



PRESS RELEASE

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Citizens of Kazakhstan will learn who pollutes their environment

ASTANA – On July 14-15 the database of the largest environmental polluters will be launched at the conference organized by the Ministry of Energy in Astana. The information in a synoptic database is provided by the non-governmental organizations and will be soon open published at www.ecocitizens.kz. The intention to make information on environmental pollution publicly available dates back years. Public databases of the pollution releases and transfers belong to a standard of developed countries under the Kyiv Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers representing the open approach of the authorities to their citizens. President Nazarbayev has also signed a new law related to the Protocol in April 2016.

"We gladly welcome that the President signed under a law amendment that will soon enable official publishing of the data on the environmental pollution. However, we wish to contribute to the effort of the state institutions and to show how the data might be clearly presented. We hope that our preliminary top-tens of the largest polluters will help to improve the reporting system and increase the interest of the public," says Dmitriy Kalmykov, Director of the EcoMuseum Karaganda.

The non-governmental organizations EcoMuseum, CINEST and Eco Mangystau from Kazakhstan and Arnika from the Czech Republic have analysed the official data reported by the industrial companies to the Ministry of Energy, and prepared their presentation. To reduce impact of the industrial pollution on human health is especially important in Kazakhstan, where number of cities with hundreds of thousand inhabitants is closely tied with heavy industry. The appalling situation however has its solution: there is number of progressive technologies and ways of operation available that can significantly reduce risks. Publishing the pollution data is a first step for their introduction.

"We are happy to bring the tools of our good practice to Kazakhstan. Lessons learnt from both mistakes and successes that we experienced can save valuable time and bring faster progress. Larger informational openness contributes to cleaner environment, happier local communities and often also to savings in industrial operations," says Martin Skalsky of Arnika, Czech Republic.

The database will be launched within the project "Promotion of the rights of citizens for public participation in decision-making about environmental issues - practical implementation of the Aarhus Convention in Mangystau", aimed at strengthening civil society by improving the living conditions of residents in Mangystau region of Kazakhstan. The project is financed by the European Union with the total budget of EUR 336,120.

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