

After the scientific-professional gathering “Project Jadar – what is known” held in early May at the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU), the organizing committee which included biologist, botanist, ecologist and biogeographer Vladimir Stevanović, chemist Bogdan Solaja and technologist Velimir Radmilović, he sent an opinion to the Ministry of Energy and Mining (MRE) in which they question the justification of the mine project in the “Jadar” valley. The company Rio Sava sent to the members of the Academy of Science and Arts a response to the conclusions about the project “Jadar” sent to the Ministry of Mining, in which it informs them that they presented incorrect data, incorrect assumptions and lump sum assessments, as well as the views of the chemistry, technology and metallurgy in Belgrade Dragana Đorđević presented “deliberate spread of panic”. The opinion that the academics thoroughly explained in SANU received a response, but not from the competent Ministry, but from Rio Tinto.

In the introductory part of the response to the letter from SANU signed by Vesna Prodanović, General Director of “Rio Sava Exploration”, he begins by stating that the analysis of the “Jadar” project requires a holistic and multidisciplinary approach, excellent knowledge of international industrial practice and domestic legislation.

“Unfortunately, the submitted letter, for the most part, used a lump sum assessment of the material that requires a precise scientific and engineering approach. A large number of incorrect data and assumptions were presented, with a lack of understanding of the legal framework, and with a tendency to extract information outside their natural context”, it is stated in the answer signed by the director Prodanović and adds:

“The general impression is that the letter most directly denies and neglects the collective technical and technological knowledge of modern civilization of the 21st century, in a way that all components of the ‘Jadar’ project are treated as if they will be performed in the vicinity of Loznica for the first time.”

There is also the question of motivation for “unfounded comments on topics that are technically indisputable.”

It is also mentioned that prof. Dr. Dragana Djordjević after the scientific meeting and after the Info-brochure Rio Tinta was delivered to her in communication with concerned citizens on the social network wrote about the project “Jadar”:

“However, it will use concentrated sulfuric acid, which it will disperse in the open over the crushed ore, so its vapors will be dispersed in the air and the green cover (forests and crops) will be eroded and erode the lungs and skin of the population and domestic and wild animals around the mine”.

The general director of “Rio Sava Exploration” assessed it as “Conscious spreading of panic with malicious untruths, that sulfuric acid will be dispersed over ore in the open, which, unfortunately, at the same time calls into question the credibility and intentions of the letter in which Dr. Djordjević is one of the authors”.

## Remarks and answers

One of the conclusions presented by SANU members in a letter to the Ministry is that the realization of the “Jadar” project would lead to massive devastation of space, permanent change of landscape character, biodiversity degradation, displacement of several hundred people and cessation of advanced and profitable agricultural activities.

He sent a reply from “Rio Sava Exploration”, a subsidiary of Rio Tinto, in which he first corrects the listed areas that the mine should cover, then compares the valley of the river Jadar with the Netherlands, most of which is in the floodplain near the sea and ends. allegations that there are already industrial zones in Rađevina that pollute the land and whose expansion is planned.

Although all industrial areas are created as a result of conversion of agricultural and forest land, it is obvious that only the project “Jadar” is approached in the manner described in the letter of SANU members, which calls into question the methodology, scientific basis and ultimately motivation for such an approach “, It is stated in the part of the answer.

SANU members warned that “habitat destruction and fragmentation will degrade biodiversity, which now includes several hundred plant and animal species, 145 of which have the status of strictly protected and protected species”.

Rio Tinto replied that the diversity of biodiversity is being assessed and that “all species and habitats in the environment will receive attention and solutions in accordance with their ecological significance and in relation to the obligations prescribed by the competent institutions of the Republic of Serbia”.

It is not explained how this will be achieved when the habitats disappear from the face of the Earth.

SANU members also pointed out numerous violations of laws and regulations, including the Law on Waters, which potentially endangered watercourses, increased the risk of floods and pollution of groundwater and land.

Rio Tinto’s responses to this type of complaint mainly boil down to claims that the necessary consents were reported in a timely manner and the laws were respected, ie. to respect Serbian laws at all times.

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