

The project of mini hydroelectric power station in the area of Bela Crkva in Serbia has been stopped

For the only mountain river in Vojvodina, Nera, for many years now it is uncertain whether it will experience and survive the commissioning of a mini hydroelectric power plant, which was hinted to happen this spring.

Since no permits have been obtained for such an endeavor, including the approval of the Serbian-Romanian Water Commission, the Provincial Institute for Nature Conservation, and the development of a new Spatial Plan for the Special Purpose Areas, Nera is still flowing at just over meters per second.

As Bela Crkva Mayor Darko Bogosavljevic recently said, Nera has an average capacity of 12 cubic seconds per year, and it takes eight to operate SHP.

- When we add and subtract everything, we come to four cubic seconds on the Nera, which means that in summer, where in some parts the depth was up to 30 centimeters, then it would be about five, which would destroy the flora and fauna - explains Bogosavljevic. - The spatial plan of Bela Crkva is under development, we have stagnated a little at this point because in the meantime we had the proclamation of Karas-Nero PIO, which also includes this move around Nera. This means that the spatial plan must also take into account the new fact that a region of exceptional features has been proclaimed, which covers more than 60 percent of the municipality.

Balancing the decision to start turbines and the need not to endanger nature, the Mayor says he has nothing against commissioning the SHPP, but only if it complies with the law and if the profession thinks the power plant can operate safely.

- At the same time, I do not want to neglect some of the environmental protection and values that exist, but all this should be harmonized with the development of the municipality, economy and tourism, that is, everything that enables people to stay here - says Bogosavljevic, adding that if SHP starts with work, it is necessary to monitor and know what the situation is at what point in time, as well as that it is green energy, which is good if there is potential.

Since 2015, activists from the local environmental association Aurora have launched a series of initiatives and activities to indicate that the completion and commissioning of plants on that watercourse would have a catastrophic effect on the wider area.

- It is true that the building has a building permit issued by the Municipality of Bela Crkva, but it is also controversial because it was issued with a number of omissions or obviously without checking the compliance of the documentation, so the documents mention different locations, lack of hydrological analysis and similar things and that which may be crucial - explains Milan Belobabic of the Aurora Association. - There is also a lack of consent from the joint Serbian-Romanian commission, without whose position nothing should be done in

The project of mini hydroelectric power station in the area of Bela Crkva in Serbia has been stopped

the area. At the very least, it would be necessary to carry out a thorough revision of the documentation accompanying the construction of a mini hydro power plant near Nera, as there are obviously discrepancies and omissions.

The mini hydroelectric power plant was not intended to be built on the Nera River, but on the Yaruga production channel, which, according to Bogosavljevic, is dry. Also, in order for the power plant to be commissioned, a threshold or water intake from Nera must be made in order for water to reach the turbines.

Assistant to the Provincial Secretary for Urbanism and Environmental Protection, Dr. Ratko Bajcetic, said in one interview that the Provincial Institute for Nature Conservation does not have a positive opinion regarding the construction of the said water intake, precisely because the area is in a protected area.

- The Institute for Nature Conservation also stated what questions that study should answer, but the study submitted did not answer those questions and therefore the conditions cannot be considered fulfilled. What I am quite sure is that the Provincial Institute for Nature Conservation will abide by the Law on Nature Protection and the Act on the Proclamation of the Karas-Nero Protected Natural Property - explained Dr Bajcetic at the time.

Source: dnevnik.rs