

New proposal on regulation on the environmental pollution fee, which would depend on the level of pollution caused by certain companies was proposed by National Alliance for Local Economic Development (NALED), said head of its environmental division Slobodan Krstovic. According to Krstovic, a methodology for the calculation of the damage done to the environment by the pollution which should be implemented, and the proceeds should be split evenly between the state budget and local self-governments.

He said that current regulation proscribes the fee within the set range, which was then charged to companies on a provisionally basis, meaning that companies whose operation did not affect the environment had to pay this fee, although in minimal amount. The fee should only be a temporary solution for the current year, until all the polluters are listed and the new regulation is adopted. Big polluters currently pay a fee on the state level of up to 0.4% of the income in the previous year and they money should be put into the Green Fund, which would be used to finance environmental protection projects. Coal-fired thermal power plants are among the biggest air polluters in Serbia and state-owned power utility EPS is making efforts to install desulfurization equipment at all coal-fired units in order to make them more environmentally friendly.

In related news, the Ministry of Mining and Energy has adopted a new regulation on technical and other requirements for oil-based liquefied fuels, which envisages a lowering of the sulfur content in fuel oils to 1 % at the most from 1 January 2021, instead of the current 3 %. By adopting this regulation, for which there was an obligation to be adopted two years ago, Serbia has fully harmonized with the internationally accepted obligations of the implementation of Directive 2016/802/EC about the content of sulfur in certain liquefied fuels.