

Thermal power plants

Last year, the thermal power plants “Nikola Tesla” were on the ninth place in the list of the biggest polluters with sulfur dioxide in the world, and TPP “Kostolac” on 44, thanks only to the smaller production capacity. Thermal power plants in Serbia emit six times more sulfur dioxide than allowed per year, and inhaling this gas increases the risk of heart disease, asthma, lung cancer and premature death. Sulfur dioxide is also a secondary source of tiny, PM particles, harmful to health. These particles are also formed during the combustion of coal, and inadequate storage of ash also contributes to their spread. That is why their excessive concentration is recorded in places near thermal power plants – Obrenovac, Kostolac, Svilajnac.

Ironworks Smederevo

At the end of last month, the “Fortress” movement from Smederevo sent a complaint to the International Commission for the Danube against the Smederevo Ironworks (HBIS Serbia) due to the suspicion that its actions directly endanger the river. On that occasion, he called on international authorities to investigate the case of storing waste slag from the Ironworks, one hundred meters from the Danube. The movement stated that the entire location where the slag is deposited is surrounded by water canals, which flow directly into the river, and warned that it was a whole hill of waste slag from which an unbearable smell spread, harmful to the eyes and breathing. During the last summer, Smederevo was covered with black dust several times. Citizens complained that on several occasions, a huge amount of black powder from the ironworks covered their houses, yards and crops.

Zidjin Bor

The Commercial Court in Zajecar ruled in October last year that the company Zidjin Bor Koper, which currently exploits copper ore near Bor, is guilty of polluting Bor in November 2019 and January 2020. The verdict was passed after the Ministry of Environmental Protection initiated the procedure. Until the beginning of last year, the competent inspection controlled this company several times, and since the mining basin was privatized at the end of 2018, it has identified omissions at least five times. According to the report on air quality for 2019 of the Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), Bor was among the most polluted cities in Serbia last year, and the only one due to sulfur dioxide. It was determined that during 2019, the concentration of sulfur dioxide in Bor was as much as 41 times above the allowed values. It often happens that sulfur dioxide in Bor exceeds 500 micrograms per cubic meter, which is an extremely dangerous health concentration – even short-term exposure can cause coughing, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chest

tightness and long-term consequences such as asthma.

Kolubara Mining Basin

Locals living in Veliki Crljeni, near the Kolubara Mining Basin, have repeatedly said that their houses are cracking due to subsidence, that their yards are often covered with coal dust, and that a large number die prematurely from the effects of pollution. Apart from the fact that this mining basin damages the immediate surroundings, the coal that is extracted there also causes damage in other parts of Serbia, because it is used for heating.

The director of the research station Petnica, Vigor Majić, stated in November last year that low-quality coal extracted from RT Kolubara was also responsible for the greater air pollution in recent years.

Vinca landfill

At only 14 kilometers from the center of the capital of Serbia, there is “Vinca”, the largest “mountain of garbage” in Europe, which covers about 70 hectares and on which 1,500 tons of garbage are disposed of daily. Apart from the fact that, due to frequent fires, it has been contributing to air pollution for decades, there is also a danger of contamination of the soil itself, where groundwater is polluted and thus comes into contact, through drinking water, with citizens. The city decided to solve the problem with the landfill by concluding a contract with Suez, the French giant in the field of waste and water management, in September 2019, for the construction of an incinerator.

However, the Let's Not Drown Belgrade Initiative has repeatedly warned that the agreement with Suez hides the fact that the privatization of the landfill in Vinca and the construction of an incinerator have been agreed, which will bring huge financial obligations with catastrophic consequences for the city budget, communal costs and significantly increase air pollution.

Pancevo Oil Refinery

The oil refinery in Pancevo, which operates as part of the company Naftne industrija Srbije (NIS), was the first power plant in Serbia to receive a PPC permit for integrated prevention and control of environmental pollution. This permit, which the refinery in Pancevo received in 2017, speaks in favor of the fact that the products in it are harmonized with the standards in the field of environmental protection.

However, the fact that this plant is one of those for the operation of which an integrated permit is required, indicates that it is a potentially large pollutant.

Citizens' associations “Zeleni most” and “Pancevo” warn that citizens who live in a circle of 5 kilometers around the Refinery are most exposed to negative influences – noise, as well as

vapors that irritate the nose, throat and eyes, and that the walls crack from vibration. on houses. They also stated that people who live near the Refinery cannot sell their properties at market prices, and that they cannot grow fruits and vegetables on them due to contaminated soil and air. An additional danger for the residents of this place is the construction of a facility for temporary storage of hazardous waste within the refinery.

Backa canal Vrbas

The Vrbas-Bezdan canal, better known as the Veliki Bački canal, is part of the Danube-Tisa-Danube canal network, 118 kilometers long, and the section near Vrbas and Srbobran, due to decades of industrial and communal pollution, is one of the biggest environmental problems in this part of Europe. . Due to the pollution, this watercourse was declared the “black ecological point of Europe”, where at the end of last year, due to the poison released from the sugar factory in Crvenka, a death of over three tons of fish occurred. The canal is mostly polluted with heavy metals, hydrocarbons and pathogenic organisms. Due to sedimentation, the depth of water in certain parts of the canal is only 30-40 centimeters. Navigation is impossible, and the watercourse is significantly reduced.

Krusik Valjevo

In addition to private fireboxes, among the biggest air pollutants in Valjevo is the Holding Corporation “Krušik”. The boiler room of this factory burns 50 to 70 tons of lignite on a daily basis.

“Pear is the biggest polluter in Valjevo. The eternal question is why Krusik did not change the energy plant, given the income generated in the arms trade, but then we come to the same conclusion again, and that is that someone close to the top of the state misused that money. Instead of preventing the poisoning of their people, they deny the existence of pollution “, said the independent councilor in the Assembly of the city of Valjevo and the activist of the Local Front Valjevo, Ljubomira Radović.

The director of the Petnica Research Station, Vigor Majić, stated that Valjevo is one of the cities where low-quality lignite is used, with a large percentage of clay from RT Kolubara, which explains the increase in air pollution levels in the last 15 years.

Elixir Zorka

Sabac has two industrial zones, of which the northwestern is the largest in Serbia. Apart from the fact that there are a large number of factories in it, the problem is that this industrial zone, created after the First World War, now, when the city has expanded, is among the residential settlements. The women from Šapče, who held a protest in mid-February due to air pollution, see the main culprit for this situation in the fertilizer factory

Eliksir Zorka, one of the largest in the city. They ask the company to install additional filters to purify the waste gases generated in the production process.

Cement factory Lafarge - Beocin

In 2019, Lafarge took the 6th place in Serbia in terms of nitrogen oxide emissions, 13th in terms of sulfur oxide emissions, while in terms of PM particle emissions, it was on the 14th place among factories and thermal power plants.

However, the cement plant has had a negative impact on the air for several decades. Back in 2006, the Plan for detailed regulation of the factory complex states that the quality of the environment in Beocin is greatly reduced due to the operation of the cement plant, its unfavorable position in relation to the settlement and the direction of the dominant wind. The eviction of the Colony and Šljivik was planned, but it was abandoned in the following years and now it is even planned to expand it. In addition, the planned buffer zone between the factory and the city has not been erected. According to the announcement on the website of the Municipality of Beocin, the kindergarten will be moved to the factory. Cement plants are among the largest emitters of carbon dioxide (CO₂). However, neither of the two measuring stations of the Environmental Protection Agency, both about a kilometer from the factory, measures CO₂. It is a gas that pollutes the atmosphere and causes climate change. Environmental activists from Beocin warn that, in addition to high levels of pollution, the incineration of waste, which is used as the main energy source in the cement plant, is also problematic.

Cement factory Titan - Kosjerić

Due to the huge problem with particulate pollution, in order to solve this problem, the Municipality of Kosjerić and the Government of Serbia signed an Agreement on the conversion of the City Heating Plant from fuel oil to gas at the beginning of the month, as well as an Agreement on afforestation.

However, among the measures aimed at improving the air quality in this city, there is no mention of the Titan cement plant, which is located less than a kilometer from the settlement and which uses coal, fuel oil and petroleum coke as fuel. Cementara asked for permission to burn municipal waste in its plants, against which citizens and environmental associations have repeatedly raised their voices, emphasizing that toxic products of municipal waste incineration in that factory will additionally endanger the environment and health of Kosjerić residents and the surrounding area.

Small hydropower plants

The expansion of the construction of small hydro power plants in Serbia happened after in

2013, 120 companies received locations for their construction after two public invitations sent by the Ministry of Energy. With this project, the line ministry was supposed to accelerate investment in renewable energy sources, in order to fulfill the obligations that Serbia has undertaken towards the Energy Community so that by 2020 the share of renewable energy sources in total consumption will reach 27 percent. By 2019, 116 small hydropower plants were among the privileged producers, of which it turned out that at least 24 were built without nature protection conditions.

The dean of the Faculty of Forestry, Ratko Ristic, assessed that the state made a mistake when it focused the strategy for the production of electricity from renewable sources exclusively on small hydropower plants of the derivation type, which “produce little energy and do great environmental damage”.

Due to the construction of small hydroelectric power plants in Serbia, protests have been held in recent years. The loudest were the activists of the movement Let's Defend the Rivers of Stara Planina, who managed to fight for the construction of SHPP Zvonce in the village of Rakita, near Babusnica. In the period from 2010 to 2014, several SHPPs were built on the river Vlasina, and the citizens of Vlasotince recently managed to get the Assembly of Vlasotince to adopt the Decision on banning the construction of mini-hydro power plants on the territory of that municipality.

Source: nova.rs