

ANNA BJERDE
Managing Director, Operations

November 19, 2024

Mr. Joshua Klemm
Executive Director
International Rivers
344 20th Street
Oakland, CA

Dear Mr. Klemm and co-signatories,

Thank you for your letter of October 23, and for sharing your concerns about World Bank Group support for large hydropower projects. The World Bank Group undertakes hydropower projects to scale up renewable energy, support economic and social development, enhance climate resilience, and provide sustainable and affordable electricity in pursuit of our mission to end extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity on a livable planet.

The World Bank works closely together with development partners and client countries to harness the power of renewable energy to green grids, increase access, and keep electricity affordable. Hydropower is an important element in transitioning country and regional power systems to renewable energy because it offers flexible capacity and ensures a stable and reliable power supply should wind or solar sources experience interruptions.

We recognize that developing hydropower can have significant social and environmental implications. However, when managed correctly, risks associated with hydropower development can be minimized and managed positive benefits for communities can be delivered. We are committed to supporting countries to develop and finance hydropower projects that are well-suited to local conditions and resilient to climate change. We see our role as helping countries which have decided to develop their hydropower potential do so in a manner that incorporates international best practices and minimizes possible negative impacts.

Our Environmental and Social Framework, with its standards on social and environmental risk assessment, involuntary resettlement, biodiversity conservation, stakeholder engagement, cultural heritage, and community health and safety - which has a dedicated annex on dam safety – applies to hydropower projects, and will help preempt, manage, and mitigate negative impacts.

In this context, we welcome your interest in the Bank’s work in the sector, in particular about ensuring that impacts on ecosystems and local communities are minimized, and that they benefit from these projects.

Thank you for the chance to engage on the role of hydropower. We are committed to supporting countries to find sustainable solutions to their development needs. Achieving our mission of ending poverty and boosting prosperity on a livable planet requires informed decisions; we appreciate your partnership as we tackle critical challenges. We also look forward to continuing this conversation. Towards this end, Mr. Demetrios Papathanasiou, Global Director for Energy and Extractives at the World Bank (dpapathanasiou@worldbank.org), would be happy to meet with you and engage on the World Bank's approach to hydropower.

You may also wish to find out more about our partnership with the African Development Bank and other development partners, called [Mission 300](#). This ambitious initiative aims to connect 300 million people to electricity in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030.

We thank you again for your letter and remain available to continue this important conversation.

Sincerely,



Anna Bjerde
Managing Director, Operations
The World Bank

Cc: Victoria Kwakwa, Regional Vice President, Eastern and Southern Africa, The World Bank
Antonella Bassani, Regional Vice President, Europe and Central Asia, The World Bank
Martin Raiser, Regional Vice President, South Asia, The World Bank
Ed Mountfield, Vice President, Operations Policy and Country Services, The World Bank
Juergen Voegelé, Vice President, Planet Vice Presidency, The World Bank
Guangzhe Chen, Vice President, Infrastructure Vice Presidency, The World Bank
Albert Zeufack, Country Director for Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sao Tome and Principe, The World Bank
Tatiana Proskuryakova, Country Director for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, The World Bank
David Sislen, Country Director for Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives, The World Bank

Bcc: Jay Heimbach, ECRVP
Sumir Lal, Director, ECRRC
Natalia Cieslik, External Affairs Advisor, ECRIM
Seynabou Sakho, Director of Strategy and Operations, MDOPS
Ashley Taylor, Economic Adviser, MDOPS
Stephanie Rogers, Senior Financial Specialist, MDOPS
Amit Dar, Director for Strategy and Operations, AFEVP
Nicole Klingen, Director for Strategy and Operations, SARVP
Carolina Sanchez, Director for Strategy and Operations, ECAVP
Renaud Seligmann, Director for Strategy and Operations, GGSVP
Sebastian Molineus, Director for Strategy and Operations, GGIVP
Demetrios Papathanasiou, Global Director, IEEDR
AFEVP Front Office
ECAVP FO Staff
SARVP Core Front Office Team
OPSVP FO Team
ECR FO Staff
GGSVP FO
GGIVP FO Core