

The Ministry of Mining and Energy has rejected Euro Lithium Balkan's request to renew its exploration license for lithium, boron, sodium, strontium, and associated elements in an area near Valjevo in western Serbia. The request was not granted because Euro Lithium had failed to complete the required 75% of exploration works, according to the ministry's decision, issued in August this year.

Answering N1's query, Euro Lithium stated that the envisaged 75% of the works were not completed due to protests and "threats by a few informal organizations and individuals." In a written statement, the company claimed that 61% of the required activities had been completed before the protests began, but that it made a decision to abort the works for security reasons.

Euro Lithium did not appeal the ministry's decision because it was in line with the law

In the statement, Euro Lithium also said that it did not appeal the ministry's decision even though it had the right to do so within 30 days, because, as the company explained, the decision was in line with the Law on mining and geological explorations.

The exploration area in question is located in the municipalities of Valjevo, Ub, Lajkovac, and Mionica. In late April this year, residents from several villages around Valjevo and environmental activists blocked a road in protest against Euro Lithium's exploration works. A day earlier, 10-15 people from the village of Lukavac prevented the Canadian-owned firm from carrying out exploration activities.

Residents had previously protested a number of times, accusing Euro Lithium of poisoning both water and land.

The biggest lithium project in Serbia was stopped in early 2022, but people fear it might be reactivated

Lithium exploration in Serbia has been met with strong resistance and protests, forcing the government to annul all documents related to the biggest of such undertakings, Rio Tinto's Jadar project in western Serbia. However, there are fears that the Anglo-Australian mining giant's project might be reactivated, Balkan Green Energy News writes.