

# **Serbia mining:” Coal sector in the Draft Energy Strategy of the Republic of Serbia by 2025, including the outlook by 2030”**

**Categories :** [Mining](#)

**Date :** November 1, 2013

Ministry of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia has prepared a Draft Energy Strategy of the Republic of Serbia by 2025, including the outlook by 2030. This Draft was the subject of public hearing from 16.08.- 11.10.2013. In the paper by the authors, Pavlović.V, Ivezić D., Ignjatović D., the place and role of the coal sector in the Serbian Energy development predictions with regards to the Draft of the new Strategy, were presented. This paper was presented at the Sixth International Conference on Coal, held at Zlatibor, from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> October this year.

Draft Strategy defines the strategic priorities and directions for the development of the energy sector. Three strategic directions of development which the Draft Strategy provides are the energy security and a safe and reliable energy supply, then, the development of national and regional energy market and energy sustainability, which includes the utilization of renewable energy resources, energy efficiency increase and environmental protection.

The authors point out that coal is a dominant energy product in the structure of the fossil fuels energy reserves of the Republic of Serbia. Therefore, as stated by the authors, this energy source and the entire coal sector occupy a significant place in the Draft Strategy.

When it comes to energy resources, reserves of better quality energy products, such as oil and gas are symbolic and represent less than 1% of balance and off-balance geological reserves of high level of exploration, while the remaining 99% of the energy reserves make various kinds of coals, with the lignite having the largest share of over 95 % of balance reserves. According to the Draft data, the total amount of lignite amounts to 8,88 billion tons. Of this, 4,5 billion tons are located in the Kosovo and Metohija basin, while about 4 billion tons are in the central part of Serbia, i.e. Kostolac and Kolubara mining basins. The total exploitable coal reserves are significant and represent a reliable basis for further long-term energy development in general, and especially for electricity production.

As a key strategic priorities and objectives given in the Draft, the energy security, the energy market development and the overall transition to sustainable energy are predominant. These are the principles on which it is necessary to develop energy policy up to 2030. The environmental impacts must be minimized. However, Serbia energy will have to be market-based and economically efficient to the extent that it could generate its own development, and also to represent a generator and a secure development basis of the country.

The authors of the Draft Strategy particularly singled out strategic objectives for the coal sector, such as a safe and reliable supply of thermal power capacities, providing the required

quantity of coal for final consumption and heat production . The current situation in the sector was also taken into account: the age of the plant and the equipment and the need for rehabilitation, problems of land expropriation for further development of open pit mines, and underground mining of coal that is not cost-effective and operates with the help the State provides. The strategic trends have been defined: intensification of coal deposit research in the territory of the entire Serbia, the opening of replacement capacities for the existing open pit mines that will soon cease operating and opening of open pit mines that will be used for new thermal power capacities, the optimization and the concentration of coal production from underground mining into profitable facilities, and the introduction of coal quality management system.

Opening new open pit mines in Kolubara basin and the capacity expansion of open pit mine Drmno have been proposed to be priority activities in the sector. Projects that need to be implemented to ensure the smooth operation of the existing thermal power plants, in Kolubara basin, are related to the investment in the existing mines (Tamnava - West Field , Fields C and D , the relocation of Vreoci (total investment of 470 million €) , opening the open pit mine Field E, as a replacement for the OPM Field D (€ 532 million investment) and the open pit mine Field G as a replacement for OPM Veliki Crljeni (€161 million investment) .

The opening of the open pit mine Radljevo (investment value of € 600 million for 6 year period of implementation and reaching projected production of 13 million tons of coal per year, and/or € 1,232 million by the end of exploitation) is strategically related to the construction of TPP Kolubara B and TPPNT B3, but also related to the further development of Kolubara mining basin. So, in this sense it is necessary to dynamically coordinate these projects implementation.

In conclusion of this paper, it is important to emphasize that the coal is undoubtedly the most important national energy product with reserves which, according to projected spending levels, would be sufficient for exploitation even after 2050. In this sense, for the development of the sector in the period given in the Draft Strategy, and also afterwards, it's important to develop "clean coal" technologies which include SO<sub>2</sub> storage as well. With the constant modernization of thermal power plants, much greater efficiency of their work and the separation and disposal of CO<sub>2</sub>, the coal could play a vital role in ensuring the security of energy supply in Serbia after 2030.

Source; MB Kolubara