

WECOOP Workshop on “Environmental Quality Standards”

9 February 2023, 14:00-18:00

Venue: Kazhydromet, 11/1 Mangilik El avenue, Astana

Welcome remarks by Johannes Baur, Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Kazakhstan

EU Green Deal

- Our cooperation with Kazakhstan is based on the **Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA)**, which came into full legal force in March 2020. EPCA covers 29 key policy areas, including political dialogue, democracy and human rights, justice and home affairs, economic and financial cooperation, energy, transport, environment and climate change, among others.
- The world is facing an **unprecedented climate crisis** and to solve it we need everyone on board. Climate change is a reality we are feeling more and more. Last summer was the hottest in Europe since the start of modern weather recording. The catastrophic floods in Pakistan and forest fires across the globe, including in Kazakhstan, showed clearly what is at stake.
- the EU has been a global leader on green transition and climate action. **The European Green Deal¹** is our new growth strategy to combat climate change, reduce CO2 emissions, and revert biodiversity loss.
- Our goal is to become **the first carbon neutral continent by 2050**. We want to have fresh air, clean water, healthy soil and biodiversity, to improve the well-being and health of our citizens and future generations. To achieve this ambitious goal, we have **committed to reduce GHG emissions by at least 55 % by 2030**, compared to 1990 levels, and move to a clean circular economy to boost the efficient use of resources across all the sectors.

This will not be easy. It requires not only the full transition of the energy sector away from fossil fuels, but also the restructuring of our industry. It will require massive investments, and the change of our industries and consumer behavior.

- But we also firmly believe that the green transition will provide opportunities for economic development, job creation, food security, protection of biodiversity and public health. We need to decarbonize our economies, link our policies to concrete investments in green infrastructure projects to adapt to climate change.
- We welcome **Kazakhstan’s ambition to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060** and are ready to support your country on this path by sharing our experience, know-how and technologies. Also in Kazakhstan, this will require a modern and sustainable economy and life-style.
- Today’s workshop has been prepared by the WECOOP project to provide an overview of the European approach to setting environmental quality standards and share experience of the new EU Member States in the transposition of these standards, particularly focusing on institutional and capacity building issues.

¹ Announced in December 2019.

- At the EU, environmental standards are laid down by legislation as minimum requirements mandatory for any Member State. However, Member States are free to establish more stringent requirements but only if this does not create a barrier to the single market.
- Development of environmental standards is based on the results of scientific research and development but correction with respect to both technical availability and economic feasibility is always necessary to avoid excessive costs. Moreover, economic as well as geographic differences among particular Member States are always taken into account to achieve result acceptable for all.
- The EU as a whole as well as particular Member States have gained a lot of practical experience in the field of environmental regulation over the last 30 years (advanced air and water quality standards, waste management, integrated permitting and introduction of BAT). We will be happy to share this experience with Kazakhstan through such projects as WECOOP or TAIEX².

In conclusion, let me assure you that the EU and our Member States are strongly committed to enhancing our cooperation with Kazakhstan to accelerate the green transition.

² Technical Assistance & Information Exchange Instrument.