

Energy Community Task Force on Environment, 20th Meeting

11 May 2020
(Webex online)

Conclusions

1. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the meeting was held online via the webex tool. The Task Force welcomed that representatives of all Contracting Parties were able to attend.
2. The Task Force adopted the draft agenda of the meeting without any amendments.

I. Implementation of the Large Combustion Plants Directive - Reporting of Emissions into the Air

3. Following the Chair's introductory remarks, the Energy Community Secretariat (hereinafter: "Secretariat") provided a general overview on the state of play of the annual emissions reporting under the Large Combustion Plants Directive. The Chair presented a country-by-country assessment and called for reactions from the Contracting Parties.
4. Bosnia and Herzegovina mentioned that the data submitted for the 2019 reporting year included the emissions from 13 plants in total since TPP Stanari was also included in the exercise. It was also mentioned that flue gas desulphurization was installed at TPP Ugljevik and it is in operation since December 2019, the results of which are expected to appear in the 2020 emissions data.
5. Georgia reported that all of the four gas-fired power plants in the Contracting Party are operating below the emission limit values. The main issue is that two plants do not have a continuous monitoring system. In response to that, the Chair explained that spot sampling and calculations are also used in certain cases in EU Member States.
6. Moldova reported that there are still pending issues with the transposition of the LCP Directive, which also concerns the collection of emissions data. To that end, the Secretariat recalled the pending dispute settlement case against Moldova.
7. Montenegro mentioned that emissions reporting was already done informally (per email) to the Secretariat, yet to be uploaded to the European Environment Agency's registry. Given the fact that the only large combustion plant in the Contracting Party is being opted out, the most relevant information about the plant is the number of operation hours. Montenegro confirmed that the plant was in operation approximately to the same extent as in 2018.
8. North Macedonia reported that certain technical issues were experienced in the course of 2019 with the largest emitter in the Contracting Party, REK Bitola. Since the average concentration of SO₂ in the flue gas almost doubled in comparison to 2018, a formal request was sent to the operator to investigate about the reasons. The amount of lignite and heavy fuel oil used by the plant increased by approximately 20% compared to 2018, there is however no information on the sulphur content of the fuel. Out of the eight installations covered by the NERP, five are in operation, while three are currently inactive.

9. Serbia presented that the NERP was adopted in January 2020, after the completion of the strategic environmental assessment on the plan. The emissions report, together with a report on projections taking into account ongoing investments was submitted in March 2020 to the Secretariat, upon which feedback was requested. The Secretariat explained that in accordance with Annex VIII.B of the LCP Directive as amended by Ministerial Council Decision 2013/05/MC-EnC, the aim of this provision is to demonstrate progress in implementation, which however does not have a direct impact on compliance assessment. The reasons for the slight decrease in SO₂ and NO_x emissions are reported to be related to the quality of the fuel and the reduction of the operational hours. The environmental impact assessment of the de-SO_x equipment of the Kostolac B power plant was delayed due to the Covid-19 situation.
10. Ukraine explained that the data submitted so far is not fully complete and it is therefore difficult to provide a comparison with the 2018 reporting year.
11. Kosovo* reported no significant difference compared to the 2018 reporting year.

II. Work Programme 2020-2022

12. The Secretariat presented the draft work programme and invited Contracting Parties to provide any comments.
13. The representative of EBRD pointed out that it would be important to discuss at the next meeting the links of the BAT conclusions on large combustion plants with the EU's upcoming rules on taxonomy and sustainable finance.

III. Policy Guidelines on Small Hydropower

14. The Secretariat presented the draft Policy Guidelines on Small Hydropower as a follow-up to the previous Task Force meeting and invited members of the Task Force to participate in the public consultation that is to be launched in the coming days.

IV. AOB

15. The Secretariat announced the recruitment of a new Environmental Expert at the organization and called upon participants to share this information.
16. The indicative date of the next meeting was set for the third week of October 2020.

V. Conclusions

17. Pending the comments provided by Contracting Parties, the Task Force endorsed the Work Programme for 2020-2022.