

## The Montenegrin coal mine has announced a tender to return the Čehotina River to its old course

The relocation of Čehotina over the floors of the internal landfill is envisaged by the Strategy for further development of coal exploitation in the Pljevlja basin from the surface mine Potrlica-Kalušići. About ten years ago, the mine relocated a part of the Čehotina stream in the length of about three kilometers, and the project cost the Pljevlja company more than 20 million euros. For the purpose of relocating Čehotina, Rudnik had to build a dam in Durutovići, in order to divert the river from its earlier course, build two tunnels, as well as two concrete canals through which Čehotina currently flows.

The return of Čehotina through the exploitation field is planned after the formation of an internal landfill at the surface mine Potrlica at an altitude of 760 meters above sea level. The watertight canal that would direct the river Čehotina is planned through a landfill in the total length of approximately 2.9 kilometers, from the position of the dam “Durutovići” to the bridge near the waterfall of the exit portal of the tunnel Velika Pliješ near the sedimentation tank. By returning Čehotina along the route of its approximately natural flow, the current role of the dam “Durutovići”, which served to divert the river through the tunnel, ends, creating the possibility of using its potential for the construction of a mini hydroelectric power plant for electricity production. For these reasons, as stated in the tender, the new bed of the river Čehotina needs to be designed and dimensioned so as to provide accommodation for the facilities of the mini hydropower plant.

According to the conceptual design within the Supplementary Mining Project of Coal Exploitation at the surface mine Potrlica - Pljevlja for the period from 2020 to 2025, it is planned that in accordance with the dynamics of works on the landfill and creating conditions on the corridor, construction works will be performed from two directions: dam “Durutovići”, downstream, towards the point of entry to the internal landfill and from the inflow into the existing riverbed at the Cementar site, upstream.

“The projected dynamics and quantities of tailings that are planned for excavation and disposal at the landfill are defined so as to enable timely formation of the route of the corridor and riverbed for moving the river Čehotina to a new bed in early 2024. The realization of such dynamics will ensure long-term planned dynamics of exploitation required quantities of coal from the Potrlica and Kalusici localities “, it is stated in the tender documentation.

The Secretariat for Spatial Planning of the Municipality of Pljevlja has issued to the Coal Mine urban-technical conditions for the construction of a watertight canal for the return of the river Čehotina along the corridor of its approximately natural flow.

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