

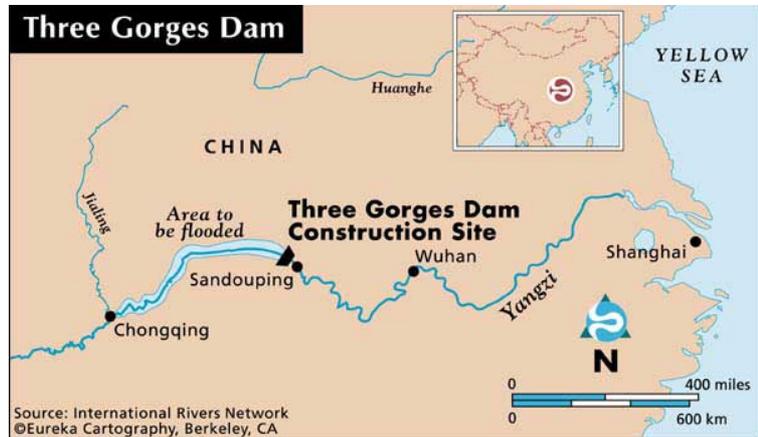
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# THREE GORGES DAM, CHINA

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Everyday, 18,000 Chinese are mobilized to build the most powerful and fascinating hydro-electric dam in the world. The reservoir will span at least 650km, making the Yangzi the longest navigable river in the world. The water exchange in the reservoir will be extremely fast (90 days at discharge rate of 5000 cubic metres per second).



It is the definition of a monumental project: a dam 1,100m wide and more than 180m high that will create a reservoir 175m deep and 600km long. It will enable 10,000 tonne ocean-going cargo ships to sail directly into the nation's interior, approximately 2,400km, for six months of each year, opening a region rich with agricultural and manufactured products. The dam's hydropower turbines are expected to create as much electricity as 18 nuclear power plants. Chongqing (see map) will become the largest seaport in the world.

The three hundred plus kilometre highway from Wuhan to Yichang is complete. The 28km stretch between Yichang and the dam site, which winds through mountainous terrain, includes curved grades built on pylons and 5km of double tunnels blasted through rock. The grades, cuts, base, tunnels and shoulders are finished, and paving seems to be about 90 to 95 percent complete. The rest is proceeding at a good pace. The river itself is a transportation artery.

This tremendous construction project will help China in the aspects of flood control, power generation, control of greenhouse gas and acid rain emissions, and improvement of navigability of the river, and China will be able to get more transportation benefits.



However, it is also considered to cause vital historical problems. Millions of people need to be relocated and these are all additional costs. Lots of historical heritage sites which have been preserved for hundreds of years are to be destroyed. Massive areas of forest and wildlife have been affected as well.

For more information please look at the website:  
[www.tuat.ac.jp/~sabo/sanxia/](http://www.tuat.ac.jp/~sabo/sanxia/)