



“Жасыл сақтық” экологиялық қоғамы
Экологическое общество “Зеленое спасение”
Ecological Society “Green Salvation”

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To: Mr. Andris PIEBALGS,
European Union Commissioner for Development Cooperation

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Dear Commissioner

Civil Society Organizations from Central Asia would like to express their recommendations regarding the elaboration of new Development Cooperation Instrument and hope that CSOs will be engaged in preparation of DCI regulation in order to ensure that EU support ensures will ensure promotion democracy, human rights protection and sustainable development to Central Asia. With this present submission, we would like to focus your attention on the key features EU DCI regulations to ensure the sustainable and democratic development of the Central Asian Countries.

Sincerely Yours,

Kuratov Sergey, chairman, Ecological Society Green Salvation, Kazakhstan.

Recommendations of central Asian civil society organisations regarding the new Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) Regulation

In line with Article 21 of the Lisbon Treaty, the DCI regulation should “foster the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of developing countries, with the primary aim of eradicating poverty; encourage the integration of all countries into the world economy, including through the progressive abolition of restrictions on international trade; help develop international measures to preserve and improve the quality of the environment and the sustainable management of global natural resources, in order to ensure sustainable development; assist populations, countries and regions confronting natural or man-made disasters”.

Achieving the goals of the Lisbon treaty is impossible without partnering with local civil society organisations. This can only be achieved with structured, open and transparent decision-making process involving local civil society representatives throughout DCI programming, monitoring and evaluation activities in the respective countries.

1. Partnership principle

The new DCI regulation should ensure the inclusion and application of the partnership principle in its relationship with civil society and ensure the implementation of structural dialogue regarding issues of human rights, the environment and sustainable development in central Asian countries.

Local EU delegations should play a major role in implementing and executing the partnership principles, through defined guidelines and procedures about how to involve CSOs in implementation of different projects and programs under the DCI.

The DCI regulation should:

- Ensure open and mandatory participation of civil society in the DCI programming process;
- Develop specific mechanisms for meaningful CSO participation;
- Ensure civil society involvement in monitoring and supervising efforts of the European Commission regarding budget support as well as for projects implemented under the DCI;
- Encourage inclusive participation of a wide number of local CSOs in DCI programming processes;
- Ensure proper observance of the principle of partnership and ownership; and
- Encourage and facilitate meaningful dialogue among governments and CSOs when possible.

2. Transparency and information availability

- The EU should prepare and publish detailed country assessment reports and national indicative programs for each central Asian country, as well as ensure public participation in preparation of those documents.
- The new regulation should require translation and publication of all country-relevant EU official documentation, including official working versions, into local languages on a continuous basis and in an easily understandable language and format.
- Local EU delegations should ensure information campaigns around EU policies and programs implemented in central Asian countries;

3. Funding priorities on the instrument level

The DCI regulation should support the objectives of Article 21 of the Lisbon Treaty, and therefore emphasis should be placed on the involvement of national governments in undertaken activities and ensuring national ownership through the inclusion of the broader public in national policy dialogues.

In spite of the difficulties and risks associated with budget support, preferences should be given to sectoral-support programs with a larger involvement of CSOs, in order to avoid the short-term reforms typical of the strong vertical hierarchy in central Asian governance structures and the dependence of reforms on individual personalities. Only through a greater push towards accountability to citizens will the ownership over reforms increase.

Experience shows that public financial management and reforms to the justice system are not effective unless a broader policy dialogue process with clear indicators defined from outset are in place about what should be achieved through such reforms. In the majority of cases, reforms do not support the improvement of public financial management systems with provisions for increased transparency, decreased corruption, or in the case of justice reform, increased independence of the judiciary.

The objectives, indicators and risks of the proposed reforms should be open to public input, and civil society should be given the possibility to monitor and evaluate such actions with involvement in joint monitoring and supervisory committees. Implementation, monitoring and evaluation reports should be available both to recipient countries and as well to EU citizens.

Problems of potential corruption and risks to local populations should be addressed by the DCI regulation. It is important to include the elements of the EU's anticorruption policy into the DCI regulation and clearly describe the role of EC in its routine implementation. The regulation should require that any DCI program is implemented in line with EU norms, standards and principles.

4. Recourse mechanisms

The DCI regulation should include provisions for a safeguard mechanism to guard against corrupt government spending and ensure protection for local groups affected by activities under the DCI. A complaints mechanism should be in place to give civil society and impacted citizens the possibility to raise their concerns on project implementation and programs under the DCI¹.

5. Funding priorities on the program level

The DCI regulation should prioritise the following areas to ensure the sustainable use and management of natural resources and to develop and foster national economies and SMEs :

- Educational programs that would increase skills and qualifications of technical workers and middle management;
- Capacity building and networking services for SMEs;
- Gender equality through the integration of gender issues in all relevant areas.
- Agricultural sector including processing;
- New renewables and energy efficiency;
- Waste management systems that would decrease resource inefficiency and increase recycling;
- Modern and efficient technology transfer in all sectors;
- Telecommunication and high –technology;

6. Strengthening the potential of civil society in central Asia

Unfortunately CSOs in central Asian countries lack the capacity to engage in policymaking and advocacy. The EU should support the development of local CSOs through financial support and specific capacity development programs. The EU should both ensure the development of links, contacts and working relations with NGOs from EU countries and at the same time it should ensure

¹ This could be a new mechanism or make use of the EU ombudsman to reserve the right to consider cases when DCI funding negatively impacts local people on the ground e.g. support for welfare system reforms where the pension age is risen and pension rate downgraded.

that local CSOs also have the same access to resources and funds provided to large international groups.

Therefore the DCI regulation should ensure for the:

- Allocation of special funds for the civil sector's active involvement in the discussion of policy, advocacy, and monitoring;
- Simplified access of local CSOs to increased funding allocated under the DCI (including applications);
- Increase in the number of EU programmes that could strengthen networks of local organisations and communications with European networks and organizations;
- Provision of trainings on the development of project proposals for different EU programmes, such as capacity building, training, and institutional development and small grant programmes; and
- Develop indicators to assess the performance of EU staff in countries and staff incentives to promote better cooperation and follow-up from staff on the ground.

In addition to these provisions, it should be noted that in a number of central Asian countries, the work of CSOs is constrained in a repressive environment where they face harassment by governments for working on issues like human rights, the environment, social protection, free elections, the media and so forth. To this end the EU should design a mechanism that would ensure support and access to resources also for unregistered groups and coalitions.

7. Increase the capacity of EU delegations to work with NSAs

- EU delegations in central Asian countries face a shortage of staff that have the capacity, skills and knowledge to work with local CSOs. The delegations should have staff dedicated to working with CSO organisations on a permanent basis as well as the necessary budget to implement activities that increase CSO capacity, whether through the organisation of specific thematic discussions or practical procedures;
- Professional skills and expertise of CSO representatives and independent experts should be strengthened through fostering better communication with EU structures, support of cooperation and communication of NGOs with European institutions of similar profile and experience; trainings and seminars addressing issues like organisational development, project management, and so forth.

Recommendations signed by following organisations

1. Kuratov Sergey, chairman, Ecological Society Green Salvation, Kazakhstan.
2. Zein Kabykeev, chief, Biodiversity Conservation Fund of Kazakhstan..
3. Dr. Firuza Illarionova, director of EcoNGO «Nature protection team» / UNEPCOM, Tajikistan.
4. Inga Zarafyan, President, «EcoLur» Informational NGO, Armenia.
5. Dana Yermolyonok, Center for Introduction of New Environmentally Safe Technologies, Kazakhstan.
6. Rauf Sabitov, «Jabagly-Manas» Mountain Club», Kazakhstan.
7. Tamara Sabitova, «Center «Miracle», Kazakhstan.
8. Galina Chernova, chairman, «Center ecology-legal initiative «Globus», Kazakhstan.
9. Kaisha Atakhanova, Social Ecofund, Almaty, Kazakhstan.
10. Gulsum Kakimzhanova, NGO «IRIS», Almaty, Kazakhstan.
11. Mutabar Tadzhibaeva, President of the Association internationale de défense des droits de l'homme «Club des cœurs ardents» (Organization International human rights «Fiery Hearts Club»), Uzbekistan.
12. Larisa Polihranidi, chairman, Info plus Taraz NGO, Kazakhstan.
13. Petrova Lyudmila, NGO Angel, Kazakhstan.
14. Hampieva Fatima, NGO Altyn Dala, Zhaksy, Kazakhstan.
15. Papinigis Inna, NGO Krokus XXI, Shuyskoye, Kazakhstan.
16. Koneva -Parshikova Tatyana, NGO Ecoclub Kapelka, Kazakhstan.

17. Makhambet ABZHAN, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Union of Patriotic Youth of Kazakhstan.
18. Muazama Burkhanova, Chair of Public Association «Foundation to support civil initiatives» (FSCI, Dastgirie Center), Tajikistan.
19. Dmitriy Tereshkevich, Director, Human's Health Institute, Kazakhstan.
20. Elena Urlaeva, «Human Rights Protection Alliance, Uzbekistan».
21. Вауыгжан Исалиев, руководитель Общественной Мониторинговой Группы по ЮКО по мониторингу проекта Западная Европа - Западный Китай, Kazakhstan.
22. Kassiyet Omarova, ARZHAN social foundation, Kazakhstan.
23. Igor Hadjamberdiev, Toxic Action network Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan.
24. Kassimanova Gulbarshin, Public Foundation of Life Long Learning, Kazakhstan.
25. Zhakupov Aslanbek, School of Active Youth, Kazakhstan.
26. Margarita Uskembaeva, Institute of equal rights, Kazakhstan.
27. Svetlana Kosheleкова, director, NGO «Taraz Press-club», Kazakhstan.
28. Kirill Ossin, director NGO «EcoMangystau», Kazakhstan.
29. Mamilov Nadir Sh, Kazakhstan.
30. Natalia Ablova, Bureau on Human Rights and Rule of Law, Kyrgyzstan.
31. Dilbar Zaynutdinova, Director of Woman's Environmental Law Center «Armon», Uzbekistan.
32. Dmitry Zhukov, Kazakhstan.
33. Tsygankova Marina, Fond «ElitAgro», Kazakhstan.
34. Yusup Kamalov, chairman, Union for Defense of the Aral Sea and Amudarya, Uzbekistan.
35. Simonenko Irina, president of Social Charity Foundation «Oral», Kazakhstan.
36. Erkingul Imankozhoeva, president, NGO «Karek», Barskoon, Kyrgyzstan.
37. Kurbonali Partoev, director of NGO «Cooperation for development», Tajikistan.
38. Nurzat Abdyrasulova, director, Civic Foundation UNISON, Kyrgyzstan.
39. Rustem Takhirov, executive director of NGO «Youth of new century», Tajikistan.
40. Tolekan Ismailova, Human Rights Centre «Citizens against corruption», Kyrgyzstan.
41. Kalia Moldogazieva, Director of Human Development Center «Tree of Life», Kyrgyzstan.
42. Shakirov Kalylbek, Department of chemichalization and plant protection, Kyrgyzstan.
43. Nargis Zokirova, Takhmina Juraeva, Bureau of Human Rights and Rule of Law, Kazakhstan