

## Report from dialogue meeting with ECAs, CoEs and campaigners June 20, 2008

Christine Eberlein, Berne Declaration, Switzerland  
Heike Drillisch, WEED, Germany  
Uli Eichelmann, Thomas Wenidoppler, ECA-Watch, Austria

The aim of the meeting was to inform NGOs how the project will proceed. NGOs were thanked and requested to “help officials to take informed decisions for future decisions”.

The meeting started with a little trouble as the ECAs refused to give upfront information on the outcome of the negotiations in Turkey, with the argument they hadn't spoken to their headquarters yet. This was protested by NGOs, but the moderator insisted to discuss this topic only at the end.

### **Presentation by Michael Cernea (Head of CoE on resettlement)**

Ilisu is Europe's largest resettlement project. All components of a large dam project must be in line: engineering, resettlement, culture and environment and finances for all components. Engineers too often forget the importance of the resettlement component. However, the RAP must be ready before the engineering components start!

#### ***Conclusions:***

- “Ilisu is the project with the largest displacement in Europe – and we don't even have a plan for it. There is no resettlement and rehabilitation plan, but let's be honest – there is also no environmental and cultural heritage management plan.”
- “PIU is not the appropriate institution to carry out large and complex resettlement and rehabilitation process. They are too slow, not constant enough, not appropriate and even worse: only part-timers.”
- There is no knowledge within DSI to do a Worldbank conform resettlement process. So far they don't understand the reasoning behind a resettlement action plan.
- Cernea has never seen a resettlement process executed by only a couple of part-timers. Nothing at all has happened, except the note by DSI: Yes, this is a good idea.
- DSI has never done a true resettlement and rehabilitation process. It was standard and in line with Turkish laws to put the emphasis on expropriation.
- The Turkish side is now responsible for implementing the recommendations and ToR
- Ilisu is much less prepared than any other project Cernea has seen so far
- **“The Worldbank would have never even considered appraising a project like this one”. However, ECAs accepted the project but don't have a mechanism like the Worldbank to supervise the project. Therefore ECAs have to rely on the Turkish partners.**

**Major problems:**

FAM 2006 gave deadlines for the ToR. Everything must be ready 6 months before start of construction. Start was planned for October 2008, which makes 2 years for preparing the components of the RAP. However the first shock came in October 2007, when the CoE learned that most issues had not even started. This threw the project back for 1 year.

The institution for managing the process had not even been started. DSI derailed the project calendar without even informing the ECAs

The CoE wrote the report, published in March 2008, criticising that there was no: resettlement plan, income restoration plan, no PIU, nothing basically worked or was set in place, no data on availability of land. No income restoration plan etc.

The ToR requires DSI to present options for resettlement to the people, but there was no effort to find land.

**Phases of the project:**

The CoE found out that only 17 villages and 185 settlements will be affected. The resettlement was planned in three phases. The first phase includes 6 villages near Ilisu. However this does not mean that the other phases shall be planned later. In contrary, they need to be planned now, otherwise the same disaster will happen like in the case of the Narmada dam in India (see CoE report March 08). Sequencing is very important. The Turkish DSI will not be allowed to say: we have resettled 2 villages therefore we are able to reconstruct the live of 55'000 people.

The CoE visited all relevant ministries and agencies in April and May to evaluate their contribution and capacity to resettlement. So far, no other ministry except DSI has signed contracts to support the resettlement and rehabilitation process. However, the ToR demand that other ministries, like planning etc have to be involved in the resettlement process. The CoE therefore critiques that the ToR have not reached other ministries yet. Thus they are not even known widely.

**Legal problems:**

Conflict of ToR and the Turkish laws. Local people cannot claim their rights based on ToR. Turkish laws must be changed and apparently there is some willingness to do so.

**Demands:**

- A new institution needs to be created, which unites all the necessary components under one roof.
- We need exact data, household surveys, baseline studies. However there is no census on the population, and there are still no baseline studies.
- Create a land pool, solve land title issues and reconstruct NEW Ilisu etc.
- However to reconstruct all which will be submerged will be a tremendous task – and there is no sign of even any commitment to do so.
- So far, the CoE never had access to higher level people in the ministries. However the CoE is of the opinion that it is crucial to talk to the higher management and ministers. Also PIU never informed higher decision-makers about the problems and the ToR.

- The start of the building of the engineering part of the dam must be postponed for at least 2 years.

### ***Critical Role of exporters***

Cernea criticized that the companies misused their involvement only for marketing purposes. They haven't done anything ever since. The consortium must take an active role. What they are doing now has nothing to do with social responsibility. They could at least help the villagers in Ilisu to get better expropriation money or to build new resettlement sites etc. In other countries companies are running the entire social component.

### **News regarding local monitoring**

The Turkish partners have accepted an expert monitoring group lead by a consultant, Mr. William Partridge.

### ***Report by Robert Zwahlen, leader of the CoE on environment***

Robert Zwahlen reported that he visited the area in May and that a second visit is planned. The first studies were commissioned regarding fish, flora and fauna and biodiversity. These sub-studies are the basis to formulate a comprehensive environmental management plan. He later said that it is not in line with international standards to commission these important studies at such a late time in the project cycle. However, he was confident that the studies will be delivered in one year.

**Conclusion:** The studies on bio-diversity are commissioned but not yet available. The environmental management plan is still not there as the majority of sub-studies is still outstanding. In short: 4 month before start of project, there is no environmental management plan.

### **Report by Margarete van Ess, leader of the CoE on cultural heritage (German Archeological Institute)**

Margarete van Ess reported that Turkey had not delivered new information, despite several requests. Because of the lack of new information, they did not visit the area in May as planned. They might do so in August.

She reported that they still don't have a proper overview about which cultural artefacts are going to be affected.

Archaeological excavations are going on at fast speed, almost too fast for her liking. She is of the opinion that Turkey might be able to deliver the requested documents within short time and that about one more year would be needed to fulfil the basic requirements to complete the cultural heritage action plan. The relocation of the monuments might be possible in theory by cross-cutting different layers and moving them layer by layer. No experiments have yet been undertaken. Further, important information how Hasankeyf could be relocated as an entity has not been delivered. The Turkish archaeological laws are not in line with international standards and discussion how to bring them up to international standards are being discussed.

**Conclusion:** The cultural heritage action plan has not been finalized and all important data is still missing. She requests to change the deadlines and the start of construction.

### **Statement by Mrs Schöne-Alaluf (environmental officer at Euler Hermes ) regarding the outcome of the negotiations with DSI on June 16-19**

The ECA's are of the opinion that the project will be built anyhow. Their aim was to change the project into a good one. The crucial question for the ECAs is now whether they can make a difference. Therefore they are "in the process of evaluating whether they can still make a difference". However, the meeting in Ankara showed that the project is in a very "critical phase". Especially because the construction of the access roads has started and none of the important TORs has been achieved. Negotiations will continue.

### **Final summary**

**Can the problems be solved by giving the Turkish partners more time?** This issue was only raised, but no time was left for discussion. However, the ECAs said their influence to stop the project is zero. They cannot go up to the DSI and say: stop the project until a new PIU is installed.

### **Issues raised by NGOs:**

There was no discussion or information that Turkey would be prepared to hire external international consultants to implement the project. Christine Eberlein from BD had pointed out in her presentation that a very similar project in Argentina supported by the Worldbank (Yacyreta Project, 1990-1999) had failed, when the Worldbank brought in international consultants to do the resettlement. The Worldbank noted as lessons learned that pressure from outside and a resettlement process done by consultants does not necessarily improve a project if there is no ownership by the local authorities. This also applies to Turkey. The ECAs and Cernea agreed with her remarks. She also informed the ECAs about ongoing ToR violations in the area, based on latest reports and statements by local lawyers.

Uli Eichelmann, ECA-Watch, Austria, gave a presentation on the dangers of not doing a proper environmental impact assessment and showed pictures of the beauty and importance of the Tigris being a biodiversity hot spot.

Other NGOs present (Heike from WEED, Thomas from ECA-Watch, WWF-AT, Kurdish organizations, KOO-Catholic Churches AT, Amnesty International AT, Global 2000) raised important questions on the environment, resettlement - land issues, sequencing of project planning, the Kurdish question, archaeology and the planned official start of the building phase.