to identify particular community concerns thus avoiding subsequent conflict between developers and the community.
 - The SEA can identify specific mitigation measures that may need some time to implement, such as new legislation, planning guidelines or zoning plans.
 - The SEA can identify environmental monitoring requirements and help to put in place optimal baseline monitoring plans so that better information is available once development is undertaken in that area.

AECEN welcomes the **expansion of SEA in the Asian region** and hopes that more **governments** in the region will undertake comprehensive SEAs as part of their normal **socio-economic development planning**.

Thank you for your attention.

