

Serbia: A new coal mine opens in Kolubara

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52 percent of Serbia's total electricity is generated from coal originating from the Kolubara Mining Basin, while the acting director of EPS, Milorad Grcic, says Radljevo mine will be officially commissioned in Kolubara next week.

At the Third Expert Conference *Investments and Environmental Protection* organized by Balkanmagazin, Grcic said that the Radljevo mine, as well as the existing Field E mine, guarantee the future and sustainability of Kolubara, and therefore the future of EPS, with the improvement of each production system for the purpose of environmental protection.

“Radljevo mine, with its investigated and safe reserves of around 350 million cubic meters of coal, is ready to open. We will officially commission this mine next week,” Grcic announced.

Mining operations have already begun in Field E, and Grcic says that about one billion euros will be invested in the mine in the next few years.

Kolubara's coal reserves are at least 2.1 billion tons, while this mining basin secures about 30 million tons of coal a year. However, to maintain sustainable development of Kolubara today, Grcic says, figures showing the tons of coal produced are not enough, we also need to take care of the environment.

He explained that it was therefore necessary to upgrade every production system in line with the state-of-the-art mines in Western Europe.

“This is why the implementation of the so-called Green Project or what we call “coal quality management” is nearing completion,” Grcic said.

As he said, the “Green Project” in Kolubara starts in December, with half of its capacity, while in 2020 it will start running at full, maximum capacity.

Grcic says that the Kolubara Mining Basin covers an area of 600 square kilometers, of which about 100 square kilometers are occupied by the actual mines.

He told that open cast mines were a living system and that they were constantly moving, which implied a whole series of complicated and expensive actions, such as relocating parts of rivers, railways, roads and other structures.

Grcic expects that launching the continuation of the construction of a thermal unit in Kalenic at the Kolubara B TPP will begin in 2020, while he said that the TPP in Veliki Crljeni has to be taken off-grid.

He specified that the old plant in Veliki Crljeni will not be taken off-gird until a new plant in Kalenic has been built.