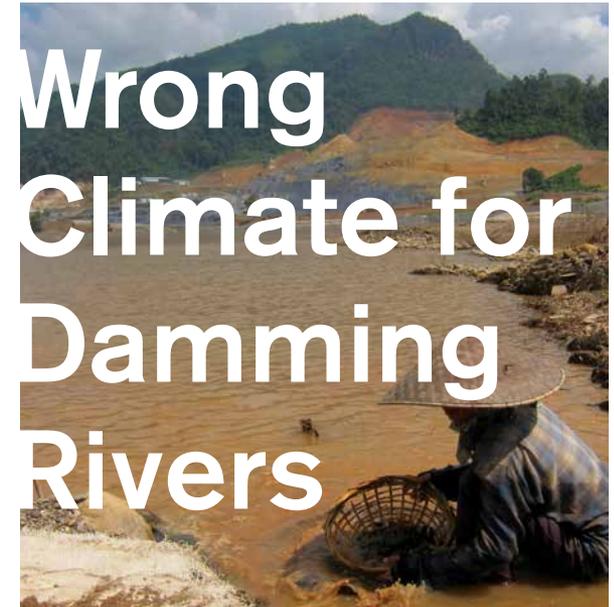


Annual Report 2012

Growing the movement for healthy rivers & human rights



Dear River Lovers and Defenders,

In 2012, International Rivers continued to deftly navigate the struggles to defend rivers at risk around the world.

We strengthened our regional offices in dam-building hot spots and added staff and resources to better support our movement and local partners in Brazil, India, South Africa and Thailand. Highlights of our regional initiatives included:

- Fighting for food security for millions of people on the Mekong River in Southeast Asia;
- Creating awareness of the climate risks of dams on the Zambezi;
- Providing training workshops and policy advocacy to advance environmental flows for healthy rivers in India; and
- Working in solidarity with indigenous people in the Amazon to protect their rivers from destructive big dams.

At the heart of International Rivers' work is our belief that the health and vitality of rivers and communities is inextricably connected. Part of what makes us unique is that we focus on protecting rivers and the rights of communities all over the world who are suffering from the same patterns of destructive development. We doggedly pursue solutions that will work for both people and the planet, working hand-in-hand with the vulnerable communities whose rights and livelihoods are most affected by the damaging consequences of mega-dams.

As Amazonian indigenous leader Valdenir Munduruku recently said in Brazil:

They [the government] want to say that they will build dams on our land and then see what we want in return. And we do not want anything in return. We want our river free and our nature preserved. The Minister says he wants to consult with indigenous peoples, but that the government's decision to build the dams has already been made. What kind of consultation is that?

International Rivers is working for a just and sustainable future where local communities' rights and aspirations – like those of the Munduruku in Brazil and the Turkana people of Kenya – are fully part of the democratic process of managing our shared river heritage. This past year, we added six new members to our Board of Directors, injecting new expertise and enthusiasm into building the financial strength and strategic effectiveness of International Rivers. Our collective success is only possible with the crucial support of our community of engaged river defenders.

Thank you for all that you do!



Jason

Jason Rainey
Executive Director

Deborah

Deborah Moore
Chair, Board of Directors

Mission

International Rivers protects rivers and defends the rights of communities that depend on them. We work to stop destructive dams and promote water and energy solutions for a just and sustainable world.

Vision

Rivers are vital to sustaining all life on earth. We seek a world where healthy rivers and the rights of local communities are valued and protected. We envision a world where water and energy needs are met without degrading nature or increasing poverty, and where people have the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives.

As you read this report, you will learn more about our work from the global and local lens, including our 2012 flagship campaigns:

[Amazônia Viva – Page 4](#)

[Save the Mekong – Page 6](#)

[Wrong Climate for Damming Rivers – Page 8](#)

How We Work

International Rivers protects rivers and rights while promoting real solutions for meeting water, energy and flood management needs. We believe in the power of people to make change happen and to champion the movement for healthy rivers and human rights. To do this, we work towards the following:

Empowering civil society

We have long played a key role in building the global river-protection movement and we continually strive to broaden and strengthen its reach. We foster grassroots organizations in more than 60 countries and build the capacity of our regional partners by providing technical and strategic advice to activists and affected people.

Changing the terms of the debate

We work to reform the top-down, opaque decision-making processes that accompany large dam projects. We seek to ensure that important social and environmental issues are not swept under the rug and that all communities have the opportunity to meaningfully and effectively participate in local decision-making processes.

Stopping destructive projects and addressing legacy dams

We discourage financial, government and industry support of harmful river projects. We hold responsible parties accountable for the damages from dams by advocating for social reparations and ecological restoration.

Raising awareness

Through social media, publications, presentations and media work, we raise awareness about the deplorable environmental, economic and human rights impacts of big dams and the viability of better options. By amplifying the voices of the people directly affected by large projects, we ensure that their opinions are included in the ongoing public debates about alternative models of development.

Promoting solutions

We promote efficient, decentralized and just solutions to meeting our water and energy needs that will alleviate poverty and protect our planet. We help partners find viable alternatives to destructive big dams through in-depth research and then support them as they present such analyses to decision makers.

Amazônia Viva

Ashaninka children watch the Ene River in the Peruvian Amazon in front of their village – an area that would be flooded by a dam.

From our office in Brazil, International Rivers has been working for nearly 20 years to protect threatened rivers, biodiversity and indigenous communities. Our Amazon Program aims to strengthen grassroots mobilization, support innovative communications and advocacy strategies, and increase the accountability of Brazilian public and private institutions.

From the headwater rivers in the Andes to the forest plains of Brazil, there are more than 150 dams planned for the Amazon Basin, including 60 large dams. Brazil's industrial growth model is driving this new dam boom, which would electrify the extractive industries in the Amazon rainforest and threaten the livelihoods and cultures of the thousands of indigenous people who rely on healthy rivers.

The Amazon Basin:

- Is home to 60% of the planet's remaining tropical rainforests and the source of the Earth's greatest biodiversity
- Drains an area nearly the size of the continental US
- Is the world's largest source of freshwater, contributing 20% of global river flows into our oceans
- Is threatened by 60 new large dams including the Belo Monte Dam, which would divert the flow of the Xingu River, devastate an extensive area of the Brazilian rainforest, and displace over 20,000 people



Ashaninka women on the shores of the Ene River in the Peruvian Amazon.

What are we campaigning for in the Amazon?

- To halt construction of the most destructive dams in the Amazon, particularly in the Xingu, Tapajós and Marañón river basins
- To shift Brazil's energy plans to reduce hydropower dependency and to capitalize on abundant wind and solar resources
- To increase transparency and accountability of key financial institutions and the Brazilian government
- To strengthen and connect regional movements to effectively resist on-river energy projects, advance the rights of indigenous people and other river-dependent communities, and protect the biodiversity of the Amazon



On June 15, 2012, demonstrators opened a channel across an earthen coffer dam to symbolically free the Xingu River.



Patagonia, Chile, Rio Baker Sin Represas.

2012: The State of the Campaign

International Rivers continued to work closely with indigenous people, social movements and NGOs to raise awareness and public pressure for accountability of the Brazilian government. Despite gross violations of domestic and international legislation on human rights and environmental protection, the government forged ahead with the [Belo Monte Dam](#) and a series of other destructive dam projects in the Amazon. Our work with local partners focused largely on strengthening grassroots education and organizing, support for legal strategies in defense of human rights, and calling for transparency and effective safeguards of the Brazilian National Development Bank.

In June, we helped organize [Xingu+23](#), a large gathering of indigenous people and other affected groups – along with activists from Brazil and around the world – to protest the Belo Monte project. The gathering included the symbolic breaching of a coffer dam and freeing of the Xingu River 23 years after the historic first meeting of indigenous people in 1989. The action was carried out on the eve of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (also known as [Rio+20](#)). Days later in Rio de Janeiro, a series of public events and protests denounced attempts to market Belo Monte and other destructive dams as “clean energy” for a green economy.

Other Latin America Program Highlights

In 2012, our Latin America team worked closely with dam-affected communities in Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Guatemala and Chile to raise awareness about threats to their rivers and support community resistance to destructive projects. In [Peru](#), we supported a legal injunction by the Ashanika people of the Ene River against the Peru-Brazil Energy Agreement. We released an alternative power development plan for [Guatemala](#) that focuses on energy efficiency and renewables while maintaining the health of the country’s rivers, and worked closely with Chixoy Dam-affected communities seeking justice and reparations.

Working with partners in the [Patagonia Sin Represas](#) campaign, we continued to stall the HidroAysén project in Chile through legal challenges, public scrutiny and widespread opposition. In May, Chilean company Colbún indefinitely suspended work on the transmission line EIA due to a lack of public and political agreement, leaving HidroAysén’s future uncertain.

Save the Mekong

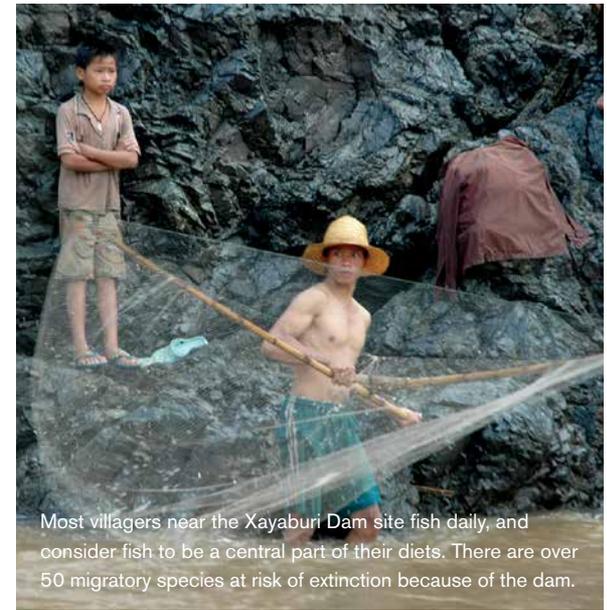
Thai villagers protest against the Thai government buying electricity from the Xayaburi Dam in Laos. Laos continues to build the dam, despite the lack of an agreement between the four Mekong River Commission countries of Laos, Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia.

International Rivers has been at the frontline of efforts to protect the Mekong River Basin, the lifeblood for millions of people who rely on this river for their livelihoods and food security.

Working closely with partners on the ground, International Rivers helps coordinate the Save the Mekong campaign, mobilizing regional and international responses to the threat posed by large dam schemes on the mainstream and tributary rivers.

Our vision for success in the Mekong:

- Xayaburi Dam construction is cancelled, which would create a precedent of protection
- Mekong River Commission member governments work together to protect the Mekong River – including needs of the people – and to cancel plans to build mainstream dams



Most villagers near the Xayaburi Dam site fish daily, and consider fish to be a central part of their diets. There are over 50 migratory species at risk of extinction because of the dam.

2012: The State of the Campaign

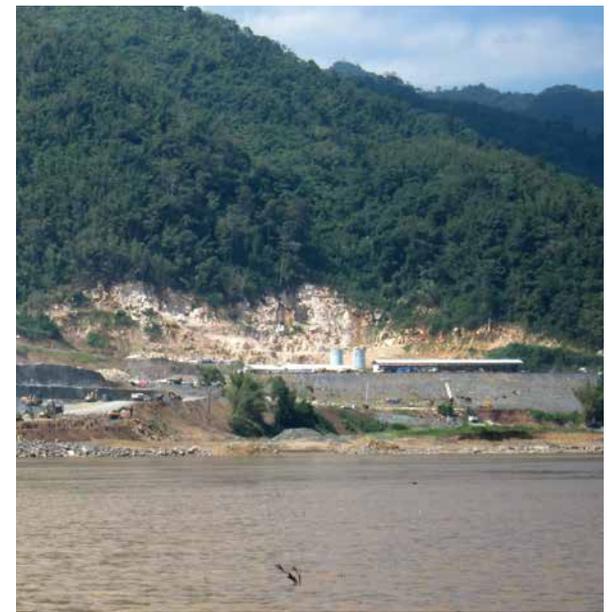
In March of 2012, after years of advocating for robust and transparent scientific evaluation of the impacts of the proposed [Xayaburi Dam](#), our campaign reached a major milestone: the downstream nations of Cambodia and Vietnam called for a five-year moratorium on dam construction until further studies could be completed. Months later, International Rivers conducted a fact-finding visit to the dam site and exposed that Laos was continuing to build the dam despite the lack of a regional agreement. Subsequently, this led to high-level statements by concerned governments – including US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton – urging Laos to postpone construction on the project.



Thai villagers protest Laos' illegal construction of the Xayaburi Dam during the Asia Europe Summit. 60 million people's livelihoods and cultures are connected with the Mekong River's natural cycles.



The Xayaburi Dam site, taken during a field visit in October 2012.



Pianporn Deetes
International Rivers' Thailand
Campaign Coordinator

The Mekong River is the main lifeline for past and future generations in Thailand.

In an era when countries are opening up to free trade and trying to boost trans-border investment, corporate giants in the region scramble to reap benefits from smaller, resource-rich countries like Laos, Cambodia and Burma.

As investors – with support from their governments – seek only to maximize profits, they pay little attention to the impacts on local villagers and river ecology. They forget that environmental problems have no boundaries and that they, too, cannot avoid the negative consequences of their own projects.

I hope Thais can show a “big heart” and help protect the natural resources of the region as if they were ours. Environmental protection has no boundaries after all.

Other Highlights from Southeast Asia

In addition to our Save the Mekong campaign, International Rivers expanded our support for civil society partners who are working to protect the Irrawaddy and Salween rivers in [Burma](#) and an indigenous people's movement that is campaigning against a cascade of dams in Sarawak, [Malaysia](#).

We documented testimonials of villagers who have been negatively impacted by Mekong tributary projects in southern [Laos](#) and are using these cases to pressure the regional decision-makers and international financial institutions responsible for these dams. Our role is especially important as hydropower issues inside Laos remain politically sensitive. This prevents Lao civil society and citizens from holding project developers accountable for the far-reaching social and environmental consequences of destructive dam projects.



The Save the Mekong campaign has inspired actions throughout the region, including on the Salween River in Burma.

Wrong Climate for Damming Rivers

The Mekong River near the construction site for the Xayaburi Dam.

Climate change is often used as a justification for the new global dam-building boom. Hundreds of large dams are proposed in areas likely to face great hydrological uncertainty, including in the Himalayas, Africa, the Amazon, the Mekong and China. Dams also profoundly harm the ecological services provided by the world's major rivers, making it harder for societies to adapt to a changing climate. Large dams – especially in the tropics – are also a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, which is often not factored into their impact assessments. While there is uncertainty in hydrological forecasts, one thing is clear: it's the wrong climate for damming our rivers.

That's why International Rivers advocates for national and international strategies that promote innovative approaches to meeting energy, water and poverty reduction goals without sacrificing the health of rivers and river-dependent communities. We counter the dam industry's greenwashing of destructive dams and encourage more sustainable river basin management practices and policies.

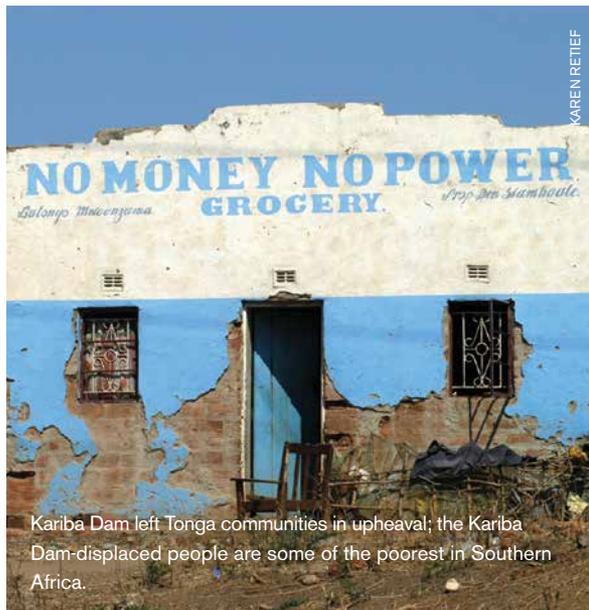
In the face of an uncertain climate, healthy rivers are more important than ever before for the health of our planet.



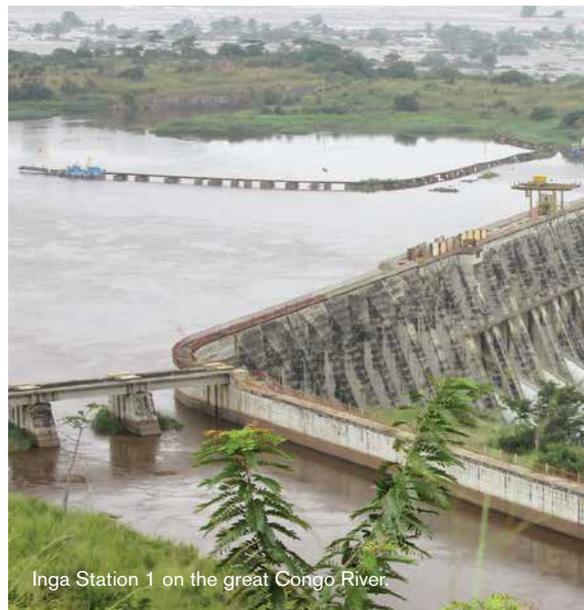
Protesting the Barro Blanco Dam, Panama.

Why is it the wrong climate for big dams?

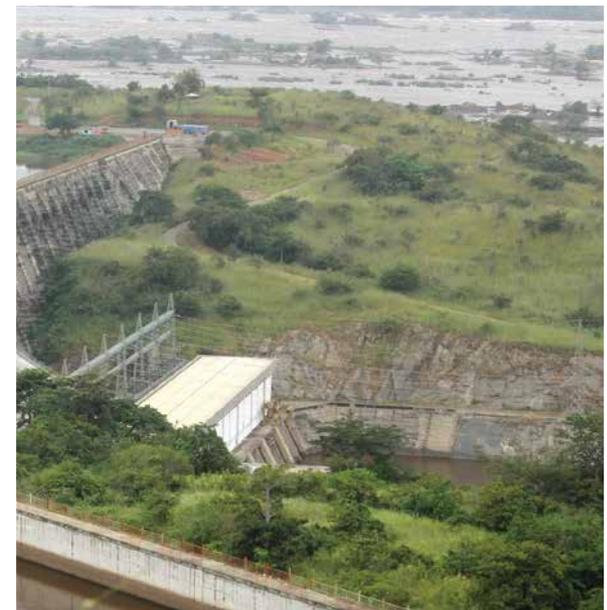
- Big dams are at huge risk from climate change's impacts on river flows
- Healthy rivers are key to successful climate adaptation – especially for the world's poorest, who are at greatest risk from climate change
- Large reservoirs can be significant sources of greenhouse gases



Kariba Dam left Tonga communities in upheaval; the Kariba Dam-displaced people are some of the poorest in Southern Africa.



Inga Station 1 on the great Congo River.



2012: The State of the Campaign

Our international network of climate champions put out a call for major policy reforms within the Clean Development Mechanism, identifying why destructive dams in the Amazon and Southeast Asia should not receive carbon offsets. We also produced a strong analysis of the climate risks of dams on the Zambezi entitled *A Risky Climate for Southern African Hydro*, which included a short video about the key risks. Further, our Climate Team worked with our regional programs to raise awareness at the local and national levels about the wrong climate for damming rivers.

Other Policy Program Highlights

International Rivers' Policy Program works to strengthen the social and environmental policies of institutions, corporations and banks responsible for funding and building destructive dams.

We advocate for transformations in infrastructure development strategies of institutions with an emphasis on poverty reduction, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and environmental protection. We support our regional programs, civil society and dam-threatened communities through policy analysis and capacity-building.

In 2012, International Rivers worked globally to draw attention to the risks of dam building and greenwashing. At the [6th World Water Forum in France](#), we worked with partners to protest greenwashing from the dam industry's Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol, and participated in high-level debates on the role of water storage in climate resilience. At the [G20 Summit](#) in Mexico, we drew media attention to the folly of the world's major economies promoting the Grand Inga Dam as a singular solution to energy poverty in Africa. At the [Rio+20](#) conference in Brazil, we partnered with local activists to protest the government and corporations ramming through construction of destructive hydropower dams on the Amazon's key rivers.

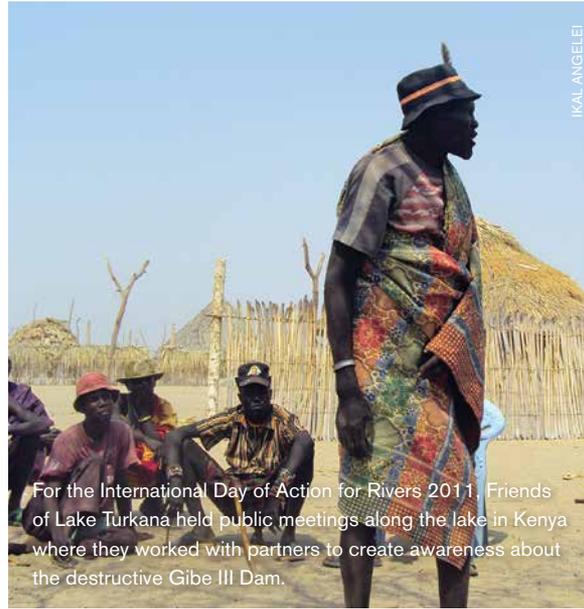
Other Program Highlights

Africa Program

International Rivers' Africa Program works to encourage African governments to diversify their energy sources to avoid becoming excessively hydropower-dependent, to reduce energy poverty, and to develop decentralized clean energy where possible.

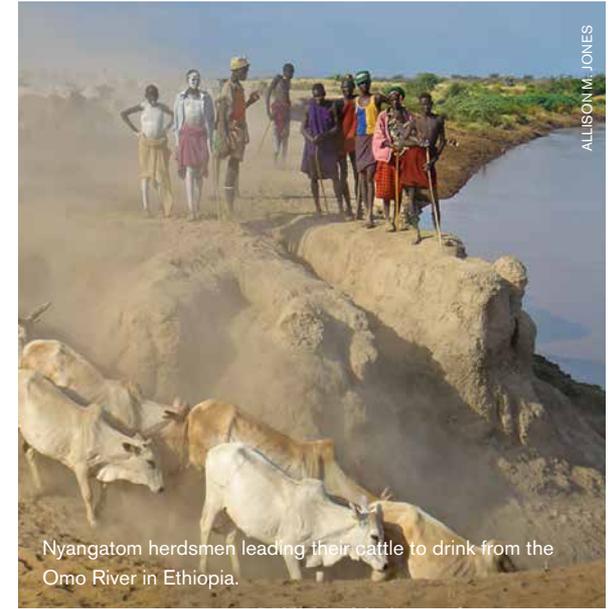
Working within our *Wrong Climate for Damming Rivers* campaign in 2012, the Africa Program published a comprehensive report on the hydrological and financial risks of building more large dams on the [Zambezi River](#) in the face of climate change (see page 6 for more details). This report continues to be used in our campaigns against the Mphanda Nkuwa and Batoka Gorge dams. If built, these dams would fail to meet long-term electricity production goals, while irreversibly impacting the people and wildlife of the Zambezi Delta and flooding the magnificent gorges and river habitat below Victoria Falls.

Ikal Angelei, founder of Friends of Lake Turkana (FoLT) in Kenya, received the prestigious [Goldman Environmental Prize](#) in April 2012. A long-time partner of International Rivers, FoLT led the successful campaign to halt international funding for the [Gibe III Dam](#), which would choke the Omo River and dry up Lake Turkana.



IKAL ANGELEI

For the International Day of Action for Rivers 2011, Friends of Lake Turkana held public meetings along the lake in Kenya where they worked with partners to create awareness about the destructive Gibe III Dam.



ALLISON M. JONES

Nyangatom herdsman leading their cattle to drink from the Omo River in Ethiopia.

In East Africa, International Rivers worked in partnership with the Kenyan organization Friends of Lake Turkana to apply pressure on the Ethiopian government for pushing ahead with construction of the [Gibe III Dam](#). This project would dam the Omo River, choking the lifeline of Lake Turkana, a World Heritage Site in Kenya that supports a quarter of a million people.

On the upper Nile River, we monitored Ethiopia's plans to build the largest dam on the continent – the [Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam](#). These dam developments are shrouded in secrecy and linked to poor human rights records. Working with our partner organizations in Africa and our Policy Program, we have put the US government – as one of Ethiopia's major financial aid sources – and the World Bank on notice for their roles in abetting non-compliant dam developments that are intensifying regional conflicts in the Nile Basin.

Other Program Highlights

South Asia Program

The [Himalaya Mountains](#) are the tallest in the world and host the greatest biodiversity on the Indian sub-continent. There are more than 500 dams planned or under construction in the Ganges and Brahmaputra river basins, which threaten freshwater environments and the cultural survival of indigenous people in the region.

With so many threats to river health, International Rivers has been organizing with local partners on upstream policy reforms. With a strategic focus on improving the laws in India that sanction new dams – and by integrating the leading science and best practices on environmental flows and coordinated river basin management throughout the region – International Rivers has shifted the public policy dialogue in the region.

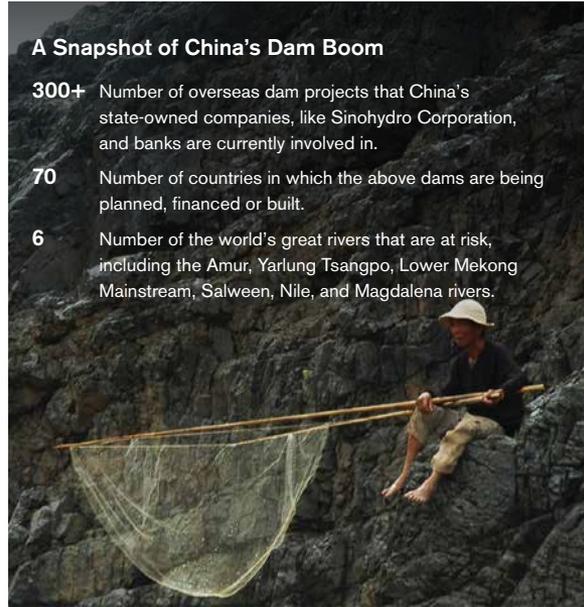
In 2012 we commissioned a [ground-breaking report on environmental flows](#) for South Asia, characterizing the negative impacts of dam operations on downstream aquatic communities and identifying key policy recommendations for the operation of existing and new dams. Through workshops with national partners and public officials in India, some key recommendations from the report have been accepted and implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

Further utilizing our grassroots approach to river protection, we worked closely with local partners to:

- Advance public-interest legal actions against high-profile hydropower schemes that violate existing laws and procedures to bring scrutiny to India's fast-tracking of large hydro dams without adequate consultation and environmental review

A Snapshot of China's Dam Boom

- 300+** Number of overseas dam projects that China's state-owned companies, like Sinohydro Corporation, and banks are currently involved in.
- 70** Number of countries in which the above dams are being planned, financed or built.
- 6** Number of the world's great rivers that are at risk, including the Amur, Yarlung Tsangpo, Lower Mekong Mainstream, Salween, Nile, and Magdalena rivers.



- Mobilize opposition to destructive dam projects on the [Teesta River](#) – a key biological and cultural diversity hotspot in northeast India and Bangladesh
- Document unique natural and cultural sites threatened by new dams and advocate for declaring reaches of the Teesta River in the Indian state of Sikkim as a UNESCO [World Heritage Site](#)
- Coordinate civil society groups and other stakeholders to advance their strategies in advocating for trans-boundary water sharing on the Indus River in [Pakistan](#) and [India](#) and for protecting rivers in [Nepal](#); and for engaging government officials in [Bhutan](#), which is rapidly developing hydropower projects for exporting electricity to India

China Program

China has emerged as the world's biggest dam builder and financier – both domestically and internationally. Since the government lacks strong commitments to environmental and social protection, the Chinese dam-building industry is one of the largest threats to sustaining freshwater ecosystems.

International Rivers plays a catalyzing role for policy reform and strategic advice to grassroots organizations campaigning against destructive overseas dam projects by Chinese corporations.

As a result of several years of policy dialogue between our China Program and Sinohydro Corporation, the world's largest dam builder adopted company-wide environmental and social standards in late 2011. The new policy meets the highest international standards, including a commitment to the World Bank safeguard standards. International Rivers published a report in 2012 called [The New Great Walls: A Guide to China's Overseas Dam Industry](#), which summarizes key aspects of Sinohydro's environmental policy for communities impacted by Sinohydro projects.

Our China Program also supports communities throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America advocating for alternatives to destructive dams on their home rivers. The suspension of Burma's destructive Myitsone Dam in late 2011 prompted the Chinese overseas dam industry to reassess their practices in 2012 and marked a shift in that country's path toward more inclusive governance. We also assessed impacts to communities and their local environments threatened by proposed Chinese-backed dams in Laos, Ethiopia and Colombia.

2012 Donors

Thank you to the supporters and members of the movement for healthy rivers and human rights.

All of the people and organizations below are a critical part of the movement we've helped to build over the past quarter century – a movement of river defenders who are standing their ground to protect livelihoods, oppose destructive dams, and advance energy and water solutions.

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Mary M. McPherson
Seth Mensah
Edith Mirante
Colleen Mlecoch & Janet Anderson
Laurel & Grant Moorhead
Paul Moss
Alison G. Murray
Gail Myers
Carey Myslewski
Jean Naples
Suresh Nautiyal
Rael Nidess
Yoko Nishida
Kimberly O'Connor
Meaveen O'Connor
Wick Pancoast & Carrie Wilson
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Judy & David Plott
Darlene Pratt
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Norma Quintana
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Susan Rashkis
Nancy Reichard
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James & Gisele Robertson
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Wendy Wilson
Aaron Wolf
Amy Yu
Eddie Yuen
Deborah Zierten
Scott Zimmermann
Helen Zipperlen

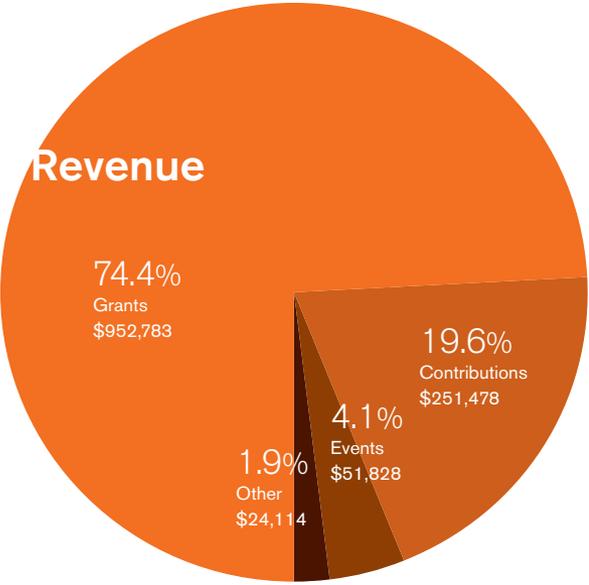
UP TO \$34

Eileen Adams
Martin Arnould
Lars-Olof Arvids
Deborah Austin
Marcus Bailie
Juliaan Bakker
Bill Bardeen
Brian Behle
Michael Beiler
Shay Black
Richard Bloom
Margot Breidahl
Elizabeth Brink

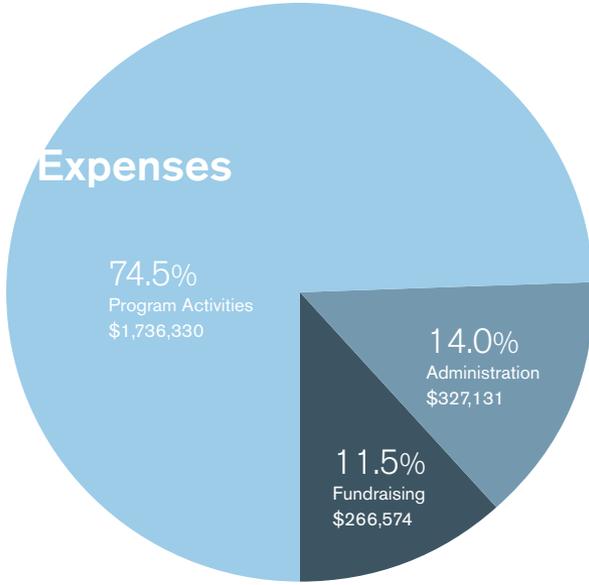
Helena Brykarz
Francis Butterworth & Patricia Ramirez
Liz Carlton
Nancy Carroll
Erwin Castellino
Ondrej Chaloupka
Sampson Chan
Michelle Chan
Debra Cleaver
Linda Connor
Kate Crusader
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William Dietrich
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Udi Lazimy
Joseph Lee & Susan Eisner
Tanja Lehmann
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Frank Lewin
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Stewart Wiggers
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Cindy Wilson Gattenby
Gail Youngelson
Theresa Ziadie
Dominic Ziegler
Marc Zimmerman

Financial Report



TOTAL INCOME: \$1,280,203



TOTAL EXPENSES: \$2,330,035

Starting Balance: \$3,013,339
Total Revenue: \$1,280,203
Total Expenses: (\$2,330,035)
Ending Balance: \$1,963,507

To obtain a copy of International Rivers' most recent audited financial statement or IRS 990 form, please contact membership@internationalrivers.org.

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Cymie Payne
Leonard Sklar
Scott Spann
Rebecca Tarbotton

In Memoriam



Rebecca Tarbotton

July 30, 1973 –
December 26, 2012

Executive Director of
Rainforest Action Network

International Rivers
Board Member

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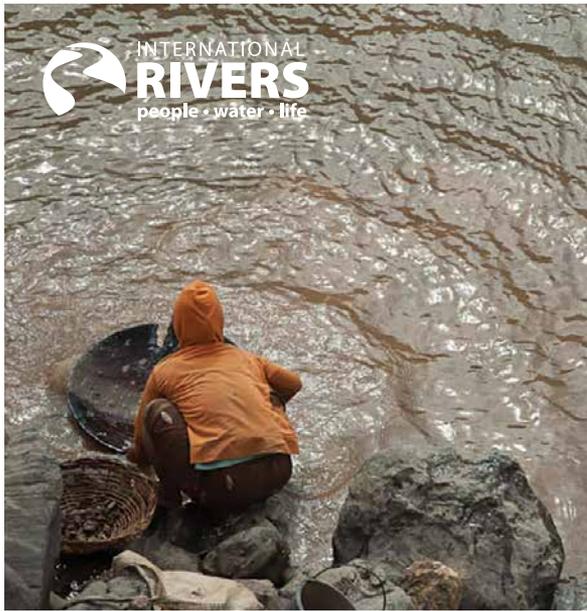
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Ravindranath
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Neeraj Vagholikar

Intern and Volunteer Program

In 2012 International Rivers welcomed 14 interns and volunteers in our Berkeley and regional offices. They helped create useful translations, more accessible communication tools and thoughtful research projects, and provided infrastructure support. Our 2012 interns and volunteers included:

- Sabine Johnson-Reiser, who helped to produce an accurate and timely bilingual spreadsheet of major dam projects in China
- Jenny Binstock, a public policy Masters candidate, who conducted research on climate adaptation and then led a group of UCLA students to produce a report on assessing the climate resilience of dams and dam-affected communities

2012 Interns and Volunteers: Simone Adler, Jenny Binstock, Katherine Brousseau, Sinan Chu, Colleen Cowles, Charlie Dubbe, Laney Ennis, Annette Fay, Xin Guo, Carly Patterson, Dan Ruan, Sebastian Thisted, Stephanie Thorne, and Yang Yang.



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Vickie Bell
Development Director

Peter Bosshard
Policy Director

Elizabeth Brink
Digital Director/Day of Action for Rivers Coordinator

Sandy Cappelli
Bookkeeper/Office Manager

Pianporn Deetes
Thailand Campaign Coordinator

Chochoe Devaporihartakula
Southeast Asia Administrative Assistant

Inanna Hazel
Director of Finance and Operations

Kirk Herbertson
Southeast Asia Policy Coordinator

Zachary Hurwitz
Policy Program Coordinator

Aviva Imhof
Campaigns Director

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Digital Administrator

Tania Lee
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Berklee Lowrey-Evans
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Patagonia Campaign Coordinator

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