



Private Rivers

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**Water Lecture
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Overview

- Drivers of politics of renewable energy in Turkey
- Privatization for hydropower
- Run-of-river hydro facts
- Data collection strategy
- Findings
- Clarification and conclusion



Politics of renewable energy in Turkey

1-Water flows for nothing, there is an energy crisis!

Large-scale effort to promote small scale hydroelectricity facilities: 49 years.

2- Blue Energy for a greener Europe

Climate change mitigation.

Global funds.

Government incentives

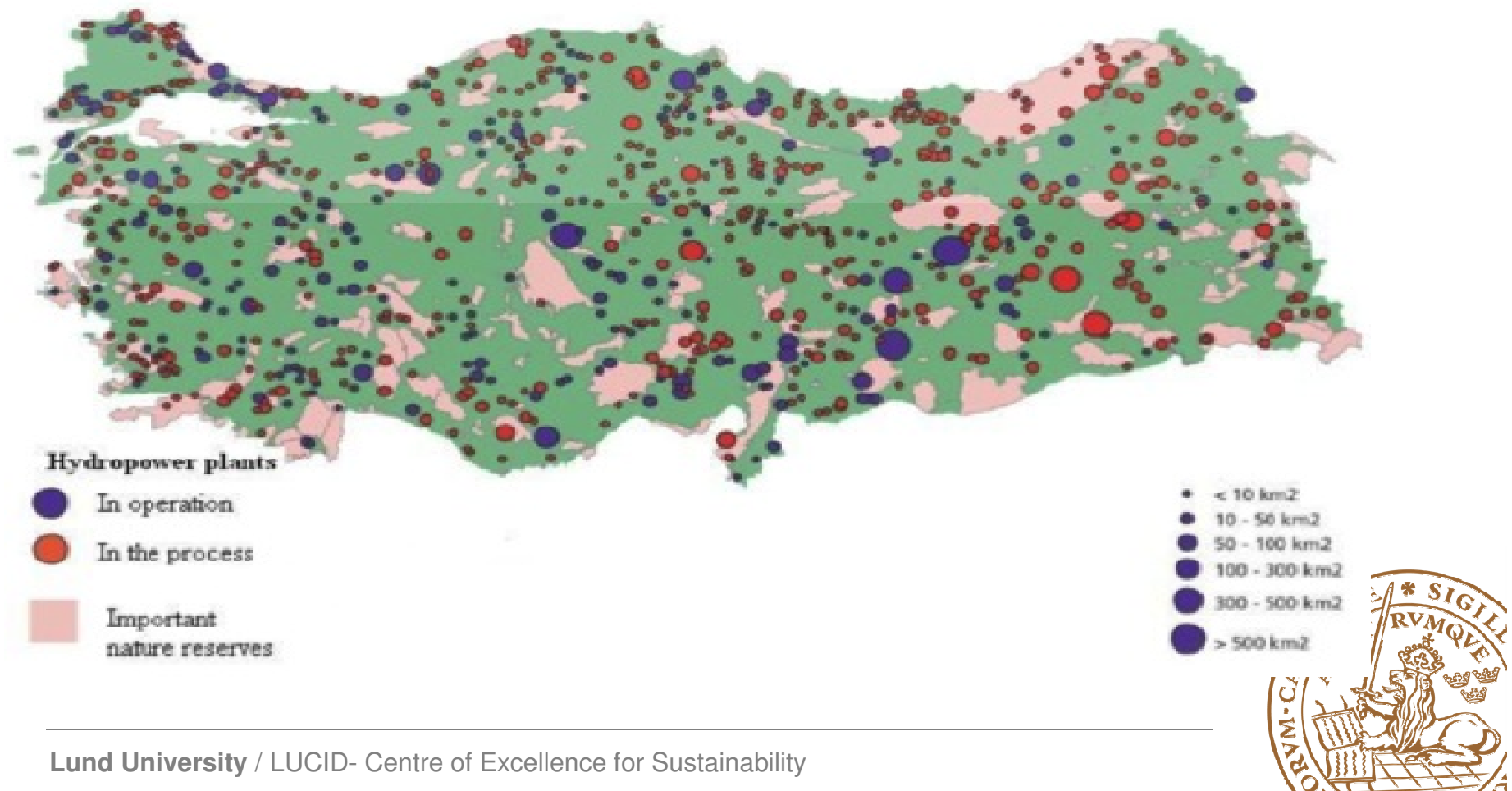
3- Run-of-river hydro

Small scale hydropower is promoted as environmentally friendly.

Approx. 2,000 projects are licensed.

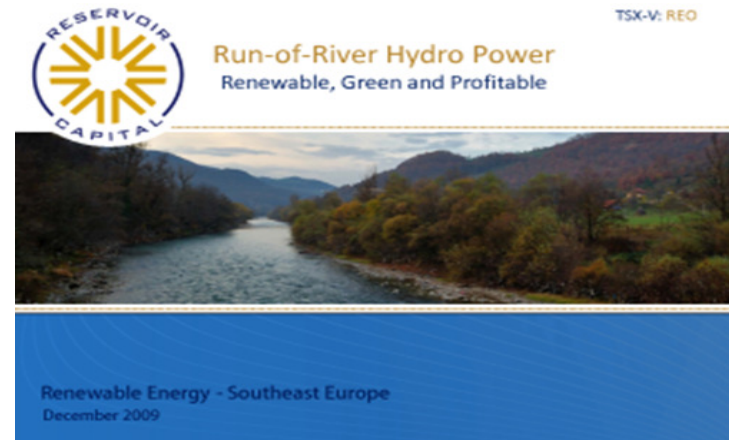


Map of hydropower projects 2001-2023

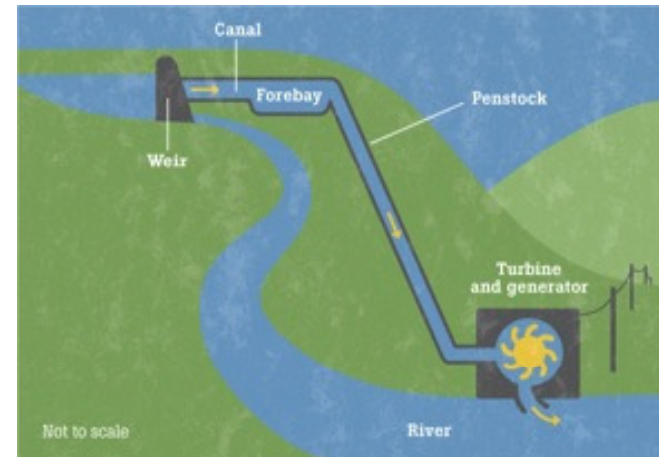


Private rivers in Turkey?

- Privatization of water use rights made possible after the legal reforms in 2001.
- Facilitated by climate technology funds and other loans, run-of-river hydropower investments spreaded widely.
- Private sector became the major actor controlling the water resources of the river basins.



Run-of-river (small hydro)



- “Goes with the flow”.
- Considered as environmental friendly.
- 10MW or more?



Data collection strategy



- Choosing critical samples.
- In-depth interviews: 52
- Focus groups
- Participatory observations



Profile of interviewees

Interviewee profile	
Academics	2
State officials (MoEU, DSI, EIA dep.)	6
Private sector	9
NGO, INGOs (WWF, UNDP, Nature assoc.)	5
Environmental and labor groups	6
Local politicians and businessman	3
Lawyers	2
Village women	11
Village men	8



FINDINGS

I. State-society relations

*The State sold us for 49 years.
Inhabitant of Aksu Valley.*

- New alliances between state and business, opaque form of governance.
- Rural communities are marginalized via/from discursive and political spaces.
- Participatory exclusion in consultation meetings



II. Water and land rights

- Changes in renewable energy laws.
- Urgent expropriation.
- Water rights guaranteed 49 years for hydrobusiness but remain ambiguous for other water uses.



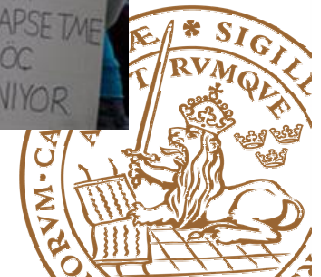
III. Environment

- Deforestation
- Changes in water quality
- Blocking of fish migration
- Threat to endangered species (like salmon).
- Wildlife disturbed due to construction and gridlines.
- HEPP:s are considered as threats to biodiversity hotspots in Turkey by Conservation International



IV. Rural identities

- Divided families
- Inequalities of social and material power: who benefits from new opportunities?
- Women's major role in social struggles.



Rise of water struggles

- 2009: Village groups start their struggles.
- 2010: Turkish Water Assembly is established.
- 2011: The Great March of Anatolia.
- 2009-2013: On-going legal struggles between companies and villagers.



Struggles for recognition



"Where is justice?
Where is my right as a
citizen? Aren't we
counted as citizens by
the state?"



Conclusion

- Renewable energy **vs.** rights to water.
Privatization of water use has implications on:
legitimacy, responsibility and transparency.
- Developmental state **vs.** rural lifestyles and nature.
- Struggles over Turkish rivers do not only reflect the conflicting interests of stakeholders but also a struggle of recognition for rural lifestyles



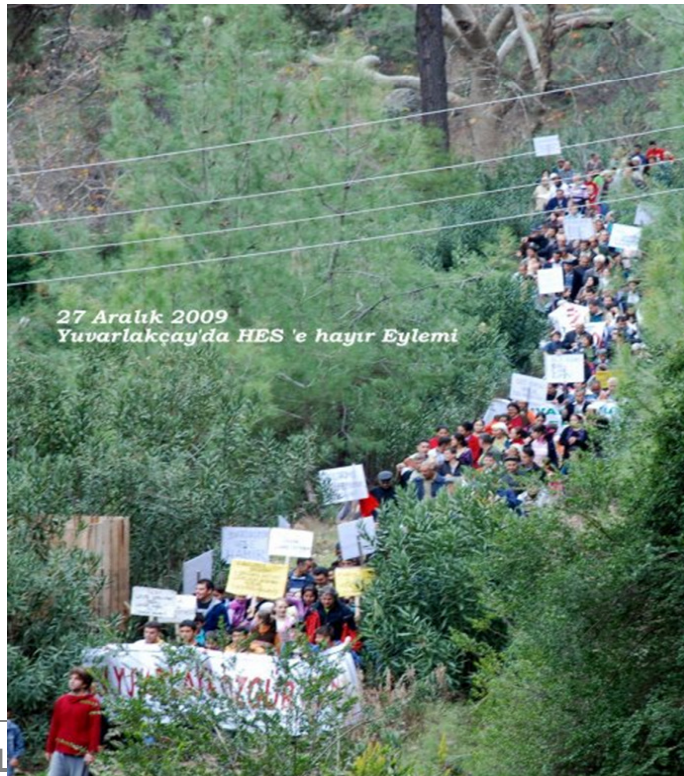
Clarifications

- The focus is mostly on initial stages of hydropower projects
- I seek to critically discuss the discrepancy between what these projects claim they do and what they actually do.
- This does not necessarily imply a dismissal of renewable energy development as a means to produce sustainable energy and improve livelihoods of people.



Extra info: resistance

- Various occupations and struggles at construction sites.



Extra info: Rule of law index 2014, WJP

Assume that the Environmental protection authority in Turkey notifies an industrial plant that it is polluting a river beyond the legally permitted levels. Which of the following outcomes is most likely? Choose one single answer:

The company complies with the law (either voluntarily or through court orders, fines, and other sanctions) 38%

The company bribes or influences the authorities to ignore the violation 46%

Absolutely nothing happens 16%

<http://data.worldjusticeproject.org/#index/TUR>



Recommended literature

M. Islar (2013): Private Rivers. Politics of Renewable Energy and the Rise of Water Struggles in Turkey, Faculty of Social Sciences, Centre for Sustainability Studies, Lund University, Lund

