

To: H.E Alemayehu Tegenu [alemayehu@mowr.gov.et]

Cc: Ato Meheret Debebe [eepcoceo@ethionet.et]; Weyzero Azeb Asnake [gibe3hep@gmail.com]; Dr Tewolde Gebre Egziabher [esid@ethionet.et]

24 July 2011

Dear Minister,

I hope you have been well since we met in Addis last December. I was very grateful for the time you and your colleagues gave me on that occasion to update me on the Gibe 3 project and answer my questions.

As you know, I was worried at that time about the likely impact of the dam on the downstream population, as a result of the elimination of the annual flood. I'm writing to you now - and sending you the attached paper - because I've become even more worried over the past few months, as the huge extent of irrigation development planned for the lower Omo has become apparent. As far as I can make out, around 300,000 ha are expected to be given over to commercial irrigation schemes in the lower Omo over the next few years. This is going to lead to the displacement of thousands of people from their best agricultural land and from much of their best grazing land. And yet the plans are being pushed through at great speed and without, therefore, adequate consultation with local communities. Based on what we know of other cases, I'm afraid this will mean, at best, increased poverty and hardship for the majority of the affected people.

Given my forty years experience of working in the area I feel it's incumbent on me to let you know of my concerns and to suggest steps that could be taken now to ensure that the dam becomes a real development opportunity for the downstream population, as we are all hoping. If you have any comments or questions arising from the attached paper I shall be very happy to try and respond to them.

I am copying this letter to Weyzero Azeb Asnake, Ato Meheret Debebe and Dr Tewolde Gebre-Egziabher, all of whom kindly discussed the dam with me when I was in Addis last December. I am also attaching a short bio.

With best wishes,

David Turton

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