SHOULD GEORGIA CONSTRUCT HIGH-RISK HYDRO POWER PLANTS?!

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Green Alternative and Green Fist nongovernmental organizations urge EBRD not to finance high-risk projects in Georgia.

A Green Fist representative Khatia Maghlaperidze says EBRD is financing a construction of three HPPs in Georgia, namely, Dariali, Shuakhevi and Paravani HPPs. However, environmentalists have recently learned EBRD also plans to construct supposedly a 280 megawatt HPP on the river Nenskra in Chuberi near Khudoni HPP project zone. Thus, it is absolutely unacceptable to construct so many hydro power plants in such a small piece of space. Additional exploration works must be carried out.

We do not object to making investments in Georgia, but projects must be reasonably planned and skillfully composed, Khatia Maghlaperidze said.

As to the already financed projects – Paravani HPP, Shuakhevi HPP and Dariali HPP, Khatia Maghlaperidze says these projects should be also explored anew. Namely, Shuakhevi is located in the landslip zone, the Autonomous Republic of Achara, and the company has not provided geological exploration on how the HPP construction will affect the life of local residents.

Paravani HPP has left only 10% of the water resources to the river, 90% has been redirected to the river Mtkvari. The effect of this decision is not known. It is also unclear whether the monument of Khertvisi will be flooded. The information is not publicized and the fate of Khertvisi is unclear. The river was to maintain 30-40% of the water resources in line with norms, she added.
As to Dariali HPP, the Green Fist representative recalled on May 17, 2014 and August 22 the Dariali HPP Construction provoked a slip of Devodoraki Cliff and a total of ten persons died. Moreover, Dariali HPP has penetrated Kazbegi national Park territory and this objects to our legislation. Nor the available risks have not been explored, she said.

“Implementation of these projects bear real threats for to human lives and ecosystem, because they have not been explored and no corresponding conclusions have not prepared”, Khatia Maghlaperidze said.

In this situation it is interesting what power system specialists think about construction of modern HPPs. Engineer Anzor Chitanava, a vice president for the Energy Academy, says high-risk projects must not be implemented and he partly agrees on the pathos of the rally participants. The projects must be planned with high qualifications, analysis and their outcomes must be foreseeable. Without these factors, expediency of construction of these assets becomes questionable and the government must not conclude similar agreements.

As to the above-mentioned concrete assets, Anzor Chitanava makes detailed comments on them.

**Paravani HPP**

Paravani HPP is one of the best, efficiently planned assets and less harmful to the environment. There is no much water reservoir, but there is a headwork for taking water and nothing more. Then a derivation system comes and later it falls into the river again. A certain part of the river was directed to the tunnel and only a sanitary part remains in the river bed. It is interesting what volume is this sanitary part. If there are violations in this norm and the calculation is incorrect, then I object to this step, but there are international parameters and if this part meets the international parameters, there is nothing alarming, because the nature manages itself. This signifies, sometimes the river lacks for water in dry and draught period, when the water in the bed almost disappears. The nature makes this and this signifies we can also plan this”, Anzor Chitanava said and added if preventive measures will be carried out, Khertvisi will not be flooded. Khertvisi must remain untouched, he concluded.

“According to my information, disputes arose because the wall was not made, I categorically demand that the wall be constructed, because no philosophy is required for the wall construction and it does not need much money, while this step will secure Khertvisi. It is our pride and interesting asset. If there is even a petite doubt Khertvisi may sink, this wall must be constructed”, Chitanava said.

**Shuakhevi HPP**

In this case everything has been preliminarily programmed and settled, reasonably balanced and calculated,
but if the population expresses protests because of damage, the project authors should take into account these protests and they should not disturb the local population with noise and dust. Local buildings must not be damaged and explosion must be carried out under international standards.

“According to my information, similar drawbacks have emerged in relation to Shuakhevi construction and this is a result of improper and incorrect approaches”, Chitanava noted.

**Dariali HPP**

Dariali HPP project has not been skillfully explored and planned. The project development required much professionalism. In due time even the Hydro Project Institute warned of expected hazards in Dariali, because the Dariali river itself is of very specific and complicated character that does not like external interferences and it may bring undesirable results”, Chitanava noted.

“Today we witness manifest landslip and glaciations tendencies. These processes were foreseeable during the projection works. Therefore, the current scheme should have been rejected from the very beginning, because the current price is very expensive. It is misfortune, the project has sacrificed human lives. Therefore, I categorically demand for substantiating the project. Exploration issues should take more time and funds, that the construction”, he said.

**Nenskra HPP**

Anzor Chitanava assures no other water storage and high cascades should be constructed above Khudoni HPP, while the Nenskra HPP project calls for constructing a high cascade in the center of the Svaneti Region, in an untouchable and exciting place.

“I have not seen the feasibility studies and project, but I have got information that calls for constructing a 27 kilometer tunnel and constructing a 135 meter high cascade. This construction may be secure and steady, but when a water storage will be created on 3.5 square kilometers in the center of Svaneti at the height of 1300-1400 meters, where fully will be removed trees, this will result in a number of irreversible changes. Maybe, many persons do not like Communists, but in that period 33 competent and the world recognized organizations (Institute of Zavriev, Hydro Project, Energy Institute, Davitaia Institute and so on), jointly concluded that no water storage asset must be constructed above Khudoni HPP”, Anzor Chitanava said.