

The construction of the Kosiinj Reservoir is expected to increase the degree of water usage from the Lika and Gacka rivers for electricity production by reducing overflow losses, thus achieving a high degree of flood protection in the downstream area, Lipovo polje and the Kosiinj valley, which are flooded almost every year.

Croatia's power company Hrvatska elektroprivreda signed an agreement with the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development on the preparation and implementation of the Kosiinj hydropower system (HES Kosiinj). The agreement represents the basis on which the Croatian Government will make a decision on declaring the HES Kosiinj project of strategic interest for Croatia in line with Croatia's Act on Strategic Investment Projects.

"I can say with certainty that today is a great day for the Croatian energy sector as one of the largest investments in the recent history of Hrvatska elektroprivreda will soon become a strategic project," commented Minister Tomislav Čorić. "The true complexity of this project is seen in its overall outcome which will contribute to achieving several national goals - increasing the share of electricity production from renewable sources, resolving flooding issues and building much-needed energy infrastructure. Given the plan to create a decarbonised Europe in accordance with the guidelines of the European Green Plan, this is another proof that Croatia is thinking and moving towards green and renewable."

The HES Kosiinj project includes the construction of the Kosiinj Reservoir with Kosiinj, Sedlo and Bakovac dams, injection curtains and Kosiinj hydropower plant with support facilities, the reconstruction of existing Sklope hydropower plant, the construction of alternative roads and of the power network connection via the 110 kilovolts (kV) switchyard and 2×110 kV overhead lines and of the 10(20)kV electricity distribution network connection.

"As one of the two units in the overall project of upgrading the existing Senj hydropower system (HES Senj), HES Kosiinj will enable an increase in electricity production at HES Senj by 230 gigawatts-hour (GWh) or by 22 per cent compared to current production," commented Frane Barbarić, HEP's President of the Management Board. "Together with the second part of the project, Senj 2 hydropower plant, this is the largest project by HEP since the independence of Croatia, with a total value of 3.4 billion kuna [approximately 453 million euros]."

In addition to increasing total electricity production, which will contribute to the strengthening of Croatia's energy self-sufficiency, the project will increase the share of renewable sources in meeting electricity demand in Croatia. It will also bring a series of commercial benefits at the national and local levels, particularly to GDP growth, the possibility of engaging the local construction industry as well as increasing employment of the local population in tourism and other service industries during and after construction

and of creating better conditions for agricultural production.

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