



The planned construction of reservoirs of hydro power plants Buk Bijela and Foca on upper Drina, which will be jointly implemented by “EPIRS” and the German company “RWE Innogy,” will have no adverse effects on the environment in Montenegro.

Srebrenka Golic, Minister for Physical Planning, Civil Engineering and Ecology pointed out on Friday, after she presented the findings of previous studies of the environmental impact of these two hydro power plants to the officials of the Government of Montenegro in Banja Luka.

“Accumulation and construction of hydropower plants will be in the territory of RS and it will have a far greater impact in RS than in Montenegro. This ministry, however, would never allow anything to be built that will have a negative impact on human life and health either in the territory of RS or the other side of the Drina river, in the territory of Serbia and Montenegro” said Golic.

Ivana Vojnovic, Deputy Minister of Sustainable Development and Tourism of Montenegro expressed its gratitude to the Government of RS and the responsible minister for their willingness to present all the relevant information about the potential cross-border impact of the construction of HPP Buk Bijela and Foca, on the environment.

As she said, the two governments will establish a permanent communication to eliminate all possible doubts that may arise during the implementation of hydro power investment in the upper Drina in the simplest possible way. She stressed that the general public in Montenegro and RS will be regularly informed about the next steps in the project, especially from an environmental point of view, and the quality of life of citizens.

“Even two months ago, when the public first got involved in this, we did not at any moment say that we are against the construction of new energy sources, but it was necessary for us to have easy access to all relevant information, as it was arranged today, so that we can make a final decision. The final study is not yet completed, and when it sees the light of day, both sides will be able to give their opinion and approval” said Vojinovic.

Official Podgorica, according to Vojinovic, fully understands the necessity of building power plants in the region, because they are of crucial importance for accelerating economic growth and development and attracting foreign investment.

The RS National Assembly in early November approved the decision of the Government on the selection of “RWE Innogy” to be a strategic partner in the project of the construction of the hydropower system Upper Drina, which includes HPP Buk Bijela, Foca, Sutjeska and Paunci with installed capacity of about 238 megawatts, and the estimated value of the investment of 450 million Euros.

The contract defines the relationship of ownership with 60 percent belonging to the German company and 40 percent belonging to the “Electric Power Industry of Republic Srpska” in a joint venture.

Construction of the first in a series of hydro power plants - Buk Bijela, is planned for the beginning of September 2014.

The project was opposed by environmental organizations in Montenegro, which deemed that the construction of the plants and reservoirs would have a detrimental impact on the environment in the neighboring country therefore the government in Podgorica asked RS to submit all information regarding the assessment of environmental impacts, in accordance with the Espoo Convention.

Srebrenka Golic said that for the remaining two hydro power plants - Sutjeska and Paunci, studies on the impact on the environment have not been done yet, but that the government of Montenegro will be involved as soon as they are completed.

The delegation of Montenegro in Banja Luka consisted of representatives of the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism, the Ministry of Economy and the Agency for Environmental Protection.

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