

Albanian Government has decided to cancel projects for the construction of hydropower plants on the Vjosa river. The Ministry of Environment refused to issue permits for the construction of HPPs on the Vjosa river and now plans to integrate the area within the existing Vjosa national park, according to Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama.

Earlier in September, the Energy Community (EnC) Secretariat sent an opening letter to Albania, addressing its concerns with regard to the environmental impact assessment (EIA) of the HPP Pocem project on the Vjosa river. In particular, the Secretariat preliminarily found that the administrative procedures conducted for the project were not in line with the provisions of Directive 2011/92/EU, with particular regard to the Directive's requirements on the content of the environmental report and its public participation provisions.

Last year, more than 150 non-governmental organizations (NGO) have sent a joint letter to PM Rama, seeking the cancellation of projects for the construction of hydropower plants on the Vjosa river. According to the letter, the Vjosa river is a hotspot for biodiversity and home to many endangered species in Europe, but there are currently 45 projects for the construction of HPPs - eight at the river's main course and 37 at her tributaries. Therefore, NGOs urge the Government to immediately suspend all ongoing hydropower developments in the Vjosa catchment until a strategic environmental impact assessment and an integrated river basin management plan, which takes into account social aspects, particularly the potential of ecotourism, has been elaborated.

In 2018, Albanian Ministry of Energy signed a concession agreement for the construction of hydropower plant Kalivac on the Vjosa river in southern Albania with Turkish-Albanian consortium consisting of Ayen Enerji and Fusha. The consortium won a 35-year concession contract for the construction of this 120 MW HPP at the international tender concluded in October last year. Estimated cost of the project is 125,3 million euros and it is expected to be completed in two and a half years. Annual electricity production of HPP Kalivac will amount to 366.6 GWh.

Source: [serbia-energy.eu](http://serbia-energy.eu)