
[Myanmar: threats to close off the forest against gas pipeline](#)

Rainforest extended over most of ancient Burma, but deforestation now affects two-thirds of the country's forests. The Kanchanabury Conservation Group and 11 conservation human rights groups and their allies are threatening to close off the forest to prevent the controversial Thai-Burma gas pipeline being built through it. The groups involved claim that this controversial project, undertaken by the Petroleum Authority of Thailand (PTT), has infringed the rights of locals -since no consultation has been realized- and will damage natural resources. In fact, national parks status for the section in Sai Yok National Park, through which the 260 Km pipeline will pass, was revoked last October. Two weeks later, the PTT started laying the pipeline in the area. This National Park holds a lush forest.

The activists made the threat in a bid to get the construction suspended and a new round of negotiations to be started. A petition will be presented to the Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai for the revision of a resolution, passed during the previous government, allowing construction of the pipeline. Phibhop Dhongchain, spokesperson of the NGOs, said that if no response is given they will march from Bangkok to Kanchanabury and close the forest to prevent PTT from laying the pipeline until talks are called to consider changing its route.

Sources: Oilnews Nr 18 (2/2/98); The World Guide 1997/1998.