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Dawei Special Economic Zone

One of the largest planned industrial zones in Southeast Asia could harm tens of thousands of people.

Country:

Myanmar (Burma)

Case Status:

Ongoing

Issues:

Corporate Accountability, Land Rights

Harms:

Lack of Consultation, Harms to Livelihoods

Summary

Dawei Special Economic Zone is an industrial development project in southern Myanmar. It is one of three SEZs in Myanmar that are designed to attract businesses by lowering environmental regulations, offering tax breaks, and waving minimum wage requirements. If completed, the SEZ will include a deep-sea port, an oil refinery, a steel mill, fertilizer and petrochemical plants, industrial factories and operations, a reservoir and a road connecting Dawei to Kanjanaburi, Thailand. If completed, it would be one of the largest industrial zones in Southeast Asia.

Dawei SEZ would directly affect 43,000 residents, most of whom have not received enough information about the project, nor have they been consulted. Only 8 percent of those affected consented to the project before it began and less than one-third of those affected received any information from the government or developers. Many of the communities in these SEZs are speaking out against what they see as land grabs, abuse and exploitation on the part of investors and project managers. Over 70 percent of those affected depend on their land for their livelihoods and most of these families will lose all or some of their land to the SEZ.

ERI has worked with local civil society organization Dawei Development Association (DDA) and frontline communities to bring the case of Dawei SEZ to the National

Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT). The complaint to the NHRCT alleged that Thai developers and investors have been party to environmental and human rights violations, including violations of rights of indigenous peoples, land rights and rights to information and proper consultation. The NHRCT has issued **a report**

(http://mekongwatch.org/PDF/daweiNHRCT_ReportFull_ENG.pdf) acknowledging some rights violations and impacts of Dawei SEZ and continues to investigate the responsible corporations and government bodies. ERI participates in a coalition of Thai NGOs and CSOs that calls for transparency and accountability for Thai regional investors called Thai Extraterritorial Obligation Watch.

Plaintiffs

Communities in Dawei District

Defendants

Italian-Thai Development Plc. (ITD) and Max Myanmar, operating as Dawei Development Company Ltd. (DDC)

Dawei SEZ Company

Partners

Dawei Development Association

∨ [Timeline \(#timelineff69-1a905f26-f4b6\)](#)

∨ Documents (#documentsff69-1a905f26-f4b6)

∨ Media (#media)

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