NOTIFICATION TO AN AFFECTED PARTY OF A PROPOSED ACTIVITY UNDER ARTICLE 3 OF THE CONVENTION

1. INFORMATION ON THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY	
(i) Information on the nature of the proposed activity	
Type of activity proposed	Hydroelectric facility
Is the proposed activity listed in Appendix I to the Convention?	Yes, point 11. Large dams and reservoirs
Scope of proposed activity (e.g. main activity and any/all peripheral activities requiring assessment)	The development of the electricity production complex, specifically the "Buk Bijela" hydroelectric power plant, involves the construction of a dam, a reservoir, a machinery facility, and an evacuation section.
Scale of proposed activity (e.g. size, production capacity)	Fundamental technical specifications of HPP Buk Bijela: • Station: 334+550 km • Total volume of the reservoir: 15.70 x 10^6 m^3 • Useful volume of the reservoir: 11.00 million m^3 • Length of the reservoir: 11.50 km • Maximum backwater elevation: 434 meters above sea level • Normal backwater elevation of the reservoir: 434 meters above sea level • Minimum operating level: 420.50 masl • Overflow capacity at normal backwater elevation: 5,982 m^3/s. • Overflow capacity (10.000 annual water): 6641 m^3/s • Overflow crest elevation: 416 meters above sea level. • Length of the overflow section: 53.7 m • Elevation of the lower water (with installed flow): 405.20 meters above sea level. • Nominal head: 28.45 m • Ecologically acceptable flow: 24.40 m^3/s • Dam crest elevation: 436.10 masl • Length of the dam crest: 197.60 m. • Height of the dam crest: from 55.10 to 57.80 meters. • Width of the dam crest: 9.85 – 15.50 meters • Number of aggregates : 3 • Installed flow: 200 + 200 + 50 = 450 m^3/s • Installed power: 118.10 MW • Average annual production: 354.31 GWh A gravity-concrete dam was selected. The machine building is situated on the riverbed, specifically on the left half of the riverbed and bank. It is outfitted with three units featuring Kaplan turbines,

	which facilitate the operation of the power plant under conditions of a minimum guaranteed flow of 50 m^3/s through the facility, and a total installed flow capacity of 450 m^3/s for the hydropower plant. Technical specifications of HP "Buk Bijela" turbines: • Installed flow of the power plant Q_{iE}: 450 m^3/s • Number of aggregates (n): 2+1 (two larger aggregates and one smaller aggregate) • Installed flow of larger turbines $Q_{i1,2}$: 200 m^3/s • Installed flow of smaller turbine Q_{i3}: 50 m^3/s • Tailwater elevation at the installed flow: 405.2 masl • Calculated gross head during operation of all turbines: Q_i: 28.8 m • Power of the larger turbine $P_{t1.2}$: 57.0 MW • Power of smaller turbine $P_{t1.2}$: 15.0 megawatts • Total power of all turbines P_t: 129.0 MW. To evacuate water during exploitation, a primary outlet (deep outlet) and an overflow system with two overflow fields are provided, all regulated by constitutions. The integration of HPP "Buk Bijela" into the electric power system of Bosnia and Herzegovina was accomplished at the 220 kV voltage level, linked through two autotransformers to the 110 kV facilities, which facilitated the distribution of energy from the generator.
Description of proposed activity (e.g. technology used)	The technology employed in hydroelectric power plants for electricity generation relies on harnessing the potential energy of water, converting it into the kinetic energy of its flow, which is subsequently transformed into mechanical energy via turbines and finally into electrical energy within an electric generator. The HPP "Buk Bijela" is an accumulation-storage facility that was engineered: • to utilize the hydro potential of the Drina River most efficiently, within a relatively short distance, specifically from the source of the Drina (the confluence of the Piva and Tara rivers in Šćepan Polje - the border of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro) downstream for 11.5 km, at the river course chainage km 334+550; • that the primary characteristics of the environment are not harmfully affected; • to adhere to the conditions and limitations concerning the effects of this hydropower facility on the Tara and Piva rivers. HPP Buk Bijela is a dam facility that utilizes the hydraulic gradient, with the mechanical structure situated adjacent to the dam, and it operates on natural inflows from an energy perspective. Total volumen of the flow reservoir is 15.7 x 10^6 m^3, while the useful volume

	is 11 x 10^6 m^3. The reservoir will feature a maximum depth of 34 m, a maximum width of 135 m, and a length of 11.5 km. The surface area of the reservoir for normal back water elevation 434 masl is 123.3 ha.
Description of purpose of proposed activity	The proposed activity aims to generate electricity from renewable sources, using the hydro potential of the Drina River.
Rationale for proposed activity (e.g. socio-economic basis, physical geographic basis)	HPP Buk Bijela stands as the most significant and appealing hydropower facility in the upper reaches of the Drina, boasting a rich historical background. Specifically, the Buk Bijela profile, located 12 km upstream from Foča, controls water from a catchment area of approximately 4,000 km^2, which constitutes 20% of the total Drina basin. This area contributes to 44% of the flow at the confluence of the Drina and Sava rivers, with an average flow rate of 170 m^3/s. Activities about the utilization of this significant hydropower potential commenced in the 1970s. Investigative efforts were undertaken, and project documentation was developed. However, with the established elevation of 500 masl, approximately one-third of the reservoir for HPP "Buk Bijela" would be situated within the territory of Montenegro, which required the establishment of an inter-republic agreement regarding construction methods, financing, power distribution, and the utilization of this facility. The adoption of the Declaration on the Protection of the Tara River by the Parliament of the Republic of Montenegro in December 2004 created the conditions for prohibiting the construction of HPP Buk Bijela (so-called „high“) with reservoir back water elevation of 500 masl, as a joint project of the Electric Power Company of Montenegro and the Electric Power Company of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Following the adoption of the aforementioned Declaration, the Republic of Srpska Electric Industry faced the necessity of exploring a new approach to harnessing the hydropower potential of the Upper Drina River. The research on the possibility of building HPP "Buk Bijela" with a reduced elevation of the back water, i.e. HPP "Buk Bijela" "low" with the elevation of accumulation back water of 434 masl, was started. In this "low" configuration, the hydropower potential is entirely allocated to the Republic of Srpska, which served as a fundamental condition during the preparation of the investment and technical documentation. To date, substantial investments have been made in the HPP "Buk Bijela" project. Preliminary and preparatory activities have been conducted on a considerable scale, including the construction of access roads, provision of water, electricity, and telephone services, as well as the residential complex for workers, and expropriation of land and buildings for project realization. Furthermore, investigative work has been undertaken, and comprehensive technical documentation has been developed for the execution (Main Project). Expropriation and associated costs for the previously planned hydropower

	plant "Buk Bijela," situated at an elevation of 500 masl (with the expropriation elevation at 502 masl), were fully executed in the 1970s. Of the total 1,200 hectares, 942 hectares (78.5%) are located within the Republic of Srpska, while 258 hectares (21.5%) are situated in the Republic of Montenegro. The expropriation process involved the acquisition of 475 buildings, two schools, one shop, and one commercial building. Considering that the expropriation process for HPP "Buk Bijela" at an elevation of 500 masl has been nearly fully executed and that the lower dam at the same location does not incur additional expropriation expenses, the economic analysis indicates that expropriation costs will not encumber investments. Furthermore, the execution of the HPP Buk Bijela project does not necessitate the relocation of residents, and there are no structures that are threatened. In addition to the above, the construction of HPP "Buk Bijela" is also important regarding the safety of the population and their property in the downstream area of the barrier profile of HPP "Buk Bijela." Specifically, the reservoir of this facility will serve as the lower compensation pool for HPP "Piva," and the dam of HPP "Buk Bijela," along with its reservoir, will significantly reduce or eliminate the risk of downstream flooding that has previously occurred due to the uncontrolled overflow of HPP "Piva" in conjunction with the substantial inflow from the Tara River. This reservoir will effectively mitigate and delay the flood wave, that is currently lacking.
Additional information/comments	Bosnia and Herzegovina possesses considerable potential for renewable energy sources, which remains only partially harnessed, particularly in the hydropower sector (large hydroelectric power plants). Electricity generation in BiH continues to rely predominantly on domestic coal-fired thermal power plants. At the national level, thermal power plants contribute to 56% of total electricity production, while in the Republic of Srpska entity, their share in the overall annual electricity output reaches 63% (data pertains to 2023). According to the Framework Energy Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina until 2035, HPP Buk Bijela is a pivotal production facility that must be developed in alignment with EU/EC obligations and the long-term sustainability goals of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Production from HPP "Buk Bijela" would increase production from renewable energy sources by 5.4% at the level of BiH, or by 12.8% at the level of Republika Srpska. Therefore, the realization of this project constitutes substantial support for fulfilling the commitments that Bosnia and Herzegovina has undertaken through the signing of international agreements, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol, and the Treaty on the Establishment of the Energy Community of Southeast European countries.
(ii) Information on the spatial and temporal boundaries of the proposed activity	
Location	The hydroelectric power plant "Buk Bijela" is situated within the territory of the entity Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The site designated for the construction of HPP "Buk Bijela" territorially belongs to the municipality

	of Foča, located in the Upper Drina Region. The barrier profile of the HPP "Buk Bijela" dam is situated in the bed of the Drina River, approximately 11.6 km upstream from the urban area of the municipality of Foča (Klanice Bridge) and about 11.5 km downstream from the confluence of the Piva and Tara rivers in Šćepan Polje (border with Montenegro), at the river course chainage km 334+550 from the confluence with the Sava River. The axis position of the Buk Bijela dam can be delineated by the coordinates of the following two points within the national coordinate system: A (4 809 183.50, 6 562 199.15); B (4 809 261.15, 6 562 534.20). The reservoir stretches upstream to Šćepan Polje, specifically to the confluence of the Piva River with the Tara. Throughout its entirety, the reservoir is situated within the bed of the Drina River, except at the confluence of the Sutjeska River, where it partially occupies the bed of that river.
Description of the location (e.g. physical-geographic characteristics, socio-economic characteristics)	The municipality of Foča is situated in the southeastern region of Bosnia and Herzegovina, within the Republic of Srpska entity. This municipality is located on the banks of the Drina River, at the onset of its upper course. The eastern and southern boundaries of the municipality coincide with the border of Montenegro, while to the northeast, it adjoins the municipality of Čajniče, also within the Republic of Srpska entity. To the north, Foča shares borders with the municipalities of Foča/Ustikolina and Goražde, located in the Federation of BiH entity, and to the west, it borders the municipality of Kalinovnik, with the municipality of Gacko to the southwest, both part of the Republic of Srpska entity. The municipality of Foča encompasses an area of 1,115 km², accounting for 4.52% of the territory of the Republic of Srpska and 2.18% of the total territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Based on the population recorded in the 2013 census, which indicated 18,288 inhabitants, Foča is classified as one of the sparsely populated municipalities in both the Republic of Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Foča is situated at an elevation ranging from 400 m (canyon valleys, river basins, and fields) to 2,386 m (mountains and terrains). The municipality experiences a continental climate. The predominant portion of the municipality consists of forest (76,702 ha) and agricultural (30,901 ha) land. The protected natural areas within the municipality encompass: • National Park "Sutjeska," with the Peručac Rainforest, is classified as Category II according to the IUCN. • Tara Nature Park - Category V according to IUCN • Nature monument "Glacier Cave" - III category as per IUCN standards.

	The municipality has substantial surface water resources, comprising 17 rivers and streams, a total length of 250 km. The most significant watercourse within the municipality is the Drina River, which measures 346 km in length and has a catchment area of approximately 19,570 km². In the upper reaches, where the dam and reservoirs are proposed, the Drina is flanked by numerous mountains and, as a quintessential fast-flowing mountain river, has carved a valley with exceptionally steep sides. The riverbed of the Drina within the reservoir area predominantly follows a straight course, exhibiting minimal bends. The trough extends along the entire length of the canyon-like reservoir. On both sides of the dam, specifically along the left and right banks, the main roads Foča - Gacko and Foča - Nikšić traverse the area. The barrier profile of the dam and the reservoir is situated in the sparsely populated rural region of the municipality, characterized by extensive forest coverage. The project implementation area encompasses the following populated locations: Mješaji, Mazoče, Kunduci, Ćurevo, Bastasi, Kosman, Tečići, Hum, Čelikovo polje, Vučevo, Prijeđel, and Beleni. According to the 2013 census, the total population across these towns is 504, indicating that the population in this rural region of the Foča municipality is exceedingly low, particularly in the settlements of Vučevo, Kosman, Hum, Čelikovo polje, and Bastasi, where the registered number of inhabitants is fewer than 10. Situated on the left bank of the barrier profile is the settlement of Mješaji, which has a population of 142 residents across 51 households. The population density of this settlement is 24 inhabitants per square kilometer. The settlement of Kunduci, located on the right bank of the barrier profile, has 118 inhabitants in 41 households, and population density of 11.7 inhabitants per square kilometer. The nearest residential structure to the barrier profile is found on the left bank in the settlement of Mješaji, approximately 400 meters northwest of the barrier profile. There are no residential structures along the proposed reservoir from the source of the Drina to the site of the dam's barrier profile. On the right bank, there are rafting camps, of which five will be partially dismantled due to the creation of the reservoir. In addition to the rafting camps along the reservoir, on the right bank in the settlement of Čelikovo Polje, lies the "Čelikovo Polje" deposit of gravel, sand, and conglomerate, which includes a separation and concrete plant. At present, this deposit remains unexploited and is planned for use in the construction of the HPP Buk Bijela. No other production facilities exist along the specified stretch. The left bank of the reservoir is uninhabited and covered with forest. The facilities of HPP Buk Bijela are situated outside of protected natural areas.

Rationale for location of proposed activity (e.g. socio-economic basis, physical-geographic basis)	The Upper Drina basin possesses significant untapped hydroelectric potential, which has generated interest in the development of the proposed hydropower facility in this region. The site of the barrier profile is specified in the prior project documentation and is identical to that of HPP Buk Bijela, with a normal backwater elevation of 500 masl. The reservoir area, with a normal backwater elevation of 434 masl, is defined based on geomorphological conditions, the hydrological potential of the watercourse, and other natural factors. However, geostrategic considerations were prioritized to ensure that the entire area of the future reservoir is situated within the territory of the Republic of Srpska and that the zone of backwater influence does not extend beyond its borders. The reservoir of HPP Buk Bijela is relatively small compared to the hydrological potential of the Drina River, which represents a notable deviation from global standards for reservoir sizing. Nonetheless, the foremost principle was that the reservoir and its impact zone must be located within the territory of Republic of Srpska.
Time frame for proposed activity (e.g. start and duration of construction and operation)	The project documentation for HPP Buk Bijela anticipates a construction duration of 4.5 years. The development of the hydroelectric power plant in question will encompass the following stages: • Excavation of the return tunnel will occur during the initial year of construction. • Concreting of the return tunnel is scheduled for the commencement of the second year of construction. • Excavation for the dam's overflow section and machine building will occur in the latter half of the second year of construction and the initial half of the third year. • Concreting of the dam's overflow section will occur in the latter half of the third year and will extend into the fourth year. • Concreting of the machine building in the fourth year of construction. • Grouting of the dam during the fourth year of construction. • Installation of hydromechanical, mechanical, and electrical equipment will occur during the fourth year and the first half of the fifth year. Excavating the riverbed downstream from the barrier site is an activity that is independent of any other activities and can be conducted in any construction year.
Maps and other pictorial documents connected with the information on the proposed activity	Accompanying the notification are:: • Overview map – the region of the "Buk Bijela" HPP Project; • Situational overview of HPP "Buk Bijela" - approved variant Q_{inst}=450 m^3/s • Satellite imagery of the HPP Buk Bijela reservoir • Presentation of the impact of HPP "Buk Bijela" reservoir backwater on the territory of Montenegro, depending on the flow

Additional information/comments	/

(iii) Information on expected environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures.

Scope of assessment (e.g. consideration of: cumulative impacts, evaluation of alternatives, sustainable development issues, impact of peripheral activities)	In the preliminary evaluation of the potential effects of interventions on the environment during construction and operation, the following impacts were taken into account:: • Impact on water • Impact on soil • Impact on air and microclimate • Impact on noise level • Impact on waste generation • Impact on flora, fauna, and habitats • Impact on natural and cultural-historical heritage • Impact on landscape characteristics • Impact on the populace • Cumulative impacts • Transboundary impacts The evaluation of the Project's environmental impact will be conducted in greater detail within the Environmental Impact Assessment Study of HPP Buk Bijela. During the preparation of the project documentation, various alternative solutions were evaluated to identify the optimal approach for minimizing impacts on specific environmental elements and to prevent any adverse effects on the protected area of the Tara River in Montenegro.
Expected environmental impacts of proposed activity (e.g. types, locations, magnitudes)	**Expected impacts on water** During the execution of construction activities, the water of the Drina River will become turbid at the site of the works, as well as in the downstream section of the watercourse. These impacts are temporary and will persist until the completion of the construction activities. During exploitation, along the 11.5 km length of the reservoir, the submergence of the main riverbed and the expansive river valley of the Drina may result in minor impacts on the groundwater regime, considering that the maximum depth of the reservoir at the barrier profile is 34 m. The HPP Buk Bijela reservoir does not affect the existing springs of the public water supply service in Foča, nor does it impact the narrow zone of sanitary protection or the smaller local springs that supply water to minor settlements. The reservoir of HPP Buk Bijela will serve as the lower compensating pool for HPP Piva. Although this accumulation will have certain positive effects in the form of leveling of upstream flows from Tara and Piva,, the operation of HPP Buk Bijela is expected to exert potential effects on the downstream sections, particularly concerning fluctuations in water levels along the Drina River in

	the Republic of Srpska and the Federation of BiH, specifically from the dam profile of HPP Buk Bijela to the Višegrad HPP reservoir. The construction of the Buk Bijela HPP dam and reservoir is expected to influence the sediment transport dynamics within the Drina River bed. Additionally, the establishment of the reservoir will undoubtedly result in alterations to water quality. **Expected impacts on soil** The construction of the hydroelectric power plant in question will result in permanent and temporary land occupation. The permanent occupation pertains to the area necessary for the reservoir (123.30 hectares) and the related facilities of the hydroelectric power plant. The land will be temporarily utilized for the disposal of excavated materials and temporary construction material storage. During construction, impacts on the soil at the sites of landslides and access roads to the reservoir, including the clearing of vegetation and rehabilitation of landslides, are anticipated. Soil contamination may arise if waste materials, engine oil, fuel, and other substances are improperly disposed, and due to failure of construction machinery and vehicles or negligence on the part of personnel. The operational mode of HPP Buk Bijela may have potential effects on the flooding of land within the accumulation zone and downstream, particularly during periods of elevated water levels. During the operation of HPP Buk Bijela, soil erosion is anticipated as a result of fluctuations in the water level within the reservoir and immediately downstream of the dam, where increased water flow may contribute to erosion. Soil pollution resulting from the operation of the hydroelectric power plant may arise from transformer oil spills during accidents, routine maintenance, and equipment overhauls, as well as from improper waste disposal practices. **Expected impacts on air quality and microclimate** During construction, air quality impacts can be expected due to the emission of dust particles and emission of exhaust gases from internal combustion engines in construction machinery and vehicles. All the aforementioned influences affect the employees engaged in the construction of the facility, as well as the local flora and fauna. These impacts can be effectively managed through proper planning and rigorous enforcement of protective measures. During the operation of HPP Buk Bijela, there are no sources of air pollutants, and it is deemed that there is no adverse effect on air quality. The reservoir of hydroelectric power can influence local climate variations

and, consequently, other environmental components. To evaluate the impact of the reservoir on the microclimate of the surrounding region, it is essential to anticipate the recording of the current conditions and the monitoring of alterations in climatological parameters adjacent to the reservoir following the completion of the hydroelectric power plant's construction.

Expected impacts on the noise level

During the construction of the power plant in question, an elevated level of noise in the environment can be anticipated due to construction activities and increased vehicular traffic to the site.

During the operation of the hydroelectric power plant in question, noise is anticipated solely within the working environment due to the functioning of aggregates, generators, turbines, and similar equipment. The noise within the machine building can be diminished to a level that is nearly imperceptible externally.

Expected impacts on flora, fauna, and habitats

During the construction of the hydroelectric power plant in question, the following can be expected:

- The existing habitats will be directly impacted by the loss of land designated for the hydroelectric power plant facilities, including the operational and maintenance zones. These impacts may be either permanent or temporary, affecting both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.
- The construction of the reservoir primarily leads to a permanent loss of forest habitats. Before the establishment of the artificial reservoir, the entire strip of dendroflora on both banks of the Drina River will be mechanically cleared up to the maximum water level of the future reservoir.
- Temporary impairment of the quality of terrestrial and aquatic habitats will occur in the construction zone, primarily due to increased dust, elevated noise levels, and water turbidity in the river. The degradation of aquatic habitats resulting from alterations in the physical properties of water due to turbidity will adversely affect fish species and other aquatic organisms. The clouding of the Drina River may lead to a reduction in both the quantity and diversity of macroinvertebrates on the riverbed, which serves as the foundation of the food chain, thereby negatively impacting the entire river ecosystem in this section of the stream. In addition to diminishing the available food supply, the fish fauna will be further influenced by these persistent turbidity levels. This impact is temporary; upon completion of the construction, its negative effects will dissipate, and the riverbed downstream of the HPP "Buk Bijela" dam will restore its original characteristics following the initial flood period, as deposited materials will be washed away.
- The removal of vegetation, excavation, and activities within the

riverbed, along with the increased movement of heavy machinery in the habitat, may result in the inadvertent mortality of less mobile animals, including those residing in the soil or sediment and connected to them throughout their life cycle (e.g., reptile eggs, amphibians, small mammals, etc.). Considering the characteristics of the area, it can be inferred that the species potentially affected by these activities are also present in other regions of the broader project area, suggesting that there will not be a significant decline in population size. Therefore, this impact can be regarded as acceptable.

- An elevated level of noise and vibrations will disrupt bird populations in the surrounding area. This impact is temporary and reversible. Furthermore, during the removal of vegetation, nests within the work zone may be destroyed. Conducting vegetation removal in the project area prior to the breeding season will enable individuals intending to nest in the area to seek alternative suitable nesting habitats nearby.
- In the project area, the potential presence of bat colonies that may be impacted by the project is plausible. Considering that bats utilize the project area as a feeding ground and that the surface of the suitable water habitats over which they forage will remain unchanged, it can be inferred that there will be no significant effect on the bat fauna.
- During the construction period, otters will be temporarily displaced from the work area due to human activity, noise generated by the operations, and alterations to their habitat. They are expected to return once the work is completed; therefore, this impact is not deemed significant.
- During construction activities, it is anticipated that wildlife will vacate the project area, returning once the work is completed.

During the exploitation phase, the following can be expected:

- Reservoir water may contain elevated levels of nutrients that can promote the growth and proliferation of algae and other aquatic macrophytes.
- The colonization of invasive species which is characterized by the colonization of ruderal habitats, where competition for living space from autochthonous flora is significantly less pronounced than in natural environments.
- Following the formation of accumulation and deposition of suspended substances from the water, the bottom itself, but also the benthic fauna will transform into a lacustrine type. The substrate will become muddy, leading to the emergence of lacustrine species of macroinvertebrates, while rheophilic species will concurrently diminish.
- By altering the ecological conditions from riverine to lacustrine environments, there will be a reduction in the abundance of salmonid species and an increase in the abundance of cyprinid fish species, alongside the emergence of specific predatory species associated with

stagnant water ecosystems, such as catfish, pike, and perch.

- The construction of the HPP "Buk Bijela" dam will lead to the fragmentation of the fish population on different sides of this hydropower facility, if an adequate fish passage is not built, with the fact that minimal consequences for the population upstream of the dam can be expected.
- By partially submerging the habitat to create a reservoir, there will be retreats of reptile species that are not adapted to aquatic environments, relocating them to habitats that support their normal survival and the execution of all life functions—specifically, to surrounding habitats that remain unaffected by the submerge.
- The creation of reservoirs can be expected to improve living conditions and increase the number of most species of amphibians.
- No significant negative impacts are expected on the existing ornithofauna concerning its extinction; however, a partial upstream retreat of certain species that prefer the habitats of mountain rivers, such as the blackbird *Cinclus cinclus*, may occur.
- The reservoir will not exert a substantial negative impact on the otter population in this region. This species will find conditions for survival in the newly formed lake. The construction of the dam will not considerably influence the fragmentation of the otter habitat. The dam will prompt otters to explore alternative pathways around it.
- The reservoir will not significantly adversely affect the composition or migratory patterns of large mammals in this region. The barrier, in the sense of increasing the width of the water mass that represents a physical barrier, will not hinder the migration of animals of these groups and prevent the passage of newly formed ecosystems from the immediate coastal parts of the Drina River, as well as migratory movements from the wider area.

Expected impacts on natural and cultural-historical heritage

The implementation of the subject project will not impact the natural and cultural-historical heritage. Within the project area of HPP "Buk Bijela," there are no protected natural assets, nor are there any natural assets currently undergoing protection or planned for future protection. Additionally, there are no protected architectural heritage assets within the project's scope.

Expected impacts on the landscape characteristics of the area

During the construction of the project, the following can be expected:

- The physical structure of the landscape is directly affected by the removal of surface cover. This impact will manifest in the areas of dense vegetation that will be cleared from the riverbanks, as well as through alterations to the natural morphology of the terrain within the construction zone.
- Temporary and limited effects on the structural quality of the

	landscape resulting from earthworks and construction activities during the ground preparation phase for the hydroelectric power plant. • The presence of construction machinery and structures, owing to the terrain's configuration, will not detrimentally impact the visual quality of the area, as the construction zone will not be fully visible from the roads. These effects are temporary, remaining until the completion of the work. During the operation of the hydropower plant, the following impacts on the landscape are expected: • The dam construction and the creation of the reservoir will transform the landscape through the introduction of new, artificial structures. The effects will be substantial and enduring. **Expected impacts on the population** The impacts on the population during construction are as follows: • Elevated levels of noise and dust in the atmosphere. • Risks associated with water pollution that may impact the communities along the Drina watercourse. • The safety of the population may be compromised due to heightened vehicle traffic on the main roads which will used for construction, particularly the main road Foča-Šćepan Polje, during the transit of trucks, heavy equipment, and machinery. • The arrival of a significant number of construction workers in the local community can lead to social, health, economic, and cultural challenges within the community. • Since the expropriation process was completed in the prior period, the execution of the project in question does not necessitate the relocation of the population. During exploitation, the following impacts can be expected: • Safety risks for communities located downstream of the dam arise from sudden and significant fluctuations in water levels. These risks require thorough review and specification.
Inputs (e.g. raw material, power sources)	Standard construction materials—such as gravel, coarse aggregate, water, cement, concrete, and reinforcement—will be utilized for the construction of the hydroelectric power plant in question. During the operation of the hydroelectric power plant, the hydropower potential of the upper reaches of the Drina River will be harnessed.
Outputs (e.g. amounts and types of: emissions into the atmosphere, discharges into the	**Discharges into water** During the construction of the hydropower plant, there may be elevated emissions into the water, particularly because the activities will occur near or within the water body. Anticipated increased sedimentation and erosion resulting from earthworks may impact water quality by introducing suspended

water system, solid waste)	solids. During the operational phase, the hydroelectric power plant generates minimal wastewater, which would contain waste materials or hazardous substances and chemicals. However, during the plant's maintenance, an accident may result in the spillage of transformer insulating oil and turbine oil into the waterway. **Soil pollution** During the construction phase and the preparatory activities, emissions to the soil may occur due to accidental pollution from motor fuels and lubricants used in construction machinery. No emissions into the soil are expected during the operation of the hydroelectric power plant, except in instances of transformer oil spillage directly onto the soil, which may occur during regular maintenance and equipment overhauls, as well as due to improper waste disposal. **Air emissions** During the construction of HPP "Buk Bijela," the following air emissions can be expected: • emissions of dust particles during the execution of earthworks and the transportation of materials. • emissions of exhaust gases resulting from the combustion of diesel fuel in construction machinery and transport vehicles. The emissions will be limited both spatially and temporally. During the operation of the hydroelectric power plant in question, there are no sources of emissions of pollutants into the atmosphere. **Noise pollution** During the construction of the hydroelectric power plant in question, the operation of construction machinery and transport vehicles is likely to result in elevated noise emissions. During the operation of the hydroelectric power plant, elevated noise and vibrations may arise from the functioning of turbines, generators, transformers, and other hydroelectric apparatus. Nevertheless, substantial increases in noise levels from this source in the surrounding environment are not anticipated. **Waste generation** During the construction of the hydroelectric power plant in question, various types of construction waste, assembly waste, and municipal waste will be produced. During the operation of the power plant, regular maintenance will result in the generation of hazardous waste, including waste oil, packaging containing residues of dangerous substances, and contaminated absorbents. Additionally, the presence of workers at the site during maintenance activities will lead to the production of municipal waste.

Transboundary impacts (e.g. types, locations, magnitudes)	HPP Buk Bijela was designed according to the conditions and limitations of the proximity to the interstate border with Montenegro, situated at an aerial distance of 10.39 km from the barrier profile. All facilities of HPP Buk Bijela are located within the territory of the Republic of Srpska (BiH). Given that the hydropower plant is positioned downstream from the border with Montenegro, a critical parameter that fundamentally defines the transboundary impact of this facility is the maximum backwater elevation, whose altitude dictates the place to which the future reservoir will reach. According to the project documentation, the maximum backwater elevation is 434 masl. The projected flow is established as the average flow of the Tara River at 73.60 m^3/s and the flow of the Piva River at 240.00 m^3/s, corresponding to the installed flow of HPP "Piva," resulting in a total of 313.60 m^3/s at the boundary profile. As illustrated in Attachment no. 4, for flow Q2, the impact of the "Buk Bijela" reservoir is immediately downstream of the boundary profile; respectively this represents the projected flow that, through hydraulic calculations, determined the maximum backwater elevation of the reservoir. For flows exceeding the projected flow, flow Q3 (Appendix 4), the reservoir does not affect the territory of Montenegro; respectively, the contact of backwater and water level in the natural regime moves more and more downstream with the flow increase on the boundary profile. For flows lower than the projected flow (flow Q1), the reservoir begins to disrupt the natural regime at the boundary profile due to its backwater, with this influence intensifying as the flow diminishes. The reservoir is not expected to adversely impact the biodiversity on the territory of Montenegro as the most affected groups, including benthic organisms and fish, do not need downstream migrations. In the context of transboundary impacts, it can be asserted that the construction of HPP "Buk Bijela" will mitigate the negative effects that Montenegro imposes on the territory of the Republic of Srpska (BiH) due to the operation and existence of HPP "Piva." Namely, the reservoir of HPP "Buk Bijela" will alleviate fluctuations of the Drina River during the summer months (but not only during the summer months) in the area of the municipality of Foča, which are a consequence of the operation of HPP "Piva". ", working synchronized with HPP "Piva" and functioning as a compensation pool for HPP "Piva". The Environmental Impact Study for HPP Buk Bijela will thoroughly evaluate transboundary effects on Montenegro. The realization of the subject project will not have an impact on the territory of the Republic of Serbia, bearing in mind the nature of the planned plant, as well as the distance of the state border of the Republic of Serbia from the location of the barrier profile of HPP "Buk Bijela", (38.9 km in air distance from the barrier profile, while the distance along the watercourse of the Drina river from the confluence with the Sava river is 170.4 km aerial distance,) and already built integral water management multi-purpose systems on the downstream stretch of the water course of the Drina river.

Proposed mitigation measures (e.g. if known, mitigation measures to prevent, eliminate, minimize, compensate for environmental effects)	Based on the preliminary analysis of the environmental impact of HPP Buk Bijela, the Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment outlines measures to mitigate effects during the hydropower plant's construction and operation. In the Environmental Impact Assessment Study for HPP Buk Bijela, following a comprehensive impact evaluation, supplementary measures will be recommended to mitigate the hydroelectric power plant's effects on the environment.
Additional information/comments	/
(iv) Proponent/developer	
Name, address, telephone and fax numbers	HES „GORNjA DRINA“ d.o.o. FOČA Address: Nemanjina, No. 19, 74218 Foča, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina Phone: +387 58 232 507, +387 58 232 508 E-mail: info@hesgornjadrina.ba
(v) EIA documentation	
Is the EIA documentation (e.g. EIA report or EIS) included in the notification?	No
If the answer to the above is no or partially, description of additional documentation to be forwarded and (approximate) date(s) when documentation will be available	Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment of HPP "Buk Bijela"
Additional information/comments	/
2. POINTS OF CONTACT	
(i) Points of contact for the possible affected Party or Parties	
Authority responsible for coordinating activities relating to the Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment (refer to decision I/3,	REPUBLIC OF MONTENEGRO: Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern Region Development Address: Eko-efikasna zgrada, Cetinjski put b.b. 81000 Podgorica, Republic of Montenegro Email: kabinet@mers.gov.me

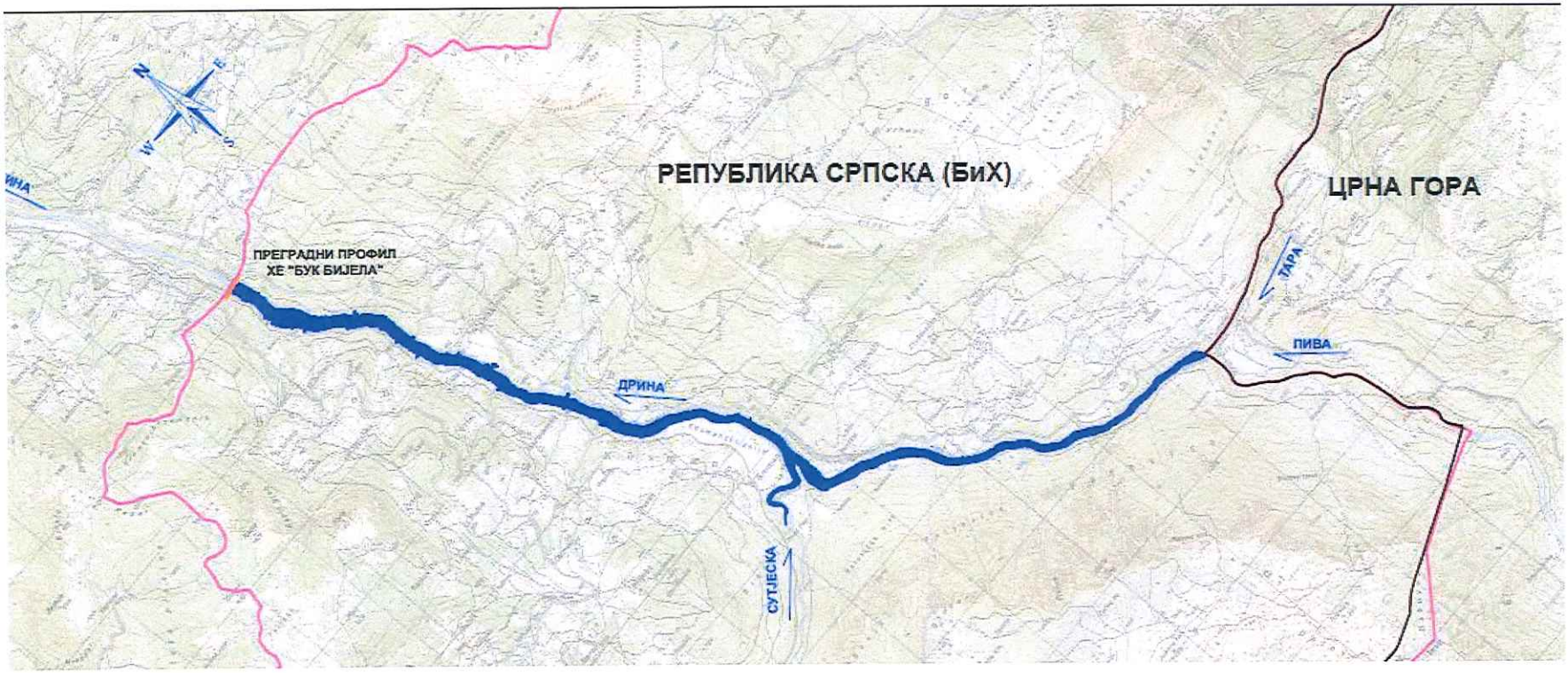
appendix) - Name, address, telephone and fax numbers	REPUBLIC OF SERBIA Ministry of Environmental Protection Address:Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 2 11070 Beograd, Republic of Serbia Telephone: +381 11 3110-271; +381 11 3110-245 Fax number: +381 11 3110-298 email: eko.kabinet@eko.gov.rs
List of affected Parties to which notification is being sent	Republic of Montenegro Republic of Serbia
(ii) Points of contact for the Party of origin	
Authority responsible for coordinating activities relating to the Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment (refer to decision I/3, appendix) - Name, address, telephone and fax numbers	Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction, and Ecology of the Republic of Srpska Address: Trg Republike Srpske 1, 78 000 Banja Luka, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina Phone: +387 51 339 520, +387 51 339 592 Fax: +387 51 339 653 E-mail: kabinetministra@mgr.vladars.rs
Decision-making authority if different than authority responsible for coordinating activities relating to the Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment - Name, address, telephone and fax numbers	Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction, and Ecology of the Republic of Srpska Address: Trg Republike Srpske 1, 78 000 Banja Luka, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina Phone: +387 51 339 520, +387 51 339 592 Fax: +387 51 339 653 E-mail: kabinetministra@mgr.vladars.rs
3. INFORMATION ON THE EIA PROCESS IN THE COUNTRY WHERE THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY IS LOCATED	
(i) Information on the EIA process that will be applied to the proposed activity	
Time schedule	The Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment process has commenced.
Opportunities for the affected Party or Parties to be involved in the EIA process	If the affected country concludes that the project may have a substantial transboundary impact, it will, within the timeframe established by the country of origin, submit a response indicating its intention to engage in the environmental impact assessment process and will notify its public.
Opportunities for the affected Party or Parties to review and comment on the notification and documentation related to the Preliminary Environmental Impact	In accordance with the Law on Environmental Protection ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Srpska" no. 71/12, 79/15, 70/20)

Assessment	
Nature and timing of the possible decision	Decision and the time limit is at least 60 days from the moment of receipt of the orderly request with the Data attached to the request.
Process for approval of the proposed activity	In accordance with the Law on Environmental Protection ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Srpska" no. 71/12, 79/15, 70/20)
Additional information/comments	/
4. INFORMATION ON THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	
Public participation procedures	According to the Law on Environmental Protection ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Srpska" No. 71/12, 79/15, 70/20), relevant bodies and organizations are required to submit their opinions regarding the request for a preliminary impact assessment within 15 days of receiving the request. Meanwhile, the interested public may provide their opinions within 15 days following the publication of the notice regarding the receipt of the request for a preliminary environmental impact assessment on the Ministry's website. Interested members of the public are invited to provide their feedback on the draft study during the public inspection and discussion phases. The public review period extends from the date of publication of the notification regarding the submitted application for approval of the impact study until the conclusion of 15 days following the public hearing. The public hearing in the local self-government unit where the project is situated shall occur no later than 60 days from the date of submission of the request for approval of the impact study to the Ministry.
Expected start and duration of public consultation	Public review lasts 15 days from the date of publication of the request and data on the subject project on the website of the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction, and Ecology of the Republic of Srpska, by the Law on Environmental Protection ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Srpska No. 71/12, 79/15, 70/20)
Additional information/comments	/
5. DEADLINE FOR RESPONSE	
Date	Reasonable timeframe, with a minimum of 30 days after receiving the notification

Director:

Zoran Janković

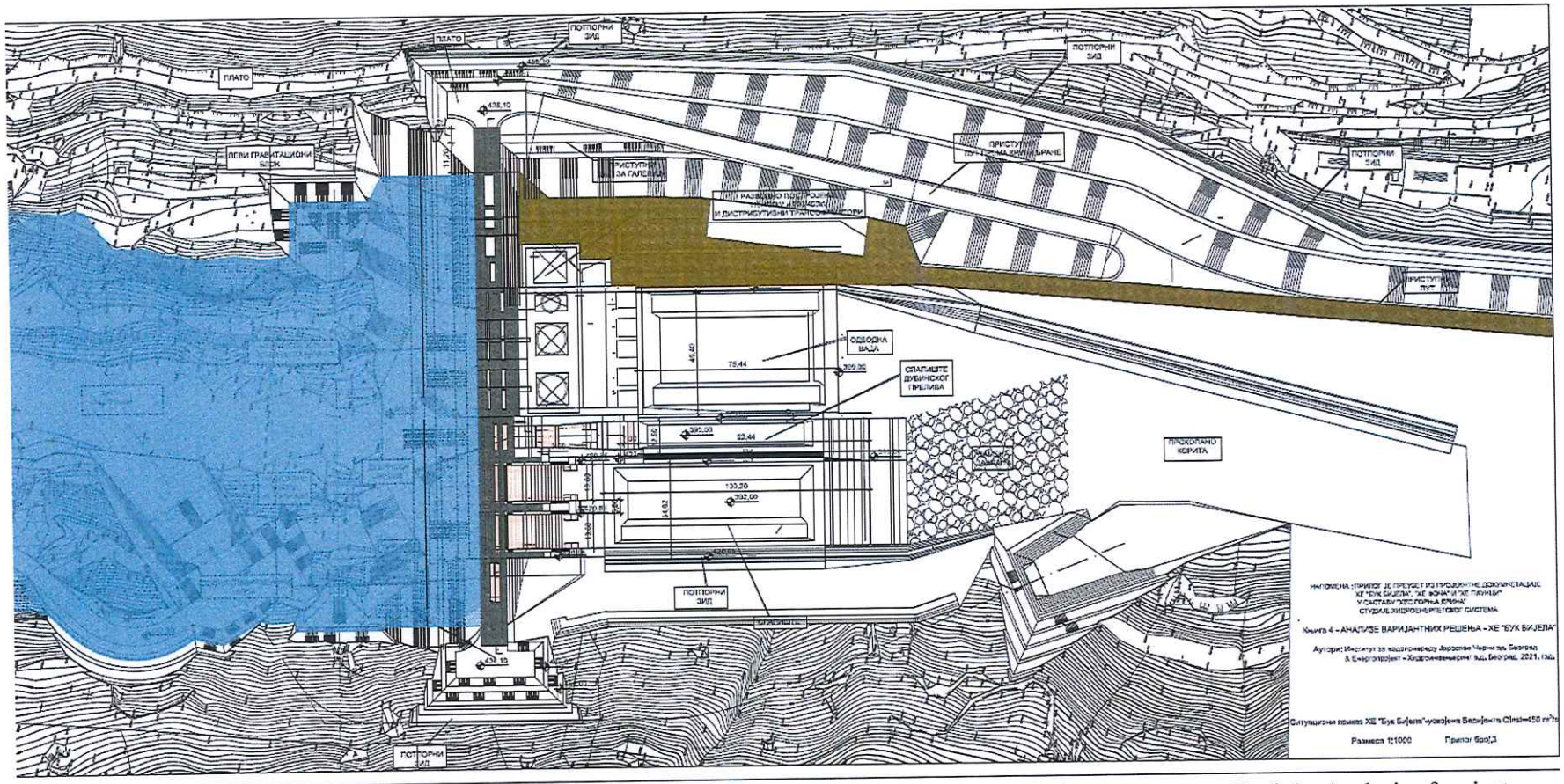
Attachments:
Attachment 1: Overview Map - Buk Bijela Hydropower Plant Project Area;
Attachment 2: Situational overview of HPP "Buk Bijela" - approved variant Qinst=450 m^3/s (Source: Studies of the hydropower system, Volume 3 - Analysis of variant technical solutions for HPP "Buk Bijela", Institute for Water Management Jaroslav Černi a.d. Belgrade and Energoprojekt Hidroinženjering a.d. Belgrade, 2021);
Attachment 3: Satellite imagery of the HPP Buk Bijela reservoir;
Attachment 4: Presentation of the effects of the gradual accumulation of "Buk Bijela" on the territory of Montenegro, contingent upon the flow.



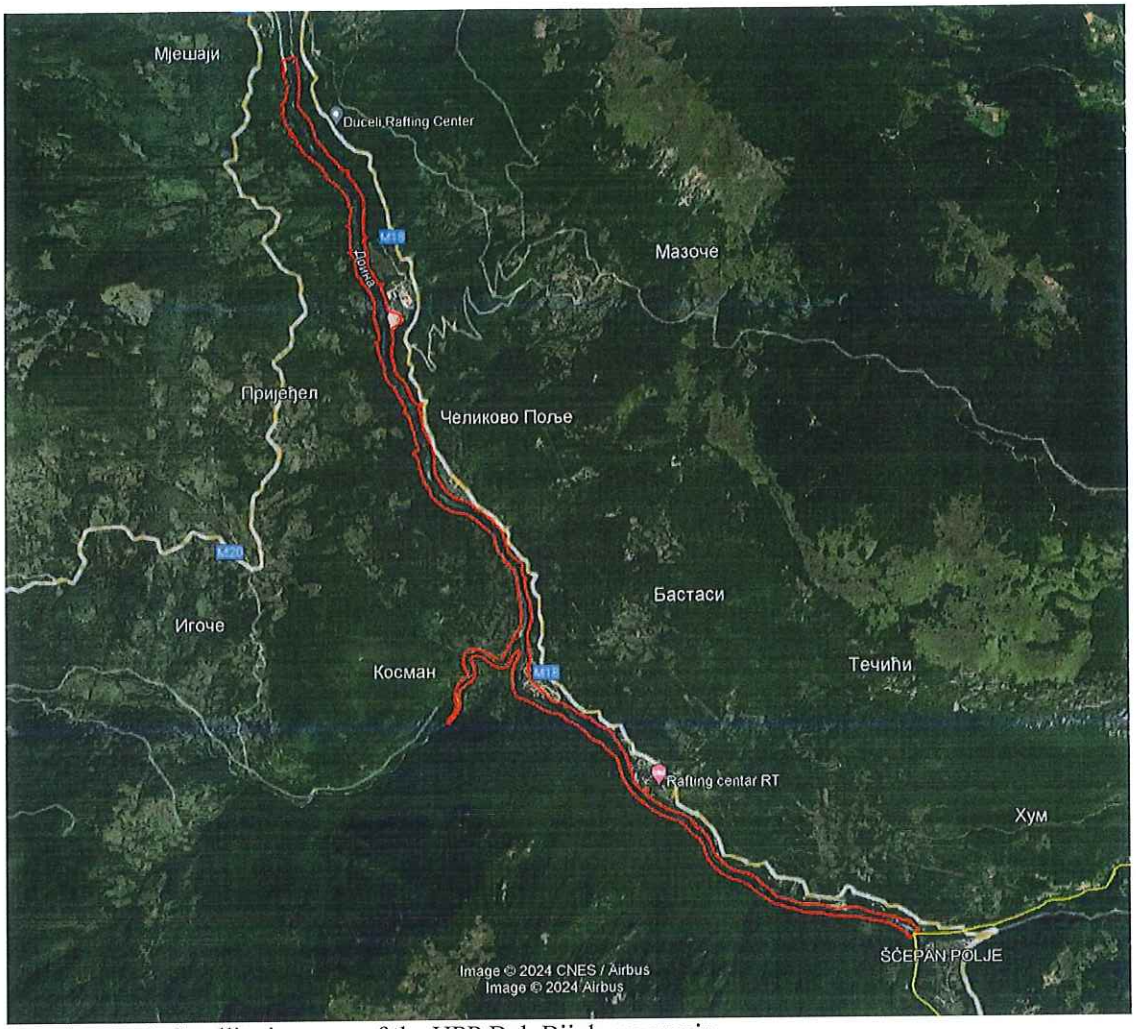
Legend:

- АКУМУЛАЦИЈА ХЕ "БУК БИЈЕЛА", КНУ 434 mnm
- ГРАНИЦА СЛИВА РИЈЕКЕ ДРИНЕ ДО ХЕ "БУК БИЈЕЛА"
- ГРАНИЦА РЕПУБЛИКА СРПСКА (БиХ) - РЕПУБЛИКА ЦРНА ГОРА
- ПРЕГРАДНИ ПРОФИЛ ХЕ "БУК БИЈЕЛА"

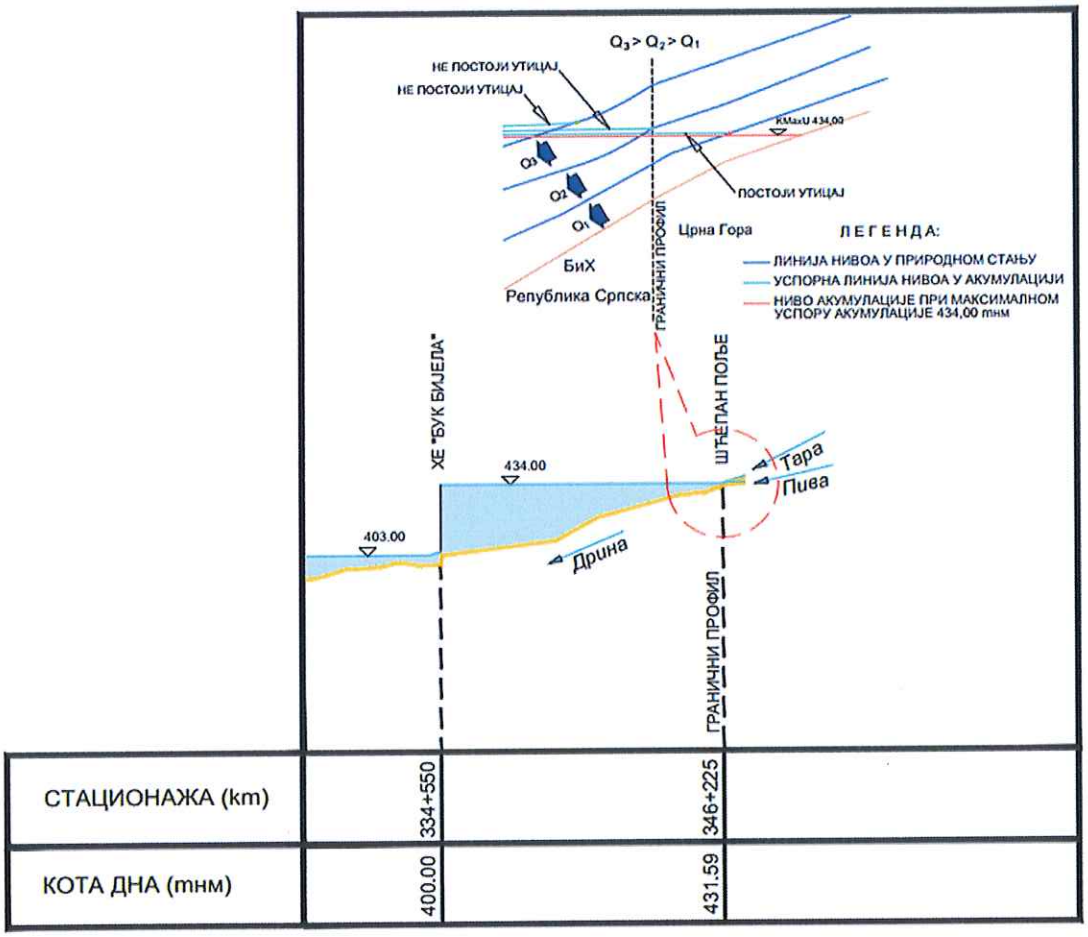
Attachment 1: Overview map of the Buk Bijela HPP project area



Attachment 2: Overview of HPP "Buk Bijela" - adopted variant Qinst=450 m3/s (Source: Studies of the hydropower system, Book 3 - Analysis of variant technical solutions for HPP "Buk Bijela", Institute for Water Management Jaroslav Černi a.d. Belgrade and Energoprojekt Hidroinženjering a.d. Belgrade, 2021);



Attachment 3: Satellite imagery of the HPP Buk Bijela reservoir



Attachment 4: Presentation of the impact of HPP "Buk Bijela" reservoir backwater on the territory of Montenegro, depending on the flow.