

International and national regulation for hydropower investments provide a complex set of rules, roles, and responsibilities, often linked to international standards and financing safeguards. These are intended to reduce risks to investors, government, civil society and the environment. However, recent research suggests that, best practice environmental and social safeguards are not systematically applied as they are rarely mandatory. The risk that this brings is therefore carried by the private sector (i.e. financiers, owners, operators), communities and societies affected by dam construction. These social and environmental risks should be more effectively recognised and regulated for by the public sector agencies responsible, and the bar set higher by those investors who voluntarily promote environmental and social safeguard compliance. The result of this is a high degree of variability in the quality of social and environmental outcomes, high project transaction costs, delays, cancellation – and a lack of the benefit sharing ideals often championed by hydropower projects. This workshop will bring together different perspectives concerning voluntary versus regulatory transparency and disclosure to reduce risk for investors, and to ensure better hydropower projects for local communities and downstream ecosystems and other water users.

Participants and the audience will be challenged to debate a series of perspective presentations to better understand how social and environmental safeguards can be improved and what lessons can be learned from other development activities. The seminar will purposefully present cases which will create debate and open up the often unspoken challenges of developing hydropower using regulatory frameworks which may not be clear and may be poor in performance for all those concerned in the value chain of providing sustainable energy.

PROGRAMME

Chair: Alex Marks, Oxford University. Former Manager of the Australian Government's Mekong Water Resources Program.

09:00

Welcome and Opening Remarks

James Dalton, IUCN Water Programme and Jamie Skinner, IIED

PART 1

09:10

Watered Down? A summary presentation on the review of social and environmental safeguards for large dam projects: risks faced by investors?

Jamie Skinner, IIED

09:30

Nam Theun 2 hydroelectric project (Laos) : a financially, socially and environmentally viable project

Jean Comby, Electricité de France

09:50

Build Operate Transfer and private sector led hydropower development: assessing benefits and risks

Nathaniel Matthews, CGIAR Water, Land and Ecosystems

10:10

Perspectives, Reactions and Questions from the Audience to presenters

10:30

Coffee break

PART 2

11:00

Advancing hydropower sustainability: from project design to sector planning

Peter Newborne, ODI

11:20

How can we reduce investor risk in hydropower through better regulation?

Cameron Ironside, IHA

11:40

Regulations can facilitate project development through promoting standards: an example from the Theun-Hinboun Expansion Project

Stephen Sparkes, Statkraft AS

12:00

Panel discussion, including questions from the audience:

Anthony Jude, Senior Advisor and Practice Leader (Energy), Regional and Sustainable Development Department, ADB

David Harrison, The Nature Conservancy, Freshwater Programme

Stephen Sparkes, Head of Social and Environmental Development, Statkraft AS

Andreas Lindstrom, Programme Manager/Team Leader, Water, Energy and Food at SIWI

Rikard Liden, Senior Hydropower Specialist, The World Bank

Dipak Gyawali, Nepal Water Conservation Foundation

12:30

Close of Seminar

2014 KEY COLLABORATING PARTNER



Thursday September 4th, 2014

Room K11

BUILDING EFFECTIVE REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS FOR HYDROPOWER: LESSONS FROM WATER GOVERNANCE



Hydropower development is expected to increase as society looks for a cleaner, greener future. Recent research suggests many environmental and social safeguards are bypassed in developing hydro projects. Participants will debate hydropower project development with water experts to improve the use of social and environmental safeguards to reduce risks for investors.

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