

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Mining and Energy, Prof. Dr. Zorana Mihajlovic, said on the occasion of marking the beginning of the project "EU for a green agenda in Serbia", that the green agenda is an opportunity for faster economic development and an opportunity for new investments, and not a threat to the energy sector.

She said that the most important issues for every country are to be energy stable and self-sufficient, ie to have enough energy and to protect the environment at the same time.

The Green Agenda for the Mining and Energy Sector means that it is not possible to implement decisions if the environment is not taken into account. The Green Agenda is an opportunity for faster development, it is a new growth model, and an opportunity for new investments, new jobs. The Green Agenda is not something that will change our energy system overnight, but it means the possibility and the need to all work together in the years ahead, we will begin the process of energy transformation," she said.

Mihajlovic pointed out that the green agenda is an opportunity for faster and sustainable economic growth, that investments are necessary, but also the active role of the state.

"We should lead these changes, not be on the sidelines and wait. I think we need a ministry for green transformation and energy efficiency in the next government, so that we can move faster towards ensuring long-term energy stability using RES," she said.

"Protection and improvement of the environment, energy transition and the green agenda are very important issues and we will work together to improve all processes. Thanks also to the line ministries for everything they have done and will do to implement this project. This government has two key priorities - governance rights and the green agenda, that is, the improvement of the environment, and the EU is our partner on these issues," said Ana Brnabić, Prime Minister.

The project is worth eight million euros and should contribute to the sustainable implementation of the green agenda through the improvement of the strategic and legislative framework. The partners in the implementation of the project are the UNDP, the EIB, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, and the beneficiaries are, in addition to the Ministry of Mining and Energy, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Minister for European Integration Jadranka Joksimović stated today that the EU Project for a Green Agenda in Serbia is not the beginning of work on a green agenda and green development in our country, but that it is an important step within Cluster 4 in negotiations with the EU and meeting all transitional criteria from that cluster related to environmental protection, climate change and sustainable development.

At the conference held on the occasion of the beginning of that project, Joksimović assessed that it is good that in parallel with improving the rule of law in Serbia, we are working on the main pillar of EU development policy at the moment, which is the green agenda and green development.

Joksimović pointed out that the green agenda and green development are also being worked on through the goals of sustainable development, which are being implemented in Serbia through the process of European integration.

According to Joksimović, the beneficiaries of the project are the Ministry of Environmental Protection, the Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, but the final beneficiaries are those institutions that implement environmental protection and climate change policies in Serbia at national and local level.

At the local level, explains Joksimović, in practice it means that local self-government units, public companies, private companies, non-governmental organizations and scientific-research institutions can apply.

"It is important that at the local level, local self-government units inform the public and all interested parties, visibility is very important, but also that they all follow the calls because they are funds that go through ministries and go down to the local," she explained.

According to her, it is important that everyone is interested and has the opportunity to influence with their ideas in the field of decarbonization, energy efficiency, circular economy, reduction of environmental pollution with a focus on air quality and sustainable agricultural production.

She says that the project was programmed in 2020, and that she signed a part of the important IPA 2020 package in April 2020, which amounted to 80 million euros in the EU grant, and eight million euros were intended for this project.

"We knew then, as in previous years, that through the programming of projects related to achieving the goals of the Green Agenda in cooperation and strategic and financial partnership with the EU, we will achieve the best goals and what citizens expect, which has become a topic not only in Serbia, but all over the world, and especially in the EU, and that is the environment, climate change, energy efficiency, protection of biodiversity, sustainable agricultural production, green industry, circular economy," Joksimovic said.

She adds that Serbia does not want to be on the margins of changes that have begun in the world and the EU, but to boldly enter the matrix of changes and emphasizes that she believes that Serbia has already done that and follows everything that is the goal of the green agenda in the EU, RTV reports.