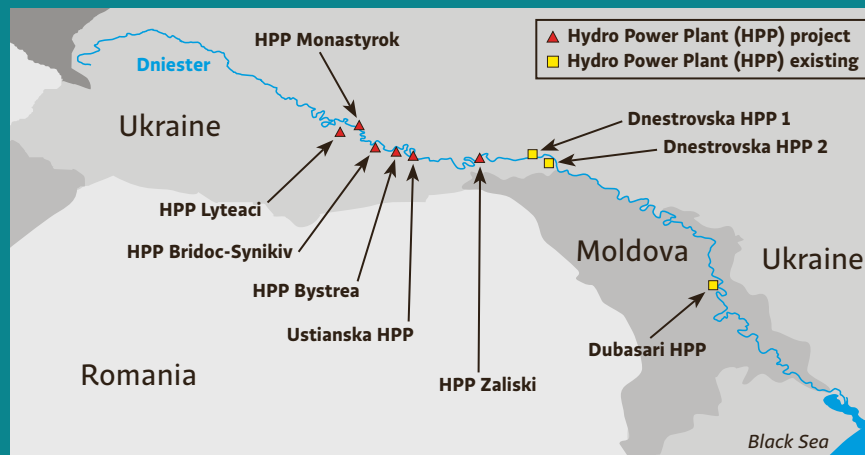


More information:
www.eco-tiras.org
www.english.arnika.org/moldova



Eco-TIRAS International Association of River Keepers (Moldova, Ukraine) was founded in 1999 by NGOs operating in the Dniester river basin to protect the river and advise governments,

authorities and citizens on how to ensure sustainable management of the Dniester. Today, it brings together 51 organizations and initiatives that jointly launched the Save the Dniester campaign.



Dniester's alarm calling

The Dniester, the largest river in Moldova, provides water for more than half of the country's needs. Regrettably, the river, which has its source in the Ukrainian Carpathians, is currently facing environmental problems caused by pollution, hydropower development, climate change, and deforestation. The Middle and Lower Dniester are currently burdened by three dams which have already seriously harmed the river's ecosystem and caused periodic water deficits. Because of Ukraine's interest in the further development of another six HPPs, the civil society of both countries is concerned about their environment and the social and economic consequences.



Arnika is a non-governmental organization with many years of experience in promoting environmental justice and a world without toxic pollutants and with natural and living rivers. It participates in projects in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia.

TRANSITION

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It is true that dams can provide protection against smaller and medium-sized floods, but their collapse represents a high risk for communities downstream in the event of extreme flooding. Additionally, dams can contribute negatively to climate change by generating methane and by replacing forests and other ecosystems that function as carbon sinks.

Moreover, the construction of big dams means that whole villages are being relocated and demolished, which leads to limited use of the rivers by local communities.

People against the nature and themselves

threats and potential impacts

We often don't realise what significant impacts on the environment and local communities dams have. According to the findings of the World Commission on Dams, these impacts are routinely underestimated, while their benefits are often overstated. Because of dams, river downstreams usually have to be fortified and channelized, causing the rivers to lose their natural character and ecological functions, such as self-cleaning abilities, biodiversity, regulation of microclimate, water retention, retardation of flood waves, etc. Dams also have a disastrous impact on fish populations, particularly on migratory species.

Especially in lowlands, the sediments in dams are full of nutrients or even toxic pollutants, developing toxic algae in still water, which are accumulated in fish tissues. By eating the polluted fish we are poisoning ourselves too.



Photo © Markéta Šedivá / Arnika

People lose access to fresh water, which has a negative influence on their lives and livelihoods and consequently the local economy. During the construction of dams and hydropower plants the local communities are also affected by higher traffic and increased dustiness and noise levels.

Time to take the action!

what can you do about it

You have the right to influence the decisions about projects that affect your livelihood and the environment you are living in. Do not give up on these rights!

- **Spread the word and inform other people** about the danger that threatens the River Dniester. By organizing yourselves and getting more people on board, you will become stronger. You can organize a public discussion in your village or distribute our leaflets in your neighbourhood.
- **Use social media** to provide information about the problems of your community.
- **Ask the authorities to protect the River Dniester.** You can contact the local and national government and demand that they take actions.
- **Reduce the negative impact on the River Dniester** by avoiding pollution and overfishing and informing the Environmental Inspectorate about such incidents.
- **Protect and renew the trees and bushes on the riverbanks** – they are the best protection against floods. Prevent the cattle from grazing on riverbank greenery.
- **Contact us for support:**
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