After receiving negative feedback from local authorities, the management of thermal power plant Sostanj, which operates under energy company HSE, said that it will not apply for an environmental permit for co-incineration of solid waste along with coal at its unit 6.
The company said that it decided to terminate the project, although it believes that it is feasible and environmentally acceptable. It claims that with adding small amount of solid waste, thermal energy output would be increased, while costs for carbon emissions will be lower.
In mid-2020, TPP Sostanj published the results of an environmental impact assessment (EIA) study, which has shown that the planned project to co-incinerate solid recovered fuel (SRF) is acceptable as it does not worsen the existing environmental situation in the Saleska valley. The EIA study takes into account the impact there would be on the environment and people with the introduction of co-incineration of SRF during the period of adjustment of TES – both during the implementation of co-incineration and in the eventuality of its discontinuation. All impacts during the operation have been assessed as insignificant.
Because the EIA results are encouraging, the management of TES has decided to continue with the procedure, which is why it has submitted the study to the Environment Agency of the Republic of Slovenia (ARSO). With this, the procedure to obtain environmental consent for co-incineration for unit 6 has officially started. The EIA results confirm the projections that the planned co-incineration will reduce the negative environmental impact. This means that, compared to the existing situation, there would be less carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions. Additionally, all other environmental impacts would remain within the permissible limit values. If SRF is added to lignite, the emissions would not only be compliant with the limit values stipulated by Slovenian laws and regulations, but also with the provisions and limit values determined at the European Union level in the BAT (best available technology) conclusions. What needs to be emphasized is that the operation of TES would still remain closely connected with the Premogovnik Velenje coalmine in the case of co-incineration. Lignite remains the primary energy source and co-incineration is not possible without it.