

The Serbian government will first set as a condition the construction of a battery and electric car factory

In order for [lithium mining](#) to be allowed in Serbia, the Serbian government will first set as a condition the construction of a battery and electric car [factory](#), said the research and publishing centre Demostat, quoting to its sources.

“Serbia will not allow lithium mining just to export it to other countries. There are no guarantees that cooperation with [Rio Tinto](#) will be abandoned altogether, but there is a possibility that the state will find a new partner whose reputation is intact, as in the case of a British-Australian corporation, which faced several accusations of destroying the environment on a global level,” the centre said.

Before the project comes to life, according to Demostat, the company that will work on it will have to submit an environmental impact assessment study, which should present relevant data collected by credible institutions on the assessment of the impact on nature in the Jadar valley and beyond.

“The state did not give up on lithium mining at any time, but stopped the project because of the April elections. Now the public is slowly preparing for the revival of the ore mining project in the fertile region of western Serbia, which was objected by a large number of citizens at the end of last year,” the statement added.

Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, American companies that produce batteries and electric cars have been interested in investing in Serbia, and one of them is Rivian, a manufacturer of electric adventure vehicles, which announced in September that it would open a research and development centre in Belgrade.

Demostat’s sources point out that that is the government’s main prerequisite for any company that wants to embark on lithium mining. As they pointed out, the state would not agree to a contract that stipulates lithium mining in Serbia which would then be exported to another country to be further processed.

As explained, if Rio Tinto leaves the project altogether, there are other interested companies from China and Germany. “This means that both of them have the possibility to invest in a lithium battery and an electric car factories that use such batteries, in addition to the mine,” Demostat said, Serbian Monitor reports.