

Balkan Rivers News



Dear Friends of the Balkan Rivers,

What's new with the Balkan Rivers? To keep you up to date, read the key news below!

ALBANIA

* 228 scientists from 33 countries fight for Europe's last wild river

In the end of September, the Vjosa received prominent support from all over the world. In a joint memorandum, 228 scientists from 33 countries call upon the Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama to protect the Vjosa and refrain from the construction of hydropower plants, at least in the coming three years. During that time period, a proper Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is to be carried out on the yet almost entirely unexplored river. [MORE](#)

Media coverage in [Albanian TV](#)



This is how a wild river looks like: the Vjosa in Albania. © Gregor Subic

* Vjosa in international media

In recent months, the Vjosa was featured in several renowned international magazines, such as the [TIME Magazine](#), the [Scientific American](#), or most recently the British [New Scientist](#). The German newspaper [Frankfurter Allgemeine](#) also covered the Vjosa issue.

WORLD ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

Europe's Last Wild River Is About to Get Dammed

John Wendle/Kuta and Tirana, Albania @Johnwendle Aug 3, 2016

The push for green power can hurt the environment

The paddlers slap the hulls of their candy colored kayaks with open palms, sending deep thunks bouncing off the walls of the Albanian prime minister's offices in Tirana, the capital. Chants of "No dams!" join the thumping, as nearly a hundred residents of Kuta, an ancient village threatened with flooding by a proposed dam



* Jazz singers for Valbona

Two well-known Albanian jazz singers – Elina Duni and Eda Zari – are helping to raise awareness about the planned construction of hydropower plants on the Valbona by giving a free concert for the river's protection in the Valbona valley on October 29. Other artists will be joining their concert. [MORE](#)

Also watch this [protest video Save Valbona NP!](#)

29 TETOR NË VALBONË 30 TETOR NË TIRANË

KONCERT PROTESTË!

MOS MA PREK VALBONËN!

NDAL IMPORITIT TE PLEHRAVE!
#QYTETARETPERPARKUN

GENERAL

*** Balkan Rivers Conference in Brussels**

In cooperation with MEP Ulrike Lunacek (Vice president of the EU Parliament, Greens / EFA Group), we brought together different stakeholder in Brussel in late June – NGOs, energy supply companies, financial institutions as well as representatives from the EU Parliament and Commission. [Ulrike Lunacek voiced her concern](#) about dam projects on the Vjosa.



Blaues Herz in Brüssel
Die Balkanflüsse verdienen gemeinsamen Schutz. In Brüssel der Europäer „Blau Herz Center“ werden Energie und Umwelt

*** Watch ZDF “Madness Hydropower” on demand**

On the occasion of the World Rivers Day, the ZDF aired a documentary about the Balkan Rivers and the dam craze that puts them at risk. This episode of the “planet e” series depicts the beauty of these rivers as well as the opposition against the imminent river regulations and damming. The documentary was mainly filmed in the Balkans, but also in Vienna and North Rhine-Westphalia, and provides a good insight into our work. [Watch here](#)



Filming at the Una in Bosnia-Herzegovina © Ulrich Eichelmann

*** No licence for HPP on Huchen river**

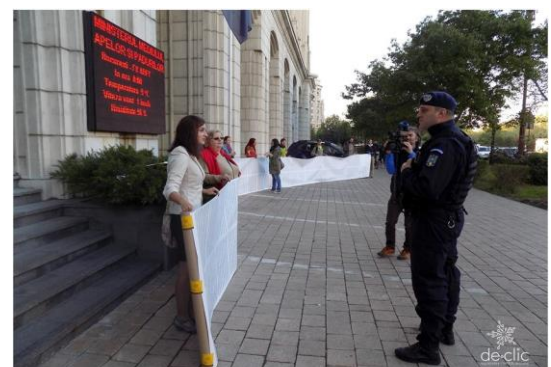
The Ministry of Environment of Bosnia-Herzegovina denied the licence for the construction of a hydropower plant on the Sana – one of the most valuable Huchen rivers in Europe. This project was planned downstream of the HPP construction site “Medna” and would have destroyed a precious Huchen stretch. By the way: we are in the process of making the rivers of Bosnia-Herzegovina to a further key area in our campaign.



Sana in BiH. A total of 93 HPPs are planned within Huchen stretches in the Balkans. This would lead to a population decline of 70%. © Ulrich Eichelmann

*** Good news from Romania**

A day after a 15 meter petition against hydropower development on river Nera was handed over to the Romanian Ministry of Environment, the Ministry officially announced, that the Waters Administration abandoned their plans to give out concessions for micro-hydropower projects on Nera. [MORE](#)



15m petition saves river Nera in Romania. © Depunere semnături campania #SOSNera | Comunitatea [de-clc.ro](#)

*** Blue Heart on Patagonia's blog**

For the third time, the Blue Heart is featured on Patagonia's blog "The Cleanest Line": [Save the Blue Heart of Europe: Climbing in Albania](#)



*** Study: Hydropower is not carbon neutral!**

Hydropower is not green, it is not even carbon neutral, as Washington State University researchers now confirm. In [their study](#), scientists confirm that reservoirs are notable sources of the potent greenhouse-gas methane. This report will hopefully be another step in the phasing out of this greenwashed technology. [MORE](#)



Hydropower isn't carbon neutral after all, WSU researchers say

Washington State University researchers have learned that reservoirs produce much more methane, a potent greenhouse gas, than previously understood.

SEATTLETIMES.COM

*** Popularity of big hydropower projects diminishes around the world**

An article by the [Circle of Blue](#) indicates the end of the hydro era. "A lengthening list of nations around the world [...] are reassessing big hydropower dams in an era when wind and solar power are less expensive, much easier to build, less damaging, and far less vulnerable to droughts and floods," the article states. Read for yourself!



More and more states worldwide are reconsidering their hydropower strategy
© Matic Oblak

*** Why is the World Bank holding on to out-of-date hydropower?**

Hydropower is a phase-out model. Wind and solar – environmentally, socially as well as economically much sounder – are the energy sources of the present and future. Why is then, that the World Bank seems to ignore the global shift in the renewable energy sector and instead continues to advocate for multi-billion dollar dam projects? [MORE](#)



Hydropower is outdated. When will the World Bank finally internalize the global shift towards wind and solar? © Ulrich Eichelmann

**All the best,
Your Blue Heart Team**