

Out of the total number of hydropower plants, 42 of them, i.e. only six percent, are large, i.e. larger than 10 megawatts, which have 94 percent of the total installed capacity, while 72 have medium power from one to 10 MW, and 522 are small hydropower plants. Small hydropower plants make up 82 percent of the total, and provide only two percent of electricity and their number has increased sharply since 2000.

The construction of an increasing number of hydropower plants in Southeast Europe could cause inestimable damage to globally important points of biodiversity, experts warn in the international scientific journal "Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews".

The analysis focus on the rivers of the Danube basin in Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, whose basin covers about two thirds of the Croatian mainland. While biodiversity monitoring stations are rare, so it is difficult to assess the impact of hydropower plants on rivers, fish and invertebrates, warn authors Krešimir Žganer from Croatia, Helena Hušek and Martin T. Pusch from Germany.

As much as 1,015 kilometers of river flow have been turned into reservoirs, which completely changes the habitats of the living world, and pollution has been determined at 59 hydroelectric power plants, according to the analysis transmitted by the Hina agency. Most of the hydroelectric power plants are located in the Sava River basin - 438 of them, and 110 in the Drava's, so the main flows of these two rivers are strongly used for electricity production.

The construction of 1,315 new hydroelectric power plants is planned on the rivers of the Danube basin, mostly in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to the analysis of the magazine "Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews".

Experts warn of the first regional review of hydropower use and available sources of data on its impact on the environment for the area outside the Alps "strongly warn that the current hydrological and biological monitoring on these rivers is not sufficient to assess environmental impacts."

In the article "Overview of dams for hydropower plants in Southeast Europe - distribution, trends and availability of monitoring data on the example of a multinational Danube basin", the authors conclude that hydropower projects can produce environmentally friendly electricity only if built in the right places and with appropriate mitigation measures.

Source: danas.rs