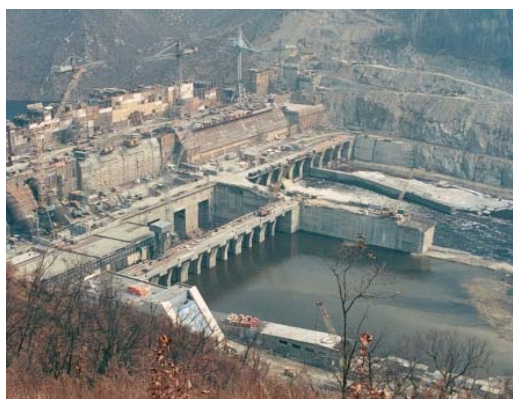


PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

At end of project, April 2009

Sustainable use of hydropower in Russia



Bureyskaya hydropower project; picture: Oleg Kabalik

Background

Hydropower is one of the most important renewable energy sources and capable of covering both base-load and peak-load demand. Yet, the construction and operation of hydroelectric power plants often has far-reaching adverse environmental and social impacts.

Generally accepted guidelines for large-scale hydropower projects are available in the form of the relatively comprehensive rules of the World Commission on Dams (WCD) and the *Sustainability Guidelines and Protocol* of the International Hydropower Association (IHA), which were developed by the hydropower industry in cooperation with the financial sector, government representatives and NGOs.

Russia is among the countries with the largest untapped hydropower potential worldwide while experiencing steady growth in the demand for energy. Yet, environmental and social standards for large-scale hydropower projects are largely lacking in Russia.

Project

This project aimed to improve awareness of a sustainable use of hydropower based on international standards. The contractor, WWF, encouraged awareness of the issue among key actors and familiarise them with how to operationalise the WCD rules and the IHA's *Sustainability Guidelines and Protocol*.

It contacted regional governments as the main financial backers of hydropower projects in Russia as well as environmental protection organisations and groups in society concerned about the ecological impacts of such large-scale projects and advocating compliance with statutory standards. WWF offered the private sector, administrations, industry representatives and scientists a process of dialogue on the sustainable use of hydropower, with the aim of identifying the various needs and expectations, points on which there was broad agreement and those that were controversial.

In parallel with this dialogue process, the WWF set up a database providing current international information in Russian and English on sustainable use of hydropower, which had not been systematically available in Russia up until now.

- Funding: Advisory Assistance Programme of the German Federal Environment Ministry
- Project identification: 380 01 193
- Region: Russian Federation
- Duration: 11/2008 - 06/2009
- Project management: Umweltbundesamt
- Project partner: WWF Deutschland