

8. Issues and Efforts on Environment and Development

8.1. Issues in Environmental Administration

At the Conference to Develop Kazakhstan Agenda 21 held under the auspices of the UNDP in February 2000, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection (currently the Ministry of Environmental Protection) pointed out the following problems in the environmental administration.

- Opaque personnel system
- Inconsistent policy and unclear policymaking process
- Lack of standard in formulation and evaluation of environmental policy
- Privatization of information
- Undeveloped legal system and lack of law-abiding spirit

Personnel changes involving top bureaucrats and policy changes arising from repeated organizational changes and cabinet reshufflings are believed to be behind these problems. The Ministry of Environmental Protection still has the same problems. For instance, the long-term environmental protection program has been changed three times since 2000, and three-quarters of the ministry's staff have been replaced.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection places “strengthened penalties against violators of laws” as its basic policy, with “strengthened emission regulations for some facilities” as an important item for environmental control. Although the number of on-site inspections and the amount of fines collected are reported by the Provincial Divisions of Environmental Protection every year, there are no reports on changes in the qualities of air or water.

Even though the World Bank, UNDP, and ADB, which are the leading aid agencies for Kazakhstan, recognize that the present Ministry of Environmental Protection is improving its capabilities for developing a legal system, identifying environmental problems, and planning action programs, they still raise the following issues.

- Developing engineers
Even though the environmental protection program is formulated and budgetary steps have been taken, the shortage of engineers disrupts proper implementation of the program. It is an urgent task to develop engineers who can manage the proper implementation of the program.
- Increasing the number of staff and developing their capabilities
Cutbacks in the number of personnel due to the promotion of administrative efficiency in the government have left the remaining personnel with too much work.
- Implementing environmental education
Partly because of the lack of environmental protection awareness among residents and businesses, the progress of the environmental protection administration is delayed. The spread of environmental education is necessary.

8.2. Efforts for Resolving the Issues

In order to implement an efficient environmental administration, the Ministry of Environmental Protection is working on promoting the decentralization of power and enhancing the environmental impact assessment system. Although the environmental

administration in an oblast is handled by a Provincial Division of Environmental Protection, which is a local branch of the Ministry of Environmental Protection, it is not always implemented based on the medium- and long-term programs developed by the ministry because the power to implement the budget is held by the provincial governor, who is appointed by the president. To solve this problem, the ministry is promoting the decentralization of power so that a Provincial Division of Environmental Protection can formulate the environmental programs best suited to the environmental issues in the oblast. In this instance, it is becoming an issue to develop human resources in a Provincial Division of Environmental Protection.

The ministry started to examine the enhancement of the environmental impact assessment in the wake of the “Government Program for the Development of Kazakhstan’s Sector of the Caspian Sea” formulated by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources in 2003. This national program is intended for the oil development in the shelf of the Caspian Sea. The government agreed with the Ministry of Environmental Protection’s strong view that environmental impact assessment is significant for the prevention of marine pollution and that capacity building for both the system and the administration is indispensable. There is a background that the Caspian Sea is considerably important for Russia and Iran because of its fishery resources as well as the influence of the Caspian Sea Environmental Treaty, which contains the protection of fishery resources and was concluded by Kazakhstan, Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Iran.

8.3. Donor Projects

The international aid agencies are providing assistance in the environmental field. They are implementing projects for Kazakhstan and Central Asia because Central Asian countries depend on international rivers for their water resources and share the international environmental problem of the shrinking of the Aral Sea, which is caused by the people’s lives and the maintenance of the economies of each of the countries in Central Asia. Table 8.1 indicates the assistance projects implemented from 1996 through March 2003.

Table 8.1 List of assistance projects

No.	Name of project	Implementation term	Amount of assistances (Thousand US\$)	Aid agency
1	Formulating wind energy development program	1998-2001	350.0	UNDP/GEF
2	Formulating solution to remove impediments to enhancement of energy efficiency in hot water and heat supply services in urban areas	1999-2001	261.9	UNDP/GEF
3	Formulating wetlands conservation unified program	1998-2001 2003-2010	137.2 8,710.0	UNDP/GEF
4	Formulating program to preserve agrobiodiversity in mountain areas	1999-2001	252.9	UNDP/GEF
5	Formulating program to preserve biodiversity in West Tian Shan area	1999-2004	2,288.0	WB/GEF/TACIS
6	Formulating national strategy to preserve biodiversity	1996-2003	307.7	UNDP/GEF
7	Formulating program to preserve and sustainably use biodiversity in Altai-Sayan Environmental Protection Area	2002-2006	60.0	UNDP/GEF

No.	Name of project	Implementation term	Amount of assistances (Thousand US\$)	Aid agency
8	Formulating countermeasure plan against residents' health hazards due to automobile exhaust gases in Almaty	1999-2001	920.0	TACIS
9	Formulating program to prevent air pollution by thermal power plants and heat supply boilers in Pavlodar, Ekibastuz, and Aksu	1999-2000	20	Japan(OECC)
10	Formulating countermeasures against mercury contamination in Khimprom's plant site	1999-2003	8,000	France
11	Implementing multilateral management of Irtysh River Basin	1999-2002	920.0	France
12	Establishing water resources management system in Nura-Ishim Basin	1999-2004	50,000	WB
13	Countermeasures against mercury contamination in Nura River and repair of water reservoirs in Nura-Ishim Basin	1999-2004	696	WB
14	Drinking water supply and health and sanitation control in Kzyl-Orda Oblast	2000-2004	14,099.0	Kuwait-Fund
15	Environmental regulations in Syrdarya River and northern Aral Sea	2000-2007	66,015.0	WB
16	Pilot project of drinking water supply for Kazalinsk and Novokazalinsk areas in Kzyl-Orda Oblast	2000-2004	5,000.0	Germany
17	Arid zone control	2000-2005	7,350.0	WB/GEF
18	Pilot project of drinking water supply in Kzyl-Orda Oblast	1997-2000	136.0	WB
19	Formulating countermeasures against ground water pollution caused by industrial waste in Ust-Kamenogorsk area	1999-2000	136.0	Germany
20	Formulating Central Asia environmental protection action program	2000	29.5	ADB
21	Technical assistance to improve environmental protection capability	2000	700.0	ADB
22	Formulating development programs of water supply and sewage disposal in local region	2001	600.0	ADB,ISDB
23	Formulating programs of drinking water supply and health control in Karaganda, Temirtau, and Kokshetau	2001	482.0	WB
24	Capacity building of water utilization associations toward sustainable development in Aral Basin	2000-2002	233.7	UNDP/IFAS
25	Formulating Caspian Sea environmental protection program	1999-2002	25.0	19,000.0
26	System enhancement toward implementation of sustainable development program	2001-2004	932.0	UNDP
27	Formulating programs of ecological and environmental remediation and agriculture promotion in Semipalatinsk area	1999-2003	756.2	WB/UNDP
28	Assistance to implementation of ARSAS Treaty	2001-2003	230.0	DEPA(Denmark)
29	Formulating program for collection and reuse of Freon	2001-2003	2,356.7	UNDP/GEF

No.	Name of project	Implementation term	Amount of assistances (Thousand US\$)	Aid agency
30	Formulating program to cease using CFC in production process of polyurethane foam used as heat insulator	2001 – 2003	1,068.8	UNDP/GEF
31	Formulating program to cease using CFC in production process of resilient material	2001 – 2003	264.0	UNDP/GEF
32	Formulating program to cease using Freon in Pavlodar Chemical Plant	2001 – 2003	99.0	UNDP/GEF
33	Formulating national Halon control program	2001 – 2003	151.1	UNDP/GEF
34	Formulating program to cease producing and using ozone depleting substances	2001 – 2004	1,091.3	UNDP/GEF

Source: Environment and Development Nexus in Kazakhstan 2004