

Approval of 3 Slovenian hydropower plants

The Slovenian company HSE has signed the EKOenergy Licence Agreement. During the summer, we have been checking which electricity they could start with.

In consultation with the Slovenian member Slovenski e-forum, and together with many other stakeholders, we have selected 3 hydropower plants.

- HPP Arto-Blanca (39 MW - lower Sava),
- HPP Fala (58 MW - Drava)
- HPP Solkan (32 MW - Soča River)

None of these seem to be contested (on the contrary), although there is only one with a fish passage (Arto Blanca)

We send additional e-mails to Slovenian fishers unions, to nature conservation organizations and to public authorities.

As a part of the approval procedure, the stakeholders also suggested 4 possible river restoration measures (Measures that COULD be financed via the EKOenergy Environmental Fund).

We list these hereafter:

1. Saving River Temenica

Facebook page in Slovenian only:

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/civilna-iniciativa-za-re%C5%A1itev-reke-temenice/program-re%C5%A1evanja-reke-temenice/150660031766256>

River Temenica is the third largest river in Slovenia with 2 underground parts. Actually most of the stream runs underground and is thus closely connected with groundwater. This makes it especially vulnerable for any kind of pollution. For many people in communities of Dolenjska region it is also a source of drinking water.

In the past decade fish stocks were severely depleted, especially between railway station Trebnje and elevated highway (former H1) at Ponikve. Through the period of last three decades the riverbed noticeably shrunk both in depth and narrowness. In time of the emperor Marija Terezija there were 17 water powered plants operational on Temenica (mills, saws...). Today there are none.

Project proposal

Restoration of three dams on the river would raise the level of water and consequently the level of ground water. In addition to that water storages behind the dams would become spawning areas for different species of fish that are now depleted and thus the biodiversity of river life would be improved.

Additional info

Efforts to save river Temenica are currently done mainly by the Civil initiative for salvation of the river Temenica and local fishing organization.

2. Building fish passages on river Kolpa.

In the past years Development Center of Novo Mesto run a project with a few partners where the goal of the project was to restore mills on river Kolpa and turn them into small hydroelectric power plants. 8 mills were chosen, but only a few were actually reconstructed. All mills can be turned into environmentally friendly hydro-power plants, the only obstacle is that fish passages have to be constructed.

It seems a great project as the results would benefit both the life in the river and they would provide additional green electricity production.

3. Co funding of LIFE PROJECT: Live Drava - Riparian Ecosystem Restoration of the Lower Drava River in Slovenia

<http://ptice.si/livedrava/home/project/general-2/?lang=en>

Conservation objectives

- Preserve populations of endangered (water)birds with appropriate management.
- Restore and preserve the stopover site for migrating (water)birds across Slovenia and along so called "Adriatic Flyway" migration route.
- Achieve positive impact on habitats types important for (water)birds.
- Preserve nature values of unique technological and cultural heritage of Slovenia (wastewater basins of the ex sugar factory Ormož).
- Preserve populations of other endangered and internationally protected plant and animal species.
- Preserve biodiversity of the area, especially of the (water)birds.

4. Additional measures related to LIFE PROJECT: Restoration of the Ljubljana River corridor and improvement of the river's flow regime

<http://ksh.fgg.uni-lj.si/ljubljaniconnects/ANG/default.htm>

The aim of the project is to improve the transitivity and connectivity of Natura 2000 sites, by restoring the functionality of the Ljubljana corridor connecting two Natura 2000 sites, i.e. Ljubljansko barje (Ljubljana Marshes) and Sava–Medvode–Kresnice. The project goals will be achieved through the removal of fish migration barriers, through improvement of the water regime, thus restoring habitats, through improvement of water infrastructure, water management, and establishment of hydrological monitoring. The target fish species, whose habitats are to be improved, are Danube salmon (*Hucho hucho* L.), Danube roach (*Rutilus pigus* Heckel) and Striped chub (*Leuciscus souffia* Risso).