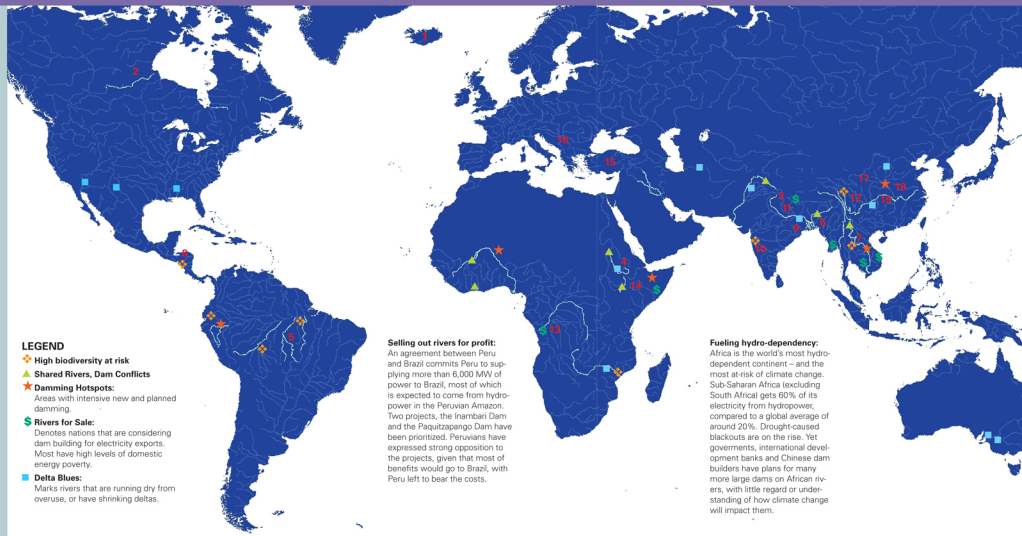


Rivers At Risk: Dam Boom Threatens A World of Rivers



1. Dams support unsustainable industries: Iceland uses more energy per capita than any other place on earth, thanks to energy-hogging aluminum smelters there. The Karahnjúkar Dam, one of Europe's largest, flooded stunning wilderness, including 60 waterfalls. Virtually all of its electricity powers one large smelter. Alcoa Aluminum has since shelved plans for more dams and smelters, but some politicians hope to build an undersea cable to export Iceland's hydropower.

2. Selling out rivers for profit: Canada is already a "hydro superpower" – some 60% of its electricity supply comes from dams. Now, its dam industry wants to launch a

multibillion-dollar dam boom to sell electricity to the US. The Rupert and Churchill rivers are key targets.

3. Climate risk: A warming climate is changing the Himalayas faster than any other region of the world. The range's mighty glaciers, the source of most large Asian rivers, are melting. Yet a slew of new hydro dams are planned, raising major concerns about dam safety and economic viability.

4. Stirling conflict: The Nile, Africa's second largest river, is key to the survival of 160 million people in 10 countries. It is also highly susceptible to climate change. Yet numerous dams are planned for its upper reaches, which will reduce runoff to dryer downstream states

and increase the potential for water conflict.

5. Displacing the indigenous: Around 25,000 indigenous people from 18 distinct ethnic groups live along the Xingu River in the Amazon basin. Plans to build the Belo Monte Dam – the third largest hydro dam in the world – would divert nearly the entire flow of the Xingu, leaving indigenous communities along a 100 km stretch of the river without water, fish, or transport.

6. Creating conflict: The Myitsone Dam planned for the Irrawaddy River has worsened conflict between the ethnic Kachin people and the military government. The dam's reservoir will

submerge important cultural sites at the Mali and N'mai Hka rivers, as well as what is widely recognized as the birthplace of Burma. Increasing conflict near the dam site has caused over 20,000 locals to flee to the Chinese border.

7. Reducing food security: The Mekong River supports the world's largest inland fishery, at least 2.6 million tons of wild fish and other aquatic resources are harvested each year. Plans to build 11 dams on the Lower Mekong threaten the livelihoods of more than 60 million people who depend on the river.

8. Damming biodiversity: The Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve is one of Honduras' most important natural and cultural heritage sites.

In 2011 the Honduran congress made a deal with China's Sino-hydro to build the first of three dams on the Patuca River. It would flood a large swath of intact rain forest that was intended to be added to the reserve. In 2011 the site joined the list of World Heritage sites in danger.

9. Strangling a lifeline: The Teesta River, called the Lifeline of Sikkim, has been so tapped for irrigation and other uses that it has largely dried up. Many fishermen and farmers are no longer able to make a living along its banks. Yet India plans to build dozens of dams along the Teesta.

10. Hotspots cooling fast: India's Western Ghats is one of eight "hottest hotspots" in the world. It is also the world's most heavily populated Biodiversity Hotspot; its rivers provide 400 million people with drinking and irrigation water and electricity from hydropower. Dozens of planned dams pose a major threat.

11. New dam builders pick up bad projects: In July 2011 the Nepali Government cancelled the West Seti Dam. In 2010 the Asian Development Bank pulled out after a campaign by local organizations showing the project's failure to comply with ADB safeguard policies. Since then, China has expressed interest in the project.

12. Sinking standards: The Upper Yangtze River is home to a third of all fish species in China. The government created a Fish Nature Reserve here as compensation for the Three Gorges Dam. Then in 2011 the government re-drew the reserve's boundaries to build Xiaonanhai Dam. The project, with two other proposed dams, is turning the last undammed part of the Yangtze River into a series of reservoirs.

13. No solution for energy poverty: The Grand Inga scheme in the Democratic Republic of Congo is the world's largest planned hydropower project. The DRC is the lowest ranked nation on the human development index. Project

proponents claim the dam could meet the energy needs of most African households, yet there is no guarantee that a megadam will bring broad-based economic growth. In fact, most Congolese live too far from the grid, and have no money to pay for electricity.

14. Human rights abuses: Dam development in Ethiopia is heavily politicized, and there is virtually no space for public debate or participation. Government repression has increased in the face of strong opposition to the Gibe III Dam, now being built on the Omo River. The controversial dam is also fueling "land grabs", which bring a new set of social concerns and abuses.

15. Cultural history drowned: With 635 large dams within its borders, Turkey is one of the world's most active dam building countries. The proposed Ilisu Dam on the Tigris River would drown the 10,000 year-old city of Hasankeyf. Other planned dams would harm the Mesopotamian Marshes in Iraq, and increase water conflict with neighbors.

16. Europe's healthiest rivers at risk: A new study reveals that the Balkan region has the healthiest rivers in Europe – and also the most proposed dams. Hundreds of large and small dams, including up to 60 large dams, threaten the "blue heart of Europe." NGOs are recommending upgrades to existing dams rather than new ones and protections for the most important river stretches.

17. World's biggest dam builder: China is now the biggest dam builder globally. Chinese companies and banks are involved in some 300 dams being built in 66 countries, particularly in Africa and Southeast Asia.

18. Rivers at breaking point: A new dam-building spree for China's major rivers was outlined in the 12th Five Year Plan. The added capacity is equivalent to building a new Three Gorges Dam every year for the next five years.

19. World's most notorious dam: The Three Gorges Dam is the world's largest hydropower project, and set records for number of people displaced (at least 1.2 million when the dam was built, and more since then), number of cities and towns flooded (13 cities, 140 towns, 1,350 villages), and length of reservoir (40 kilometers). In recent years the government has begun to acknowledge its many serious flaws.