

Announcements of the construction of Kolubara B and extension of Kolubara A are a bad option for Serbia, according to the EU Delegation

Antoine Avignon, Program Manager at the EU Delegation for Environment and Climate Change, said on the online panel “Air Quality – from European to Local Levels” that the announced construction of the Kolubara B thermal power plant and investing money in extending the life cycle of Kolubara A are not a good direction for Serbia because the European Union is trying not to use coal and fossil fuels.

He said that the energy mix in Serbia is such that “there are not enough alternatives and green opportunities”, and added that he thinks that the EU will “push” Serbia to move away from coal and decarbonise its economy. “It will take years for that process,” he said, explaining that the EU had introduced a “fair mechanism” that would apply to the entire Balkans, and “special rules” for Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Avignon emphasized that air pollution in Serbia has not decreased, that the situation in Smederevo and Bor is even worse when it comes to air quality, and stated that perhaps the “green deal” implemented by the EU will be a good opportunity to work on changing carbon dioxide concentrations in Serbia. . He reminded how important it is to stop burning solid fuels in cities and warned that air pollution affects the spread of the virus, which is bad during a pandemic.

Stove “Smederevo” silent killer

Speaking about individual furnaces, the representative of Coalition 27 Mirjana Jovanovic said that the basic problem in that regard is the standard of quality of devices that citizens use for heating. She pointed out that the “Smederevo” stove is a “silent killer” that burns low-calorie fuels and emits huge amounts of pollutants. Jovanovic said that it is necessary to include the social component in solving the problems of individual furnaces, and that it is important for the state to help those categories of the population that cannot afford devices that meet the standards and insulate houses.

Speaking about the economic aspects of investing in environmental protection, she said that large investments were needed for Elektroprivreda Srbije (EPS) to install filters, but that it was necessary to seek an answer from the state, since EPS is a state-owned company. Jovanovic reminded that the National Plan for Reducing Emissions from Thermal Power Plants (NERP) was two years late and that it was launched only when the Secretariat of the Energy Community initiated a case against Serbia in January.

When asked how the citizens of Smederevo fight for clean air, the activist of the organization “Protok 21” from Smederevo, Dragan Nedeljković, answered that the cooperation with the local ironworks is “like talking to a tree”. The ironworks does not give “many answers”, and they are also “announcements”, Nedeljkovic stated and pointed out

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that the biggest problem is that it is not known in whose jurisdiction the problem is “and who we are to approach it and ask for information”.

As he put it, even the local self-government does not have access to that “fortress” which is “under the control of others”. According to his testimony, the citizens of Smederevo “visually know that the pollution is escalating”.

He reminded that in the last two years, there were promises that filters would be installed, but that the deadlines for that had already been broken three times.

Nedeljkovic said that the Smederevo Ironworks has measuring points from which it sends data to the competent institutions, but he emphasized that the citizens do not have insight into them, and thus do not make real data. The citizens of Smederevo, Nedeljkovic pointed out, are aware that “they must both eat and breathe”, and they are not against the ironworks, but only demand that it works in accordance with legal and environmental norms.

Source: rs.n1info.com