

Drafting of the Long-Term Coal Mining Program for coal basins operated by EPS stems from the need to strategically plan future surface coal mining operations in the Kolubara and Kostolac basins, ensure production continuity and meet the country's energy needs, in conjunction with sustainable mining development.

This is the focus of the paper prepared by the group of authors comprising prof. Dr. Vladimir Pavlovic from the Surface Mining Center, Branko Jeftic, Zeljko Micovic, and Gordana Tomasevic from Electric Power Industry of Serbia.

The Law on Mining and Geological Investigations sets forth an obligation to prepare a Long-term Coal Mining Program covering a period of at least ten years for the mining of mineral resources of interest for the Republic of Serbia.

The authors point out that the long-term program is a strategic document and that its main objective is to reduce contradictions, and review existing and find new forms of open cast mining development management in order to optimally valorise the overall potentials of mining basins, both in terms of coal, and other related mineral raw materials.

The starting point for the development of the Long-Term Plan are the results of the analysis into the current situation of the coal basins operated by EPS, and should include all the essential elements affecting the strategy of further basin development, primarily geological, hydrogeological and geotechnical data, equipment conditions, expropriation, infrastructure relocation, environmental impacts, status of individual operating units. A key component of this strategic plan are surely reserves of coal as a non-renewable resource.

Successful implementation of this project, experts say, is based on the methodology containing a number of activities allocated to three continuous process segments – assessment of the situation, followed by the formulation of strategic development directions and finally implementation of the long-term program, as well as the coal mining development strategy of basins operated by EPS.

The starting point for the schedule is project completion period, while the schedule of different project sections is defined based on the scope of each section. The planned project implementation schedule consisting of 365 days, also includes contingencies of 28 calendar days. Time contingencies of 7.7% considerably increase the reliability level of the proposed schedule.

Kolubara and Kostolac coal basins today represent the most important resource potential of the Electric Power Industry of Serbia, while coal originating from these basins will in the long run be the primary raw material for electricity generation in Serbia.