Grand Inga is not the “light” solution
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Eskom (a South Africa power company) announced plans to build another dam on the Congo River’s Inga Rapids called the Grand Inga. This dam is going to be twice the size of the Three Gorges dam in China and would generate approximately 40,000 MW of power. The dam would provide enough power to support industrialization in Africa and still have power left over. The Grand Inga dam sounds like a good idea, but there are several issues that still need to be addressed. The big issue is cost, the Grand Inga is estimated to cost 50 billion US dollars. Not only is the Grand Inga going to cost a lot of money, but the two existing dams, Inga 1 and Inga 2, need to be rehabilitated which is estimated to cost 550 million dollars. Then before the Grand Inga is built the Inga 3 will be built first which will generate 3500 MW of power (more than the Inga 1 and Inga 2 combined), which will cost approximately 5.23 billion dollars. Eskom claims that the Grand Inga will “light up Africa”, but in order to do this the grid system in Africa would need to be updated because 90% of the people living with out electricity live in areas off of the power grid. Updating the grid system would be even more costly and increase debt and taxes nationally, making those who already poor, poorer. Another issue is climate change and how it will affect the water levels that are needed to support the Grand Inga.

River: Congo River

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