



# INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT



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**REPORTER**

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**HIGHLIGHTS****EU Says Fewer Dossiers Than Expected Submitted Prior to REACH Deadline**

The European Chemicals Agency receives far fewer dossiers than expected by the Nov. 30 deadline to register substances under the European Union's REACH law, but cautions that this could be due to a number of factors other than the failure of companies to register in time. Both ECHA and the chemicals industry play down fears about disruptions to supply, saying it will take three months to fully assess the results. **Page 1171** . . . ECHA plans to send the European Commission a request to include eight substances in Annex XIV of REACH, meaning their use would be banned unless specific authorizations are granted. The eight chemicals are di-isobutyl phthalate (DIBP), diarsenic trioxide, diarsenic pentoxide, lead chromate, lead sulphochromate yellow, lead chromate molybdate sulphate red, tris(2-chloroethyl)phosphate, and 2,4-dinitrotoluene. **Page 1172** . . . The REACH law should be used as the basic framework for chemical regulation worldwide, France's biggest chemical manufacturers association says. **Page 1178**

**Climate Talks Focus on Texts With 2 Degree Celsius Limit, 1990 Base Year**

Delegates at the U.N.-sponsored climate change summit in Cancun, Mexico, focus on a pair of negotiating documents from the two main negotiating tracks, one eliminating a more ambitious goal to limit temperature increases, and another retaining 1990 as the base year by which to measure reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. One text eliminates a possible target to limit worldwide temperature increases to just 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels, leaving only a goal to limit warming to 2 degrees C (3.6 degrees F). The other text adopts the Kyoto Protocol's base year of 1990 for calculating emissions reductions and eliminates language that would have used 2000 or 2005 as potential alternate base years. **Page 1211** . . . China's top climate negotiator defends his country's pledge to slow the growth of greenhouse gas emissions but signals that the rapidly developing nation will continue to resist taking on binding emissions cuts given its need to bring more than 150 million of its people out of poverty. **Page 1212**

**Germany's Constitutional Court Upholds Restrictions on Biotech Crops**

Germany's Federal Constitutional Court rules that national restrictions on cultivating crops with genetically modified organisms are in line with the country's Constitution. The ruling comes in a lawsuit filed by the state of Saxony-Anhalt against provisions of the federal Genetic Engineering Act. Germany's top constitutional court rejects the claim, saying that risks related to biotechnology have not been sufficiently investigated and that natural resources need to be protected. **Page 1177**

**China to Adopt Demand-Side Management to Boost Energy Efficiency**

China on Jan. 1 will implement new regulations on demand-side management of energy resources to help it reach energy conservation and emissions reduction targets. The Beijing office of the Natural Resources Defense Council says

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

**SOUTH AFRICA:** International efforts to control global warming could have serious repercussions on the country's economy, the government says in a draft climate strategy. **Page 1209**

**PERU:** The Environment Ministry publishes an Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation. **Page 1200**

**AUSTRALIA:** The government proposes an emissions offsets regime that would allow projects to create carbon credits that could be sold domestically and overseas. **Page 1207**

**DEVELOPMENT AID:** The United Nations has collected just over 2 percent of the \$10 billion expected by this point for a fund to help nations adapt to climate change. **Page 1217**

**VOLUNTARY STANDARDS:** While many companies measure and report their greenhouse gas emissions, a lack of standards makes the reports neither comparable nor credible, an international agency says. **Page 1213**

**REFERENCE FILE**

**DECEMBER SUPPLEMENT:** This supplement contains four new or revised European Union documents and updated tables of contents for the EU Water and EU Waste tabs.

“But Poland will set such limits which it will not allow to be exceeded,” Toczko said.

**Law to Take Effect in Early 2011.** Poland’s Council of Ministers Nov. 16 approved a draft amendment to the Law on Environment, giving a guideline on how to incorporate the EU directive into Polish law.

A written statement issued after the Council of Ministers meeting said the draft is expected to be processed on a fast legal track and approved by the Parliament by the end of 2010 so it can take effect Jan. 1.

But the monitoring department at GIOS said final passage may take a couple months longer. “In our opinion, it may take effect in the first quarter of 2011, taking into account the amount of problems we have to resolve and consultations with experts we are going to have,” Toczko said.

“Poland failed to meet the [June 11, 2010] deadline” to incorporate the CAFE directive into Polish law, Toczko said. “We are late.”

**Increased Monitoring of Fine Particulates.** Toczko said the country’s monitoring stations have largely been checking levels of coarse particulates, those larger than 2.5 microns in diameter and smaller than 10 microns in diameter (PM-10), without detailed research on PM-2.5.

“We have started installing more measuring tools in the 168 zones [in Poland where air quality is monitored] to better monitor PM-2.5 emissions,” Toczko said. Fine particulates make up about 70 percent to 80 percent of all particulates that are smaller than 10 microns in size, Toczko said.

She admitted that there are no accurate data on the scope of PM-2.5 emissions and said she hopes the situation will improve gradually through 2015, when the directive would be fully incorporated into Polish law.

Andrzej Jargusiewicz, Poland’s chief environmental inspector, said Nov. 19 that air quality in the country is “not good” but did not offer specific figures.

“There are 168 zones in Poland where air quality is monitored and in one-third of them air quality standards were poor,” Jargusiewicz said.

According to the draft amendment, the chief environmental inspector will be required to prepare a report every year on the amount of emitted PM-2.5 in each of the 168 zones and to present it to the environment minister. Reports also will be analyzed by the National Health Ministry.

The draft also said the gradual modernization of the Polish power industry, 90 percent of which is fueled by coal, will contribute to the reduction of hazardous emissions, including PM-2.5.

**Biomass Could Add to Pollution.** But Toczko said, “It is not so simple.” According to her, the European Union’s climate change package, which requires the 27 EU member states to collectively reduce their greenhouse gas emissions 20 percent from 1990 levels by 2020, could present a new challenge from renewable energy.

The package also requires the European Union to meet 20 percent of its energy needs from renewable sources by 2020. That likely will include energy from wind, solar, and biomass.

“Biomass will definitely reduce emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>, but its use will increase generation of PM-2.5,” Toczko said.

By BOGDAN TUREK

More information on the EU directive on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe is available at [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/quality/legislation/existing\\_leg.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/quality/legislation/existing_leg.htm).

## Forests

### Russia Faces Growing Pressure to Change Forest Laws in Wake of Summer Wildfires

**S**T. PETERSBURG, Russia—Russia’s government is facing growing domestic and international pressure to reform the country’s forestry laws, which critics blame for allowing the out-of-control fires that killed dozens and destroyed vast areas of the country last summer.

Criticism of Russia’s forestry code and a push for change are coming from a wide array of groups, who say the current laws have sapped firefighting resources, making it impossible to organize an effective response to the seasonal problem. They also say the law does not prevent illegal logging, which is inhibiting Russia’s ability to sell timber to European and American markets.

President Dmitri Medvedev has called for a review of the current law, while sources say Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has ordered several of his advisers to recommend how the law could be changed. However, no significant actions have yet been taken, observers said (33 INER 833, 9/1/10).

Russia’s forestry code, implemented in 2007, significantly changed the country’s system of managing forests. The code decentralized authority, giving regions responsibility to prevent, detect, and extinguish fires, as well as to pay for the system. It abolished the traditional system of forest fire control, in which the “smoke jumpers” of Avialesookhrana, or the National Aerial Forest Fire Center, served as the country’s major fire firefighting force.

The law resulted in an estimated 70,000 foresters losing their jobs, according to one widely cited figure. But a Nov. 22 story on national forest management in the independent, online business daily *Gazeta.Ru* quoted officials in the field as saying out of 250,000 foresters employed prior to implementation of the forest code, only 40,000 remain.

The federal forestry agency, Rosleshoz, estimated that the area burned during the summer was about 6 million hectares (14.8 million acres), but independent estimates made from satellite data are much higher. The Global Fire Monitoring Center estimated that as much as 12 million hectares (29.6 million acres), or an area about the size of Pennsylvania, burned last summer (33 INER 793, 8/18/10).

**Calls for Legislative Action.** The center called for the federal government to retake control of fire management, monitoring, and law enforcement in the Aug. 15 report *Preliminary Assessment of the Fire Situation in Russia*, which was presented at a Duma, or parliamentary, committee hearing Sept. 23. The group also called for training of specialists in controlled burning and other forms of fire prevention.

At the EU level, the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance program, established by the World Bank, met Nov. 16 with the Russian Chamber of Commerce to

discuss how the forest code is preventing sustainable development of Russia's forest resources due to a lack of procedures for tracking timber and ensuring it is legally sourced.

"This puts Russia in a difficult situation with regard to new U.S. and EU legislation on preventing illegal forest products trade," the governance program said in a written statement. The group is urging new legislation to implement standards for sustainable forest development and certification, including criteria for illegal logging and high-value forests.

A coalition including the opposition party Yabloko and the environmental groups Bellona, Greenpeace Russia, and the World Wide Fund for Nature, called for a division of labor from the federal to the local levels, the hiring of more personnel, and more advanced monitoring in a September report, *Conclusions of the Social Commission on the Investigation of the Causes and Consequences of the 2010 Fires in Russia*.

Nikolay Kovalev of Avialesookhrana acknowledged that the new forest code did away with the unified system of forest protection but said the situation can change. "This year we are trying to rebuild," Kovalev said Nov. 8 at a conference in St. Petersburg organized by Bellona. "We are working to introduce certain amendments into legislation."

**Growing Global Concern.** The state of Russia's forest protection system is of global concern, in part because the ecosystems store vast amounts of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide. Russia contains nearly 21 percent of the world's forest resources and stores 28 percent of global carbon, according to the seminal 2005 report, *Stocks and Flows: Carbon Inventory and Mitigation Potential of the Russian Forest and Land Base*, published by the World Resources Institute.

Climate models consistently predict that temperature increases in the boreal forest zone will lead to increased fire hazard, more intense fires, longer fire seasons, and more lightning events, a key source of wildfires. The events last summer coincided with the warmest July in Russia since recordkeeping began 130 years ago.

A longtime push to develop an international system of cooperation to protect forests through a legal or voluntary mechanism is gaining ground, with growing incidences of wildfires around the world, on par with the summer's events in Russia, Johann Goldammer of the Global Fire Monitoring Network told BNA Nov. 8.

"There is growing recognition of the connectedness of countries' atmospheres [that is leading to] efforts to further develop the capacity to manage fire globally," Goldammer said. The efforts are seeking to further work already taking place under regional fire networks.

Efforts to share resources such as satellite detection systems, training, equipment, and cooperative funding through a global agreement will be discussed in international forums in 2011, including in May in South Africa and in October in Italy.

BY JENNY JOHNSON

Full text of the Aug. 15 report Preliminary Assessment of the Fire Situation in Russia is available at <http://op.bna.com/env.nsf/r?Open=phey-8bgtpr>.

## Energy

### **Institutional Change Seen as Key to Reach Russia's Energy Efficiency, Emissions Goals**

**S**T. PETERSBURG, Russia—Broad structural changes in Russian institutions are needed for the country to achieve its ambitious goals to reduce energy use, with international financing of related projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions potentially limited by a complex domestic market, experts say.

A host of projects to reduce emissions are set to be funded by international investors through the Kyoto Protocol's Joint Implementation (JI) program, providing a large source of funding for modernization of the economy now and possibly far into the future. A country with greenhouse gas emissions commitments under Kyoto can earn credit toward its goal by investing in emissions-reducing JI projects in another country with Protocol commitments.

However, the funds linked to climate change could prove tenuous in light of a larger trend: Russia is experiencing large-scale flight of foreign and domestic capital—\$22 billion in 2010, according to the Russian central bank—even as investor activity in other emerging markets skyrockets.

The uncertainty of working in Russia, including fears of corruption and lack of confidence in legal institutions, is said to be turning investors away. While Russia has written rules to improve energy efficiency across the economy, experts say it now needs to focus on fundamental institutional reform to make the implementation a success and to bolster future private investments in the environmental arena (33 INER 1034, 10/27/10).

Meanwhile, uncertainty surrounding the future of the JI mechanism following the expiration of the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period at the end of 2012 has raised concerns about the continued financing of projects that have so far been a major area of investor activity in Russia. Observers hope the U.N. climate change summit under way in Cancun, Mexico, through Dec. 10, will clarify the issue.

**Questions Over Ability to Meet Goals.** Russian authorities have frequently reiterated their commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. "Russia will act the same, with or without the conclusion of an agreement," presidential economic adviser Arkady Dvorkovich said at a Nov. 8 press conference, referring to the Cancun talks.

The Russian strategy is to reduce the energy intensity of its economy, or energy use per unit of gross domestic product, by 40 percent and to increase the share of renewable energy in total generation to 4.5 percent by 2020. Experts estimate the Russian economy uses seven times more energy per unit of GDP than Western Europe.

The energy efficiency effort is driven by economic considerations as the country emerges from the 2008 financial crisis, which saw GDP drop by 8 percent. In addition, Russian oil and gas production is not projected to substantially increase in the near term, so to increase exports the country needs to consume less domestically.

"Russians understand that they need this," David Dusseault, professor of Russian energy policy at the