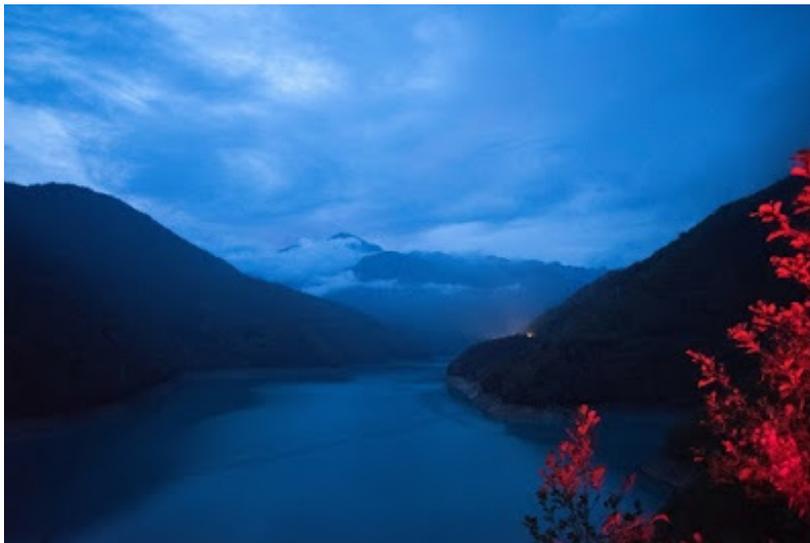


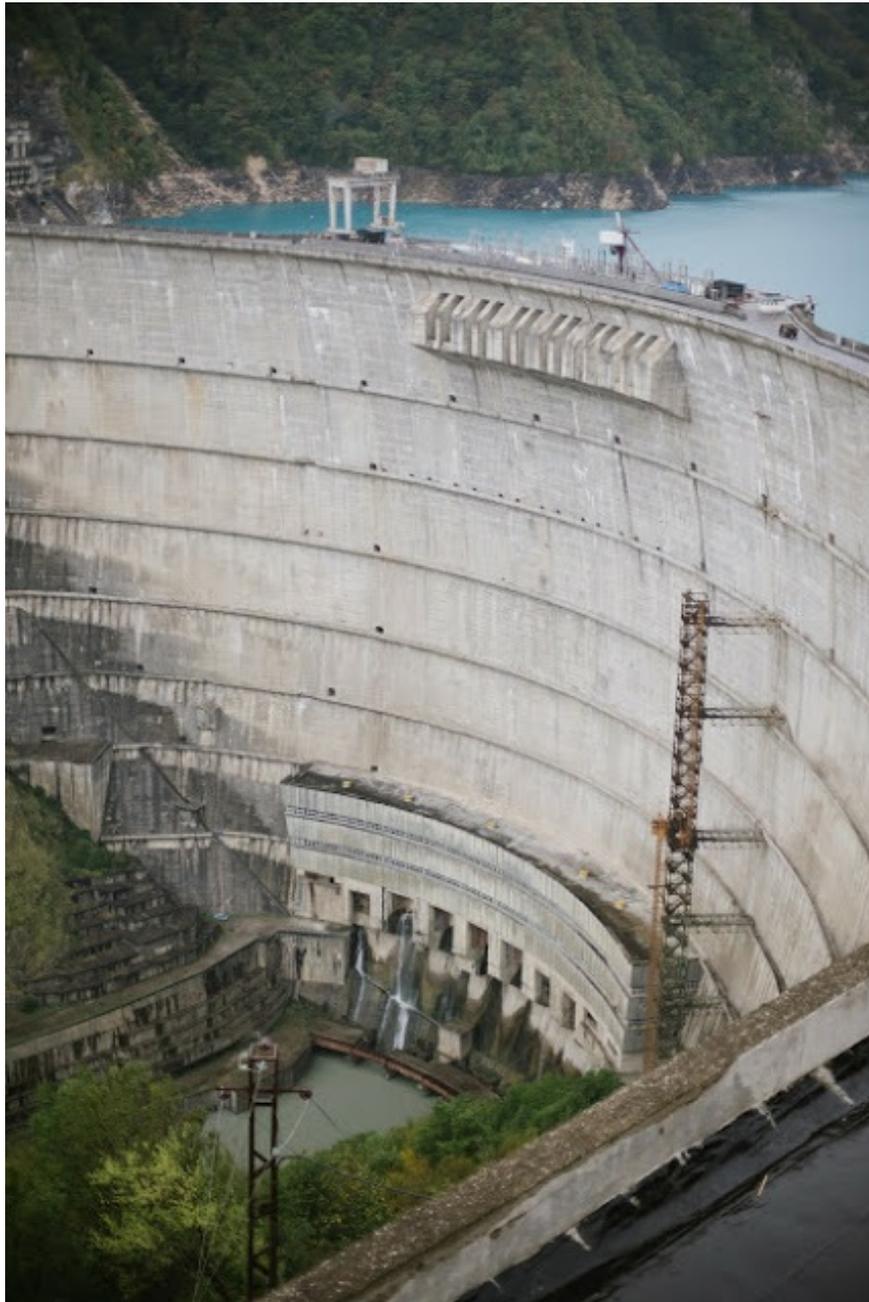
Documentary about hydro power plants in Georgia

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Our journey began on 1st of October as we, **Anna Gavronski, Märten Vaher** and **Meelis Kadastik**, headed to mountainous Svaneti region. From the very beginning we were amazed by the beauty of Georgian nature. High mountains and turquoise blue rivers- in Estonia we can only dream about these kind of natural miracles.



After five-hour drive from Tbilisi we arrived at the Enguri dam, the world's second highest dam of its kind. We were stunned, the concrete arch was gigantic, its height is 271.5 meters. The chief engineer Levan Chanturia showed us around in the hydro power plant and head of the dam Jonu Chania explained us the problems they are facing. Our guide Dato Chipashvili from an NGO called Green Alternative explained, how in his opinion the old dam could be made more effective.



On our second day, we headed even further north to Khudoni area. There we saw some ruins of the Khudoni dam, which they started building during Soviet times. However, the dam was never finished. In addition, we met with the people from Kutaisi village. They are very upset about the plans to restart the building of Khudoni hydro power plant. If that plan goes through a lot of people would have to be resettled. The men of Kutaisi even made an oath to protect their home no matter what. We were very moved by their passionate approach- it was possible to see that these people really love the land they live on.



On our way we saw loads of farm animals on the road we were driving. This kind of sight would be unimaginable in Estonia. Especially it is impossible to see pigs, because Estonia is fighting African swine fever for years, so all the remaining pigs are kept in closed areas. Hence it was very refreshing to see pigs and we made a task of making a selfie with a pig- we were successful.



On 3rd of October, we went to see Nenskra river and the area where another power plant is planned to be built. According to some sources, this would be the largest hydro power plant built in Georgia since the collapse of Soviet Union. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development has agreed to provide US\$200 million for Georgia's 280-MW Nenskra hydropower plant. On the other hand, people from Nakra village are afraid that their homes will be flushed away by a mud river. We filmed the Nakra villagers showing us the mud river, when it suddenly started raining heavily. However, the villagers did not care about the pouring rain, they continued showing us the problematic area. These scenes were very moving.



These first days were full of crossing very dangerous looking wooden bridges. I must say, that these bridges were very scary and probably the least enjoyable part of the whole trip. However, we got some really good shots thanks to these crossings.

On the day forth, we started driving back to Tbilisi. The 330 kilometre journey took us more than half a day. One our way we stopped to film one of the oldest power plants in Georgia. The situation there looked miserable- no one was taking care of the hydro. Even Enguri dam looked new compared to the small old hydro.

On Monday we drove 160 kilometres away from Tbilisi to Dariali, the area on the northern border of Georgian next to Russia. This is a place where construction works of another hydro power plant are taking place on Tergi river. However, the project is controversial- last year the construction area was hit twice by a mudflow river. These catastrophes left several people dead and missing. We managed to find a border guard who witnessed one of those disasters. She said that she is still thinking about the disaster and she is afraid of it all happening again.

In addition, we went to visit Aragvi and Paravani hydro power plants, where we managed to interview the directors of the plants. On our last days we stayed in Tbilisi, where we filmed the everyday life of our guide Dato Chipashvili. Besides that our director managed to get stuck in toilet- fortunately, the operation of his releasing was quite successful and he got out of cubicle in less than half an hour.





On our final day at four o'clock in the afternoon we got a call from the Ministry of Energy. We had been asking for an interview with the minister of energy Kakha Kaladze for the last two months. And then on the afternoon of our final day, they asked us to come urgently to the ministry for the interview. We rushed through the city in the speed of ambulance. Finally, there he was the famous football player/minister. We got the desired interview and were ready to fly back to home after accomplishing all our goals.