



Laos Dam failure



Press Release

Dam Failure in Laos

The International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD) is following the situation very closely as information is just coming out about the collapse of the saddle dam at the Xe Pian Xe Namnoy Hydroelectric Dam, in Laos.

ICOLD newly elected President Michael Rogers made the following statement:

“Our deepest condolences go out to the people of Laos impacted by this tragedy, especially those families who have lost loved ones and/or their homes.

Dams are critical pieces of not only physical, but also socio-economic infrastructure that supply renewable power, storage for agricultural, industrial, municipal and community water supply. Like other large infrastructure in our societies, dams provide critical service, but also pose high risks that must be addressed during the planning, design and construction phases. The precautionary principle of dams to prevent and/or mitigate adverse downstream safety consequences informs and is at the heart of the ICOLD Mission.

ICOLD has been working for 90 years to promote the safe and sustainable design and construction of dams. As an organization of 100 nations committed to the safety of all dams around the world, ICOLD stands ready to assist and support the project owner and the national dam safety organization in Laos to assess the situation and work towards recovery. Moving forward, it will be important to understand the full cause of this apparent failure so that important lessons may be shared with other nations and dam owners. This is the heart of ICOLD mission and the main reason why it was founded. For example, during its recent Congress in Vienna (July 1-7 2018), ICOLD organized an important open workshop on the lessons learned from the Oroville Spillway Incident (USA, 2017).

Again, our heartfelt condolences go out to the thousands of persons downstream of this dam that have been impacted by this tragedy and ICOLD stands ready to support Laos in any way possible.”