

RESEARCH NOTES

Entwicklungspotentiale in Südwestchina

Hintergründe und Auswirkungen zu Yunnans ambitioniertem Hydroenergie- und Verkehrsinfrastrukturausbau

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Summary

PR China's impressive economic growth is focusing mainly on its eastern and southern coastal regions. Yunnan province of SW-China, famous for China's highest bio-, geo- and ethnic diversity, is not benefiting neither in the economic growth nor in foreign direct investment. Regarding its per capita GDP Yunnan is even one of the poorest provinces of China. Despite these economic disadvantages the province has some major benefits. First is Yunnan, often referred as Southeast Asia's and China's watertower, developing to China's key supplier of electric energy. To sustain its impressive economic growth, PR China is aggressively developing its energy sector. Regenerative energy, mainly hydropower, plays a major role in its present and future energy sector strategy, making Yunnan due to its (physio-) geographic suitability, to the prime power supplier to China's booming coastal regions as well as to Thailand and Northern Viet Nam. This development is mainly based on controversial large hydropower projects, but unlike other global regions also on greed feeding small hydropower projects (SHPs). Yunnan's second major benefit is its geopolitical location sharing a 4,000 km long border to Myanmar, Laos and Viet Nam which makes the province to China's gateway towards Southeast Asia and India. Massive investment into Yunnan's infrastructure has to be seen also in this geopolitical context as well as in Yunnan's integration in two major subregional economic cooperation schemes, the Greater Mekong Subregion as well as the track II Kunming initiative. The article analyses the present state of Yunnan's aggressively developing hydro-power and infrastructure sector and integrates the caused rapid dynamic into a more general context. Further is a special focus given to the Chinese-Burmese relations in these two fields.

Keywords: PR China, Yunnan, SE-Asia, Regional cooperation, Hydropower, Infrastructure

1 Einleitung

Das seit Jahren kontinuierlich hohe Wirtschaftswachstum Chinas konzentriert sich primär auf die Küstenprovinzen. Die Provinz Yunnan, im Südwesten Chinas gelegen, ohne Zugang zum Meer und eine über 4.000 km lange Grenze mit Myanmar, Laos und Vietnam teilend, profitiert weder nennenswert vom Wirtschaftswachstum