

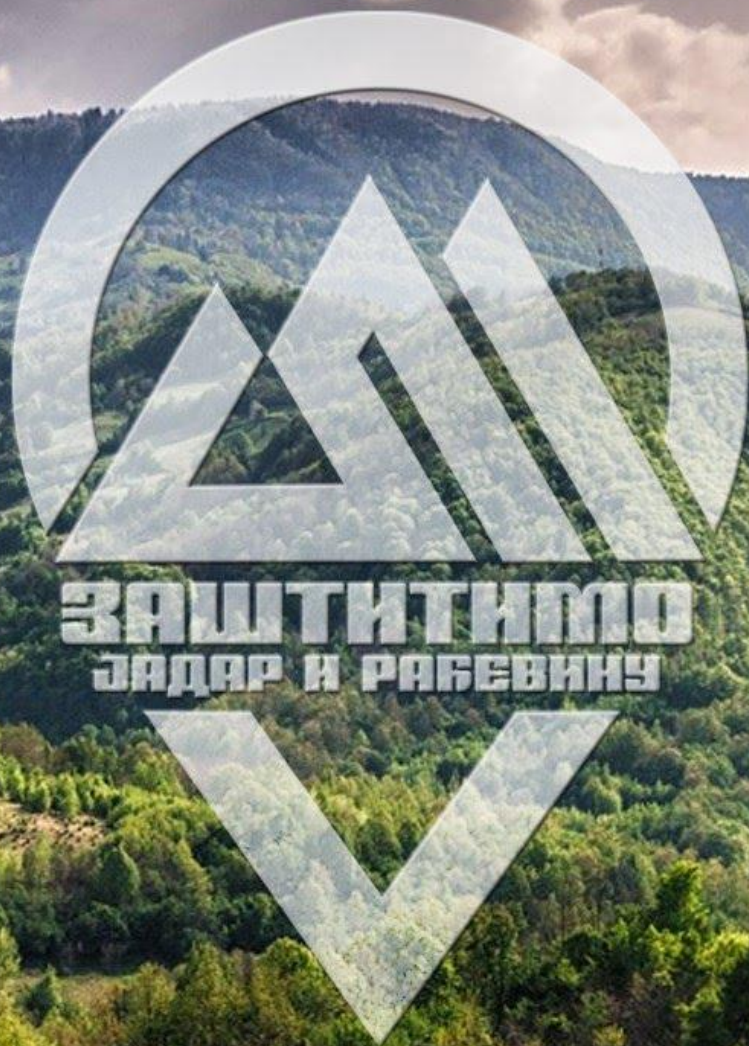
Ne RUDNIK

DA ŽIVOT

Alleged threat to fauna species and protected sites due to the proposed construction of a lithium mine in the Jadar River Valley

2021/7

On behalf of Earth Thrive, Protect Jadar and Radjevina-Za štitimo Jadar i Rađevinu and Earth Law Center and all living beings in Jadar



**Protect Jadar and Rađevina/Zaštitimo Jadar i Rađevinu**



Република Србија  
МИНИСТАРСТВО  
ЗАШТИТЕ ЖИВОТНЕ СРЕДИНЕ

Број: 002541265.2024

Датум: 15.11.2024.

Немањина 22-26  
Београд

На основу члана 2. тачка 2. алинеја 1, члана 14. став 3. Закона о процени утицаја на животну средину („Сл. гласник РС“, 135/04, 36/09), члана 6. став 1. Закона о министарствима („Сл. гласник РС“, број 128/2020, 116/22 и 92/23- др.закон), члана 23. став 2. и члана 24. став 3. Закона о државној управи („Сл. гласник РС“, бр. 79/2005, 101/2007, 95/2010, 99/2014, 47/2018 и 30/2018 – др. закон) и члана 136. став 1. Закона о општем управном поступку („Сл. гласник РС“, број 18/2016, и 95/2018 – аутентично тумачење и 2/2023 - одлука УС), поступајући по захтеву носиоца пројекта „Rio Sava Exploration“ д.о.о. Београд, за одређивање обима и садржаја Студије о процени утицаја на животну средину, Александар Дујановић, државни секретар Министарства заштите животне средине по решењу о овлашћењу број: 001747986.2024.14850.000.020.092 од 24.05.2024. године, доноси

**РЕШЕЊЕ**

- Одређује се носиоцу пројекта „Rio Sava Exploration“ д.о.о. Београд, обим и садржај Студије о процени утицаја на животну средину пројекта подземне експлоатације лежишта литијума и бора „Јадар“, на катастарским парцелама у оквиру катастарских општина Горње Недељице, Брњац, Велико Село, Јаребице, Слатина, Ступница и Шурице, град Лозница, у обухвату подзона 1А и 1Б – зона рударских активности према Просторном плану подручја посебне намене за реализацију пројекта експлоатације и прераде минерала јадарита у лежишту „Јадар“ („Сл.Гласник РС“, број 26/2020). Координате преломних тачака експлоатационог поља „Јадар“ су следеће:

X	Y
1. 7 369 701	4 932 812
2. 7 370 663	4 931 969
3. 7 371 083	4 932 172
4. 7 371 427	4 932 281
5. 7 371 719	4 932 321
6. 7 372 305	4 932 360
7. 7 372 999	4 932 112
8. 7 373 542	4 931 425
9. 7 373 508	4 930 483
10. 7 372 691	4 929 643
11. 7 371 181	4 929 745

The decision determining the scope and content of the EIA was issued on the 15th of November, but the public was informed six days later, on the 21st of November. We have never gotten the reply from the Ministry about our requests to revoke this illegal process. The scope and content of the EIA are being determined only for the mining part of the project which is not in accordance with the Serbian legislative. Mining project and following studies have never been published.



четвртак, 21. новембар 2024.

Решење којим се носиоцу пројекта

„RIO SAVA EXPLORATION“ д.о.о.

Београд, одређује обим и садржај

Студије о процени утицаја на животну

средину пројекта подземне

експлоатације лежишта литијума и

бора „Јадар“

На основу чл. 14. и чл. 29. Закона о процени утицаја на животну средину („Сл. гласник РС“ 135/04, 36/09), Министарство заштите животне средине даје следеће

# Constitutional Court of Serbia rules in favor of Rio Tinto's lithium project



**The Constitutional Court of Serbia declared unconstitutional and unlawful a government decree from 2022 that annulled the local spatial plan for Rio Tinto's project for a lithium mine and processing plant. The site is on the territory of the city of Loznica in the country's west.**

## Thousands rally in Serbia accusing populist government of cracking down on anti-lithium activists



People hold a banner that reads: "Not even a chunk of ore to EU occupier! Rio Tinto get out of Serbia!" during an environmental protest in front of the mine. [Read More](#)

BY JOVANA GEC

Updated 9:21 PM GMT+1, September 1, 2024



Photo: Presidency of Serbia / Dimitrije Goll

*Vučić said the Jadar lithium project in Serbia is complete in the political sense and that Rio Tinto now needs to meet the government's requests to be allowed to open a mine and processing facility*

Turning to Rio Tinto's controversial project for a lithium mine and processing plant in Serbia, the president told the media that the alkali metal would be excavated if the company fulfills the government's conditions. "In the political sense, that story is long done," Vučić asserted.

Of note, COP29's formal name is the Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention c



## Faculty of Biology: Optimal measure to prevent negative impact is to abandon Jadar project

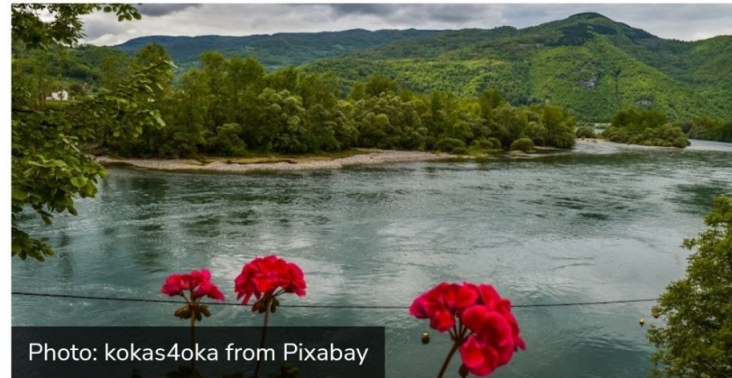


Photo: kokas4oka from Pixabay

**The Faculty of Biology at the University of Belgrade has issued a statement regarding Rio Tinto's three drafts of environmental impact assessment studies for the Jadar lithium mining and processing project. The studies are carried out by the company's subsidiary,**



## RERI: Rio Tinto divides up Jadar lithium project in Serbia to avoid overall environmental assessment



Photo: iStock

**Rio Tinto is attempting to portray the potential environmental impacts of its Jadar project in Serbia as smaller than they are, Renewables and Environmental Regulatory Institute said. The company's request to the responsible ministry to**

Fertile Jadar valley, source of income and food security for hundreds of people.



St. George church, more than 300 years old, 100 meters from the planned processing zone.

Gornje Brezovice in Radjevina, a farm adjacent to the planned filtered tailing zone covering 360 hectares with projection of a million and half tons of waste per year. Remote area of beautiful untouched nature, fruit growing and livestock region.

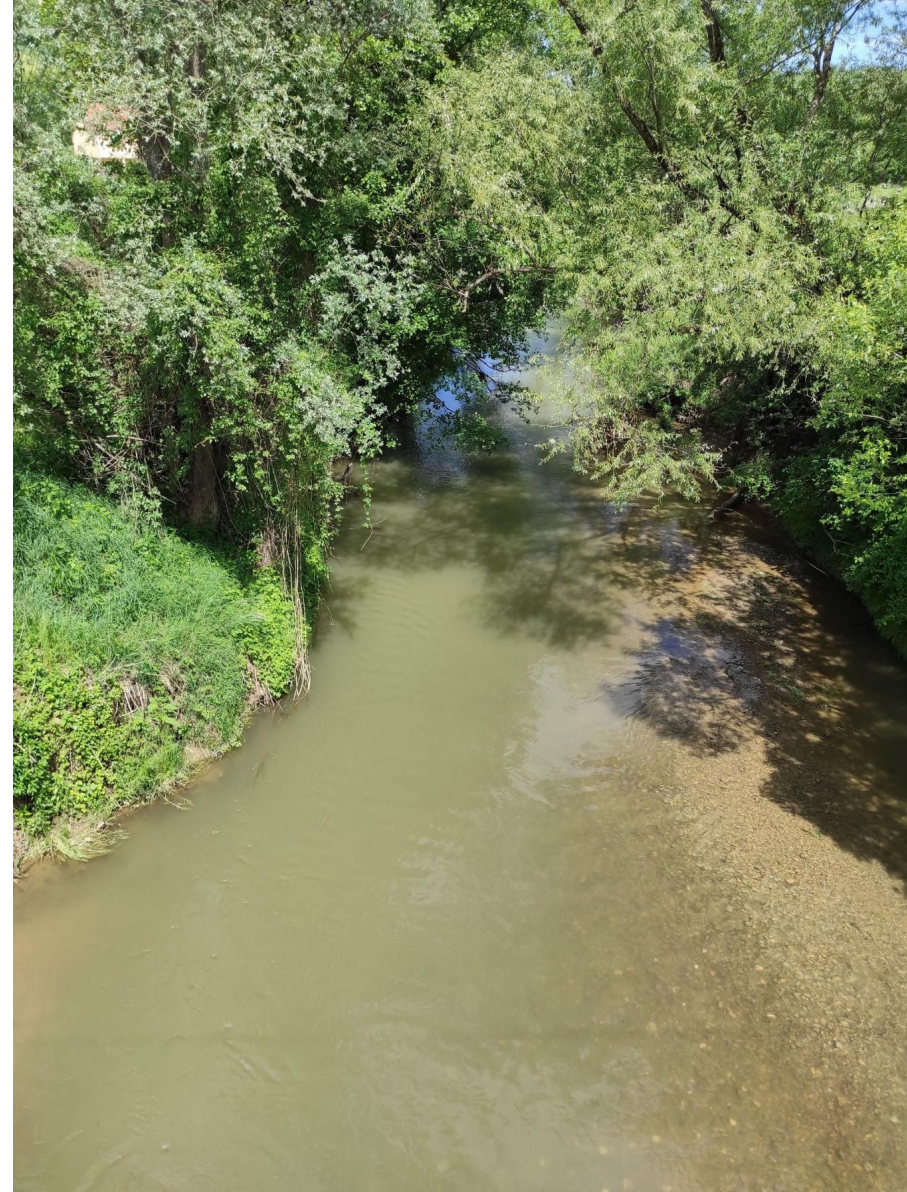




Forest in Radjevina, location of the planned filtered tailing zone, Štavice, home to many protected species, including endemic plant species *Teucrium scorodonia*.

“If the “Jadar” project would be implemented, 90% of the population of *Teucrium siculum* would disappear on the site where the construction of the landfill (Štavice, Rađevina) is planned, which would most likely lead to its definitive disappearance from the flora of Serbia. At the same time, another 20 species of rare plants would disappear in the mentioned locality. Additionally, if activities were to be implemented in the production-industrial zone (Brezjak), seven more species of plants from this area would disappear.”

*Dmitar Lakušić and Imre Krizmanić, professors of the Faculty of Biology and managers on the “Jadar” project in the part “State of biodiversity”*



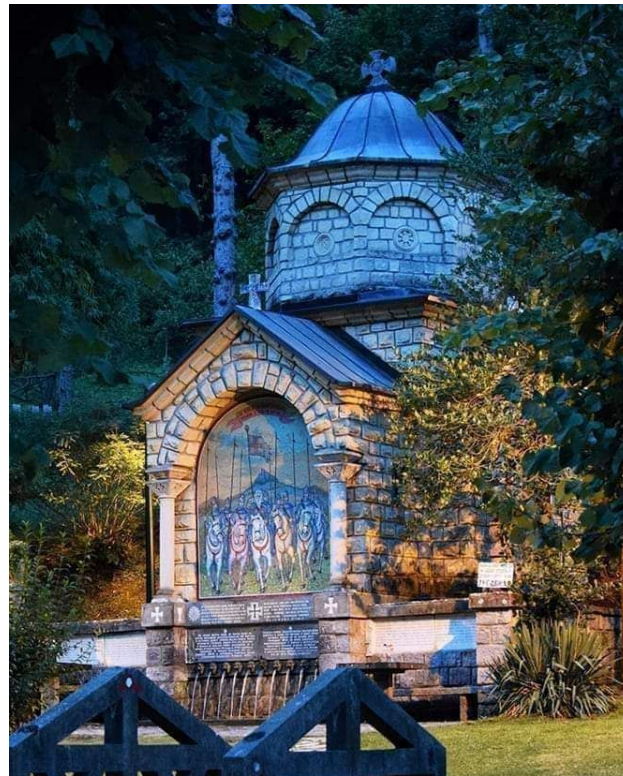
The Jadar river, 75 km long right tributary of the Drina river.





“Cultural landscape Tršić-Tronoša”, protected area of which more than 1000 hectares are occupied by Rio Tinto’s spatial plan, home to more than 145 protected species of plants and animals and the monastery dating to XIV century, unfortunately also covered by the Spatial plan

Gusle, serbian national instrument. Singing to the accompaniment of the Gusle Inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the practice is still alive in Jadar and Radjevina.



Ritual of making and lighting farmer candles in Tronoša, Intangible cultural heritage of Serbia.



Social practices and knowledge related to the preparation and use of the traditional plum spirit – šljivovica, inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Practice of essential importance in Radjevina



Burning of Petrovdan “lila” torches in Loznica, Intangible cultural heritage of Serbia

Slava, celebration of family saint patron’s day, inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity



Traditional celebration of Christmas Eve, Church of St. John the Theologian, Brezjak, Jadar



Draginac, WWII Memorial complex and mass grave of about 3000 civilians shot in October of 1941. 2.5 km from the mining zone, occupied by the Spatial plan



Paulje necropolis, Bronze Age, 1500 – 1200BC. Within the planned mining zone. The artefacts are displayed in the Jadar Museum in Loznica.



**РУДНИКА НЕЋЕ БИТИ!**



THERE  
WON'T BE  
MINE!

**ЈЕР ТАКО ХОЋЕМО МИ!**

**„ЗАШТИТИМО ЈАДАР И РАЂЕВИНУ“**

BECAUSE  
THAT'S  
WHAT WE  
WANT!

“PROTECT  
JADAR AND  
RADJEVINA”

# Potential impact of Mining Activities in Jadar

On behalf of Earth Thrive and Earth Law Centre



**Earth Thrive**  
NATURE RIGHTS



**earth**  
LAW CENTER  
FIGHTING FOR NATURE'S RIGHTS

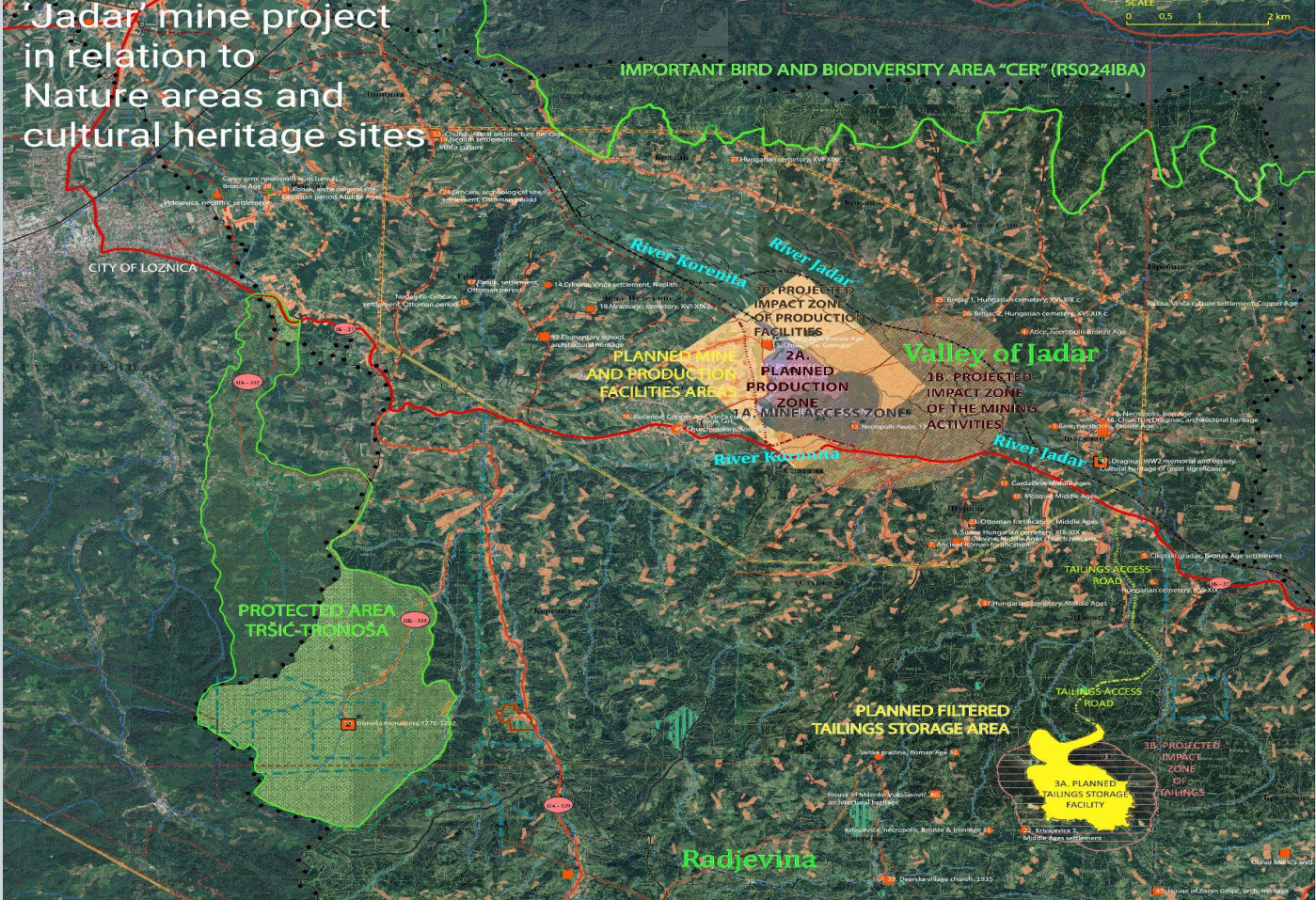
# An Overview

- Serbia violated **Articles 3.2, 4.1, 4.2,** and **5** of the Bern Convention by failing to take appropriate legislative and administrative measures to protect wild flora, fauna, and endangered habitats in the Jadar Valley.
- Serbia has supported the advancement of the Jadar Mine, Europe's largest planned lithium mine (293 km<sup>2</sup>), despite inadequate and irregular environmental assessments and public participation.
- The mine will cause deforestation, habitat destruction, and pollution, including contamination of rivers and groundwater.
- Immediate impacts from exploratory drills and habitat destruction already threaten 807 hectares and 68+ Bern-protected species.
- Violates the Rights of Nature.



Syrian woodpecker *dendrocopos syriacus*  
(Birds, Bern *Annex II*)

# Location of the Mine





## Voices of Nature

**Inextricable  
connection between  
wildlife and people.**

**> 50 family displaced  
22 village ~ 20 000 people  
species, habitats  
life endangered**

**small-scale agriculture**

**mixed agriculture**



365 days 24/7



55 explosive (TNT)

1333 sulphuric acid (H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>)



300 olympic pools  
full of treated wastewater (Jadar-Drina)



# Species and Habitats impacted

The mine will impact at least 68 species protected under the Bern Convention;

## Species protected under Habitat, Bonn, EUROBATS...

15 mammals,  
55 birds,  
10 amphibians,  
10 reptiles,  
4 insects,  
11 fish

Species include: yellow bellied toad, agile frog, dice snake, Macedonian crested newt, white tailed eagle, European Pond Terrapin, Noctule ...

*The valley of Jadar and surrounding landscape is a unique mosaic of important and interconnected habitats, hosting a wide number of protected amphibians, reptiles, fish, mammal taxa and fauna ...*



## Habitats

101 important for protection

31 priority for protection mentioned in 13 Natura 2000 habitat types,

Priority:

91E0 \*Alluvial forests of alder (*Alnus* spp.), willow (*Salix* spp.) and poplar (*Populus* spp.), and

91I0 \*Euro-Siberian steppe forests with oaks (*Quercus* spp.).



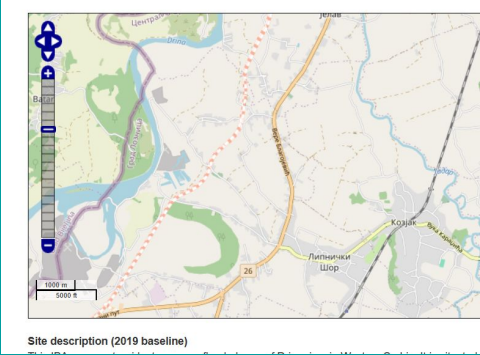
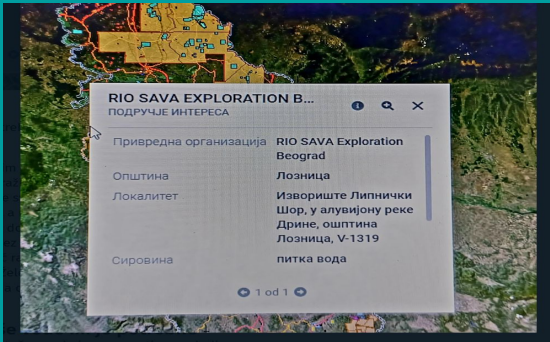
<https://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/donje-podrinje-iba-serbia>

# River Drina - International Emerald corridor

Numerous species live here  
 Various habitats of exceptional ecological value and unique importance for biodiversity

The only recorded nesting ground of the little tern in Serbia lies in IBA Donje Podrinje (downstream of project area)

Area of interest as a water source of water for the mine is in the alluvium of the Drina river (IBA Donje Podrinje)





The negative impacts of jadarite mineral exploitation can be reflected on the entire ecosystem diversity of all aquatic and terrestrial habitats outside the area of the "Jadar" mining complex.



In certain, primary zones of influence, there will be a complete and direct destruction of habitats with the disappearance of all the organisms that inhabit them.



**ENDANGERED**

# Rights of Nature ('RoN')

A legal framework acknowledging that natural entities possess inherent rights, just as humans do.

Recognizes ecosystems and species as having rights to exist, thrive, and evolve naturally, challenging their treatment as mere property under current legal systems.

The Preamble of the Bern Convention explicitly emphasizes the intrinsic value of wild flora and fauna, aligning with the Rights of Nature principle that ecosystems and species have value independent of their utility to humans.

Article 4 of the Bern Convention also supports, if not necessitates, consideration of the Rights of Nature ( *see also* Articles 5, 6, 7, 10). Article 4 requires “appropriate and necessary legislative and administrative measures” to conserve the habitat of wild flora and fauna species and endangered natural habitats. Achieving this in practice may necessitate the Rights of Nature.

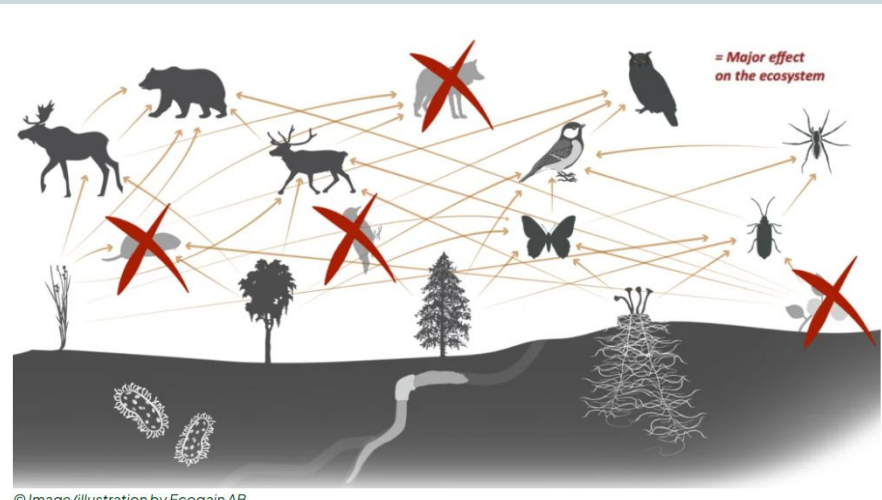


Photo: Rollin\_Verlinde Kuhl's pipistrelle - *Pipistrellus kuhlii*

# Problems + false solutions to the climate, biodiversity and ecological crises



Right to a healthy environment (Protests for Right to say NO)



© Image/illustration by Ecoain AR

Picture:

<https://miningwithnature.se/en/utbildningar/biodiversity/understanding-biodiversity/if-many-species-are-declining/>

In Serbia, 1 mining inspector does the work of three inspectors in Europe - very poor coverage

TREATISE ON ASSESSMENT OF RISK ON AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM OF THE RIVER JADAR OWING TO EXPLOITATION OF BORON AND LITHIUM IN THE PROJECT "JADAR"

March 2023

DOI: [10.7251/ASB220302023S](https://doi.org/10.7251/ASB220302023S)

Lab: [Center for Genotyping of Fisheries Resources](#)

 Predrag Simonović ·  Radoslav Dekić ·  Vera Nikolić

The risk to the River Jadar as a main recipient of treated underground waters is very high

“Would affect the ecosystem” ... “The massive death of aquatic organisms...”

*EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 Healthy Planet, Healthy People*

# River Jadar and floods



flooded exploration wells

River Korenita (riparian habitats - Annex I Habitat) proved to be a key corridor, primarily for birds and bats, higher frequency of use/ the Jadar River bed. (Scope EIA)

Jadar River in western Serbia, periodically flooding the plains. May 2014 floods were associated with the effects of climate change. The proposed site for the Europe's biggest lithium mine is on the bank of the Korenita River, a tributary of the Jadar.



# Lack of response from the Serbian government

Avoiding for respect international and domestic laws and regulations (Bern, Habitat, Bonn...)

Law and Institute for nature protection say DO CUMULATIVE IMPACT (mine, ore processing plant and landfill)

Preserve mosaics of habitats!

Ministry of environmental protection says NO NEED...

“the mine functions as *an independent unit and is not connected to the rest*” ???

Environmental Impact Assessment (scope and content)

AN INCOMPLETE AND ILLEGAL REQUEST

No key documents that are *prescribed by law*

NO IMPACT ON WATER

“*There are no protected areas*”

“*There are no endemic or critically endangered*”

*Internationally protected???*

*No impact (neither Korenita nor anywhere)*

# Impacts of current exploration and potential impacts of the future exploitation of the mine



Leaks from exploratory wells / financial “compensation” by the company to the parcel owners



*“Evidence of soil and water pollution, deforestation , as well as forced displacement of the residents, due to the exploration activities by the Rio Tinto”*

*“Jadar valley is settled area with a very important reservoir of high-quality shallow underground drinking water”*

[https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-024-68072-9?fbclid=IwZXhobgNhZWwCMTEAAR3aoHTxrxttUwKallgbj\\_RKhpUGHM1O7vqkg--pnva\\_9jvTgipyole3E-E\\_aem\\_8\\_VEamHdO45iJkYc4Bqhw](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-024-68072-9?fbclid=IwZXhobgNhZWwCMTEAAR3aoHTxrxttUwKallgbj_RKhpUGHM1O7vqkg--pnva_9jvTgipyole3E-E_aem_8_VEamHdO45iJkYc4Bqhw)

Article | [Open access](#) | Published: 24 July 2024

## The influence of exploration activities of a potential lithium mine to the environment in Western Serbia

[Dragana Đorđević](#) , [Jovan M. Tadić](#), [Branimir Grgur](#), [Ratko Ristić](#), [Sanja Sakan](#), [Jelena Brezjanović](#), [Vladimir Stevanović](#) & [Bogdan Šolaja](#)

*Scientific Reports* **14**, Article number: 17090 (2024) | [Cite this article](#)

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# Remedies sought on behalf of Nature

- A proposal to amend Article 4 of the Bern Convention to incorporate a specific Rights of Nature clause
- Finding that there have been breaches of the Bern Convention articles 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, and 5.
- Recommendations for action by the Serbian government, including monitoring of nature impacts and a refusal of permit for mining in Jadar
- Recommendations for remediation steps to restore nature
- Seminar for all relevant parties at which the impact of the mines on nature is discussed



*Modus vivendi*

*High Nature Value farming*

*Permaculture*

*Agroforestry*

*The Bureau recalled that nature protection and the coverage of the Bern Convention extends beyond designated Protected Areas, and that Contracting Parties are obliged to protect the habitats and species across their whole territories.*



**Earth Thrive**  
NATURE RIGHTS



**earth**  
LAW CENTER  
FIGHTING FOR NATURE'S RIGHTS

**Thank You!**