

Co-incineration of SRF fuel, produced from waste, would increase emissions of heavy metals and other pollutants and degrade the air and soil quality, the review of the EIA reads. Even though the environmental impact assessment (EIA) for co-incineration of solid recovered fuel (SRF) in Slovenia's Šoštanj thermal power plant (TEŠ) found all impacts to be insignificant, co-incineration will negatively affect human health, according to the review commissioned by the Municipality of Šoštanj.

The EIA was prepared by coal-fired power plant TEŠ, a subsidiary of state-owned energy company Holding Slovenske Elektrarne (HSE). The use of SRF is seen by TEŠ as a possibility to achieve a gradual transition to a carbon-free society. All impacts were found to be insignificant, HSE said during the presentation of the EIA.

In the meantime, the Šoštanj municipality has asked Celje-based IOP, Institute for Environment and Spatial Planning, to review the EIA. According to the review, SRF fuel is suitable for incineration, but TEŠ plans co-incineration. The operator of the thermal power plant claimed the replacement of 6% of the weight of lignite with SRF would enable Velenje Coal Mine, which supplies it, to remain open for longer. Authors of the EIA review said the period would not be significant and stressed that at the same time the quality of the environment would be worsened. SRF is produced from municipal solid waste, industrial and commercial waste or construction and demolition waste. It includes paper, card, wood, textiles and plastic. The European Union has adopted standards for the fuel.

TEŠ: We will withdraw from the project if it is bad for the population

Šoštanj thermal power plant has announced that it would comment on the review after examining it, local media reported. The comments will be sent to the representatives of the Šoštanj municipality. However, the company said it would withdraw from the co-incineration project if in the official procedure it is determined that it doesn't comply with environmental legislation or that it could have a negative impact on the environment and human health. After finishing the EIA, TEŠ has advanced with the procedure and submitted the document to the Slovenian Environment Agency (ARSO), which is still examining it. TEŠ repeated that studies demonstrated the power plant is suitable for co-incineration of SRF fuel.

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