

Example of good practice	Kruščica standing its ground – the initiative to prevent the construction of small hydropower plants in the future nature park
Categories	Local initiatives, equality
Organization	Eko Bistro
Partners	Centre For the Environment, Eco-Humanitarian Association of Gotuša – Fojnica, Arnika – Prague, Czech Republic, River Protection Coalition of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Location	Vitez Municipality, Kruščica Local community
Country	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Form of protection	The Vitez Municipality Spatial Plan (Protected landscape)
Scope of implementation (local, national)	Local
Time	3 years
People	2
Budget	BAM 80,000
Funding	EU funding, Patagonia
Project info	http://rijekebih.org/index.php/portfolio-item/gradanke-i-gradani-kruscice-brane-svoju-rijeku/
Contact	Maida Bilal (President), Mika Tibold, Amela Zukan, Hata Hurem, Enes Salkić (Deputy), Vilal Mehmed, Hurem Alem, Safet Bešo
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the second spontaneous citizens' initiative to prevent the construction and to change the Central Bosnia Canton (SBK) government's decision on the modification of the SBK Spatial Plan (after Gotuša/Fojnica) • the River Protection Coalition of Bosnia and Herzegovina organized the protests to support Kruščica with more than 300 attendees and sent a message of unity in the struggle for the preservation of the Kruščica river • petition with more than 800 signatures • since 2 August 2017 (345 days), the population of Kruščica kept a round-the-clock watch (women during the day, men in the evening) over the only bridge that leads to the construction site in order to prevent the construction of hydropower plants

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the women were charged with violating public order and peace and assaulting a police officer for having blocked the bridge – the court dismissed the charges against the women of Kruščica • the perseverance of the people – despite the brutal reaction of the police, the locals kept on blocking the bridge • the Eko Bistro association was founded (supporters of Kruščica will soon be allowed to become members) • former representatives of the local community that approved the construction of hydropower plant have been removed from duty • more than 600 people participated in the local community assembly • for the first time, national representatives of the majority peoples of B&H, women and the Roma community are represented equally in the newly established governing body of the local community • a non-violent attempt of the Special Police forces to unblock the bridge was prevented • the lawsuit filed against the investor for non-compliance with the urban and environmental permit issuance procedure was successful and the construction of two small hydropower plants (of the 4 planned) has been prohibited – the court's decision on re-trial is still to be announced. • numerous publications in the national and international media brought awareness to the public of the possible damaging consequences of the SHP construction • numerous organizations and initiatives have shown their support
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Problem/opportunity	
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<p>Problem you wish to solve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the construction of 4 small-scale hydropower plants on the Kruščica River • the local population's access to water is jeopardized – the water supply system for the town of Zenica (about 100,000 people) relies on the Kruščica river source and there is no water supply in the village. • the possibility of declaring and establishing a protected area is compromised • preventing activities on the development of sustainable activities along the river – tourism • the public was not involved in the decision-making • non-transparent operation of the local community governing body, local authorities and investors • violation of legal procedures with regard to the environmental permit issuance • modified Spatial Plan to which the SHPs were subsequently added
<p>Opportunities you wish to seize</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support of the local population and the fight for their rights • revision of the procedure for amendment of the Spatial Plan and permit issuance procedure (environmental and construction) • preserved river in the future nature park with the possibilities of sustainable development
<p>Planning</p>	
<p>Pre-requisites for success</p>	<p><u>Legal:</u> Aarhus Convention – access to information Freedom of Access to Information Act The Environmental Protection Act – participation in the permit issuance procedure and commenting on environmental impact studies (evidence accompanying the environmental permit application). The Gotuša case from the neighboring Fojnica Municipality. A similar problem and the initiative ended successfully with</p>

	<p>the help of WWF and CZZS – recommended their own attorney.</p> <p><u>Institutional:</u></p> <p>Government of the Central Bosnia Canton (Line Ministry) Vitez Municipal Council (Spatial Plan of the Municipality) Peaceful protests in front of the Vitez town hall Involvement of international organizations</p> <p><u>The local population:</u></p> <p>Strengthening the internal capacities of the local initiative (Eko Bistro association – Kruščica, Kruščica Local Community and informal Women's Group Kruščica): Locals will picket until they get firm guarantees, i.e. court decisions to prohibit the construction of the SHP. 35 women injured while blocking the bridge Petition – 817 locals signed the petition for obtaining power of attorney for the represented parties. Around 2000 people participated in the daytime vigil. <u>What success requires: an attorney, a biologist, spatial planner, media communication</u></p>
Initial idea	<p>The examples of Gotuša and the Battle of Sutjeska campaign motivated the local population to take steps to protect the Kruščica river.</p> <p>The motivation of the local population to get involved and fight for their rights in June of 2017 – support provided by all members of the River Protection Coalition of Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p> <p>After a brutal police action on 24 August 2017, this case makes it to the forefront of the news in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Centre For the Environment and Arnika send letters expressing concern to the UNDP non-resident representative, the OSCE mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p>
Strategies	<p>None, but Eko Bistro has become a full-fledged member of the River Protection Coalition and participated in the drafting of the Coalition's work strategy for 2018-2019.</p>

<p>Partner roles</p>	<p>CZZS – protection and legal assistance, assistance in the preparation of the statute and the formation of the association.</p> <p>LOTT-SFOR/OSCE – support in the protection of fundamental human rights</p> <p>“Crvena” association – NGO, financial aid for legal purposes, resources, the unemployed, aided by local entrepreneurs</p> <p>River Protection Coalition of Bosnia and Herzegovina – professional and legal support.</p> <p>Patagonia – promotion of civic activism by means of film projections.</p> <p>WWF – media relations, consulting, strengthening the capacity of the Eko Bistro association, economic empowerment of vulnerable groups.</p> <p>Local sport fishing association.</p> <p>Invitation to all interested individuals, groups and associations to help the fight for Kruščica.</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	
<p>Project key stages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • problem mapping (allies and opposing groups) • demonstrations and continuous blockades of pathways for machines intended for the construction of the hydropower plant (influenced by the experience with Gotuša, where the police attacked the men protesting; women were placed in the first row because they thought it would prevent conflicts between the men and the police, unfortunately, 35 women were injured) • creation of the platform for the purpose of active participation of the locals in development planning – Eko Bistro association • analysis of legal processes and options (hired the attorney with previous success in the Gotuša case) • networking and involvement of individuals and organizations of the River Protection Coalition • protests directed at decision makers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submission of the request to reopen the procedure of issuing permits and public involvement • filing a lawsuit against the competent Ministry due to its refusal to repeat the procedure based on “active legitimation” of the local representatives • continuously soliciting decision makers, key organizations and individuals • continuous communication with the media
Stakeholders selection	We were contacted by the stakeholders.
Stakeholder involvement	<p>We have included the media and external interested parties by means of the mailing list, social networks, newspapers, the Internet portal and TV.</p> <p>Actions are agreed upon internally via telephone since they do not use e-mail.</p>
Vulnerable groups involvement	<p>All the population living in the area of Kruščica which was not consulted were shown how to exercise their right to participate in decision making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – population from 15 to 80 years of age, most locals unemployed, around 30-40 women and 50 men actively participating in all shifts – around 120 Roma households participated since the beginning and got involved in the actions, and have a representative in the local community
Rights to information	The entire process influenced the public opinion and incentivized the population to demand their rights.
Communication	<p>Media conferences, meetings, press briefings, TV, radio, newspapers, social networks, protests, petition (local population), the initiative to register the Eko Bistro association.</p> <p>International and national work.</p> <p>The Patagonia documentary, participation at the world premiere. A second documentary produced by Al Jazeera is in the works.</p>
Climate change adaptation & mitigation	One of the arguments for reopening the procedure was the impact of climate change on the quantity of water required for supply and

	hydropower, i.e. its lack, which may limit access to water as a resource. Fight against illegal felling.
Challenges	Administrative: The lack of support from municipal administration Clash of jurisdiction on the municipal and cantonal level The ruling parties in the coalition are ignoring failures in the procedure of issuing permits and are siding with investors.
	Financial: Legal aid is too demanding and requires financing. Cabin maintenance, heating and electricity for protesters on the bridge. Lack of equipment and skills required for the work of the association and the local community.
	With stakeholders: Clarification of the issues with the hydropower plant for the local community Lack of practice in organizing civil protests. Religious leaders also ignore the initiative. Protesters received threatening messages via social networks and their safety was compromised.
Change	
Positive effects on environment	The construction of the hydropower plants was stopped and thus the natural processes were retained. The existing state and quality of the river Kruščica habitats was preserved! Increased awareness of the natural and cultural heritage of the area. Future development projects will have to be planned with the participation of the locals who want to plan the development in a sustainable way.
Positive economic and social changes	In relation to the public sector (local, cantonal)

	<p>Society: change in the authority bodies of the local community. Previous authority body did not react to illegal felling and excluded locals from decision making.</p> <p>The administration's attitude on the issue of participation of the population in decision making still only revolves around contention. 16 local communities of the Central Bosnia Canton function well, with the exception of Kruščica.</p>
	<p>In relation to the business sector:</p> <p>Society: local business operators recognize the significance of Kruščica, as well as the importance of involving the local population in the efforts, and they support the initiative through donations</p> <p>Lumber mills are the largest economic operators.</p>
	<p>Of the local population:</p> <p>Society: collaboration and unity of the local population, representatives in the local community council.</p>
Key benefits	<p>For nature</p> <p>Prevention of the construction of hydropower plants and the preservation of the natural state!</p> <p>For the people</p> <p>Empowerment of the people in the village but also region-wide through their example!</p> <p>The greatest success was accomplished by women! The women played a key role.</p>
Replication and recommendations	
Essential things to replication	<p>Commitment</p> <p>Inclusion of diverse partners</p> <p>Presenting the case at the international level (Aarhus Convention, UNDP, OSCE, Friends of the Earth International)</p> <p>Media involvement</p> <p>Contracting of experts.</p> <p>Mobilization of voters for the assembly of the local community.</p> <p>Joining forces and exchanging experiences with similar initiatives.</p>

Recommendations	<p>Take an active part in the social processes of the local community and introduce control measures regarding the work of elected representatives.</p> <p>Insist on pursuing the demands made to local authorities.</p> <p>Consultation with experts and mimicking successful examples from other parts of the country.</p> <p>President of the local community in contact with the attorney.</p> <p>A model is needed for the purpose of accelerating the court proceedings.</p> <p>Address all possible levels of government and international bodies in Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p> <p>Involve the media from the very beginning.</p> <p>Use the potentials of sustainable areas (tourism, local produce)</p>
Sustainability	<p>Strengthening the capacity of the association and the local community and transparency of operations.</p> <p>Continuously emphasizing the values of the rivers/nature and the potential for sustainable development.</p> <p>Involving a greater number of young people in the work of the local community and associations.</p> <p>Actively monitoring the legal procedures and the implementation of the legislative framework.</p> <p>Adoption and implementation of the development strategy and the action plan of the local community and associations.</p> <p>Identifying priority issues and resolving them.</p>
Replication	
Needed policy improvements	<p>Revision of all issued and new concessions for the construction of hydropower plants in the Central Bosnia Canton.</p> <p>Ensuring early-on participation of the general public in the process of planning development projects, i.e. in the implementation of the existing legislative framework.</p> <p>Amendment to the spatial planning documentation</p> <p>Adoption of the act on forests and timber transport regulation (no control???)</p> <p>Declaration of the protected area</p>

Your interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – practical examples of the use of renewable energy sources – using the rivers in a sustainable way so that they bring about income, remain controlled and populated – examples of cooperatives and cluster formation
Expectations	
From the “Nature for People” site?	Applying for projects that will result in the declaration of protected areas and sustainable management of natural resources.
From WWF?	<p>Continued support to the River Protection Coalition of Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p> <p>Greater support to grassroots organizations and the visibility of civic initiatives.</p>