

The Bush lake issue has been untouched for twenty years, and it is recalled only by occasional media reports, such as yesterday's. Bukovo Lake in Bosnia and Herzegovina, created in the 1970s by submerging southeastern parts of Livno, is the largest artificial reservoir in this part of Europe. While the municipalities of Livno and Tomislavgrad, use only a small part of its potential (sports, tourism and fishing), the nearest cross-border neighbor has been using it for decades. Croatian Electric Power Company from this lake uses water for the production of electricity in the Orlovac Hydroelectric Power Plant, which is located on the territory of the Republic of Croatia.

However, this exploitation is not based on an intergovernmental agreement, but by an agreement between the Republic of Croatia and the parallel authority of the B&H Croats. Residents of the mentioned municipalities are dissatisfied with the fact that this agreement is still in force since the fees for the use of lakes received by HEP are very misleading (total EUR 1.75 million a year) compared to their reported profit (annually around EUR 40 million). At the same time, the Croatian government does not want to undermine its image of custodians, and besides that compensation Croats in BiH sometimes drop a few crumbs from the Zagreb table – as we wrote earlier in the form of support projects in the field of culture or education. Still, many locals would dismiss such patronage, just to return their belongings.

Similar examples can be found at the other end of the country. On the Drina river, there are HPP Bajina Bašta and HPP Zvornik, and although parts of these hydro power plants are located in the territory of BiH, only Serbia has the benefit. The latter, in the negotiations on the border determination with BiH, offered a rather ridiculous solution: the exchange of territories. Bosnia and Herzegovina had rejected it earlier, but nothing has been done since the unfinished institutions of their own. Given the great benefit of the electricity production that all citizens can have (which would ultimately have a lower electricity price available), all residents should be affected by energy distribution plans, regardless of the state border.