



International Rivers

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

Dear Friend of International Rivers,

Last year was one of enormous changes for the US and the world. US voters elected a historic new president bringing hope to countless millions around the world; and, the global economic boom came to a shuddering halt, leaving us teetering at the edge of a global depression.

Thankfully, International Rivers was able to sustain its fundraising levels in spite of the recession, and while we had to delay planned expansion, we did not have to make serious cuts to any of our program work. While the recession is causing great economic hardship around the world, by reducing demand for energy and tightening credit markets, it has at least slowed down the depredations of the dam builders and given our climate a little breathing room by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The financial collapse also took much of the steam out of the culture of debt-fuelled overconsumption that marked the turn of the century in the US and other parts of the developed world, offering hope for the rise of a culture that better recognizes limits and values sustainability.

One of the changes last year that is likely to have the most far-reaching consequences for the work of International Rivers and the world more broadly was that the new US administration recognizes the seriousness of climate change and sees major economic benefits in the clean energy revolution.

International Rivers expanded our climate change work in 2008 with the addition of our first ever full-time climate campaigner and scientist, Dr. Payal Parekh. Our years of work showing the serious flaws in the Kyoto Protocol's carbon offsetting mechanism saw more signs of bearing fruit, with our criticisms echoed by official bodies such as the US General Accountability Office.

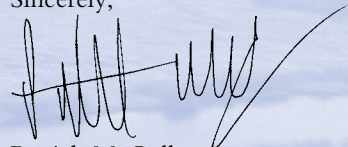
Our work and related media coverage has helped shame the CDM to better enforce its own rules. Largely because of this stricter enforcement, estimates of the number of offsets to be generated by the CDM up to 2012 are now 300 million less than predicted in 2007. This in effect means that 300 million fake Kyoto credits will be kept out of circulation. Instead of buying these fake credits, polluters in Europe and Japan will have to actually cut their emissions. To put this in context, 300 million tons of CO₂ is greater than the annual emissions of all of California's cars, trucks and trains.

In 2008 we also ramped up our campaign against the damming of wild rivers in Chilean Patagonia. We succeeded in pressuring large US lumber importer Pro-Build not to buy wood products from the Chilean companies behind these misguided projects. We then turned our attention to Home Depot, and are encouraging the home-improvement giant to follow Pro-Build's lead.

We also produced a steady stream of "think tank" publications, including *Mountains of Concrete: Dam Building in the Himalayas*. This analyzed the massive dam-building program planned for this region and the risks to dam safety and performance posed by climate change, in particular because of melting glaciers. The report underscored the message that big hydro is the wrong energy choice for a warming world. We also published *Power Surge: The Impacts of Rapid Dam Development in Laos*, a comprehensive report that made waves at a Mekong River Commission consultation on hydropower and was well received by regional dam watchers and donors.

All of this work is possible thanks to your support. We are successful in our efforts thanks to your commitment to healthy rivers and human rights.

Sincerely,



Patrick McCully
Executive Director

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International Rivers would like to thank all who supported our work in 2008 and especially:

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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.

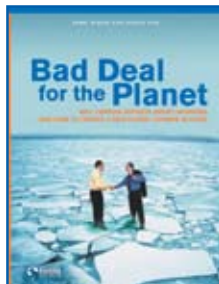
* Indicates a River Healer (monthly sustainer)



PUBLICATIONS:

*Bad Deal for the Planet:
Why Carbon Offsets Aren't
Working...and How to Create
a Fair Global Climate Accord*

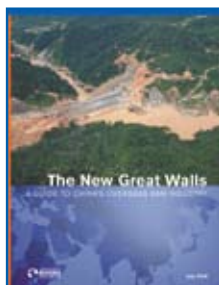
Efforts to solve the climate crisis are stumbling over poorly designed carbon-offset programs. One of the biggest programs created in Kyoto—the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)—is actually increasing greenhouse gas emissions. Our third annual “Dams, Rivers and People” report shows how the CDM is handing out billions of dollars for destructive dams and fossil fuel; it also dissects the CDM’s major flaws and lays out a Greenhouse Development Rights framework for creating true climate equity.



*The New Great Walls:
A Guide to China's
Overseas Dam Industry*

China’s overseas dam industry is building hundreds of dams around the world, particularly in Southeast Asia and Africa, but also in countries like Pakistan and Albania. What can communities impacted by these projects do to protect their rights and advocate for rivers targeted for dams built by China?

This guide provides useful information for groups concerned about dam projects in which Chinese companies and financiers are involved.



La Parota Hydroelectric Dam, which threatens to affect 100,000 people and the ecology of the Papagallo River, was stalled by a legal injunction. We are proud to stand with the Council of Communal Land Owners and Communities Against Construction of La Parota Dam and the Mexican Movement of Dam-Affected People in their struggles.

The IV Latin American People took place were provided with Latin America and destructive water meeting was also against Colombia part of the coordination with fundraising

We organized a successful gathering of Indigenous Peoples of the Xingú River Basin. The meeting resulted in a strong expression of opposition by indigenous people and other inhabitants of the Xingú to the Belo Monte Dam, and will complicate efforts by the Brazilian government to promote this socially disruptive and environmentally destructive project.

Our campaign to keep the rivers of Patagonia free-flowing enjoyed a series of successes as we pressured the transnational companies that are backing the building of destructive dams on the Baker and Pascua rivers. We also supported our Chilean partners’ efforts to debunk the dam-builders’ faulty environmental impact assessment and helped make a case for real alternatives to meet Chile’s energy needs.



2008 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

American Meeting of Dam Affected
in July 2008 in Colombia. Participants
with an overview of energy policies in
and developed regional strategies to fight
projects and promote solutions. The
a show of support for the struggle
's Urrá I Dam. International Rivers was
nating team for the meeting and helped
and creating the agenda.

We provided logistical and fundraising support to help our
local partner host a three-day meeting on the Inga hydropower
projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This meeting
was an unprecedented and critical step in addressing the
local impacts of built and planned Inga dams. Those forcibly
displaced by the original dams were never compensated, and
this meeting allowed a comprehensive dialogue between all
relevant parties to take place.

Preparations for the construction of the
3,000 MW Dibang project in Arunachal
Pradesh, India, are not moving forward as
planned, mainly because the local people
successfully boycotted public hearings and
voiced their opposition to the project. The
last public hearing attempt was boycotted
in March 2008, during the International
Day of Action for Rivers.

We released two major reports, "Power Surge:
The Impacts of Rapid Dam Development
in Laos" and "Cambodia's Hydropower
Sector and China's Involvement," that drew
public attention to the dam-building boom
now underway in the Mekong Region. We
continued to pressure the developers of the
Nam Theun 2 and Theun Hinboun dams
in Laos to keep their promises to affected
communities. In response to recent plans to
build eleven dams on the Mekong River's
mainstream, we worked with our local partners
to support a photograph exhibition in Phnom
Penh and an international public forum in
Bangkok that highlighted what would be lost
if these projects were to go ahead.

Our Africa Program Director went to South Africa to participate
in a book launch for *Electric Capitalism* (to which we contributed
a chapter), and to meet with energy academics and activists about
how we can support local efforts to advance energy efficiency and
renewables in South Africa.



WATER



LIFE

Giant River Otter © janetinnphotography.com

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MATCHING GIFTS FROM CORPORATIONS

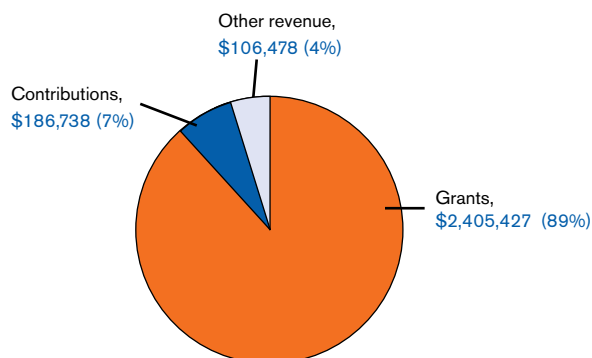
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Metropolitan Group
QUALCOMM Matching Gift Program
Salesforce.com Foundation
Charles Schwab Employee Matching Gifts Program

* Indicates a River Healer
(monthly sustainer)

Financial Report

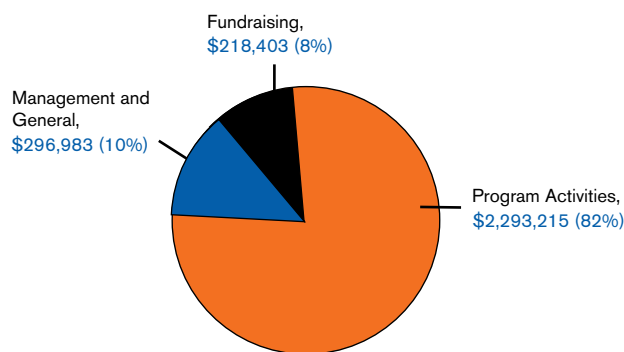
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY – JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2008

INCOME



TOTAL INCOME \$2,698,643

EXPENSES



TOTAL EXPENSES \$2,808,601

PLANNED GIVING

A LEGACY FOR HEALTHY RIVERS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Fund for International Rivers (FIR) was established by the board of directors of International Rivers. The FIR is a "Supporting Organization" for International Rivers as defined under Section 509(a)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

The mission of the FIR is to increase the effectiveness of International Rivers by providing financial support that enhances the long-term stability 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
- Insurance Policies
- Retirement Assets
- Deferred Employee Benefits

All participants in International Rivers or the Fund for International Rivers Legacy Program are honored with membership in our Legacy Society – a group of people who have demonstrated a deep commitment to the cause of healthy rivers and human rights.

Contact our Development Department for more information:
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or by email: karolo@internationalrivers.org.

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INTERNATIONAL RIVERS' 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.



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