

# Dams analysis essay



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As a mark of development, modern countries particularly those with high interests on hydrological process started the creation of dams. A gigantic structure of almost immeasurable proportions, dams have been known to be one of the largest infrastructures ever built in history. Some experts even attribute the skills and drive to create dams in our modern day to one of nature's wonders- beavers' dams. These animals have started to create dams due to their needs of making some parts of the rivers shallower to allow them to find fishes for easy picking.

The same is true with humans; humans build dams to satisfy their needs like generating energy and the creation of watersheds. No matter what the reason may be for both humans and beasts, consequential affects will certainly result from the creation of these structures; the only demarcating line will remain on the extent of these effects. For the sake of organization, this paper will be exclusively discussing the effects of man made dams.

The reason for this is simple; the dams created by beavers is patterned by nature itself, it is not catastrophic and altering such as that of manmade ones. Anyone can easily be amazed and even star stricken with the superfluous design that can every single dam would require from its blueprint planning and even in its actual construction. Amidst the overall details needed to be checked, satisfied and accounted for before the creation of a dam can be made possible; reasons for putting the creation of dams to a halt are continually being vocalized in both local and international arenas.

The existence of counter parties in light with the issue at hand moves this paper to further delve not only in the distinct reasons why such counter arguments exist but also to the justifications of the proponents of the creation of dams. These issues will be explained through the current stand-off between pro and anti groups in the creation of dams in Brazil. The stand off between these parties has been relegated from simple street protests to the complexities of legislative battles; both manners speaking ideologically loaded arguments.

In this paper, two pieces of literature will be given complete attention and will be exerted with the most exhaustive discussions in this paper's attempt to shed some light on the established issue at hand. The academic journal article "Changes in a large regulated tropical river: The Parana River downstream from the Porto Primavera Dam, Brazil" will be used in this paper to justify the scientific and empirical parts of the paper. On the other hand, the news article "Amazon Defenders Win Bid to Stall Huge Dam Project" will be used to distinctly show the tangible representation of the countering party in the creation of dams.

The creation of dams scientifically is arguably destructive in the sense that it is an artificially integrated structure to the environment. Fluvial channels just like rivers embody the constantly changing characteristics of fluvial dynamics (Stevaux, Martins and Meurer 230). As presented by Stevau et al. the changes and alterations observable through the changes in the fluvial dynamics if drastically modified by artificial disruptions such as the creation of dams can tip off the whole balance in the fluvial channel (230).

When the balance is tipped off, problems such as an irreversible change in the water cycle of the fluvial channels, destruction of many natural habitats and an inevitable destruction of the biodiversity of the area (Stevaux, Martins and Meurer 230). Despite a very sensitive balance that needs to be preserved, South America including Brazil has been constantly increasing in terms of the number of large dams created in the past three decades (Stevaux, Martins and Meurer 230). The authors of this journal article concluded their discussion with observable negative effects taking place in their area of study.

Soil erosion, flooding, oscillation of water levels, and consistent decrease in soil suspension are some of their identified adverse effects (Stevaux, Martins and Meurer 236). Upon identifying the on going negative effects of the creation of dams, possible ways to put a stop in these problems is stated by the authors. According to Stevau and his colleagues, the best way of putting a stop to these adverse effects is the closure of the dams concerned (236). In the way they have argued it, it is for the best of all to let nature takes its own course of healing the damages done by the creation of these dams.

In due time, the variables which have been unaccounted for will return in their original states, stopping or at least preventing the occurrence and reoccurrence of the adverse effects due to the creation of dams. The same issues are used by the dam creation opposing party led by James Cameron in their lobbying protest against the creation of a dam in the Amazon.

Environmentalists under the leadership of Cameron lobbied for the

suspension and even a complete prohibition on the creation of the dam in the Amazon (Abrams, Lehman and James n. pag. ).

The group shifted from the general arguments such as environmental care and environmental destruction to a more technical approach, foreign debts. The financing of the project will be shouldered by international firms, which will indebt Brazil to skyrocketing billions of dollars with additional interest rates. This argument can sooner or later prove to be irrelevant to the matter at hand since Brazil since the time that the financial instability has been lobbied has been booming as a South American economy; that as of today can brag 240 billion US dollars in reserves.

Environmentalists and other lobbying individuals and groups know this fact which put them in a different stance. Finance as an impediment has been ruled out to the issue, alternative solutions to the problem that the dam is deemed to be the answer as of now is being focused on by those who condemn it. Hydroelectric energy from dams is deemed by the current Brazilian government to be the answer to the problematic power supply of Brazil. However, protesters argue that the creation of alternative energy should not be at the expense of another satiable part of the world- the environment.

The battle might have been won by the protesting parties because of the court ruling that halted the immediate construction of the dam; however the overturning of the decision is predicted by both parties. The opposing parties even if they have won a battle are still unsure of the result of their war against the creation of the dam. Public awareness as of today is being used

by the opposing parties in their attempts to urge the public to take the same stand on the issue (Abrams, Lehman and James n. pag. ). It can be observed from these two pieces of literature very strong articulated calls for the stoppage of the creation of dams.

This is a similarity that can very well overshadow the other differences imminent in these two literatures, such as the one being scientific and the other more ideological and participative. To conclude this paper, a stand on the need for these two approaches to combine if the efforts regarding the dam issue will be established. The loop holes which can be seen in these approaches can be compensated for if the two approaches are to be combined in terms of justifying the other. The scientific approach can be the justification and reason for the mobilization of the lobbying parties.

The integration of the scientific and established facts in the overall campaign against the creation of the dams will result to a certain sense of legitimacy in the calls against the dams. On the other hand, the scientific wing of those who are against the creation of the dams can use the figures such as James Cameron in making their findings not just more understandable but also more public. The scientific findings of the scientific approach can be integrated to the everyday lives of the people given that they know the practicability of this cause.

Unless, this merger of ideas can be properly addressed and conducted, the divided battle fronts against the creation of the dams will not last a day against the pressing needs for the creation of new energy sources in Brazil. Other may see it a fair trade off and go for the creation of dams. Who can

tell? No one. But one thing is for sure, the existing ideas against the creation of dams should not only aim to debunk every reason for the creation of the dam through appeals on environmental care and even scientific studies. Instead, a presentation of alternative courses to energy efficiency should also be formulated.