In addition to three under-construction hydro-electric stations (HESes), the construction of seven new HESes is planned in Kazbegi district. Keti Gujaradze, a policy analyst at Green Alternative, said that the construction of HESes will have a negative impact on the environment and that the construction of so many HESes in one region raises many doubts.

Eka Zhvania, the chief advisor to the Minister of Energy, told the Information Center of Mtskheta-Mtianeti (ICMM) that the Kazbegi district is one of the most advantageous sites for the construction of HESes, and if they are not constructed, the darkness of the '90s will return to Georgia within several years.

According to the deal between the Georgian government and energy company GR-Energy, Ltd., the company intends to construct 32 HESes in Georgia. Seven of them will be located in Kazbegi: the Truso HES (Tergi River), Kobi HES (Tergi river), Tergi HES (Tergi River), Snostskali HES (Artkhostskali River), Juta HES (Juta River), Chkheri HES (Chkheri River) and Amali HES (Amali River).

The deal was signed between former Prime Minister Nika Gilauri and Stefan Balzan, the director of Maltese company GR-Energy, Ltd., on January 25, 2012. Environmental organization Green Alternative published the deal.

A list of HESes is presented in two annexes to the memorandum. According to the first annex, in addition to the Kazbegi district, HES construction is planned in the village of Dzegvi, Mtskheta—in the Racha-Lechkhumi region—and the Svaneti and Samegrelo regions. The second annex shows that HES construction is also planned in the Kakheti, Guria, Imereti and Samtskhe-Javakheti regions.

According to the agreement, the power of the HESes will be as follows:

- Truso HES: 8.70 megawatts (MW)
- Kobi HES: 3.80 MW
- Tergi HES: 26.30 MW
- Snostskali HES: 22.20 MW
- Juta HES: 8.90 MW
- Chkheri HES: 14.80 MW
- Amali HES: 8.30 MW
- Dzegvi HES: 10 MW

The agreement further establishes that the company will study and analyze technical and economic aspects of the construction of the aforementioned HESes from the first annex by July 2013. At this time, it must also submit a proposal regarding the construction of the HESes to the government of Georgia. This proposal will include information about the power of the HESes and their annual output; exact coordinates of each HES's location and relevant features of its river; dates for the start and finish of the construction and a date for the beginning of operation; and an estimated amount of expenditures. They must also produce technical and economic studies, documents, and drafts regarding the HESes.

The agreement also states that authorization of the HESes' construction will be issued or declined within two months after the proposal is submitted. If permission is granted, during the two months after October 2013, the parties will negotiate agreements on the construction, ownership and operation of the HESes.

According to the agreement, the government will take responsibility for assisting the company to obtain construction permits.

The government also agrees not to transfer the HESes' construction, ownership, or operation rights to a third party before the agreement term expires without discussing it with the company.

Policy Analyst Keti Gujaraizde of Green Alternative said that the construction of 10 HESes in one small district causes many doubts.

"There is unique biodiversity in Kazbegi; there is reserved territory there that is planned to be extended, and it is interesting that the extension of reserved territories conforms to the development of HESes in the area. The HES construction is planned even though they have not established where the produced electricity will be used. Does the Kazbegi district need so much electricity? Indeed, the construction of so many HESes in one district, in a small ravine, raises many questions. Employment of the local population on the HESes' construction is a very weak argument," Keti Gujaradze told ICMM.

The chief advisor to the Minister of Energy, Eka Zhvania, said that the Kazbegi district is one of the most advantageous places for HES construction.

"We plan to construct so many HESes in Kazbegi because construction sites are selected according to their natural, advantageous conditions. We must also consider the threat of waterfalls and other similar risks. We cannot construct HESes in Gareji Desert," Eka Zhvania told ICMM.

She added that unless HESes are constructed, the darkness of the '90s will return to Georgia in several years.

"Unless HESes are constructed, the darkness of the '90s could return to Georgia in two to three years. It will be difficult to supply the population with imported electricity because the number of consumers and the need for electricity will increase. We understand the position of environmentalists; they care about nature, and for that reason, we want to cooperate with them. Project authors will provide an ecological evaluation, and Green Alternative will also present its ideas," said Eka Zhvania.

Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Georgia Khatuna Gogaladze said that the data will be studied and analyzed regarding the HESes' construction in order not to damage the unique environment of the Kazbegi district.

"The previous government signed the agreement. According to this document, they planned to study and analyze the technical and economic issues of the HESes' construction and the possible construction of the HESes in the case of positive conclusions. It does not necessarily mean that the HESes will be constructed. Hydro-energy is considered to be green energy. However, all data will be considered and analyzed. The Kazbegi district is famous for its unique natural environment, and we should be very careful during the decision-making process," the Minister told ICMM.

Two HESes are being constructed on the Tergi River in Dariali Gorge, Kazbegi—the Dariali and Larsi HESes. As a result of HES construction, the Tergi River will be utilized in the tunnel in Dariali Gorge. Another HES is to be constructed in Khida Gorge on Khidastskali River. Environmentalists believe these HESes will have a negative impact on its unique nature, its flora and fauna.

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