

To whom it may concern

08 May 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to express our concern about the hydroelectric project ‘Halcones’ on Rio Diguillín approved by the VIII Region Environmental Committee on 13 February 2018.

Firstly, it is disappointing that this project was given a green light in an area that is part of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve called Corredor Biológico Nevados de Chillán – Laguna del Laja. This reserve with its diverse flora and fauna and endemic species (like the huemul deer) is a precious ecological centre not only for Chile, but for the whole world. Such a construction work would undoubtedly have serious negative impacts on this unique and pristine ecological environment.

Secondly, the impact of huge hydroelectric projects on the local communities is also a matter of concern. In the Valley more than 25,000 people live, who would certainly be affected by the construction of the plant. The area has become an emerging tourism destination due to its unspoilt nature and the growing tourism has a positive impact on local employment: tourism provides job opportunities directly for 2,000 people and indirectly for 8,000 people. With the start of constructions the area would lose its beauty and this way it would not be attractive for tourists any more. The decline of tourism would mean fewer job opportunities, fewer economic benefits in the area and also less tax income for the government.

Therefore, we strongly suggest the reconsideration of the decision about Halcones project on Rio Diguillín. Based on our experience, we furthermore suggest tourism as a tool for the sustainable social and economic development of the area that would provide quality of life and well-being for local people and additional incomes for the government. Allowing tourism to further develop in the Valley and in the area would create a win-win situation: it would be beneficial for the nature, local people and the municipal and national governments, as they could get more incomes without considerable investment.

We very much hope the consideration of the above suggestions, when decisions are made about Halcones project or any similar projects in the area.



Yours faithfully,

Maurizio Davolio

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