

# Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol *Launch*



[www.hydrosustainability.org](http://www.hydrosustainability.org)

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## Global tool to advance the sustainability of hydropower projects launched

The Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol, a comprehensive tool to assess the sustainability of hydropower projects globally, was launched today at the *International Hydropower Association (IHA) 2011 World Congress on Advancing Sustainable Hydropower*.

“For years, the environmental community has been looking for industry leadership to raise the environmental performance of hydro projects, and to avoid bad projects altogether. Industry awareness is certainly increasing, but there is still an urgent need for practical tools in the field.” said Dr Joerg Hartmann, Water Security Leader, WWF International

“Working with IHA on the Protocol has already proven to be a very effective way for WWF to reach a broad group of utilities, investors and regulators.”

Launching the Protocol in Iguassu, Brazil, were representatives of key stakeholders involved in the 30 month Protocol development process including: David Harrison, Senior Advisor Global Freshwater Team at The Nature Conservancy; Donal O’Leary, Senior Advisor of Transparency International; Mr Israel Phiri, Manager at the Zambian Ministry of Energy and Water Development; Mr Antonio Cardoso, Executive Technical Director of Itaipu Binacional; and Dr Refaat Abdel-Malek, President of IHA.

The IHA also announced the first eight *Sustainability Partners*. These sustainability leaders role in promoting continuous improvement of hydropower sustainability performance: EDF, E.ON, Itaipu Binacional, Hydro Tasmania, Landsvirkjun, Manitoba Hydro, Sarawak Energy, and Statkraft.

*Sustainability Partners* receive training on the content and application of the Protocol and two Protocol assessments, one of which is carried out by an accredited assessor as an official Protocol assessment.

“I warmly welcome the Sustainability Partners who have demonstrated the vision and leadership in taking the first steps to implementing this ground-breaking sustainability assessment tool.” said Dr Refaat Abdel-Malek, President of IHA.

“The development of this important global tool to assess the sustainability of hydropower projects has been a thorough, rigorous and informative multi-stakeholder process. It is a great testament to the hard work and valuable contributions of all those members of the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Forum, which developed the Protocol, supported by their reference groups that we are

now able to launch the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol today, and I would like to sincerely thank them.”

“For the first time, the issues of governance, transparency, integrity and accountability were addressed in the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol. This will significantly facilitate the sustainability of the planning, design, implementation and operation of hydroelectric projects.” said Dr Donal O`Leary, Senior Advisor of Transparency International (TI) and TI representative on the Water Integrity Network International Steering Committee.

The Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol offers a consistent, globally-applicable method of assessing performance in approximately twenty vital topics of the sustainability of hydropower facilities, depending on the stage of the assessment. These topics cover the four principle pillars of sustainability: social, economic, environmental and technical.

These topics include downstream flow regimes, indigenous peoples, biodiversity, infrastructure safety, resettlement, water quality, and economic viability.

The Protocol can be used during all stages of hydropower project development: early stage, preparation, implementation and operation. It has been designed to be used to assess the sustainability of hydropower projects anywhere in the world.

Based on objective analysis and documented evidence, the results of an assessment of the facility using the Protocol are presented in a standardised structure and diagram, allowing transparent communication and rapid interpretation.

#### **Notes for editors**

The Protocol is the result of intensive work from 2008 to 2010 by the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Forum, a multi-stakeholder body with representatives from social and environmental NGOs (Oxfam, The Nature Conservancy, Transparency International, WWF); governments (China, Germany [observer], Iceland, Norway, Zambia); commercial and development banks (members of the Equator Principles Financial Institutions, The World Bank [observer]); and the hydropower sector, represented by IHA.

The development process of the Protocol involved field trials in 13 different countries and stakeholder engagement with 1,933 individuals in 28 countries.

The International Hydropower Association (IHA) was formed under the auspices of UNESCO in 1995 and addresses the role of hydropower in meeting the world’s growing water and energy needs as a clean, renewable and sustainable technology. With members active in more than 80 countries, IHA is a non-governmental, mutual association of organisations and individuals.

#### **Press enquires:**

Mr Thor Windham-Wright  
International Hydropower Association  
Email: [tww@hydropower.org](mailto:tww@hydropower.org)  
Tel: +44 208 652 5294