



Organizacija za političku
ekologiju POLEKOL:

**GLAS PRIRODE:
PRIČE O OTPORU I NADI
GODIŠNJAK 2024.**

Organization for Political
Ecology "POLEKOL":

**THE VOICE OF NATURE: TALES
OF RESISTANCE AND HOPE
YEARBOOK 2024.**

Organizacija za političku
ekologiju Polekol:
**GLAS PRIRODE:
PRIČE OTPORA I
NADE**
GODIŠNJAK 2024.

Organization for Political
Ecology "POLEKOL":
**THE VOICE OF NATURE:
TALES OF RESISTANCE
AND HOPE**
YEARBOOK 2024

Autorke / Authors:
Miroslava Nikolić, Nataša Jančić, Iskra Krstić

Asistenti / Assistants:
Slobodan Knežević, Iva Marković, Žaklina Živković

Dizajn / Design:
Kalman Moldvai

Izdavač / Publisher:
Organizacija za političku ekologiju Polekol,
Makedonska 4/I, 11000 Beograd

Beograd, 2025.



Vizija Polekola je društvo u kojoj se priroda poštuje kao ravnopravna a ne resurs koji se eksploatiše. Društvo ljudi koji sarađuju a ne koji se takmiče u eksploataciji. Društvo u kojem se prevazilazi računica profita a stavlja naglasak na dobrobit svih. Za nas je priroda zajedničko dobro svih koji od tog dobra direktno zavise.

Polekol je zagovaračka i aktivistička organizacija civilnog društva prepoznatljiva u javnosti po okupljanju različitih inicijativa, ali i po pokretanju sopstvenih inicijativa usmerenih na zaštitu životne sredine, prirode i prirodnih dobara, kao i po promociji zelenih vrednosti (i društvenih praksi) fokusiranih na dobrobit ljudi i prirode.

Polekol ima izgrađen proces podrške lokalnim i regionalnim inicijativama, organizacijama i građanima. Takođe, okuplja stručnjake i stručnjakinje koji su sposobni da produkuju politike koje dalje usmeravaju društvo u oblasti zaštite životne sredine, prirode i prirodnih dobara.

Važan deo rada Polekola je i edukacija o zelenim politikama, razvoj teorijskih postavki i narativa koji vode ka održivosti celog društva.

Vrednosti Polekol se oslanjaju na:
Ekološku mudrost
Demokratiju i participativnost
Socijalnu pravdu

The vision of Polekol is a society in which nature is respected as an equal and not a resource to be exploited. A society of people who cooperate and not compete in exploitation. A society in which the calculation of profit is overcome and which emphasizes the well-being of all. For us, nature is the common good of all who directly depend on it.

Polekol is an advocacy and activist civil society organization recognized by the public for gathering various initiatives and for launching its own initiatives aimed at protecting the environment, nature and natural resources, as well as for the promotion of green values (and social practices) focused on the well-being of people and nature.

Polekol has a built-in process of supporting local and regional initiatives, organizations and citizens. It also brings together experts who are capable of producing policies that further guide society in the area of environmental protection, nature and natural resources.

An important part of Polekol's work is education about green policies, the development of theoretical assumptions and narratives that lead to the sustainability of the entire society.

Polekol values are based on:
Environmental wisdom
Democracy and participation
Social justice

Uvod:

Godina 2024. bila je godina izazova, ali i odlučnosti. Suočeni sa sve vidljivijim posledicama klimatskih promena, rastućim pritiscima investitorskih projekata na prirodne resurse i sužavanjem prostora za građansko delovanje, odlučili smo da još čvršće stanemo u odbranu vrednosti koje delimo: zaštite prirode, prava na vodu, javnih dobara, ljudskih prava i demokratije.

Kroz brojne inicijative, kampanje, pravne borbe, ulične akcije i međunarodne nastupe, Polekol i inicijativa Pravo na vodu nastavili su da podržavaju zajednice, osnažuju građane i građanke, i grade saveze za otpornije, pravednije društvo. Naš rad ove godine bio je posvećen kako hitnim reakcijama na krize koje ugrožavaju životnu sredinu i javno zdravlje, tako i dugoročnim procesima – jačanju kolektiva, edukaciji, promociji rodno odgovornih i održivih politika.

Ovaj godišnjak je zbir naših napora, naših pobeda, naših učenja. On svedoči o trenucima kada su građani svojim glasom uspeli da sačuvaju reke i šume, kada su studenti, radnici i aktivisti zajedno izašli na ulice tražeći pravdu, kada su žene čuvalе prirodu i zajednice kroz solidarnost i znanje, kada smo povezivali lokalne borbe sa evropskim i globalnim pitanjima. Svaka priča ovde predstavlja otpor, ali i nadu – jer u borbi za prirodu borimo se i za sebe, za buduće generacije i za društvo koje verujemo da je moguće.

Znamo da nas čekaju i novi izazovi. Znamo da promena nikada nije linearna, da traži upornost, strpljenje i snagu zajedništva. Ipak, ovaj godišnjak pokazuje da sve dok ima onih koji veruju u moć zajedničkog delovanja, postoji šansa za bolje i pravednije društvo.

Hvala svima koji su u 2024. godini bili deo ove borbe. Nastavljamo dalje, zajedno.

Introduction:

The year 2024 was a year of challenges, but also of determination. Faced with the increasingly visible consequences of climate change, the mounting pressures from investor-driven projects on natural resources, and the shrinking space for civic engagement, we chose to stand even more firmly in defense of the values we share: the protection of nature, the right to water, public goods, human rights, and democracy.

Through numerous initiatives, campaigns, legal battles, street actions, and international engagements, Polekol and the Right to Water initiative continued to support communities, empower citizens, and build alliances for a more resilient and just society. This year, our work was dedicated both to urgent responses to crises threatening the environment and public health, and to long-term processes—strengthening collectives, educating, and promoting gender-responsive and sustainable policies.

This annual report is a collection of our efforts, our victories, and our lessons learned. It bears witness to moments when citizens raised their voices to save rivers and forests, when students, workers, and activists marched together in pursuit of justice, when women safeguarded nature and communities through solidarity and knowledge, and when we connected local struggles with European and global issues. Each story here embodies resistance, but also hope—because in fighting for nature, we fight for ourselves, for future generations, and for the society we believe is possible.

We know that new challenges await us. We know that change is never linear; it requires perseverance, patience, and the strength of solidarity. Yet, this annual report shows that as long as there are those who believe in the power of collective action, there remains a chance for a better and more just society.

Thank you to everyone who was part of this struggle in 2024. We move forward—together.

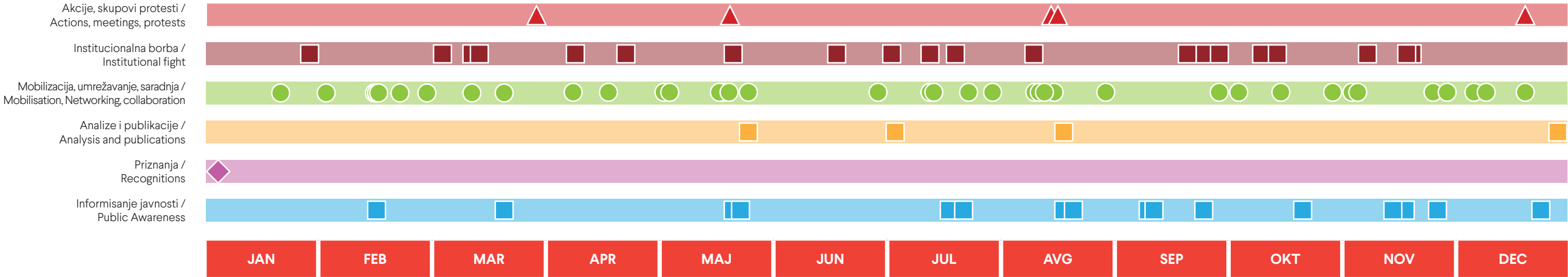
Kalendar aktivnosti 2024.

Callender of activities 2024

Napomena: **podvučeni naslovi u ovom godišnjaku su interaktivni.**
Klikom na njih možete saznati više o konkretnim aktivnostima i akcijama.

LEGENDA / LEGEND

Simbol na tajmlajnu / Symbol on timeline	Simbol na kalendaru / Symbol on callender	Kategorija aktivnosti /Category of activity	Simbol na tajmlajnu / Symbol on timeline	Simbol na kalendaru / Symbol on callender	Kategorija aktivnosti /Category of activity
		Akcije, skupovi protesti / Actions, meetings, protests			Analize i publikacije / Analysis and publications
		Institucionalna borba / Institutional fight			Priznanja / Recognitions
		Mobilizacija, umrežavanje, saradnja / Mobilisation, Networking, collaboration			Informisanje javnosti / Public Awareness



PRAVO NA VODU

Pravo na vodu je inicijativa otvorenog članstva koja se zalaže za zaštitu vodnih dobara i zagovara ljudsko pravo na vodu. Zalažemo se za potpunu obustavu izgradnje malih hidroelektrana u Srbiji. Želimo da Srbija primeni integralni pristup u upravljanju vodama. Podižemo svest i stvaramo prostor za diskusiju o otpadnim vodama. Zhtevamo veći stepen de facto zaštite obala od gradnje i uzurpacije. Tražimo održivo korišćenje lekovitih i pitkih voda koje moraju biti javno dobro.

RIGHT TO WATER

The Right to Water is an open membership initiative that advocates for the protection of water commons and for the human right to water. We want Serbia to apply an integral approach when dealing with water management. We raise awareness and create space for discussion about wastewater treatment. We demand a higher degree of de facto protection of coasts from construction and usurpation. We stand for the total suspension of small hydropower plants construction in Serbia. We seek sustainable drinking water and sanitation usage, which must be a public good.



20. JANUAR 2024.

Dve decenije bez pijaće vode u Zrenjaninu

Stanovništvo Zrenjanina već 20 godina nema ispravnu vodu za piće, kuvanje i higijenu. Zrenjaninci dnevno potroše 20.000 evra na flaširanu vodu i primorani su da time stvaraju ogroman plastični otpad i dodatno narušavaju svoju životnu sredinu. Ovim ljudima je oduzeto jedno od osnovnih ljudskih prava, prava na čistu pijaću vodu na neprofitnoj osnovi. Ovim povodom inicijativa Pravo na vodu i Polekol organizovali su kampanju na društvenim mrežama, a organizacija Extinction Rebellion Srbija (XR Srbija) pokrenula je kampanju #ČašaVodeZaZrenjanin! kojoj smo se pridružili.

JANUARY 20, 2024

Two Decades Without Drinking Water in Zrenjanin

The residents of Zrenjanin have been without safe drinking water for over 20 years—for drinking, cooking, and hygiene. Each day, Zrenjanin citizens spend approximately 20,000 euros on bottled water, forced to create massive amounts of plastic waste and further damage their environment. These people have been deprived of one of the most basic human rights: the right to clean drinking water on a non-profit basis.

To highlight this issue, the Right to Water initiative and Polekol organized a social media campaign, while Extinction Rebellion Serbia (XR Serbia) launched the #GlassOfWaterForZrenjanin! campaign, which we joined.



30. JANUAR 2024.

Korito reke Gračanice je suvo, Opština Prijepolje

Zbog ugrožavanja zaštićenog područja PIO "Kamena gora", Polekol je Zavodu za zaštitu prirode Srbije podneo Zahtev za postupak vanrednog vršenja stručnog nadzora na zaštićenom prirodnom dobru PIO "Kamena gora", posebno u odnosu na reku Gračanicu kao izdvojenu celinu. Takođe, udruženje Libergraf i inicijativa Zaštitimo reke Prijepolja su, uz krivične prijave, protiv investitora podneli i predstavke Vodnoj i Inspekciji zaštite životne sredine, jer je na vodozahvate postavio daske koje su sprečavale protok vode kroz riblju stazu, dok je sva voda usmerena u vodozahvate mini hidroelektrana. Apelovali smo da opština Prijepolje po ugledu na brojne druge lokalne samouprave, zabrani gradnju malih hidroelektrana na svojoj teritoriji.

JANUARY 30, 2024

The Riverbed of Gračanica is Dry, Municipality of Prijepolje

Due to the endangerment of the protected area of PIO "Kamena Gora," Polekol submitted a request to the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia for an extraordinary professional supervision procedure over the protected natural asset of PIO "Kamena Gora," particularly concerning the Gračanica River as a distinct entity. Additionally, the association Libergraf and the initiative Protect the Rivers of Prijepolje filed criminal charges and complaints against the investor with the Water and Environmental Protection Inspections, as boards were placed at water intakes to block the flow through the fish pass, diverting all the water into mini-hydropower intakes. We called upon the Municipality of Prijepolje, following the example of many other local governments, to prohibit the construction of small hydropower plants on its territory.



2. FEBRUAR 2024.

Svetski dan vlažnih staništa, Beograd

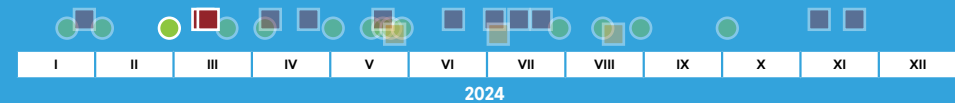
Svetski dan vlažnih staništa Polekol već tradicionalno obeležava zajedno sa sestrinskom organizacijom koja se bavi zaštitom leve obale Dunava i područja Reve, Bela čaplja 1165.

FEBRUARY 2, 2024

World Wetlands Day, Belgrade

Polekol traditionally marks World Wetlands Day together with its sister organization "Bela Čaplja 1165," dedicated to the protection of the left bank of the Danube and the Reva area.

PRAVO NA VODU / RIGHT TO WATER



22. FEBRUAR 2024.

Zajedništvo je naša snaga – premijera filma o “Odbranimo r(ij)eke Balkana”, Sarajevo

U organizaciji Fondacija Atelje za društvene promjene - ACT i Polekola uz prisustvo oko 100 predstavnika članica regionalnog saveza “Odbranimo r(ij)eke Balkana” iz Bosne i Hercegovine i Srbije i građana i građanki predstavljen je film “Zajedništvo”, posvećen borbama za spas balkanskih reka. Iz sarajevskog Kina Meeting Point poslata je snažna poruka da naše reke, šume i planine, koje žele okupirati različiti investitori, itekako ima ko da brani! Film je dostupan na našem Youtube kanalu.

FEBRUARY 22, 2024

Unity Is Our Strength – Premiere of the Film “Defend the Balkan Rivers”, Sarajevo

Organized by the Atelier for Social Change Foundation - ACT and Polekol, with around 100 representatives of member organizations from the regional alliance “Defend the Balkan Rivers” from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, as well as citizens, the film “Unity” was presented. Dedicated to the battles for the protection of the Balkans’ rivers, the film was shown at the Meeting Point Cinema in Sarajevo, sending a strong message: there are indeed those ready to defend our rivers, forests, and mountains from various investors! The film is available on our YouTube channel.



28. FEBRUAR 2024.

Pravo na vodu u Popculture Challenge

U okviru programa Popculture Challenge, koji drugu godinu za redom organizuje Centar E8, Polekol je imao priliku da predstavi svoju ideju kako da popularnom pop kulturom uključi i edukuje građane o problemu zagađenja u opštini Prijepolje. Ova opština ugrožena je planiranom izgradnjom 48 MHE na njenim rekama. Ideja koju je predstavila naša Miroslava Nikolić obuhvatala je kulturno umetnički program, oslikavanje murala inspirisanog zaštićenim vrstama iz opštine, radionice stensilsa, sito štampe, program za najmlađe i edukativni štand.

FEBRUARY 28, 2024

Right to Water in the Popculture Challenge

As part of the Popculture Challenge program, organized for the second year in a row by Center E8, Polekol had the opportunity to present its idea on how to use popular pop culture to engage and educate citizens about the issue of pollution in the municipality of Prijepolje. This municipality is under threat from the planned construction of 48 small hydropower plants (SHPs) on its rivers. The idea presented by our Miroslava Nikolić included a cultural and artistic program, the painting of a mural inspired by protected species from the municipality, stencil and screen printing workshops, a program for children, and an educational stand.



12. MART 2024.

Zavod za zaštitu prirode uvrstio Ratajsku reku u izradu studije zaštite, Prijepolje

Zavod za zaštitu prirode Srbije je odgovorio na zahtev za informacije od javnog značaja Polekola i u svom odgovoru naveo da je izrada studije zaštite za Ratajsku reku uvrštena u plan za 2024 godinu. Podsetimo, Ratajskoj reci u opštini Prijepolje, je pretela izgradnja MHE, protiv čega smo se zajedno sa lokalnom zajednicom i brojnim drugim organizacijama i inicijativama pobunili. Smatramo da je ovo velika pobeda meštana i ekoloških organizacija, jer će Studija pokazati sve prirodne vrednosti i biti osnova za zaštitu od svih štetnih projekata.

MARCH 12, 2024

The Institute for Nature Conservation Included the Ratajska River in the Protection Study Plan, Prijepolje

The Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia responded to a Freedom of Information request by Polekol, stating that the preparation of a protection study for the Ratajska River has been included in the 2024 plan. Let us recall that the Ratajska River in the municipality of Prijepolje was threatened by the planned construction of an SHP, against which we, alongside the local community and many other organizations and initiatives, protested. We consider this a great victory for the local residents and environmental organizations, as the Study will highlight the river's natural values and serve as a foundation for protecting it from harmful projects.



14. MART 2024.

Apel na Svetski dan reka

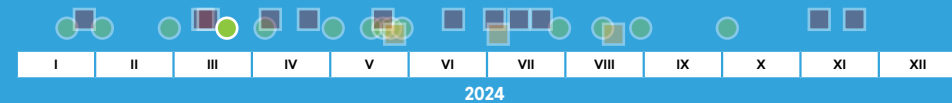
Za Svetski dan reka ponovili smo zahteve inicijative Pravo na vodu i drugih ekoloških organizacija za usvajanje moratorijuma na izgradnju malih hidroelektrana u opštinama grada Kraljeva, Prijepolja, Nove Varoši i Trgovišta i pozvali vlast na odgovornost usmerenu ka javnom interesu. Na reci Studenica se priprema gradnja MHE Studenica S4 - Gradina, koja bi bila visoka 28m i široka 100m i to u zaštitnoj zoni Parka prirode Golija, rezervata biosfere pod zaštitom UNESCOa. U opštini Prijepolje je Ratajska reka bila na meti investitora i za nju će biti izrađena studija zaštite, ali do pokretanja postupka zaštite reka neće biti bezbedna. U ovoj opštini MHE senka se nadvila i nad Sopotnicom koja je samo delimično zaštićena.

MARCH 14, 2024

Appeal on the International Day of Rivers

For the International Day of Rivers, we reiterated the demands of the Right to Water initiative and other environmental organizations to introduce a moratorium on the construction of small hydropower plants in the municipalities of Kraljevo, Prijepolje, Nova Varoš, and Trgovište, and called on authorities to prioritize public interest. On the Studenica River, preparations are underway for the construction of the SHP Studenica S4 - Gradina, which would be 28 meters high and 100 meters wide, located within the protected zone of the Golija Nature Park, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. In Prijepolje municipality, the Ratajska River was also targeted by investors, and a protection study will be developed for it; however, until formal protection is established, the rivers remain vulnerable. Similarly, the shadow of SHP development looms over the Sopotnica River, which is only partially protected.

PRAVO NA VODU / RIGHT TO WATER



21. MART 2024.

Povodom vode i mira – deklaracija na Svetski dana voda

MARCH 21, 2024

On Water and Peace – Declaration on World Water Day



SRB / Mi, aktivisti za zaštitu reka, vode i prirode, međunarodni Dan vode danas dočekujemo duboko zabrinuti. Stari se problemi nisu rešili, a nove nevolje bacaju senku na budućnost celog čovečanstva. Ove godine Ujedinjene nacije kao temu obeležavanja istakle su mir. Voda ima ključne uloge tokom sukoba: kao okidač, oružje ili žrtva. Voda može uzburkati ili ugasi konflikt. Bez trajno dostupne vode svakom čoveku – nema trajnog mira!

Pa ipak, aktivisti širom našeg regiona i dalje su osuđeni da se igraju potapanja podmornica sa investitorima malih hidroelektrana za koje već i vrapci znaju da nikome dobro ne donose sem investitoru. Milion i po ljudi samo u Srbiji nema stabilan pristup pijaćoj vodi. Tamo gde je čista u prirodi, korporacije je eksploatišu zarad profita umesto zadovoljavanja osnovne ljudske potrebe. Preti nam privatizacija usluga vodosnabdevanja i kanalizacije. Ceo Balkan trese rudarska groznica koja lako može da preraste u zapaljenje vitalnih vodotokova. Rudarenjem su posebno ugroženi podzemni baseni, koje su najveći izvor pijaće vode u našim krajevima. Pod krinkom zelene energije i kročenja vodotokova, planiraju se velike akumulacije – ali zgodno na dohvata ruke budućim rudničkim postrojenjima. Nasuprot prepoznavanju vode samo kao robe na tržištu, naš region još uvek čeka puno priznanje vode kao ljudskog prava.

Žed za vodom pravdom nije spojila samo nas, aktiviste za reke Balkana. Više od 3 milijarde ljudi u svetu oslanja se na vodu koja prelazi nacionalne granice. Hitna potreba za saradnjom, među državama i narodima, povećana je zabrinjavajućim uticajem klimatskih promena. Mirna saradnja oko vode podstiče harmoničnu saradnju u drugim oblastima i izgradnju mira. Nedostatak vode, zagađenje i nejednak ili nikakav pristup vodi dovode do tenzija između zajednica, a neretko i država.

Napadi na civilnu infrastrukturu, uključujući vodne sisteme, predstavljaju ozbiljne zdravstvene rizike i krše međunarodno humanitarno pravo. Na ovaj Dan vode svedočimo nezapamćenoj humanitarnoj katastrofi u pojasu Gaze. Pored jezivog broja brutalno ugašenih života civila, pre svega dece, važna odlika ovog stradanja je onemogućavanje pristupa vodi. Dva od tri glavna toka vodosnabdevanja su razorena, a treći preostali je pao na pola kapaciteta. Lokalni bunari i postrojenje za odso-ljavanje morske vode spali su na tek nekoliko procenata svojih kapaciteta. Na 2000 stanovnika dostupan je jedan tuš, a 500 ljudi je prinuđeno da deli jedan toalet. Nedostatak bezbedne pijaće vode, kao i nedovoljno vode za kuvanje i higijenske potrebe, pogoršavaju već prisutnu glad i neminovno odnose zdravlje preživelih.

U proseku, domaćinstva u pojasu Gaze na Svetski dan vode imaju pristup manje od jednog litra bezbedne vode po osobi dnevno. Prema humanitarnim standardima, minimalna količina bezbedne vode potrebna u vanrednim situacijama je 3 litra, dok je inače minimalni standard 15 litara po osobi. Iz očaja, preživeli koriste zagađenu, pa čak i morsku vodu za pranje što dodatno pogoršava situaciju. 90% dece mlađe od 5 godina izloženo je životno ugrožavajućim infekcijama zbog zagađene vode.

Mi u regionu nažalost znamo šta je rat i kakve posledice ostavlja. Kada dođe zao čas znamo ko vodu muti, a ko ostaje žedan. Na ovaj Dan voda, ujedinjeni smo u veri da dobro može pobediti samo ako mu sa svih strana bar malo pomognemo mi, (ne) obični ljudi. Svim našim regionalnim zahtevima dodajemo apel da se odmah prekinu ratna dejstva, dostavi neophodna humanitarna pomoć civilima i hitno omogući pristup čistoj vodi u pojasu Gaze.

Bez vode nema mira! Učinimo sve da sledeći Svetski dan voda dočekamo u sigurnijoj, pravednijoj i mirnijoj budućnosti za sve. Voda za mir!

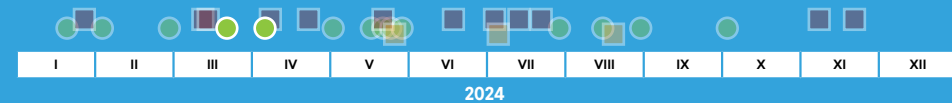
Regionalni savez Odbranimo r(ij)eke Balkana

ENG / We, activists for the protection of rivers, water, and nature, mark this World Water Day deeply concerned. Old problems remain unresolved, and new challenges cast a shadow over the future of humanity. This year, the United Nations emphasized peace as the theme for World Water Day. Water plays crucial roles during conflicts: as a trigger, a weapon, or a victim. Water can ignite or extinguish conflict. Without permanently accessible water for every human being, there can be no lasting peace.

Nevertheless, activists across our region are still forced to battle against SHP investors, whose projects are known to benefit no one but themselves. In Serbia alone, 1.5 million people lack stable access to drinking water. Where natural clean water exists, corporations exploit it for profit instead of fulfilling basic human needs. Privatization of water and sanitation services looms, while the entire Balkans suffers from a mining frenzy that threatens vital watercourses. Mining especially endangers underground aquifers, our main sources of drinking water. Under the guise of "green energy" and river "taming," large reservoirs are being planned—conveniently located near future mining sites. In contrast to seeing water merely as a market commodity, our region still awaits full recognition of water as a human right.

Our thirst for water justice has united not only Balkan river defenders. Over 3 billion people worldwide rely on transboundary water sources. The urgent need for cooperation among nations and peoples is heightened by the alarming impact of climate change. Peaceful cooperation over water fosters harmony in other areas and strengthens peacebuilding efforts. A lack of water, pollution, and unequal or no access to water spark tensions between communities and even between nations.

PRAVO NA VODU / RIGHT TO WATER



Attacks on civilian infrastructure, including water systems, pose serious public health risks and violate international humanitarian law. This World Water Day, we bear witness to an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. Beyond the horrifying number of civilian lives lost, especially children, a major characteristic of this tragedy is the deliberate denial of access to water. Two of the three main water supply systems have been destroyed, and the third operates at half capacity. Local wells and the seawater desalination plant are down to just a few percent of their normal capacity. In Gaza, one shower serves 2,000 people, and 500 people share a single toilet. Lack of safe drinking water and insufficient water for cooking and hygiene are worsening already rampant hunger and severely impacting the health of survivors.

On average, households in Gaza now have access to less than one liter of safe water per person per day. According to humanitarian standards, at least 3 liters per day are needed in emergencies, while the normal minimum is 15 liters per day. Out of desperation, survivors use contaminated or even seawater for washing, further exacerbating the crisis. 90% of children under five years old are exposed to life-threatening infections due to contaminated water.

We in the region sadly know what war means and the consequences it leaves behind. When dark times come, we know who muddies the water and who stays thirsty. This World Water Day, we are united in our belief that good can prevail—but only if we, ordinary (and extraordinary) people, help it along. Alongside our regional demands, we call for an immediate ceasefire, urgent delivery of humanitarian aid to civilians, and immediate access to clean water in Gaza.

Without water, there is no peace! Let us do everything we can so that the next World Water Day finds us in a safer, fairer, and more peaceful future for all.

Water for peace!
Regional Alliance "Defend the Balkan Rivers"



21. MART 2024.

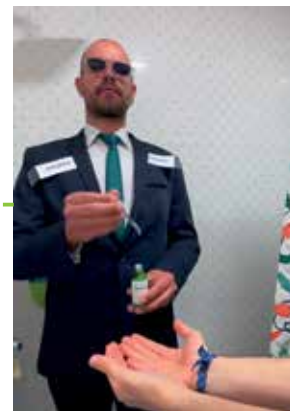
Premijera Vodoždera

U okviru kampanje za Svetski dan voda, inicijativa Pravo na vodu osmislila je video pod nazivom Vodožder koji na kreativan, duhovit ali upozoravajuć način oslikava budućnost u kojoj je voda potpuno privatizovana a njena dostupnost zavisi od kupovne moći stanovništva a ne realnih potreba. Ovaj video izazvao je veliku pažnju javnosti, a na društvenim mrežama ga je pogledalo više stotina hiljada ljudi.

MARCH 21, 2024

Premiere of "Water Eater"

As part of the World Water Day campaign, the Right to Water initiative created a video titled "Water Eater," which creatively, humorously, yet warningly portrays a future where water is fully privatized, and access depends on purchasing power rather than real needs. The video attracted significant public attention and was viewed by hundreds of thousands on social media.



4-6. APRIL 2024.

Sastanak Evropskog pokreta za vode u Lyonu

APRIL 4-6, 2024

Meeting of the European Water Movement in Lyon



SRB / Na godišnjoj skupštini Evropskog pokreta za vodu aktivisti inicijative Pravo na vodu Iva Marković i Iskra Krstić, koje su i članice sekretarijata ovog pokreta, kao i Strahinja Macić moderirali su nekoliko diskusija i govorili o posledicama ekstraktivizma, posebno u odnosu na vodu kao javno dobro. Preko sedamdeset predstavnika inicijativa-članica EWM-a je razmatralo načine na koje se može uticati da se počne sa rešavanjem gorućih ekoloških i društvenih problema: nestašice vode zbog suša i krađe, zagađenje koje izazivaju "večne hemikalije", nuklearna postrojenja i rudnici, kao i represiji koju trpe oni koji na probleme ukazuju.

ENG / At the annual assembly of the European Water Movement (EWM) in Lyon, activists from the Right to Water initiative— Iva Marković and Iskra Krstić, who are also Secretariat members, along with Strahinja Macić – moderated several discussions and spoke about the consequences of extractivism, particularly concerning water as a public good. More than seventy representatives from EWM member initiatives discussed ways to address pressing environmental and social issues: water shortages due to droughts and theft, pollution caused by "forever chemicals," nuclear plants and mines, and the repression faced by those who expose these problems.





7. APRIL 2024.

Saopštenje Evropskog pokreta za vode upućeno institucijama Evropske Unije

Kao rezultat sastanka Evropskog pokreta za vode u Lyonu, Francuska, članice su uputile pismo institucijama Evropske Unije, apelirajući na njih da daju prioritet pravu na vodu, kao ljudskom pravu na zdravstveno ispravnu vodu za piće.

„Pred ekološkim, društvenim i političkim vanrednim stanjima prirodna baština i vodni resursi moraju biti sačuvani prevencijom i zaštitom. Pred nestašicom, sušom i poplavama, garancija vode za svakoga mora imati prioritet nad preteranom ili nelegitimnom industrijskom ili poljoprivrednom upotrebom. Imperativ je obnoviti narušene/uništene ekosisteme i kvalitet vode koja je dramatično zagađena hemijskim sredstvima, PFAS-om, mikroplastikom, između ostalog. U tu svrhu podrška agroekološkoj tranziciji mora biti osigurana, a u vezi s upotrebom i odlaganjem toksičnih materija treba da budu usvojene stroge mere. Implementacija ljudskog prava na vodu i sanitarije za sve zahteva isključenje vode iz liberalizacije, komodifikacije, financijalizacije i grabljenja. Upravljanje vodom mora biti javno, transparentno i participativno, s aktivnom ulogom građana i radnika. Podržano i praćeno javno-javnim partnerstvima, mora osigurati pristupačnost, kvalitet usluga i ulaganja u infrastrukturu i održavanje kako bi se smanjila curenja u mrežama.” Celokupno pismo možete pročitati [ovde](#).

APRIL 7, 2024

Statement from the European Water Movement to European Union Institutions – Institutional Struggle

As a result of the European Water Movement meeting in Lyon, France, the member initiatives sent a letter to EU institutions, urging them to prioritize the right to water as a human right to safe drinking water.

“Faced with ecological, social, and political emergencies, natural heritage and water resources must be preserved through prevention and protection. In the face of scarcity, drought, and flooding, ensuring water for everyone must take precedence over excessive or illegitimate industrial and agricultural use. It is imperative to restore degraded or destroyed ecosystems and the quality of water, which has been dramatically polluted by chemicals, PFAS, microplastics, among others. Support for agroecological transition must be ensured, and strict measures must be adopted regarding the use and disposal of toxic substances. The implementation of the human right to water and sanitation for all requires excluding water from liberalization, commodification, financialization, and water grabbing. Water management must be public, transparent, and participatory, with the active role of citizens and workers. Supported and monitored by public-public partnerships, it must ensure accessibility, quality services, and investments in infrastructure and maintenance to reduce leaks in networks.”

You can read the full letter [here](#).



25. APRIL 2024.

Zaštita reka: Prijava Sudu časti protiv urbanistkinje odgovorne za sporni projekat MHE “Mlanča”

Kako bismo zaštitili prirodne tokove i pravo zajednica na vodu, organizacija Polekol i inicijativa Pravo na vodu podneli su prijavu Sudu časti Inženjerske komore Srbije protiv urbanistkinje odgovorne za izradu projekta male hidroelektrane “Mlanča”. Ovaj projekat predviđao je zahvatanje voda čak tri reke – Beloševske, Jasenjske i Strajinjske – i preusmeravanje njihovih tokova kroz cevi, što bi imalo ozbiljne posledice po prirodu i lokalne zajednice. Smatramo da je urbanistički projekat izrađen suprotno zakonima i etičkim standardima struke, pa smo zatražili pokretanje disciplinskog postupka i oduzimanje licence odgovornoj urbanistkinji. Ova prijava je deo naše šire borbe za očuvanje reka Srbije i odgovornost onih koji svojim delovanjem ugrožavaju prirodu i ljudska prava.

APRIL 25, 2024

Protecting Rivers: Filing a Complaint with the Honor Court Against the Urban Planner Responsible for the Controversial “Mlanča” SHP Project – Institutional Struggle

In an effort to protect natural river flows and the right of communities to water, Polekol and the Right to Water initiative filed a complaint with the Honor Court of the Serbian Chamber of Engineers against the urban planner responsible for the design of the small hydropower plant (SHP) “Mlanča.”

The project planned to capture the waters of three rivers—Beloševska, Jasenjska, and Strajinjska—and divert their flows through pipes, causing severe consequences for nature and local communities. We believe that the urban planning project was prepared in violation of laws and ethical standards of the profession, and we requested the initiation of disciplinary proceedings and the revocation of the responsible urban planner’s license. This complaint is part of our broader struggle to preserve Serbia’s rivers and demand accountability from those whose actions threaten nature and human rights.



1-5. MAJ 2024.

Za zaštitu poslednjih divljih reka: Solidarna poseta Komarnici u Crnoj Gori

Predstavnici Polekola i inicijative Pravo na vodu posetili su ekološki kamp na reci Komarnici, koja čuva poslednji očuvani kanjon u Crnoj Gori i jedan od retkih preostalih na Balkanu. Komarnica je dom za 22 od ukupno 88 staništa registrovanih u Crnoj Gori, što znači da ima i ogroman značaj za očuvanje evropske prirodne baštine.

Nažalost, ovom jedinstvenom ekosistemu preti uništenje zbog planova za izgradnju akumulacionog jezera i velike hidroelektrane – projekta koji, prema mišljenju nezavisnih stručnjaka, ne bi bio ni energetski ni ekonomski opravdan. Ovo je treća godina kako Polekol sarađuje sa biolozima i aktivistima iz Crne Gore, kako bismo zajedno informisali javnost o opasnostima koje nosi zajednički projekat elektroprivreda Srbije i Crne Gore. Ako se realizuje, ovaj projekat mogao bi zauvek uništiti područje koje ima potencijal da postane deo UNESCO svetske baštine, kao i Emerald i Natura 2000 mreže zaštićenih prirodnih područja

MAY 1-5, 2024

Protecting the Last Wild Rivers: Solidarity Visit to Komarnica, Montenegro

Representatives of Polekol and the Right to Water initiative visited an environmental camp on the Komarnica River, which preserves the last intact canyon in Montenegro and one of the few remaining on the Balkans. Komarnica is home to 22 of Montenegro's 88 registered habitats, giving it immense importance for the conservation of Europe's natural heritage.

Unfortunately, this unique ecosystem is threatened by plans to build a reservoir and a large hydropower plant—a project that independent experts consider neither energetically nor economically justified. This marks the third year that Polekol has been cooperating with biologists and activists from Montenegro to inform the public about the dangers posed by this joint project of the electricity companies of Serbia and Montenegro. If realized, the project could forever destroy an area with the potential to become part of UNESCO World Heritage, as well as the Emerald and Natura 2000 networks of protected natural areas.



15-17. MAJ 2024.

Glas iz Srbije na najvećoj konferenciji o slobodnim rekama – Free Flow u Groningenu

Na konferenciji Free Flow u nemačkom Groningenu, najvećem svetskom skupu posvećenom očuvanju slobodnih reka, istraživačica Polekola, Iskra Krstić, govorila je o izazovima sa kojima se suočavaju borci za zaštitu voda u Srbiji. Konferencija je od 15. do 17. maja okupila gotovo 500 naučnika, stručnjaka i aktivista iz celog sveta, uz više od 100 predavača koji su razmenjivali znanja i iskustva o uklanjanju brana i obnovi prirodnih tokova reka. Iskra je prenela realnost iz Srbije – zemlji gde su reke pod pritiskom sve većeg broja malih hidroelektrana i gde lokalne zajednice, često uz minimalnu podršku institucija, brane svoje vode od uništenja. Njeno izlaganje dodatno je ojačalo međunarodnu mrežu solidarnosti u borbi za očuvanje slobodnih reka širom sveta.



MAY 15-17, 2024

A Voice from Serbia at the World's Largest Free-Flowing Rivers Conference – Free Flow, Groningen

At the Free Flow conference in Groningen, Germany—the world's largest gathering dedicated to the protection of free-flowing rivers—Polekol researcher Iskra Krstić spoke about the challenges faced by water defenders in Serbia. Held from May 15 to 17, the conference gathered nearly 500 scientists, experts, and activists from around the world, with over 100 speakers exchanging knowledge and experiences on dam removal and river restoration. Iskra conveyed the reality from Serbia—a country where rivers are under pressure from an increasing number of small hydropower plants, and where local communities, often with minimal institutional support, are fighting to defend their waters. Her presentation further strengthened the international solidarity network fighting to preserve free-flowing rivers worldwide.



Za reke koje teku slobodno: Predaja inicijative za moratorijum na male hidroelektrane u Kraljevu

ENG / Representatives of three initiatives—Right to Water, Save Studenica, and Save the Mountain Rivers of Kraljevo—submitted 70 copies of the Moratorium Initiative on the construction of small hydropower plants (SHPs) in the city of Kraljevo—one copy for each city councilor. Before the submission, a press conference was held where activists emphasized that this act is not merely a formality, but an appeal and reminder to the councilors, who for over two and a half years have been ignoring a citizen petition demanding river protection.

For Rivers That Flow Freely: Submission of the Moratorium Initiative on Small Hydropower Plants in Kraljevo

Žaklina Živković from the Right to Water initiative pointed out that the fight against SHPs across Serbia has already led to significant victories—including amendments to the Nature Protection Act and the Renewable Energy Sources Act, which now prohibit SHP construction in protected natural areas. However, in Kraljevo, the problem persists. There are still 52 locations earmarked for potential SHP construction in the city's Spatial Plan, even though it is clear that such projects mainly benefit investors while devastating nature and leaving rivers dry.

The initiatives demand that these locations be removed from the plan so that Kraljevo's rivers can remain alive and free—for nature, for people, and for the future.



Zaštita prirodnih oaza: Na Bari Revi povodom Međunarodnog dana biodiverziteta

Protecting Natural Oases: At Bara Reva on the International Day of Biodiversity





Voda nam curi pred očima: Tribina o gubicima vode u Leskovcu

MAY 23, 2024

Water Slipping Away Before Our Eyes: Panel on Water Losses in Leskovac

At the panel discussion “Talking About Water,” organized by Team 42 in Leskovac, Strahinja Macić from the Right to Water initiative presented an analysis of the state of the water supply system, compiled into the publication “Water Is Slipping Away, and So Is Time.” As much as 240 million cubic meters of water are lost annually from Serbia’s water supply systems—the volume of the entire Zlatarsko Lake! Instead of improving, losses have increased by 20% over the past 20 years. In Leskovac, water losses amount to 43%, while the Western Waterworks records a shocking 80% loss—an unacceptable situation for both the environment and the economy. Water losses also mean wasting energy, money, and precious resources, with the situation further worsened by climate change, which is reducing the capacity of the Barje reservoir. There are solutions: continuous investment, better management, and serious attention to the problem by local authorities. Read more about the analysis and proposals in the publication “Water Is Slipping Away, and So Is Time”!



Za reke koje nestaju: Poseta Brezanskoj reci kod Kraljeva

Predstavnici inicijative Prava na vodu, Lokalnog fronta, inicijative Sačuvajmo planinske reke Kraljeva i organizacije Libergraf obišli su Brezansku reku - nekadašnji biser planine Goč, danas tužnu sliku posledica neodgovornog upravljanja vodama. Zatekli su isušeno korito u dužini od preko 3,5 kilometra. Inspekcijama su podnete prijave, ali ovaj prizor ostaje snažan podsetnik: moramo zaustaviti planove za gradnju još 42 mini hidroelektrane na rekama Kraljeva koje su od neprocenjive vrednosti za prirodu i zajednice. Reke nisu resurs za eksploataciju - one su život koji moramo sačuvati!

MAY 27, 2024

For Disappearing Rivers: Visit to the Brezanska River near Kraljevo

Representatives of the Right to Water initiative, Lokalni Front, the Save the Mountain Rivers of Kraljevo initiative, and the Libergraf organization visited the Brezanska River—once a gem of the Goč mountain, now a sad image of the consequences of irresponsible water management. They found a dry riverbed stretching over 3.5 kilometers. Although reports have been filed with inspections, the sight remains a powerful reminder: we must stop the plans to build 42 more small hydro-power plants on Kraljevo's rivers, which are of invaluable importance for nature and local communities. Rivers are not resources for exploitation—they are life itself, and we must protect them!





Na prijavu Polekola iz novembra 2021. tužilaštvo je pokrenulo upravni spor, a u junu 2024. sud je poništio Rešenje Ministarstva rudarstva i energetike kojim je odobreno geološko istraživanje firme Bonis Eko Stalač za potrebe izgradnje male hidroelektrane (MHE). Ova odluka predstavlja značajan korak ka zaštiti prirode kao dobra od javnog interesa, koje zaslu uje pravnu sigurnost i o uvanje. Ovaj uspeh podseća da institucionalna borba – iako  esto spora i zahtevna – mo e biti jednako va na kao i ona na terenu.

Victory for Nature: Geological Research Permit for SHP on the South Morava River Revoked

Following Polekol's complaint filed in November 2021, the prosecutor's office initiated an administrative dispute, and in June 2024, the court annulled the decision of the Ministry of Mining and Energy that had granted permission for geological research to the company Bonis Eko Stalac for the construction of a small hydropower plant (SHP). This ruling represents a significant step toward protecting nature as a public good, deserving of legal security and preservation. The success reminds us that institutional struggles—although often slow and demanding—can be just as crucial as direct actions on the ground.



Stanovnici naselja Padinska skela u Beogradu, u danima kada temperature prelaze 40 stepeni, ostali su bez bezbedne pijaće vode. Gradski zavod za javno zdravlje potvrdio je da je voda iz slavina zatrovana, a sumnja se da je uzrok loše upravljanje vodovodom od strane nenadležnog privatnog preduzeća AIK AD Beograd, što je suprotno zakonima o komunalnim delatnostima i aktima Grada Beograda. Inicijativa Pravo na vodu i lokalna organizacija Volim Padinjak uputile su peticiju Gradu Beogradu da ovaj problem hitno uvrsti u dnevni red i da u okviru rebalansa budžeta obezbedi sredstva za rekonstrukciju vodovodne mreže. Tražili smo da Grad Beograd preuzme upravljanje vodosnabdevanjem, izradi elaborat o zonama sanitarne zaštite i poveže sve lokalne vodovode u jedinstveni regionalni sistem. Predstavke su podnete i republičkoj i gradskoj komunalnoj inspekciji, kao i sanitarnoj inspekciji Ministarstva zdravlja.

The Fight for Clean Water in Padinska Skela

Residents of the Padinska Skela neighborhood in Belgrade, during days when temperatures exceeded 40 degrees Celsius, were left without access to safe drinking water. The Belgrade City Institute for Public Health confirmed that the tap water was contaminated, and it is suspected that the cause lies in the mismanagement of the water system by the unauthorized private company AIK AD Belgrade, contrary to the laws on communal activities and the acts of the City of Belgrade. The Right to Water initiative and the local organization Volim Padjinjak sent a petition to the City of Belgrade, demanding that the issue be urgently placed on the City Council's agenda and that the revised budget provide funds for the reconstruction of the water supply network. We demanded that the City of Belgrade take over water supply management, develop a sanitary protection zones study, and integrate all local waterworks into a single regional system. Complaints were also submitted to the national and city communal inspections and the sanitary inspection of the Ministry of Health.



2. JUL 2024.

Beograd se spustio na reke, a reke se people na brda

U jeku poplave na beogradskim ulicama, o katastrofalnom stanju kanalizacione mreže, problemima nelegalne izgradnje i priključenja na mrežu, investitorskom urbanizmu, radu nadležnih organa, manjku zelenih površina koje pored smanjenja temperatura koriste i kao zaštita od poplava, inicijativa Pravo na vodu objašnjava vezu i posledice klimatskih promena, bujica i neadekvatnog upravljanja donosioca odluka kada su u pitanju adaptacije na ove promene.

JULY 2, 2024

Belgrade Descended to the Rivers, and the Rivers Climbed to the Hills

Amid urban floods in Belgrade, the Right to Water initiative highlighted the disastrous state of the sewerage network, problems of illegal construction and unauthorized connections, investor-driven urbanization, the shortcomings of competent authorities, and the lack of green areas—which not only help lower temperatures but also serve as flood protection. We explained the connection between and consequences of climate change, flash floods, and the inadequate decision-making of authorities when it comes to adaptation measures.

13. JUL 2024.

Zajedno za javne česme: Nova kampanja Prava na vodu

JULY 13, 2024

Together for Public Fountains: New Campaign by the Right to Water Initiative



SRB / Inicijativa Pravo na vodu pokrenula je tokom letnjih meseci akciju „Zajedno šaljemo inicijative da česme zažive“, kojom je omogućila svim građanima da preko stranice polekol.org jednostavno pošalju zahtev svojoj opštini ili gradu za obnovu postojeće ili izgradnju nove javne česme na mestima gde su najpotrebnije.

Sa sve češćim i intenzivnijim toplotnim talasima, pristup besplatnoj i bezbednoj vodi za piće postaje pitanje javnog zdravlja, naročito za najranjivije grupe – decu, starije, hronične bolesnike i osobe u situaciji beskućništva. Javne česme nisu samo civilizacijska potreba, već i konkretna mera za zaštitu zdravlja u uslovima klimatskih promena.

Iz inicijative poručuju da bez dostupne čiste vode na javnim površinama ne možemo govoriti o funkcionalnom sistemu javnog zdravlja. Istovremeno, korišćenjem javnih česama smanjuje se potreba za flaširanom vodom i upotrebom plastike, čime se štiti i životna sredina.

Na stranici polekol.org, inicijativu mogu uputiti pojedinci, neformalne grupe, udruženja i druge organizacije – svako ko želi da njegova zajednica ima pristup vodi kao osnovnom ljudskom pravu.

ENG / During the summer months, the Right to Water initiative launched the campaign “Together We Send Initiatives for Fountains to Live Again,” enabling citizens to easily send requests to their municipality or city via the polekol.org platform to either restore an existing public fountain or build a new one in locations where they are most needed.

With increasingly frequent and intense heatwaves, access to free and safe drinking water has become a matter of public health, particularly for vulnerable groups—children, the elderly, chronically ill persons, and people experiencing homelessness. Public fountains are not only a civilizational need but also a concrete public health measure in the context of climate change.

The initiative states that without accessible clean water in public spaces, we cannot talk about a functional public health system. At the same time, using public fountains reduces the need for bottled water and plastic use, thus protecting the environment.

On the polekol.org platform, individuals, informal groups, associations, and other organizations can submit initiatives—anyone who wants their community to have access to water as a basic human right.



21. JUL 2024.

Građani Bora bez vode, rudnik radi punom snagom

Polekol i Pravo na vodu pokrenuli su kampanju na društvenim mrežama kako bi ukazali na problem nestašice vode za građane Bora tokom letnjih meseci. Dok stanovnici trpe restrikcije, voda se nesmetano preusmerava ka rudniku kineske kompanije Zijin, koji bez prekida nastavlja svoju proizvodnju. Ovakva praksa predstavlja ozbiljno kršenje ljudskih prava i zakona, jer se interesi privatnih kompanija stavljaju ispred prava građana na pristup osnovnim životnim resursima. Voda mora biti javno dobro dostupno svima, a ne privilegija za industriju



29. JUL 2024.

Solidarnost za reku Unu: Odbranimo r(ij)eke Balkana uz meštane Donje Suvaje

JULY 29, 2024

Solidarity for the Una River: Defend the Rivers of the Balkans Together with the Residents of Donja Suvaja

SRB / Savez Odbranimo r(ij)eke Balkana, čiji je član i Inicijativa Pravo na vodu, pružio je podršku udruženju "Una" Srb i meštanima Donje Suvaje u borbi protiv izgradnje male hidroelektrane na reci Uni. U zajedničkom saopštenju upozoreno je na ugrožavanje zaštićenog područja Natura 2000, kojem Una pripada, i upućen je apel vlastima da poštuju evropske zakone o očuvanju prirodnih resursa i obustave izgradnju. Inicijativa Pravo na vodu dodatno je informisala javnost u Srbiji o ovom problemu, ističući da je Una jedno od najvrednijih prirodnih blaga regiona koje treba sačuvati. Žaklina Živković iz Inicijative Pravo na vodu naglasila je da ovakvi projekti donose zanemarljive količine energije, dok štete prirodi i lokalnim zajednicama ostaju ogromne. Srčanost lokalnih inicijativa i odlučnost u borbi za reku Una ohrabruju, a mreža Odbranimo r(ij)eke Balkana ostaje uz njih u ovoj važnoj borbi za prirodu.



14. AVGUST 2024.

Stepujemo i repujemo za pravo na vodu: Nastavak kampanje za javne česme

U okviru kampanje za dostupnost javnih česama, Pravo na vodu je u avgustu pokrenulo novu akciju - kroz pesmu i video prikazali smo kako izgleda svakodnevica bez javnih česama tokom letnjih meseci, na užarenom betonu grada. Kampanjom smo ukazali na potrebu da se voda sačuva kao javno dobro, a ne da se prepušta privatizaciji i pakovanju u plastičnu ambalažu. Pozvali smo građane da nam se priključe i da preko jednostavnog formulara na sajtu polekol.org zahtevaju postavljanje ili obnovu javnih česama u svojim opštinama.

Voda mora biti dostupna svima - besplatna, čista i javna.

AUGUST 14, 2024

Stepping and Rapping for the Right to Water: Continuing the Campaign for Public Fountains

As part of the campaign for accessible public fountains, the Right to Water Initiative launched a new action in August—through music and video, they portrayed everyday life without public fountains during the summer heat on the city's scorching concrete. The campaign highlighted the need to preserve water as a public good, rather than allowing it to become privatized and bottled in plastic. We invited citizens to join the campaign by using a simple form on the polekol.org website to request the installation or renovation of public fountains in their municipalities.

Water must be accessible to everyone—free, clean, and public.

ENG / The Lets Defend the Rivers of the Balkans Alliance, of which the Right to Water Initiative is a member, provided support to the "Una" Association from Srb and the residents of Donja Suvaja in their fight against the construction of a small hydropower plant on the Una River. In a joint statement, they warned about the endangerment of the Natura 2000 protected area, to which the Una belongs, and called on the authorities to respect European laws on natural resource protection and halt the construction. The Right to Water Initiative additionally informed the Serbian public about this issue, emphasizing that Una is one of the region's most valuable natural treasures that must be preserved. Žaklina Živković from the Right to Water Initiative stressed that such projects generate negligible amounts of energy while causing immense harm to nature and local communities. The determination and spirit of local initiatives fighting for the Una River are encouraging, and the Defend the Rivers of the Balkans network remains steadfast in supporting them in this crucial battle for nature.



18. AVGUST 2024.

Srbija presušila: Mapa nestašica vode otkriva ozbiljne sistemske probleme

AUGUST 18, 2024

Serbia Is Drying Up: Water Shortage Map Reveals Serious Systemic Issues

SRB / Zbog alarmantne nestašice vode širom Srbije, Polekol i Inicijativa Pravo na vodu izradili su mapu koja beleži više od 40 mesta pogođenih restrikcijama, presušivanjem izvora, reka i jezera tokom ekstremno visokih letnjih temperatura.

Ova analiza jasno pokazuje da problemi nisu posledica ponašanja građana, već duboko ukorenjenih sistemskih propusta: zastarele i neodržavane infrastrukture, neracionalne potrošnje vode u privredi, lošeg upravljanja vodnim resursima i nedostatka prilagođavanja na klimatske promene, iako je Srbija među zemljama koje su tim promenama najizloženije.

Kampanjom „Srbija presušila“, Polekol želi da ukaže na hitnu potrebu za reformom upravljanja vodnim dobrima i da podseti da pristup vodi mora biti zaštićeno osnovno ljudsko pravo, a ne luksuz rezervisan za privilegovane.



ENG / Due to the alarming water shortages across Serbia, Polekol and the Right to Water Initiative created a map recording more than 40 locations affected by restrictions, the drying up of springs, rivers, and lakes during extremely high summer temperatures.

This analysis clearly shows that the problems are not caused by citizens' behavior, but by deeply rooted systemic failures: outdated and poorly maintained infrastructure, irrational industrial water use, poor water resource management, and a lack of adaptation to climate change—even though Serbia is among the countries most exposed to these changes.

With the "Serbia Is Drying Up" campaign, Polekol aims to highlight the urgent need for water management reform and to remind everyone that access to water must be protected as a basic human right, not a luxury for the privileged.



29. AVGUST 2024.

Građani žedni na Homljskim planinama

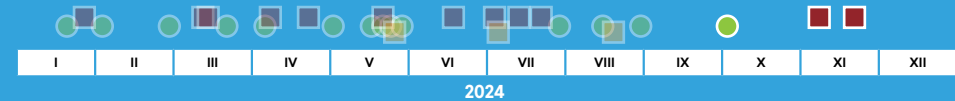
Inicijativa Pravo na vodu pružila je podršku organizaciji Rendžeri Istočne Srbije, koja se bori za očuvanje prirode Homolja od uticaja kanadske rudarske kompanije Dundee. Dok građani trpe restrikcije vode, kompanija nastavlja sa radom, zagađuje potoke i, protivno zakonima Republike Srbije, snabdeva vodom javno komunalno preduzeće u Žagubici putem istražnih bušotina. Pozvali smo građane da se pridruže blokadi koju su organizovali aktivisti na terenu i informisali javnost o pritiscima i oblicima represije kojima su ti aktivisti izloženi od strane lokalnih vlasti i njihovih saradnika.

AUGUST 29, 2024

Citizens Thirsty on the Homolje Mountains

The Right to Water Initiative supported the Rangers of Eastern Serbia organization in their efforts to protect the Homolje region from the impact of the Canadian mining company Dundee. While citizens suffer from water restrictions, the company continues operations, polluting streams and, contrary to Serbian law, supplying the public utility company in Žagubica through exploratory boreholes. We called on citizens to join the blockade organized by activists on the ground and informed the public about the pressures and forms of repression that activists are facing from local authorities and their allies.

PRAVO NA VODU / RIGHT TO WATER



2. OKTOBAR 2024.

Balkan River Summit 2024: Zajedništvo u borbi za očuvanje reka Balkana

SRB / Balkan River Summit 2024, održan u Podgorici, okupio je branitelje i braniteljke reka iz celog regiona, pružajući priliku za razmenu iskustava, slavljenje pobeda i mapiranje novih koraka u zaštiti slobodnih i divljih reka - neprocenjivog prirodnog blaga Balkana. Ključna tema ovogodišnjeg samita bila je jačanje regionalne solidarnosti i razmena znanja među aktivističkim grupama, što je istaknuto kroz panele i radionice posvećene zaštiti reka i izazovima sa kojima se suočavaju ekološki aktivisti.

ENG / The Balkan River Summit 2024, held in Podgorica, gathered river defenders from across the region, providing a platform for experience sharing, celebrating victories, and mapping out new steps to protect free-flowing and wild rivers—the Balkans' priceless natural treasures. The summit's key theme was strengthening regional solidarity and knowledge exchange among activist groups, emphasized through panels and workshops focused on river protection and the challenges environmental activists face.

OCTOBER 2, 2024

Balkan River Summit 2024: Unity in the Fight to Protect the Rivers of the Balkans

Na panelu o Evropskom zelenom dogovoru i zaštiti reka u zemljama Zapadnog Balkana, Žaklina Živković iz Polekola i inicijative Pravo na vodu naglasila je važnost vraćanja moći odlučivanja narodu, daleko od interesa krupnog kapitala, ističući potrebu za brzom i efikasnom primenom zakona kako bi se osigurala zaštita rečnih ekosistema. Takođe, na radionici posvećenoj aktivizmu, ljudskim pravima i pristupu pravdi, Azra Berbić i Žaklina Živković analizirale su izazove sa kojima se suočavaju ekološki aktivisti, uključujući SLAPP tužbe, bezbednosne pretnje i rizike od burnout-a, pružajući prostor za razmenu iskustava i osnaživanje otpornosti aktivista suočenih sa ovim sve većim pritiscima.

At the panel on the European Green Deal and river protection in the Western Balkans, Žaklina Živković from Polekol and the Right to Water Initiative emphasized the importance of returning decision-making power to the people, away from corporate interests, and stressed the need for swift and effective implementation of laws to safeguard river ecosystems. Additionally, during a workshop on activism, human rights, and access to justice, Azra Berbić and Žaklina Živković analyzed the challenges faced by environmental activists, including SLAPP lawsuits, security threats, and burnout risks, providing space for sharing experiences and strengthening activist resilience.



7. NOVEMBAR 2024.

Podrška kampanji za proširenje Emerald mreže na Dunav

Polekol i inicijativa Pravo na vodu pružili su podršku kampanji za proširenje Emerald mreže na područje reke Dunav, kako bi se obezbedila dugoročna zaštita ovog izuzetnog ekosistema i njegovog bogatog biodiverziteta. Pozivamo nadležne institucije Republike Srbije da se na predstojećem sastanku Stalnog komiteta Bernske konvencije u decembru jasno založe za očuvanje svojih reka i prirodnih vrednosti.

NOVEMBER 7, 2024

Support for the Campaign to Expand the Emerald Network to the Danube

Polekol and the Right to Water Initiative supported the campaign to expand the Emerald Network to include the Danube River area, ensuring long-term protection of this extraordinary ecosystem and its rich biodiversity. We call on the competent institutions of the Republic of Serbia to advocate for the protection of their rivers and natural assets at the upcoming meeting of the Bern Convention Standing Committee in December.



19. NOVEMBAR 2024.

Građani i udruženja odlučni u odbrani Ratajske reke

Udruženje građana Polekol podnelo je zahtev Ministarstvu rudarstva i energetike (MRE) za poništenje energetske dozvole izdate privrednom društvu Power IT iz Subotice, koja je krajnje nezakonito omogućena. Rešenje je doneto uprkos Zakonu o energetici, koji jasno propisuje da se novi postupak za izdavanje energetske dozvole može pokrenuti samo ako je prethodno iskorišćena mogućnost produženja roka važenja ranije dozvole.

NOVEMBER 19, 2024

Citizens and Associations Determined to Defend the Ratajska River

The Polekol filed a request with the Ministry of Mining and Energy (MRE) for the annulment of the energy permit granted to the Power IT company from Subotica, which was issued unlawfully. The decision was made despite the Energy Act, which clearly stipulates that a new energy permit procedure can only be initiated if the extension of the previous permit's validity period has already been exhausted.



20. MART 2024.

Intervju za list Nova i Novi magazin o MHE na Studenici

Projekat izgradnje male hidroelektrane Gradina na reci Studenici, vraćen je na velika vrata stavljanjem na javni uvid Urbanističkog projekta za njenu izgradnju na teritoriji Grada Kraljeva. Ovo se dešava gotovo tri godine nakon protesta u naselju Ušće, gde se Studenica uliva u Ibar, i oko dve i po godine nakon poruke predsednika Srbije građanima da „mirno spava ju“ jer će reke biti sačuvane. Strahinja Macić pravni savetnik Polekola dao je intervju listu Nova o pretnji izgradnje MHE na reci Studenici u Kraljevu.

MARCH 20, 2024

Interview for Nova and Novi Magazin about SHP on the Studenica River

The project to construct the Gradina small hydropower plant on the Studenica River resurfaced through the public review of the Urban Project for its construction in the territory of the City of Kraljevo. This happened almost three years after protests in the town of Ušće, where the Studenica meets the Ibar, and about two and a half years after the President of Serbia assured citizens they could “sleep peacefully” because rivers would be protected. Strahinja Macić, legal advisor for Polekol, gave an interview to Nova newspaper about the threat posed by the SHP construction on the Studenica River in Kraljevo.

20. MAJ 2024.

Portal Krug prenosi konferenciju za štampu inicijative Pravo na vodu

Na pisarnici Gradske uprave u Kraljevu predato 70 primeraka Inicijative za moratorijum na izgradnji malih hidroelektrana na teritoriji Kraljeva, po jedan za svakog od odbornika gradske skupštine

MAY 20, 2024

Portal Krug Covers the Press Conference of the Right to Water Initiative

At the registry office of the City Administration of Kraljevo, 70 copies of the Initiative for a Moratorium on the Construction of Small Hydropower Plants in Kraljevo were submitted—one for each city councilor.

16. JUL 2024.

Pravo na vodu na jutranjem programu televizije N1

Nашa Žaklina Živković je u jutarnjem programu N1 skrenula pažnju javnosti da 1.6 miliona ljudi u Srbiji nema osigurano ljudsko pravo na vodu i podelila zabrinutost da je zanemarivanje namerno kako bi se stvorili uslovi za privatizaciju vodosnabdevanja.

JULY 16, 2024

Right to Water on N1 Morning Show

Our Žaklina Živković appeared on N1’s morning program, highlighting to the public that 1.6 million people in Serbia lack guaranteed access to the human right to water. She expressed concern that this neglect is intentional, aimed at creating conditions for the privatization of water supply services.

23. AVGUST 2024.

Intervju Strahinja Macić

Ispred Polekola, pravni savetnik Strahinja Macić dao je intervju za portal Mašina, gde je govorio o gubicima vode na vodovodnim mrežama i njenim uzrocima. Strahinja je naglasio da je ceo Balkan izuzetno pogođen klimatskim promenama koje će sve intezivnije uticati na nestašice vode. On je naglasio da problem predstavljaju ogromni gubici na mreži zbog zastarele infrastrukture, neulaganja u nju, lošeg planiranja i implementacije strategija. Podsetio je da smo se ovog meseca suočili i sa činjenicom da za državni sistem prioritet ima privreda a ne stanovništvo kada je u pitanju dostupnost vode.

AUGUST 23, 2024

Interview with Strahinja Macić

Representing Polekol, legal advisor Strahinja Macić gave an interview to the portal Mašina, discussing water losses in the water supply networks and their causes. Strahinja emphasized that the entire Balkans is heavily affected by climate change, which will increasingly impact water shortages. He pointed out that massive losses in the network are due to outdated infrastructure, lack of investment, poor planning, and weak strategy implementation. He also reminded the public that this month we witnessed how the state system prioritizes industry over citizens when it comes to access to water.



8. SEPTEMBAR 2024.

Strahinja Macić o mapi nestašica vode u Srbiji na televiziji N1

Objavljivanje mape restrikcija i kvarova u vodosnabdevanju ovog leta izazvalo je veliku zabrinutost građana i pažnju medija. Strahinja Macić za N1 objašnjava kako smo došli do problema i šta nam je činiti

SEPTEMBER 8, 2024

Strahinja Macić Discusses the Water Shortage Map in Serbia on N1 TV

The release of the map showing water supply restrictions and breakdowns during this summer raised great public concern and media attention. Strahinja Macić explained for N1 how we arrived at this problem and what needs to be done.

10. SEPTEMBAR 2024.

Institucije da shvate problem suša ozbiljno – Žaklina Živković na N1

Žaklina Živković iz inicijative Pravo na vodu pričala je o mapi nestašica vode u Srbiji tokom jula i avgusta i pozvala da se institucije uhvate u koštac sa problemom i pripreme na sve manju dostupnost vode.

SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

Institutions Must Take Droughts Seriously – Žaklina Živković on N1

Žaklina Živković from the Right to Water Initiative spoke about the water shortage map in Serbia during July and August, calling on institutions to address the problem seriously and to prepare for increasingly limited water availability.

27. NOVEMBAR 2024.

O ugroženoj Ratajskoj reci za TV Forum

Slivu Ratajske reke u Prijepolju opet prete mini hidrocentrale! Iako im je energetska dozvola prošle godine poništena, investitor „Power IT doo Subotica“ uspeo je da dobije novu u martu ove godine. Pravni savetnik Polekola Strahinja Macić govorio je za TV Forum iz Prijepolja na ovu temu.

NOVEMBER 27, 2024

On the Endangered Ratajska River – Interview for TV Forum

The Ratajska River basin in Prijepolje is once again threatened by small hydropower plants! Even though their energy permit was annulled last year, the investor “Power IT doo Subotica” managed to obtain a new one in March this year. Polekol's legal advisor, Strahinja Macić, spoke on this topic for TV Forum from Prijepolje.

ZELENE POLITIKE

Polekol se bavi podizanjem svesti o političkoj ekologiji i razumevanju zelene političke ideje. Radi sveobuhvatnog pristupa podstičemo međusektorsku saradnju i širenje savezništava društvenih aktera kao što su organizacije civilnog društva, sindikati, naučna zajednica, manjine, žene itd. Edukujemo političke aktore o zelenoj političkoj ideji i pronalazimo načine da se ona primeni u Srbiji.

GREEN POLICIES

Polekol is dedicated to raising awareness about political ecology and understanding the green political idea. For a more comprehensive approach, we encourage cross-sector collaboration and the expansion of alliances of social actors such as civil society organizations, trade unions, the scientific community, minorities, women, etc. We educate political actors about the green political idea and find ways to implement it in Serbia and region.

ZELENE POLITIKE / GREEN POLICIES



15-16. FEBRUAR 2024.

**Dobro za sve: Treća
Zelena akademija
Evropski horizonti,
Beograd**

FEBRUARY 15-16, 2024

**Good for All: Third
Green Academy
“European Horizons,”
Belgrade**

SRB / Da li je dobro da se izrabljuju prirodna dobra, i da li bi moglo da se živi i radi drugačije da bi bilo bolje, pa da bude i *dobara za sve* i *dobro za sve*? To su samo neka od pitanja na koja se tražio odgovor na trodnevnoj Akademiji Zeleni evropski horizonti: Dobro za sve koja je održana od 15. do 16. februara u Beogradu.

Aktivisti sa tri kontinenta, razmenili su iskustava i perspektive koje se tiču zelene tranzicije i ekstraktivizma. U radnim sastancima koji su održani u Prostoru Miljenko Dereta učestvovalo je oko 40 učesnica i učesnika iz Sjedinjenih Američkih Država, Perua, Irske, Portugala, Bosne i Hercegovine, Grčke i različitih krajeva Srbije.

Žaklina Živković, izvršna direktorka Polekola, je u uvodnom obraćanju skrenula pažnju na urgentnost istorijskog trenutka i potrebu da razumemo procese sa kojima se suočavamo da bismo u njima odgovorno i osnaženo učestvovali. Programska direktorka Polekola, Iva Marković, uključila se video obraćanjem iz Univerziteta u Saseksu i kratkim intervjuima sa tamošnjim kolegama koji su izneli svoje viđenje ekstraktivizma.

Kako su organizatori i ranije naglašavali, neophodno je da bolje razumemo kako klimatsku i ekonomsku krizu u kojoj smo se zatekli, te procese koje dominantni akteri na globalnom nivou promovišu kao sredstva za njihovo rešavanje, tako i ono „šta se valja iza brda“, odnosno problematičnost ponuđenih rešenja i, na kraju ali ne najmanje važno, moguće alternative. Upravo ovim temama su bila posvećena dva predavanja koja su održali Iskra Krstić iz Polekola i sa portala Mašina, i Dijego Marin iz Evropskog ekološkog biroa (European Environmental Bureau) i pratećih diskusija sa Jan Moril iz organizacije Earthworks, Shanai Matteson iz Tamarack Water Alliance, Johnny Barber iz Honor the Earth i Allen Richardson iz iste organizacije, Anishinaabe starešina Ricky DeFoe iz Ojibwe plemena Fond du Lac iz Minnesote, Lynda Sullivan iz Yes to Life, No to Mining iz Irske, Marijana Petković, iz Saveza ekoloških organizacija Srbije (SEOS) iz Gornjih Nedeljica, Francisco Venes iz Unidos em Defesa de Covas do Barroso (UCDB) iz Portugala i Majda Ibraković iz Eko foruma Zenica iz Bosne i Hercegovine.

ENG / Is it good to exploit natural resources, and could we live and work differently so that there would be enough good for all? These were just some of the questions explored during the three-day Academy “Green European Horizons: Good for All,” held from February 15 to 16 in Belgrade.

Activists from three continents exchanged experiences and perspectives related to the green transition and extractivism. Around 40 participants from the United States, Peru, Ireland, Portugal, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, and various parts of Serbia participated in the working sessions held at Miljenko Dereta Space.

Žaklina Živković, Executive Director of Polekol, in her opening address, emphasized the urgency of the historical moment and the need to understand the processes we face in order to engage responsibly and empowered. Iva Marković, Polekol’s Program Director, joined via video from the University of Sussex and shared short interviews with colleagues there who presented their views on extractivism.

The two main lectures, held by Iskra Krstić from Polekol and the Mašina portal, and Diego Marin from the European Environmental Bureau, addressed the need to better understand not only the climate and economic crises but also the problematic nature of proposed “solutions” and potential alternatives. Discussions followed with activists from Earthworks, Tamarack Water Alliance, Honor the Earth, Ojibwe elder Ricky DeFoe (Fond du Lac Band, Minnesota), Yes to Life, No to Mining (Ireland), the Alliance of Environmental Organizations of Serbia (SEOS), Unidos em Defesa de Covas do Barroso (Portugal), and Eco Forum Zenica (Bosnia and Herzegovina).





17. FEBRUAR 2024.

Tribina: nauka i aktivizam u borbi protiv ekstraktivzma, LOZNICA

U saradnji sa lokalnom organizacijom Ne damo Jadar, Polekol je za nekoliko stotina okupljenih stanovnika Loznice u Domu kulture „Vuk Karadžić“ organizovao tribinu pod nazivom „Nauka i aktivizam u borbi protiv ekstraktivizma“. Na njoj su govorili prof. dr Ljiljana Tomović, prof. dr Nenad Kostić, Milenko Jovanov iz Nacionalne ekološke asocijacije, Diego Marin iz Evropskog ekološkog biroa, gosti iz SAD i Perua, kao i Žaklina Živković, izvršna direktorka Polekola. Ovo gostovanje je izazvalo i veliku pažnju medija, pa je uživo prenošeno na kanalu N1 televizije.



18. FEBRUAR 2024.

Ne za rudarenje, da za život – poseta aktivista selu Gornje Nedeljice



FEBRUARY 17, 2024

Panel: Science and Activism in the Fight Against Extractivism, Loznica

In cooperation with the local organization “Ne damo Jadar,” Polekol organized a panel discussion for several hundred residents of Loznica at the “Vuk Karadžić” Cultural Center titled “Science and Activism in the Fight Against Extractivism.” Speakers included Prof. Dr. Ljiljana Tomović, Prof. Dr. Nenad Kostić, Milenko Jovanov from the National Ecological Association, Diego Marin from the European Environmental Bureau, guests from the USA and Peru, and Žaklina Živković, Executive Director of Polekol. The event attracted significant media attention and was broadcast live on N1 television.

FEBRUARY 18, 2024

No to Mining, Yes to Life: Activists Visit Gornje Nedeljice



SRB / Polekol je organizovao međunarodnu posetu aktivista sa čak tri kontinenta selu Gornje Nedeljice i organizaciji Ne damo Jadar, kako bi se u direktnom kontaktu upoznali sa planovima za otvaranje rudnika i prirodnim bogatstvima ovog kraja. Aktivisti su od strane meštana srdačno dočekani na tradicionalni način, u nošnji, sa pogačom i solju, a onda su usledili obilazak i druženje. Aktivisti koji se u drugim zemljama bore protiv otvaranja rudnika nikla kompanije RioTinto, iz Gornjih Nedeljica i doline Jadra iz Srbije su otišli sa zastavom koja je simbol borbe protiv iskopavanja litijuma u Srbiji, na kojoj jasno piše NE DAMO JADAR!

ENG / Polekol organized an international visit by activists from three continents to the village of Gornje Nedeljice and the organization “Ne damo Jadar” to experience first-hand the mining plans and the natural wealth of the area. The activists were warmly welcomed in traditional fashion, with bread and salt, followed by a tour and gathering. Activists fighting against mining projects in other countries left Gornje Nedeljice carrying the flag symbolizing the resistance against lithium mining in Serbia, clearly stating “WE WILL NOT GIVE UP JADAR!”



16-17. APRIL 2024.

Regionalni sastanak protiv ekstraktivizma u Boru i Žagubici

Polekol je učestvovao na regionalnom sastanku, koji je organizovao Evropski fond za Balkan, zajedno sa još dvadesetak inicijativa iz Bosne i Hercegovine, Makedonije i Srbije, koji je imao fokus na teme rudarenja i ekstraktivizma. Na sastanku smo diskutovali o političkim i ekološkim izazovima, kao i strategijama borbe protiv ovih izrabljivačkih praksi. Poseta Boru omogućila je učesnicima da vide razmere i štetnost rada rudnika bakra i zlata kineske kompanije Zijin.

Kasnije smo se u Žagubici susreli sa aktivistima koji protive radu kanadske kompanije Dandi koja je postavila istražne bušotine i planira otvaranje rudnika zlata na Homlju. Na sastanku je naglašena važnost umrežavanje aktivista, uzajamna podrška i rad sa lokalnom zajednicom, kako bi se stvorila kritična masa koja bi uspešno mogla da pruži otpor i pritisak za ukidanje i prekid izvođenja štetnih projekata.

APRIL 16-17, 2024.

Regional Meeting Against Extractivism in Bor and Žagubica

Polekol participated in a regional meeting organized by the European Fund for the Balkans with around twenty initiatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, and Serbia, focused on mining and extractivism. Discussions centered on political and ecological challenges, as well as resistance strategies. The visit to Bor allowed participants to see firsthand the environmental damage caused by the Chinese company Zijin's copper and gold mining operations.

In Žagubica, they met with activists opposing the Canadian company Dundee, which has installed exploratory boreholes and plans to open a gold mine on Mount Homlje. The meeting highlighted the importance of activist networking, mutual support, and working with local communities to create a critical mass capable of resisting harmful projects.



3. MAJ 2024.

Borba protiv medijskog mraka: Polekol na Svetskom danu slobodnih medija u Briselu

Na Svetski dan slobodnih medija, predstavnica Polekola, Miroslava Nikolić, govorila je na prestižnoj konferenciji Difference Day u Briselu, koju svake godine organizuju vodeći briselski univerziteti. Miroslava je učesnicima panela približila realnost u Srbiji, gde se suočavamo sa ozbiljnim medijskim mrakom pod autoritarnim režimom, uz posebno isticanje kako se informacije o problemima u životnoj sredini sistematski prikrivaju. Predstavila je načine na koje se Polekol bori protiv dezinformacija - kroz aktivno prisustvo na društvenim mrežama, saradnju sa lokalnim aktivistima i javne kampanje. Zaključila je da samo sveobuhvatan pristup - koji objedinjuje rad na terenu, medijsko delovanje i pravne pritiske na institucije - može doneti stvarne promene u borbi za istinu i pravo građana da budu informisani.

MAY 3, 2024.

Fighting Media Darkness: Polekol at World Press Freedom Day in Brussels

On World Press Freedom Day, Polekol's Miroslava Nikolić spoke at the prestigious Difference Day conference in Brussels, organized annually by leading universities. She described the media darkness facing Serbia under an authoritarian regime, particularly the systematic concealment of environmental issues. Miroslava outlined Polekol's strategies for fighting disinformation—through social media, cooperation with local activists, and public campaigns—and stressed that only a comprehensive approach combining fieldwork, media advocacy, and legal pressure can bring real change.





17. MAJ 2024.

Za čiste vode i prava građana: Polekol na Grüne JugÖs događaju u Beču

Na događaju u organizaciji Grüne JugÖs u Beču, Žaklina Živković, izvršna direktorka Polekola, govorila je zajedno sa Thomasom Waitzom, kopredsjednikom Evropske zelene partije i poslanikom u Evropskom parlamentu. Razgovarali su o ključnim pitanjima koja oblikuju budućnost voda u Evropi i na Zapadnom Balkanu: šta zagađuje naše reke, kako primeniti standarde zaštite voda, kao i o važnosti učešća građana u procesima donošenja odluka koje utiču na životnu sredinu. Poseban akcenat stavljen je na značaj očuvanja evropske perspektive zemalja regiona, uz obavezu poštovanja ekoloških vrednosti i ljudskih prava.



MAY 17, 2024

For Clean Water and Citizens' Rights: Polekol at Grüne JugÖs Event in Vienna

At the event organized by Grüne JugÖs in Vienna, Žaklina Živković, Executive Director of Polekol, spoke alongside Thomas Waitz, Co-Chair of the European Green Party and Member of the European Parliament. They discussed key issues such as river pollution, implementation of water protection standards, and the importance of citizen participation in environmental decision-making. The importance of safeguarding the European perspective of the Western Balkans, while respecting ecological values and human rights, was emphasized.



29. JUN 2024.

Za Srbiju bez ekstraktivizma: Polekol na protestu u Loznici



JUNE 29, 2024

For a Serbia Without Extractivism: Polekol at the Protest in Loznica



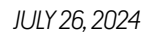
SRB / Polekol se odazvao pozivu Saveza ekoloških organizacija Srbije (SEOS) i pridružio se ekološkim aktivistima i građanima iz Srbije i Bosne i Hercegovine na velikom protestu protiv iskopavanja litijuma i bora, održanom u Loznici, nadomak planiranog rudnika. Ekološke organizacije uputile su Vladi Srbije zvaničan zahtev za zakonsku zabranu istraživanja i eksploatacije litijuma i bora na teritoriji cele zemlje, uz rok od 40 dana za njegovo usvajanje. Ukoliko vlasti ne ispune zahtev, najavljene su blokade širom Srbije. Na protestu smo poslali jasnu poruku – ujedinjeni smo, solidarni i odlučni da se zajedno borimo za Srbiju čiste vode, vazduha i zemlje, za budućnost u kojoj priroda ima svoje mesto, a ljudi dostojanstveno žive u skladu sa njom.

ENG / Polekol responded to the call from the Alliance of Environmental Organizations of Serbia (SEOS) and joined environmental activists and citizens from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina at a major protest against lithium and boron mining, held in Loznica near the site of the planned mine. Environmental organizations submitted an official demand to the Government of Serbia for a legal ban on lithium and boron exploration and exploitation across the country, setting a 40-day deadline for its adoption. If the authorities fail to comply, nationwide blockades have been announced. At the protest, we sent a clear message: we are united, in solidarity, and determined to fight together for a Serbia of clean water, air, and land, for a future where nature has its place, and people live with dignity in harmony with it.



Uoči velikog protesta protiv otvaranja rudnika litijuma u Jadru, Polekol je napisao deset ključnih razloga protiv ekstraktivizma u Srbiji. Ovaj tekst otvorio je mnoge važne teme, a imao je i ogromnu čitanost: na društvenoj mreži Facebook videlo ga je više od 60.000 ljudi a na Instagramu čak 120.000.

Srbija ne treba da postane još jedna žrtva globalne trke za mineralima koja ugrožava lokalne zajednice širom sveta. Umesto ekstraktivizma, potrebna nam je vizija razvoja koja poštuje prirodu, ljude i buduće generacije. Pročitajte zašto smo mi protiv na linku.



Why We Oppose Lithium Mining: 10 Reasons Against Extractivism

Ahead of a major protest against the opening of a lithium mine in Jadar, Polekol published ten key reasons against extractivism in Serbia. The text addressed many important issues and reached a large audience: over 60,000 views on Facebook and 120,000 on Instagram.

Serbia must not become another victim of the global rush for minerals that threatens local communities worldwide. Instead of extractivism, Serbia needs a development vision that respects nature, people, and future generations.

Read why we oppose lithium mining here.



Nakon odluke Ustavnog suda Republike Srbije da vrati u proceduru projekat rudnika litijuma Rio Tinta, širom Srbije izbio je talas spontanijh ekoloških protesta.

Na protestu u Obrenovcu, održanom pred nekoliko stotina građana, govorila je izvršna direktorka Polekola Žaklina Živković. U svom obraćanju istakla je ozbiljnost ekoloških problema sa kojima se Srbija suočava, upozorila na značaj očuvanja vode kao prirodnog dobra i na pogubne posledice rudarenja po prirodu i lokalne zajednice. Obrenovac je bio samo jedno od mesta širom zemlje gde su građani jasno poručili da neće dozvoliti da se njihova voda, zemlja i vazduh stave u službu kratkoročnih interesa korporacija.

AUGUST 8, 2024

Obrenovac Stands for Nature: Protest Against Lithium Mining

Following the decision of the Constitutional Court of Serbia to return the Rio Tinto lithium mining project into procedure, a wave of spontaneous ecological protests erupted across Serbia.

At the protest in Obrenovac, held before several hundred citizens, Polekol's Executive Director Žaklina Živković spoke. In her address, she emphasized the seriousness of the ecological problems Serbia faces, warned about the importance of preserving water as a natural good, and the devastating consequences of mining for nature and local communities. Obrenovac was just one of many places across the country where citizens clearly stated they would not allow their water, land, and air to be sacrificed for short-term corporate interests.





Nakon što je Ministarstvo zdravlja predstavilo tim stručnjaka za ispitivanje uticaja rudarenja litijuma na zdravlje stanovništva, više od stotinu medicinskih radnika iz Gornjeg Milanovca javno je podržalo borbu protiv otvaranja rudnika litijuma i bora u Srbiji. Polekoli i Pravo na vodu pridružili su se podršci, ukazujući na zabrinjavajuće pokušaje skrivanja studije Instituta za javno zdravlje „Batut“, koja je utvrdila mere za smanjenje negativnih uticaja rudarenja na zdravlje ljudi, ali i identifikovala velike propuste u radu institucija zaduženih za zaštitu životne sredine. Ova pobuna medicinske zajednice još jednom je pokazala da zaštita zdravlja građana mora biti ispred interesa rudarskih kompanija i političkih odluka.

AUGUST 9, 2024

After the Ministry of Health presented a team of experts to study the impact of lithium mining on public health, over a hundred medical workers from Gornji Milanovac publicly supported the fight against opening lithium and boron mines in Serbia. Polekol and the Right to Water Initiative joined in support, highlighting worrying attempts to conceal a study by the "Batut" Institute of Public Health, which identified measures to mitigate mining's negative impacts on health but also exposed major institutional failures in environmental protection. This uprising by the medical community once again demonstrated that protecting public health must come before the interests of mining companies and political decisions.



10. AVGUST 2024.

AUGUST 10, 2024

SRB / Povratak projekta Jadar u postupak, nakon što ga je Vlada Srbije ukinula 2022. godine, izazvao je talas protesta u više od 20 gradova širom zemlje. Građani su spontano organizovali blokade u svojim sredinama, izražavajući nezadovoljstvo i zabrinutost zbog otvaranja rudnika litijuma.

Protesti su kulminirali masovnim okupljanjem u Beogradu, gde se okupilo više od 50.000 ljudi, nakon čega je usledila blokada železnice. Blokada je planirana da traje sve dok se ne usvoji zakon kojim bi se trajno zabranilo istraživanje i eksploatacija litijuma i bora u Srbiji.

Polekol je, zajedno sa drugim aktivistima, proveo noć na pruži, šaljući jasnu poruku institucijama da zaštita prirode i zdravlja građana mora biti apsolutni prioritet

ENG / The reinstatement of the Jadar project into the approval process, after the Serbian government had canceled it in 2022, triggered protests in over 20 cities across the country. Citizens spontaneously organized blockades in their communities, expressing discontent and concern over the opening of lithium mines.

Protests culminated in a massive gathering in Belgrade, where over 50,000 people assembled, followed by a railway blockade. The blockade was planned to continue until a law banning the exploration and exploitation of lithium and boron in Serbia is adopted.

Polekol, together with other activists, spent the night on the tracks, sending a clear message to institutions that protecting nature and citizens' health must be an absolute priority.





11-13. AVGUST 2024.

Od blokade pruge do pritisa na aktiviste: Borba za slobodu i pravo na protest

Nakon celonoćne blokade pruge u Beogradu, u ranim jutarnjim satima 11. avgusta specijalne jedinice su opkolile aktiviste, saterale ih, a pojedine i privele. Trojici aktivista izrečene su zatvorske kazne od 30 i 40 dana. Građani i aktivisti su odmah organizovali protest ispred policije, zahtevajući njihovo hitno oslobađanje. Nakon tri dana pritiska javnosti, privedeni aktivisti su pušteni, ali su otpočeli novi talasi represije – privođenja, zaplena telefona i računara, javne diskreditacije u tabloidima i upadi u stanove postali su svakodnevica za sve koji su digli glas protiv režima. Polekol je organizovao konferenciju za novinare kako bi skrenuo pažnju na ove pritiske. Konferenciju je moderirala izvršna direktorka Žaklina Živković, a govorili su oslobođeni aktivisti Ivan Bjelić, Nikola Ristić i Jevdenije Julijan Dimitrijević, kao i Nebojša Petković iz Saveza ekoloških organizacija Srbije (SEOS) i advokat Marko Pantić.

AUGUST 11-13, 2024

From Railway Blockades to Pressure on Activists: The Fight for Freedom and the Right to Protest

After the overnight railway blockade in Belgrade, special police units surrounded, corralled, and arrested activists in the early morning of August 11. Three activists received prison sentences of 30 and 40 days. Citizens and activists immediately organized a protest outside the police station demanding their release. After three days of public pressure, the detained activists were freed, but new waves of repression began—arrests, seizure of phones and computers, public smear campaigns in tabloids, and home raids became everyday realities for those who raised their voices against the regime. Polekol organized a press conference to draw attention to these pressures. The conference was moderated by Executive Director Žaklina Živković, with speeches by released activists Ivan Bjelić, Nikola Ristić, and Jevdenije Julijan Dimitrijević, as well as Nebojša Petković from SEOS and lawyer Marko Pantić.



25. SEPTEMBAR 2024.

Glas Srbije u Evropskom parlamentu: Podrška borbi protiv iskopavanja litijuma

Nakon celonoćne blokade pruge u Beogradu, u ranim jutarnjim satima 11. avgusta specijalne jedinice su opkolile aktiviste, saterale ih, a pojedine i privele. Trojici aktivista izrečene su zatvorske kazne od 30 i 40 dana. Građani i aktivisti su odmah organizovali protest ispred policije, zahtevajući njihovo hitno oslobađanje. Nakon tri dana pritiska javnosti, privedeni aktivisti su pušteni, ali su otpočeli novi talasi represije – privođenja, zaplena telefona i računara, javne diskreditacije u tabloidima i upadi u stanove postali su svakodnevica za sve koji su digli glas protiv režima. Polekol je organizovao konferenciju za novinare kako bi skrenuo pažnju na ove pritiske. Konferenciju je moderirala izvršna direktorka Žaklina Živković, a govorili su oslobođeni aktivisti Ivan Bjelić, Nikola Ristić i Jevdenije Julijan Dimitrijević, kao i Nebojša Petković iz Saveza ekoloških organizacija Srbije (SEOS) i advokat Marko Pantić.

SEPTEMBER 25, 2024

Serbia's Voice in the European Parliament: Support for the Fight Against Lithium Mining

After visiting Serbia and meeting with environmental activists including Polekol, independent MEP Carola Rackete spoke in the European Parliament about the citizens' rebellion against lithium mining, the protests across Serbia, and the regime's repression of activists. She highlighted smear campaigns by pro-government tabloids, surveillance, and arrests targeting those opposing the Rio Tinto project. Using information provided by Polekol members, her powerful and inspiring speech garnered hundreds of thousands of views on social media and gave great encouragement to activists facing pressure. We continue our fight to protect nature at local, national, and international levels.



29. OKTOBAR 2024.

**Glas iz Srbije na Subverziv festivalu:
Ekološka pravda i borba za opstanak**

Iskra Krstić iz inicijative Pravo na vodu govorila je o borbi za životnu sredinu na Balkan forumu 2024, održanom u okviru Subverziv festivala u Zagrebu. Na panelu posvećenom ekološkoj pravdi, Iskra je predstavila kako se ljudi u Srbiji organizuju protiv destruktivnih ekstraktivističkih projekata i objasnila zašto je ova borba pitanje ne samo zaštite prirode, već i opstanka lokalnih zajednica.

OCTOBER 29, 2024

**A Voice from Serbia at Subversive
Festival: Environmental Justice and the
Fight for Survival**

Iskra Krstić from the Right to Water Initiative spoke about the environmental struggle at the Balkan Forum 2024, held as part of the Subversive Festival in Zagreb. On a panel dedicated to environmental justice, Iskra explained how people in Serbia organize against destructive extractivist projects and why this fight is not only about protecting nature, but also about the survival of local communities.



22-24. NOVEMBAR 2024.

**Polekol postao pridruženi član
Evropske zelene fondacije**

Organizacija Polekol učestvovala je na Zelenoj evropskoj akademiji u Briselu. Preko 100 učesnika iz celog sveta razgovaralo je o Evropskom Zelenom dogovoru, očuvanju ekološke i socijalne pravde, borbi protiv klimatskih promena te mirovnim i bezbednosnim politikama. Ovom događaju je prethodila Generalna skupština Evropske Zelene fondacije na kojoj je izglasano da Polekol postane pridružena članica Evropske Zelene fondacije, nakon višegodišnje uspešne saradnje. Organizaciju je predstavljala izvršna direktorka Polekola Žaklina Živković.

NOVEMBER 22-24, 2024

**Polekol Becomes an Associate Member
of the Green European Foundation**

Polekol participated in the Green European Academy in Brussels. Over 100 participants from around the world discussed the European Green Deal, the preservation of ecological and social justice, the fight against climate change, and peace and security policies. This event was preceded by the General Assembly of the Green European Foundation, where it was voted that Polekol would become an associate member of the Green European Foundation after years of successful cooperation. Polekol was represented by its Executive Director, Žaklina Živković.



21. DECEMBAR 2024.

**Osnaživanje
kolektiva kroz
dobre priče
i otpornu
komunikaciju**

DECEMBER 21, 2024

**Strengthening
Collectives
Through
Good Stories
and Resilient**



SRB / Organizacija za političku ekologiju Polekol je organizovala seminar pod nazivom „Dobre priče i dobri kolektivi za bolje društvo“ u prostoru Miljenko Dereta u Beogradu. Seminar je okupio partnerske organizacije i aktiviste sa ciljem jačanja kolektivne otpornosti kroz razvoj narativa i unapređenje interne komunikacije. Tokom seminara održane su dve radionice. Prvu, pod nazivom „Ispričaj svoju dobru priču“, vodila je profesorka medijskih studija Jelena Kleut, uz moderaciju Ive Marković iz Polekola. Druga radionica, „Da se čujemo i kada sve gori“, fokusirala se na krizno komuniciranje unutar kolektiva, a predvodila ju je komunikacijska konsultantkinja Aleksandra Živković, uz moderaciju Iskre Krstić.

Učesnici su diskutovali o važnosti pozitivnih narativa u suprotstavljanju negativnim kampanjama koje podrivaju javnu podršku ekološkim organizacijama, kao i o značaju efikasne interne komunikacije za očuvanje stabilnosti i poverenja unutar timova tokom kriznih situacija.

Seminar je zaključen razgovorom o planovima i očekivanjima za buduće akcije i saradnje među partnerskim organizacijama, sa ciljem postizanja pozitivnih promena u 2025. godini, deo koji je moderirala Žaklina Živković.

ENG / The Organization for Political Ecology Polekol organized a seminar titled “Good Stories and Good Collectives for a Better Society” at the Miljenko Dereta Space in Belgrade. The seminar gathered partner organizations and activists with the aim of strengthening collective resilience through narrative development and improving internal communication. Two workshops were held during the seminar. The first, titled “Tell Your Good Story,” was led by media studies professor Jelena Kleut, moderated by Iva Marković from Polekol. The second workshop, “Hearing Each Other Even When Everything Is Burning,” focused on crisis communication within collectives and was led by communications consultant Aleksandra Živković, moderated by Iskra Krstić.

Participants discussed the importance of positive narratives in countering negative campaigns that undermine public support for environmental organizations, as well as the significance of effective internal communication for maintaining stability and trust within teams during crises.

The seminar concluded with a discussion about plans and expectations for future actions and cooperation among partner organizations, moderated by Žaklina Živković, aiming for positive changes in 2025.



ZELENE POLITIKE / GREEN POLICIES

16. FEBRUAR 2024.

Gosti Akademije Zeleni horizonti u „Probudi se“ na Nova S

Učesnici akademije Anishinaabe elder Ricky DeFoe iz SAD-a i Francisco Venes iz Portugala, gostovali su u jutarnjem programu “Probudi se” na televizini NovaS. Poslušajte kakvo iskustvo donose iz svojih zemalja u pogledu rudarenja i šta savetuju građanima Srbije.

FEBRUARY 16, 2024

Guests of the Green Horizons Academy on “Wake Up” on Nova S

Participants of the academy, Anishinaabe elder Ricky DeFoe from the USA and Francisco Venes from Portugal, appeared on the morning program “Wake Up” on Nova S television. Listen to what experiences they bring from their countries regarding mining and what advice they give to the citizens of Serbia.

16. AVGUST 2024.

Protest ima mnoge forme – Intervju za list Danas

Žaklina Živković ispred organizacije za političku ekologiju Polekol, koja je učestvovala u organizaciji ekoloških protesta protiv litijuma, dala je intervju za Danas gde je govorila o različitim oblicima pobune koji dolaze sa svih stran i zaključila da će se oni nastaviti.

AUGUST 16, 2024

Protest Takes Many Forms – Interview for Danas Newspaper

Žaklina Živković, representing the Organization for Political Ecology Polekol, which took part in organizing environmental protests against lithium mining, gave an interview to Danas where she spoke about the various forms of resistance emerging from all sides and concluded that the protests will continue.

14. NOVEMBAR 2024.

Globalni samit o klimatskim promenama UN kroz prizmu Ive Marković

Programska direktorka Iva Marković u jutarnjem programu N1 analizirala globalni samit o klimatskim promenama u Bakuu kao i učešće Srbije na istom

NOVEMBER 14, 2024

The UN Global Climate Summit Through the Eyes of Iva Marković

Polekol's Program Director, Iva Marković, analyzed the Global Climate Summit in Baku and Serbia's participation in it during the N1 morning program.



MREŽA ŽENE ZA PRIRODU I ŽIVOTNU SREDINU

Polekol se zalaže za rodnu ravnopravnost unutar grupa i organizacija koje se bave životnom sredinom. Radimo na tome da žene dobiju jednako pravo glasa unutar struktura ekoloških organizacija i jednaku vidljivost u javnosti. Podižemo kapacitete žena putem umrežavanja i udruživanja, edukativnih programa i personalizovanom podrškom. Želimo da proširimo i poboljšamo ulogu žena u borbi za životnu sredinu kako bi se ekološko pitanje rešavalo iz rodne perspektive i napravimo most između ekologije i drugih oblasti zaštite ljudskih prava.

WOMEN'S NETWORK FOR ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE

Polekol advocates for gender equality within groups and organizations dealing with the environment. We are working to ensure that women get equal voice within the structures of environmental organizations and equal visibility in the public. We raise women's capacities through networking and collaboration, educational programs, and personalized support. We want to expand and improve the role of women in the struggle for the environment in order to solve ecological issues from a gender perspective and build a bridge between nature commons and other areas of human rights protection.

Timeline of the year 2024 with 12 months labeled I to XII. Green circles indicate specific events: a double circle in month III, a single circle in month VII, a double circle in month XI, and a single circle in month XII. A green square is at the end of the timeline.



Žene za budžet koji štiti prirodu i ljude – Radionica na Zlataru

A group of people, including women, are holding a banner that reads "МРЕЖА ЖЕНА ЗА ЗАШТИТУ ПРИРОДЕ" (Network of Women for Nature Protection) during a protest at night. The banner is white with red text and a small logo on the left. The people are dressed in winter clothing, and the background shows city lights and trees.

Two guests from the local community, living within a protected nature reserve, shared their experiences and daily challenges. This gathering reaffirmed that nature conservation must be an integral part of public policies and budgets, not just nice words.



ŽENE ZA PRIRODU I ŽIVOTNU SREDINU / WOMEN FOR NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
						2024					



13. JUL 2024.

Mreža žena za prirodu u poseti rezervatu Uvac

Članice Mreže žena za prirodu i životnu sredinu posetile su Specijalni rezervat prirode "Uvac", jedno od najlepših prirodnih područja Srbije. Tokom vožnje katamaranom kroz krivudave meandre Uvačkog jezera, uživale su u pogledu na impresivne pejzaže i neizostavne stanovnike ovog područja – beloglave supove koji su preletali iznad njih. Posebnu pažnju privukla je poseta Ledene pećine, u kojoj temperatura tokom cele godine ostaje stabilna na 8°C. Pećina je sačuvana u svom prirodnom obliku – bez rasvete, a obilazak je moguć samo uz pomoć ručnih lampi i u pratnji čuvara rezervata. Ova poseta bila je podsećanje na neprocenjivu vrednost očuvanih prirodnih područja i važnost njihovog trajnog čuvanja za buduće generacije.

JULY 13, 2024

Women's Network for Nature Visiting Uvac Nature Reserve

Members of the Women's Network for Nature and the Environment visited the Special Nature Reserve "Uvac," one of Serbia's most beautiful natural areas. During a catamaran ride through the winding meanders of Uvac Lake, they enjoyed stunning landscapes and sightings of the iconic griffon vultures soaring above. A special highlight was the visit to the Ice Cave, where the temperature remains stable at 8°C year-round. The cave is preserved in its natural

state—without lighting—and tours are only possible with handheld lamps and in the company of reserve rangers. This visit was a reminder of the invaluable importance of protected natural areas and the need to safeguard them for future generations.



1-3. NOVEMBAR 2024

VI sastanak Mreže žena za zaštitu prirode i životnu sredinu: Ekstraktivizam pod lupom

NOVEMBER 1-3, 2024

Sixth Meeting of the Women's Network for Nature and the Environment: Extractivism Under the Microscope



SRB / Na Homolju je održan šesti sastanak Mreže žena za zaštitu prirode i životnu sredinu, okupljajući aktivistkinje iz različitih delova Srbije. Ova lokacija nije izabrana slučajno; Homolje je trenutno pod pretnjom rudarskih projekata, uključujući planirani rudnik zlata kanadske kompanije Dundee. Sastanak je otvorila Miroslava Nikolić iz Polekola, ističući da je Mreža žena sigurno mesto za solidarnost i saradnju, za razliku od nasilnog procesa ekstraktivizma koji ugrožava prirodu i zajednice.

Iskra Krstić iz inicijative Pravo na vodu održala je uvodno predavanje pod nazivom "Za šaku dolara: Uvod u ekstraktivizam", objašnjavajući kako ovaj ekonomski model eksploatiše prirodna bogatstva zemalja globalnog juga, ostavljajući za sobom ekološku i ekonomsku pustoš.

Učesnice su posetile brdo Čoka Rakita, gde su se upoznale sa posledicama istražnih bušotina i planiranim rudarskim projektima. Na imanju aktivistkinje Slavice Mošić, članice mreže su simbolično posadile lukovice kao čin očuvanja prirode. Iva Marković, programska direktorka Polekola, održala je predavanje "Ekstraktivizam i priroda", ističući razliku između ekstraktivizma kao ideologije i ekstrakcije kao procesa. Naglasila je kako se ekstraktivizam može primeniti i na znanje, kada obrazovani kadrovi odlaze da rade za strane kompanije, umesto da doprinesu lokalnoj zajednici.

Diskusija je obuhvatila i koncept "prava prirode", koji prepoznaje prirodu kao entitet sa sopstvenim pravima, kao što su to učinile Bolivija i Ekvador. Sastanak je završen izborom novog Komiteta Mreže žena i razmenom sekndhend garderobe pod nazivom "Održivost u ženskoj praksi", simbolizujući primenu filozofije odrasta u svakodnevnom životu



ŽENE ZA PRIRODU I ŽIVOTNU SREDINU / WOMEN FOR NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT



ENG / The sixth meeting of the Women’s Network for Nature and the Environment took place in Homolje, bringing together activists from across Serbia. The location was not chosen by accident—Homolje is currently under threat from mining projects, including a planned gold mine by the Canadian company Dundee. The meeting was opened by Miroslava Nikolić from Polekol, emphasizing that the Women’s Network is a safe place for solidarity and cooperation, in contrast to the violent process of extractivism that threatens nature and communities.

Iskra Krstić from the Right to Water Initiative delivered the opening lecture titled “For a Fistful of Dollars: Introduction to Extractivism,” explaining how this economic model exploits the natural wealth of Global South countries, leaving behind environmental and economic devastation.

Participants visited the Čoka Rakita hill to witness the consequences of exploratory drilling and planned mining operations. On the property of activist Slavica Mošić, network members symbolically planted flower bulbs as an act of nature preservation. Iva Marković, Program Director of Polekol, held a lecture titled “Extractivism and Nature,” highlighting the difference between extractivism as an ideology and extraction as a process. She stressed that extractivism can also apply to knowledge, when educated individuals leave to work for foreign companies instead of contributing to local communities.

The discussion also covered the concept of “rights of nature,” recognizing nature as a legal entity, as already done in Bolivia and Ecuador. The meeting concluded with the election of a new Women’s Network Committee and a secondhand clothing exchange called “Sustainability in Women’s Practice,” symbolizing the everyday application of degrowth philosophy.



5. NOVEMBAR 2024.

Žene u centru klimatskih politika i akcija

U okviru “Dijaloga o klimatskim promenama”, održanih u susret globalnoj UN konferenciji o klimatskim promenama COP29 koja se održala u Azerbejdžanu, UN Women je organizovao panel diskusiju “Žene u centru klimatskih politika i akcija: povećana otpornost na klimatske promene kroz unapređenje rodne ravnopravnosti”.

Na panelu su učestvovali predstavnici Ministarstva poljoprivrede, šumarstva i vodoprivrede, Ministarstva rudarstva i energetike, Ministarstva zaštite životne sredine kao i Žaklina Živković ispred Mreže žena za prirodu i životnu sredinu. Tokom diskusije istaknuta je važnost uključivanja rodne perspektive u sve politike, mere i aktivnosti koje se tiču borbe protiv klimatskih promena. Zaključak panela bio je jasan – za pravednija, inkluzivnija i održivija rešenja, neophodno je da se glas žena čuje i uvaži.

NOVEMBER 5, 2024

Women at the Center of Climate Policies and Actions

As part of the “Dialogue on Climate Change” series held in the lead-up to the UN COP29 Climate Conference in Azerbaijan, UN Women organized a panel discussion titled “Women at the Center of Climate Policies and Actions: Increasing Resilience to Climate Change Through Gender Equality.”

Panelists included representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Water Management, the Ministry of Mining and Energy, the Ministry of Environmental Protection, as well as Žaklina Živković representing the Women’s Network for Nature and the Environment. The discussion emphasized the importance of integrating a gender perspective into all climate-related policies, measures, and activities. The conclusion was clear—for fairer, more inclusive, and more sustainable solutions, women’s voices must be heard and respected.



ŽENE ZA PRIRODU I ŽIVOTNU SREDINU / WOMEN FOR NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT



5. DECEMBER 2024.

Upoznajte čuvarke prirode: Panel diskusija u Goethe-Institutu Beograd

Inspirativna panel diskusija „Upoznajte čuvarke prirode“, održana u Goethe-Institutu Beograd, bila je prilika da Mreža žena za zaštitu prirode i životne sredine predstavi svoje članice i svoj rad. Na panelu su govorile Dragana Arsić iz Pokreta Odbranimo šume Fruške gore, Marija Simić Savić iz Udruženja Ekomar, Ana Džakić iz organizacije Bela Čaplja, Sandra Jovanović, ekološkinja i braniteljka ptica, i Ana Karanović, osnivačica firme Ukusi Kopaonika. One su govorile o razlozima zbog kojih su se posvetile zaštiti prirode, izazovima i predrasudama sa kojima su se suočavale, iskustvima sa terena i aktivističkim borbama koje su vodile. U drugom delu razgovora, koji je moderirala Nataša Jančić ispred Polekola, učesnice su se osvrnule na rast Mreže od njenog osnivanja do danas, prisetile se najdirljivijih trenutaka sa zajedničkih aktivnosti i podelile na koji način im je članstvo u Mreži obogatilo lični i profesionalni život. Ceo razgovor možete pogledati na YouTube kanalu Prava na vodu. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4QbrOQ2fpIY>

DECEMBER 5, 2024

Meet the Guardians of Nature: Panel Discussion at the Goethe-Institut

The inspiring panel discussion “Meet the Guardians of Nature,” held at the Goethe-Institut Belgrade, offered an opportunity for the Women’s Network for Nature and the Environment to present its members and work. Speakers included Dragana Arsić from the Movement to Defend the Forests of Fruška Gora, Marija Simić Savić from the Ekomar Association, Ana Džakić from the Bela Čaplja organization, Sandra Jovanović, ecologist and bird defender, and Ana Karanović, founder of the “Flavors of Kopaonik” company. They shared their reasons for dedicating themselves to nature protection, the challenges and prejudices they faced, field experiences, and activist battles they fought. The second part of the discussion, moderated by Nataša Jančić from Polekol, reflected on the network’s growth since its founding, the most touching moments from their activities, and how membership in the Network enriched their personal and professional lives.

The full discussion is available on the Right to Water YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4QbrOQ2fpIY>



30. DECEMBER 2024.

Objavljena publikacija “Ženski ekološki budželar”

Rodno odgovorno budžetiranje ima za cilj da budžeti postanu više od finansijskih dokumenata – da budu ogledalo vrednosti i prioriteta zajednice, kao i alat za izgradnju ravnopravnijeg i održivijeg društva. Autorke publikacije “Ženski ekološki budželar”, Iskra Krstić i Žaklina Živković, na jasan i pristupačan način osvetljavaju ovu često zanemarenu temu u oblasti zaštite životne sredine. Kroz publikaciju su predstavljeni ključni pojmovi, analiza loših primera budžetiranja ekoloških projekata, kao i konkretni predlozi za unapređenje. Ovaj vodič namenjen je i ekološkim aktivistkinjama koje se zalažu za održive politike i donosiocima odluka koji žele da kreiraju i primenjuju bolje politike zaštite prirode.

DECEMBER 30, 2024

Publication “Women’s Environmental Budget Guide” Released

Gender-responsive budgeting aims to make budgets more than financial documents—it seeks to turn them into reflections of a community’s values and priorities, and tools for building a more equal and sustainable society. The authors of the publication “Women’s Environmental Budget Guide,” Iskra Krstić and Žaklina Živković, clearly and accessibly shed light on this often overlooked topic within environmental protection. The publication presents key concepts, an analysis of poor examples of environmental project budgeting, and concrete proposals for improvements. This guide is intended for both environmental activists advocating for sustainable policies and policymakers seeking to create and implement better nature protection policies.

DEMOKRA- TIZACIJA I UČEŠĆE JAVNOSTI

Polekol zagovara demokratizaciju društva i povećanu participaciju građanki i građana u procesima odlučivanja. Kroz istraživanja i edukaciju podstiče spremnost građana za učešće u procesima donošenja odluka. Veća informisanost građana o problemima i rešenjima u procesima donošenja odluka. Kreiranje prostora i podsticanje na učešće stručne javnosti.

DEMOCRATI- ZATION AND PUBLIC PAR- TICIPATION

Polekol advocates for the democratization of society and the increased participation of citizens in decision-making processes. Through research and education, it encourages citizens' willingness to participate in decision-making processes. We work on creating a greater awareness of citizens about problems and solutions in decision-making processes. We create space and encourage the participation of the expert public.

DEMOKRATIZACIJA I UČEŠĆE JAVNOSTI / DEMOCRATIZATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



1. MART - 12. DECEMBAR 2024.

Prvi institucionalni koraci Polekola – rad u radnoj grupi Ministarstva zaštite životne sredine

SRB / Arhuska konvencija reguliše pravo na pristup informacijama o životnoj sredini, pravo na učešće javnosti u donošenju odluka o pitanjima životne sredine, kao i pravo na pravnu zaštitu u pitanjima životne sredine. Republika Srbija je potvrdila Arhusku konvenciju 2009. godine, a Polekol je na javnom konkursu Ministarstva zaštite životne sredine Republike Srbije početkom 2024. godine postao član radne grupe za izradu Nacrta Strategije i Akcionog plana za primenu Arhuske konvencije za narednih deset godina.

ENG / The Aarhus Convention regulates the right to access environmental information, the right to public participation in environmental decision-making, and the right to legal protection regarding environmental issues. The Republic of Serbia ratified the Aarhus Convention in 2009, and in early 2024, following a public call by the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Polekol became a member of the Working Group tasked with drafting the Strategy and Action Plan for implementing the Aarhus Convention over the next ten years.

Ova Strategija ima za cilj da obezbedi efikasno i postepeno ispunjavanje zahteva Konvencije u skladu sa specifičnostima uslova u Srbiji. Strategija definiše i razvojne ciljeve i mere potrebne za usklađivanje sa najvišim standardima zaštite životne sredine.

Polekol je u okviru Radne grupe tražio izmenu delova Nacrta Strategije, pošto postojeći predlozi istih ne ispunjavaju u potpunosti cilj same Konvencije, niti omogućavaju unapređenje mogućnosti javne participacije građana i pravne zaštite životne sredine u meri u kojoj je to potrebno. Više informacija o radu Polekola u ovoj radnoj grupi možete naći na našem sajtu.

This Strategy aims to ensure the gradual and effective fulfillment of the Convention's requirements, tailored to the specific conditions in Serbia. It defines development goals and measures necessary for alignment with the highest standards of environmental protection.

Within the Working Group, Polekol demanded amendments to parts of the Draft Strategy, as the existing proposals did not fully meet the Convention's aims nor adequately improve opportunities for public participation and legal environmental protection as required. More information about Polekol's work in the Working Group can be found on our website.



30. MART 2024.

Podrška blokadama u Krivelju

Na teritoriji Krivelja kineska kompanija ZiJin Copper Bor eksploatiše mineralne sirovine u 4 aktivna rudnika. Kompanija i država potpuno ignorišu vapaj Kriveljana, a kad se borite da za goli život nemate izbora nego da započnete radikalni protest kakav je blokada saobraćajnica. U selu Krivelj sabrali su se ljudi na 60. dan blokade i organizovan je veliki ekološki skup podrške meštanima u borbi za zdravu životnu sredinu, a Polekol je podržao ovaj skup.

MARCH 30, 2024

Supporting the Blockades in Krivelj

In the territory of Krivelj, the Chinese company ZiJin Copper Bor exploits mineral resources at four active mines. The company and the state have completely ignored the desperate calls from the residents of Krivelj, who, fighting for their very survival, had no choice but to launch a radical protest—blocking the roads. On the 60th day of the blockade, a large environmental gathering was organized to support the residents in their fight for a healthy environment, and Polekol joined in support.



22. MAJ 2024.

Užice se guši: Požar na deponiji „Duboko“ – građani traže rešenja i odgovornost

Više od mesec dana stanovnici Užica i okolnih sela trpili su posledice požara na deponiji „Duboko“, udišući otrovni dim. Zbog toga su 21. maja po drugi put izašli na ulice – oko 1.000 građana okupilo se na masovnom protestu, tražeći hitnu sanaciju, zatvaranje deponije i smenjivanje odgovornih. Među okupljenima su bili zabrinuti roditelji, stručnjaci i ekološki aktivisti, među kojima i članovi inicijative Pravo na vodu i užičkog Libergrafta. Izvršna direktorka Polekola Žaklina Živković govorila je na protestu i poslala jasnu poruku: neprihvatljivo je da nemar, loši projekti i ignorisanje problema dovode do ekoloških katastrofa koje ugrožavaju zdravlje građana.

MAY 22, 2024

Užice Suffocates: Fire at “Duboko” Landfill – Citizens Demand Solutions and Accountability

For over a month, residents of Užice and surrounding villages endured the consequences of the fire at the “Duboko” landfill, breathing in toxic smoke. On May 21, citizens took to the streets for the second time—around 1,000 people gathered in a mass protest demanding immediate remediation, the closure of the landfill, and the dismissal of those responsible. Among those gathered were concerned parents, experts, and environmental activists, including members of the Right to Water Initiative and Užice's Libergraf. Polekol's Executive Director, Žaklina Živković, spoke at the protest, sending a clear message: negligence, poor projects, and ignoring problems must no longer be allowed to cause ecological disasters endangering citizens' health.

DEMOKRATIZACIJA I UČEŠĆE JAVNOSTI /
DEMOCRATIZATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



9. AVGUST 2024.
Za očuvanje Golije: Primedbe na nacrt zaštite Parka prirode

Polekol je uputio svoje primedbe na Nacrt naredbe o proglašenju i Studiju zaštite Parka prirode “Golija”, zalažući se za očuvanje ovog dragocenog prirodnog područja. Primedbe su usmerene na ukidanje planova za izgradnju skijališta i malih hidroelektrana na teritoriji parka, kao i na zabranu izgradnje vetroparkova i eksploatacije rudnih i mineralnih sirovina, uključujući pesak, kamen, šljunak i glinu iz vodotokova. Polekol je takođe svoje primedbe učinio dostupnim javnosti, pozvavši građane da se priključe, učestvuju u javnoj raspravi i zajednički zaštite Goliju kao prirodno blago koje pripada svima. Organizovali smo inicijative iz Kraljeva, Ivanjice, Raške i drugih mesta da učestvuju u ovim procesima i iskoriste naše primedbe, ili napišu svoje.

AUGUST 9, 2024
Protecting Golija: Objections to the Draft Protection Plan for the Nature Park

Polekol submitted objections to the Draft Decree and Protection Study for the Golija Nature Park, advocating for the preservation of this precious natural area. The objections targeted plans for ski resort construction and small hydropower plants within the park, and called for bans on wind farms and the exploitation of minerals and raw materials (sand, stone, gravel, and clay from waterways). Polekol made its objections publicly available, inviting citizens to join the public consultation process, submit their own comments, and collectively protect Golija as a shared natural treasure. We also mobilized initiatives from Kraljevo, Ivanjica, Raška, and other towns to participate, using our comments or drafting their own.



15. AVGUST 2024.
Blokada deponije Duboko: Borba za čist vazduh u Užicu

Polekol je podržao građane Užica i Lunovog Sela koji su blokirali pristup bivšoj sanitarnoj deponiji Duboko, nakon što joj je istekla dozvola za odlaganje otpada. Deponija je pre toga 40 dana gorela, izazivajući ozbiljno zagađenje vazduha i strah među stanovnicima da će se požar ponoviti. Građani su kamionima sa otpadom blokirali prilaz deponiji, tražeći zaštitu svog zdravlja i hitnu reakciju nadležnih da trajno reše problem Dubokog, a ne da ga prebacuju preko leđa lokalnog stanovništva.

AUGUST 15, 2024
Blockade of Duboko Landfill: Fight for Clean Air in Užice

Polekol supported the citizens of Užice and Lunovo Selo who blocked access to the former sanitary landfill Duboko after its waste disposal permit expired. Prior to that, the landfill had burned for 40 days, causing serious air pollution and raising fears among residents of another fire. Citizens blocked the landfill's access roads with garbage trucks, demanding protection for their health and immediate action by authorities to permanently resolve the Duboko issue rather than placing the burden on local communities.



19. SEPTEMBAR 2024.
Skandalozna javna rasprava u Užicu bez rešenja za zagađenje sa deponije Duboko

Na javnoj raspravi o nacrtu Regionalnog plana upravljanja otpadom, održanoj 18. septembra u Užicu, građani i predstavnici organizacija, među kojima i Polekol, ukazali su na ozbiljne propuste u planu, uključujući nedostatak dozvola za rad deponije Duboko i neadekvatan sistem upravljanja otpadom. Umesto odgovora, suočili su se sa omalovažavanjem i ignorisanjem njihovih pitanja od strane predstavnika vlasti.

Zbog ovakvog pristupa, građani su zahtevali da se proces vrati na početak, da se uključe stručnjaci i lokalna zajednica i da se novi plan izradi u skladu sa zakonom i stvarnim potrebama. Rasprava je još jednom pokazala duboko nepoverenje u institucije i hitnu potrebu za transparentnim i odgovornim vođenjem procesa.

SEPTEMBER 19, 2024
Scandalous Public Hearing in Užice: No Solutions for Pollution from Duboko Landfill

At the public hearing on the Draft Regional Waste Management Plan, held on September 18 in Užice, citizens and organizations, including Polekol, pointed out serious flaws in the plan, such as the lack of permits for Duboko's operation and the inadequate waste management system. Instead of receiving answers, they were met with belittling and the dismissal of their questions by government representatives.

As a result, citizens demanded that the process be restarted, that experts and the local community be genuinely involved, and that a new plan be drafted in line with the law and real needs. The hearing once again revealed deep distrust in institutions and the urgent need for transparent and accountable environmental governance.

DEMOKRATIZACIJA I UČEŠĆE JAVNOSTI / DEMOCRATIZATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



27. SEPTEMBAR 2024.

Rtanj u opasnosti: Problematična rešenja u Nacrtu Prostornog plana

SRB / Nacrt Prostornog plana za Specijalni rezervat prirode Rtanj predviđa rešenja koja ozbiljno ugrožavaju prirodu i održivi razvoj ovog jedinstvenog područja. Odsustvo zaštitne zone, planiranje skijališta i izgradnja malih akumulacija predstavljaju poteze koji bi doveli do devastacije prirodnih vrednosti Rtnja.

ENG / The Draft Spatial Plan for the Special Nature Reserve Rtanj proposes solutions that seriously threaten the nature and sustainable development of this unique area. The absence of a protective zone, the planning of ski resorts, and the construction of small reservoirs would lead to the devastation of Rtanj's natural values.

SEPTEMBER 27, 2024

Rtanj in Danger: Problematic Solutions in the Draft Spatial Plan

Zaštitna zona, koja je standard neopravdano je izostavljena i na Rtnju, čime se šire područje rezervata ostavlja nezaštićenim. Predviđena izgradnja skijališta ugrozila bi visoke šume i staništa retkih vrsta, a zbog klimatskih promena i sve manje padavina, održavanje skijališta ispod 1500 metara nadmorske visine postaje neodrživo. Planirane akumulacije na Vrmdžanskoj, Lozanskoj reci i Jošanici narušile bi prirodne tokove, ugrozile autohtone vrste i otvorile mogućnost za izgradnju mini hidroelektrana, što je suprotno važećim zabranama.

Polekol je napisao svoje primedbe, pozivao građane da pošalju svoje primedbe na adresu Agencije za prostorno planiranje i urbanizam Republike Srbije i da prisustvuju javnoj sednici u Sokobanji.

The protective zone—an international standard—was unjustifiably omitted for Rtanj, leaving broader reserve areas unprotected. The planned ski resort would endanger tall forests and rare species' habitats, and due to climate change and decreasing precipitation, maintaining ski resorts below 1,500 meters above sea level is unsustainable. The planned reservoirs on the Vrmdžanska, Lozanska rivers, and Jošanica would disrupt natural water flows, endanger native species, and create possibilities for mini hydropower plants—contrary to existing prohibitions.

Polekol submitted its objections and called on citizens to send their own comments to the Spatial Planning and Urbanism Agency of the Republic of Serbia and to attend the public session in Sokobanja.



30. SEPTEMBAR 2024.

Čuvajmo čuvaru prirode

Atelje za društvene promene - ACT i Polekol skrenuli su pažnju da je tokom 2023. godine širom sveta ubijeno 196 ekoloških aktivista koji su hrabro branili prirodu i svoje zajednice od deforestacije, zagađenja i otimanja zemljišta. Od 2012. godine organizacija Global Witness dokumentovala je više od 2.000 ubistava ekoloških branitelja, a stvarni broj je verovatno još veći.

Ovi zločini uglavnom ostaju nekažnjeni, dok vlasti i korporacije zatvaraju oči pred nasiljem i kriminalizacijom aktivista. Situacija ni u našem regionu nije bolja - aktivisti se svakodnevno suočavaju sa napadima, pretnjama, pritiscima, SLAPP tužbama i kampaњama blaćenja, dok se pravo na okupljanje i protest sve više ograničava. Naša krhka demokratija i osnovna ljudska prava su pod stalnim pritiskom, a borba za reke, šume i budućnost naših zajednica postaje borba za opstanak.

SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

Protect the Protectors of Nature

The Atelier for Social Change - ACT and Polekol highlighted that in 2023, 196 environmental activists were killed worldwide while bravely defending nature and their communities from deforestation, pollution, and land grabbing. Since 2012, Global Witness has documented over 2,000 murders of environmental defenders, though the real number is likely even higher.

These crimes largely go unpunished, while authorities and corporations turn a blind eye to violence and the criminalization of activists. The situation in our region is no better—activists face daily attacks, threats, pressure, SLAPP lawsuits, and smear campaigns, while the rights to assemble and protest are increasingly restricted. Our fragile democracy and fundamental human rights are under constant pressure, and the fight for rivers, forests, and the future of our communities has become a fight for survival.

Rtanj u opasnosti:
Hoće od piramide da
naprave behaton kocku!



DEMOKRATIZACIJA I UČEŠĆE JAVNOSTI / DEMOCRATIZATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



1. OKTOBAR 2024.

Forum civilnog društva Berlinskog samita 2024: Poziv za zaštitu demokratije i civilnog društva

OCTOBER 1, 2024

Civil Society Forum of the 2024 Berlin Summit: A Call to Protect Democracy and Civil Society



SRB / Na Forumu civilnog društva Berlinskog procesa 2024, održanom od 9. do 11. oktobra u Berlinu, učesnici su pozvali lidere Berlinskog procesa da sledeće nedelje usvoje zaključke o podršci vladavini prava i demokratiji na Zapadnom Balkanu. Među učesnicima bila je i Žaklina Živković, izvršna direktorka Polekola, koja je učestvovala u razgovorima sa donosiocima odluka iz regiona i EU o Zelenoj agendi, vladavini prava, rodnoj ravnopravnosti, omladinskim politikama i drugim ključnim temama.

Forum je posebno istakao potrebu da se vlade Zapadnog Balkana pozovu da se uzdrže od svih oblika direktne i indirektna represije nad civilnim društvom, naglašavajući važnost stvaranja bezbednog i slobodnog prostora za rad organizacija i aktivista u regionu.

ENG / At the 2024 Civil Society Forum of the Berlin Process, held from October 9 to 11 in Berlin, participants called on Berlin Process leaders to adopt conclusions supporting the rule of law and democracy in the Western Balkans. Among the participants was Žaklina Živković, Executive Director of Polekol, who took part in discussions with decision-makers from the region and the EU about the Green Agenda, rule of law, gender equality, youth policies, and other key topics.

The Forum particularly emphasized the need for Western Balkan governments to refrain from all forms of direct and indirect repression against civil society, highlighting the importance of creating a safe and free space for the work of organizations and activists in the region.



9. OKTOBAR 2024.

Polekol na javnom slušanju u Evropskom parlamentu o gušenju građanskih sloboda u Srbiji

Na javnom slušanju održanom u Evropskom parlamentu, koje su organizovali zeleni poslanici Gordan Bosanac i Vladimir Prebilič, govorila je Iva Marković, programska direktorka organizacije Polekol. Događaj je organizovan kao odgovor na hitan apel za prekid pritiska na civilno društvo u Srbiji i na osnovu izveštaja Građanskih inicijativa koji dokumentuje sve intenzivnije napade na organizacije i aktiviste. Ovaj događaj je omogućio da se glasovi onih koji se bore za očuvanje prostora građanskih sloboda čuju u najvažnijim evropskim institucijama.

Uz Ivu Marković, na slušanju su govorili i Uroš Jovanović (Građanske inicijative), Mirko Popović (RERI), Sofija Todorović (Inicijativa mladih za ljudska prava) i Andrej Petrovski (Share fondacija), ističući kako se protesti protiv Rio Tinta i projekta Jadar koriste kao primer represije nad miroljubivim građanskim pokretima. Govornici su naglasili hitnu potrebu da EU bolje razume izazove sa kojima se suočavaju građani Srbije i da ojača nadzor nad vladavinom prava i poštovanjem osnovnih prava u procesu pristupanja Srbije Evropskoj uniji.

OCTOBER 9, 2024

Polekol at the European Parliament Public Hearing on the Suppression of Civil Liberties in Serbia

At a public hearing organized in the European Parliament by Green MEPs Gordan Bosanac and Vladimir Prebilič, Polekol's Program Director Iva Marković spoke. The event was organized in response to an urgent appeal to stop the pressure on civil society in Serbia and was based on a report by Civic Initiatives documenting escalating attacks on organizations and activists. The hearing gave a voice to those fighting to preserve civil liberties in the most important European institutions.

In addition to Iva Marković, speakers included Uroš Jovanović (Civic Initiatives), Mirko Popović (RERI), Sofija Todorović (Youth Initiative for Human Rights), and Andrej Petrovski (Share Foundation), who emphasized how the protests against Rio Tinto and the Jadar project are being used as examples of repression against peaceful citizens' movements. Speakers stressed the urgent need for the EU to better understand the challenges facing Serbian citizens and to strengthen oversight over rule of law and human rights in Serbia's EU accession process.



DEMOKRATIZACIJA I UČEŠĆE JAVNOSTI / DEMOCRATIZATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



14. OKTOBAR 2024.

Pobeda prirode nad investitorskim urbanizmom: Rtanj sačuvan

Polekol i inicijativa Pravo na vodu sa zadovoljstvom obaveštavaju javnost da je planirana “zlatiborizacija” Rtnja uspešno osujećena zahvaljujući mobilizaciji građana i organizacija širom Srbije. Nacrt Prostornog plana za Specijalni rezervat prirode Rtanj, koji je predviđao vetroparkove, kame-nolome, skijališta i male hidroelektrane, doživeo je ključne izmene nakon masovnog učešća građana na javnom uvidu održanom 11. oktobra u So-kobanji. Ova pobeda pokazuje da odlučna i organizovana reakcija javno-sti može zaustaviti projekte koji prete prirodnim dobrima, i da su glasovi građana nezaobilazan faktor u očuvanju naših najvrednijih prostora.

OCTOBER 14, 2024

Victory of Nature Over Investor Urbanism: Rtanj Preserved

Polekol and the Right to Water Initiative are pleased to inform the public that the planned “Zlatiborization” of Rtanj has been successfully thwarted thanks to the mobilization of citizens and organizations across Serbia. The Draft Spatial Plan for the Special Nature Reserve Rtanj, which had included wind farms, quarries, ski resorts, and mini hydropower plants, underwent key amendments following the mass participation of citizens during the public review held on October 11 in Sokobanja. This victory shows that a determined and organized public response can stop projects that threaten natural assets, and that the voices of citizens are an essential force in preserving our most valuable areas.



14-17. OKTOBAR 2024.

Brisel na raskršnici: Glasovi Srbije i Bosne i Hercegovine protiv ekstraktivizma

OCTOBER 14-17, 2024

Brussels at a Crossroads: Voices from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina Against Extractivism

SRB / Od 14. do 17. oktobra 2024. godine, Polekol je bio deo delegacije iz Srbije i Bosne i Hercegovine koja je posetila Brisel, u organizaciji Evropskog biroa za životnu sredinu i Fondacije Hajnrih Bel. Cilj posete bio je angažovanje evropskih zvaničnika u vezi sa hitnim pitanjima životne sredine i ljudskih prava na Zapadnom Balkanu, posebno u kontekstu predloženih projekata rudarenja litijuma u Srbiji i BiH. Delegacija je istakla zabrinutost zbog slabog institucionalnog nadzora i davanja prioriteta privatnim interesima nad javnom dobrobiti, što doprinosi atmosferi represije i neprijateljstva prema ekološkim aktivistima.

Glavni događaj posete bio je skup “Balkan na raskršću: rudarenje litijuma, ljudska prava i borba za ekološku pravdu” u Evropskom parlamentu. Među govornicima bila je Iva Marković, programska direktorka Polekola i suosnivač inicijative Pravo na vodu. Ona je govorila o razvoju ekološkog pokreta u Srbiji, koji je nastao kroz godine otpora prema problemima poput malih hidroelektrana, zagađenja vazduha i eksploatacije uglja. Marković je naglasila da pokret nije antizapadno ili antiistočno orijentisan, već da se zasniva na autentičnim ekološkim brigama lokalnih zajednica. Takođe je osudila represiju protiv ekoloških aktivista u Srbiji, uključujući hapšenja i medijske napade, ističući da građani pribegavaju protestima tek nakon što iscrpe sve institucionalne kanale. Ona je upozorila da ćutanje EU pred ovim kršenjima ljudskih prava može dodatno narušiti njen ugled u Srbiji i šire.

ENG / From October 14 to 17, 2024, Polekol was part of a delegation from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina that visited Brussels, organized by the European Environmental Bureau and the Heinrich Böll Foundation. The aim of the visit was to engage European officials regarding urgent environmental and human rights issues in the Western Balkans, particularly concerning proposed lithium mining projects in Serbia and BiH. The delegation raised concerns about weak institutional oversight and the prioritization of private interests over public welfare, contributing to an atmosphere of repression and hostility toward environmental activists.

The main event was the gathering “Balkan at a Crossroads: Lithium Mining, Human Rights, and the Fight for Environmental Justice” held at the European Parliament. Among the speakers was Iva Marković, Program Director of Polekol and co-founder of the Right to Water Initiative. She spoke about the development of Serbia’s environmental movement, which grew through years of resistance against problems such as small hydropower plants, air pollution, and coal exploitation. Marković emphasized that the movement is neither anti-Western nor anti-Eastern, but rooted in the authentic environmental concerns of local communities. She condemned the repression of environmental activists in Serbia, including arrests and media attacks, stressing that citizens resort to protests only after exhausting all institutional avenues. Marković warned that the EU’s silence in the face of these human rights violations could further damage its reputation in Serbia and beyond.





18. NOVEMBAR 2024.

Polekol zahteva odlučne mere protiv ekološkog kriminala

Polekol je učestvovao u javnoj raspravi o Nacrtu zakona o izmenama i dopunama Krivičnog zakonika i Zakona o krivičnom postupku, slanjem komentara koji treba da doprinesu da ovi zakoni bolje prepoznaju i sankcionišu ugrožavanje životne sredine, ističući da su posledice ovakvih dela razorne po prirodu, zdravlje ljudi i javne resurse. Iako zakoni postoje, ekološki kriminal često ostaje nekažnjen, dok građani i aktivisti koji ukazuju na ove probleme trpe pritiske i odmazdu.

Polekol zahteva od institucija da hitno preduzmu mere: doslednu primenu zakona, obezbeđivanje nezavisnosti inspekcija i tužilaštava, javno objavljivanje informacija o ekološkim incidentima i zaštitu uzbunjivača i aktivista. Takođe, pozivaju sve građane da prijavljuju ekološke prekršaje i aktivno učestvuju u zaštiti životne sredine, jer je to odgovornost koju delimo svi.

NOVEMBER 18, 2024

Polekol Demands Decisive Action Against Environmental Crime

Polekol participated in the public consultation on the Draft Amendments to the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code, submitting comments aimed at better recognizing and punishing environmental harm. They highlighted that while laws exist, environmental crimes often go unpunished, while citizens and activists pointing them out face pressure and retaliation.

Polekol demands urgent institutional action: consistent law enforcement, ensuring the independence of inspections and prosecutors, public disclosure of environmental incident information, and protection for whistleblowers and activists. They also called on all citizens to report environmental violations and actively participate in protecting the environment, as it is a shared responsibility.



30. NOVEMBAR 2024.

Zajedno protiv SLAPP tužbi: Polekol na prvoj regionalnoj anti-SLAPP konferenciji

Polekol je učestvovao na prvoj regionalnoj anti-SLAPP konferenciji, koja je okupila aktiviste i aktivistkinje iz celog Zapadnog Balkana sa ciljem zajedničkog suprotstavljanja zloupotrebi pravnog sistema kroz SLAPP tužbe.

Iva Marković, programska direktorka Polekola, moderirala je panel koji je istraživao duboke posledice koje SLAPP tužbe ostavljaju na rad i živote aktivista. Na panelu su govorili Sunčica Tuševljak iz Ateljea za društvene promene ACT, Denis Mekić, ekološki aktivista iz Crne Gore, Miodrag Vujović iz organizacije KOD i Dragana Arsić iz Pokreta Odbranimo šume Fruške gore, razmenjujući iskustva i strategije otpora.

NOVEMBER 30, 2024

United Against SLAPP Lawsuits: Polekol at the First Regional Anti-SLAPP Conference

Polekol participated in the first regional anti-SLAPP conference, which gathered activists from across the Western Balkans to jointly resist the abuse of the legal system through SLAPP lawsuits.

Iva Marković, Program Director of Polekol, moderated a panel exploring the profound impacts of SLAPP lawsuits on activists' work and lives. Panelists included Sunčica Tuševljak (Atelier for Social Change ACT), Denis Mekić (environmental activist from Montenegro), Miodrag Vujović (organization KOD), and Dragana Arsić (Movement to Defend Fruška Gora's Forests), who shared experiences and resistance strategies.



DEMOKRATIZACIJA I UČEŠĆE JAVNOSTI / DEMOCRATIZATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



8. DECEMBAR 2024.

Susret civilnog društva sa izvestiocima Evropskog parlamenta za Zapadni Balkan

Predstavnici organizacija i inicijativa iz zemalja regiona, okupljenih u okviru Angažovane demokratske inicijative (Engaged Democracy) Evropskog fonda za Balkan, zajedno sa članovima Savetodavne grupe za javne politike Balkan u Evropi (BiE-PAG), sastali su se u Briselu sa izvestiocima Evropskog parlamenta za Zapadni Balkan – Toninom Piculom (Srbija), Marjanom Šarecom (Crna Gora), Andreasom Šiderom (Albanija) i Tomasom Vajcom (Severna Makedonija), kao i sa poslanicima Vladimirom Prebiličem i Markom Tarkvinijem. Deo delegacije bila je i Žaklina Živković izvršna direktorka Polekola doprinosivši razgovorima o pritiscima sa kojima se suočavaju ekološki aktivisti u Srbiji i u regionu i važnosti očuvanja prostora za delovanje građana u procesima donošenja odluka.

DECEMBER 8, 2024

Civil Society Meeting with European Parliament Rapporteurs for the Western Balkans

Representatives of organizations and initiatives from the region, gathered under the Engaged Democracy Initiative of the European Fund for the Balkans, together with members of the Balkan in Europe Policy Advisory Group (BiEPAG), met in Brussels with European Parliament rapporteurs for the Western Balkans—Tonino Picula (Serbia), Marjan Šarec (Montenegro), Andreas Schieder (Albania), and Thomas Waitz (North Macedonia)—as well as MEPs Vladimir Prebilič and Marco Tarquinio. Žaklina Živković, Executive Director of Polekol, was part of the delegation, contributing to discussions about the pressures facing environmental activists in Serbia and the region, and emphasizing the importance of preserving civic space in decision-making processes.



21. DECEMBAR 2024.

Podrška studentima i poljoprivrednicima: Polekol uz proteste za pravdu i dostojanstvo

Polekol je pozvao ekološke aktivistkinje i aktiviste da se okupe ispred Studentskog kulturnog centra i zajedno pruže podršku studentima i poljoprivrednicima koji su organizovali protest na Slaviji, reagujući na (ne)ispunjenje studentskih zahteva. Zahtevi su formirani nakon napada na studente Fakulteta dramskih umetnosti koji su ođavali počast žrtvama stradalim usled pada nadstrešnice železničke stanice u Novom Sadu. Neispunjavanje zahteva, nasilje nad studentima, stanje u državi i sveprisutna korupcija doveli su do masovnih blokada koje traju već više od tri meseca širom Srbije. Protestima se pridružuje i sve veći broj javnih preduzeća kroz štrajkove, pokazujući širinu nezadovoljstva i potrebu za dubokim promenama u društvu.

DECEMBER 21, 2024

Supporting Students and Farmers: Polekol Joins the Protests for Justice and Dignity

Polekol called on environmental activists to gather in front of the Students' Cultural Center and support students and farmers protesting at Slavija Square, reacting to the government's failure to meet students' demands. The demands were formed after an attack on students from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts who were commemorating victims of the Novi Sad train station roof collapse. The government's failure to address these demands, the violence against students, widespread state corruption, and deteriorating conditions led to mass blockades across Serbia for over three months. More and more public sector workers have joined the protests through strikes, reflecting the depth of public dissatisfaction and the need for profound societal change.



2024



21. MAJ 2024.

Lokalni mediji u Užicu o protestu zbog požara na deponiji

Jedan od najčitanijih medija u Užicu Radio Luna izvestio je sa protesta u ovom gradu, izazvanim požarom na regionaloj deponiji Užice, na kojem se okupljenima obratila i izvršna direktorka Polekola Žaklina Živković.

MAY 21, 2024

Local Media in Užice Report on Protest Over Landfill Fire

One of the most-read media outlets in Užice, Radio Luna, reported on the protest triggered by the fire at the regional landfill, where Polekol's Executive Director Žaklina Živković addressed the gathered crowd.

17. SEPTEMBAR 2024.

Javna rasprava prekinuta uvredama u Užicu

Javnu raspravu o deponiji Duboko pratile su mnoge kontroverze. O ovome detaljno za Novi Magazin govorila je Žaklina Živković iz Polekola.

SEPTEMBER 17, 2024.

Public Hearing Interrupted by Insults in Užice

The public hearing about the Duboko landfill was surrounded by numerous controversies. Žaklina Živković from Polekol discussed the details of the situation in an interview for Novi Magazin.

26. SEPTEMBAR 2024.

Tragom javne rasprave o regionalnom planu upravljanja otpadom

Novinari Novog magazina napisali su detaljan izveštaj sa javne rasprave o predlogu novog regionalnog plana upravljanja otpadom koja se održala u Užicu, a na kojem je učestvovao i Polekol.

SEPTEMBER 26, 2024.

Following the Public Hearing on the Regional Waste Management Plan

Journalists from Novi Magazin published a detailed report from the public hearing on the proposal for the new regional waste management plan, held in Užice, with Polekol actively participating.

19. OKTOBAR 2024.

O odbrani Rtnja na televiziji N1

Izmene Nacrta plana područja posebne namene Specijalnog rezervata prirode Rtanj donele su pravu pobjedu za prirodu i održivo korišćenje prostora, o čemu je govorio pravni savetnik Polekola Strahinja Macić za televiziju N1.

SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

Defending Rtanj on N1 Television

The amendments to the Draft Plan for the Special Nature Reserve Rtanj marked a true victory for nature and sustainable land use. Polekol's legal advisor, Strahinja Macić, spoke about this for N1 Television.

15. NOVEMBAR 2024.

Gostovanje Strahinje Macića na Novoj S

Tema gostovanja na jutarnjem programu "Probudi se" našeg pravnog savetnika Strahinje Macića bila je ekološki kriminal i izmene Krivičnog zakona i Zakona o krivičnom postupku.

OCTOBER 19, 2024

Strahinja Macić Guest Appearance on Nova S

In the morning program "Wake Up" ("Probudi se") on Nova S TV, Polekol's legal advisor Strahinja Macić discussed environmental crime and the amendments to the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code.

25. DECEMBAR 2024.

Polekolova Snaga borbe

Organizacija Polekol predstavljena je u okviru serijala Snaga borbe, koju su realizovale Građanske inicijative i novinar Marko Novičić. Polekol je poznat po okupljanju i pokretanju inicijativa, a jedna od ključnih je Pravo na vodu. Govorili smo i o Mreži žena za životnu sredinu i prirodu, podsticanju ljudi da se probude i zauzmu za svoje okruženje i institucionalno i direktnom akcijom. Demistifikovali smo političku ekologiju i naše vrednosti.

DECEMBER 25, 2024

Polekol's "Strength of Struggle"

Polekol was featured in the "Strength of Struggle" series, produced by Civic Initiatives and journalist Marko Novičić. The organization was highlighted for gathering and initiating movements, notably the Right to Water initiative. We also spoke about the Women's Network for Nature and the Environment, encouraging people to stand up for their surroundings both institutionally and through direct action. We demystified political ecology and reaffirmed our values.

polekol
Organizacija
za političku ekologiju

*Pravo
na
vodu*

ОД ЛАЗНИЦЕ
ДО ЛОЗНИЦЕ
РУДНИКА БИТИ НЕЋЕ



polekol.org