

## **Inadequacy and Inefficiency of the Scoping Requirements in the Preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment Reports for Dam and Reservoir Projects in Thailand**

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**Abstract :** Like other countries, Thailand continually experiences strong protests against dam and reservoir proposals, especially large-scale projects. The protestors are constantly worried about the potential significant adverse impacts of the projects on the environment and society. Although project proponents are required by laws to assess the environmental and social impacts of the dam proposals by making environmental impact assessment (EIA) reports and finding mitigation measures before implementing the plans, the outcomes of the assessments often do not lessen the affected people and public's concerns about the potential negative effects of the projects. One of the main reasons is that Thailand does not have a proper and efficient law to regulate project proponents when determining the scope of environmental impact assessments. Scoping is the crucial second stage of the preparation of an EIA report. The appropriate scope of assessments will allow EIA studies to focus only on the significant effects of the proposed project on particular resources, areas, and communities. It will offer crucial and sufficient information to the decision-makers and the public. The decision to implement the dam and reservoir projects considered based on the assessments with a proper scoping will eventually be more widely accepted by the public and reduce community opposition. The research work seeks to identify flaws in the current requirements of scoping steps under Thai laws and regulations and proposes recommendations to improve the legal scheme. The paper explores the well-established United States laws and relevant rules regulating how lead agencies determine the scope of their environmental impact assessments and some guidelines concerning scoping published by dominant institutions. Policymakers and legislature will find the results of studies helpful in improving the scoping-step requirements of EIA for dam and reservoir projects and reducing the level of anti-dam protests in Thailand.

**Keywords :** dam and reservoir, EIA, environmental impact assessment, law, scoping, Thailand

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