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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee
45th meeting
Strasbourg, 8-12 December 2025

Open File: 2020/9

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

- GOVERNMENT REPORT -

Document prepared by the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina

PROGRESS REPORT (06)

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity
Bern Convention
Council of Europe
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Attn.

Ms. Alessandra Siino, Secretary of the Bern Convention

Ms. Marta **Međlińska**, 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, 4th December 2025

With regard to the previous report submitted by the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina – *Government Report T-PVS/Files(2025)2022-9_gov*, 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. The Faculty of Forestry of the University of Sarajevo has been selected to carry out these activities, and the work on preparing the documents is currently underway. 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).

With regard to the coordination meeting with the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina aimed at examining 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 18 December 2024, the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism indicated that it has no objections

to this proposal. A similar position was expressed by the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Ecology of the Republic of Srpska, which considers that the proposal set out in paragraph 154 is justified. The Ministry recalls that it previously provided support and logistical assistance for the On-the-Spot Appraisal (OSA) carried out in October 2022, and that the same approach will be applied again.

Although the meeting was not held in a reduced format, as proposed in paragraph 154 of the List of Decisions and Adopted Texts – T-PVS(2024)Misc, representatives of the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Ecology and the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism participated actively at the conference “Natural Gems of Bosnia and Herzegovina”, held from 26 to 27 September 2025 in Banja Luka, which was attended by representatives of civil society and one of the parties (the Centre for the Environment) that submitted the complaint to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention. The conference was organised by the Centre for the Environment, Banja Luka, the Aarhus Center in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, the Dr. Stjepan Bolkey Centre, Olovo, the Czech organisation Arnika – Citizens Support Center, in cooperation with the Belgrade Open School and the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Sarajevo, with the financial support of the European Union and the Transition Promotion Programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. One of the conclusions of the conference was the importance of ensuring joint action and cooperation between civil society organisations and the competent public authorities concerning information exchange for the purpose of nature protection.

We would like to underline that the upper part of the Neretva River, upstream from the constructed Ulog hydropower plant, remains intact. The Ministry is seeking a solution for the termination of the concession and intends to proceed in the direction of designating the area as protected according to Law on Nature Protection. Accordingly, no activities related to the construction of the planned small hydropower plants in the area upstream from the Ulog hydropower plant have been carried out.