

Adoption of the declaration on river protection by the National Assembly of the Republic of Srpska (RS), one of the two entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is a welcome step forward in addressing the challenges arising from hydropower development. It complements a similar declaration adopted by the Parliament of the second entity, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), in June 2020, said The Energy Community (EnC) Secretariat.

Both declarations call on the entity Governments to halt the procedures for approving new small hydropower projects and their construction until a review of all relevant national legislation is completed, and a subsequent report on its findings and proposals for reform are drawn up. The review is expected to include proposals for amendments to the state support schemes for renewable energy and to exempt small hydropower projects from receiving state incentives - as recommended in the Secretariat's policy guidelines on small hydropower projects.

The Secretariat is assisting Bosnia and Herzegovina in the preparation of a new regulation that will secure environmentally-friendly river flow. FBiH Government is already in the last stage of adopting a catalogue on the criteria for the sustainable development of hydropower plants up to 10 MW. The catalogue aims to steer strategic decision-making on small hydropower development, taking into consideration the criteria pertaining to energy management, ecological values, water management aspects and spatial planning.