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“Key challenges to ensure environmental security and sustainable development in the  
OSCE area: Land degradation, soil contamination and water management”  
Prague, 21 - 23 May 2007**

**Special Event  
Review of environmental challenges in the Caspian Basin and possible follow-up**

Please find attached the contribution by Mr. Alzhan Braliev, Vice Minister of Environment Protection, Kazakhstan.

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Report by the Vice-Minister  
of Environmental Protection  
of the Republic of Kazakhstan

**Braliyev A.H.**

### ***Main directions of Caspian sea marine environment protection***

Measures undertaken by the Government of Kazakhstan for preservation and restoration of the Caspian sea environment may be identified as follows.

#### ***Preservation and sustainable use of bioresources***

It is planned to restore sturgeon stock by way of reconstruction and modernization of two fish-breeding factories and developing the capacity of each of them to up to 6 mln. fry as well as introducing sale sturgeon breeding.

Starting 2004 a number of scientific researches of fish resources in the region are being conducted. For example, annual operative evaluations and forecasts re the state of Caspian sea bioresources, including sturgeon types of fish, are prepared.

#### ***Preservation of the Caspian sea biodiversity***

During the implementation of the II Stage within the State program on the development of Kazakhstan sector of Caspian sea Action plan for 2006-2010 it is planned to carry out:

- functional zoning of the Northern part of Caspian sea reservation area in order to limit the effect of marine operations on its biodiversity;

- scientific research of the condition of Caspian sea as well as its coastal zone fauna and flora in order to conduct state registration, monitoring and inventory.

Starting 2005 the work to establish the Novinsky state wildlife park on the area of 43,000 hectares is being carried out.

The environmental effect of oil-and-gas industry operation has been assessed and corresponding recommendation on the preservation of Mangistau region biodiversity have been developed.

### ***Improvement of the quality of the Caspian sea water***

Within the I stage of the State program on the development of Kazakhstan sector of Caspian sea the cadastre of oil wells subject to liquidation has been executed. Altogether 153 oil wells among which 85 are located in the Caspian sea flooding zone will be liquidated and suspended.

As of now the oil-extracting enterprises have liquidated all oil barns in the floodable zone of Caspian coast in Atyrau region.

One of the serious problems is also liquidation of sunk ships in Bautino bay. The total number of sunk and semi-sunk ships amounts to 53. Presently ship remains are being transported to Aktau foundry.

Great attention is given to carrying out scientific-research and environmental monitoring activities. The following researches have been performed:

- Research of modes and development of typical wind current maps of Northern and Medium Caspian sea;
- Research of wave mode in the Kazakhstan part of Caspian sea;
- hydrometeorological research in Aktau port area.

Starting 2005 scientific research and assessment of environmental conditions of north-eastern Pre-Caspian sea area are being carried out and are planned to be finished at the end of 2007.

The Caspian sea monitoring center equipped with the modern equipment has been established.

The arrangements on joint Caspian sea monitoring with large oil-extracting companies with active use of space monitoring have been made.

The system of storm run-down and run-up phenomena forecast for the north-eastern part of Caspian sea has been created. The National anti-desertification plan including a number of projects in Near-Caspian region has been prepared.

### ***Sustainable development of coastal regions***

The Government is maintaining dialogue with the NGOs. The Environmental Forum of Kazakhstan uniting more than 100 NGOs has been established and is actively working. NGO representatives have been included into the Interdepartmental Commission on environment quality stabilization issues chaired by the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan. The Commission has already reviewed issues related to ecological safety of oil operations and additional environmental requirements for activities on Caspian sea.

Civil society representatives actively participate in political and economic decision-making process. Holding of the 2nd Meeting of Orhus Convention members in May, 2005 in Almaty was a bright example of Kazakhstan steadfast attention to involving the public in environmental protection work.

High economic development rates of the country, rapid growth of industrial production, in particular, in the Caspian region, demand constant improvement of environmental legislation.

In this relation at the end of 2005 the law of the Republic of Kazakhstan (RK) "On mandatory ecological insurance" had been passed. Amendment to the law of the RK "On oil" had been made providing for:

- the ban on industrial development of oil-and-gas deposits without passing and natural gas utilization;

- the ban on burning passing and natural gas on torches except in emergency cases and in cases of threat to public health and life as well as environment;

- the ban on dump and burial of waste in the sea during oil operations, i.e. stipulating for "zero waste disposal".

Amendments to the law "On bankruptcy" have been introduced. From now on the "liquidation funds" shall be excluded from general bidding amounts and shall be directed only at elimination of nature management companies' activities consequences.

Duty rates have been increased and amendments to the Administrative code of the RK hardening penal sanctions for environment contamination and equaling them to the amount of imposed damage are being prepared.

The Ecological Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan has been passed. Its primary goal is to legislatively unify all environmental issues based on essentially new approaches to environment protection. It is also planned to implement the international environmental standards by the end of running year.

The law of the RK "On amendments and supplements to the Criminal Code of the RK on strengthening measures of criminal liability for infringement of the legislation in the field of protection, reproduction and use of fauna and flora" has been passed. According to articles 287 and 290 of the Criminal Code of the RK "Illegal extraction of water animals and plants" and, correspondingly, "Illegal

treatment of rare and under threat of extinction types of animals and plants" have been changed, i.e. hardening measures of criminal liability.

In December 2006 the law of the RK "On ratification of the Frame convention on the Caspian sea marine environment protection" was passed.

Great deal of attention is being rendered to issues of improving control-inspection activities as well as improving material-technical support of environment protection agencies. For example, during 2004-2005 Atyrau and Mangistau analytical control divisions of regional environmental protection departments were equipped with modern devices and equipment, including a mobile laboratory. In 2006 2 marine vessels equipped with all necessary devices to conduct state nature protection control activities in the Kazakhstan sector of Caspian sea were bought.

A number of projects aimed at nature preservation and rational use of natural resources of Near-Caspian region funded by both international financial institutions and the private sector are being implemented in Kazakhstan.

"Complex preservation of priority globally significant water-marsh areas as locations of passage birds dwelling" project is one of them. The project has started in 2004 and is being implemented with the financial and technical support from UNDP/GEF Kazakhstan in close cooperation with the Committee on wood and hunting facilities of the Ministry of Agriculture of the RK. The project covers three unique water-marsh areas in Kazakhstan one of which is located in Ural river delta and adjacent Caspian sea coast.

This year implementation of the project by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on monitoring oil pollution in the Kazakhstan part of Caspian sea has started. The project includes supply of the necessary equipment

and development of an operative information collection system re pollution of Caspian sea by oil as well as its transfer to decision-makers.

The private sector, in particular oil companies, makes an essential contribution to the region's environment preservation. For example, during 2003-2005 the Agip KKO oil company only allocated 10,26 bln. Tenge (or app. \$78,9 mln.) for nature preservation activities like introduction of best accessible technologies, scientific research, biodiversity preservation research, including specific ones on sturgeon and seals, etc.

Altogether during 2006-2008 1,7 bln. Tenge (or \$13 mln.) will be allocated from the local budget.

In 2008-2009 it is planned to conduct a research of the effect of oil-and-gas works on hydroflora of Caspian sea shelf area and to develop recommendations on its preservation in Mangistau region.

Thank you for your attention!