

To: Mr CYRIL MULLER  
Regional Vice President  
Europe and Central Asia  
1818 H Street NW Washington DC 20433  
USA

17-May-2019

Ref. "Odra and Vistula Flood Management Project, "Increasing Flood Retention in the Klodzko Valley, An Analysis" co-financed by the World Bank

Dear Mr Mueller, Dear World Bank Representatives,

We - the people of Goszów and Stary Gierałtów have started a [petition](#)\*, signed by 500+ people, directed to the World Bank **to immediately cease financing and supporting further work on the construction of flood retention "dry dam" projects in the Gmina Stronie Śląskie in Poland** in particular in the villages of Goszów/Stary Gierałtów and Bolesławów.

In reference to your letter of 07-May-2017 to Mr Krzysztof Soboń, Sołtys (Village Leader) we inform you that the construction of flood retention "dry dam" projects in Goszów/Stary Gierałtów and in Bolesławów has been **definitively rejected by the local community**.

Additionally we want to bring to your attention that **violations of due process took place that are in direct contradiction to your Safeguard Policies**.

Continuation of the project in its current form in Gmina Stronie Śląskie had been **unanimously** rejected by all representatives of the local government, village leaders and formal legal acts of Village Meeting of the villages Goszów, Stary and Nowy Gierałtów, Bielice and Radochów which took place on 04-May-2019. Thus continuation of the project is directly contrary to principles of democracy and the rule of law that your institution is committed to uphold.

Additionally I am informing you that contrary to your belief expressed in the letter of 07-May-2019 the most directly involved stakeholders directly namely the inhabitants and property owners in the villages of Goszów, Stary and Nowy Gierałtów, Bielice and Radochów have **not been consulted at all** formally by any of the decisionmakers of the Polish government, State Water Management Authority any others in this process.

No letters were sent by anyone nor any formal communications took place informing such stakeholders of a project that was associated with **expropriation of their property and bulldozing it to the ground**. All information spread by word of mouth and social media. State Water Management Authority even published a misinformation piece on their website denying that any plans of construction of such dam in the Villages Goszów and Stary Gierałtów existed.

The fact that the most directly affected stakeholders, namely inhabitants, owners of businesses operating in the area and other property owners have not been consulted violates any pretensions to "good social policy".

The report supporting the project by the consultancy Sweco, "Increasing Flood Retention in the Klodzko Valley, An Analysis" is full of glaring factual errors **underestimating environmental, community and economic impact** of construction of flood retention projects in the villages of Goszów, Stary and Nowy Gierałtów. For example it states that "1" eco-tourism outfit is located in the affected area where we are aware of at least 20 such enterprises in the affected area. These enterprises are run by women and if they are grazed to the ground, which the project proposes, not

relevant employment options will be available and the concerned families will face destitution and social exclusion.

Contrary to statements in the letter of 07-May-2019 that “various options were considered” the Sweco report clearly states that **no other options are examined** to “increasing flood retention capacity in the Klodzko Valley” than the proposed solution (of building the proposed flood retention plains) and that it examines the construction of the “dry dams” as **the only option**.

Our community has obtained scientific counsel which clearly states that the proposed solution is obsolete and sub-optimal in term of achieving flood retention objective compared with alternatives, while it is associated with **massive and irreversible adverse environmental and community impact**.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the construction of a “dry dam” is planned in an area that is an area of outstanding natural beauty and is formally designated a Landscape Park (“Snieznicki Park Krajobrazowy). To demolish a place of such beauty is an act **of ecocidal vandalism** that World Bank cannot allow to become part of its legacy.

The four retention projects whose construction has been started to date were all in uninhabited areas. The “dry dam” retention project in Goszów and Stary Gierałtów is **literally planned in the middle of an existing village**, where a village-meeting hall, whose renovation was funded by EU is placed.

If the plans for the retention project in Goszów and Stary Gierałtów continue the project is going to descend into an embittered and protracted battle with a sizeable and informed community and lead to the World Bank as the co-financier of the project in getting embroiled in endless lawsuits.

We appeal to your decency and urge you to immediately do everything in your power to stop this absurd and harmful project in its tracks.

Signed:

Representatives of the Community of Goszow, Stary and Nowy Gieraltow, Bielice, Radochow and Stronie Slaskie

\*Petition URL:

[https://www.petycjeonline.com/wstrzymanie\\_projektu\\_budowy\\_tamy\\_na\\_rzece\\_biaej\\_ldeckiej\\_w\\_miejscowosci\\_goszow\\_i\\_stary\\_gieratow](https://www.petycjeonline.com/wstrzymanie_projektu_budowy_tamy_na_rzece_biaej_ldeckiej_w_miejscowosci_goszow_i_stary_gieratow)