

Out of 141 registered HPPs within national parks, 28 already exist or are under construction, whereas 113 HPP are in the pipeline. In the case of SHHPs the precise number may vary as water abstractions, pipelines and powerhouses are not explicitly known for many projects. Furthermore, some projects located in close proximity to NPs may impact the protected area, particularly if the water for energy production is extracted directly from the park's boundary or if they impede on fish migration.

National parks are dedicated to protect wilderness and natural heritage. Thus, all HPP projects inside national parks are ecologically significant as they affect hydromorphological conditions.

Particularly in Albania, Macedonia, but also in Montenegro, national parks are impacted by numerous smaller or bigger projects.

Two other examples are the Una NP in BA and the upper Krka NP in HR, where new facilities are projected within the boundaries of national parks.

In regards to relevant riparian habitats, national parks play an important role: 911 km of larger rivers flow through the area of national parks (this includes only larger rivers as shown in the maps). However, many small hydropower stations extract water from rivers with much smaller catchments.

Often hydropower projects can be found in close vicinity of parks, such as in the Sutjeska NP in BA or the Lura NP, where water for the power generation is taken directly from the park's boundary, or even from lakes inside the park. The big power plant "Rapuni 1" strongly impedes the connectivity to Shebenik Jabllanice National Park in Albania.

Ramsar Sites, Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites (Nature) and hydropower projects

A total of 30 HPPs can be found in Ramsar Sites, Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Nature Sites. Five are operating or under implementation, whereas 25 new projects are projected (mainly along the Mura and Drava, but also in the Neretva Delta (Opuzen), Sava or Durmitor NP/WH on Tara). Only two planned hydropower plants in this category also fall within national parks.

International categories are based on national protection categories such as Nature Reserves or Natura 2000 Sites (e.g. Ramsar Sites have commonly been designated within strict nature reserves or Natura 2000 areas; core zones of Biosphere Reserves are usually built upon strict nature reserves).

One critical example is the Durmitor National Park in Montenegro, a World Heritage Nature Site (WH), where new HPPs are planned in the Tara valley.

Intentions to build a chain of hydropower plants within the Mura-Drava Danube

Transboundary Biosphere Reserve in SI and HR still exist, but are not very realistic after the area has been designated as Natura2000 and Biosphere Reserve.

Source: Euronatur & RiverWatch