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Asian investment bank to high standards of environmental and social safeguard policies how embodied?
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    Social Security
    Policy Observation
    Asian investment bank

Compared with the beginning of preparations for the Asian investment bank overwhelming media reports, the Asian investment bank "Environmental and social security framework," and the consultation process initiated recently released seems too quiet, the domestic media and think tanks collective silence. But low-key is difficult to avoid some of the enthusiastic attention, major focus, first, the consultation process, the second is the substance, regardless of which side, it seems that is not enough to reflect the high Asian investment bank has international commitments of environmental and social safeguard policies standards.

A consultation process arrangement is difficult to reflect the importance of Asian investment bank stakeholder views

Asian investment bank on September 7 published a draft "environmental and social safeguard policies" and with stakeholders on the contents of the draft guidelines for consultation program on its official website. While this follows the international practice of public consultations on the draft policy shows the Asian investment banking practice open and transparent attitude, but not enough to accommodate the specific consultation arrangements have been criticized by some social organizations.

According to consultation arrangements, Asian investment bank in eight days of September 10 to 17 to complete the internal Beijing and Vienna than 20 consultation meetings (whether follow-up consultation, as the case may be). The draft policy compared to the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank and other multilateral development banks and amendments to the consultations usually carried out several rounds, each round lasting several months, the consultation Asian investment bank is indeed "rushed." However, to fully listen to the views and suggestions of stakeholders and carefully screening the useful suggestions to absorb into the draft, but it is difficult moves, requires working slowly and deliberately, and does not allow half-heartedly. In addition, the first consultation scheduled for September 10, from the Asian investment bank issued a consultation notice only three days. Such a short time, to register and to prepare for the consultations, has become a test of the first consultation participants. For some network equipment developed regions, stakeholders, especially communities likely to be affected can not even get timely consultation notice.

The consultations are not on-site exchange, only by way of video and / or audio of the proceedings, and the time is only two hours each meeting, the number of participants is not more than five, this technology will also be screening arrangement many grass-roots opinion and Suggest. In many regions of Asia, people do not even have Internet, video conferencing technology is not widely used; for this kind of attention like the environment and social security, it is important policies should be contending, two hours remotely difficult to achieve constructive results. Meeting in the form and strictly limited to the time and number of Asian investment bank will not make as much as possible to hear the voices from the grassroots stakeholders, but easy to leave "skimming" impression. In addition, the consultation plan, did not even appear the words civil society (social organization), only vaguely of "public and private stakeholders" covers, ignore the "third sector", it is difficult to convince the public that most Asian investment bank probably affected by the project and marginalized groups given full attention.

Consultation limited English as the only language, no translation service, which also affected communities increased the difficulty involved in discussions. In Asia, English is not the native language in most areas, it is not the majority of people are proficient and accurate expression of the language. This restriction on the consultation of language can not guarantee participants fully understand the explanation of the details of policy and security policy consultations Asian investment bank may be undertaken. It is worth mentioning that the Asian investment bank draft safeguard policies require customers (borrowers households) "for affected residents in the language and format understandable publish environmental and social risks and impacts of relevant information," while Asian investment bank is not consultation draft process to provide convenience to the stakeholders, but also gives Asian investment bank has been using double standards on human impression.

Second, the environment and the substance of the social security policy is still more than a oversight

1. Policy and Standards

The draft Security Policy "green growth," the high-level overview of the goals expressed in project operations as environmental standards, the lack of policy for key industries. The draft security policy does not cover future policy Asian investment bank focused on the area of ​​infrastructure investment, especially railways, roads, electricity, oil, cement, steel and other prominent environmental and social impact areas.

The draft project despite the international financial institutions to follow the practices of Asian investment bank investments classified management, but in the specific management tools and standards are not and international common practice, but also lower than China's current environmental protection laws and regulations. This is embodied in the cause cumulative and irreversible serious effects on the environment and social projects A, Asian investment bank is only required to provide customers with comprehensive document, but there is no clear provisions do not restrict the principle of the loan or loans. Although the draft specifically lists the Asian investment bank to provide loans to the situation not, but in addition to the arms industry, other environmental and social risks of a significant industry has not been included in the ban on loans.

2. insufficient transparency provisions

Referred to in the draft and for information disclosure and transparency regulations only require customers to disclose information, and the bank itself does not require the disclosure obligations, only the official part of the information published online customers in order to fulfill its disclosure obligations to customers "Support" . The draft only requires the customer "for information on operation of the project environmental and social risks and impacts related to disclosure," but did not mention the Asian investment bank should a project-level information, customer information and operational information disclosure complaints residents. This is a multilateral development bank in terms of the nature of the Asian investment bank, apparently lacking in institutional arrangements exist transparency.

3. The lack of liability

Many provisions of the draft on customer requirements in terms of environmental and social protection, but little about the Asian investment banking responsibilities and obligations under itself. In a few rare Asian investment bank on terms and conditions as the omission, the use of "may (may)" and other words of insufficient force, can not reflect the attitude of Asian investment bank of its own strict requirements and responsibility to play in.

4. The lack of complaints mechanisms

The draft does not provide for Asian investment bank should establish an independent complaints mechanism itself (only customer requirements), which is relatively common mechanism of international financial institutions is obvious flaws. World Bank, Asian Development Bank and other major multilateral development banks, the European Investment Bank, and some of the major countries in the world Development Bank have set up independent complaints and accountability mechanisms that the project for the bank to understand the problems and difficulties encountered in providing the way, but also for the banks to provide a platform to resolve conflicts, and establish a socially and environmentally responsible image and reputation. Initiate and build the country featuring Asian investment bank, it should not be a lack of such independent complaints mechanisms.

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