

New global alliance to stop controversial dam projects

Title

The embankment dam projects [Ilisu in Turkey](#) and Belo Monte in Brazil have devastating consequences for nature and people, and they are also the spearhead of an unprecedented worldwide dam construction boom. Now, an international alliance called 'Damocracy' has been formed in order to preserve the last intact rivers in these countries. Recently, 25 of Damocracy activists blocked the Ilisu construction site, among them Kayapo-Indians from the Amazon, who are also committed to stopping the construction of the Belo Monte dam. To [NABU \(BirdLife in Germany\)](#), [RiverWatch](#), the [Manfred-Hermesen-Foundation](#) and other non-governmental organisations, Ilisu is a project bound to trigger an ecological and social catastrophe. *'Through networking and by creating international attention, we want to put up resistance against the tightly organised and well-financed dam construction lobby'*, NABU vice-president Thomas Tennhardt said. *'Over the last 15 years, hydroelectric power plants have been built in increasing numbers again, and they are misleadingly marketed as 'green energy sources'. However, if we bring into focus the consequences suffered by nature and local human populations, the overall social and ecological scenario is devastating'*, Tennhardt continued. Damocracy **demands** the immediate abandonment of the Ilisu project and the recognition and preservation of the antique city of [Hasankeyf](#) as a UNESCO world cultural and natural heritage site. A scientific survey revealed that the city and the neighbouring Tigris valley are the only locations worldwide to meet nine out of the UNESCO's ten criteria for world cultural and natural heritage sites. However, the Turkish government refuses to preserve the area and intends to flood Hasankeyf and the 65,000 inhabitants will be relocated. Numerous animal and plant species will face death, among them the Bonelli's eagle, the Griffon vulture and the already endangered Euphrates soft-shell turtle. According to statements from the construction site management, 70 per cent of the Ilisu dam has already been completed, and its flooding is scheduled for summer 2014. *'Even if the dam is completed, we want to make sure it is only half flooded, so that Hasankeyf remains above water level'*, Ulrich Eichelmann of RiverWatch said on the occasion of the Damocracy-protest. **You can take action now** by signing this [online petition](#) to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. For more information: please contact [Thomas Tennhardt](#), NABU vice-president.
