

Montenegro, It is crucial to start implementing all energy solutions that would replace the capacity of TPP Pljevlja as soon as possible

Montenegrin Prime Minister Zdravko Krivokapic said during his meeting with the management of state-owned power utility EPCG that Montenegro should not be delusional and have false hopes that it will be profitable to produce electricity at coal-fired thermal power plants after 2030.

Therefore, PM Krivokapic stressed, it is crucial to start implementing all energy solutions that would replace the capacity of TPP Pljevlja as soon as possible. He pointed out that there are sufficient preconditions for investing in energy sector both in the northern and southern part of the country, where wind and solar power plants would be built in order to reach energy balance between the two regions.

He reminded that the project for the construction of Ionian-Adriatic (IAP) gas pipeline, gas pipeline that would connect Prijepolje in Serbia and Pljevlja in Montenegro enabling the gasification of TPP Pljevlja, construction of a new, gas-fired power plant near Bar are some of the solutions that the Government is considering at the moment.

PM Krivokapic said earlier that TPP Pljevlja will most likely have to stop working in 2030 under the pressure of the European Energy Community and due to the rules of the European Union.

On 20 April, the Energy Community Secretariat sent an Opening Letter to Montenegro to address its breach of the Large Combustion Plants Directive. In particular, the country's sole thermal power plant Pljevlja, continues to operate despite the expiry of the limited lifetime derogation period of the plant.

Following a written declaration not to operate a plant for more than 20,000 hours after 1 January 2018, the limited lifetime derogation (also known as opt-out) was granted to selected installations by the Energy Community Ministerial Council. It is an implementation alternative to complying with the maximum emission limits set by the Large Combustion Plants Directive. Following the expiry of the 20,000 hours, the plants can only remain in operation if they meet the (stricter) standards of the Industrial Emissions Directive. This is not the case for TPP Pljevlja.

If coal-fired thermal power plant Pljevlja were to close now, Montenegro would have to pay over 100 million euros a year for electricity imports. This is, among other things, shown by the analysis of the assessment of the financial effects of the possible shutdown of TPP Pljevlja made by state-owned power utility EPCG.