

January 2014

Good News for Anti-Dam Activists

U.S. Pushes for Outside Oversight of World Bank, Opposes Push Forward 'Big Hydro'

By Howard Schneider in *The Washington Post*, 25 January 2014

The United States is demanding stricter oversight of World Bank projects amid concern that the Bank has slipped in how closely it guards against violence, forced resettlement and other conflict associated with the works that it funds.

In a blow to plans set by World Bank President, Jim Yong Kim, the United States recently approved an appropriation bill that orders the bank's U.S. board members to vote against any major hydroelectric project – a type of development that has been a source of local land conflicts and controversies throughout the bank's history. The measure also demands that the organization undertake "independent outside evaluation" of all of its lending.

The demand coincides with a spate of disputes between the World Bank, civil society groups and the United States over past bank-funded projects that have been linked to killings of villagers and forcing people from their land. The cases include still-unpaid reparations from a Guatemalan dam project from the 1970s in which hundreds of villagers were killed, concern about forced relocations in Ethiopia, and funding for a palm oil and food company whose operations in Honduras in recent years were the scenes of deadly fighting between workers and security guards.

The Bank has extensive procedures to guard the rights of local residents and a number of ostensibly independent review policies inside its bureaucracy. But the growing concerns led Sen. Patrick J Leahy (D-Vt), chairman of the Senate appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations, to make a broad call for stricter oversight by an outside organization. "Senator Leahy does not believe the evaluation process – the internal process – is what the institution needs to provide independent evaluation of the effectiveness of their lending", said David Carle that (Kim) needs to look outside the institution."

It is not uncommon for Congress to use the appropriation bills to attach stings or recommendations about the operations of international organizations such as the World Bank, where the United States is the largest shareholder and an influential voice on policy. The recently approved bill included \$1.55 billion for the World Bank's concessional lending arm – what a spokesman for the bank called "strong support".

But the list of amendments reflects skepticism about some of the central ideas that Kim had laid out since he was nominated to the bank's top job by President Obama two years ago. Kim has said he wants to steer the bank toward "transformational" infrastructure projects and has specifically mentioned the building of large-scale

hydroelectric dams in energy-starved parts of Africa and elsewhere to advance development and tackle climate change.

The amendments apply to all international financial institutions, including regional ones such as the Inter-American Development Bank and the African Development Bank. But the focus was on the World Bank. The U.S. vote alone would not be enough to block hydroelectric or other projects from moving forward. But the Leahy amendments recommend withholding U.S. funding for the bank unless an outside evaluation process is established.

A World Bank spokesman said that the U.S. demand was still being analyzed and that “we will work with the U.S. to understand their views.”

Source: [E-mail from Michael M Cernea](#)

A Victory Over 30 Years in Coming

Reparations for the Victims of Chixoy Dam in Guatemala

The US Senate recently passed an omnibus Appropriations Bill, with a predictably large number of provisions. The one, on page 1240, instructs the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank to support reparations for people affected by the Chixoy Dam, a victory over 30 years coming. In 1982, 444 Maya Achi people of Guatemala were massacred to make way for the Chixoy Dam, a project financed by these banks. Since then, the survivors have been fighting for reparations as a way to begin to right the injustices they still continue to live with from this project. In 2010 a landmark Reparation Plan was finally created and agreed to by affected people and the government of Guatemala – yet it still hasn't been implemented. Now, the US Congress instructed the two banks to take responsibility for their roles and "support implementation of the April 2010 Reparation Plan for Damages Suffered by the Communities Affected by the construction of the Chixoy Hydroelectric Dam in Guatemala”.

Source: [International Rivers](#)

Under Pressure from Human Rights Groups

ADB Admits Fault in Rail Project, Pledges Compensation

By Zsombar Peter in The Cambodia Daily, 3 February 2014

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has for the first time admitted to major flaws in its efforts to protect the roughly 4,000 families losing land to a \$143 million project it is funding to rehabilitate Cambodia's dilapidated railway system. On Friday, the ADB said it would work with the Cambodian government to come up with a plan within 60 days to bring the project into full compliance with its safeguard policies, meant to prevent anyone affected by its work from ending up worse off.

“While more than 90 percent of all affected households have been compensated, and more than 80 percent of households entitled to relocate have received their plots of land, ADB acknowledges that proper compensation has been an issue in some cases,” it said in a statement. Resettlement is a process, and ADB is fully cognizant that this process is not yet complete, particularly in terms of ensuring all affected households are compensated and assisted in accordance with ADB's policies. ADB also recognizes there is a need to strengthen project monitoring. Consultations with affected households should have been more frequent to ensure their views were better reflected in the resettlement process.”

Housing rights groups have been complaining for years that families losing land to the project—in some cases, all the land they owned—were not being fairly compensated and that far-off resettlement sites for evictees lacked potable water, nearby schools, and comparable job opportunities to what they were losing. In an impact assessment the ADB commissioned in 2012 and then tried to keep from the public, a noted expert on relocation said the evictees were facing a debt crisis because of the project.

The ADB and AusAID—the Australian government's foreign aid arm, which is also funding the railway project—offered piecemeal aid on top of their original plans to help the families. They disavowed responsibility for the evictees and placed responsibility on the government—officially in charge of the relocation sites—which in turn pointed the finger at the donors. Until Friday, neither donor had accepted responsibility for the difficulties the families were facing.

In its statement, the ADB admits to inadequately compensating families, failing to properly consult affected families, deficiencies with the resettlement sites, an inadequate grievance process, delays in helping evictees make a living and to weak monitoring. The Bank's about-face is the result of a recent review of the project by the ADB's compliance review panel. The Bank said it would release the panel's full report.

Source: [E-mail from Ted Downing](#)

Doing Dams Differently Can Mean Development for All

By [Jamie Skinner \(Water Team\) IIED London](#)

Development is a messy, often inequitable business. Investments and policies usually favour some people or sectors over others and the playing field of opportunity is rarely flat. Should development be just for the majority or is it possible to ensure development for all? Nowhere is this choice more visible than in the approaches governments take to resettlement and downstream impacts from large dams.

Dams transform the waterways on which they are built. They reduce floods, store water for irrigation or hydropower and stabilise downstream flows. This creates downstream opportunities for some (often farmers who want year-round irrigation) – but can spell disaster for others (such as fishers and pastoralists whose livestock graze seasonal floodplains).

These divides reflect a recurring development fault-line, across which the 'modern' can grind up against the traditional. For policymakers, these sides can represent stagnation versus progress. In many semi-arid countries this plays out as strategic choices, where more irrigation means less pastoralism, or more intensive, large-scale irrigated agribusiness ousts smallholder farms in a quest for higher yields, "modern" agriculture and national food security.

Is it not possible to have inclusive development, and not have to choose who should benefit but ensure that everyone does? This would take more time—and perhaps cost more—to achieve, but ultimately it would be less divisive and more equitable. Can you make an omelette without breaking eggs? Our work on dams in Niger suggests you can.

Backward" to "Modern: Mention dams and development in Africa and many people's minds will turn not to Niger but to Ethiopia or perhaps the Congo basin. Both have hit the news recently, the first for the geo-political implications on Egypt of the downstream impacts of its huge Renaissance dam, and the second for the sheer size of the planned Inga hydropower plant. It will be nearly twice as large as China's Three Gorges dam, with up to 42000 MW of installed capacity. Both reflect an Africa-wide push for secure energy supplies.

Ethiopia aims to become a major hydropower exporter. Another of its dams, the Gibe III under construction on the Omo River, shows that in some countries little has changed in the development paradigm. For centuries, nomadic pastoralists have grazed the semi-arid land through which the Omo flows south from the Ethiopian highlands towards Lake Turkana in Kenya. They depend on the river's seasonal floods, which create lush grasslands. Now, with the dam due to be completed in 2014, change is on its way.

The Ethiopian government plans to turn 170,000-245,000 hectares of that land over to large-scale industrial irrigation projects that will attract foreign investors. It aims to modernize and transform the local economy to promote opportunities for farmers and businesses.

Both *Survival International* and *Human Rights Watch* are concerned that Ethiopia regards the traditional livelihoods of the pastoralists as backward and uncivilized, and will 'develop' the herders, without taking their views into account or letting them participate in the decision-making process. Another 20,000 households of farmers, who grow crops on 11,000 hectares of flood recession land along the waterways, will also lose their resource base.

This government move to appropriate communal land on a large scale and its repackaging and development by particular interest groups is not unfamiliar. In Britain, the process of formally and legally enclosing the commons for the benefit of particular land owners and at the expense of "commoners" was regular practice 150-300 years ago. The argument advanced then was the same as now: only when land is clearly owned and managed will good stewardship, investment and productive exploitation result. And while Ethiopia follows that historical pathway and paradigm, which benefits certain actors over others, on the other side of Africa, Niger shows that another way is possible.

Recognizing Rights Unlike elsewhere in West Africa – where governments often legally own the land and local people have customary rights to use it – Niger has gone further over the last twenty years to enable rural people to register their traditional farmland as private property. This approach builds on community customs. It recognises their past and the way in which rural people historically settled and used land, rather than promoting a swift and sweeping transformation from 'backward' to 'modern'.

The government will compensate all 38,000 people that the Kandadji Dam will affect with a land for land swap. They will receive intensive plots on new irrigation schemes to replace traditional rice and millet fields lost to the dam reservoir. In this way, local people have a long term stake in the project.

The Howard G Buffett Foundation is supporting IIED and IUCN through the *Global Water Initiative* to work with the Niger Government and local communities to draft a new legal framework for these plots that will legally recognize farmers' rights to sell, rent, inherit or mortgage this land as part of their production or livelihood strategy through a 50 year (renewable) lease. At present farmers are not allowed to do these things on existing government schemes where they have few secure rights. But with these rights secured they will have long-term flexibility in using this key asset to develop their family's livelihoods.

This equitable development outcome arises from the confluence of two practices: first, the social cohesion of Niger and the historic national practice of seeking negotiated, rather than imposed, outcomes, and second, the application of World Bank safeguards which require "just and prior" compensation for flooded land. IIED and IUCN have worked in close consultation with local partners to identify what "just" means in the local context.

Niger's process is undoubtedly slower and more expensive than that in Ethiopia but it significantly reduces the scope for long term social conflict and impoverishment by providing development opportunities and secure assets and rights for all. The fate of the rural communities in the southern Omo, and around downstream Lake Turkana into Northern Kenya appears much less certain.

FORTHCOMING INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

UNHCR, BROOKINGS AND GERGETOWN UNIVERSITY International Consultation on Climate Change and Population Resettlement San Remo, Italy, 12-14 March 2014

Research on climate change and its likely consequences in terms of population resettlement and migration is intensifying at the international level. Three important organizations have convened an international consultation scheduled to take place on March 12-14, 2014, in San Remo, Italy, dedicated to the issues of "Planned Relocations, Natural Disasters, and Climate Change: Consolidating Good Practices and Preparing for the Future." The consultation is convened and organized by the Brookings Institution, Washinton DC, UNHCR, and the Institute for the Study of International Migration of Georgetown University, Washington DC.

The consultation will be attended by social scientists, human rights and humanitarian activists and climate change researchers. The consultation's presentations and debates are structured around six distinct themes: (a) State practice on relocation and protection; (b) Evacuation: lessons learned from past experiences; (c) Development-Forced Displacement and Resettlement (DFDR): lessons for mitigating the social impacts of climate change; (d) Vulnerabilities and planned relocations; (e) Land and relocations; (f) Planned Relocation in National Adaptation Plans to Climate Change. The consultation will be attended by participants form many countries..

The next issue of Resettlement News will publish a detailed account of the San Remo international consultation

REPORT OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Raising the Profile of Displacement/Resettlement
NZASIA Conference, Auckland, November 2013
By Felix Padel for *Resettlement News*

The issue of Displacement/Resettlement featured large at the 2013 NZASIA conference in Auckland, with a full session on each of the three days. One of the keynote speakers at the conference was Amita Baviskar, whose plenary address 'From the Forest to the City' highlighted similarities and continuities between rural and urban displacement.

Ted Downing started the sessions on 22nd November, presenting a major theoretical contribution in 'The Geometry of psycho-social-cultural dislocation', emphasizing the temporary 'dissonant cultures' brought about by displacement, that may or may not form new routine cultures. This was followed and complemented by Felix Padel's talk, 'India's activist movements for preventing ecocide and cultural genocide in an era of investment-induced displacement', showing how much displacement in India (and other countries) compounds impoverishment by erasing cultures where the traditional economy had been founded on ecological principles, which is why India is full of movements opposing more displacement, especially from tribal (adivasi) communities, who generally have the most to lose.

Most of the following presentations highlighted impacts by particular projects, starting with Susanna Price on a LNG project in West Papua Indonesia, built on patterns of traditional population mobility to reconstruct identities of the small coastal communities affected, addressing dissonant elements arising through in-migration of work seekers, loss of traditional maritime resources, intensive management and the impact of external rivalries.

The 2nd day's session presented three more case studies. Jessie Connell on another ADB-funded resettlement project, for people displaced by Cambodia's new Railway Project aimed at greater connectivity with Thailand, emphasized 'mobility as adaptation'. Lei Yinru, on climate-changed-induced displacement of about 12,000 people in Shaanxi Province, China, highlighted the importance of migration as an adaptation strategy, aided by a government resettlement programme. Arjun Patel's study of massive 'slum re-development' in Surat (Gujarat) complemented Amita Baviskar's presentation on Delhi, indicating violations of many human rights and policy norms, through projects promoted as 'Public-Private Partnerships'. Inner city housing for working class families is being cruelly neglected. Resettlement sites are very far from the centre, making transport as well as basic facilities (especially water) a nightmare for displaced families.

Urban displacement was also highlighted in the last session by Adam MacBeth. 'Redevelopment' in Phnom Penh has involved the filling in of Boeng Kak lake, with dangerous environmental impacts for the whole city, as well as forced evictions. Protest by the affected people, in which women leaders were prominent, led to a successful appeal to the World Bank's Inspection Panel, since the IDA had financed a Land

Management and Administration Project to map property rights in the neighbourhood, as part of the same overall development plan. When the Cambodian government refused to co-operate, the World Bank took the unprecedented step of suspending further loans to the Cambodia in August 2011.

Hedda Ransan Cooper's presentation examined post-disaster resettlement in the Philippines, following Typhoon Reming's devastation of Albay Province in south Luzon, 2006. 10,000 families whose homes had been destroyed by mudslides, were resettled by the Phillipines government, with NGO aid, into eight new colonies. For some, this reinforced a pattern of increased mobility through multi-tasking jobs, but communities were dispersed, and the scheme neglected livelihood options. Many farming families therefore returned to their original villages and land, rebuilding homes there without support. Implicit in the resettlement plan is a marginalization of small-scale farmers, and use of foreign funds to promote industrialization and tourism in the region.

The last paper by Jane Singer focused on two ethnic minority villages displaced in 2006 by dams in upland Vietnam. Resettlement was aided by the cultural practice of relocating villages every 10-20 years. Problems included low quality of houses constructed (often replaced by villagers making their own homes from natural materials), poor land provision and disaster risk. A second relocation for one village received no financial help from the government. Nevertheless, communities were moved intact and experienced relatively little conflict or inequality of outcomes. Indigenous construction skills and strong sense of community aided adaptation, underlying the need for integrating an understanding of indigenous skills, practices and land use in resettlement planning.

The sessions ended with a consensus about an urgent need to raise the profile for Displacement/Resettlement studies, and to draw in new experts and fresh ideas for spreading awareness about the issues, inviting a wider analysis

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Franks, Daniel 2012 [Social Impact Assessment of Resource Projects Canberra: Australian Aid](#)

This paper describes aspects of the legislative and policy framework for the assessment and management of the social impacts of resource projects in Australia. Australian state Governments have adopted varied approaches to the assessment and management of social impacts. The paper does not attempt to provide a comprehensive review of SIA policy in Australia, nor should it be used as a guide to the jurisdictional requirements. Instead the paper highlights the leading practice initiatives that have improved outcomes for the communities and social groups impacted by projects. The paper begins with an outline of the social issues associated with resource development and an explanation of SIA and its importance. A range of case studies of initiatives and policies adopted by governments in Australia are summarized..

Rich, Bruce 2013 [Foreclosing the Future: The World Bank and the Politics of Environmental Destruction](#) Washington DC: Island Press 2013

World Bank President Jim Yong Kim has vowed that his institution will fight poverty and climate change, a claim that World Bank presidents have made for two

decades. But if worldwide protests and reams of damning internal reports are any indication, too often it does just the opposite. By funding development projects and programs that warm the planet and destroy critical natural resources on which the poor depend, the Bank has been hurting the very people it claims to serve. What explains this blatant contradiction?

If anyone has the answer, it is arguably Bruce Rich—a lawyer and expert in public international finance who has for the last three decades studied the Bank’s institutional contortions, the real-world consequences of its lending, and the politics of the global environmental crisis. What emerges from the bureaucratic dust is a disturbing and gripping story of corruption, larger-than-life personalities, perverse incentives, and institutional amnesia. The World Bank is the Vatican of development finance, and its dysfunction plays out as a reflection of the political hypocrisies and failures of governance of its 188 member countries.

Foreclosing the Future shows how the Bank’s failure to address the challenges of the 21st Century has implications for everyone in an increasingly interdependent world. Rich depicts how the World Bank is a microcosm of global political and economic trends—powerful forces that threaten both environmental and social ruin. Rich shows how the Bank has reinforced these forces, undercutting the most idealistic attempts at alleviating poverty and sustaining the environment, and damaging the lives of millions. Readers will see global politics on an increasingly crowded planet as they never have before—and come to understand the changes necessary if the World Bank is ever to achieve its mission.

RESETTLEMENT News, published twice a year in January and July, reports on current operational, research and capacity building work in resettlement from around the world. The aim is to disseminate practical experience, information and ideas among those working for resettlement agencies, development research centres, and management training institutes. It is published by the **Resettlement News** Network - an informal network of individuals with a concern for the fate of people who are forced to relocate due to development projects.

The submission of material relating to any aspect of development-induced resettlement is welcomed, and should be addressed to the Editor:

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