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Deutsches Institut für  
Entwicklungspolitik

German Development  
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## Hydropower development on the Coruh River shared between Turkey and Georgia

Special Session

“The Water-Energy Nexus in Shared River Basins:  
How Hydro-power Shapes Cooperation”

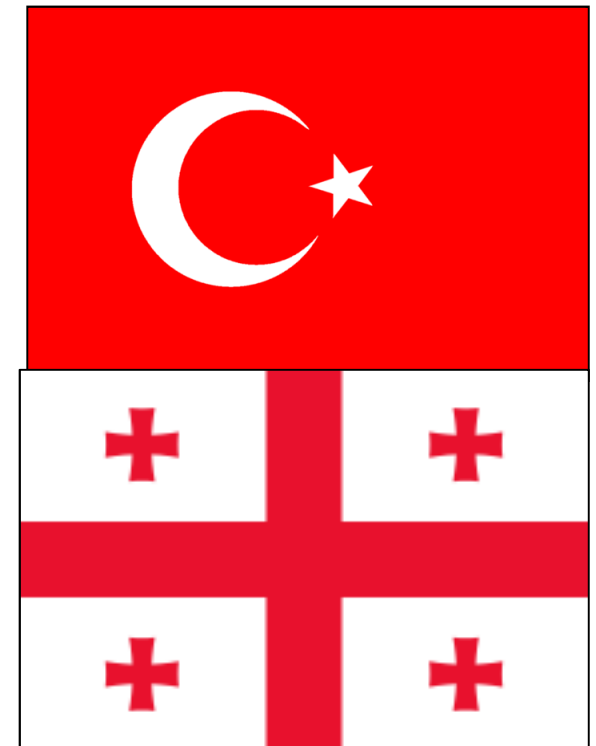
Waltina Scheumann, German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für  
Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Bonn

# Why is hydropower important for Turkey and Georgia?



- To secure electricity supply
- To increase the share of renewables (climate mitigation)  
[Turkey :34% of potential; Georgia: 25%]
- To limit dependency from energy imports
- To gain from electricity export / trade

**Hydro on Coruh River by private investors!**



# Unilateral hydro development on a transboundary river



410 km in Turkey  
25 km in Georgia

# Conflict over upstream-downstream impacts (1990ff.)



Close political and economic relations  
(1994ff): Turkey is the leading  
foreign investor in Georgia

Turkish dams trap sediments =>  
**coastal erosion** near Batumi

**disagreement on impacts and costs**  
=> Turkey and Georgia establish a  
bilateral expert group)





## Turkish-Georgian Cross-Border Electricity Trade Agreement (May 2013)



# Upstream-downstream impacts change



Electricity generation in Georgia relies on plant operations in Turkey  
[= control river flow]

negotiations between Energy Ministers and private utilities  
Committee established under Cross-border Electricity Trade Agreement

**Impact on coast (sediments) moves back stage**  
(protection on Georgian Govt.'s cost)





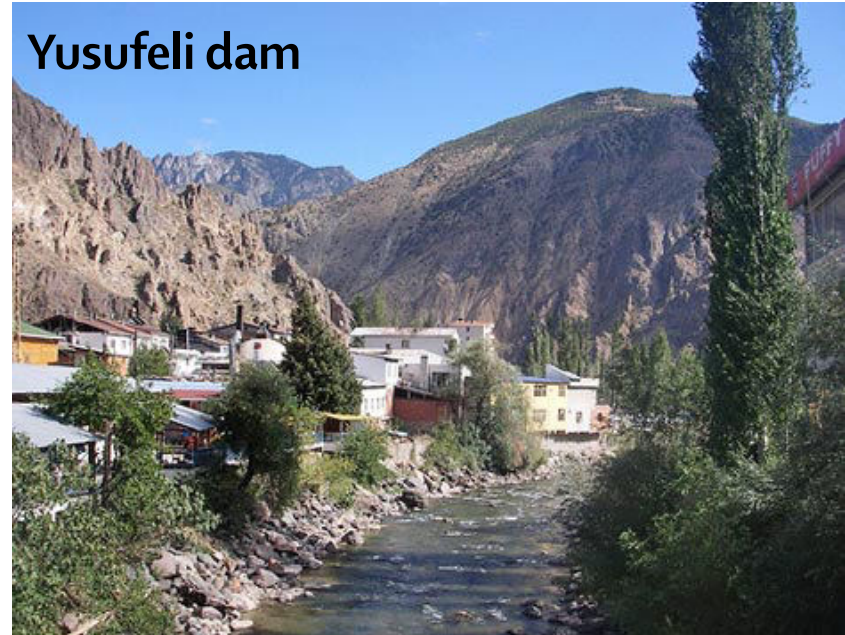
# Power of hydro sector vis-à-vis other actors



## Access to hydro decision-making in Turkey

- ❖ weak status of EIA and environmental bureaucracy
- ❖ weak public participation in EIA
- ❖ influence of international actors, but they refrain (>weak 'environment'/ 'resettlement' practices)

Yusufeli dam



## Access to hydro decision-making in Georgia

- ❖ international companies apply standards (EIA)
- ❖ but paying compensation is delayed and inadequate

# Turkish Govt. pushes hydro



Priority over other uses and informal use-rights,  
in favor of private investments

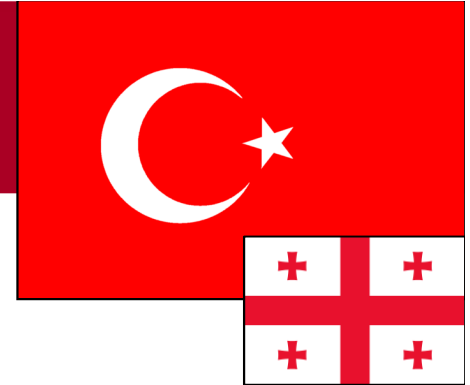
Policies weaken **property** and **democratic rights**, protection of environment  
(2010ff.)

=> allow urgent expropriation

=> allow renewable projects in protected areas



## „Power‘ findings



### Positive relations among unequal partners

#### International dimension

Turkey combines upstream position with economic / financial capability

Despite transboundary impacts, hydro-electricity trade facilitates cooperation

Alliance of Energy Ministers and private utility operators:

CBETA Committee mandated to settle issues

#### National dimension

Negative environmental / social impacts are legitimized:

climate mitigation! electricity supply! decrease dependency on imports!

Weak power of environmental bureaucracy and public in hydro decision-making

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