

The cornerstone for hydropower plant Buk Bijela, a joint project of Serbia and the Republic of Srpska (RS), will be laid on 17 May, Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic announced. In March 2019, RS and Serbia decided to cooperate on the project for the construction of HPP Buk Bijela, besides already agreed joint development of the projects for the construction of hydropower plants Foca and Paunci on the Drina river. At the meeting of the Energy Committee of Serbia and the Republic of Srpska, it was concluded that the construction of these facilities, whose combined installed capacity exceeds 180 MW, would equally contribute to the stability of energy systems of both countries. In June 2016, the contract on the concession grant for the construction and operation of 93.52 MW HPP Buk Bijela between the RS Government and the consortium which consists of power utility ERS and its subsidiary "Hidroelektrane na Drini" has been signed. The concession is granted for a period of 50 years and the estimated value of the investment is around 195 million euros. RS agreed to build these three HPPs in cooperation with neighboring Serbia, while ERS merged two of its subsidiaries "Hidroelektrana Buk Bijela" and "Hidroelektrana Foca i Hidroelektrana Paunci" to establish a new company "Hidroenergetski Sistemi Gornja Drina", which would be co-owned by ERS and Serbian EPS, with EPS holding 51 % stake in the company.