

Environmental organizations WWF Adria, Eco-team and Action for Social Justice said in a joint statement that “By avoiding a permanent abolition of incentives for small hydropower plants, the new law will continue to sponsor the destruction of rivers and enrich private investors and draft amendments to the Energy Law leave burning energy problems in Montenegro unresolved.”

The Ministry of Economy commented on the observations to draft legislation on Amendments to the Energy Law.

“This law, if adopted by the Parliament of Montenegro, will contribute to slowing down the economic recovery of Montenegro, and we can only imagine the consequences this will have for 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 resulting from climate change, the Ministry of Economy and the entire Government are continuing with the status quo. Unfortunately, it’s the people who will pay the price of their negligence,” the statement said.

During the public debate, conducted during the pandemic, several civil society organizations and individuals, but also state-owned companies, sent comments on the draft law. Between the deadline for the submission of observations and the Ministry’s official statement, not a single session of the responsible working group was held, which, as the organizations stated, significantly violated the transparency and democracy of the entire procedure.

“At the end of April, several non-governmental organizations, with the support of WWF Adria, sent comments on the draft law. They used the opportunity to recall that the new legal solution should stipulate that the development of energy activities should protect public interests and that the production of energy from renewable sources must not jeopardize sustainable development and environmental protection. Although the process of drafting the new law went without direct discussion, it will inevitably be accepted. The Ministry of Economy has once again shown that they are not interested in real public participation, even when it comes to topics that concern all Montenegrin citizens, and that should be opened up to their due participation,” announced a statement from the environmental organizations.

WWF Adria, Eco-team and Action for Social Justice, in anticipation of this year’s World Environment Day, are expressing their sincere regret over the entire process.

“The development of the private sector is important for the future of the whole country, especially in a period of economic recovery, but it must be sustainable, transparent, and equally accessible to all, without undermining the environment and the well-being of

citizens. By acting in this way, the public good and the resources owned by all citizens are used for private interests with great losses for society as a whole,” environmentalists believe.

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