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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

45th meeting

Strasbourg, 8-12 December 2025

Bureau of the Standing Committee

8-10 April 2025

Strasbourg

Open File: 2020/9

**Possible negative impact of hydro-power plant
development on the Neretva River (Bosnia &
Herzegovina)**

- GOVERNMENT REPORT -

Document prepared by

The Federal Ministry for the Environment and Tourism

PROGRESS REPORT (05)
Bosnia and Herzegovina

Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity
Bern Convention
Council of Europe
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Attn.
Mr. Mikaël Poutiers, Secretary of the Bern Convention
Ms. Marta Mędzińska, Programme Manager

Reference: Open File 2020/9: Bosnia and Herzegovina: Possible negative impact of hydro-power plant development on the Neretva River, Updated report, hereby delivered

Consolidated report prepared by Dejan Radosevic, Bern Convention National Focal Point for Bosnia and Herzegovina
Banja Luka, 14th February 2025

With regard to the previous report submitted by the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina – *Government Report - T-PVS/Files(2024)07*, the competent ministries responsible for environmental protection (*the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Ecology of Republic of Srpska and the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism*) emphasize that there have been no significant changes compared to what was previously submitted, nor are there any additional updates or activities concerning *Recommendation No. 217 (2022) of the Standing Committee*, adopted on 2nd December 2022, regarding the possible negative impact of hydropower plant development on the Neretva River (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

It is worth highlighting, however, progress related to the initiative of *the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism, in cooperation with the City of Konjic*, to establish a new protected area of Prenj (potentially under the National Park category). The valorization process and study for the designation of the new protected area will take into consideration the upper part of the Neretva River. A contractor has been selected for the preparation of the *Expert Justification* for the designation of Mount Prenj as a protected area. This process will include an economic evaluation of the area as well as the drafting of the relevant law/act on designation, in accordance with Article 145 of the Law on Nature Protection ("Official Gazette of FBiH," No. 66/13).

Regarding the *coordination meeting with the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina* to discuss the implementation of *Recommendation No. 217 (2022)*, as proposed in paragraph 154 of the *List of decisions and adopted texts - T-PVS(2024)Misc*, published on 18th December 2024, the *Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism* wishes to state that it has no objections to such a meeting proposal. The scheduling of the meeting will be determined by the entity ministries in coordination with the *Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Given the considerable number of ongoing obligations, the *Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism* proposes the meeting should be planned no before April 2025.

A similar position is held by the *Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Ecology of Republic of Srpska*, which considers the proposal from paragraph 154 mentioned above to be justified. The Ministry also recalls that it previously supported and provided logistical assistance for the *On-the-spot appraisal (OSA)* conducted in October 2022 and that the same approach will be taken now as well.

In this regard, the Ministry will follow the guidelines and recommendations adopted during the sessions of the Bureau to ensure proper and timely preparations for the meeting, should it take place. Taking into account the Ministry's regular obligations, as well as extraordinary circumstances related to Croatia's intention to construct a radioactive waste disposal site near the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina, an issue that is currently a priority and requires the full engagement of all available resources, the Ministry is, at this moment, unable to specify an exact timeframe for the meeting.

In the coming period, the *Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Ecology of Republic of Srpska* will provide further information regarding other recommendations of the *Standing Committee of the Bern Convention*, particularly those concerning the authorities' consideration of mitigation measures related to the construction and operation of *Ulog HPP*.