



Photo by Brent Stirton/Getty Images

International Rivers

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Dear Friends,

Last year ended with the sad passing of our friend, colleague and passionate river warrior, Glenn Switkes. Glenn died of lung cancer in São Paulo, Brazil, from where he had been spearheading our Latin America work for the past 15 years.

In April our campaigns director, Aviva Imhof, traveled to Brazil to consult with local partners on how we can continue Glenn's work of stopping the hydro-electrocution of the Amazon. Together with Glenn's widow Selma and son Gabe, Aviva joined indigenous people and local activists in a memorial ceremony that ended with the scattering of Glenn's ashes in the Xingu, a major Amazon tributary.

"The ceremony was deeply moving," Aviva told me on her return, "and I felt so honored to be there. It was striking just how much Glenn was loved and respected by local activists, and how much they valued his support for their efforts to protect the Amazon."

Thankfully, the rest of 2009 brought much better news in the dam-fighting, river-protecting world.

In Mexico, communities that we've been supporting for many years had two important victories: the cancellation of Arcediano Dam near Guadalajara, and the postponement until at least 2018 of La Parota Dam near Acapulco. The La Parota communities will continue to push for the permanent cancellation of this particularly noxious project.

In other good news from Latin America, 2009 saw the cancellation or indefinite postponements of controversial dams in Colombia, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala.

Another campaign that we've long supported is that of Turkish and European NGOs against the Ilisu Dam in eastern Turkey. In 2009 several European governments finally announced they would not fund the dam. Unfortunately, Chinese funders may step into the breach and support a project that threatens to displace up to 70,000 people and drown Hasankeyf, a remarkable 10,000 year-old Kurdish city.

Pressure from International Rivers and our partners in Italy and Kenya stalled plans from the European Investment Bank, the African Development Bank and the World Bank to fund Africa's most destructive dam, Gibe 3 in southwest Ethiopia. Again, there is a strong risk that China will step in and fund this monstrous project that threatens the livelihoods of up to half a million farmers, herders and fisherfolk living along the Omo River.

The Ilisu and Gibe 3 cases highlight the importance of our "China Global" campaign, which aims to persuade Chinese banks and companies to adopt social and environmental standards that would keep them out of human rights-abusing and river-destroying dams.

On the solutions front, we supported and helped to publicize major reports on the clean energy potentials of Mozambique and Chile. We worked with the NGO Justiça Ambiental to publish *A Renewable Energy Plan for Mozambique*. The report shows how a focus on clean energy can promote greater regional equity in the country's development while also sparing the Zambezi from further harm by dams. The report's findings made headlines across the region.

On the home front, we moved our headquarters to the David Brower Center, a new state-of-the-art green building and center for progressive non-profits in downtown Berkeley.

Once again, thank you so much for your support. Our work is only possible thanks to your commitment to free-flowing healthy rivers and human rights.

Sincerely,



Patrick McCully
Executive Director

Our Mission

International Rivers' mission is to protect rivers and defend the rights of communities that depend on them. We oppose destructive dams and the development model they advance, and encourage better ways of meeting people's needs for water, energy and protection from damaging floods. To achieve this mission, we collaborate with a global network of local communities, social movements, non-governmental organizations and other partners. Through research, education and advocacy, International Rivers works to halt destructive river infrastructure projects, address the legacies of existing projects, improve development policies and practices, and promote water and energy solutions for a just and sustainable world. The primary focus of our work is in the global South.

Our Vision

We seek a world in which rivers and the ecosystems they support are valued, and the importance of the links between healthy environments and healthy societies are understood. We envision a world where development projects neither degrade nature nor impoverish people, and where all people have a voice in decisions affecting their lives and livelihoods.



2009 Program Highlights

AMAZON RIVER

In the Amazon we ramped up our campaign to stop the Belo Monte Dam on the Xingu River. We helped organize an Experts' Panel to analyze Belo Monte's environmental studies. The Panel produced a 230-page report that identified serious problems with the project's design and helped civil society and indigenous groups better understand the project's impacts. The report contributed to a delay in the environmental licensing process. We supported



the efforts of the Kayapo and other indigenous communities and worked with members of the *Movimento Xingu Vivo para Sempre* to support their campaign.

ETHIOPIA

In 2009, the Africa Program continued its aggressive campaign against Ethiopia's Gibe 3 Dam. Our efforts have succeeded in delaying all critical project funding from international funders. We published a report on the downstream indigenous communities; a critique of the project's Environmental Social Impact Assessment; and a fact sheet on the project. We supported and advised our Kenyan partners in their filing of a complaint to the African Development Bank about the impacts to Kenya's Lake Turkana, and filed our own complaint related to the project's impacts in Ethiopia. We helped build an international coalition of NGOs against the dam. Our concerns were covered by the BBC, the *Los Angeles Times*, and many other international media. We also prepared supporting documentation for an Ethiopian seeking asylum in the US after his life was threatened for speaking out against the Gibe 3 Dam.

CHILEAN PATAGONIA

Our work with allies in Chile led to further delays in the proposal to dam two rivers in Chilean Patagonia. As of this writing, the project has still not been approved by the Chilean environmental agency and many outstanding questions remain. We also generated extensive media coverage in Chile and internationally, adding to increasing pressure on the project sponsors and the Chilean government.

CHINA

Sinohydro, a company owned by the Chinese government, has become the world's most important dam builder in recent years. In 2009, the company invited International Rivers to begin the first ever dialogue between a Chinese state-owned enterprise and an advocacy organization. Sinohydro has meanwhile accepted our proposal to prepare an environmental policy, and has invited our input for it.



GUATEMALA

In 2009, International Rivers campaigners visited several communities threatened by the construction of the Xalalá Dam and conducted workshops on the process of dam building, impacts, financing of projects, and strategies to delay and stop construction.



of destructive dams. The project would affect more than 14,000 indigenous people who would lose land, crops, and other resources to the reservoir and associated construction works.

To date, local opposition to the project has kept the construction companies at bay.



MEKONG RIVER

In March, we helped to launch the Save the Mekong coalition, comprised of 25 organizations in the Mekong region and internationally, working to keep the Mekong mainstream flowing freely. The Coalition met with Thailand's Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva and delivered a 23,110 signature petition to the region's Prime Ministers, making plans to build eleven dams on the Mekong one of the region's hottest controversies. International Rivers also continued to monitor the destructive Nam Theun 2 and Theun-Hinboun dams in Laos, resulting in improved compensation measures for affected communities.



MOZAMBIQUE

We worked with a renewable energy consultant and local partners to produce *A Renewable Energy Plan for Mozambique*, which lays out a plan for developing energy sources that would make the proposed Mphanda Nkuwa Dam obsolete. The plan would share the energy wealth more equitably, and diversify the national electricity grid to help the nation adapt to climate change (which is expected to significantly harm hydro by reducing stream flow). The plan received significant media coverage in Southern Africa.

SOUTH ASIA

A massive dam-building boom in the Himalayas puts some of Asia's most important rivers at risk. We used our report, *Mountains of Concrete*, to raise awareness of the threats posed by large dams to the cultures, climate, ecosystems, and geography of the Himalayas. The report calls attention to the huge risks that dams pose for India, Pakistan, Bhutan, and Nepal. At the end of 2009, International Rivers opened a new office in India to support the region's NGOs in addressing the risks of dam building in the region.

25 Years

of Protecting Rivers and Rights



1985

First *International Dams Newsletter* published in San Francisco.

Anti-dam protests at meeting of the International Commission on Large Dams in Switzerland.

1994

On the 50th anniversary of the World Bank, NGOs issue the Manibeli Declaration, calling for a moratorium on World Bank funding for large dams around the world. Coordinated by IRN, the declaration is signed by 326 groups from 44 countries.

2001

US, UK and Italian governments cancel proposed support for the Ilisu Dam in Turkey.

2010

International Rivers India office established.
International Rivers celebrates its quarter century.

1989

Gathering in the Amazon of indigenous people, activists and international celebrities leads to canceling of plan to dam the Xingu River. World Bank denies loan for the dams.

Save the Narmada Movement formed in India.

1993

World Bank withdraws from Sardar Sarovar Dam in India after independent review confirms serious problems. Big dams become PR nightmare for World Bank. Their lending for dams plummets through the 1990s.

Calling the project "outdated and overly expensive," US Bureau of Reclamation stops providing technical support for the Three Gorges Dam.

1997

IRN first sets up overseas office, in Brazil.

IRN helps organize the First International Meeting of Dam-Affected people and their Allies held in Curitiba, Brazil.

World Bank and World Conservation Union agree to sponsor World Commission on Dams in response to opposition to dams from IRN and others.

2000

Nelson Mandela launches the report of the World Commission on Dams. Commission's findings vindicate dam critics' positions. The World Bank starts campaign to discredit the report.

Lesotho High Court launches trials against several multinationals for bribery on massive multi-dam project. Major dam building companies are found guilty, and debarred from World Bank contracts.

Hidrovia Paraguay-Parana, an industrial waterway project, halted due to opposition led by the Rios Vivos Coalition. The Hidrovia threatened South America's largest wetland, the Pantanal.

2009

La Parota and Arcediano dams in Mexico, Traveston Dam in Australia, Urrá 1 Dam in Colombia, and Patuca III Dam in Honduras are all cancelled or postponed.

Chinese version of *World Rivers Review* launched.

Save the Mekong Coalition formed.

International Rivers moves to the David Brower Center.

1988

IRN organizes international conference of dam activists from 26 countries. Attendees draw up the San Francisco Declaration, which sets out guidelines to be followed in deciding on dam projects.

1987

First issue of *World Rivers Review* is published. Publishers name themselves International Rivers Network (IRN) and are given office space by Earth Island Institute. IRN later becomes Earth Island project.

1991

Movement of Dam-Affected People formed in Brazil.

World Bank Executive Directors meet for the first time with people threatened by one of its dams, Pak Mun in Thailand.

1996

IRN goes online at www.irn.org.

1995

World Bank cancels Arun III Dam in Nepal, saying the project was too risky and that alternatives existed.

A proposed series of dams on the mainstream of the Mekong River is scrapped due to opposition.

Research reveals that tropical reservoirs can release more greenhouse gases than fossil-fuel power plants.

1999

Thai villagers occupy Pak Mun dam site for 14 months to demand compensation for lost fisheries.

"Rally for the Valley," inspired by novelist Arundhati Roy, brings thousands to march in opposition to dams in India's Narmada Valley.

1998

First International Day of Action against Dams and for Rivers, Water and Life.

2006

Hydrological analysis commissioned by IRN pushes regional governments to recognize that excess releases from dams are a major reason for the rapid shrinking of Africa's Lake Victoria.

IRN Bangkok office established.

2004

After negotiations supported by IRN, Guatemalan government agrees to reparations talks with communities harmed by Chixoy Dam.

2007

International Rivers Network changes its name to International Rivers and launches its new website internationalrivers.org

2003

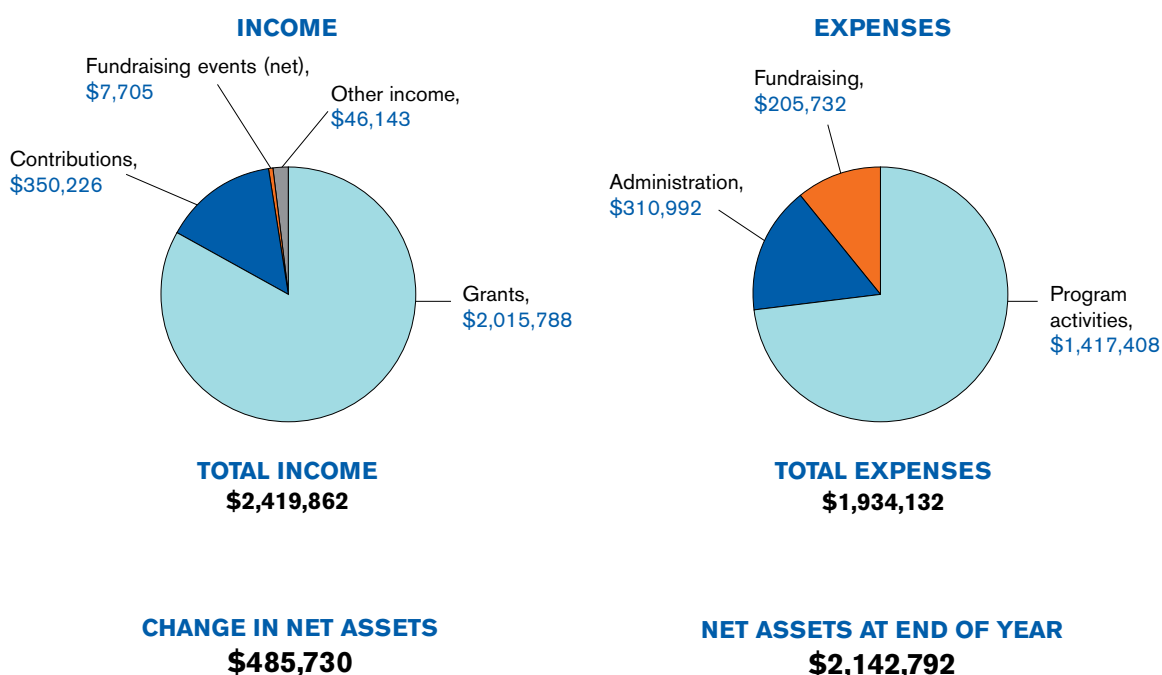
IRN sponsors Second International Meeting of Dam-Affected People and their Allies. The meeting brings 300+ people from 62 countries to Rasi Salai, Thailand.

2008

International Rivers research on Kyoto Protocol carbon offsets helps push UN to tighten project approval criteria.

Financial Report

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY – JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2009



Note: This report is based on the 2009 audited financial statements.

PLANNED GIVING

A LEGACY FOR HEALTHY RIVERS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Fund for International Rivers was established by our board of directors to provide financial support to International Rivers to enhance the long-term sustainability and viability of the organization.

Including International Rivers or the Fund for International Rivers in your will leaves a legacy of healthy rivers and human rights for future generations.

International Rivers and the Fund for International Rivers are able to accept the following planned gifts:

- Bequests
- Retirement Assets
- Insurance Policies
- Deferred Employee Benefits

Contact our Development Department for more information:
+1 510 848 1155 ext. 301 or by
email: karolo@internationalrivers.org.

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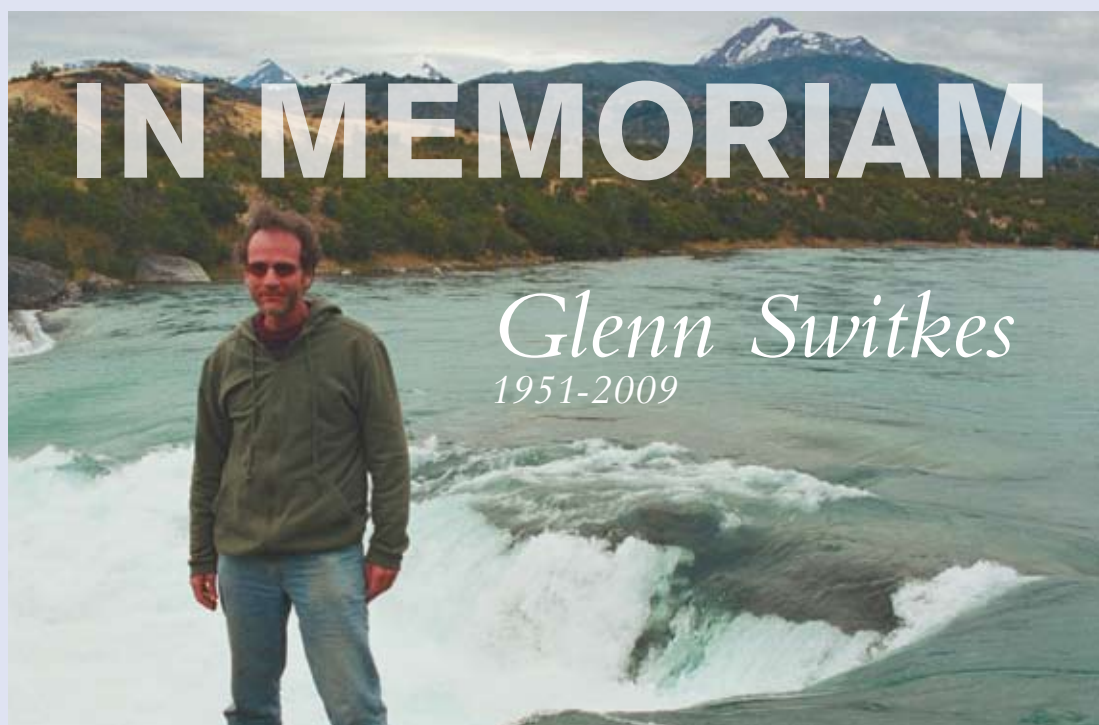
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International Rivers depends on the generosity of foundations and individuals like you. International Rivers is a registered 501(c)(3) organization and donations made to support our work are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

★ Indicates a River Healer (monthly sustainer)



International Rivers mourns the loss of our Amazon program director Glenn Switkes, a dear friend, respected colleague, and a river warrior of unbreakable passion. Glenn died on December 21, 2009 in a São Paulo hospital of complications linked to lung cancer. He was 58.

Glenn was a man of rare integrity, great humor, and political savvy. He was a much-loved inspiration and teacher to river defenders, and an effective thorn in the side of river-wrecking politicians

and bureaucrats. Heartfelt tributes to Glenn have flowed in to International Rivers from activists throughout Brazil, Latin America and the world.

We will honor and celebrate his life with a renewed fighting spirit for the rivers of the Amazon and elsewhere...

(Glenn's full obituary can be read online at www.internationalrivers.org/node/4945.)

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