



Thailand

CHANDLER & THONG-EK

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Established in 1974, Chandler & Thong-ek maintains a Thai business and finance law practice advising investors, lenders and management on matters of tax, regulatory and other legal requirements. Currently, the firm represents a number of major Thai and international clients in a wide range of investment projects and financial transactions.

Chandler & Thong-ek has eight partners, 24 associates, two foreign consultants and more than 50 non-professional staff. It is the only independent Thai firm with the combination of senior international and Thai-qualified lawyers. The firm received IFLR's National Law Firm of the Year Award at the Asian Awards 2011 in March, 2011, for the eleventh year in a row.

Senior Counsel, Hunt Talmage said that the firm offers particular expertise pertaining to energy and natural resource matters, and has acted for international agencies as well as Asian governments on projects involving mineral and petroleum policies and legislation.

Mr. Talmage noted: "Energy law covers several areas in Thailand. These are energy generation, transmission and distribution as well as petroleum exploration, production, transportation and processing." He added that related or ancillary subjects include environmental matters, construction and service

contracts and, to a lesser extent, water and mining extraction, treatment, distribution and sale.

Chandler & Thong-ek has been involved in a majority of Thailand's independent power producer (IPP) and small power producer (SPP) investments since 1994 – representing investors, sponsors, lenders, EPC contractors and other service providers. Its cases have also included several major hydropower projects in Lao PDR.

The firm represents several petroleum companies in their exploration and production activities and also acts for a number of companies carrying out mineral exploration, mining and processing projects, and it is thus familiar with all stages of licensing and government approvals in these sectors.

When asked about the firm's recent work, Mr. Talmage said: "In January 2009, the Thai government approved a 15-year renewable energy plan. Since then, Chandler & Thong-ek has been assisting clients in overcoming regulatory constraints on such investments. The firm currently acts for sponsors of over 50 solar projects and eight wind projects, and it also represents lenders to several such projects."

He added: "Present challenges of wind projects include uncertainties relating to land access and tenure for project sites, rights-of-way for transmission lines and interconnection points with the Thai electricity grid – although these issues are generally of lesser concern for solar, biogas and biomass projects. Other potential issues relate to price support for renewable projects, as well as restrictions on transfers of rights under power purchase agreements."