

## Ecology Expert Pans Brazil for Building More Hydroelectrics

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Washington Novaes, a Brazilian journalist who writes on environmental issues and has been a UN consultant on ecology impacts, says that the announcement by Brazil's government that it intends to construct six new hydroelectric power plants should be the object of a broad discussion by all of society and the government.

Novaes said that Brazil's energy problem is not a lack of energy, but the waste of energy. He pointed out that during the 2001 shortfall, people were made aware of the problem and electricity consumption dropped by 30%.

He went on to say that what happened then shows that a consistent program to reduce consumption could be very successful. "It costs a lot less to economize a kilowatt of energy than it does to generate a kilowatt of energy," said Novaes.

Meanwhile, a group known as "Victims of Dams" (Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens) (MAB) says it is "strongly opposed" to the construction of more dams.

"They have enormous impact on the environment and create social conflict by not respecting people's rights," says Luiz Costa, the president of MAB.

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