

Letter to the Editor

By Azeb Asnake, Gibe III Hydroelectric Project Manager

We appreciate for her ***“Greens must have very hard hearts if they can look at flood-hit Ethiopia and still say ‘don’t build dams’*** article posted on www.spiked-online.com. Rothschild has exactly reflected the facts of the Gibe III Hydroelectric Project. Thank you, Rothschild.

Having said this, the Gibe III Hydroelectric Project Office wants to justify facts since some of the opinions lack appropriate information about the Dam and the mitigation measures proposed for the local communities.

The Gibe III Hydroelectric Dam is situated in a deep gorge of Omo River, uninhabitable and non-cultivable area. It is being constructed in the least developed part of the country with poor infrastructure developments. Many experts have also said that the location of the Dam is an ideal place. So, the Gibe III Project Dam is by no means a threat to the local communities; rather it is promising for flow regulations and improvements of living standards for the local people by introducing small scale irrigation schemes, modern fishing production, provision of infrastructures like water supply, electricity, roads, job opportunities, and so on.

The Gibe III Dam will also positively contribute to the downstream areas. Some of the envisaged benefits are: flood regulation (avoidance of un-regulated catastrophic events), reliable and timely water supply for recession cultivation (prevention of cultivations from sudden and irregular floods), reduction of evaporation in flood plains, sustainable flow and positive hydrological balance to Lake Turkana (characterized by high rate of fluctuations and level reduction at an alarming rate), reduction of extended drought periods, long term sustainable development (small scale irrigation) are envisaged as part of the management plan.

These points are based on a thorough study dedicated to the impact of the Dam on the downstream areas. Additional compensation measures such as community awareness programs, cooperative support, agriculture in-service training program, coordination measures

for food, conflict prevention and resolution training program, and Woreda- level- institution strengthening activities will also be envisaged.

Please refer to <http://www.gibe3.com.et/> for further information