

Serbian environmental activists believe the government is lobbying for Rio Tinto's interests

Environmental activists invited representatives of Rio Tinto, as well as the Ministries of Construction and Energy, but none of them invited appeared at the press conference held at the Media Center in Belgrade.

“We oppose the opening of a lithium ore mine in the vicinity of Loznica, which is planned by the Australian company Rio Tinto, because the project is environmentally harmful and threatens the existence and survival of a dozen villages in the area,” said Zvezdan Kalmar, president of the Coalition for Sustainable Mining Serbia.

According to him, the Ministry of Construction approved the construction of that mine without adequate environmental and economic analyzes that would indicate the justification of the project, and, as he claims, it is completely clear that the Government of Serbia is a lobbyist for Rio Tinto and other large companies.

Momcilo Alimpic, president of the association “Let’s protect Jadar and Radjevina”, pointed out that the representatives of the company “Rio Tinto” threaten the residents of that area who do not want to sell their land located in the area where the mine should be built, that if they do not give up from its intention to be taken away by the process of expropriation.

“Given that expropriation is applied only in the case of public interest, the logical question is who gives the right to a private company to threaten to take away the land and to decide whether it is in the public interest or not. We do not want a lithium mine to be built in our area because it would endanger the environment and the state would not benefit from it because the material compensation it would receive by opening the mine would be very low. One of the things we can agree to is that the company Rio Tinto undertakes to stop further research and the state to undertake to order that company to return the land on which it performed excavations to its original condition “, states Alimpic.

Source: danas.rs