

Krško nuclear power plant's license has recently been extended to 2043, and Gen Energy, the company which manages the Slovenian 50 percent share in the power plant, wants to expand it with a second, stronger generating facility in order to achieve energy security for Slovenia and Croatia. Croatia owns the other half of the power plant and receives half of electricity produced.

The move is opposed by environmental groups. Greenpeace says that describing the nuclear power from Krško as a viable and inexpensive energy potential is only possible because its owners do not incorporate into their calculations a sufficient share of costs of its future decommissioning. The organisation believes that the two countries should focus on a renewable and alternative energy sources. "If Gen Energy were to pay a fair share a future costs of decommissioning and storage of nuclear waste, then it would not be able to talk about cheap energy from Krško," said Katja Huš from Greenpeace.

Although the expansion of the Krško nuclear power plant has not yet been included in any official planning documents, Gen Energy's managing director Martin Novšak said that the idea should be discussed. The owner of the Slovenian half of the nuclear power plant has invested 14 million euros in various studies during the last 11 years.

The second 1200 megawatt block of the Krško nuclear power plant would in the long run cover the average energy needs of Slovenia, if the requirements were combined with the needs of Croatia, Austria or Italy, said Novšak. Their studies show that the construction and installation of the second block at the current location would take about ten years, and the total cost would be between 3.5 to 5 billion euros.

At present relatively low electricity prices, the Krško nuclear power plant will bring to its owners, Gen Energy and Croatian Electrical Company, about two billion euros of added value during 20 years of extended operations, while the new nuclear power plant block - having a larger output - would bring Slovenia and Croatia at least four billion euros during the same time frame, so its construction would be economically viable, claims Gen Energy.

Krško is located near the Slovenian border with Croatia.

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