DOWNLOAD PDF EMPTY PROMISES: THE ELUSIVE BENEFITS OF LARGE DAMS

Chapter 1 : The road to Dawei is paved with empty promises | Mekong Eye

The book Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams, The Technical Failures of Large Dams 5. Empty Promises: The Elusive Benefits of Large Dams 6.

The river was tamed for navigation and flooding has been controlled. Rural farms got electric power for the first time and at rates far less than the national average. Irrigation has made farming possible in the arid Columbia Basin. Columbia River power was crucial to the war effort and the resulting industries have been an asset to the economy of the region. Hydroelectric power is the largest source of renewable electricity in the world, and the Pacific Northwest obtains two-thirds of its electricity from hydroelectric dams. Hydro plants are the least expensive source of electricity with typical production costs less than a third that of coal or nuclear. In addition, hydroelectric power does not pollute the environment in the way that unsustainable fossil and nuclear power can [1]. With hindsight, we now can see the unintended negative impacts of the large dams on the culture and environment of the Columbia river. Many people today mourn the loss of the free flowing river and the wild salmon runs, which were central to Native American culture along the Columbia. Evidence of the struggle over restoration of salmon and the future fate of some of the dams is seen daily in newspaper headlines. Some might argue that if Woody Guthrie were alive today and writing songs of social protest, he would be among those calling for the removal of the dams. When Woody Guthrie toured the Columbia in May of seeking inspiration from the river, and the people building the dams upon it, he also stopped to talk to the Indians at CeliloFalls. It was at the time of the spring Chinook run, and Woody watched as the Indians standing on wooden platforms used long handled dipnets and spears to harvest the teaming numbers of salmon. For generations, Celilo Falls had been an important gathering place for Native Americans from all over the Northwest. For the local tribes of Wasco, Wichrams, and Wyams, the Salmon fishery at Celilo Falls provided sustenance and enabled them to barter for beadwork, furs, and other necessities. Celilo Falls was a sacred site where celebrations and ceremonial activities connected to the journey of the salmon would take place for days and sometimes weeks at a time [2]. The building of the Dalles dam was proposed at the site of Celilo Falls in The Celilo Falls Indians and the Bureau of Indian Affairs testified against the building of the dam, arguing that doing so would take away their livelihood and was a violation of promises made in the treaties. The protests went unheeded. The Indians were paid In with a crowd of onlookers, the roaring Celilo Falls were submerged as the dam backed up the river, turning it into Celilo Lake [4]. Celilo Falls was the last of the Indian dip-netting sites to be destroyed. The building of Bonneville dam had drowned the 6-mile stretch previously known as "The Cascades of the Columbia" [5]. The disruption of Native American salmon fishing sites dealt a huge blow to the stability of these cultures. In some cases, the government did not follow through on relocation assistance and the building of replacement housing [7]. By their own accounts, before , the Northwest tribes typically harvested 5 million Columbia River salmon in a year. By the mid-nineties, the number had shrunk to 30, Beyond the numbers, there is a deep, collective sense of loss among native people whose spiritual beliefs and cultural identities remain tied to the salmon. The salmon evolved to become an essential part of a complex ecosystem dependent upon the nutrients and energy that the fish brought back with them from the sea. Ironically, the Army Corps of Engineers defended the building of the Dalles dam as a conservation measure that would prevent over fishing by the Indians. In fact, over- fishing, primarily by commercial and sports fishers has been a factor in salmon decline [9]. There are many other elements contributing to the falling number of salmon. Pollution from residential and industry sources affect water quality. Farming in the Columbia Plateau brought erosion and consequent clogging of streams with sediment. Fertilizers and pesticides from agricultural runoff pollute the river. The raising of livestock near rivers has been destructive to riparian habitats. Deforestation has increased soil erosion, blocked streams and elevated water temperatures. Unpredictable ocean conditions such as El Nino events have also been harmful to salmon [10]. But, as Kahn also acknowledged, the salmon are "not going through so well now though. There are more

than dams in the entire Columbia Basin. At one foot each, this would be comparable to scaling a skyscraper [11]. Another problem with fish ladders is that salmon are naturally more attracted to the strong currents of the power house outlets or the spillway than the slack water typical of the entrances of most fish ladders. Migrating salmon only have so much stored fat and energy in their bodies to sustain them on their journey and time wasted getting around dams puts them at jeopardy of starving to death before reaching their native stream to spawn [12]. Big dams like Grand Coulee are simply too high to allow fish ladders. Seventy percent of Columbia Basin river and stream miles which had been salmon habitat are now blocked by dams which prevent the migration of adult coho, chinook, and sockeye salmon from the ocean to their upstream spawning grounds [13]. The Columbia is a complex system of reservoirs carefully controlled to release and contain water at a rate consistent with electricity demands. Salmon depend upon the high water of the spring and summer months to ease their migration upstream to spawn. The high water is also crucial for young salmon that need a strong current in order to be flushed safely out to the ocean. Conversely, our greatest energy demands occur in winter to provide heat and light. The engineers who control the dams store water in reservoirs during the summer, releasing it during fall and winter months to meet peak energy demands. This causes water levels to be low during the summer months when salmon need strong currents. While measures are being taken to correct this problem, basically, human needs are at odds with the needs of the salmon [14]. When a dam blocks a river, the river habitat changes to a lake habitat. In the still, deep pools formed by dams, water becomes stratified, with warm water on top and cold water on the bottom. The cold water looses oxygen and becomes uninhabitable for salmon [15]. The slack water of dam reservoirs is also ideal habitat for predatory fish like the northern pikeminnows, which prey on juvenile salmon [16]. Dams present several other problems for smolt young salmon in their migration to the sea. In order to get through dams, smolts must pass through turbines, the blades of which may chew them up. Some dams have had new kinds of turbines installed that are more fish friendly. To avoid damage to fish by spinning turbine blades, other dams spill water and young salmon over the top of the dam. Since then, other groups have petitioned to add several species of salmon and steelhead to the list [18]. Efforts by fishery agencies at mitigating the loss of salmon runs has focused on the following areas: Restoration of rivers and streams previously damaged by habitat destruction. Barging smolts downstream to save them the trauma of going over or through dams. Regulating and allocating the fish catch among various fishing interests In the past twenty years, even hatchery supplemented salmon runs have been declining sharply. Some studies that suggest that hatchery fish actually harm wild runs because they introduce diseases, compete for food, and are genetically inferior. Wild salmon are genetically coded from thousands of years of evolution to know how to find their spawning site. They also seem to have a superior ability to make the adaptations necessary for the transition from fresh to saltwater and back again. Some feel that hybridization will spell the end for truly wild salmon runs [20]. Today, nine out of ten migrating juvenile Columbia River salmon were born in a fish hatchery, not a stream [21]. Some are calling for the partial removal of several dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers. They believe that these modifications would provide salmon the colder, cleaner, free flowing water that they need for survival [22]. Endangered Salmon and the People of the Pacific Northwest. The Remaking of the Columbia River. The Great Columbia River. Simon and Schuster, Dietrich,

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Chapter 2 : Silenced Rivers : Patrick McCully :

Excerpted from Chapter 5 of Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams by Patrick McCully Empty Promises: The Elusive Benefits of Large Dams For every claim to virtue made by the proponents of big dams there is a clear-cut.

Tue, Aug 21 Could the Kerala floods have been prevented? As the water recedes in Kerala this question will, and should, surface. Back in , a combination of heavy rain and a breached dam triggered deadly floods that claimed 1, lives. In , history may have repeated itself. Under relentless downpours, poor dam management may have aggravated the floods, raising questions about the role of dams in Kerala and other states. India is home to more than 5, large dams over 15 metre high , the third largest number in the world, behind the US and China. While only a handful of these dams 28 are built explicitly for flood control, in theory, they all have the properties to minimize flood damage. Dams can manage rivers, storing their water, adjusting flows and redirecting channels. Click here for enlarge Kerala is home to 53 large dams with a collective capacity of nearly 7 trillion litres. As rain poured and rivers overflowed, these dams should have served as a bulwark. James Wilson, an officer with the Kerala state water agency, estimated that the Idukki and Idamalayar dams the two biggest together have stored Click here for enlarge But for dams to truly tame floods, experts say dam reservoirs need to be relatively empty before the onset of rains. The Idukki dam was already near full capacity by July-end even as rains were relatively weak below normal levels during that period. When the downpours arrived in August, the near full-capacity Idukki was forced to release water into already flooded areas. For both entities, the amount of water to store is motivated by demand for electricity and irrigation, rather than flood control measures. These floods also raise another recurring, unresolved issue in Indian dam operations: Like many dams in India, the Mullaperiyar is located in one state Kerala , but operated by another Tamil Nadu. Beyond dam mismanagement, some environmentalists are pointing to other man-made issues, such as urban development and quarrying. In Kerala, much of which sits on the Western Ghats, development activity can increase the chances of landslidesâ€”the biggest source of fatalities in floods. The Western Ghats ecology expert panel the Madhav Gadgil Committee report had labelled areas of the state as extremely ecologically-sensitive where no developmental activities should take place. According to Gadgil, unchecked quarrying and construction in these areas caused these floods.

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Chapter 3 : Silenced Rivers

Bibliography Includes bibliographical references and index. Contents. The power and the water-- rivers no more - the environmental effects of dams-- temples of doom - the human consequences of dams-- when things fall apart - the technical failures of large dams-- empty promises - the elusive benefits of large dams-- paradise lost - dams and irrigation-- the wise use of watersheds-- energy.

This is why for centuries rivers have been the very cornerstone and foundation of civilization, bringing precious drinking water and sustaining the life of millions along its banks. Today as communities have expanded away from fresh water sources structures that store, transport and utilize vast amounts of water or dams are believed to have become vital for survival. With the growing urban population in India, approximately 1. As a result, today the uses of rivers and dams have extended to include hydropower generation. Recently, the massive power grid failure in July , reportedly the largest blackout affecting nearly million people, or twice the population of America, clearly illustrated India is struggling to effectively meet its demand. In this power crunch the potential of hydropower seems like the glimmering light of hope providing the promise of not only clean energy but also employment and development. Hydropower Development The Upper Ganga basin in Uttarakhand, India has become an attractive site for these projects with estimated hydropower potential to be nearly 20, MW. The fresh air, the pure water, the chilling snow, the spellbinding mountains, the scenic beauty, the small villages, the simpler people and a tougher lifestyle is what that distinguishes Uttarakhand from rest of the worldâ€¦ The State is truly a treasure house â€¦and is an ideal location for eco-tourism, as well as wildlife tourism. Although the cultural and spiritual history of the state is as old as India itself, its identity as an independent state is new, formed only in year after the bifurcation of Uttar Pradesh. The separation promoted its upward growth it also brought upon increased pressure to develop itself in the same way as its neighboring states as an industrial capital. Therefore, the promise of development to bring more employment and better paying jobs brings with it the hope to be more like the rest of the nation and the rest of the world. To what extent are the promises of energy, development and employment really being meet by hydropower projects on the Upper Ganga River Basin and are these dams a ban or are they a boon to India? Let us use this simple equation to help us answer this question: The State plans to expand its hydropower production capacity to become self-reliant and a net exporter of surplus power. In terms of energy production Uttarakhand is currently a net importer of power, generating a seasonal surplus of power. It has witnessed a sharp increase in energy demand, growing more than five times, in the last eight years; only 52 percent of its power is met from its natural resources. Hence, there is a misconception that energy produced from dams in the Upper Ganga Region actually benefits the rural population of Uttarakhand, much of the energy actually gets sold to meet the needs of major northern cities like Delhi while people of the mountains are left without electricity. Harsh weather conditions Scattered households Low population density Therefore a system that has worked in the plain regions in India will not necessarily be the power solution for this state. After upgradation, they hold the potential of providing 5 KW of electricity which cannot just light the neighbouring areas; but can also be sued for some productive applications like milling, drying and thrashing of grains or for fibre- processing activities like spinning, dyeing, drying, etc. In this way they can be a significant source of cheap power for the rural population. However, the cooking and water heating requirements can be met through solar cookers and solar water heaters. In fact, there is plenty of solar and wind potential that can be tapped in the state to meet its energy needs. Pine needles, although being used for cooking purposes occasionally, are not a favoured fuel due to the release of nitrogenous compounds during combustion. However, a new process to utilize the pine needles, while avoiding the nitrogenous emissions, has been developed i. As mentioned before, although unemployment rates are low in this state nearly half of the state still exists below the poverty line, with low wages and income. So, what kind of development is promised by hydropower projects and who do they really benefit? And at what cost? Significant and irreversible social

cultural costs. The rich radioactive sediments and minerals that give the water this quality are significantly reduced thereby preventing downstream plains and farms of fertile and nourishing soil. Drying of streams also leads to no water for drinking for locals, loss of grazing and agricultural land, dried water sources, uncontrolled heavy blasting for tunnelling, road building and power houses are seen besides de-forestation and unchecked dumping of muck in the river bed at all construction sites which go onto further destroy the once fertile land. While the projects provide energy and employment to those outside of the state and negatively impact not only the land in which they are built but also the local and indigenous people who are often displaced from the homes of their ancestorsâ€"permanently depriving future generation to their national, cultural and spiritual heritage. Additionally, thefaith of billions connected to the River Ganga, which is not merely a river but is a spiritual entity and a divine mother to them leave people with no place in which they may perform their daily oblations and prayers. While mitigation plans are proposed and promised to the locals they are often left with empty promises. Additional the risks of dams in this region include: So while dams maybe a solution in most parts of the world in the Upper Ganga River Basin the trend begins to appear like this: Heeding the warning of environmentalists, scholars, saints and the precedence set in Indian Government Agreement under British rule , as demanded by Madan Mohan Malaviya, Kings of Bharat, the four Shankaracharyas and the general public, that there will be no hindrance to the flow of Ganga and on the 20th April , granted by the Chief Secretary of the United Provinces, ICS Burns passed order No. As well as the more recent scrapping of the Lohari Nag Pala project and the declaration of the Bhagirathi River as an Eco-Sensitive Zone, whereby all projects over 25 MW are strictly prohibited. A thorough costs benefits analysis must be undertaken for each project over 25 MW. The following international recommendations by the World Commission on Dams WCD can be taken under consideration by relevant stakeholders. For the dams already built: Reinvestment in maximizing and optimizing energy output by existing dams. Ensuring that the 6 month checking and reporting process by the EIA is monitored and undertaken. The ecological flows that are necessary to the river are maintained. If a minimum of cumecs aquatic ecology is released in a ft wide river bed than the 2 cumecs water is less than a foot that is lost on the boulders, which is witnessed downstream of the Maneri Dam. Permanent cessation of all proposed projects, abandonment of all projects under constructed. All scrapped projects should be brought to an appropriate closure and the already done construction work should be sealed in to restore the ecology of the area. The tunnels and construction can be used for improving road connectivity such as was recommended for Lohari Nag Pala. For all new dams: The process of Environmental Impact Assessment EIA must be undertaken by an independent authority prior to the project. The Public Consultation and Public Hearing process must be done with clarity, being sure to involve and provide accurate data and information to all local stakeholders. The clauses of Environmental Clearances must be maintained and upheld by the involved stakeholders For example the Uttarakhand Environmental Clearance and No Objection certificate of the Maneri Bali states in: Clause 8 that implementation of project shall not adversely affect the forest, flora and fauna and human beings in that area when this is inadvertently the biggest risk and cost of these projects. Clause 14 states that complete details of projects must be published in newspapers and redressal of public observations must be ensured. It also states that Informational Centre should be set-up to inform all the local stakeholders. There are countless recorded testimonials that these centres were either not set-up or Gram Panchayats and their heads had often no idea that projects were being started until after the construction had begun. The certificate also states that village temples and monuments of cultural religious and historical archaeological importance shall not suffer any impact. The Ganga itself is a cultural, spiritual and natural templeâ€¦what about the impact and the rights of the billions that worship Her waters as the Divine Goddess? Create a dedicated panel of river experts and decision makers, such as the NGRBA, as a full time autonomous body, serving to protect the national river its sanctity and course in the web of life. Demarcation of the protected Ganga basin, i. Local representative group of men and women should be set-up to help do the monitoring and assessment of all projects on the ground level. Some other preventative measures that can be implemented are as below: Supporting the new state of

Uttarakhand and providing it with incentives to promote its green and sustainable development as a model to the world, which would be beneficial to downstream Ganga states and to the rest of the world. Implementing and reducing energy demands by effective demand-side management policies as well as improving its infrastructure to cut power transmission losses Rigorous energy conservation and water literacy education throughout the nation and city planning that is synergistically focused on demand side management and promotion of renewable energy that is safe and sustainable. Credits for reducing carbon footprints and water footprints should percolate directly to State governments and Urban Local Bodies. We believe that although the Center has done a great job with subsidizing alternative energy sources and creating a dynamic and resilient energy plan, the Center should also recognize and give incentives to green States who are committed to greening and developing in a sustainable and planned manner. Putting in place a model and measure of development that is truly holistic and inclusive of all, including the indigenous folks of Uttarakhand, not just GNP and GDP but factors such as Global Happiness Index and Global Environmental Index that can be added to better assess the well being and sustainable lifestyles of the people. A crucial balance must be found between development i. For if Ganga thrives, India thrives. If Ganga dies than India dies.

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Chapter 4 : IMF/World Bank: the facts | New Internationalist

A study which explains the history and politics of dam building worldwide and shows why large dams have become so controversial. The ecological and human impacts of large dams are detailed along with.

Large Dams in South Asia Taming the water: Large Dams in South Asia 8. Resettlement and rehabilitation in India: Impoverishment or social justice? Irrigation Projects and Impoverishment: Retrofit economic rehabilitation using impoverishment risks analysis: Resettlement in the upper Indravati Project: Poverty Risks in Power Projects: Marginalization of project-affected people: Preventing impoverishment from displacement: Impoverishing effects of coal mining projects: Policy and Capacity-Building Initiatives: Developing institutional capacity for resettlement and rehabilitation training: Good intentions or policies are not enough: The national draft policy for rehabilitation: Draft national policy for rehabilitation of persons displaced as a consequence of acquisition of land. The World Bank policy on resettlement. A particularly contentious aspect of this debate is the direct negative impact on people of large-scale development projects. However, both sides of the divide are united by a concern for the fate of people who are forced to relocate, leaving behind forever their homes, lands and communities. It presents evidence of impoverishment, seeks its causes and suggests ways to reduce the risks of impoverishment. Case studies from different parts of India examine the risks of impoverishment associated with resettlement resulting from a variety of projects such as irrigation, hydropower, mining, and thermal power. The power and the water. When things fall apart: The wise use of watersheds. Industry applies, man conforms: We will not move: The wide-ranging ecological impacts of dams, and the human consequences of these impacts, are explained in detail. The arguments of dam proponents are explained and it is shown how the benefits claimed for dams invariably fail to appear. Singh, Satyajit , From the Dam to the Ghettoes, in: Economic and Political Weekly, Bombay, Singh, Satyajit , Taming the Waters: The Politics behind the Destruction, in: Baviskar, Amita , In the Belly of the River: A Case Study from Gujarat; in: June , 31 pp. The NGO movements in the Narmada valley: Rehabilitation in the Narmada valley: Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Resettlement and rehabilitation in Gujarat: Centre for Social Studies, Surat. Displacement and resettlement in Madhya Pradesh: Besides being important in its own right, this investigation also has much relevance as a case study of the general problems involved in development-induced displacement. It will be of interest to environmentalists, activists, policy-makers and anyone interested in environment and development-related issues. Kalpavriksh , The Narmada Valley Project: A Critique, Ajanta Publications: Kothari, Ashish and Rahul N. Development or Destruction, in: Economic and Political Weekly, July

Chapter 5 : Roll On Columbia the Documentary

Taming the water: Large Dams in South Asia. General Literatur, Collections Empty promises: the elusive benefits of large dams. 6. Paradise lost: dams and.

And the people cheered. Roughly people attended the first formal hearing on the Snake dams Thursday. Another attended the night session, many dressed in red to show solidarity against dams. Two men testified dressed like Lewis and Clark, and at least two people wore large fish costumes. Save Our Wild Salmon paraded through the conference center with large blue signs bearing some of the 96, signatures they have from people across the country who want the dams down. Doors open at noon, and public testimony on the Snake dams, the John Day drawdown study and other federal river documents will be taken from 3 to 5 p. Will Stelle, regional administrator for the National Marine Fisheries Service, said Thursday that federal agencies still have not determined what to do with the dams, a decision that ultimately is up to Congress. While several people spoke in defense of the dams, the majority here want the dams out. They believe a more naturally flowing Snake River will help rebuild fish runs, create more fishing jobs in coastal towns, allow for more angling and meet treaty obligations with Northwest tribes. This is not an economic choice," he said. Martin agreed on both accounts, science and morals. Clinton administration shows such lack of vision, courage and integrity. About of them gathered with several dozen shiny aluminum boats in the parking lot of a marine supply store to remind viewers that their hobby should count for something in the great federal salmon scales. Anglers wore their hearts on their placards. The gathering was much less intense than a similar rally in Yakima by farmers and builders last week. But the message was just as clear - 10 years after the first Snake River salmon stocks gained federal protection, the government has failed to create a comprehensive recovery plan. Anglers say they have shouldered the worst of the conservation plans to date as their fishing seasons were cut back or dropped altogether. After the rally, anglers formed their boats into a conga line reminiscent of logging trucks during the spotted owl wars and drove toward the hearing while slowing traffic on a major road. Columbia River tribes also testified in force. And Don Sampson, with the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, reiterated what tribes have been saying often lately, that they are willing to go to court to force the Clinton administration to take decisive steps to save salmon. Patrick Reiten with the Pacific Northwest Generating Cooperative in Portland, however, tried to steer the discussion toward technological upgrades such as dam bypass systems and turbine screens that have made the river significantly safer for fish since the dams were built in the s and s. Others stressed jobs, farm product transportation, cheap electricity and other benefits of the dams.

Chapter 6 : Saving Iceland Â» Alcoa in Greenland: Empty Promises?

Entirely updated in the light of the recent World Commission on Dams Report, and responding to it, this new edition of McCully's classic study shows why large dams have become such a controversial technology in both industrialized and developing countries.

Large Dams in South Asia 8. Resettlement and rehabilitation in India: Impoverishment or social justice? Irrigation Projects and Impoverishment: Retrofit economic rehabilitation using impoverishment risks analysis: Resettlement in the upper Indravati Project: Poverty Risks in Power Projects: Marginalization of project-affected people: Preventing impoverishment from displacement: Impoverishing effects of coal mining projects: Policy and Capacity-Building Initiatives: Developing institutional capacity for resettlement and rehabilitation training: Good intentions or policies are not enough: The national draft policy for rehabilitation: Draft national policy for rehabilitation of persons displaced as a consequence of acquisition of land. The World Bank policy on resettlement. A particularly contentious aspect of this debate is the direct negative impact on people of large-scale development projects. However, both sides of the divide are united by a concern for the fate of people who are forced to relocate, leaving behind forever their homes, lands and communities. It presents evidence of impoverishment, seeks its causes and suggests ways to reduce the risks of impoverishment. Case studies from different parts of India examine the risks of impoverishment associated with resettlement resulting from a variety of projects such as irrigation, hydropower, mining, and thermal power. The power and the water. When things fall apart: The wise use of watersheds. Industry applies, man conforms: We will not move: The wide-ranging ecological impacts of dams, and the human consequences of these impacts, are explained in detail. The arguments of dam proponents are explained and it is shown how the benefits claimed for dams invariably fail to appear. Singh, Satyajit , From the Dam to the Ghettoes, in: Economic and Political Weekly, Bombay, Singh, Satyajit , Taming the Waters: The Politics behind the Destruction, in: Baviskar, Amita , In the Belly of the River: A Case Study from Gujarat; in: June , 31 pp. The NGO movements in the Narmada valley: Rehabilitation in the Narmada valley: Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Resettlement and rehabilitation in Gujarat: Centre for Social Studies, Surat. Displacement and resettlement in Madhya Pradesh: Besides being important in its own right, this investigation also has much relevance as a case study of the general problems involved in development-induced displacement. It will be of interest to environmentalists, activists, policy-makers and anyone interested in environment and development-related issues. Kalpavriksh , The Narmada Valley Project: A Critique, Ajanta Publications: Kothari, Ashish and Rahul N. Development or Destruction, in: Economic and Political Weekly, July

Chapter 7 : Silenced rivers : the ecology and politics of large dams in SearchWorks catalog

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In , Suu Kyi visited Thailand on her first trip outside of Burma in 24 years. She met with Burmese migrant workers in Mahachai, Samut Sakhon province, which has the largest migrant community in Thailand. They hope that discussions during her upcoming visit will ultimately result in better protection of their rights and improvements in their legal standing. The project was initiated by the Italian-Thai Development Company, which was granted a concession to implement the first phase of the project in August Have they been tempted by the high levels of projected benefits? Are they willing to simply overlook the high cost of social and environmental impacts, many of which have already occurred on the project site and will continue to intensify if it moves forward? The Dawai SEZ covers There are predictable winners and losers in the game of industrial development. According to one report undertaken by civil society groups in Thailand, the main groups who profited from the Map Ta Phut Industrial Estate were large corporations, both foreign and Thai owned. Small-scale local businesses do not have enough capital or technological expertise to invest in petrochemical industries. Other groups that benefit include politicians, senior officials, and related businesses such as construction and transportation. Meanwhile, small local businesses, ranging from tourist resorts to grocery stores, have been adversely affected by the industrial development. The pollution from the construction of roads and ports has permanently destroyed the coastline and the once popular beaches of Rayong. Furthermore, most local residents were sidelined from employment opportunities as they do not possess the necessary skills required to work in high-tech factories. Only a few people have been hired as housekeepers, gardeners or drivers. Local residents in Map Ta Phut have also suffered from the loss of agricultural areas, fisheries and gardens, and are no longer able to be self-reliant. This same scenario is currently unfolding in Dawei. In Map Ta Phut, the traditional sources of water such as rainwater, canals and shallow water wells, have been contaminated with toxins from the atmosphere, and from polluted wastewater entering the ground. Moreover, the pollution and environmental changes have caused serious health problems. In addition, Rayong has the highest national rate of many different types of cancer. Proponents of large industrial projects tend to emphasize the benefits of job creation. However, the situation in Map Ta Phut has shown that the traditional way of life and culture has been significantly impacted by the large number of migrant workers moving into the area. Moreover, according to the Chamber of Commerce in Rayong, the gap between the rich and poor has become significantly wider. Although the initial phase of the Dawei SEZ project has just started, the local people have stated the project has already destroyed the economic backbone of their communities. A report undertaken by the Dawei Development Association DDA , which was also submitted to the National Human Rights Commission NHRC of Thailand, estimated that 20 to 36 villages comprising approximately 4, to 7, households or 22, to 43, people would be directly affected by the construction of the Dawei SEZ and related projects, including the industrial estate, ports, road links, reservoirs and resettlement areas. And 71 percent of affected households expect to lose all or some of their land to the Dawei SEZ. The investigation by the NHRC has also pointed out that the Dawei SEZ Project has already caused negative impacts to local communities, especially with regard to the lack of transparency and inconsistent standards. Local people have been subjected to land appropriations and loss of their livelihoods and incomes without prior notification. Moreover, the local groups have voiced their concerns on numerous occasions to the relevant authorities and the company. No response has been forthcoming and their problems remain unresolved. The time has come for the newly elected democratic government of Burma to pause and carefully examine the Dawei SEZ Project to ensure that its decision will best represent all of the people who placed power in its hands.

Chapter 8 : Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams: Patrick McCully | NHBS Book Shop

Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams by Patrick McCully (, Paperback, Revised, Enlarged).

Restoring the Lower Snake River Crosscut: Play me an old-fashioned melody News analysis: But here we go again. By Daniel Jack Chasan January 27, Will the fifth time be the charm? The federal government has just come out with a new biological opinion BiOp on how to conduct the operations of its Columbia River system dams. And for all that time, the federal courts have been slapping them down. The newest version was unveiled on January It looks remarkably similar to the last one, which was prepared by the administration of George W. Bush and repackaged with little substantive change by Obama officials. If history provides a guide, this new BiOp will soon be the target of litigation by conservation groups and it, too, will eventually be tossed out by the courts. The feds have basically tried to preserve business as usual. Through two decades of court losses, they have largely managed to do so. How did we get here? The background may be somewhat familiar, but worth recalling in what has become a court fight with a life cycle as predictable as that of the salmon. The Columbia River system drains a quarter-million square miles, an area roughly as large as France. The Columbia itself rises in British Columbia, 1, river miles from the Pacific, and is joined at the Tri Cities by its largest tributary, the Snake, which rises in Wyoming. For millennia, the Columbia was the greatest chinook salmon river in the world. Up to 15 million wild salmon of all species made their way up the river to spawn. Tribes all along the river caught, dried and ate the salmon. Because it drops so far roughly half a vertical mile on its journey from the mountains to the sea, the Columbia has more hydroelectric potential than any other river in North America. From the s to the s, the federal government built a series of dams on the Columbia and its tributaries, including the Snake. Those dams, known collectively as the Federal Columbia River Power System, still generate some 40 percent of the electricity used in the Northwest â€” some of it in Seattle and Bellevue â€” and enable tugs and barges to travel all the way to Idaho. The dams blocked salmon passage to and from salt water. Some were built with fish ladders. Once the dams went in, the numbers of fish plummeted. This came as no great surprise. Columbia River salmon runs were clearly being overfished by the late s. Spawning streams have been affected by farming, ranching and development. To increase survival rates, for many years the U. Army Corps of Engineers has trucked young salmon downstream around the dams. Federal, state and tribal hatcheries have pumped out many millions of fish. The river still supports only a fraction of its former runs. Because of this, the federal government has had to issue biological opinions on whether or not operation of the dam system will jeopardize their recovery. Four BiOps have already been rejected by federal courts. No one has decided yet to sue over this version, but a bet in favor of litigation would seem less a gamble than an investment. As the newest act in this long-running drama plays out, though, there are some themes to remember. Like its predecessor, this BiOp relies heavily on habitat improvements rather than changes in dam operation; the court may or may not be convinced that these improvements will really happen â€” or that they will produce the benefits that the federal agencies predict. The easiest way to avoid making major changes in the status quo is by arguing that salmon will recover just fine if you do something else. Historically, something else has primarily meant building and operating hatcheries that pump new fish into the river system. There is no reasonable doubt that habitat in the Columbia Basin has changed in ways that are harmful to fish. When Redden tossed the last BiOp, he said it was "based on unidentified mitigation measures that are not reasonably likely to occur. Some seem more likely to occur. But not all are well-defined, and attributing specific survival benefits to any of them is still pretty far-fetched. It does not seriously contemplate breaching the four lower Snake River dams. They do, however, provide appreciable generating capacity. More important politically, they make it possible for Lewiston, Idaho to function as a deep-water port. Fish advocates have long wanted to see those dams breached and have called for a hard-nosed balancing of their economic benefits against their environmental costs. Redden made it pretty clear he wanted breaching included as an option if other things failed. The BiOp merely says that if all else fails, the

feds can launch a study to see how they should study the prospect of breaching. The BiOp recommends spilling less water â€" water that is key to speeding young salmon downstream over the dams. Nature designed young Columbia River system salmon to float downstream with spring floods. The pools of slack water created by the dams slow the river, extending the trip and creating dangerous conditions for young fish. Spilling water over the dams instead of running it through turbines speeds the young fish on their way. But water over the dam equals electricity foregone, so the BPA, which transmits and markets power from the dams, and public utilities, which rely on power from the dams, have wanted to minimize spill. Nor is water channeled into irrigation canals. And large amounts of power are used to pump water uphill from dam pools to those canals. Nevertheless, diverting water to help fish is always the issue. Starting in , the courts ordered the federal agencies to spill more water in the spring. Evidence suggests more fish survived. In , the feds were about to propose reducing spring spill. Two different scientific groups hammered the proposal. The feds said never mind. There, they suggest less spill. Salmon spawn in cool water. Average temperatures in the Pacific Northwest are expected to rise. Some streams will become too warm for the fish. So does protecting spawning areas at higher elevations, where temperatures will stay lower. The spawning streams in the mountains of Idaho are already protected within federal wilderness. But passage to and from those streams is blocked by eight dams, including the four on the lower Snake. Wild fish advocates argue that the threat of climate change raises the Idaho spawning streams to a new level of importance and should focus an even stronger spotlight on the Snake River dams. So far, the feds have shown no sign that they agree. It is "remarkable to me how much science NOAA itself has done on climate change and how little is applied in this opinion," says Earthjustice attorney Steve Mashuda. Killer whales live all over he world. Other killer whales eat sea mammals. In fact, like many of us, they prefer chinook salmon. Recent research suggests that the killer whales may need nourishment badly in the spring, when huge chinook runs once swam back through their range to the Columbia. If we want to restore the orca population, we may have to at least partially restore those salmon runs. The BiOp suggests that current hatchery operation will more than compensate for chinook losses at the dams â€" ignoring the obvious fact that if you want more orcas, you need more orca food. But what does the law really require? This was justly ridiculed at the time, and Redden expressed his skepticism. Because the last BiOp relied on empty promises about habitat restoration, he could strike it down without doing so. But Redden had clearly lost patience. The feds had had their three strikes in his court. Faced with a fourth, Redden might very well have ordered significant changes in or taken partial control of river management. But Redden has retired. Will a new judge feel comfortable saying the government has used up its chances? Will a new judge give the government only one strike? Some observers doubt it â€" and are guessing that the feds doubt it, too. Daniel Jack Chasan is an author, attorney, and writer of many articles about Northwest environmental issues.

Chapter 9 : Save Our Wild Salmon - Crosscut: Feds' latest Columbia River plan: Play me an old-fashioned

This is an updated edition of a classic study of one of the most controversial environmental and development issues - dam building. It explains the history and politics of dam building worldwide and shows why large dams have become such a contentious issue.

It is more likely, as the global history of the industry and the evidence in Greenland tells us, that the decision has in fact already been made undemocratically behind closed doors, despite the decreasing support of the Greenlandic people. In fact Alcoa and the Greenland government are so keen on passing the project that they have just hired an eighth employee at their national company Greenland Development- formed to enable the industry to go ahead. Greenland Development paints a rosy picture of an aluminium future for Greenland, but will their promises of prosperity come true? Chinese workers would be paid half the salary of members of the Greenland Workers Union. They claim this will be necessary to make the project competitive and that the Greenlandic labour force will not be sufficient[2]. Greenland Development responded immediately to this unpopular news by sending out a press release explaining why competitiveness was so important. The release explained that since the financial crisis China has increasingly dominated the market for aluminium smelting due to their low cost of construction and production. Greenland is in direct competition with these prices and will have to provide very good terms for the company if they want the project to go forwards[3]. The labour question has dominated debate on the smelter in Greenland recently. Bjarne Lyberth, Head of the organisation Against Aluminium Smelter in Greenland is concerned that other important issues are being sidelined: When the decision on the Fjardaal aluminium smelter and associated Karahnjukar dams was pending, the Iceland government made similar claims. They promised the Confederation of Icelandic Labour that the ratio of Icelanders to foreign workers at the dam construction site would be about 8: In reality the construction company Impregilo only employed around Icelandic workers out of employees at the site. Many of these workers were Chinese, Portuguese and other non EU nationalities. In contrast the Chinese workers were very stable despite tough conditions[5]. The construction of the dams was plagued with controversy as it was revealed that foreign workers were being paid less than Icelanders and made to work in unsafe conditions without proper equipment[6]. Four workers are known to have died from injuries on the site[7] [8]. A few years later it was revealed that the payments had not been made and the union ASI raised rights of foreign labourers again. National income from aluminium export? The competition is as such between countries that it among other issues hinges on the terms a host country will provide for a new project. Only projects that are competitive on a global scale will have a chance to become real projects and be implemented[9]. National unions of workers the Greenland Employers? Association and the Organisation of Greenlandic Employers have warned that the only income from the project in its first few years will be tax paid by its employees, and with much workforce coming from abroad on low wages this is likely to be very little[10]. The government has also said that company tax should not be counted on for the first fifteen years, suggesting that large tax breaks have been given[11]. In Iceland predictions that the smelters could be an economic drain and not a boost are increasingly being proven. The deals they made link energy prices to the cost of aluminium so when the market drops the taxpayer can end up subsidising the companies rather than profiting from them. Already there seems to be some degree of caution in Greenland about taking too much of the burden of construction costs and loans which caused so many problems in Iceland. Of the citizens that have expressed either a positive or negative attitude towards the aluminium project, there is thus now only a small majority 54 percent who are positive. Environmental protection group, Avataq, says Greenland Development has deliberately tried to distort public opinion about the aluminum industry. Their head Mikkel Myrup explains: Greenland Development, news page. More power plants may cause more economic instability.