

Example of good practice	Battle for Sutjeska – initiative to oppose the decision to construct hydroelectric plants in a national park
Category	Local initiative
Organization	Centar za životnu sredinu (CZZS) – Environment Centre
Partners	WWF, Arbor Magna, Spasilački klub Wolf
Location	Sutjeska National Park
Country	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Form of protection	National park, IUCN II
Scope of implementation (local, national)	Local
Time	2 years
People	1
Budget	50 000 BAM / 25 000 EUR
Funding	EU financing, Pro Natura, WWF
Project info	http://czzs.org/sutjeska/
Contact	Nataša Crnković
Achievements	<p>First civil initiative in Bosnia and Herzegovina (initiative to change the government decision and petition of signatures submitted to the national assembly) – the first such mobilization of people in BiH, with 6000 signatures (priručnik o građanskim inicijativama – handbook on civil initiatives)</p> <p>The issue of hydroelectric plants has been focused on the example of Sutjeska in BiH – 12 towns in which signatures were collected 267 announcements in the domestic and foreign media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation of local groups and associations to get involved and fight for their rights

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1. establishment of the coalition to protect BiH rivers (over 23 societies) ● 2. launch of the initiative for 7 rivers in BiH (Ljuta, Neretva, Una, Ugar, Željeznica, Vrbas, Orlija) – 10 societies (ecological, fishing, sports, kayaking, hunting, humanitarian) ● First court verdict won in which the court entered into the merits of the case. ● EU Parliament passed the resolution for BiH and in one segment recommended that no hydroelectric plants be constructed in the Una and Sutjeska national parks, and that impact assessment studies should be conducted. ● Current plans for construction of hydroelectric plants on the Sutjeska and Hrčavka Rivers halted.
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Problem/opportunity	
Problem	<p>Possible construction of hydroelectric plants on the Sutjeska and Hrčavka Rivers</p> <p>Poor inclusion of the local population in the activities in Sutjeska National Park</p>
Opportunity	Conservation of a river in a national park
Planning	
Pre-requisites for success	<p>Legal:</p> <p>Aarhus Convention – access to information</p> <p>Act on the Freedom of Access to Information</p> <p>Act on Referendums and Civil Initiatives – creation of civil initiatives</p>

	Act on Environmental Protection – inclusion in permitting processes and debate on environmental impact studies
	Institutional: Support to the Institute for the Protection of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage Support to the Faculty of Forestry
	Internal capacities: Lawyer, biologist, knowledge of EU integration processes, work with the media. Many years of work experience, good knowledge of the area and opportunities, and the local population
Initial idea	The planned hydroelectric plants would jeopardize the existence of the oldest national park in BiH, and the local population was not acting decisively, so we decided to take the initiative.
Strategies	Internal strategy of the CZZS
Partner roles	WWF – media relations, advisory, finding funding, credibility Arbor Magna – expert advice and good knowledge of the terrain and people Spasilački klub Wolf – representatives of the local population and communications with the media Identification of partners having activities in the park. Agreement to work together and to plan activities.
Implementation	
Project key stages	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. mapping the problem (supporters and opponents) 2. analysing legal processes and possibilities 3. networking and inclusion of individuals, organisation, institutions (launching civil initiatives and collecting signatures)

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. demonstrations directed at decision-makers 5. commenting on impact assessment 6. filing lawsuits against the line ministry for its adoption of the impact assessment 7. ongoing advocacy towards decision-makers and key persons and organisations 8. ongoing work with the media 9. biological research of the Sutjeska and Hrvavka canyons 10. celebration
Stakeholders selection	The stakeholders approached us.
Stakeholder involvement	Networking with ecological associations in BiH, collection of 6000 signatures in 12 cities, calls for protests.
Vulnerable groups involvement	The elderly population living in the park area were not consulted and were provided the opportunity to express their opinions.
Rights to information	<p>The entire process influenced the informing of the public and activation of societies to demand their rights.</p> <p>Both experts and the local population were invited to make their comments at public debates.</p> <p>Opinions of the local population were heard for the first time.</p>
Communication	<p>Press conferences, meetings, initiation of public debates, news announcements, TV, radio, news, social networks, protests, petitions.</p> <p>International and national work.</p>
Climate change adaptation & mitigation	One of the arguments for contesting the studies was the impacts of climate change on water quantities,

	i.e. loss of water could limit access to water as a resource.
Challenges	Administrative: Lack of support from Sutjeska National Park Lack of practice in establishing civil initiatives
	With stakeholders: Explaining the issues of hydroelectric plants to the local community
Changes	
Positive effects on environment	The existing state and quality of habitat in the Sutjeska and Hračvka canyons have been preserved.
Positive economic and social changes	Public sector (local, national) Social: more positive position of authorities (local and national) on the need to conserve the river
	Private sector: Economic: increased revenues and jobs Social: increased numbers of tourists following promotional campaigns of Sutjeska.
	Protected area manager: Economic: increased revenues from ticket sales and accommodations Social: promotion of Sutjeska National Park, establishment of the cooperation council
	Civil society: Social: activating societies to demand their rights and their networking; a range of initiatives for 7 other rivers; creation of a coalition for the protection of BiH rivers (over 23 societies)
	Local population: Economic: revenues through accommodation and sales of local products

	<p>Social: awareness of the values of Sutjeska, their voice has been heard through the campaign, representatives in the cooperation council</p>
<p>Replication and recommendations</p>	
<p>Essential things to replication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dedication ● Inclusion of a wide range of partners ● Monitoring deadlines and timely reactions in legal processes ● Presentation of the case at the international level ● Targeted countering of the decision using multiple tools
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>Greater inclusion of the local population in media activities, and inclusion of representatives of the expert public for discussions with decision-makers. Not all comments were made during the public debate on the impact assessment, as some were kept for the legal proceedings.</p> <p>We recommend that a male and a female attend the meetings.</p>
<p>Sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local population as the key actors who can receive timely information. ● Local community recognition of the significance and benefits of protected areas. ● Perseverance and regular monitoring of legislation. ● Ongoing explanations as to the value of the river and nature.
<p>Needed policy improvements</p>	<p>Amendments to the National Parks Act, to prohibit the construction of hydroelectric plants in national parks.</p> <p>Halting the process of issuing new concessions for the construction of hydroelectric plants.</p>

Your interests	<p>Good use of renewable energy sources – application (installations).</p> <p>Practical examples of the use of renewable energy sources (panels in the local community).</p> <p>Use of rivers in a sustainable manner to ensure that both the manager and local community have revenues and benefits.</p>
Expectations	
From the “Nature for People” site?	<p>Actively involvement in the Cooperation Council of Sutjeska National Park.</p> <p>Application for projects that would enable the sustainable management and development of Sutjeska National Park.</p>
From WWF?	<p>Continued support to Sutjeska National Park in the future.</p> <p>Greater support in preventing the construction of hydroelectric plants in BiH.</p> <p>Strengthening capacity of lawyers in the field of environmental law.</p>