

Serbia: Less than 50 out of 800 suitable SHPP locations used

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Serbian Minister of Construction Zorana Mihajlovic said that out of 800 locations suitable for the construction of small hydropower plants (SHPP), Serbia is currently using only less than 50.

Her statement was a response to a previous statement made by Serbian Minister of Environmental Protection Goran Trivan, who said that the law on the protection of nature will be amended, namely that the article which allows the construction of SHPPs in protected areas will be removed. Minister Mihajlovic noted that the Ministry of Construction was the final instance in the issuance of construction permits for the construction of small hydro power plants, after all the participants in the process have already given their approval and if there are no other obstacles.

Earlier this year, Minister Trivan said that permits for the construction of small hydropower plants (SHPP) on Stara Planina, as well as those for SHPPs on the river Visocica, previously issued by competent state institutions, will be revoked. He said that these areas represent a protected natural preserve and he personally is against the construction of SHPPs in such areas. However, the construction of several SHPPs on the side of Stara Planina which belongs to Knjazevac municipality has already started, but their construction and operation will be monitored closely. He also said that state Spatial Plan and local Spatial Plans are often in collision with each other regarding the areas available for the construction of such facilities, which is an issue that needs to be addressed in the future.