

In the last Implementation Report for last year, the Energy Community (EC) expressed concern that Montenegro will not comply with the provisions of the so-called opt-out regime in which TPP Pljevlja is and that after reaching the limit of 20 thousand hours the plant will not stop working. The shutdown of the coal sector and its exclusion from the energy mix, which is happening in the European Union (EU), is also expected in Montenegro, so it is necessary to start the process of planning economic diversification in Pljevlja as soon as possible, the NGO Eco-team announced.

This non-governmental organization said that it was necessary to assess the social benefits of the operation of the Pljevlja Thermal Power Plant and the Coal Mine for the local and national economy, and the costs they cause, including the costs of environmental protection and health. Only then, as they believe, should we assess how long the survival of the coal sector is justified in Montenegro.

“Shutdown of the coal sector and its exclusion from the energy mix, which is already happening in the EU, is expected in our country, so it is necessary to start the process of planning economic diversification in Pljevlja, which will primarily affect local development and enable a fair energy transition. “, It is stated in the announcement of the Eco-team. Having in mind the challenge that the Ministry of Capital Investments is currently facing when it comes to further work of the thermal energy complex in Pljevlja, the NGOs called on the new government to approach solving that challenge carefully and make a decision on further work of TPP Pljevlja.

“The EC Secretariat points out that the harmonization of installations with emission limit values for new installations, according to the Industrial Emissions Directive, must be a priority. Therefore, the security of Elektroprivreda (EPCG) is surprising that the EC will approve the further work of TPP Pljevlja, because the role of the EC is to ensure the implementation of directives, including the implementation of criminal procedures in case of violation, “explained the representatives of the Eco-team.

They stated that the example of Ukraine, which is cited as one of the cases where the EC rules on concessions, cannot be called a new decision, but is actually a solution from 2014 for a situation that is not even similar to the situation Montenegro is currently in.

“In 2014, Ukraine received an additional number of hours for the operation of thermal power plants due to the threat to energy supply, condition and poor equipment of about 140 coal plants that Ukraine has and large investments that would require environmental adaptation of these plants in such a short time,“ they reminded from the Eco-team.

The NGO said that they were aware that the final decision and position on the continued use of coal, and the survival of the sector in Montenegro in general, should be made by the

Government.

“At the same time, we cannot but refer to the project of ecological reconstruction of TPP Pljevlja, for which the feasibility study was never published and whose conceptual solution was declared a state secret. We call on the Government and the Ministry to request all the mentioned studies from EPCG and analyze them in detail before the final decision on support for this project, “the statement added.

The Eco-team believes that this is a very important cross-sectoral problem, which should be addressed in this way.

“The pollution that is currently emitted from TPP Pljevlja makes this city one of the most polluted in Europe. The trend that exists has been repeated for decades, and the result is a degraded environment, endangered health and increased mortality caused by poor air quality. On the other hand, the current importance of the coal sector in Pljevlja in terms of employment of the local population is clear, “the statement concludes.

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