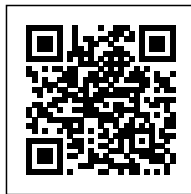


MONGOLIA CONTINUES TO PUSH FOR THE EG RIVER HYDROPOWER PLANT

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The Minister of Energy of Mongolian N.Tavinbekh affirms that the construction of a hydropower plant on the Eg River will have little impact on the Selenge River, which flows through the territory of the Russian Federation to Lake Baikal.

By September 31 this year, the environment and biodiversity impact assessment of the HPP is expected to be completed. The Minister also mentioned last week that the Government checked the progress of the French company that is conducting the assessment. Eg is a river in the Khuvsgul and Bulgan provinces in northern Mongolia. It is the only outflow of Lake Khuvsgul and a left tributary of the Selenge river. Preliminary assessments showed that the hydropower plant on Eg River will have little impact on the Selenge River and Lake Baikal by taking additional measures. However, it might have an impact on the flow of the Selenge River, on the part that flows through the territory of Mongolia. A tentative recommendation was also given that additional measures should be taken.

Once the result of the environmental impact assessment is out, it must be submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. The Prime Minister of Mongolia also raised this issue to UN Secretary-General António Guterres during his visit to Mongolia. In turn, Mr. Guterres stressed that developing countries should not be energy dependent on other countries. Therefore, the UN is ready to provide policy support by familiarizing with the results of the studies at the 46th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.

The Eg Hydropower Plant Project has been discussed for the past 30 years but has repeatedly been delayed. The construction of this plant is expected to reduce the country's energy dependence and significantly increase the use of renewable energy resources. Russia says the establishment of this plant would negatively impact Lake Baikal's ecosystem. The Russian government asked for an environmental assessment of cumulative impacts in the transboundary basin. Lake Baikal is listed as a world heritage site by UNESCO.

Mongolia has spent an average of over USD 20 million annually over the past decade to import electricity from Russia. Efforts to build the Eg hydropower plant were made four times in 1991, 2006, 2013, and 2017.