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Zeleni Neretve: Why the Silence?

Zeleni Neretve

27 October 2006

Zeleni Neretve, Konjic-based civic association for the preservation of Neretva river, recently sent an open letter to all people connected with the river to get involved protecting it from the intended construction of hydro-electric power-plants in its upper valley.

The letter was provoked by the increased media reporting on the intention of "Intrade-Energy" company to receive a concession from the Government of B&H Federation, on Government's initiative, for construction of power-plants on upper Neretva.

The construction will devastate area of high natural value and has met strong opposition of the citizens that live along the river (not only in Konjic).

Faced with the evident silence of state institutions on the issue, Zeleni Neretve use the letter to ask several important questions.

They demand from the FB&H Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Protection to clearly present its positions and the views presented by the Minister at the session of the Government that debated this issue. This in view of the fact that Upper Neretva valley was seen as area of highest importance for development of tourism and the procedure to declare it a national park is already under way.

The Ministry of Spatial and Urban Planning should report to the public how could it happen that the four planned dams deviate greatly from the existing Spatial Plan of the FB&H (adopted in 1981), but also, how comes that one additional dam was included in the plans?

The Tourist Association of B&H Federation, says the letter further, should wake up from its long lethargy, accustomed to not being asked for anything and itself not providing any views and opinions.

The area of Upper Neretva, under attack for quite some time, has long been seen as great potential in all development strategies in the country. Do the people in the Tourist Association believe that dams will be more attractive view than the clear rushing waters of the river? If they don't have any position on this matter, then why do they exist?

Zeleni Neretve invite all the citizens, experts and tourists that have witnessed the beauty of the river, either in fishing trips on rafting down the river. The preservation of Neretva river is not the exclusive interest of environmental organizations that have been the only entities to publicly voice their protests so far.



Rijeka Neretva

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