

The Ministry of Economy of Montenegro rejected the comments of the civil society on the Energy Law

At the end of April, several non-governmental organizations, with the support of WWF Adria, submitted comments on the draft Energy Law. On that occasion, they reminded that through the new legal solution it is necessary to clearly prescribe that the development of energy activities should be for the purpose of protecting the public interest. In addition, they emphasized that the production of energy from renewable sources must not endanger sustainable development and environmental protection.

The Ministry of Economy of Montenegro refused to accept the comments of the representatives of the civil society on the Law on Energy, which once again sent a message that they are not interested in different opinions.

The Ministry of Economy commented on the comments on the draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Energy. During the public debate that was conducted in the midst of the pandemic, a number of civil society organizations, individuals, but also state-owned companies, sent comments on the draft law. From the conclusion of the deadline for submission of comments to the official statement of the Ministry, not a single session of the working group in charge of this law was held, which significantly violated the transparency and democracy of the entire procedure.

Although the whole process of preparing the draft of the new law went without a direct discussion, it is certain how it will be accepted. The Ministry of Economy has once again shown that they are not interested in the actual participation of the public, even when it comes to topics that concern all citizens of Montenegro, and who should participate in them. Therefore, in anticipation of this year's World Environment Day, WWF Adria, the Eco-team and the Social Justice Action express their deep regret over the whole process. The development of the private sector is important for the future of the whole country, especially in the period of economic recovery, but it must be sustainable, transparent and equally accessible to all, without harming the environment and the well-being of citizens. With this draft law, the authorities reaffirm that only certain stakeholders will continue to benefit. Thus, the public good and resources owned by all citizens are used for the purpose of private interests with great losses for the whole society.

The draft of the new law leaves the burning energy problems in Montenegro unresolved. By avoiding the permanent abolition of incentives for small hydropower plants, the new law will continue to sponsor the destruction of rivers and enrich private investors.

"This law, if adopted by the Parliament of Montenegro, will contribute to slowing down the economic recovery of Montenegro, and we can only assume all the consequences by nature. Instead of building a stable and sustainable energy system that takes into account the long-term development of the country and all the challenges we will face, which are the result of



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climate change, the Ministry of Economy and the entire Government continue as before. Unfortunately, the price of their negligence will be paid by all citizens, "WWF Adria, Eco-team and Action for Social Justice said in a statement.

Source: wwfadria.org