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TERRA  
Press Release

## Thai Villagers Rally Against Nam Theun 2 Dam Outside World Bank

**Bangkok** – More than 150 Thai villagers gathered in front of the World Bank's Bangkok headquarters today to protest against the Nam Theun 2 dam in Lao PDR.

The majority of protesters were victims of the World Bank-financed Pak Mun dam, which was completed 11 years ago despite years of protest from local communities and environmentalists.

"The World Bank did not listen to us then and it is not listening now," said Ms. Lamduan Soratham, one of thousands of people displaced by the Pak Mun dam. "It is time the World Bank stopped financing dams that destroy our resources and turn us into hopeless victims."

The protesters urged the World Bank not to finance the US\$1.3 billion Nam Theun 2 dam in neighbouring Lao PDR, and warned that Laotians would suffer the same fate as those harmed by Pak Mun and other Bank-financed projects.

The villagers asked the World Bank's Bangkok representative, Mr. Patachamuthu Illangovan, to fax their petition to Bank President James Wolfensohn in Washington.

They also torched an effigy of the Bank President, expressing their frustration with the Bank's failure to take responsibility for its environmental damages.

The 135-MW Pak Mun dam blocked Thailand's largest Mekong tributary, destroying a productive fishery and flooding prime riverine farmland upon which thousands of villagers depended for their livelihoods.

The Nam Theun 2 dam, if built, would displace more than 6,000 villagers and affect the livelihoods of another 100,000 people living downstream along Xe Bang Fai, another large Mekong tributary.

Marking the International Day of Action for Rivers, the rally included people affected by World Bank-sponsored Pak Mun and Lam Takhong projects, as well as Thai consumer and environmental groups.

In a separate letter sent to the World Bank last week, senior Thai wildlife conservationists warned that Nam Theun 2's 450-square kilometre reservoir would cause irreparable damage to endangered wildlife, including Asian elephants and tigers.

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