

Bulgaria: Deadline for application for derogation by coal-fired TPPs extended

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Bulgarian Council of Ministers has extended the deadline for application for derogation by coal-fired thermal power plants. The deadline is extended from six to nine months so that integrated permits can be reviewed after the decisions on Best Available Techniques (BAT) conclusions.

The current deadline has been considered insufficient for installation operators to prepare and submit the necessary documentation to the competent authority. With its extension, the operators are given an opportunity to prepare and provide the complete set of information so that delays in reviewing procedures is avoided.

In April 2017, the European Commission adopted BAT conclusions for large combustion plants (LCPs) pursuant to Directive 2010/75/EU regarding industrial emissions, while the reference document came into power on 17 August 2017. It applied immediately for new production capacities and it will apply for existing ones after four years. The adopted document introduced new, stricter values of emission levels for sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, mercury and others, which are generated by the installations burning coal.

In late October 2017, Bulgarian Ministry of Energy announced its report to the National Assembly regarding the measure taken by the Government in relation to the adopted reference document on large combustion plants. It said that the 6-month period for submitting requests for a derogation from the operators of LCPs in Bulgaria is inadequate and they offer that it is extended to one year.

Bulgarian plants are able to apply for the so-called derogation from the Directive, which will allow them to comply with previously authorized limits for a longer period of time. The exception can be made when the assessment for the particular installation shows that reaching new emission levels would lead to costs disproportionately higher than environmental benefits. The power plants which can apply for a derogation are: TPP Maritsa East 2, TPP AES Maritsa East 1 (TPP Galabovo), TPP ContourGlobal Maritsa East 3, TPP Brikel, TPP Bobov Dol, Toplofikatsya Pernik, Toplofikatsya Sliven and Toplofikatsya Ruse.