

30 March 2010: Salini Costruttori accuses Survival International of quoting 'obviously incorrect' figures on Gibe III.

Salini says Survival announced the size of the dam's reservoir at 216 billion cubic metres. Survival has not made any comments about the reservoir size, ever. Other organizations supporting the [www.stopgibe3.org](http://www.stopgibe3.org) petition estimated the reservoir size at 11.75 billion m<sup>3</sup>, less even than Salini's own most recent figure of 14 billion m<sup>3</sup>.

**Survival asked Salini to substantiate their allegation or withdraw it.  
We have not received a response.**

Salini claims in the same statement that the dam will benefit the downstream communities:

Salini says	Survival says
Gibe III will regulate water flows, avoiding the floods which have ' <b>exterminated</b> ' the Omo Valley communities in the past – most recently in 2006 when ' <b>hundreds</b> ' died.	The 2006 flood was the worst for 100 years. According to local people, up to ten men <b>were drowned</b> in the Valley as they tried to lead cattle to safety. This was a tragic but extremely rare accident.
A more regulated water flow will allow <b>irrigation</b> , with all the <b>agricultural benefits</b> this can bring.	Thousands of hectares have already been <b>leased to foreign companies</b> for exploitation. This is grazing land now <b>lost to the communities</b> , which are also likely to lose out to migrant labour in the race for jobs.
Irrigation agriculture will wean the Omo Valley tribes off their <b>60% dependence on external aid</b> for food and water.	It is a mystery where Salini get this figure. For at least thirty years, any food aid to Lower Omo has been distributed in a highly sporadic and unsystematic fashion. <b>Most people, most of the time, have had to depend entirely on their own resources.</b> It is these same resources that are now threatened both by the dam itself and by the commercial projects that will follow in its wake.
The Gibe III dam will enable ' <b>the controlled reproduction</b> ' of floods, which will allow communities to continue to practice flood retreat cultivation until it is ' <b>deemed opportune to switch to more modern forms of agriculture.</b> '	Who will do the deeming? It is most <b>unlikely to be the communities.</b> The intention, apparently, is that the floods will occur for only <b>ten days</b> in each year. It's not clear how this is to replace the annual floods that at present last up to <b>three months</b> , or how communities are to be protected against <b>commercial pressures to reduce the controlled floods</b> still further or abandon them altogether as, apparently, is the intention.

Decisions about water flows, irrigation and flooding have been made without the least regard to the communities whose lives will be most affected by them.

Because of Gibe III, **pastoral and agricultural societies that have operated successfully for hundreds of years** are now likely to disappear, and **the peoples of the Lower Omo will become dependent on hand-outs** and casual labour on the plantations.