



TIBET POLICY INSTITUTE

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10-Point Call from Tibetan Experts on the current Chinese Dam construction and forced displacement in Derge, Tibet

- 1. Cease Construction of Dams Without Local Consent:** Considering the potential social, cultural, and ecological impacts of the ongoing dam construction in Derge, the Chinese government should halt the construction of all large hydropower dams which are against the need and wishes of the local communities. Additionally, any forced relocations should cease immediately, and Tibetans unjustly detained for expressing their concerns should be unconditionally released, with proper medical care provided to the injured.
- 2. Enhance Transparency in Eco-Environment Information:** The Chinese government should prioritize transparency by disclosing more information about hydropower development plans in Tibet's major rivers, such as Driчу, Zachu, Machu, Gyalmo Ngulchu, Senge Tsangpo and Yarlung Tsangpo to ensure people's right to be informed.
- 3. Increase Public Involvement in Environmental Decision-making:** There should be improved public participation in planning and decision-making processes, including thorough Environmental and Social Impact Assessments for all development projects in Tibet. Public involvement in evaluating plans with potential adverse environmental impacts should be allowed to safeguard environmental rights.
- 4. Conduct Seismic Risk Assessments:** Given Tibet's high seismic activity, thorough seismic risk assessments are necessary to understand the potential risks posed by earthquakes to large dams and the millions of people living along Tibet's rivers, including people in Tibet, China, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia.
- 5. Advocate for Free, Prior, and Informed Consent:** Governments, NGOs, and civil society groups should advocate for genuine adherence to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent principles, ensuring proper compensation, resettlement, and preservation of cultural heritage before initiating any projects requiring local consent, particularly concerning dam construction in Tibet.
- 6. Disengage from Businesses Affecting Tibetan Environment:** The international community should cease business relations with Chinese companies involved in environmentally detrimental activities, such as mining and dam construction in Tibet,



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until there is demonstrable improvement in human rights conditions for Tibetans and that all social and environmental concerns are fully addressed.

7. Ratify Human Rights Treaties: China should promptly ratify crucial human rights treaties to protect local communities and indigenous inhabitants from coercion related to relocation or the destruction of culturally significant sites.

8. Recognize the Ecological Importance of Tibet: China and the global community should acknowledge the ecological significance of the Tibetan Plateau, recognizing its biodiversity, influence on regional weather patterns, and its role in ensuring food and water security in Asia.

9. Address Colonial Behaviors in Tibet: Recognize and rectify the impact of Chinese colonial policies in Tibet since 1959, including resource extraction, dam construction, and forced resettlement of Tibetan nomads. Adopt a rights-based approach to protect frontline communities and respect traditional knowledge.

10. Cease Criminalization of Environmental Defenders: The Chinese state should refrain from criminalizing Tibetan environmental defenders and release all individuals, such as A-nya Sengdra and Karma Samdrup, detained for peaceful activism against dam construction and forced relocation in Tibet.

The '10-Point Calls from Tibetan Experts' was issued as part of a panel discussion titled "China's Dam in Derge: Examining the Adverse Social, Cultural, and Ecological Impact on Tibetans and Beyond," organized by the Tibet Policy Institute on March 14, 2024 to mark the International Day of Action for Rivers, and to highlight the ongoing forced relocation of Tibetans in Derge by the Chinese government for the construction of a large dam in the region.

Expert Panelists:

- Dechen Palmo, Research Fellow, Tibet Policy Institute, CTA
- Ngawang Lungtok, Researcher, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights & Democracy
- Dr. Lobsang Yangtso, Senior Environmental Researcher, International Tibet Network
- Dr. Tenzin Lhadon, Research Fellow, Tibet Policy Institute, CTA

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