

Serbia is suffering enormous, and especially environmental, damage from the uncontrolled exploitation of mineral resources, and the State Audit Institution (SAI) recently pointed out the problem of calculation and collection of ore annuities, said economist at the Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy, Petar Djukic.

He pointed to insufficient environmental or green funds, which should be used to remedy the environmental consequences of mining.

Djukic cited the example of Lazarevac municipality, which, due to coal mines and TPP Kolubara, has many environmental problems and which until 1991 had so-called An annuity fund, which has been used for environmental protection, protection of public health, restoration of green infrastructure and reclamation of the area.

Since 1991, that fund has been terminated for Lazarevac as a suburban municipality and transferred to the Environmental Protection Fund for the city of Belgrade.

“What to do today in Lazarevac, Kostolac, Bor and other municipalities in a time when environmental and other damages from the extraction of mineral resources have become enormous”, Djukic asks. He also warned about the fact that the rent for oil extraction in Serbia is much lower than abroad.

Djukic said in particular that domestic research from the early 21st century shows that the environmental damage from the extraction of mineral resources in Serbia is at the level of one and a half to two billion euros a year.

Foreign research has shown that these damages are at the level of 6-12 percent of Gross Domestic Product, and that they are up to 20 percent of GDP in underdeveloped countries that do not have developed infrastructure.

Serbia is closer to the latter category and in our country these damages amount to between 10-15 percent of GDP, Djukic points out.

He points out that in poverty it is difficult to be fair and efficient and that it is difficult to capture a part of the income that would fully cover the environmental and other damage caused by the exploitation of mineral resources, as it could lead to the collapse of these companies and the loss of jobs.

This requires laws, political will and independent institutions.

It is positive that the State Audit Institution pointed to the problem of calculation and collection of ore annuities, Djukic points out and recalls that SAI announced that revenues from fees for mining of minerals in 2018 amounted to six billion dinars, and that the debt earlier this year it amounted to 2.6 billion according to the Serbian budget.

Source: rs.n1info.com