

HOW TO WRITE AN  
**INTRODUCTION**



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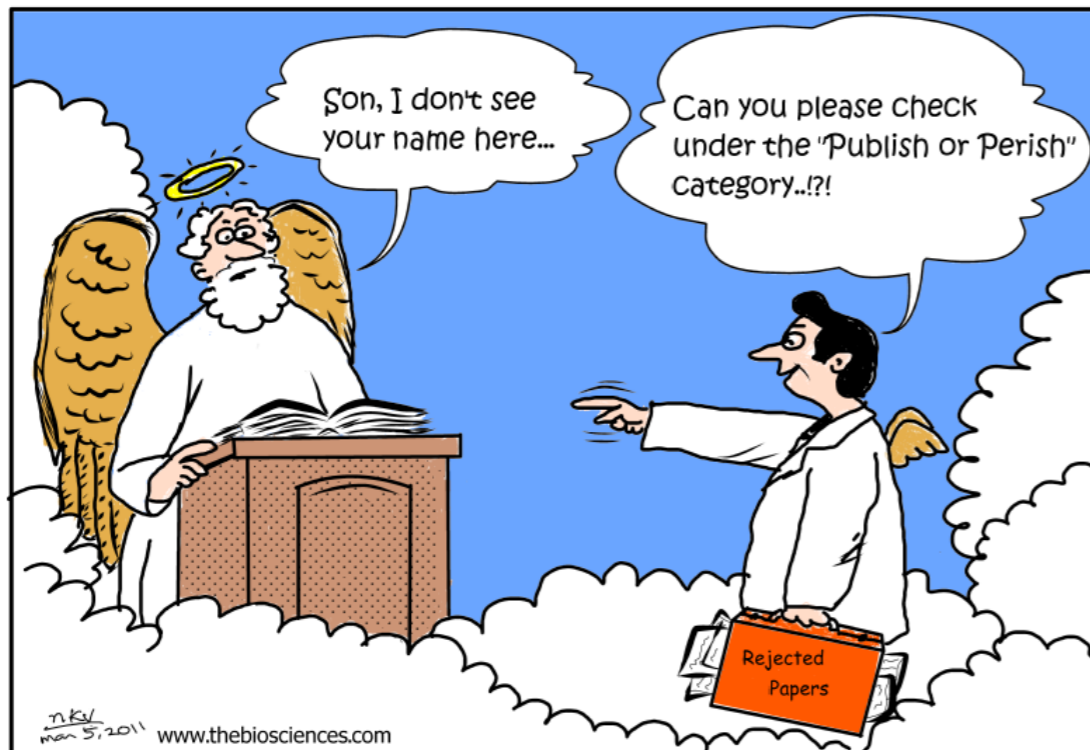
# WHAT IS AN INTRODUCTION?

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- A (conversational) bridge for readers to enter an island of your essay
- Crossing from their worlds into your world
- Determining the attitude of the readers toward the work (pragmatically and aesthetically)
- Leaving a map for the readers to explore on their own
- Often times, it is structured in a similar or related way with your conclusion, leading the readers back to their own worlds

# WHY BOTHER WRITING GOOD INTRODUCTION?

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- The most read section: shop or drop
- Acting as your own guide
- Gaining useful feedbacks
- Publish or perish

# HOW TO WRITE A STANDARD INTRODUCTION

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- State clearly the topic you studied [WHAT]
- Background of your research or setting up the scene in order to situate your topic [WHERE]
- The significance or contribution of your research [WHY]
- Your argument/ finding/ statement [WHICH]
- The structure /direction of the essay [HOW]
  - literature review, conceptualization, case studies, findings, limitations, etc

## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

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- Can play with order of introductory elements
- Be concise
- Considering your readers/audience
- Thinking about the angle of your finding; what make it different from other previous researches
- Avoid anything that's a "huge idea," generalization, vague, extreme statement or anything that don't say much

## MORE FANCY WAYS TO WRITE INTRODUCTION

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- Begin with an attention catcher
  - A hook sentence
  - Exciting information or statistic
  - An anecdote or a short story that illustrates a point
  - An important quote or dialogue
- Share author's experience and/or struggle with the issue; personal reflection

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# From Pak Mun to Xayaburi

The backwater and spillover of Thailand's hydropower politics

WHAT

This chapter/ article examines the decision making process of hydropower dam construction in the Mekong river basin. Framed by “political ecology” perspective, it seeks to unravel political contexts and strategies employed by different actors in influencing and shaping regional process of hydropower dam development.

WHERE

Many previous studies on Mekong hydropower often pay attention to the local impacts and the role of different actors involving in dam construction. However, comparative case studies highlighting the shift in decision-making process in dam construction at the regional level are still very limited.

WHY

This research aims at contributing to the such limitation by offering a comparative studies of hydropower dam in Thailand and Laos and seek to understand the political ecology surrounding the decision-making. Understanding this knowledge gap will allow better coordination among different actors and greater chances of people participation in decision-making processes.

## WHICH

In this chapter, I propose that the shift in Thailand's hydropower dam construction to its neighbouring countries has to a great extent been influenced by social and political tensions emerging as a result of incompetent and uncoordinated decision-making in the country's hydropower sector. Because of the inertia in this backwater, no effort has been made to reform the way in which decisions are made, forcing the sector to seek electricity supplies outside the country, in effect 'spilling over' its own internal shortcomings.

## HOW

Employing the two hydrological analogies of 'backwater' and 'spillover' to conceptualise and problematize hydropower development in Thailand, I look into two studied cases of Pak Mun Dam in Thailand and Xayaburi Dam in Lao PDR. The findings derived from our 15 key-informant interviews, 5 focus groups with impacted villagers as well as our field survey and participation in different levels of meeting related to the projects.

In January 1997, the street in front of Government House in Bangkok was occupied by a large crowd of villagers from along the Pak Mun River in northeastern Thailand. Mobilized under a nationwide movement called the Assembly of the Poor, the villagers' immediate goal was to submit a petition to then Prime Minister Banharn Silpa-archa demanding that his government set up an independent committee to oversee the problems arising as a result of the construction of the Pak Mun Dam, the state-of-the-art hydropower project completed in 1994 and operated since then by the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT).

### *Anecdote*

The streets of Bangkok are not the only battleground in this contest. The Mekong River also provides a space for such contestation (Molle et al., 2009). The view from Laos's capital city, Vientiane, looks directly across the Mekong into Thailand's Nong Khai Province. It was from the Nong Khai shore that, in November 2012, a flotilla of small fishing boats carrying more than 300 protesters set off to ply the Thai waters in front of Vientiane.

The two events described above – the street and river protests – focused on what were perceived to be shortcomings in dam decision-making processes, low levels of public participation in hydropower management, and the fears that the same litany of dam-related environmental and social problems would simply repeat themselves.