

Since the laws of the European Union regarding the environmental protection are very strict, and Serbia is contractually obliged to comply with such laws, much attention is paid to environmental protection programs. In Mining Basin "Kolubara" , the largest coal producer in the Serbian Electric Power Industry, in addition to regularly meeting the production schedules, the Management of the company stresses the great importance of environmental protection improvement and mitigation of the effects on the environment. According to Mr. Milorad Grčić, Director of the Mining Basin "Kolubara", the global trends of making the coal and electricity production "clean" as much as possible, have been taken in "Kolubara" very seriously, so the corresponding activities have been initiated. As Mr. Grčić pointed out, the people employed in the Department who in charge of this area did a lot to raise the awareness about the importance of protecting the environment and lifting ecological standards for the production in the previous period. The first "green" project in MB "Kolubara" - " Environmental Protection Improvement in the Mining Basin "Kolubara", is worth 182 million euros. It is funded by a loan of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in the amount of 80 million, the German Development Bank (KfW) with 74 million, and proper funds of "Electric Power Industry of Serbia" amounting to 28 million. According to the envisaged schedule, the implementation will take three years and a half. Cooperation with the banks, EBRD and KfW is very important to MB "Kolubara" - said Director Grčić . - The project teams of MB "Kolubara" meet all obligations with high level of efficiency and accountability, and the regular internal weekly meetings on progress of the project show a high level of responsibility of MB "Kolubara" towards the international creditors. It is estimated that in the last twenty years, this was the largest investment in the Serbian mining. It will serve for providing modern equipment to MB "Kolubara" for overburden excavation in the eastern part of the deposit, and by installing the system for coal homogenization, the first of its kind in the " Electric Power Industry of Serbia" , in the western part of the deposit, the guaranteed quality of the coal for thermal power plants will be ensured. - The objective of the project is to secure the coal standardized quality by implementing the homogenization system, which will, among other things, contribute to the reduction of environmental pollution. It is estimated that it will reduce SO₂ emissions by 3,650 tons, NO₂ by 21,370 tons, and CO₂ emissions by 555,350 tons per year, while the amount of ash and slag will be reduced by 885,000 tons per year in TPP "Nikola Tesla" , in Obrenovac - said Mr. Gričić explaining the project goals - The great importance of the "green" project of MB "Kolubara" has also been confirmed by a presentation at the conference "Rio +20" , within the Serbian national report on sustainable development . Our interviewee announced that it was expected the Environment Monitoring Project for the

whole area of MB “Kolubara ” to be finished in October.

- In June, as part of the activities planned for the final project realization period, the consultations with the Ministry of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection were initiated in order to clarify the obligations as per regulations governing the quality of environmental parameters with respect to a new obligation of the business entities to consult with each other prior to establishing environmental self-monitoring on site and significant amendments of regulations governing this area - explained Mr. Grčić.

MB “Kolubara ” is one of the first two companies in Serbia, where the TEAMS software application was implemented in practice. The TEAMS software has been donated by the Norwegian government and was fully implemented within MB “Kolubara”. The staff members for qualitative and continuous data input (data on the quality of air, water, soil, and waste) was trained last year. This software will be immediately applied within the project - Monitoring Plan of the Environment in MB “Kolubara”, which will speed up the start of the environmental monitoring implementation in the company for at least one year. According to Mr. Slobodan Radosavljević, Head of the Department for the Environmental Protection and Improvement, the portable system for measuring of environmental noise was purchased and installed, and regular measurements are performed by trained operators. The complementary laboratory accreditation is planned for the noise measuring format and built-in flow meters of wastewater, pumped from the open pit mines into the surrounding recipients.

The project named “Technical-Economic Analysis of the Possibilities for using of Woody Biomass from the area of open pit mines of MB “Kolubara” for heating purposes”; next year follows the purchase of the first boiler fired by wood chops, thus announcing the start of implementation of renewable energy sources in the company. The General Design on solving the issue of waste water in the industrial compound of “Tamnava ”, and its technical check has been performed. In the course of this year, the elaboration of Conceptual Design will be started.

The partnership of MB “Kolubara” Management with civil associations at local and national level, determines its high degree of social and community responsibility. In this year, in MB “Kolubara” has started the implementation of the first “green” project, and all other projects, started in the previous period, are continued. With the investments in the new mining equipment and the coal homogenization in order to modernize the production process, it is realistic to expect the largest coal producer in the country to keep its mainstay position in the field of power supply, with more stringent enforcement of environmental standards.

Source ; EPS Kwh