



Until the issue of whether the countries of the region will build hydro power plants is resolved, it is important that the Montenegrin laws are obeyed to the letter so as not to endanger the environment, said the people from the NGO Green Home and the Agency for Environmental Protection.

“The research, which is expected to show whether Montenegro has oil and gas, will be the biggest challenge in the future”, they say in the Agency for Environmental Protection and Green Home.

From Green Homa they say that it is important for the plan documents to be followed in order to mitigate the potential negative impacts of the construction of hydro power plants.

“It is necessary to examine alternatives at the project level as well as a thorough assessment of the impact of various alternatives on the environment and society. It is necessary to make clear information about all the costs and benefits of a given hydro power project available” said program coordinator for the environment in Green Home, Natasa Kovacevic.

We still don’t know whether Serbia and the Republic Srpska will build hydro power plants in their territory. It is not clear, as director of the Agency for Environmental Protection Daliborka Pejovic pointed out, whether those countries are parties to the Espoo Convention. If not, Montenegro will have no right of appeal.

“If they are, we should seek international protection because we can not allow Montenegrin citizens to suffer the consequences and be a collateral damage of the development plans of some other countries,” she added.

Kovacevic noted however that it is clear from all the documents that the two countries signed the Convention.

“To our knowledge, in their documents they refer to the Espoo Convention, so we guess they have signed it. Clearly communication between the relevant authorities and persons in charge of the convention has not been adequate,” she said.

Montenegro is preparing for a big challenge-oil and gas exploration on the coast. Pejovic says that this project is at the very beginning.

“The Ministry of Economy is considering a tender for strategic assessment of the environmental impact. When documentation is completed we will know which parts of the territorial waters would be selected for the research.”

From Green Home and Agency for Environmental Protection they say that the issue of environmental protection concerns the citizens too. As they say, for now a small number of them are actively participating in the decision-making process, which is not the practice of the European Union.

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