

Serbia: Coal and oil shale along with new hydro projects are priorities for Serbia, says Energy Minister Mihajlovic

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Serbia wants to take advantage of all the resources it has to increase the energy stability, including coal and oil shale, says Minister Mihajlovic. "All there is - from renewable energy export, oil shale and coal should be used," said Energy Minister Zorana Mihajlovic. Mihajlovic said that although there is much talk about the closure of coal plants, it is not disputed for Serbia, but she noted that energy stability of the country must be provided to that point.

As stated, this means that if Serbia has brown coal, power plants should be built, and if there is oil shale from which synthetic oil can be obtained, it will get it. Mihajlovic said that this increases the power, stability and strength of the state, which can not be achieved by thinking how to import energy.

The Minister pointed out that Serbia has established a solid legal framework in the past year and a half, which is primarily for renewable energy, which, according to her, is confirmed by numerous investors.

According to Mihajlovic, Serbia is in front of the adoption of the Energy Development Strategy from 2025 until 2030, that after a public hearing should be adopted.

Speaking about the potentials of Serbia in the energy world, the minister noted that Serbia should use the position of the state as it is in the center of the Balkan region.

Mihajlovic said that Serbia should become a transit corridor for energy and fuels.

"Our vision is that Serbia becomes the electricity exporter and transit country, as well as storage for energy and the fuels and the country that has achieved a high level of energy security and sustainability required for the accelerated development of the economy", said the minister.

She also said that building of two hydro capacities Bistrica and Djerdap 3 is planned, as well as the construction of South Stream, concluded minister Mihajlovic at recently held Energy Arena conference supported by Energy Community.

Deputy General Manager for Energy Directorate of Energy of the European Commission, Fabrizio Barbato, said that the European Commission is considering the introduction of guidelines and directives governing the issue of exploitation and utilization of oil shale, because, as he said, it is a very valuable resource peculiar to Europe.

He said that this proposal will include measures relating to the protection of water and soil,

and the specific requirements relating to the protection of the environment when it comes to the exploitation of oil shale.

According to him, the Serbian legislation in the energy sector is already largely harmonized with the EU legislation, but it is important for the country to increasingly open energy market.

In the energy market competition should be increased, as there would be only one monopolist that controls the situation, said Barbaso.

"This means that the energy market in Serbia should be integrated with the markets of the countries in the region and the EU," he added.

Pointing out that under the laws of the EU, each state is free to choose the ways of power supply, Barbaso said that the situation in Serbia is to a certain degree out of balance, since a large part depends on energy from coal and from one gas supplier.

"That's why we encourage Serbia to invest in the renewable energy sector, as well as in infrastructure, which is very important to connect the energy market and to give the opportunity to supply with alternative sources of energy," he said.

Barbaso said he was aware that the production of energy from coal can not be changed overnight, but we should invest more in alternative energy sources.

Managing Director of the Oil Industry of Serbia (NIS) Kirill Kravchenko said that the company through the newly formed Center for new technologies to use non-conventional reserves, is considering several projects, including the use of oil shale.

"We are waiting for the state's attitude to what principles it wants to see the partners in the use of oil shale," said Kravchenko.

He also added that NIS will certainly consider all energy projects that enhance energy independence of Serbia.

Kravchenko said that in the Balkan region in the energy sector by 2030, we need to invest 60 billion EUR.

He said that if you compare the Balkan region to central Europe, energy efficiency and economic capacity must be doubled in the next ten years.

"Energy is the driving force of the economy in the Balkan region, as eight of the ten largest regional company are in this industry, the largest investments are flowing into this sector, and it employs the largest number of people," said Kravchenko.

Source; Serbia Energy