

**Comment on ADB'S  
2<sup>nd</sup> Draft Public Communications Policy (version 25 October 2004)**

TO: disclosure@adb.org

FROM: Affected Communities Col Matara Highway  
Sri Lanka

DATE: 17 November 2004

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Dear Sirs,

The 2nd draft does not seem to have changed its approach much from the 1st Draft. Affected People need to understand what is happening and whilst there are many points of improvement the disclosure is still too little.

Sadly the title is not changed, that perhaps is the clearest indicator that the importance of disclosure is not accepted by ADB drafters of the policy.

The main problem seems to be that much that is needed is internal and cannot be disclosed. Back to Office, Mission Reports and even a safeguards review are considered internal and hence secret. These should all be available on enquiry.

The accountability reporting which has been added to this draft is poor with the government having a blocking power on disclosure in the Consultation Phase and only a press advisory being issued from CRP. These are areas where transparency is the key and disclosure is vital to not only the complainants but to all those watching the process.

Detailed points noted are:

- Title still Public Communications Policy
- No sign of Mission reports being published.
- Para 147 Report publishing should not require Government's approval.
- Para 149 CRP should publish the request not just a "press advisory"
- Appendix 4 Safeguards Policy Compliance memorandum considered an internal document

Joint Organization of the Affected Communities on Colombo Matara Highway

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