

Tergi in the Iron and Concrete Coffin

11.07.2012

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Dariali HES is under construction at the Dariali Gorge. They intend to place Tergi River in the derivation channel and tunnel at the distance of eight kilometers. Environmentalists evaluate that construction and operation of the HES in this way will cause irreversible damage to the Dariali Gorge and its eco-system: the gorge landscape changes will be absolute. The project will make an irreversible impact on the endangered species from the Red Book, such as stream trout, and it will cause a final disappearance of the trout from the Tergi River.

The construction project of the Dariali HES aims at producing a Hydro-Electro Station of 110 megawatt power on Tergi River in Dariali Gorge close to Georgian-Russian Border. Dariali HES will be connected with the Energo-system with 110 kilowatt line which connects Georgian and Russian energy-systems. According to the project, part of the produced electricity will be supplied to the Georgian Energy System for internal use and the other part will be sold on the foreign market. The project is implemented by the company Dariali Energy.

Nongovernmental organization Green Alternative believes that the arrangement of a fish-corridor to reduce impact of the project on stream trout, which is suggested by the report on impact on the environment, will not improve habitat of the trout. "Thus, there is high risk that the stream trout population in Tergi will disappear soon after the project implementation starts. This is confirmed by that fact that monitoring plans of neither construction stage nor exploitation stage envisage monitoring of ictiofauna conditions. It has only one clarification – despite so-called "significant reductive measures," the objective of monitoring and consequently the need of mentoring will no longer exist," representatives of the Green Alternative stated.

Environmental organization representatives cannot understand why visual-landscape impact of the HES was evaluated as "low" at the exploitation phase when the Tergi River will no longer exist on 8 km distance in Dariali Gorge. "With a 1.97 m²/second ecologic (sanitary) outlay, it will be a small river which will more likely be frozen in cold winters! Besides that, 8 km length out of total 11 kilometers of Tergi River that runs through Dariali Gorge will either disappear for ever or in the next 50 years. It must not be news for the authors of the report about environmental impact and any educated Georgian person that the Dariali Gorge is famous with the Tergi River. This river was inspiration for [Ilia Chavchavadze](#), [Aleksandre Kazbegi](#), [Grigol Orbeliani](#) and other famous writers and poets. The river and surrounding landscape attracted and still attracts tourists. If the project is implemented in the proposed way, the gorge will lose its value and attraction to tourists. It will have a relative impact on the revenues from tourism (particularly on the local level)," the Green Alternative states.

The organization submitted remarks and evaluations to the HES Constructing Company as soon as the HES construction had started but they did not include the notes. In addition to that, Green Alternative appealed the permission issued by the Environmental Ministry of Georgia on the construction of Dariali HES at the Court but lost the trial.

On July 16, at 11:00 am association Green Alternative will hold a demonstration in Stepantsminda.

Photo by Tinatin Mosiashvili

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