

Coal-fired thermal power plant Bobov Dol has a serious impact on the environment in southwestern part of the country, according to a study developed by Greenpeace Bulgaria. The study findings suggest that waste streams from TPP Bobov Dol and its associated black lake ash storage site are impacting the quality of river water and sediments of the tributaries of the Struma river that carries pollution into the West Aegean basin. The report includes the analysis of the findings of a three-month air pollutant monitoring survey carried out in 2019 in Kyustendil region.

The document also points to a previous long-term monitoring survey of nitrogen dioxide and sulfur dioxide carried out by Greenpeace Bulgaria, and to official monitoring carried out by the Environmental Agency. The air and water samples were analyzed at the Greenpeace Research Laboratories at the University of Exeter. The EU and WHO daily mean standard for particulate matter was exceeded on five occasions in the data analyzed by the study. The results indicate a potential problem as only 35 exceedances are permitted annually according to EU legislation. There were also 11 exceedances of the WHO 24-hour mean guideline for sulfur dioxide. Desislava Mikova from Greenpeace Bulgaria said that that, since water is becoming an increasingly scarce resource, it must not be polluted by outdated energy technology, which also exacerbates the climate crisis and causes health problems due to air pollution. The organization has sent numerous alerts but has not had an adequate response from the authorities.