

Balkan Rivers News



Dear Friends of the Balkan Rivers,

The location for our Balkan Rivers Days in September is set: it's Belgrade! For more details about this unique event and what else is new in the campaign, read this newsletter!

* Invitation: Balkan Rivers Days in Belgrade

We are happy to invite you to the Balkan Rivers Days in Belgrade this September – a free event and the first of this kind in Europe! Find the flyer to download and more detailed information [HERE](#). Please help us by forwarding this message to anyone who might be interested in this event and by distributing the flyer widely!



* WE NEED YOUR HELP: Film yourself!

We are producing a short Balkan Rivers Film about people who want to keep their rivers free from hydropower plants. We need your help for that: film yourself in front of a river that is threatened by a hydropower project while saying the following sentences: "This is (name of the river). I love my river and I don't want it to be damed. Save the Blue Heart of Europe." [More](#)



* Vjosa Day in Tirana

Within the context of the Blue Heart campaign, EcoAlbania organized the "Vjosa Day" on June 6, 2015 in a pedestrian area in Tirana. It was the closing event of the "Vjosa Tour" – a series of meetings with local communities of the Vjosa valley. The Vjosa Day was a colorful celebration of the river's beauty and values. [More](#)

Media coverage: [A1 Report](#), [Gazeta Shqiptare](#)



Famous singer Golik Jaupi and his traditional iso-polyphonic band from Bënça © Dalip Guri

*** Dam craze puts protected areas in the Balkans at risk**

We recently published a [study on hydropower projects inside protected areas](#) in the Balkans. Quite alarmingly, it shows that 535 projects are currently planned within strict nature conservation areas, 113 of which in the midst of national parks – commonly with support from international companies and banks, particularly from inside the EU. [More](#)

Media coverage: [Der Standard](#)



The construction of a hydropower plant in the midst of the Albanian Fir of Hotova National Park. © Roland Tasho

*** European Parliament criticizes Albania's hydropower policies**

In a [Motion for a Resolution](#) on the 2014 Progress Report, the European Parliament called upon the Albanian government to rethink the projected hydropower projects along the Vjosa River and its tributaries, "...since these projects would harm one of Europe's last extensive, intact and near-natural river ecosystems". [More](#)

Media coverage: [Shqiptarja](#)



The Vjosa River in Albania. The last big wild river in Europe
© Bledi Hoxha

*** Romanian environmentalists attacked by pro-hydro thugs**

While investigating illegal logging for an equally illegal hydropower plant on the river Râul Alb inside a Natura2000 area (Sălaşul de Sus, Hunedoara County), Romanian environmentalists were chased and violently attacked by a group of thugs on May 24. The attack was caught on video. [More](#)



*** Videos: Bence protest and beautiful Langarica**

On April 29, 2015, about 150 people protested against a hydropower plant on the Bence (a tributary of the Vjosa), which is already under construction. Check out the [videos](#) and [photo gallery](#) of the protest. The Langarica is another Albanian river threatened by a HPP under construction. In [two videos](#), Ulrich Eichelmann takes you to a natural spring along the river.

Media coverage: [Die Krone](#), [VOA](#), [ORF](#)



*** Small hydro: how beautiful is small**

Is small hydropower greener than mega dams? Do they make sense economically? Watch [this cartoon](#) and find out about the many "benefits" of small hydropower developments.



All the best,

Your Blue Heart Team