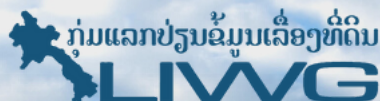


LIWG E-NEWSLETTER



LIWG MEMBER WORK

- JVC holding a launching event of Legal Calendar 2023 in Sekong
- SAEDA co-leading the Focal Group on Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI)
- National Seed Fairs and Rice Contest-2022

Stories inside:

LIWG Member Work

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Readings:

- ▲ Recommended readings, publications and news on land and natural resources

WHAT IN THE NEWS!

HIGHLIGHT UPDATE ON LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCE ISSUES IN LAOS

UPCOMING UPDATE AND EVENTS FROM JANUARY - APRIL 2023!

LIWG Member Work

JVC holding a launching event of Legal Calendar 2023 in Sekong, Laos



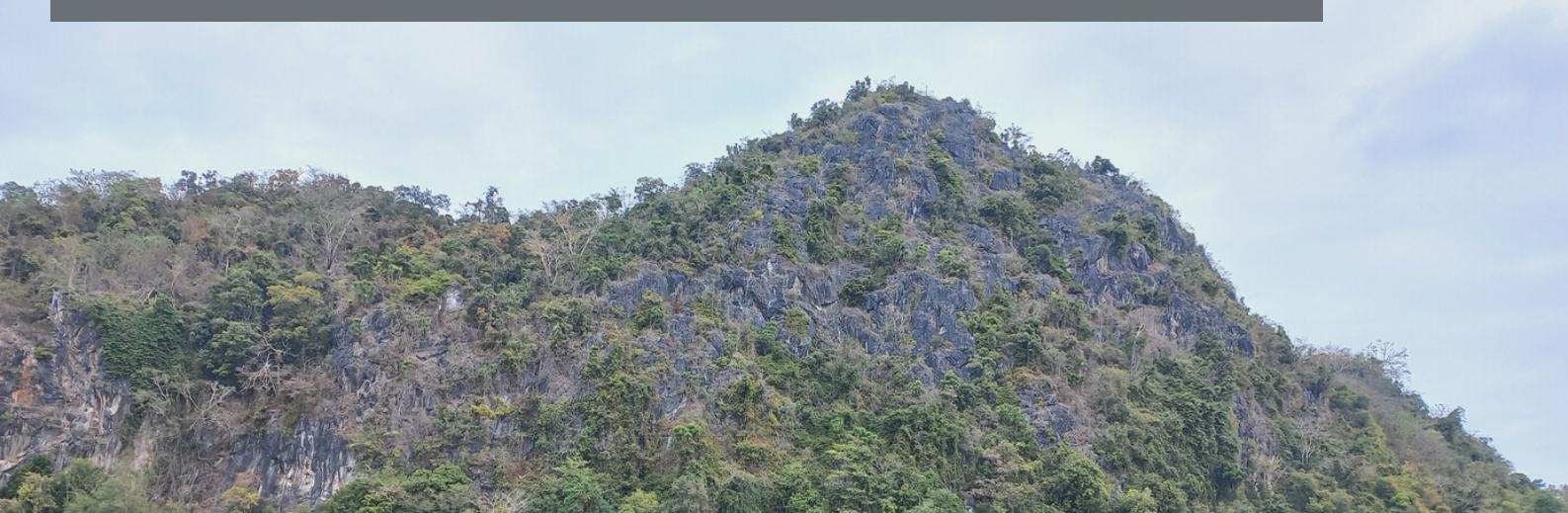
Japan International Volunteer Center (JVC) held the launching event of the legal calendar 2023 on December 21 at the Natural Resources and Environment Department in Sekong Province, chaired by Mr. Bounlith Sakbuavong, acting head of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment in Sekong Province, with representatives from the Department of Land, the Ministry of Agriculture, JVC, related departments at the provincial, district, village groups and companies within the province participating.

This event is for communities in remote areas to have more access to information. It is a promotion-support for local government agencies to use the print media to publish advertisements about land and natural resource management work, to encourage people and all parties to participate in sustainable development, aiming to disseminate basic legal information for people to recognize, understand and simultaneously implement proactively, to help reduce misunderstandings or conflicts that may occur between foreign investors and local communities who are affected by various development projects. See the article at <https://bit.ly/40e6JcP>

SAEDA co-leading the Focal Group on Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI)

Since October 2022, the NPA and LIWG member SAEDA co-leads the Focal Group on Responsible Agriculture Investment under the Land Sub-Sector Working Group (LSSWG). In November 2022, DALaM joined SAEDA as the chair of the Focal Group. In December 2022, SAEDA and DALaM conducted a multi-stakeholders consultation workshop in order develop the FG Terms of Reference and Action plan 2023. This event was attended by relevant ministries[1], development partners, international non-government organization (INGOs), civil society organization (CSOs), and education and research institutes.

[1] Representatives of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (Department of Agricultural Land Management, Department of Technology, Extension and Agro-Processing, Department of Planning and Cooperation, Department of Land –Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Investment Promotion Department –Ministry of Planning Investment



National Seed Fairs and Rice Contest- 2022

The main purpose of the event was to boost the promotion of seed production among Lao farmers and discuss the way forward of the seed production plan in Laos and update on the National seed policy, especially seed certification and relevant policy. This event was co-organized by Lao Farmer Network (LFN), NAFRI and DOA, funded by SIDA and OXFAM between 14 and 15 December 2022.

These farmers showcased agricultural goods such as rice, coffee and vegetable in the fairs. Over 15 booths from Lao Farmer Network and NAFRI's members had brought their seed and showcased to share, displayed and sold in this event.

You can follow the event from Facebook page of [ເຄືອຂ່າຍຊາວກະສິກອນລາວ Lao Farmer Network](#)

LIWG Meetings and Activities

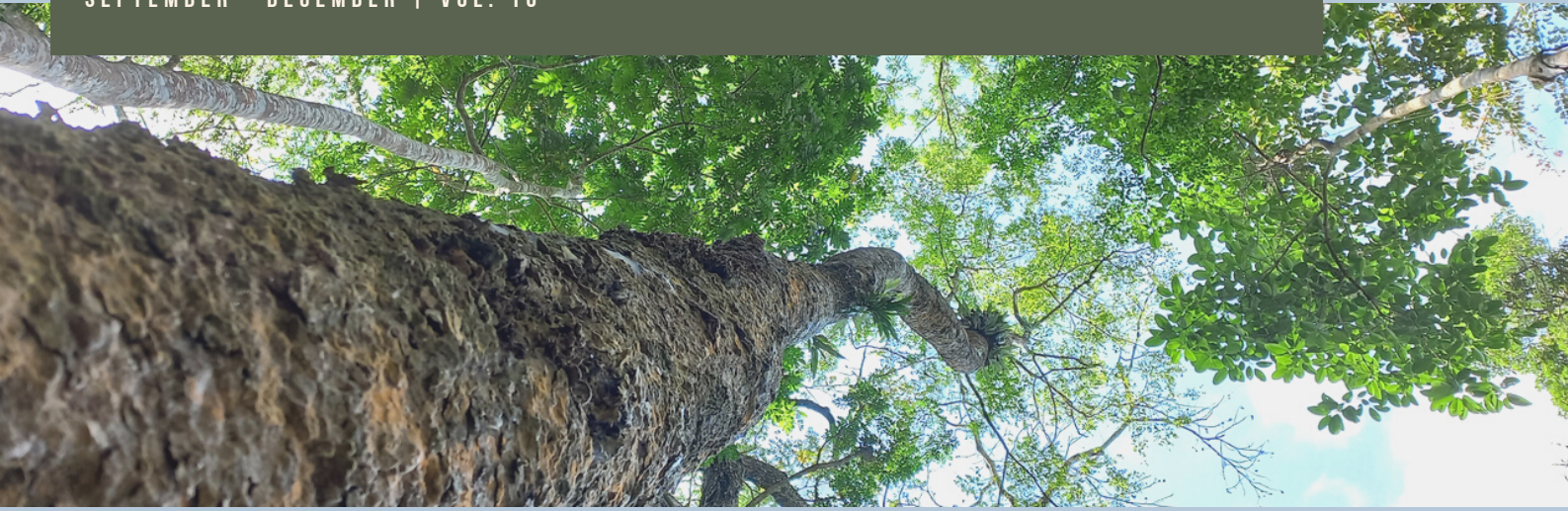
National CSOs Fair 2022 in Vientiane Capital

Between November 25 and 27, 2022, the LIWG Land Information Working Group (LIWG) participated in the 4th National CSOs Fair 2022 which was organized by the Secretariat of the Lao CSO Coordination Office (LCCO) at the Culture Hall, Vientiane Capital. This year is the 4th year and includes more than 60 social organizations participating in the event.



This time, LIWG has brought a variety of academic documents to be exhibited at the event, such as case studies, briefing notes, manuals and awareness tools related to land and natural resources issues, women's land rights, and most importantly, the 2023 legal calendar that has been successfully developed and printed. Also, there are organizations that are LIWG members participating in the event. Read more about the event at <https://bit.ly/3iXNPq6>





LIWG Core Member Meeting

On the 1st of November 2022, LIWG hold a Core Members' Meeting to update about work and activities within the network. There were 4 topics presented to the participants to be aware on Revision of the LIWG Strategy from 2023-2025, Issues of LUP and Nam Et-Phou Louey National Park in Luang-Prabang, update on Focal Group on Sustainable Land Investment/RAI, and update from the PIASVC project. During the event, the participants had a lot of opportunities to exchange regarding those topics, particularly the one related to a WCS project in Nam Et-Phou Louey National Park in Luang-Prabang (<https://bit.ly/3wmmfQVa>), which was about the land use challenges around the national park. In addition, the participants were invited to the LIWG Annual General Meeting in 2023. Information of the event will be shared in the next issue January - April. See the presentations at <https://bit.ly/3k6DbxE>

Interactive learning and sharing session between Lao CSOs and Lao staff from iNGOs on Land, Forest and Natural resources and Environment



On November 30, 2022, the LIWG Land Information Working Group held an Interactive learning and sharing session between Lao CSOs and Lao staff from iNGOs on Land, Forest and Natural resources and Environment at the Training Center of the Lao Front for National Development, Vientiane Capital.

The overall goal is to create opportunity for Lao staff from all CSOs and iNGOs to have space for interactive learning and sharing lessons learnt together as well as to help improving in communication, networking and cooperation for more effective of work outcomes. Guest speakers were from MRLG, DoL, PIASVC Project and LIFE Project for sharing their work.

Update on the PIASVC Project

PIASVC's Legal Counseling and Awareness Raising Tools and Materials Inventory

Following the 4 consultation workshops for identifying and finalizing tools and materials on legal counseling and awareness raising for PIASVC's sub-grantees which started in April 2022, all selected tools and materials from several organizations have been finalized and are now on the process on updating on the designs and revising the contents to be up to date and appropriate for using at local level.

Once all the tools and materials have been completely revised and approved by the owner organizations, they will be shared to the sub-grantees for the use of supporting tools and materials for implementing activities at their project sites.



PIASVC's Training of Trainers

LIWG and Helvetas Laos scheduled several trainings of trainers (ToTs) for representatives from the sub-grantees of the PIASVC project. There were 2 more ToTs which were delivered between September and October 2022, such as contract farming, and customary land rights. To provide those ToTs, LIWG and Helvetas Laos have worked closely with expert trainers with significant knowledge and skills, which are from LIFE project and the Legal and Development Partnership (LDP) as a training coordinator, in order to enable the participants to experience and understand those topics.

For more information about those 5 previous ToTs, please visit the list below:

-5th ToT: Contract Farming – please visit <https://bit.ly/3DLnxPE>

-6th ToT: Customary Land Rights – please visit <https://bit.ly/3iVIUFY>

In addition, there is now a process of compiling manuals and materials of all 6 ToTs, which will be combined as a set of manual and materials for each ToT. These tools will be used by the sub-grantees when implanting activities learnt from PIASVC's ToTs at the local level.



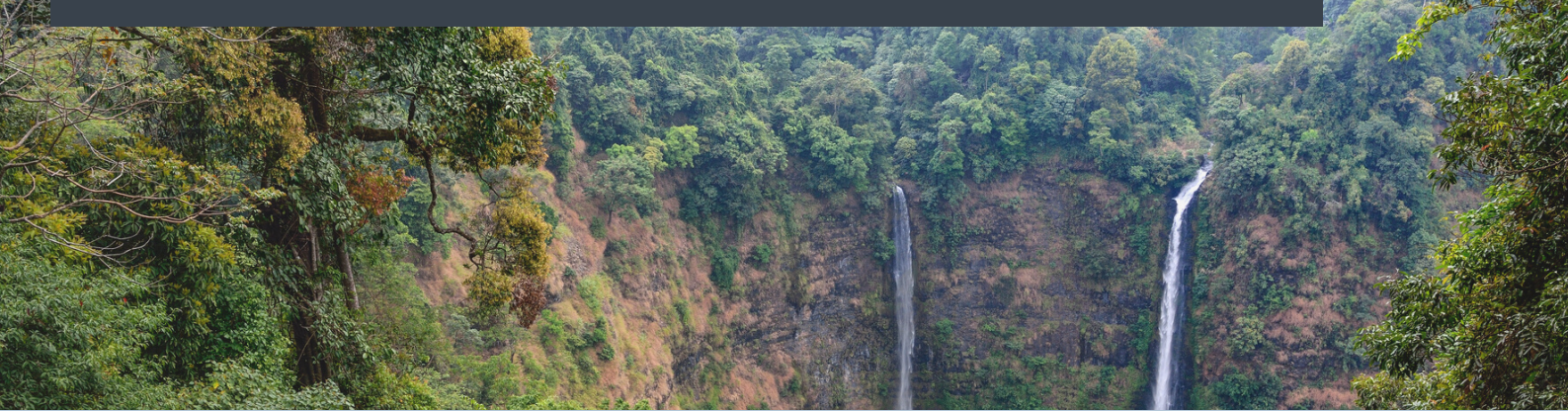
Land Sub-sector Working Group

2nd LSSWG Meeting of 2022

On October 13, 2022, the 2nd LSSWG Meeting of 2022 was held at Crowne Plaza which was co-hosted by GIZ, Helvetas Laos/LIWG and MoNRE. The three main objectives of this meeting were to updates on achievements and implementation progress from all focal groups (FG), exchange and discussion about the status of contract farming in Laos and open exchange and feedback from the members of the LSSWG on upcoming topics. Regarding this meeting, it captured that the government has high intention to modernize the land administration and expects Land Law to play a critical role in this regard.

Also, The LSSWG should serve as an exchange and coordination format to support this process. Moreover, the participants exchanged ideas and pointed a few interesting topics for next LSSWG meeting including of land valuation including a presentation of regulation on valuation and findings from a World Bank case study, engagement of youth in agriculture through rural agribusiness development, and possible Impacts of the upcoming EU Deforestation Free Products regulation on the land and agricultural sector in Lao PDR.

Additionally, the LSSWG officially acted the creation of the new Focal Group on RAI co-lead by SAEDA.



Legal Calendar 2023 Taskforce

Cross government meeting to pass legal calendar 2023



On September 27, 2023, LIWG held a meeting to pass the legal calendar 2023 draft between the calendar taskforce and the government sectors at LaoTel Hotel, in Vientiane Capital. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Anothai Chanthalasy, Deputy Land Department - Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, which was attended by various parties including social organizations, international organizations and related government sectors.

The main purpose of this meeting is to pass the draft of the legal calendar 2023 to the relevant parties representing the public sector, and report on the work of the previous legal calendar production process and introduce the topics, content and images of the calendar 2023. Also, the participants also added comments on the draft content of the calendar so that the content is more complete and easier to understand.

ToT on Legal Calendar 2023

Between 9 and 11 November 2022, LIFE Project in coordination with Land Information Working Group organized a training of trainers on the Legal Calendar 2023 on land and natural resources for LIWG core member organizations and PIASVC sub-grantees. The training was held at the training center of the Lao Front for National Development in Vientiane Capital, and it was led by the LIFE coaching team during the 3 training days. During the training, the participants learned different topics from the legal calendar 2023. After this, the participants will bring the lessons and skills learned this time to spread and distribute the legal calendar 2023 to other parties including the community in the target area of each organization.

Read more information at <https://bit.ly/3wo9PgS>

Legal Calendar 2023 Launching Event

On the 1st of December 2022, LIWG secretariat together with the Calendar Taskforce held the Launching Event of the Legal Calendar 2023 related to land, natural resources and environments, which was participated by representatives from iNGOs, CSOs, government partners and mass-media organizations.

During the event, the CTF representatives presented the overview of the calendar and its 6 topics related to land, natural resources and environments, such as:

1. Obtaining the right to use land,
2. Land title registration,
3. Management and treatment of chemicals and waste,
4. Planning for forest management and rehabilitation at the village level,
5. Equal rights of women and men to have a name on the land title, and
6. Ethics, rights and duties of the village-level Dispute Mediation Unit.

Moreover, there was a showcase calendars of previous versions from 2010 until 2023 along with other LIWG's products and tools.

Watch the video of the launching event at <https://fb.watch/ieOPByvqg4/>

See the calendar at <https://bit.ly/3i8G9gF>



Partner

Case study: A Glimpse into Women’s Customary Forest Tenure Practices in Lao PDR

Access, Use and Management Rights of Women in Customary Tenure Systems in Mai District, Phongsali Province

This case study was commissioned by the Land Information Working Group (LIWG) in partnership with the Faculty of Law at the National University of Laos and financially supported by the Mekong Region Land Governance (MRLG) Project.

The case study explores the intersect between customary tenure systems and gender roles in two villages in Phongsali district in the north of Laos. The country has a diverse population of ethnic communities who depend on forests and other natural resources for their livelihoods. These communities play an important role for conserving complex landscapes.

Read more this on our website at <https://laolandinfo.org/en/category/resource/publications/>

Blog stories

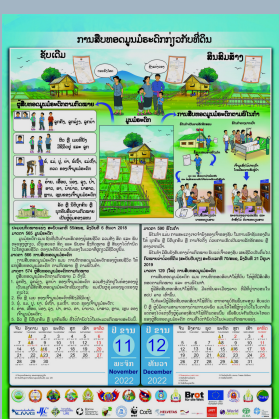
Contract Farming: Legal Calendar September – October 2022



The legal calendar for the month of September - October 2022 presents the title "agricultural contract" with the aim of showing the contract farming about cultivation, animal husbandry and fishing which must fulfill the rights and obligations to each other in order to bring about change or end. Which in the picture shows the buying and selling of a variety of products between the villagers and traders who have made a contract farming with the village administration as a certifying agent with the same content on both sides such as the type of products, quantity, price and compliance of both the buyer and the seller.

See more details at <https://bit.ly/3jOslDu>

Land Inheritance: Legal Calendar November – December 2022



The legal calendar for the month of November - December 2022 presents the topic of "Land Inheritance" as a right defined in the law, but most people still lack a proper understanding, especially land inheritance. Therefore, in this picture, the original assets and assets are shown as houses and building land, agricultural land or garden land, legal heirs and inheritance according to discipline which includes the process of making a written decision and oral decision. All steps are important for inheriting land as required by law.

See more details at <https://bit.ly/3D8UJzD>



LIWG Legal Calendar 2023 and its booklet



LIWG has officially published the Legal Calendar 2023 and the Legal Calendar 2023 Booklet on its website. The legal calendar 2023 consists of 6 different topics related to land and natural resources, gender equality and village mediation unit. The 2023 legal calendar 2022 booklet has been developed as a training guide by the calendar taskforce representing government organizations, social organizations, international organizations and academic institutions who will bring the legal calendar as an awareness raising tool in various forms to support the dissemination of information through the legal calendar effectively, a variety of topics related to the lives of the people of Laos.

See the Legal Calendar 2023 at <https://bit.ly/3FymoMO> and the booklet at <https://bit.ly/3X1vx5K>.

Recommended publications and knowledge websites

FAQs related to gender-based violence, employment and disabilities, and land and forest

Recently the frequency asked questions or FAQs, that LIWG involved in questions related to land and forest, have been approved by Ministry of Justice. There are 26 Q&As that related to three areas such as gender-based violence, employment and disabilities, and land and forest which have been uploaded on the Digital Legal Aid Platform.

Please check in the platform with links below for the details:

DLAP: <https://legal-aid.moj.gov.la/> or FAQs: <https://legal-aid.moj.gov.la/faq/>

MRLG and RECOFTC's Gender, tenure and customary practices in forest landscapes

MRLG has published a report by RECOFTC which is based on 10 research projects carried out in 18 sites in seven countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam. The studies formed the basis of ten informational briefs from the research sites published together with the report (available at <https://bit.ly/3Cm3A0o>).

Please read the report herewith the link <https://bit.ly/3WOxmmy>.

In addition, they have released a new report on the recognition of customary tenure of communities living in forested landscapes in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam. It also includes a case study from Thailand. Please read the report herewith the link <https://bit.ly/3GHaVuc>.



Agricultural investment at the crossroads in Cambodia: Towards inclusion of smallholder farmers?

The Centre for Policy Studies (CPS), Analyzing Development Issues Centre (ADIC) and MRLG are pleased to announce the publication of a new Case Study “Agricultural investment at the crossroads in Cambodia: Towards inclusion of smallholder farmers?”, together with a summary of the same study.

The research findings focus on the reasons for the farmers to engage in contract farming, contractual arrangements, technical support services, and the perceived outcomes of contract farming. It highlights the key policy and institutional implications and offers recommendations to enhance the benefits to smallholder farmers.

Please find the Case Study [here](#) and the Brief version [here](#).

Land & Climate Change #COP27

There have been created a COP27 Land & Climate Change Hub that brings together blogs focusing on land & climate change, featuring a series of blogs from Land-at-Scale partners, a blog series published in partnership with Landesa, GLTN, and the International Land Coalition, and more at <https://landportal.org/cop27>

What's in the news!

Laos-China Railway Yet to Compensate Over 1,000 Families

Recently, the Laotian Times has reported that there are more than 1,000 families displaced during the six-year construction period of the Laos-China Railway still waiting for compensation from the company.

A total of 1,018 families of 6,855 families are expecting compensation of over LAK 200 billion, or around USD 11 million, for the construction of the railway in four provinces of Vientiane, Luang Prabang, Oudomxay, Luang Namtha, and the capital of Vientiane.

Source article at <https://bit.ly/3JOISsb>.

Lao villagers reject offer for land lost to ‘Smart City’ project

Residents of a village in Laos’ Oudomxay province have rejected a government offer of compensation for their farmland, which has been leased to a Thai company to build a “Smart City” in the area, saying it is too low for them to relocate.

On Aug. 25, the Lao government signed an agreement with Bangkok-based Amata Corporation Public Company Ltd., one of Thailand's leading industrial estate developers and operators, allowing it to use 3,150 hectares (7,785 acres) of land in Na Mor district to develop a Smart and Eco City there, although portions of it are actively farmed by area inhabitants. News from Radio Free Asia at <https://bit.ly/3CljUPh>



Lao dam lawsuit failure shows need to revise cross-border deals

On 17 August, the Thai Supreme Administrative Court ruled to dismiss a lawsuit, filed by 37 Thai villagers against five Thai state agencies for their role in approving the Xayaburi hydropower dam's Power Purchase Agreement (PPA).

Filed 10 years ago, the Xayaburi lawsuit was the first community-filed lawsuit related to dam building on the Mekong River, and the first lawsuit on a transboundary project.

The lawsuit was filed against five Thai state agencies, including the National Energy Policy Council, the Thai Cabinet, and the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) for their role in approving the project's PPA.

The lawsuit asserted that the PPA is illegal under both the Thai Constitution and the 1995 Mekong Agreement. The claims were made based on the Thai agencies' failure to provide information, assess impacts (including transboundary impacts), and ensure public participation in the decision to purchase power from the dam. Read full article at <http://bit.ly/3e919Wa>.

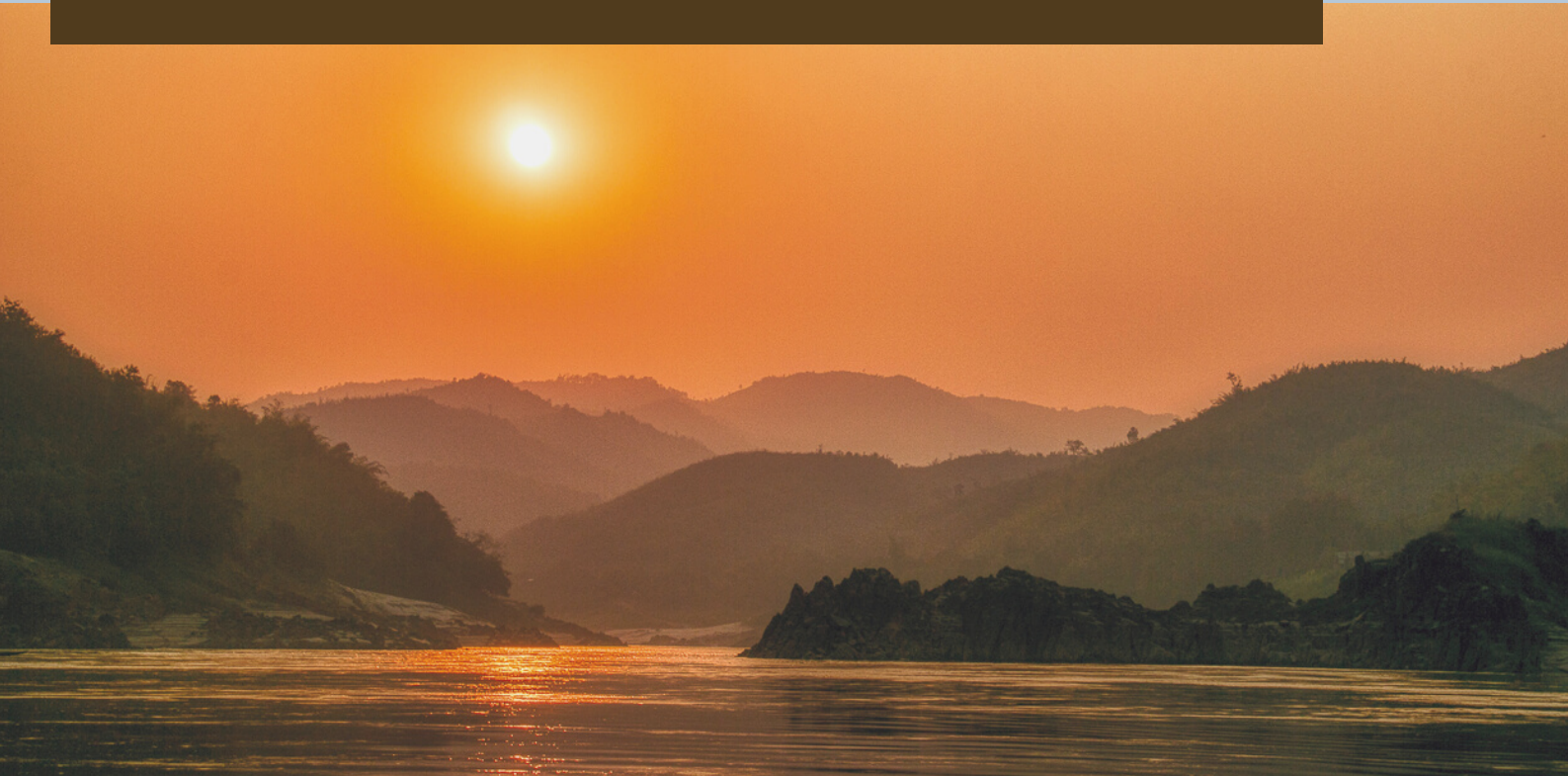
The government issued the decree on Environmental Impacts Assessment (EIA), No. 389/Gov, VTE, Dated 20 October 2022

This decree defines the principles, regulations and procedures regarding the management and monitoring of environmental impact assessment work so that such work is carried out correctly, transparently and uniformly, and aiming to prevent, reduce, correct negative effects on the environment, ensure reasonable compensation for damages, allocation of land and occupation and restore the living conditions of those affected for better, make the management and use of natural resources the most effective, guarantee the rights and benefits of the nation and the people and contribute to the implementation of the national green economic-social sustainable development plan. You can read and download this decree at <https://bit.ly/3SvkxUF>

Housing for Attapeu Dam Collapse Victims Now 99 Percent Complete

A project to build 700 homes for flood victims, valued at USD 24.5 million, began in June 2020, with funding from the dam developer, but various delays and setbacks have meant that victims have had to wait over four years for their housing, despite funds being provided to the government by the dam operator following the disaster.

Deputy Governor of Attapeu Province, Mr. Bounseut Setthilath, said in a recent provincial meeting that only 12 of the 700 houses built for flood victims remain incomplete. Read more at <https://bit.ly/41bXla8>.



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES (JANUARY – APRIL 2023)

- PIASVC Update on upcoming ToTs MoU and Sub-grantees' project implementations
- Legal Calendar 2023 Video production
- LIWG Secretariat Field work in province
- LIWG Annual Regional Meeting 2023
- LSSWG Meeting of 2023

Thank you for reading our newsletter!

