



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Small grants provided by the European Union helped local communities in Kazakhstan to solve environmental problems

**KARAGANDA/BALKHASH/GLUBOKOE/TEMIRTAU/STEPNOGORSK/– Dust from abandoned uranium mines tailings, illegal waste dumps, poisoning of river Irtysh by heavy metals, contamination of lake Balkhash and severe air pollution. These are topics of the five projects that were financially supported within Small Grants Program, coordinated by Czech non-governmental organization Arnika and its partners EcoMuseum and Centre for Introduction of New Environmentally Safe Technologies (CINEST) from Kazakhstan. Overall budget of EUR 12,000 was provided by European Union as a part of broader project “Empowering the civil society in Kazakhstan in improvement of chemical safety”. Selected projects helped to solve environmental pollution threatening health of about 800,000 people.**

Within the Small Grants Programme, 47 articles in media were published, 4 public hearings organized, 3 workshops and 5 public awareness events. In total, 548 citizens participated. Today, organizations implemented local grants are meeting in Karaganda at the workshop with other civil society groups, and discuss the ways of further cooperation.

“The best way how to solve local problems is to activate the citizens. Civic groups implemented small grants showed their power and creativity when involving their neighbours and addressing responsible authorities. Their effort contributed to chemical safety and improvement of the environment for life of themselves and their children,” says Martin Skalsky, project coordinator of Arnika.

“Our experts provided local groups with help in planning their campaigns, publicity or seeking for the ways of tackling serious environmental pollution. Now we need to keep the public pressure to enforce solution of revealed problems,” stated Julia Kalmykova, small grants manager of EcoMuseum.

In total, 11 projects were submitted to the Small Grants Program from Karaganda, Akmola and East Kazakhstan oblasts. The requested sum of money exceeded EUR 30,000. Projects were assessed by the group of experts from the Czech Republic, Kazakhstan and Russian Federation.

#### More information:

(English) <http://english.arnika.org/kazakhstan/small-grants-programme>

(Russian) <http://toxic.kz/o-proekte/deyatelnost/set-npo/mini-granty/proekty/>



The project is implemented by Arnika

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Impl. partners: EcoMuseum  
Karaganda, CINEST



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The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.



## Attachment 1

### Overview of projects supported in the Small Grants Program:

Project title	Implementing NGO	Location and place of realization	Pollution victims estimation	Budget provided by the EU
Illegal waste dumps impact on environment of Karaganda	EcoObraz	Karaganda/ Karagandy	<b>500,000 people</b>	<b>€ 2,300</b>
River Irtys contamination by heavy metals from metallurgic waste	Eco-Accord	Glubokoe/ East Kazakhstan	<b>9,000 people</b>	<b>€ 2,000</b>
Public monitoring of the air pollution in Temirtau	Otrazheniye	Temirtau/ Karaganda	<b>170,000 people</b>	<b>€ 2,220</b>
Fighting toxic pollution of Northern Balkhash	Balkhash Environmental Center	Northern Balkhash / Karaganda	<b>30,000 people</b>	<b>€ 2,500</b>
Public involvement in remediation of uranium tailings in Stepnogorsk	Institution of Human Health	Stepnogorsk / Akmolinskaya	<b>70,000 people</b>	<b>€ 2,000</b>

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