

# Laos approves Mekong River dam

Laos has given the go-ahead to build a massive dam on the Mekong, despite opposition from environmentalists and countries downstream. The dam is the first of eight Laos plans to build to expand its generating capacity and sell electricity to its neighbours

## XAYABURI DAM

■ Laos says revenue from 1,260MW dam will spur economic and social development. Thailand has already agreed to buy 95% of electricity output

■ About 60m people depend on Mekong and its tributaries for food, water and transportation – Cambodia and Vietnam are concerned dam will disrupt fisheries and rice production

■ Dam would forcibly resettle 2,100 people and could affect livelihoods of millions of others

■ Mekong is second only to Amazon in terms of biodiversity, with over 1,000 fish species, including critically endangered Mekong giant catfish

