Activists called the EBRD to protect communities from agribusinesses

Activists and representatives of local communities have arrived today at the Kyiv office of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to complain about the activities of its clients-agribusinesses in Ukraine. The participants brought a chest with complaints, in particular, on the actions of Myronivsky Hliboprodukt (MHP), and also arranged the installation of photos of activists who had the courage to make a civic stance on this agroholding.

Activists and community members consider it unacceptable for the EBRD to finance Ukrainian agricultural companies, that do not comply with European environmental standards and neglect the rights of the local residents.

In particular, according to official sources, poultry farms in Vinnytsia and Cherkasy regions are the largest contaminants beside the Ladyzhyn thermal power plant (TPP) and chemical enterprises in these regions accordingly.

All objects of the “Vinnytsya Poultry Factory” (MHP’s subsidiary) are located around the town of Ladyzhyn, which is already weighted by the
Ladyzhyn TPP. In spite of the already existing ash-slag tails and an increased background of emissions into the air, in the nearby village of Zaozerne it is planned to build the poultry rearing facilities and a biogas plant. Another village in Vinnytsia oblast – Ol’yanitsya is surrounded by four brigades of poultry factory and a mixed fodder plant; in addition, all transport of the Vinnytsya poultry farm passes through the village, resulting in the destruction of local residents’ homes.

However, MHP doesn’t plan to stop their expansion at this point. In Vinnytsia it is planned to double the production by 2022. At present, the Vinnytsia poultry farm consists of 12 brigades with a capacity of 1.5 million hens per landing each. At the same time, the poultry farms from 85 thousand broilers are already considered objects of increased environmental hazard.

Activists who oppose the MHP plans also undergo constant pressure. A village chairman of the village of Yasnozirya in Cherkasy region was beaten up. He counts this case to be related to his active position regarding the resistance to the development of chicken raising facility in the lands of his community. The court case is still ongoing.

"Perhaps at least like this we will be heard by the bank. For more than a year, requests for a meeting were not answered. In fact, today’s action is a chance to be get in touch with the bank, telling them about the problems of local communities forst hand," says Tamara Kharchylava, the community development coordinator of NGO “Ecoaction”.

“We want the agroholding company to adhere to the EBRD policy and EU community standards. The EBRD should require MHP to implement the Bank’s environmental and social policies, the EU Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, and Best Practices in the Field of Business;” continues Vladlena Martsynkevych, representative of NGO “Ecoaction” and CEE Bankwatch Network. "This means that the MHP should make publicly available project documentation on its own initiative and at the request of the public. The EBRD should ensure that critically-minded community representatives are not under pressure," she adds.

Activists managed to talk to the EBRD representatives during the public action and were invited to a short meeting at the office. Vladlena Martsynkevych said: “This is the first step. We are looking forward to further actions by the bank and we will closely monitor how our claims were heard”.

Worth mentioning that Myronivsky Hliboproduct is currently the largest producer of chicken in Ukraine and the largest company of such a plan in

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Project "Clean air for Ukraine!" is part of an international environmental project, which in 2018-2020 is implemented by the NGO 'Arnica' (Czech Republic) in cooperation with a group of NGOs in Ukraine and with financial support under the Transition program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and the NED program. You can get more information about the project by sending a message to the email: cleanair@arnika.org

Our partners

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Eastern Europe. Activists from about ten local communities in three regions of Ukraine said they were protecting the rights for clean environment against the activities of the agroholding in their neighbourhood. 

See the photogallery from the protest>>> 

See the video from the action:

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