

Bosnia's rivers Janj and Pliva endangered due to the plan to build small hydropower plants

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The areas of Rijeka Janj and Pliva should have been protected because of their beauty. Instead, they are targeted by investors, and the construction of small hydroelectric power plants would have a negative impact on these natural pearls, not only in this area, but in the entire country and the Balkans. Viktor Bjelić from the Center for the Environment warned that small hydroelectric power plants hit the rivers, and disrupt life and the environment, wherever they are built. By going to the field in the municipality of Šipovo, Viktor Bjelić showed the journalists the location of Ada Sokocnica on the river Pliva.

"This place was a famous picnic area of the municipality of Šipovo, as well as a tourist complex that was looted during the war, and later privatized. Unfortunately, it was never put into operation again. The source of the river Pliva is located some 4 km upstream from this place, and about 150 meters downstream a small hydroelectric power plant Glavica was built, while upstream 150 meters from this resort another small hydroelectric power plant is planned," said Viktor Bjelić during a tour of the area. He added that this area is planned as protected.

"Pliva is such a beautiful river, it is one of the most beautiful and cleanest rivers in Bosnia and certainly deserves protection, and the construction of small hydro power plants violates those plans, that is, it disturbs life and the environment in this area," said Viktor.

Empty promises

Arriving at the place where the small hydroelectric power plant Glavica was built, Viktor said that it is not a derivation type, ie with pipes through which water passes, but is collected, so most of the water is redirected to turbines, while a smaller part of water passes over waterfalls. over the fish path, which apparently is not in function, ie it has not been noticed that the fish is migrating.

"Apart from the damage caused by small hydroelectric power plants in terms of river crossings, ie migration routes for fish, as well as for other plant and animal species, they also have a negative impact on the landscape. Although the investor of this hydroelectric power plant promised to build a promenade along the river, on the shore, and arrange it, this has not happened so far. The promise remained empty. Such are the promises about jobs, these are automatic hydroelectric power plants that employ a minimum number of workers", Bjelić points out.

In addition to Pliva, in the area of the municipality of Šipovo, the beautiful waterfalls of the river Janj are also endangered.

"Janj islands are the pearl of the municipality of Šipovo. At the site of the waterfall below Bukva, one of the most beautiful waterfalls, a small hydro power plant Šipovo is planned. With its construction, this beautiful waterfall would be completely submerged and in its place would be an accumulation. Downstream from this waterfall, there is a large waterfall under Sokolin, which would be completely destroyed by the construction of this small hydroelectric power plant, ie it would be dry, because all the water would go through pipes to the turbines of the small hydroelectric power plant, so the entire stretch of several kilometers would be dry. explained Viktor Bjelić.

The area that was to be protected

He reminded that an urgent zoning plan was made for this area of the Janj islands.

"According to that plan, which was paid for and ordered by investors, this small hydro power plant entered into that plan. Unfortunately, the plan was adopted in the National Assembly of the Republika Srpska, without the possibility for the public to announce itself, that is, no public debate was held on this topic. This plan, in addition to this small hydroelectric power plant Šipovo, envisages the construction of several more micro hydroelectric power plants. At the moment, a micro power plant with a current capacity of 80 kilowatts has been built on the site of the Janj islands several decades ago, but through this zoning plan it is planned to build two more micro power plants, and one has started, although it does not have a permit or documentation."

He adds that, according to the spatial plan of Republika Srpska, this area was intended for protection as cultural and natural heritage, because it is in this place that the river Janj makes thousands of islands, thousands of waterfalls, thousands of tributaries, which are unique, not only in Bosnia but and throughout the Balkans.

"In addition to the natural environment created by Mother Nature, human mills have created numerous mills, mills that grind grain. This area is also interesting for tourists who visit it every day. But the planned projects for the construction of small hydro power plants, through legalization and through the mentioned zoning plan, will bring only harm, and no benefit to this area and the local population. The saddest thing is that through electricity bills, all citizens of Bosnia pay a fee for renewable energy sources, and most of the funds are actually poured into the pockets of investors in small hydro power plants, "said Viktor and adds:" stop the construction of small hydro power plants. Let's abolish incentives and you will see that investors will lose interest, so small hydro power plants will not be built. "

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