

Source: [New pollution rules published in the Official Journal of the European Union](#)

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New pollution rules published in the Official Journal of the European Union

Podgorica, 17.08.2017. - In the Official Journal of the European Union, new pollution rules have been published today, which will limit the emissions of harmful gases coming from thermal power plants. These rules will apply in most of the countries of the Western Balkans, however, regional governments are still not ready for the actual implementation of these standards(LCP BREF).

New standards include more stringent pollution limits for nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide and dust, and a new standard for emissions of mercury. They ensure that large factories use the best available pollution reduction techniques, which will lead to a significant reduction in emissions of pollutants and a positive impact on air quality throughout Europe.

Since most of the Western Balkan countries adopt laws that explicitly apply to EU standards for best available techniques, from now on, new plant licenses must be based on the LCP's BREF (Large Combustion Plants). Nevertheless, it seems that most governments in the region are not familiar with this issue, despite numerous NGO warnings. In a recent analysis of Bankwatch, it was noted that almost none of the planned new power plants in the Western Balkans would meet the new standards of LCP BREF.

None of the countries in the region insist on applying new standards, even in countries closest to EU accession. The Environmental Impact Assessment Study (EIA) for the Pljevlja II Thermal Power Plant shows that the plant would meet only the 2010 EU standards set out in Annex V of the Industrial Emissions Directive, which are now outdated. Nevertheless, the authorities completely ignored the warnings on this issue submitted by NGO Green Home in the comments during the public debate on the Impact Assessment Study for TPP Pljevlja II. After publishing the Bankwatch analysis in June, EPCG called this analysis "critical and inaccurate" (stating that "the construction of Unit II will be in line with the EU guaranteed conditions and standards for the appropriate coal combustion technology. It should be noted that the contractor's obligation is to apply the modern and best available technology (BAT), including all waste gas cleaning activities in accordance with the defined EU directives, even in case of stricter international environmental standards. However, the environmental impact assessment and feasibility study for the construction of the II block of the thermal power plant in Pljevlja do not even mention these more stringent new standards, so it is difficult to imagine that they will actually apply.

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