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First publication of Official assessments using the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol

The first official assessments using the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol were today published on the Protocol website (<http://hydrosustainability.org>). The assessments, carried out over the last year, were undertaken on hydropower projects in Brazil (ESBR), Norway (Statkraft), Iceland (Landsvirkjun), and Germany (E.ON). The assessments were made by independent teams of experts, coordinated by IHA, and highlight areas in which the hydropower developers are performing well and where there is room for improvement. The publication of the reports now opens a period of 60 days of public comment, via the same website.

The Protocol, a comprehensive tool to assess the sustainability of hydropower projects globally, provides a rigorous, evidence-based assessment of between 19-23 relevant sustainability topics, depending on the development stage of the project. These topics include issues such as downstream flow regimes, indigenous peoples, biodiversity, infrastructure safety, resettlement, water quality, and erosion and sedimentation.

Joerg Hartmann, Chair of the Protocol Governance Council said:

'The release of these results shows the detailed and expert nature of Protocol assessments, we hope that having reports available publicly will encourage other stakeholders in the sector to explore how assessments can be of use to them.'

Publication has been timed to coincide with the IHA World Congress taking place this week in Sarawak, Malaysia, with the goal of advancing sustainable hydropower. It is anticipated that a further five assessments will be published in the coming year.

Notes for editors

The Protocol is the product of a rigorous multi-stakeholder development process involving representatives from social and environmental NGOs (Oxfam, The Nature Conservancy, Transparency International, WWF); governments (China, Germany [as an observer], Iceland, Norway, Zambia); commercial and development banks (including banks that are signatory to the Equator Principles, and the World Bank [as an observer]); and the hydropower sector, represented by IHA.

Implementation of the Protocol in the European Union is supported through Hydro4LIFE, a European Commission funded project, under the European Commission's Life+ Environment Policy and Governance programme. Hydro4LIFE will demonstrate the Protocol in the EU, raise awareness about the Protocol and serve to consolidate hydropower sustainability performance knowledge.

More information and a copy of the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol can be found here: <http://www.hydrosustainability.org>

To find out more about the work of the IHA, visit: <http://hydropower.org>

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