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Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## The Culture Sector

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7 June 2012

### Subject : World Heritage properties affected by the development of dams

Dear Sir/Madam,

I hereby acknowledge receipt of your electronic messages addressing the impact of dam constructions on World Heritage properties. This is indeed a factor affecting a number of World Heritage properties, which the World Heritage Committee has been dealing with for a number of years. As you know, the Committee has also expressed its concern and urged the States Parties concerned to halt projects that clearly have an adverse impact of the Outstanding Universal Value and integrity of the World Heritage properties.

In 2010, at its 34th session in Brasilia, the World Heritage Committee also took note of an analysis of the trends on threats affecting the properties for the 2005-2009 period (document WHC-10/34.COM/7C). This study showed that the threats linked to "Utilities and service infrastructure" were mainly caused by the development of dam projects and their associated impacts. This study is available online at the following web address:  
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/34COM/documents>.

Furthermore, at its 35th session (UNESCO, 2011), the World Heritage Committee also addressed the issue of dams and other energy related megaprojects affecting World Heritage properties such as Ashur (Iraq), Niokolo-Koba National Park (Senegal), Selous Game Reserve (Tanzania), Durmitor National Park (Montenegro) and others (see Document WHC-11/35.COM/7B; available online at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/35COM/documents>).

I would like to inform you further that at its forthcoming 36th session (24 June – 6 July 2012, Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation), the World Heritage Committee will examine, within the framework of its reactive monitoring processes (Agenda items 7A and 7B), the state of conservation of a majority of the properties for which you are raising attention on your website.

For the first time this year, the state of conservation reports (documents WHC-12/36.COM/7A; 7A.Add; 7B and 7B.Add) are available for access by the public on our website at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/36COM/documents>. I strongly encourage you to consult them. I am also pleased to inform you that all debates of the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee will be live-streamed on Internet. The link will be indicated on <http://whc.unesco.org> in due course.

I thank you for your support in ensuring a better conservation of our World Heritage.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kishore Rao', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Kishore Rao  
Director  
UNESCO World Heritage Centre