

# Complaint No. 2016/5: Presumed negative impact of hydro-power plant development on the Vjosa river (Albania)

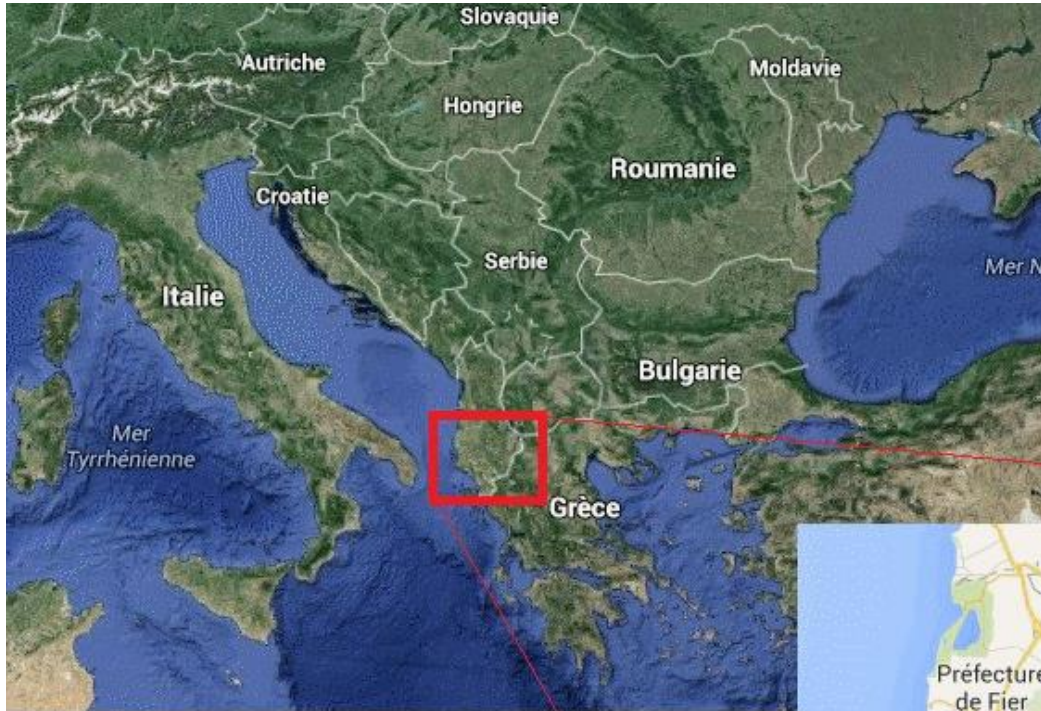


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# The Vjosa River basin



Drains 6,700 km<sup>2</sup> in the Balkan region of Europe.

Rises in the Pindus mountains, Greece.  
Flows 192 km.  
Through Albania into the Adriatic Sea.





# Vjosa river valley



Unique landscape, broad river valley, with fertile floodplains, productive agriculture

# Vjosa river species



examples: eurasian otter (*Lutra lutra*), stone loach (*Pindus barbatula*), stone curlew (*Burhinus oedicanus*), little ringed plover (*Charadrius dubius*)



# Vjosa river gorges



Good sites for hydro-power dams  
Kalivaç (1997, now cancelled)  
Poçem (contract awarded 2017 )

# Albanian laws

- Good laws and policies for development of large infrastructure
- Involvement of local stakeholders
- Safe construction
- Avoidance or mitigation of impacts on the environment
- Signed Bern Convention
  - Conserve biodiversity
  - Establish an Emerald network of protected areas



# Alleged breach of the Convention

## COMPLAINT No. 2016/5

HPP will:

- block the upstream and downstream movement of fish
- prevent sediment transport
- cause a decline in groundwater
- reduced water quality

EIA poor

People not consulted

Area is a potential Emerald network site



# Project EIAs

No EIA available for Kalivaç

English translation for Poçem  
reviewed by Prof M Acreman



- No assessment of river flow impacts
- Out-of-date analysis of environmental flows
- No assessment of sediment transport impacts
- No mention of aquatic or wetland species, such as mammals, fish or water birds
- International best practice not followed



# Mission hosted by Ministry of Tourism and Environment

Ministry of Tourism and Environment

Ministry of Energy and Industry

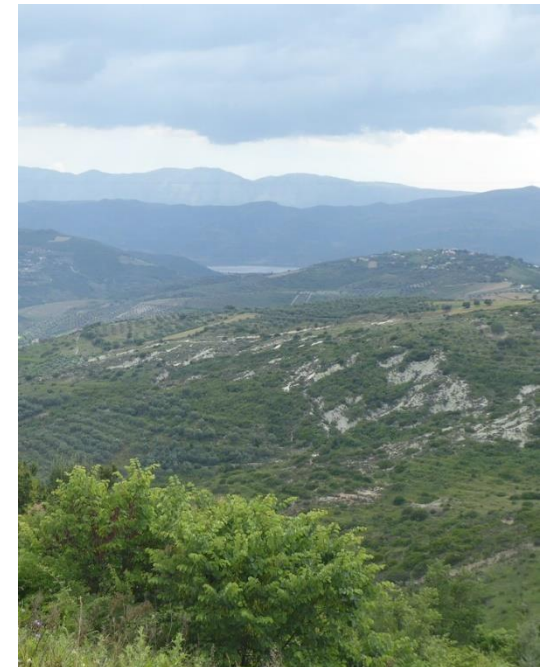
National Agency for Protected Areas

EU Delegation to Albania

NGOs EcoAlbania, Euronatur

University of Tirana

Local communities Qesarat, Anëvjosë,  
Kutë, Shkoze



# Consultation with local people

Local people met with mission team

“strong objection to dams”

“will ruin farming and eco-tourism”

“never told or consulted”

“statutory meeting not advertised  
and held a long way from river  
valley”

“have records of rare species”



# Recommendations

1. Suspend dam projects until full assessments completed
2. Prepare strategic river basin plans
3. Study sediment transport impacts
4. Consider Vjosa for Emerald network
5. Engage with local people
6. Repeat EIA using local knowledge
7. Improve Albanian EIA training
8. Prepare strategic energy plan
9. Hold workshop to exchange/discuss biodiversity data
10. Improve links between government, academics and NGOs





