



*Mr Jure Leben
Minister of Environment and Spatial
Planning
Dunajska 48
SI-1000 Ljubljana*

27th of February 2019

**Support to the decision to stop the concession decree on Mura River in
Slovenia**

Your Excellency,

Hereby, on behalf of Croatian NGOs, we are supporting your decision to stop the decree on the concession for water use for electricity production on Mura River in Slovenia. We are referring to the decree issued on 22nd December 2005 where the Government of the Republic of Slovenia issued a decree on the concession for water use for the production of electricity on the part of the water body of the Mura River from Sladki Vrh to Veržej (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 120/05).

We are highly welcoming the decision to stop building of HPPs on Mura River in Slovenia due to its high biodiversity value, but also for its rich cultural heritage and the local population for who we think could have far more benefits from the natural free flowing river then from the river used primarily for energy production. We greet the decision of the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme who in July 2018 proclaimed the Mura region as the Mura Biosphere Reserve with which Mura River gained high recognition for its natural and cultural values. Mura River is also a part of the Natura 2000 network and we support your goal to protect valuable habitats and species that can be found in Mura River and its surroundings.

In Croatia we encounter very problematic situation since there is a plan to use Drava River for energy production, however our authorities do not have the same holistic approach and unfortunately still do not realize the importance of a healthy river systems. We hope that they will now follow your example and decide to protect our valuable Drava River.

With your decision you are going towards safeguarding freshwater treasure, our river Mura and also situate Slovenia as a role model for other countries.

Kindest regards,

*Friends of the Earth Croatia
Association BIOM
Zaštitarsko-ekološka udruga "Senjar"
Croatian Society for the Bird and Nature Protection
Association for nature and environment protection Green Osijek*