

1998 ACTIONS

1998 was the first year for the International Day of Action. On March 14, more than 10,000 people worldwide organized events to protest against the destruction of rivers, to educate people about threats to rivers and to promote alternatives.

More than 50 actions took place in 24 countries, including Brazil, India, Thailand, Australia, Russia, Japan and the United States. In Brazil, thousands of people camped out to demand reparations for people resettled for the Itaparica Dam. In Hungary, a thousand environmentalists formed a mile-long human chain along the Danube River to protest a dam. In India, thousands of tribals burned an effigy of the Sardar Sarovar Dam and vowed to continue to fight for their livelihoods and resources.

Click on one of the links to the left to see what other groups organized in 1998.

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1998 Actions - Africa

South Africa, Cape Town

We have had a small river, coastal lake and estuarine system go exceptionally toxic with cyanobacterial bloom. Four toxin variants of the known 51 variants of Microcystin are present in our system. Toxin levels are way over chronic exposure levels of Microcystin LR (the Microcystins are the strongest liver tumour promoters known from the biological world) and are presently 50% of acute. The toxin are still algal bound and not as yet soluble in the system, but algae have reached the marine intertidal foodchain (I think an historical first) and local popular mussel beds are now very dangerously accumulating the toxin.

We have hit the media hard and achieved Provincial printed media coverage coupled with national TV news. A ban on mussel consumption has been broadcast and the reasons for the bloom (desperately poor catchment management) have caught media attention. We are now planning to draw down the system by opening the estuary mouth and then using fire-bombing helicopters to drop salt onto the lowered system in order to osmotically shock the blue green algae and promote regeneration of natural plant growth.

This exercise is being broadcast this weekend and the full scale operation should start late next week. We are very worried that poor communities who rely on mussels for daily food supply will become poisoned or subjected to chronic exposure levels and have to move quickly. The irony is that "it is an ill wind that blows no-one and good!" We are using the situation to educate the public and officials into the importance of integrated catchement management.

Contact Information:

Freshwater Research Unit

Zoology Department,

University of Cape Town

Cape Town 7700

Phone: +27 21 650 3637/650 3638

Fax: +27 21 650 3301

E-mail: bedaview@botzoo.uct.ac.za

Website: <http://www.uct.ac.za/depts/zoology/fru>

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1998 Actions - East Asia

JAPAN

International Rivers Network Seinou, Fujihashi
Village

Action: International Rivers Network Seinou (Seinou is west Mino area and valley of Ivi River) will hold a public meeting to oppose the Tokuama Dam on the Ivi river in Gifu-ken.

Contact Information:

Makoto Miura
Honmachi 2-27
Oogaki City GIFU-ken 503-0885
Phone & Fax: +81 584 78 4119
Email: tokuyama@geocities.co.jp
Website: www.geocities.co.jp/WallStreet/1214
(Japanese only)

Citizens for Saving the Kawabe, Kumamoto

Action Report: We had a small meeting along the river and had various edible wild plants and fish that was fished in that morning. We realized that we could eat almost all the weeds what was brought by

the nature like the river, field and mountain. We talked how the nature was important one another. It was a wonderful time. In addition, we handed bills (sheet written sentences about how stupid the Kawabe River Dam project is) to people and signature-collecting campaign in the center of Kumamoto city on 15th.

Contact information:

Yoko Nishida
552 Nakashima-machi
Kumamoto-shi
Kumamoto, 861-5272
Phone & Fax: +81 96 329 0830
Email: BYJ01252@niftyserve.or.jp
Web: <http://plaza4.mbn.or.jp/~kawabe/>

Yamayuri no kai (Mountain Lilly)

Action: They will climb the mountain where the Sagami River originates and hold a meeting at its summit.

Contact Information:

Masaaki Kusano
2-25-16 Akuwa-nishi
Seya, Yokohama
Kanagawa 246, Japan
Phone & Fax: +81 45 364 6515

Sagami River Camp-In Symposium, Kanagawa

Action: Action at the Sagami-ozeki Dam site with paddling, river walking, nature walking, and loud voice competition--maybe more. On March 15th there is a river clean-up for nesting of Koajisasi (tern), and a release of reports on the movement for the "right of wildlife in Japan," to be held in Tokyo Bunkyo-kumin Center. They ask that people concerned about the wildlife in Japan send letters of support to the following address and they will forward them to appropriate government officials.

Contact Information:

Ken-ichi Kanao
3-12-59-202 Hishinuma
Chigasaki
Kanagawa, 253
Phone: +81 467 51 2446
Fax: +81 467 51 2446
Email: VER00204@niftyserve.or.jp

Yamayuri no kai

Action: Planning an action at the Tanzawa mountain which is the origin of the Sagami River. Further details will be announced.

Contact Information:

Masaaki Kusano
2-25-16 Akuwa-nishi
Seya, Yokohama

Kanagawa 246, Japan

Phone & Fax: +81 45 364 6515

Network for Reviewing the Makiogawa, Osaka

Action Report: They handed out flyers against dams in Central Osaka on 11 March and collected signatures against the Makiogawa Dam on 14 March.

Contact information:

Yasuko Minami

1-21-3 Nozomino

Izumi-shi

Osaka 594-1105

Phone: +81 725 57 1325

Fax: +81 725 57 1386

The Society of People Loving the Atera Valley

Action: Distributing a leaflet opposing a hydro plant on the Atera Valley. There will also be a photo exhibit on the Atera Valley in Toyosina Saty from 17-22 of March.

Contact information:

Hideaki Kanazawa

Ohkuwa Village

Nagano

Phone: +81 264 55 3116

Fax: +81 264 55 3116

Love the Asuwa River Association

Action: The Association will build a beautiful sign-board for the Asuwa River Private Trust and start holding regular meetings where everyone is welcome to join.

Contact information:

Shinsui Nose

Kagetsu, 3-8-1, Fukui

Phone: +81 776 23 6074

Email: asuwa@mitene.or.jp

Website: www.mitene.or.jp/~asuwa/ (Japanese only)

Citizens Against the Aigawa Dam, Osaka

Action Report: They handed out bills against dams in Central Osaka with 'Network for Reviewing the Makiogawa.'

Contact information:

Youichi Esuga

2-2-5-109 Minami-ai Ibaraki-shi

Osaka

Phone & Fax: +81 726 43 1533

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1998 Actions - Europe

FRANCE

European Rivers Network

Action: ERN chose to have a March 13 action against the Chambonchard dam, a project on the Cher river (a tributary of the Loire) related to the cancelled Serre de la Fare dam project. It was itself cancelled in 1991 but the project was rekindled in 1993. The action was organized together with SOS Loire Vivante and the Loire Vivante network. It took place on Friday 12 and Saturday 13, because of regional and local elections taking place on Sunday 15, which took up all press coverage.

A group of 30 people (about 10 people from Le Puy of SOS Loire Vivante and ERN) met on Friday 12 at noon to set up a "warning occupation camp" on the Chambonchard dam site. Two television teams filmed the camp set up ; the regional broadcast station RMC and written press also covered the event. Then we left for the town of Montluçon, located about 30 miles from the Chambonchard dam site, to demonstrate in front of the town hall (the mayor of Montluçon has always been a supporter of the dam). Previously, ERN and SOS Loire Vivante had asked for a meeting with the mayor. A delegation was met by his secretary. A

press release, undersigned by about 20 nature protection organizations (among which WWF-France) and local and regional Green Party sections, was handed to the secretary, About 50 demonstrators were in front of the town hall at that time.

In the evening, about 40 people attended the "party" which took place in a restaurant meant to be inundated by the reservoir. Two films were shown : one on the Three-Gorges and one on what happened in Hainburg on the Danube. The morning after, a walk was organized to show the plots of land which have been bought in the valley by Loire Vivante and the WWF-France to oppose the dam project.

Contact Information

Marie Arnould or Roberto Epple
European Rivers Network
8, Rue Crozatier
F-43000 Le Puy
Phone: +33 16 471055788
Fax: +33 16 471026099
Email: ern@rivernet.org

GERMANY

Koeln: Urgewald e.V.,

Action: A group of 10 to 15 people will present a declaration to Latin American embassies about the

poor use of rivers for transportation. This declaration will be supported by 20 to 25 NGO representatives and will highlight the negative ecological and social effects of "river highways" in Germany. This action will urge the German government and the EU not to finance projects like the [Hidrovia Paraguay Parana](#). This action will end with a press conference on the International Day of Action.

Contact Information:

Maike Rademaker
Hacklaender Strasse 12
D-50825 Koeln
Germany
Tel: +49 221 55 21 52
Fax: +49 221 55 21 52
Email: urgewald@koeln.netsurf.de

HUNGARY

Budapest: Danube Charta, Danube Circle, Fund to Protect the Hungarian Environment & Others

Action Report: *ABC News, March 14, 1998*
BUDAPEST, March 14 (Reuters) - More than 1,000 environmentalists gathered on Saturday to form a 1.5-kilometre (one mile) human chain along the river Danube to protest against a plan to build a dam to satisfy Slovak claims. The demonstrators, gathering in Budapest under banners saying "the Danube in danger, the country in danger," vowed to

fight a protocol agreement signed with Slovakia last month." We have to achieve a government withdrawal of the agreement", said Janos Vargha, a member of the presidency of Danube Circle, a movement which organised the rally. It was the second demonstration in two weeks by environmentalists against the dam, but the turnout was low this time with organisers blaming the cold and drizzling rain. Two weeks ago at least 10,000 environmentalists rallied in Budapest, just one day after a Hungarian government delegation agreed with Slovakia that Hungary would construct a new dam.

Hungary and Slovakia have been at loggerheads for years over the rights of a large Hungarian ethnic minority in Slovakia and over their 1977 plan to harness the Danube for hydro-electricity. Hungary halted work on its part of the plan, the downstream dam at Nagymaros, in 1989 under pressure from environmental groups and abandoned the project in 1992, citing cost and ecological reasons.

Czechoslovakia, with which Hungary signed the original agreement in 1977, completed its part of the work at Gabčíkovo, which was taken over by Slovakia after Czechoslovakia split in 1993.

The International Court in the Hague ruled last September that the 1977 treaty was still valid and that the two sides must work out a joint operational regime for Gabčíkovo which took into account environmental as well as economic factors. The agreement reached last month met strong resistance by environmentalists and all parliamentary parties including the junior ruling

coalition member Free Democrats. The government, led by the Socialists (MSZP), said recently that the final agreement may not be ready this year.

Speakers at the rally said a lobby of companies planning to take part in the lucrative construction work and Slovakia laid strong pressure on the government to build the dam. Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar said on Friday that his country did not accept Budapest's "pretexts" for the delay in signing a final agreement on the project. Meciar told the Slovak news agency TASR that enough calculations had been done and Slovakia would ask the International Court to rule that Hungary should meet its obligations and pay compensation to Slovakia for the delay. Hungarian Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs told MTI news agency that Hungary still wanted to reach an agreement but had asked for more time "because in our opinion, further examination and calculations are needed for a reassuring decision." Analysts said earlier that the dispute was complicated by the fact that both countries would hold general elections this year, Hungary in May and Slovakia in September.

REUTERS

Contact Information:

Bela Liptak

Email: liptakbela@aol.com

Janos Vargha

Danube Circle

Mail: Vadasz utca 29., Budapest, H-1054 Hungary

Phone/Fax: +36 (1) 1530100

Mobile: +36 (20) 419096

E-mail: circle@euroweb.hu

Homepage: <http://www.danube.org>

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ITALY

Rome: Italian Campaign for the Reform of the World Bank and Leliop Basso International Foundation for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples

Action Report: Will launch the report "LARGE SCALE DAMS, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT:

Three Cases -- Yacyreta, Chixoy, Katse, The role of Italian TNC's, development aid, and the World Bank and governments."

The report, a section of which was presented at the International Tribunal on Indigenous Peoples and Nature (Denver, June 1997), examines three cases of dams built by the Italian company Impreglio in Argentina/Paraguay, Guatemala and Lesotho and funded by the World Bank and Italian Development Aid.

Title: ENVIRONMENT: NGO's Denounce World Bank
by Jorge Pina

ROME, Mar 13 (IPS) - Italian Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) accused the World Bank of violating human and environmental rights in the construction of three hydroelectric stations in

Argentina-Paraguay, Guatemala and Lesotho. The denunciation was presented in a press conference, on the eve of the National Day of Action Against Dams and for Rivers. The World Bank financed the dams of Yacyreta, between Argentina and Paragua, Chixoy in Guatemala, and Katse in Lesotho, all built by an Italian transnational company, Impregilo. The accusation was launched by Liliana Cori and Francesco Martone, co-ordinators of the Campaign for the Reform of the World Bank, and Jaroslava Colajacomo, researcher of the Lelio Basso International Foundation for the Rights and Liberation of the Peoples.

Since its creation in 1994, the World Bank has financed more than 6,000 development projects in 140 countries, worth a total of 300 billion dollars. There have been complaints against their activities and projects from local communities and NGOs from all over the world for years. For the World Bank has given its support to large-scale projects which destroy forests, contaminate the atmosphere, expel millions of people from their lands and reduce the possibility of ecologically compatible and socially just development.

Despite the announcement of substantial reforms in its policies and procedures, the entity has not been able to give priority to projects which directly contribute to the battle against poverty and the defence of the environment, they indicated. The NGO representatives demanded the World Bank be "more green, transparent and responsible." The three dams mentioned above caused serious social and environmental problems to indigenous people

and local communities. The most evident violations are those of these peoples' rights to decide on their own future and to manage their territory and natural resources. They were not consulted in any of these three cases, violating even the World Bank's own policy and international regulations, said the NGOs.

The dams have caused the dispersal, death and physical and cultural impoverishment of the communities, enriching the political elites and transnationals which carry out the work. They forced people to leave their homes, submerged fertile farmlands, forests and sacred places, destroyed drinking water reserves and caused the social and cultural disintegration of societies. Meanwhile, they have produced less electrical energy and irrigated less than promised and have caused floods, instead of limiting them. The benefits of these projects went to large land owners, the multinational agroindustry companies and speculators. The Chixoy station had devastating effects on the Guatemalan economy, as its cost represents 40 percent of the nation's foreign debt.

Activists asked politicians, international agencies and investors for an immediate suspension of the construction of large hydroelectric centres, until all forms of violence against the local peoples can be stopped. Yacyreta, on the Parana river, on the frontier between Argentina and Paraguay is "considered a model of corruption in Latin America" and even the World Bank recognised it would have been better not to have built it, they said. Its

construction was planned in 1973, in a treaty between Argentine president Juan Domingo Peron and the Paraguayan dictator Alfredo Stroessner. Its final cost was four times the planned costs in the engineering sector and seven in the administration. The cost of the energy produced by Yacyreta was three times higher than the international average and the project has still not been finished, despite the fact funding was to end in 1990. According to World Bank calculations, around 80,000 people were forced to leave their homes.

The Chixoy hydroelectric project was developed in a period of military dictatorship and civil war in Guatemala. In 1975, the National Institute of Electrification (Inde) announced the project, to develop a reliable, economic and abundant source of energy supply. The final cost of the project is still not clear, but estimates range from 1.2 to 2.5 billion dollars. The dam was built in the area where the Maya Achi indigenous people had lived for centuries, and 50,000 people have been forced to leave their land. The Katse dam, which is planned to end in 2017, was planned in a treaty between the South African and Lesotho governments in 1986, at an initial cost of 300 million dollars. The projects have affected the lives of 24,000 people, now surviving on the cereals they were given in compensation.

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Contact Information:

Francesco Martone/Liliana Cori

Centro Internazionale Croceria
Via Ferraironi 88/G
00172 Roma
Phone: +39 6 244 04212
Fax: +39 6 2424177
Email: fmartone@gn.apc.org

**Florence: Society for Threatened People/the
People's Library**

Action: Will list Day of Action in their bulletin.
Action to be announced.

Contact Information:

Alessandro Michelucci
PO Box 6282
I-50127 Florence
Email: apm-gfbv@ines.gn.apc.org

POLAND

Klub Gaja

Action: Their action will be aimed at private industry's involvement in the future management of Vistula River and the proposal to build seven dam cascade along the lower Vistula. They will also aim their action at private industry's involvement in the Three Gorges Dam project.

Contact Information:

Jacek Bozek
Klub Gaja
PO Box 261
43-301 Bielsko Biala 1, Poland
Phone & Fax: +48 33 12 36 94
Email: klub@gaja.most.org.pl

RUSSIA

NIZHNI NOVGOROD

Organizations:

- Coordination center of "Let's help the River"
- "Berginia" newspaper and ecological center "Dront"
- Children's ecological clubs "Green Sail"; "White Stork"; and "Wind Rose"

Object of Actions: Volga River and small municipal streams: Rzhavka, Rakhma, Levinka

Actions:

- Round table discussion between citizen's groups, municipal committee of nature protection, water committee about the issues of small municipal streams.
- Press-conference for media about the international day of actions and the negative influence of the dams on the Volga river and about the poor control of the dam operation.
- Publication of an open letter from children to the mayor of

the city against enclosing of the municipal streams in pipes.

- Poordination of activities, exchange of information, collection of information.
- Making up and distribution of leaflets among the local population.

SARATOV

Organization: Newspaper "Nabat"

Object of Action: Volga river - Saratov dam

Action: Publishing materials on the destructive influence of Saratov Dam on the Volga river.

YAROSLAVL'

Organization: Ecological club "Green brunch"

Object of Action: Small municipal streams

Action: ide spread appearances in mass media in the support of small municipal streams.

TUTAYEV (Yaroslavl' province)

Organization: House of Nature

Object of Actions: Volga river, small municipal streams

Action: Week of the River:

1. Exhibition of pictures "River Needs Help"
2. Business game "Volga"
3. Concert of the folk group "From afar flows the Volga"
4. Local mass media will inform the residents on the developments of the week.

PEREYASLAVL' (Ryasan' province)

Organization: Pereyaslavl' National Park

Object of Actions: Small rivers

Actions:

- Cleaning of small rivers to enable the fish access to spawning ground
- Environmental "landing force" operation in cleaning Pleshcheevo lake of household waste
- Research project of identification of pollution sources of small rivers and creeks
- Finding out environmental pollution sources at the territory of the city
- Topic-oriented publications in mass media
- Lectures in the school and college with the program "Water on the Earth"
- Competition of leaflets , posters, photos, literature
- Festival of Water

KALUGA

Object of the Action: Volga and Kievka rivers

Organization: Children's ecological detachment
"Penguin"

Actions:

- Will publish an article in the newspaper on the condition of the Volga and Kievka rivers.
- Will hold a competition of pictures.

- Will submit a formal protest to the management of guarages' co-operative "Ogonyok", which makes a landfill out of the river Kievka.
- Will organize a festival "The Day of the River" in school 23

PAVLOVSK (Voronezh province)

Organization: Young natural scientists' station

Object of the Action: River Don

Action: Appearance on the district radio; will publish an article in the district newspaper "Beacon of the Don"

Contact Information:

Help the River Volga

Elena Kolpakova

Kostina Str, h2, Flat 164

Sol Kolpakova E.

Nizhoi Novgorod 603134

Phone: +7 831 2302881

Fax: +7 831 2391191

Email: dront@glas.apc.org

PAVLOVO ON OKA RIVER (Nizhni Novgorod Province)

Organization: Ecological center "Creeks"

Object of the Action: Rivers Seriozha, Tarka

Action: Protesting against dams

VLADIMIR

Organizations: Suzdal' branch of Russian Socio-Ecological Union, Suzdal' ECO center, Vladimir

society of agriculture, Vladimir regional branch of soil scientists society of Russia, Suzdal' club of environmental farming.

Object of the Actions: Small municipal streams of Suzdal: Kamenka and Mzhara

Actions: They organized and implemented the conference where they discussed the problems of small rivers of Suzdal' preservation Kamenka and Mzhara. They see the start of the solution of this problem, as creation of nature reserves in the flood plain of the river Mzhara in the area of Il'inski meadow, which has started to degrade. The reports of children produced at the conference were broadcasted at the district radio. In the district newspaper "Susdal' news for March 14, which is being published now, there will be information about this Day of Action and our actions. A speech on the district radio is being prepared for March 14.

IZHEVSK, Udmurtian Republic.

Organization: Springs

Object of the Action: Streams and small rivers of the city

Actions: Publications in the newspaper about the Day of Action.

BRYANSK

Objects: Rivers of the City

Organization: NGO "Viola"

Actions: Carrying out action "For the quality of drinking water in our region":

- Struggle against polluting of surface drinking water

sources

- 1500 signatures had been collected with the demand to the administration of the Province to solve the problem of bad quality of drinking water and stop river pollution.
- On March 14 there will be a meeting and round table held with the representatives of Mass Media, medical men and scientists.

NOVOCHERKASSK, ROSTOV

Organization: NGO "Green Don"

Object of the Actions: River Don

Actions:

- Articles were published in the newspaper "Don Defence Line": letter to the Government of Russian Federation , "Do not cry fish", "Will sturgeons still exist in the 21-st century"
- March 10, 1998 in the library of Novocherkassk there will be held an exhibition of materials of "Green Don" NGO on the problems of conservation of biodiversity of Azov basin and struggle against Rostov Nuclear Power Station.
- On March 14 and 16 we are planning to hold a press conference in Novocherkassk and Rostov about the consequences of the operation of Tsymlyansk dam, fish and Rostov Nuclear Power Station.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

**Society for Sustainable Living in the Slovak
Republic**

Action: Will release a joint NGO statement regarding the current situation with the Danube River Dams between Bratislava and Budapest.

Contact Information:

Mikulas Huba

Email: geoghuba@savba.sk

Friends of the Earth - Slovakia

Action: They have arranged a full-page "info on dams" in a large newspaper. They are also having a press conference, mailing info to environmental NGOs, and sending a joint-NGO letter to the government requesting info concerning the economic and social aspects of dams already built, under construction, or being planned.

Contact information:

Juraj Zamkovsky

Center for Environmental Public Advocacy

Slatinka Association

Ponicka Huta 65

976 33 Poniky

Phone & fax: +421 88 93324

Email: zamkovsky@changenet.sk

Web: www.changenet.sk/cepa/

Tulcik: Wolf Forest Protection Association

STARINA DAM 1998

Seventy activists and friends of WOLF Forest Protection Movement in Slovakia demonstrated at the Starina Dam in eastern Slovakia on Friday, March 13th. They spread a banner with a joke by Slovak caricaturist Fedor Vico on a dike in the presence of journalists and reporters of the most viewed TV station. The banner of 10x20m is considered to be the biggest joke of the world stated "It's better to have water up to our knees than dams up to our necks". It also includes a drawing of a guy having water up to his knees and saying "They preach of wine but suck our blood". By this joke WOLF Forest Protection Movement wanted to bring attention of the general public and responsible authorities to the long-standing devastation of Slovak forests which resulted in an enormous diminution of the ability to retain water in the landscape. Water runoff is intensified, the occurrence of catastrophic floods is increased in rainy periods and in dry periods the landscape suffers from drought.

Instead of providing fundamental changes in forest management policy, the Ministry of Land Management in Slovakia tries to solve this situation by the construction of expensive dams although their function could be substituted by healthy natural forests. There is a construction of an unbelievable number of 91 dams being planned in Slovakia. An average price of a dam is from 100 to 160 million US\$. The state budget lacks US\$ 100

million as to be able to solve housing policy in Slovakia which is exactly equal to the price of one dam.

WOLF Forest Protection Movement has suggested a solution of the situation to the Ministry of Land Management by several scientific studies. There was no reaction. Furthermore for several years responsible bodies have remained silent concerning WOLF's petition for a change in the Forest Law although 10000 signatures of Slovak citizens were submitted to the National Parliament. The petition calls for legal changes in favor of saving natural forests. The National Parliament has been also ignoring WOLF' s repeating requirements for a survey of the most devastated natural forests by Members of Parliament.

IF THERE IS A FOOL SITTING IN THE BATHTUB WITH HOLES IN IT AND THERE IS NOT ENOUGH WATER, HE WILL LET MORE WATER RUN, BUT THE WISEMAN WILL REPAIR THE BATHTUB.

PS: The action got a significant media attention. There were articles in all significant national and regional press and a report on the most viewed TV station in Slovakia as well as reports on several radio stations. There will be one more article in a weekly issued Slovak magazine published.

Contact information:

Juraj Lukac

c.d. 27

082 13 Tulcik

Slovak Republic

Phone: +421 91 941488

Email: wolf@vadium.sk

UKRAINE

Nikolaev: Nikolaev Regional Ecological Assn. "Zaleny Svit"

Action Report: Issued a press release in support of the Day of Action and urging their citizenry to save the Southern Bug River:

PRESS -RELEASE

14 March - International Day of Action Against Dams and for Rivers, Water and Life

In March of 1997 in Curitiba, Brazil, the First International Meeting of people affected by dams took place. It declared that 14 March will from now on become the International Day of Action Against Dams and for Rivers, Water and Life. The Meeting appealed that all the actions be led under the slogan 'Water for life, not for death' and demanded that governments, international agencies and investors implement a moratorium on the building of large dams until international independent review of their building is commissioned and until the damage caused to people and nature by dams is compensated. The meeting united people from 20 countries - Germany, Spain, Norway, Russia, France, Switzerland, Sweden, the USA, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Mexico,

India, Lesotho, Nepal, Thailand, Taiwan - and set the task to work out ways of democratic decision-making concerning rivers.

In the USA, International Rivers Network is struggling for deconstructing water reservoirs. The Congress approved deconstructing of two dams each 60 meters high on the Missouri river. In Sweden in the 80s the law prohibiting construction of large dams was adopted. The efficiency of existing dams is possible to be increased, without constructing the new ones. In Spain, France, Brazil, India, China actions against dams on the mountain rivers took place.

In the world volume of all the water reservoirs is about 10000 cubic km. This is as 5 times more as water volume of all the rivers of the world; it is equal to water volume of dump areas, or to that of the atmosphere. Weight of large water reservoirs is so big that it can cause earthquakes. Such cases have already happened. More than 400,000 square km - the area equal to California - is occupied by water reservoirs. Geological science says this can cause planet scale changes, which, once starting, are impossible to be reversed. One of the main ecological threats from dams is 'fragmentation' of flora and fauna. As to Sweden scientists data 77 per cent of water of the rivers in the USA, Canada, Europe and former USSR are disappearing in 139 largest water systems of these countries.

Ukraine broke all the records, having overloaded its main rivers more than it is allowed by the Water Law. On the Dnieper river six bed water reservoirs on the plain are built and among them there is the

largest in the world man-made Kakhovskoye water reservoir, on the bank of which the largest in the world Zaporozhskaya nuclear power station is standing under five dams of Hydro - Electrical Plant. There is no other case in the world that a nuclear reactor would stand under at least one dam. If at least one of these dams is broken through our civilization will face, according to the review of the international independent committee V. Kredo, the largest of all the possible world disasters equal to 100 Chernobyls.

In Nikolaev, the Southern Bug river is overloaded more than it is allowed by the Water Law of Ukraine. In upper areas of the river and its tributaries there are more than 8000 ponds and water reservoirs. Because of them there has been no full flood for 18 years which could have led to self-purification and self-renewal of the river! Despite of this and of three negative state ecological expertise nuclear power people have been planning for ten years to fill in the bed Alexandrovskoye water reservoir and today they are closer to their goal as have never been before. This will finally eliminate our river. For the last 8 years Tashlyk HAEP is being built against the law. Against the law another Bakshalinskoye water reservoir is filled in. By this two unique archeological 3000 -year old objects of the world value are being destroyed.

Kiev is promoting the dangerous projects. The Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council Mr. Gorbulin addressed (Not in Public !) the President of Ukraine, proposing construction of the

Tashlyk HAEP without ecological expertise, and that is a direct breach of the law of Ukraine! Ecological Security Ministry just has replaced the Head of the State Expertise Committee, the man of principles, for the one who is obedient to the authorities. The latter has already approved a part of the project without reviewing it in the whole.

We are facing the biggest in our area ecological and moral disaster. The last barrier to be overcome by the nuclear power people is to abolish a decision of the Regional Council which prohibits construction of the Tashlyk HAEP and filling in the Alexandrovskoye water reservoir.

We are addressing to all the citizens of Nikolaev area: due to your support for 10 years we all have been able to struggle for our river, and we need your support again. By our mutual efforts the Southern Bug river will be saved! We are addressing to all the Nikolaev area officials in charge : remember that if you promote construction of the Tashlyk HAEP and filling in the Alexandrovskoye water reservoir you will have to bear the whole responsibility for the damage caused to nature and people!

WATER FOR LIFE, NOT FOR DEATH !

The Chairman of the Association "Zeleny Svit"^a
Anatoly Zolotukhin

Press-secretary of the Association "Zeleny Svit"^a
Marina Martsinkevich

Contact information:

Anatoly Zolotukhin

PO Box 158

327001 Nikolaev

Phone: +380 512 35 33 89

Fax: +380 512 35 31 12

Email: anufr@nikgrpc.freenet.kiev.ua

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1998 Actions - Latin America

ARGENTINA

Santa Fé: Fundación Proteger

Action Report: Participants met with local authorities to discuss the Paraná Medio Dam and other planned dams. Other actions took place in Rosario, Villa Constitución, Reconquista, Paraná, La Paz, Resistencia, Corrientes y Posadas. Contact

Information:

Jorge Cappato
Casilla de Correo 550
3000 Santa Fé
Phone & Fax: +54 42 970298
Email: jcproteg@satlink.com
Parana, Entre Rios

Association of Environmental Organizations of the Middle Paraná River

Action: A group of kayaks travelled on the Gualeguay River, from the headwaters in the north to the mouth in the south, stopping in cities and communities, visiting the media and schools in

order to teach the people about the issues surrounding the Paraná Medio Dam. The name of this action is "Alerta Gualeguay."

Contact Information:

Anacleto Llosa/Raul José Rocco

Rocamora 670

3100 Parana, Entre Rios

Phone: + 54 43 230910

Fax: +54 43 220000

Email: eciobert@satlink.com

BRAZIL

**Northeast Region: Movement of Dam-Affected
People - Movimento dos Atingidos por
Barragens (MAB)**

Action: More than 3,000 rural workers, youth, adults and family farmers resettled by the Itaparica Dam camped at Paulo Afonso from March 11-14. They broke camp because they were successful in forcing resettlement negotiations to resume. "Our sit-in sought to demand that the Government earmark specific funds to carry out the rest of the resettlement program. In our camp, we received the news that on the first day of our protest the President had sent a proposal to the National Congress for a law requesting \$112 million in additional funding to complete the resettlement. We expect that the National Congress approve these funds rapidly, since this money is needed to make

the resettlement projects a reality after ten years of struggle."

Contact Information:

Eraldo José de Souza

Polo Sindical dos Trabalhadores Rurais do Submédio
São Francisco

Rua Dantas Barreto, 139 Caixa Postal 02

56.460-000 Petrolândia, PE

Telefax: +55.81.851.1160 ou 851.1144

(In English):

International Rivers Network, Latin America office

Tel/fax: +55.65.627.1689

Email: glen@nutecnet.com.br

Action Report: Declaration by Rural Workers of Itaparica, Camped at Paulo Afonso, from March 11-14, on the International Day of Action against Dams, and for Rivers, Water, and Life:

The more than 3,000 workers and rural workers, youth, adults, and elderly, family farmers resettled for Itaparica Dam, camped at Paulo Afonso, Bahia since March 11, and represented by their Unions, Cooperatives, and coordinated by the UNION POLE OF RURAL WORKERS OF THE LOWER-MIDDLE SAO FRANCISCO RIVER VALLEY (Polo Sindical) resolve on this day to suspend their protest, considering that negotiations to conclude the resettlement program are now once again underway.

We have shown Brazil and the World that we continue to be united and strong within our organizations under the coordination of the UNION POLE, our legitimate representative in the process

of negotiations with organs of the Federal, State, and Local Governments. The visit by the Federal Government, represented by CHESF, the Hydroelectric Company of the São Francisco, for a seven-hour meeting yesterday, reaffirmed that the representative of the populations affected by Itaparica Dam is the UNION POLE and its UNIONS.

Our sit-in sought to demand that the Government earmark specific funds to carry out the rest of the resettlement program. In our camp, we received the news that on the first day of our protest the President had sent a proposal to the National Congress for a law requesting \$112 million in additional funding to complete the Itaparica project. We are certain that, given the responsibility assumed by the Federal Government in front of us workers and in front of the World Bank, as a result of our complaint to the Bank's Inspection Panel, this budgetary supplement will be approved. We expect that the National Congress approve these funds rapidly, since this money is needed to make the resettlement projects a reality after ten years of struggle.

The President, via a decree, placed all actions related to the Itaparica resettlement project under the jurisdiction of the Executive Group for the Conclusion of the Itaparica Resettlements - GERPI, with CHESF as the executing agency.

We are leaving our camp assured that negotiations will take place between the UNION POLE, the MINISTRY OF MINES AND ENERGY, THE GERPI, AND CHESF on the UNION POLE's proposals delivered to

these agencies on the first day of our protest. For us, the continuation of negotiations will mean placing a priority on beginning those resettlement works now under study, readapting those currently in construction, and guaranteeing the economic feasibility of those projects already in production.

Contact information:

(in Portuguese):

Pólo Sindical dos Trabalhadores Rurais do Submédio
São Francisco

tel/fax: +55.81.851.1160 or 851.1144

Rede Brasil dos Bancos Multilaterais

tel: +55.61.226.8093

fax: +55.61.226.8042

email: rbrasil@brnet.com.br

(in English):

International Rivers Network

Latin America office

tel/fax: +55.65.627.1689

email: glen@nutecnet.com.br

Southern Region

CRABI Iguassu River Basin

Action: Iguassu River Basin: The Regional Commission of People Affected by Dams in the Iguassu River Basin mobilized fishing communities who never were resettled and were never adequately compensated for impacts of Itaipu.

Estimates are that 6,000 people will take part in the demonstration in Guaira, Paraná state.

Contact information:

Margareth

CRABI

Rua Parana

192-Bairro Sco Cristsvco Cep-85802

Cascavel-PR

Phone & Fax: +55 45 225 4347

Uruguay River Basin

**Comissão of Dam-Affected People of the
Uruguay River Basin (CRAB)**

Action Report: On March 19th, about 1,600 dam-affected people and members of citizens organizations who had been camped in Florianópolis since March 9th, broke through a police blockade and occupied the offices of ELETROSUL (a Public Utility Company) for five hours. Their purpose was to pressure the company into opening negotiations with affected people for just compensation for environmental damages, relocation and loss of livelihood as a result of dams currently in construction in the Uruguai river basin. ELETROSUL, following instructions from Brazilian President Cardoso, refused to negotiate, and instead called in a police riot squad which expelled the demonstrators from the building. The demonstrators returned to their campground in front of the Government Palace.

Contact information:

(in Portuguese):

Ricardo Montagner

CRAB

Rua Espirito Santo

164 - Erechim - RS - Cep: 99700-000

Phone: +55 54 522 1857

(In English):

International Rivers Network

Latin America office

Tel/Fax: +55.65.627.1689

Email: glen@nutecnet.com.br

Southeastern region

Minas Gerais

Action: A regional meeting will take place in the state capital, Belo Horizonte, with the participation of people affected by Irapé, Cachoeira da Providência, Salto Estrela, Pilar, Cachoeira do Emboque dams, and by those who would be affected by dams on the Ribeira Valley in São Paulo state. At the close of the meeting, on March 13th, there will be a public rally to commemorate the Day of Action.

Centro de Ação Ambiental do Pantanal, Corumbá

Action: *THE LIVING PANTANAL MEANS A CLEAN RIVER:*

Coordination: ECOA, Centro de Ação Ambiental do Pantanal e grupo de Jovens ECOANDOS e apoio da Prefeitura Municipal de Corumbá, Capitania Fluvial do Pantanal, Corpo de Bombeiros, Exército Brasileiros, Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul além da comunidade estudantil de Corumbá. (EOCA, Environmental Action Center of the Pantanal and youth group ECOANDOS, with support from the Mayor's office of Corumbá, the Port Captainty of the Pantanal, Fire Brigade, Brazilian Army, Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul state, and youth of Corumbá.

Objective: To make local populations aware of the importance of preserving water quality of the Paraguay River, and of finding an appropriate site and technology for processing garbage of Corumbá.

Contact information:

Rose Mary Paes de Araujo
Av. General Rondon,
No. 437-Corumbá
Caixa Postal 156
CEP 79303-970
Phone & Fax: +55 67 231 9477
Email: camalote@pantanalnet.com.br

ECOANDO/Ecologia e Acao, Campo Grande

Action: This youth group will do a clean-up of garbage on the banks of the Paraguay River, Corumbá.

Contact information:

Valfrido
Rua 14 de julho, 3169 Centro
79002-333 Campo Grande, MS
Phone & Fax: +55 67 724 3230/9109
Email: ecoa@msinternet.com.br

COSTA RICA

Fundación Rios Tropicales

Action: The group will organize a river clean-up on the Turrialba River, a small but highly contaminated river that flows thru the town of Turrialba in Costa Rica.

Contact Information:

Mélida L. Barbee
SJO #130
PO Box 025312
Miami, FL 33102
Phone: 506.233.6455
Fax: 506.255.4354

URUGUAY

REDES, Friends of the Earth Uruguay, Colonia and Frey Bentos

Action: Friends of the Earth Uruguay is organizing two public events. One is a public debate in Colonia, Uruguay on the theme of megaprojects with a focus

on the [Paraguay-Parana Hidrovia](#) and the Colonia-Buenos Aires Bridge. They will also premiere the Rios Vivos/IRN video "Pantanal: Lifewaters." They are also organizing a public debate, along with the NGO "Vida", in Frey Bentos, Uruguay on the theme of contamination of the Uruguay River.

Contact Information:

Silvia Ribeiro

Phone: +598 2 307 2455

Fax: +598 2 308 1640

Email: rios@redes.org.uy

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1998 Actions - North America

CANADA

Mt. Allison University, New Brunswick

Action: Student group is organizing an information day on campus with a display of rivers, water and dam-related visual art work from students and staff. The group will also show some videos and slides explaining the impacts of dams.

Contact Information:

Kate Kennedy
152 Main Street
Sackville, New Brunswick E4L 1B3
Phone: 506 536 5899
Email: Kakndy@mta.ca

Ontario Public Research Interest Group (OPIRG), Ottawa

Action: The Ontario Public Research Interest Group (OPIRG) has 3 activities planned. One of them will be to call a speaker to educate the group on river and dam issues in Ottawa and eastern Canada. The other event will be a combination of a river clean-up followed by an outing on the Ottawa River. The third

action will be to set up information booths providing information and distributing materials on dam projects in general and specifically the [Biobio](#).

Contact Information:

Leigh Herbert
Box 089
Carleton University Residences
1233 Colonel bt Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B7
Email: lherbert@chat.carleton.ca

UNITED STATES

**[International Rivers Network](#), Berkeley,
California**

Action: Demonstration in front of the Chilean Consulate to oppose the Ralco Dam on Chile's [Biobío River](#) and in front of Bank of America's Corporate Headquarters to oppose foreign financing of the massive [Three Gorges Dam](#).

Contact information:

Aleta Brown
International Day of Action Communication
Coordinator
1847 Berkeley Way
Berkeley, CA 94703
Phone: 510 848 1155
Fax: 510 848 1008
Email: aleta@irn.org

**Southern Ute Grassroots Organization (SUGO),
Ignacio, Colorado**

Action: SUGO will hold an event on 14 March at the location of the proposed pumping station for the Animas/La Plata Project. The event will celebrate the life of the river. "Without a vision, the river will die."

Contact Information:

Sage Douglas Remington

PO BOX 637

Southern Ute Indian Reservation

Ignacio, CO 81137, USA

Phone: 970 563 4483

Fax: 970 563 4487

Email: sage@frontier.net

**Haw River Assembly, North Carolina,
Greensboro**

Action: The 8th Annual Haw River Clean-Up-A-Thon. The Haw River stretches 110 miles in the Piedmont of North Carolina and feeds into the Cape Fear River. The river is impacted by pollution and sediment from both urban and rural sources and receives treated wastewater from cities such as Greensboro and Chapel Hill. Despite pollution, it is a beautiful whitewater river and a favorite of canoers. Volunteers will converge at 10 sites along the river to pick up trash.

Contact Information:

Elaine Chiosso

Haw River Assembly Executive Director

P.O.box 187

Bynum, NC 27228

Phone: (919) 542-5790

Email: hra@emji.net

Internet: <http://www.n-t-t.com/haw/>

Zapata County, Zapata, Texas

Action: Will have information booth at Zapata County Fair to oppose the third dam (now called the Lago Project) proposed upstream on the Rio Grande. The dam site is in Web County, which supports the project.

Contact Information:

Mario Gonzalez Davis

PO Box 99

Zapata, TX 78076

Phone: 956 765 9939

Fax: 956 765 9926

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1998 Actions - Oceania

AUSTRALIA

Queensland, Arlie Beach

Wildlife Preservation of Queensland (WPSQ)

Action: Group published relevant material in their newsletter and urged their members to attend the Mackay action.

Contact Information:

Ian Sutton, Coordinator
Whitsunday Branch Inc.
PO Box 1002
Arlie Beach Q 4802
phone & fax: +61 7 4946 4170
Email: isutton@tpgj.com.au

Queensland, Mackay

Mackay Conservation Group

Action Report: The Mackay Conservation Group held a celebration in Mackay at Jubilee Park. They distributed information about the downstream effects of dams and how that affects the health of the oceans (it was the year of the ocean). They had stalls, displays, food and music.

Contact Information:

Lauren Appleby, Coordinator
Mackay Conservation Group Inc.
PO Box 826
Mackay, Qld 4740
Phone: +61 7 4953 0808
Fax: +61 7 4953 5438
Email: mcg@m130.aone.net.au

Environs Kimberley

Action: Kimberley people who are concerned about plans to dam the Fitzroy River celebrated the Day of Action by holding a family picnic at Willare Bridge. The event was organized by Derby members of Environs Kimberley. The aim was to raise awareness of the value of the Fitzroy as one of Australia's few remaining wild rivers.

Contact Information:

Environs Kimberley
Peter Mitchell
PO Box 1048
Broome, WA 6725
Phone: +61 8 9193 7901
Fax: +61 8 9193 1079

Ecological Water Alliance of Queensland (EWA)

Action: The Queensland State Government is currently committed to investing \$1 billion into

water structure development, mainly to provide irrigation. EWA distributed a newsletter to its members and other parties that included articles about various dams, water development proposals and some positive alternatives. The EWA is supporting one important Government initiative that will strategize on how to maximize the re-use of water.

Contact information:

Jenifer Simpson

c/o 9 Meher Rd.

Kell Mountain

Woombye, Qld 4559

Phone: +61 7 5442 1948

Email: jsimp@beachaccess.com.au

Snowy River Alliance

Action: Actor Tom Burlinson, star of the *The Man from Snowy River* movies, joined Snowy River people from Victoria and NSW on Saturday March 14 on a historic ride along the banks of the famous Snowy River. The ride symbolized the need to reclaim the famous river's flows as a precious part of Australia's heritage. The message to the governments at State and Federal level - "Bring the river back or stand accused of its demise." said Mr Leete.

Contact information:

Paul Leete

Hamilton St

Dalgety NSW 2628

Phone: +61 2 6456 5000

Fax: +61 2 6456 5100

Email: paul@cooma.snowy.net.au

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1998 Actions - South Asia

INDIA

Narmada Bachao Andolan

Action Report: *Update and press release/ March 17, 1998.*

EFFIGY OF BIG DAM BURNT IN HOLI FIRE IN
NARMADA VALLEY.
PEOPLE CELEBRATE COLOURFUL FESTIVAL OF LIFE
AND LIGHT.

"We want Development- Not Destruction", " Save Narmada-Save Human being" (vikas chaahiye-vinaash nahin and Narmada bachao-manav bachao) were some of the slogans that rented the air as the effigy of the big dam, Sardar Sarovar was cosigned to fire by the tribals and activists in the Narmada valley in the early hours of March 13.

Thousands of the tribals in the Narmada valley, while celebrating Holi, the most important tribal festival of song, dance and colours, rituals, burnt the effigy of the Sardar Sarovar dam along with the Holi fire. This was a part of the major Holi celebrated in village Domkhedi, on the banks of Narmada river, in Maharashtra in which thousands of men, women, children from over 30-35 villages

around participated. Domkhedi Holi is considered as a major Holi in the area. Number of villagers declared the implementation of prohibition, community ban on liquor in their villages. Also, the representatives of the villages were felicitated for the total boycott on the voting in the recent Parliament elections as a mark of people's protest.

The anti-big dam day was celebrated in the Narmada valley as a part of the decision taken by the First International Convention against the Large Dams, held in Curitiba, Brazil in April, 1997. All over the world people and organisations struggling against the big dams and the displacement, destruction due to them celebrated the day in varied manners. At Domkhedi, in the early hours of March 13, coinciding with the anti-large dams day of March 14, the bamboo and mud, paper model of the disastrous Sardar Sarovar was burnt among the chanting of slogans against the dam and the anti-people development policy. The burning of the effigy of the dam was preceded by the public meeting during the course of the night long celebrations.

Number of organisations and supporters from various parts of India participated in the celebrations and the programme. An artists' group from the Baroda specially came to be a part of the programme. A group of students from Canada studying international development were present to witness the people's celebrations and resolve. Village representatives from Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh came to strengthen the solidarity of the valley against the attempts by the

government to displace them. The people spoke against the continued efforts by the government and pro-dam interests to spread disinformation regarding the 'model' resettlement and the people's agitation. The people also expressed their resolve to continue fight for their right to life, resources and against unjust,unwarranted and inhuman displacement despite any adversities.

As the tribal Holi continues in different villages for over a week, similar Holi was celebrated in village Danel in Maharashtra next day. An effigy of the monster representing the large dam, multilateral aid agencies, the contractors, politicians and bureaucrats out to displace the people, was burnt in later hours of 14th March. Here the message by the organisations fighting against the large dams in other parts of the world was read out. The people in the Narmada valley sent their message of solidarity and of continued struggle.

Holi, the most auspicious festival for the tribals in the Narmada valley, is celebrated with the beautiful and dexterious community dancing accompanied by the dhol (huge drum), bansuri (flute) and the traditional weapons, songs. Women in their colourful attire participate in Hole dancing and singing. The village leaders distributed prizes for best dhol rendering in Domkhedi and Danel. Along with the dances, a ritual dancing at the fag end of the celebrations with the devotes with painted faces and bodies, headgears of peacock feathers and musical instrument add to the colour and ritual importance of the occassion. These dancers are those who made a wish (manta) at the previous

Holi.

The Resolves

The tribals in the Maharashtra villages have recently shown their determination and strength during the Parliamentary elections. The polling booths at Nimgavhan, Danel, Manibeli, Debra Mal and other centres in the valley recorded zero voting. Even in the booths outside of the dam affected villages registered hardly two to ten votes, that too mostly by the semi-government functionaries. The people's wrath was aptly expressed by Noorji Padvi, one of the firebrand leaders of Andolan from Danel village when he spoke in the meeting, " For all these years we have been confronting the political parties and the candidates on our issues. Despite the assurances and our votes, none of them came to be a part of our struggle neither any of them came during the crisis period. Though we do not indulge in party politics, we understand the importance of the elections and have been voting to a suitable candidate in the elections. But, our experience in the past and in the present elections compelled us to take the stand for boycotting the elections". Significantly, Noorjibhai also spoke in the election meeting of the Congress Party candidate and reminded him of burning issues in the valley and the failures on the part of the parties.

The people have also deliberated, after the celebrations on their village level issues of the land rights, health, drinking water, education, employment and issue of the forest protection and the people's rights. On 26th March, people will be

marching to the District headquarters, Dhule, to press for immediate action regarding the local issues. In most villages, which have been partially submerged due to the illegal dam construction upto 81.5 metres, the people have taken the crops despite the heavy post-monsoon showers.

Sanjay Sangvai

Contact Information:

Medha Patkar

B-13, Shivam Flats

Ellora Park

Baroda 390 007

Phone and Fax: +91 265 382232

Email: NBA@lwbdq.lwbbs.net (NBA)

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1998 Actions - South East Asia

THE PHILIPPINES

Women Workers Program

Action Report: March 12 - We held a press conference with the local media about our planned activities on March 14 and about the updates in the situation of the people in the dam site of the San Roque Dam along the Agno River in Pangasinan. Speakers in the press conference were Pascual Pocding and Lakay Lorenzo who are leaders in the Dalupirip community's opposition to the San Roque Dam; Joan Carling, the secretary-general of the Cordillera Peoples' Alliance; Jeannette Ribaya, secretary-general of the Tongtongan ti Umili; and Bishop Allan Ray Sarte of the Unnited Church of Christ in the Philippines-Northern Luzon Jurisdiction.

Bishop Sarte reported that 119 families have so far been displaced in San Roque without any provision for a relocation area. The evacuees are now scattered in rented rooms and other shelters in conditions resembling a refugee camp. Instead of the promised land, houses and alternative livelihood, the displaced families were given only P5,000 pesos as subsistence allowance for the month to cover food, rent and other basic needs. It is not clear what the National Power Corporation,

the government-owned corporation which is in charge of the project, is planning to do to make good its promises.

The community representatives reiterated their position to fight against the construction of the dam. They said that knowing the situation of the displaced families in Pangasinan makes them more determined to continue their opposition to the project. It was also announced that the March 14 activity is just one of many actions around the world. The Cordillera Peoples' Alliance also said that efforts are being made to lobby in the offices of Marubeni in Japan to make them aware of the impact of the dam project.

Several local newspapers, radio stations and TV stations sent their representatives to the press conference. After the press conference, the plans for the International Day were covered in the local and national papers, radio and TV.

March 14 - the signature campaign to support the opposition of the Itogon and Pangasinan people started at 9:00 a.m. and continued until 6:30 p.m. A total of 2,000 signatures were gathered during the day. Two centers were set up in Session Rd. to gather signatures, with a photo exhibit and streamers announcing the International Day of Action. Community representatives from Dalupirip were present to explain the issue to passersby and to solicit their support by signing. At the same time, 10,000 copies of the statement of the Shalupirip Santahnay Indigenous Peoples' Movement were distributed. The signature campaign will continue

and will be brought to other communities. All the signatures that will be gathered will be sent to the National Power Corporation, and to the foreign investors of the project namely, Marubeni of Japan, Sithe Energy Philippines and Italian-Thai Development Public Corporation. The activity was also covered by the media and several articles and pictures were published in local and national newspapers.

March 22 - A fact-finding mission will be going to the damsite in Barangay San Roque, San Manuel, Pangasinan to investigate the situation of the the displaced families and to see the status of the work on the dam which is targetted to start construction this year. Organizers of the mission include the Cordillera People's Alliance, Tongtongan ti Umili, Women Workers Program and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines-NLJ. The mission will be participated in by local and national media, NGO workers, community leaders of Dalupirip and church people. The mission will conduct an occular inspection in the area, and will hold a community meeting during which the displaced people will report on their situation. * * *

We hope you can help project what is happening here in the Philippines to other people around the world. We would also appreciate letters of support from other dam-affected people and support groups to strengthen the resolve of the people here to go on with the struggle even as the first stage of implementation of the project is starting. Letters to the Philippine Government, to the National Power Corporation and to the foreign investors telling

them of our objections to the project will also help, especially if these letters are many and come from different countries around the world.

We have other materials about the San Roque Dam which are available here for those who are interested, including a primer prepared by the Women Workers Program.

This is all we can report as of now. More updates will follow, after the fact-finding mission on March 22.

Contact information:

Jill K. Carino, Executive Director
111 Upper General Luna Rd.
Baguio City 2600
Phone & Fax: + 63 74 442 22 58
Email: wwp@is.phil.gn.apc.org

THAILAND

Friends of the People/Wildlife Fund Thailand

Action: To be announced.

Contact Information:

Prasittiporn Kan-onsri
Email: fopthai@hotmail.com
Fax: +66 2 281 1916
OR
Tara Buakamsri

Email: pisitnp@mozart.inet.co.th

Fax: +66 2 552 6083

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