



International Rivers Network
Linking Human Rights and Environmental Protection

Shri Gegong Apang
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh
Itanagar 791111
Arunachal Pradesh, India
Fax: +91 360 2123439

International Rivers Network Supports the Arunachal Pradesh Government Stance Against Large Hydro Projects

July 27, 2005

Dear Hon'ble Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Shri Gegong Apang,

International Rivers Network wants to extend the strongest support for your stance against the construction of large reservoir (hydel) projects in Arunachal Pradesh and to halt all hydro projects under construction in Arunachal Pradesh such as the Lower Subansiri HEP.

Almost ten years ago, an international commission was established to conduct a comprehensive review of all large dams, the World Commission on Dams (WCD). The WCD, which was comprised of representatives of the World Bank, private business, environmental experts and civil society groups found that while "dams have made an important and significant contribution to human development, and benefits derived from them have been considerable... in too many cases an unacceptable and often unnecessary price has been paid to secure those benefits, especially in social and environmental terms, by people displaced, by communities downstream, by taxpayers and by the natural environment."

International Rivers Network has been assessing large dam projects all over the world for twenty years. Our experience underscores the lessons learned by the World Commission on Dams: dams fall short of meeting their projected benefits and they pose serious threats to the livelihoods and cultures of people that need to be displaced to make room for large reservoirs. Intended to boost development, these projects have led instead to further impoverishment and degraded environments. Dams have generated less power, irrigated less land and supplied less drinking water than projected. Dams can often not contribute to flood protection, but instead exacerbate damages suffered when floods do occur.

International Rivers Network, 1847 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94703, USA
Tel: +(510) 848 1155 Fax: +(510) 848 1008/ www.irn.org

Viable options do exist. Small dams can capture rainwater for irrigation and recharge groundwater supplies. Decentralized renewable energy offers great promise for people who are now lacking modern energy services.

We congratulate you to your realistic assessment of the dangers of large dams and want to support you in your assessment of alternative options to meet energy needs.

In addition to this support letter that we will fax, we will also send you the report of the World Commission on Dams and the best-selling book on Dams "Silenced Rivers" by International Rivers Network's Executive Director, Patrick McCully. They will arrive per mail shortly.

Please don't hesitate to contact us regarding your concerns with large dams and the assessment of alternative options.

Yours sincerely,

Ann Kathrin Schneider

South Asia Program, International Rivers Network
akschneider@irn.org