

Opt-out

Montenegro is the only Western Balkan country other than Albania that does not have a large combustion plant and could comply with the LCPD requirements in the near future. The Pljevlja lignite-fired thermal power plant, with a capacity of 225 MWe, has only one unit, which cannot be subject to the National Emission Reduction Plan, so the options were to close the plant by the end of 2017 or opt-out.

Given that the power plant produced just under 40 percent of its total electricity in 2018, shutdowns were not considered. Coordination should have been a priority, but the Government and EPCG lost several years concentrating on the construction of the now cancelled TPP Pljevlja 2.

Therefore, the opt-out option was chosen according to which Pljevlja could operate for a total of 20,000 hours between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2023. In order to continue operating beyond this deadline, it must comply with the emission limit values for new installations.

When funding for Pljevlja 2 was rejected and the contract with the Czech Skoda Praha was cancelled, preparations for the rehabilitation of Pljevlja 1 were accelerated, and a project design tender was announced in early 2018.

In March 2018, the Environmental Protection Agency finally issued an integrated environmental permit for Pljevlja 1, which anticipates compliance with 2017 LCP BREF standards by 2023. TPP Pljevlja is the first existing plant in the region required to do this.

Continuous emission monitoring

The Pljevlja power plant has continuous measuring equipment installed, but this equipment does not function properly, so it is not used for emissions reporting.

The 2018 emissions

Retrofit or closure of the plant is urgent, as the plant produced an estimated 64,475 tonnes of SO₂ in 2018 – more than some of the larger plants such as Bitola and Tuzla, and 2.5 times the 2016 emissions (25,459 tonnes).

The NO_x emissions for 2018, 7,786 tonnes, are among the highest in the region, almost as in the Kostolac B TPP, although that power plant is three times larger.

Current investments

TPP Pljevlja spent 7,081 of its 20,000 operating hours in 2018. Work is planned on installing

desulphurisation and de-NO_x equipment and improving the operation of the electrostatic precipitator. In July 2019, a tender for a project contractor was announced.

There are controversies surrounding the tender, as a tender by a consortium comprising: Chinese Dongfang, whose staff are suspected of accepting bribes from suppliers; BB Solar, owned by the son of the President of Montenegro; Bemak, another well-connected company that often gets government contracts; and Permonte, was selected.

Source: seenews.com