

KAZAKHSTAN

COUNTRY ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS



Asian Development Bank

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PREFACE

The present volume brings to a wider audience some of the analysis behind the country strategies and assistance programs that the Asian Development Bank (ADB) formulates in consultation with its member countries. The focus of the document is environmental management, one of ADB's priority concerns not diminished by the more forceful and explicit attention given in recent years to poverty alleviation.

Leaving aside the People's Republic of China, ADB member countries under the responsibility of the East and Central Asia Department (ECRD) include "textbook" transition economies, six out of seven of them countries of the former Soviet Union (FSU). This amounts to unique opportunities for ADB to influence for the better the course of economic and social development in these fledgling market economies.

ADB's support for environmental management in FSU member countries is not new as the present document explains in detail. Earlier ADB publications devoted to the same broad subject matter in the ECRD region include *Central Asian Environments in Transition* (1997), *Environmental Profile of Tajikistan* (2001), and *Mongolia's Environment: Implications for ADB's Operations* (2002). The present report dealing with Kazakhstan adds to them and to the considerable body of detailed unpublished material used by ADB staff.

This document is one of the outputs of the regional technical assistance for Central Asian republics for Integrating Environmental Considerations into Development Policies, Plans, and Programs.

ADB wishes to record its gratitude to Kazakhstan's Ministry of Environmental Protection and Ministry of Economy and Budget Planning for the support given to the process of country environmental analysis on which this document rests. Several other government agencies shared their views and experience and even if they are not listed one by one here, their importance in a project dealing with integration of environmental with other concerns is obvious. Extensive feedback was also obtained from Kazakhstan's nongovernment organizations and ADB is encouraged by the degree of interest in the subject and their participation in the process.

East and Central Asia Department
Asian Development Bank
June 2004

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(as of June 2004)

Currency Unit	–	tenge (T)
T1.00	=	\$0.0073
\$1.00	=	T136.5600

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
AOTA	–	advisory and operation technical assistance
APCED	–	Asia-Pacific Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development
ASB	–	Aral Sea Basin
ASP	–	Agency of Strategic Planning
BTO	–	best available technology
BVO	–	river basin authority (from Russian)
CA	–	Central Asia
CAMIN	–	Central Asian Mountain Information Network
CARs	–	Central Asia republics
CAREC	–	see REC-CA
CARECU	–	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Unit (of ECOC)
CBO	–	community-based organization
CEA	–	Country Environmental Analysis
CERCLA	–	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (U.S.)
CP	–	clean production
CSP	–	Country Strategy and Program
DMC	–	Developing Member Country (of ADB)
ECAE	–	Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resource Division of CEAD (of ADB)
ECID	–	Infrastructure Division (of ECRD)
ECOC	–	Operations Coordination Division of CEAD (of ADB)
ECRD	–	East and Central Asia Department (of ADB)
EDD	–	environmental due diligence
EPIC	–	Environmental Policies and Institutions of Central Asia
ESCAP	–	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EU	–	European Union
FSU	–	Former Soviet Union
GDP	–	gross domestic product
GEF	–	Global Environment Facility
GGERI	–	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Initiative
GM	–	Global Mechanism of the UNCCD
GOK	–	Government of Kazakhstan
GWP	–	Global Water Partnership
HDI	–	Human Development Index
ICAS	–	Interstate Council for the Aral Sea (merged into IFAS)
ICCW RM	–	Interstate Commission for the Coordination of Water Resource Management (see also ICWC)
ICIMOD	–	International Center for Integrated Mountain Development
ICSD	–	Interstate Commission for Sustainable Development

ICWC	–	Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (see also ICCWRM)
IDCCD	–	Inter-Departmental Committee to Combat Desertification
IFAS	–	International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea
IFI	–	international financial institutions
ISO	–	International Standards Organization
IZA	–	index of air pollution (used in NIS, from Russian)
IZV	–	index of water pollution (used in NIS, from Russian)
JFPR	–	Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction
KAZ	–	Kazakhstan
KYR	–	Kyrgyz Republic
LEAP	–	local environmental action plan
MEAs	–	multilateral environmental agreements
MEBP	–	Ministry of Economy and Budget Planning
MEMR	–	Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources
MOA	–	Ministry of Agriculture
MOU	–	memorandum of understanding
MPC	–	maximum permitted concentrations
NAPCD	–	National Action Program to Combat Desertification
NFP	–	National Focal Point
NEAP	–	National Environmental Action Plan
NGO	–	nongovernment organization
NIS	–	Newly Independent States
NR	–	natural resources
OECD	–	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSCE	–	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PIP	–	Public Investment Plan
PPP	–	purchasing-price parity
PPTA	–	Project Preparation Technical Assistance
PRC	–	People's Republic of China
PRPA	–	Poverty Reduction Partnership Agreement
PREGA	–	Promotion of Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Greenhouse Gas Abatement Projects
RAP	–	Regional Action Program under UNCCD
REAP	–	Regional Environmental Action Plan
REC-CA	–	Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia
RETA	–	Regional Technical Assistance
ROK	–	Republic of Kazakhstan
RSAN	–	Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resource Division (of RSSD)
RSES	–	Environment and Social Safeguard Division (of RSSD)
RSSD	–	Regional Sustainable Development Department (of ADB)
SD	–	sustainable development
SIC	–	Scientific Information Center
SME	–	small and medium enterprise
SPA	–	Strategic Partnership Agreement
SPECA	–	Special Program for the Economies of Central Asia
SRAP	–	Sub-regional Action Program under UNCCD
TA	–	Technical Assistance
TACIS	–	Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States
UNCCD	–	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought
UNDP	–	United Nations Development Program
UNECE	–	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

UNEMS	–	Unified National Environmental Monitoring System
UNEP	–	United Nations Environment Program
USAID	–	United States Agency for International Development
WARMAP	–	Water Resource Management and Agriculture Production (Project)
WARMIS	–	Water Resource Management Information System
WB	–	World Bank
WRC	–	Water Resource Commission
WSSD	–	World Summit on Sustainable Development

GLOSSARY

<i>akimat</i>	local government, headed by an <i>akim</i>
<i>kolkhoz</i>	agricultural cooperative (during Soviet times)
<i>oblast</i>	Province (16 of them in Kazakhstan, including the cities of Almaty and Astana)
<i>rayon</i>	District (160 of them in Kazakhstan)
<i>sovkhoz</i>	state farm (during Soviet times)

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RUSSIAN TRANSLATION	

Map 1: Chief Environmental Problems In Central Asia

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- Wind erosion
- Overgrazing
- Salination
- Desertification
- Serious atmospheric pollution
- Radioactive contamination
- Oil exploration
- Dangerous industrial waste storage
- Dangerous defense industries (chemical, nuclear, and biological)
- (1) Lakes, seas (1), rivers (2), and groundwater (3) contaminated by industrial or agricultural pollution
- (2)
- (3)

Source: ?????????? *Le Monde diplomatique*, June 2000.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Country Environmental Analysis (CEA) of Kazakhstan presented here is one of several technical documents underpinning the preparation of Asian Development Bank's (ADB's) Kazakhstan country strategy and program (CSP) for 2004–2006. In addition, the CEA aims to provide a succinct, yet comprehensive, picture of the main environmental challenges that Kazakhstan faces and the responses to them.

More than a decade after Kazakhstan's independence, it is increasingly questionable whether the menu of environmental challenges confronting the country today can still be explained simply as a carry-over of the Soviet era's pattern of economic development. The path of economic transition since then has created its own environmental problems, as well as successes.

A broad consensus exists concerning the principal environmental concerns. They are

1. Existing conditions of water resources and their management, dominated by multiple problems associated with the decline of the Aral Sea but extending to inefficient use of water in general, water and groundwater contamination, under-investment in associated physical infrastructure, and water underpricing.
2. Degradation and poor management of land, in part linked to inefficient use of irrigation water but also as a result of inappropriate land use and farm practices, the problems compounded by deforestation in some areas.
3. Energy inefficiency and associated air pollution. Growing mobile source pollution in Almaty.
4. Inadequate waste disposal both municipal and industrial, with a legacy of accumulated waste, some toxic, and poorly defined policies to counter the problem.
5. Pressure, some of it recent, on the country's biodiversity and under-funding of the protected realm.
6. Unresolved issues of regional environmental cooperation, especially the management of transboundary water resources and its linkage with the pattern of energy supplies and trade in Central Asia and beyond.

Sound environment and sustainable development have official backing and ministerial status. Key Government documents outlining medium- and long-term strategy of economic development up to 2030 have been translated by the environmental authorities into more

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