



SOS Xingu

The Xingu is endangered

The building and exploitation of the planned hydro-electric power station Belo Monte pose an assault on the river, the environment and the local population. This threat calls for a global effort in favour of life and sustainable development. The Belo Monte project does not aim at sustainability, but at accelerated development. Acceleration for whom? Nowadays the ordinary people already work eight days per week – rest days count double – to earn a simple living.

Sustainable development versus accelerated development

Already in 1972 The Club of Rome pointed at the boundaries of growth and warned amongst other things for the unrestrained exploitation of natural resources. Two decades later an important conference for the "Salvation of the Planet" took place in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). The UN-conference on Environment and Development phrased the concept of sustainability and appealed to the responsibility of the world community.

This responsibility for our Planet Earth and for a worthy life for future generations is the motive of our petition. We ask you for your attention and perceptivity regarding our fears, so that they are taken into account when making your decisions.

February 1st 2010, the same month in which five years ago a contract killer took the life of Dorothy Mae Stang, an activist for the rights of the smallholders along the Transamazônica, and a defender of an enduring development of Amazonian, the IBAMA has granted the pre-licence for the hydro-electric power station Belo Monte.

The pre-licence contains 40 conditions, regarding amongst others water quality, fauna, sanitary infrastructure and population involved. These conditions only partly match the requirements of the people affected by the power station. The existent studies in the planning process with regard to social, migration and environmental consequences for instance, are full of gaps. Previous large projects show that conditions and promises are never implemented in full.

Examples of the past

Four decades have passed since the first sod for the bi-national UHE Itaipu was cut. Ca. 40,000 people – mostly Indios Guaraní – were forced to move from their traditional territories. Millions of tropical trees were lost forever.

The reservoir for the UHE Sobradinho on the Rio São Francisco dispelled 70,000 people. Many of the people affected by the power station were chased away. Many months later, a part of the smallholder families were granted a piece of land in a stony, semi arid area without infrastructure, which is unsuitable for subsistence economy.

The long droughts in the semi arid region lower the water level and cause a clear drop of the energy production. To the present day, the saddlers in the surroundings of the reservoir bemoan the lack of drinking water.

The grubbing of the forest in the basin of the Tocantins was insufficient for the flooding for the power station Tucuruí. The decomposing biomass releases substantial amounts of greenhouse gasses. The standing and dead water is a hotbed of mosquitos and vermin. The living space of more than 20,000 people has submerged in the water. Only a few received a small financial compensation. Many proofs of ownership of the pieces of land, which were offered for compensation, were given away a long time ago. For the native community Parakanã, the move was a drastic event in their social organization form. At least 5,000 households, such as in Mocajuba, Cametá or Limoeiro, have not yet been connected to the power network of Tucuruí. The luxurious housing units of the former engineers and technicians from other states are largely empty, while the favelas are growing.

Who monitors the observation of the 33 conditions, which were issued within the context of the power stations Santo Antônio and Jirau on the river Madeira? The 5,000 families directly involved still don't know when they must leave the area, and they even don't know where to find a shelter.

When the people, who are affected by the power stations, hit the streets to claim that their rights and interests are observed, the demonstrations are always escorted by a disproportioned amount of police. Again and again arbitrary arrests are carried out.

In the last 50 years, the number of inhabitants of Altamira has grown from around 5,000 to approximately 90,000. As a consequence of Belo Monte, more than 100,000 persons will immigrate within a short time. Thousands of people will push into this region on the river Xingu. What kind of infrastructure is available to meet this disproportional migration?

Eletrobrás promises 18,000 direct and 80,000 indirect jobs for the UHE Belo Monte. Hundreds of jobs were held out as prospect for the extension of the high-tension network from Tucuruí to Altamira. Patiently the countless job-seekers queued up, even paid a fee and still went away empty handed. The low paid job contracts were closed with Indians from Bolivia.

Solidarity

The native people directly and indirectly affected by the Belo Monte power station, for whom Amazonia is their homeland since time immemorial, still demand their hearing, based on the federal constitution of 1988 and the ILO-Convention 169, in accordance with these norms.

Planet Earth belongs to all of us.

On this planet there is only one Amazonia with its ecological diversity.

Incomparable is also the river Xingu.

In solidarity with the saddlers along the rivers, with the indigenous people Xipaia, Curuaia, Xikrin do Bacajá, Parakanã, Arara, Araweté, Asurini, Juruna and Kayapó, with the inhabitants of Altamira, Anapu, Brasil Novo, Medicilândia, Pacajá, Placas, Porto de Moz, Senador José Porfírio, Uruará and Vitória do Xingu, we confirm:

The Xingu must live forever!

plattform belo monte – petition SOS Xingu

The Xingu is endangered. The building and exploitation of the planned hydro-electric power station Belo Monte pose an assault on the river, the environment and the local population. This threat calls for a global effort in favour of life and sustainable development. The responsibility for our Planet Earth and for a worthy life for future generations is the motive of our petition.

February 1st 2010, the Brazilian Institut of Environment and Natural Renewable Resources (IBAMA) granted the pre-licence for the hydro-electric power station Belo Monte, engaged in 40 conditions. Examples from the past show that such conditions are not followed, as soon as the construction has been started.

Planet Earth belongs to all of us.

On this planet there is only one Amazonia with its ecological diversity.

Unique is also the river Xingu.

In solidarity with the indigenous people and with the saddlers along the rivers, we confirm:

The Xingu must live forever!

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Please scan the filled lists and mail them to info@belomonte.org

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