

## Chemical Safety in Kazakhstan: How to Improve the Situation

*EcoMuseum (Kazakhstan), CINEST (Kazakhstan), Arnika - Toxics and Waste Programme (Czech Republic)*

EcoMuseum, CINEST and Arnika – Toxics and Waste Programme would like to kindly invite you to an international conference on chemical safety in Kazakhstan. Participants will become familiar with an overview of contamination caused by persistent organic pollutants and heavy metals and their impacts on human health. Results of the new research of contamination of hotspots in central Kazakhstan will be presented as well as two successful stories on citizens' initiatives to protect the environment. After a lunch break, examples of the best international practices will be shared with participants and solutions suitable for Kazakhstan will be discussed.

**When?** August 7, 2014 – Thursday, from 9:30 till 16:30

**Where?** Delegation of the European Union to Kazakhstan, Conference room – 14th floor, 62 Kosmonavtov street, Business Centre Kaskad, Astana

### **Do you need more information?**

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## Serbia Substitutes

*Safer Chemicals Alternative (ALHem) (Serbia)*

Safer Chemicals Alternative (ALHem), in cooperation with Chem-Sec and KOOP, have been implementing a project entitled "Serbia Substitutes," which promotes substitution of hazardous chemicals with safer alternatives in the Serbian industry. Within this project, selected content of the SUBSPORT (Substitution Support Portal) website was translated into Serbian and made available at [rs.subsport.eu](http://rs.subsport.eu). Serbian translations of case stories from enterprises and literature with descriptions of alternative substances and technologies can be found in the Case Story Database. Additionally, following the SUBSPORT concept for the Alternatives Identification and Assessment Training (including elements on the SIN List), two training sessions were provided for Serbian industry and NGO representatives. The project ends in September 2014. A short overview of the project can be found here: <http://www.subsport.eu/about-the-portal/serbia-substitutes>

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*Arnika- Toxics and Waste Programme is the IPEN Regional Hub for Central and Eastern Europe. <http://english.arnika.org/toxic@arnika.org>*

*In this region, IPEN has a total of 38 Participating Organizations in the following countries: Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Turkey.*

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## New Platform for Environmental NGOs in Macedonia

*Eco-Sense (Macedonia)*

Eco-Sense, together with another Macedonian NGO Biosphere, launched a new environmental electronic platform at [www.ekosfera.mk](http://www.ekosfera.mk). The main goal of the platform is to help environmental organizations to actively participate in consultation processes, adequately share information with the authorities, media and experts to develop partnerships and collaborate, monitor environmental

impacts and environmental trends on the local and national level, and to improve their accountability to the public. More information can be found at [www.ekosfera.mk](http://www.ekosfera.mk).

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## Czech Experts Collecting Environmental Samples in Kazakhstan

*Arnika (Czech Republic)*

Experts from the Institute of Chemical Technology and Arnika – Toxics and Waste Programme are currently travelling around toxic hot-spots in Kazakhstan to inform local stakeholders in Temirtau, Ekibastuz or Balkhash on results of analyses of samples that were collected there last year. Another set of samples is also being collected to increase the knowledge on toxic pollution around selected hot-spots. The tour will end with a conference in Astana.

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## Conference on Chemical Safety in Belarus

*Center for Environmental Solutions (Belarus) and Arnika (Czech Republic)*

On 19th June an international conference on chemical safety and sustainable lifestyles took place in Minsk, Belarus. The conference was organized by the Center for Environmental Solutions and Arnika – Toxics and Waste Programme. Belarusian and Czech experts spoke about practical guides for choosing equipment for mothers' centers, legislature and hygienic norms in Belarus and the EU, chemicals in toys and other issues. The conference was attended by representatives of NGOs, medical doctors, and government officials, and was a part of a project empowering Belarusian civil society in independent actions towards sustainable development, protection of health



### Conference in Minsk

*Credit: Vladimir Stepurko*

and the environment, and improvement of chemical safety.

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## Students Learning about the Environment in Albania

*EDEN Centre (Albania)*

At the end of June, a group of students of various ages visited EDEN Centre for some environmental education. During their visit the students were taught about the pro-environment construction of the centre, which includes solar panels, LED lamps, and rain water deposition. They were informed about the functions of different tools in the centre, including: compass, magnets, hydrometer, rain meter, tree-length meter, thermometers, and magnifying glasses for insects, as well as identification of plants.

Additionally, the students took part in an educational game by making paintings of a river segment observed during one of their class trips. Then, the paintings were discussed, thus talking about river pollution, the importance of a clean and stable ecosystem, etc. The



**Jan Nezhyba (Arnika – Toxics and Waste Programme) taking sediment samples from Irtysh river.**

*Credit: Ondřej Petrlik*



*Credit: EDEN Centre*

paintings were placed on the wall of the centre as a souvenir of the students' visit there.

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## Tracking White Storks in Bulgaria

*By Dimitar Popov, Green Balkans (Bulgaria)*

Back in 2010 NGO Green Balkans started a program for marking white storks from the colony at Belozem village with special colored plastic rings. The stork population of Belozem village was in decline because of industrialisation, urbanization and agricultural changes

(principally the draining of wetlands and conversion of meadows to crops such as maize), as well as with threats such as a lack of good places for building nests or getting caught in strings or ropes.

We are happy to share the good news that we have just registered the first return to the colony by a stork marked there as a chick. That happened this summer when we were recording the nesting success at the European Stork Village in Bulgaria. It was a great pleasure to find a bird marked in 2010 on the roof of the "Geo Milev" school nesting there to raise its first offspring. The stork was marked with a black ring with white code B0010 and it is nesting on one of the special platforms placed on the school roof

situated at about 20 m from the nest where it was hatched.

To add to the remarkable event of the first nesting of a stork marked at Belozem, nearby the village we have observed one more stork marked at the local colony. The bird was hatched in 2012 at another nest on the school roof and has a ring with the code B0128. The sighting was recorded at the outskirts of the village in a group of juvenile non-breeding birds that have gathered at a roost on a row of old disused electricity poles.

During the current year the breeding success at the European Stork village at Belozem was an average of 3 chicks per nest: 41 pairs have managed to raise 125 small storks. We have registered new occupied nests – some were successful in breeding and others not. We hope that next year these pairs that left without chicks this year will manage to raise offspring successfully!

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**Four-year stork at nest**

*Credit: Green Balkans*

IPEN's global network is comprised of more than 700 public interest, non-governmental organizations in 118 countries. Working in the international policy arena and in developing countries, with international offices in the US and Sweden, IPEN is coordinated via eight IPEN Regional Hub Offices in Africa, Asia, Central / Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. IPEN works to establish and implement safe chemicals policies and practices that protect human health and the environment around the world.

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