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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

33rd meeting
Strasbourg, 3-6 December 2013

Other complaints

**Hydro power development within the territory
of Mavrovo National Park
("the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia")**

REPORT BY THE GOVERNMENT

*Document prepared by
the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning of the "the former Yugoslav Republic of
Macedonia"*

Skopje: 7 August 2013

REPORT

on the application of environmental impact assessment procedure concerning the implementation of projects for development of HPP Boshkov Most I HPP Lukovo Pole in NP Mavrovo, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”

1. Background

This Report has been prepared at the request of the Secretariat of the Bern Convention at the Council of Europe, for delivery of data and information on activities undertaken by the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MEPP), investor of two hydropower plants in NP Mavrovo and PI NP Mavrovo in the proposed Emerald site Mavrovo.

The Report includes relevant data on completed activities and produced materials in relation to the application of environmental impact assessment procedure concerning the implementation of projects for development of HPP Boshkov Most I HPP Lukovo Pole in NP Mavrovo, as well as planned activities towards implementation of the provisions contained in the national legislation on environment and nature, European law and international conventions and agreements on nature and biodiversity protection.

2. Background of the Council of Europe’s request

In May 2013, Secretariat of the Bern Convention delivered Letter to the Administration of Environment through the Permanent Mission of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France.

Secretariat of the Convention on the Protection of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) notified the Government of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” on communications submitted by NGO “Eko Svest” from Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, related to the threat posed to wildlife in the NP Mavrovo by the construction of hydropower plants Boshkov Most and Lukovo Pole. In this context, provisions of the Bern Convention and two recommendations of the Standing Committee (No.157/2011 and 162/2011) we mentioned, concerning application of protection measures for nominated Emerald sites, habitat types and Emerald species by the Parties of the Bern Convention.

It was demanded to deliver more relevant data and information on the development of the two hydropower plants in NP Mavrovo and potential conclusions on their impact on natural ecosystems and especially on habitats and wild species, as well as measures established in accordance with the provisions of the Bern Convention, EU Bird and Habitat Directives and implementation of Recommendation no. 157/2011 on the management of this Emerald site. The Report will be included in the Agenda of the Meeting of the Bureau scheduled for 17 September 2013 in the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France.

3. Activities of MEPP

The Administration of Environment within MEPP contacted PI NP Mavrovo and ELEM (Electric Power Plants of Macedonia), investor of the two hydropower plants and requested that they deliver the demanded data and information on the status of the two projects concerning development of hydropower plants Boshkov Most and Lukovo Pole. It was also requested that they deliver excerpts from the results of biodiversity monitoring at the site of the future accumulation of Boshkov Most and Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the project aimed at developing the hydropower plant Lukovo Pole.

In addition to the above, Department of Environment collected:

- Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the project aimed at developing the hydropower plant Boshkov Most (Technical no. PZS_005_01/11 of 2011, prepared by GEING Skopje);

- Decision awarding consent to the application for approval of the project aimed at developing the hydropower plant Boshkov Most (MEPP, no.11-1660/3 dated 9.10.2012);
- Minutes from three public debates organized with regard to the Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the project aimed at developing the hydropower plant Boshkov Most, as follows: on 12.09.2011 in the Municipality Mavrovo Rostushe, on 13.09.2011 in the Municipality Debar and on 14.09.2011 in the Grand Meeting Room of the Assembly of the City of Skopje, in Skopje;
- Programme for environmental monitoring (quality of air, water, soils, noise); and
- Programme for biodiversity monitoring in the area intended for development of accumulation and other facilities of HPP Boshkov Most (prepared by EMPIRIA EMS Skopje and Birds of Macedonia Study Society in 2012).

3. Conclusion

Upon detailed analysis carried out on the content of the Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the project aimed at developing the hydropower plant Boshkov Most, it has been concluded that it contained 12 Chapters, executive summary, conclusion and annexes (maps, tables and figures). We have selected the following chapters in particular:

- Goal of the project, description of site and wider area;
- Legal and administrative framework for environmental impact assessment (EIA),
- Process of public information and involvement,
- Considered alternatives,
- Description of environment: landscape, biodiversity;
- Special insight in fauna diversity (animal species),
- Natural heritage,
- Project impact on landscape diversity,
- Project impact on biological diversity and natural heritage;
- Measures to mitigate impacts on nature,
- Plan for environment and nature management and monitoring,
- Special insight in the monitoring of area biodiversity,
- Conclusion, Executive summary.

We have also checked the references of the authors of presented chapters in the Study and concluded that they are reputable national scientific experts (academicians, members of MASA and professors at natural science faculties under the University of “St.Cyril and Methodius” in Skopje).

The Programme for biodiversity monitoring has been carried out by team of experts composed of specialists in flora, botanics and zoology (for invertebrate and vertebrate animals). The monitoring is on-going. So far, autumn, winter, spring and summer season monitoring have been completed.

4. Future activities

The Investor of the project for HPP Lukovo Pole development is also ELEM (Electric Power Plants of Macedonia) from Skopje.

MEPP issued decision to ELEM obliging them to prepare Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the project aimed at developing the hydropower plant Lukovo Pole (no.11-4902/4 dated 16.8.2013).

International tender was published and company BRL from France was selected to develop the EIA Study by engaging international and national experts. Then, the Investor ELEM will forward the Study to the independent expert committee established by MEPP, for review.

5. Conclusion

On the basis of the analysis made of documents prepared by the Investor ELEM (Electric Power Plants of Macedonia) from Skopje, it has been concluded that the provisions of the national legislation have been adhered to in full and the procedure of approval of the Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the project aimed at developing the hydropower plant Boshkov Most has been completed and followed up by issuance of Decision awarding consent to the development of the accumulation and hydropower plant Boshkov Most.

Upon the completion of the process of elaboration of Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the project for construction of hydropower plant and accumulation Lukovo Pole, and its review by the independent expert committee, Investor ELEM will submit the Study to MEPP.

Administration of Environment within MEPP will review the EIA Study on Lukovo Pole project and state its position on the content and measures proposed for protection of environment, nature and biodiversity.

With reference to activities carried out at national level with regard to the second project HPP Lukovo Pole), “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” Government, through MEPP, will prepare detailed report and forward it to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention at the Council of Europe.

Department of Nature

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