

Croatia: HEP to extend lifespan of TPP Plomin 1

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A public hearing on the Expert Approval for obtaining of the environmental permit for 115 MW coal-fired thermal power plant Plomin 1 from February 2016 has started because its operator, state-owned power utility HEP, want to extend its lifespan by additional 15 to 20 years.

According to previous permit, TPP Plomin 1 should have been shut down on 1 January 2018 after the commissioning of the new unit C, which was scrapped in the meantime. HEP now wants to continue production at the old unit, commissioned in 1969, but it is not in line with the European directives on industrial emissions. Namely, it is now proposed to install DENOX facilities and desulfurization facilities in order for the plant to meet the EU standards.

It is not disclosed how much this modernization would cost, but it will not come cheap, because it was previously deemed that it is more cost-effective to build new coal-fired unit than to modernize the old one.

The public hearing will last until 9 May and environmental organizations have already voiced their discontent with HEP's intentions. They claim that coal-based electricity production is a thing of the past and instead of accepting this fact, HEP wants to keep running insecure and obsolete power plant. Although modernized, TPP Plomin would still pose serious threat to environment.

TPP Plomin is the only coal-fired power plant in the country, which provides about 7 % of electricity production in Croatia. Unit 1 at TPP Plomin has power output of 115 MW, while unit 2 has power output of 210 MW.