

- to develop decision-making criteria and policy and regulatory frameworks for assessing alternatives for energy and water resources development;
- to evaluate the development effectiveness of large dams;
- to develop and promote internationally acceptable standards for the planning, assessment, design, construction, operation and monitoring of large dams and, if the dams are built, ensure that affected people are better off;
- to identify the implications for institutional, policy and financial arrangements so that benefits, costs and risks are equitably shared at the global, national and local levels; and
- to recommend interim modifications, where necessary, of existing policies and guidelines, and to promote “best practices”.

The agenda of the commission should build on an evolving paradigm for large dam development. The development process should be based on the analysis of multiple criteria, including food, water, energy, foreign currency, health, employment, human rights, equity, sustainable use of natural resources, and conservation of natural ecosystems and their genetic stocks. The analysis should involve consideration of the long-term and of quantitative and qualitative values. Decision-making should be more transparent and accountable and made through consultation with multiple stakeholders, including local communities, numerous authorities and government departments, industry, and non-governmental organizations. Choices should be made by considering multiple and integrated development options, including demand management, a run-of-the-river hydropower scheme, conjunctive use of surface water and groundwater, and the development of traditional local water management and agricultural practices. A report of the World Commission of Dams is expected within two years.

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