

The Albanian Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy informed the Government of Montenegro that two hydropower plants are being constructed on the Cijevna River, and announced the construction of another hydropower plant in the same basin.

According to extensive documentation from the Albanian Ministry, construction of the Dobrinja and Muras HPPs is underway, while conditions are being created for the construction of the Vriel HPP in the Cijevna basin.

Last year, the Montenegrin government, in accordance with the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context – Espoo, through diplomatic channels through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, requested documentation from Albania related to the construction of hydroelectric power projects on the Cijevna River.

The Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism translated the documentation and made it publicly available.

At the same time, the Ministry invited the interested public to send all suggestions and comments on the submitted documentation to the official address of the Ministry by February 24.

Who builds the hydroelectric power plant on the Cijevna River?

According to extensive documentation provided by the Albanian side, the Dobrinja hydroelectric power plant is being built by the company W.T.S.- Energji on the Cijevna Selce River, Malesi e Madhe municipality.

According to the data obtained, the installed capacity of the facility is 1,000 kW, while the average annual production will be 4,080,126 kWh.

According to the official documentation, the concessionaires of the Dobrinja HPP applied for a construction permit on June 21, 2018. The permit was officially announced on March 1, 2019, and the Albanian Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy did not receive information from the company on the status of the works.

As for HPP Muras, the facility is being built by Mateo & C on the tributary of Cevna, Malesi e Madhe municipality. The installed power of the power plant is 2,000 kW. The average annual energy production is about 8.2 million KWh.

The permit for the construction of this power plant was announced by the Albanian authorities on 16 March 2018, while the works officially began on 1 November 2018.

The document states that the Albanian government has “conditionally” issued a permit for the construction of this power plant, but it does not specify what this specifically means since work has been delayed. Interestingly, some documents for the construction of these power plants were personally signed by Prime Minister Eddie Rama.

HPP Vriela

Documents submitted by the Albanian ministry also mention the construction of HPP Vriela at Cijevna, but it does not specify at what stage this project is.

Selca Energji, the concessionaire, or constructor of that energy facility, is listed in accordance with the preliminary Permit for exploitation of the Vriela creek between the 1,170 m altitude and 690 m altitude issued by the Ministry of Energy and Industry and the relevant Feasibility Study.

“The use of the Vriela creek will be done through a one-catch scheme and three captures into its small tributaries that will provide a flow (flow) of 150 l / sec, with a single decanter, a pressure pool, a derivation pipeline and a pressure pipeline. This scheme envisages the creation of one interception work at an altitude of 970 m above sea level, and three captions at a quota of 975 m above sea level, which will be connected by pipelines of the derivation to the decanter located immediately behind the interception part, which on its side will connect to the hydroelectric power station building at an altitude of 680 m above sea level, “the Albanian document states.

How it all began

A group of Montenegrin NGOs and citizens protested in the fall of 2018 over the announcement of the construction of two hydropower plants.

A year later, a meeting of the Albanian – Montenegrin Commission for Water Management of Common Interest was held in Podgorica.

The Montenegrin side considered that their construction had a direct impact on the quality and quantity of groundwater in the territory of Montenegro, and the fact that the Montenegrin side had not been notified was contrary to the ESPOO convention.

The Montenegrin side also stated that the information provided formally by the Albanian side was not sufficient for their experts to conclude whether such activity was causing environmental damage in their territory.

Although the parties did not share the same position, under the bilateral agreement, the Albanian party pledged to make available to the Montenegrin side, within 15 days of the joint meeting, a map showing all hydropower plants built before 1990 and those installed in 1990. construction process on the Cijevna River.

Don't put Cijevna into a pipe

A protest by Montenegrin NGO activists was held on October 20, 2018 under the slogan

“Don’t put Cijevna into pipe”.

Noting the potential consequences of small hydroelectric projects on wild mountain rivers, NGOs “Bird Protection Center” and Biciklo.me, under the slogan “Don’t put Cijevna into pipe”, they said that the only short-term benefit would be private concessionaires.

By the decision of the Capital City Assembly, the Cijevna Canyon was proclaimed a Nature Park.

Source: portalanalitika.me