

The Ministry of Mining and Energy of Serbia has **extended the deadline 11 times in two years** to the [Rio Tinto](#) company in order to complete the documentation for the issuance of approval for lithium mining, the Regulatory Institute for Renewable Energy and Environment (RERI) announced today.

As **RERI** claims, the company Rio Tinto has been trying for more than two years to obtain approval for an exploitation field, a document that allows it to start [mining lithium in Serbia](#), despite the fact that it did not attach the necessary documentation to the request.

“The company lacks the Decision on determining the scope and content of the environmental impact assessment study, which was canceled in January 2022 after the Decree on the termination of the validity of the spatial plan of the special purpose area for this project was passed,” RERI said.

They recalled that at that time the Government announced that **“an end has been put to the Rio Tinta project in Serbia”** and that all competent authorities will immediately suspend all procedures that were started based on the mentioned Spatial Plan and invalidate the acts adopted for the implementation of the project.

Legal adviser from RERI **Hristina Vojvodić** said that the Ministry was obliged to reject the request for the exploitation field, because there are no justified reasons for extending the deadlines.

“[Rio Tinto](#) does not have the Decision on determining the scope and content of the environmental impact assessment study, because it was annulled in January of last year. Although the company filed a complaint with the Administrative Court against the annulment decision, this does not constitute a justified reason for extending the deadline for the amendment documentation,” said Vojvodic.

In March of this year, the RERI organization submitted a statement on entering this dispute on the side of the Government of Serbia.

The organization justified its interest in numerous illegalities in the implementation of the **environmental impact** assessment procedure, due to which, previously, in September 2021, it filed a complaint with the [Government](#) demanding that it be annulled.

Source: [Serbia Business](#)