

Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Forum:

Statement of Conclusion

June 2011

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This statement confirms the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Forum's (the 'Forum') submission of its Recommended Final Draft Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol (November 2010) to Forum member organisations for decisions on adoption and support.

The Forum was conceived out of discussions amongst The Nature Conservancy, the WWF, and the International Hydropower Association (IHA) in 2007 about support for the IHA Sustainability Assessment Protocol (2006) by parties outside of IHA. These discussions led to the formation of a cross-sector Forum representing governments, finance, industry and civil society, which formally launched its process in March 2008.

The mandate for the Forum was provided by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The goal of the Forum was to establish a broadly endorsed assessment tool to measure and guide sustainability performance in the hydropower sector, based on the Hydropower Sustainability Guidelines (2004) and Assessment Protocol (2006) developed by IHA. Rather than establish a new standard, the Forum's aim was to refine a tool to measure and improve industry performance. Important objectives have been adoption of the Forum's recommended Protocol by IHA, thereby signaling a strong industry commitment to its application, and signals of support by Forum members, thereby strengthening the credibility of the Protocol within sectors beyond industry.

Whilst this was not a fact-finding commission, important inputs for the Forum's work included reference to experience from previous processes relating to hydropower and dams, international standards, expert knowledge and feedback from Forum members and their reference groups, specialist input on key topics and themes, global consultation periods, and trialling of a draft Protocol.

The Forum met nine times for formal meetings over a 30 month period, and supplemented these face-to-face meetings with seven webinar engagements. The Forum sought at all times to operate with transparency, good will and by consensus. All meeting proceedings and important milestone documents were made publicly available on the Forum part of the IHA website, and regular notices sent out to an ever-growing stakeholder database interested in following the Forum's progress. The level of interest in the work of the Forum proved to be very high across the globe and across a diversity of sectors. The Forum responded to this interest by enabling two periods of public consultation that were not initially foreseen in the work plan, and communicating on how it has taken into account stakeholder feedback in the development of the Protocol. The consequence was a more extended Forum process than originally envisaged, but one that has been informed by a high level of awareness of stakeholder views ultimately strengthening the end product.

The aim to operate by consensus has been highly influential on the Forum proceedings. It was an ambitious aspiration for fourteen members from a diversity of sectors, organisations and experiences to agree on all Protocol content. The Forum developed Principles for Consensus Building early in its process, and the MoU stated that where there was a lack of consensus, aspects would be recorded and noted in relevant documents. In the Forum process, all Forum members heard and respected the diversity of views on many topics, and all did their best to compromise on preferred positions in the interests of achieving consensus outcomes. The minutes to the Forum meetings capture the diversity of views and inputs that fed into the Forum process, as does the online Forum Knowledge Base which houses many of the documents referenced in development of the Protocol.

Negotiations to come to consensus agreements on Protocol content also resulted in an extended timetable for the Forum process. The Recommended Final Draft Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol (November 2010) captures a considerably high level of convergence amongst the diverse views of Forum member organisations on how to best incorporate into this assessment tool the issues relevant to hydropower sustainability. Whilst there are numerous areas of wording in the Protocol that Forum members have indicated are of interest to pay close attention to in the forward process, “areas of non-consensus” relate to specific wording in the Protocol where individual Forum members have requested that their contrary view be recorded. These areas of non-consensus are in the two assessment tool documents entitled Preparation and Implementation, under the topics Project Affected Communities & Livelihoods; Resettlement; and Indigenous Peoples. The specific details of the non-consensus views are found on the relevant topic page in each of these Protocol assessment tool documents. The Forum recommends that these areas receive priority consideration in future processes of Protocol improvement, and that inputs from key stakeholders and experiences based on practical application regarding these topics are sought.

The Forum members recognise that certain areas relating to the use and governance of the Protocol as addressed in the Background Document remain of concern to some Forum members. These have yet to be clarified and finalised and will be a topic of continued dialogue.

In closing this process, the Forum members are offering the results of its work to member organisations for their consideration. The Forum members believe that their efforts over the past 30 months represent one of many steps in the process of advancing the sustainability of hydropower, and that there are many opportunities moving forward that can be leveraged off the Recommended Final Draft Protocol (November 2010). The Protocol is submitted to Forum member organisations on the understanding that it is a living document, one that will be reviewed based on the experiences and insights obtained from its dissemination and application. The Protocol is thus open to signals of support from all interested parties.

The Forum members would like to express their considerable appreciation to the donors that have contributed to the Forum process, and to the wide array of organisations that have supported this process through a range of in-kind measures.

List of contributors (financial or in-kind):

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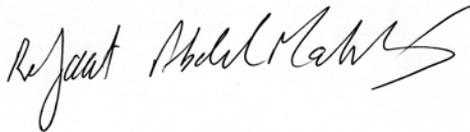
Finally, the Forum members and Chair would like to express their profound appreciation for the role played by the IHA's Forum Coordinator, Dr. Helen Locher.

Further information can be obtained from IHA: www.hydrosustainability.org; iha@hydropower.org.

This Statement of Conclusion is signed by the Forum Chair and all members of the Forum:



Mr André Abadie (Forum Chair), Director, Sustainable Finance Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of PricewaterhouseCoopers UK, UK



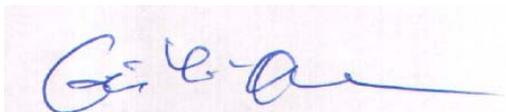
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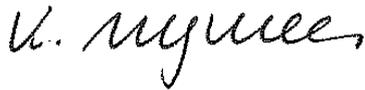
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael S.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr Michael Simon, Lead - People, Infrastructure and Environment Program, Oxfam, Australia

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yu Xuezhong", with a long, sweeping tail on the final character.

Dr Yu Xuezhong, Associate Professor, China Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Research, PR China