



## PRESS RELEASE

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### EU-TURKEY cooperation helps to improve Air Emission Control

Today, Turkey made an important step in defining the national framework for improving air quality. The related EU Twinning project presented a first draft for a strategic action plan to reduce air pollutants in Turkey by 2020. It also showed that Turkey now has the capacity to monitor and report air emissions in-line with the requirements of the European Union.

The Ministry of Environment and Urbanization (MoEU), the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Turkey and the Environment Agency Austria (EAA) organized today the closing event of the EU Twinning project "Improving Emissions Control". Deputy General Director and Turkish Project Leader Muhammet ECEL, Ambassador of Austria Klaus WÖLFER, Ambassador of Finland Nina VASKUNLAHTI, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation in Turkey Béla SZOMBATI, the Member State Project Leader Manfred RITTER, Junior Partner Project Leader Kimmo SILVO and Resident Twinning Adviser Dietmar KOCH addressed the audience.

This Twinning project on Air Emissions Control was funded by the European Union through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) with a budget of 1,235 million Euros. It was conducted in the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization of the Republic of Turkey in partnership with the Environment Agency Austria and the Finnish Environment Institute. The project started on May 7th 2011 and lasted for a period of 26 months.

The main objective of this project was to establish the necessary capacity within the MoEU to transpose and implement the National Emission Ceilings (NEC) Directive in Turkey. Aligning with EU legislation and standards in this field is extremely important for Turkey, not only as a condition for joining the EU but also to reduce health risks for its citizens from air pollution. The aim of this directive is to reduce emissions of acidifying and eutrophying pollutants and ozone precursors in order to improve the protection of the environment. The directive sets upper limits for the total emissions of the four pollutants: Sulphur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), Nitrogen Oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), Ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) and Non-Methane Volatile Organic Carbons (NMVOC).



*This project is co-financed by the European Union with a national contribution by the Turkish Government.*

During this Twinning project, Austrian and Finnish environmental experts helped the Turkish authorities to address this major health problem through four project components:

1. Understanding of **International and EU legislation** related to the NEC directive and **clarification of roles and responsibilities** in the Turkish administration. Turkish, Austrian and Finnish partners prepared together a draft by-law for Turkey on the Control of national Air Emissions in order to transpose the NEC directive.
2. **Establishment** of necessary **capacity** to prepare and **manage** the **national air emission inventory**. The EU Twinning project built on the results achieved by the EU Technical Assistance Project on improving emissions control. A tailor made training programme was developed and approximately 25 people from MoEU have been trained on compiling national air emissions on an annual basis starting from 1990 on.
3. Development of a **strategic action plan to reduce emissions** of the pollutants regulated in the NEC directive. This plan describes possible policies and measures on a sectorial basis to abate emissions for the period up to 2020. Turkish experts were made familiar with proposed actions so as to manage the whole system in the future.
4. **Development of reporting capacity in line** with the NEC directive. Under this component an institutional assessment report that defines roles and responsibilities was drafted. A very important achievement in terms of sustainability was the establishment of an inter-institutional coordination board through a prime ministers circular. The aim of the coordination board is to sustain the highest level of coordination and cooperation for ensuring data and information exchange and efficient management of air emissions.

This project is part of a wider EU assistance package to help Turkey align with EU air emissions management standards. Between the years 2007 and 2013, EU assistance has provided 909 million Euros in total (107 million under IPA1 and 802 million under IPA3) to the environment sector.

This Twinning project ensures that future investments required in air emissions management in Turkey will be guided by a modern legal framework that is in-line with the EU and protects the environment and public health as well as promotes an efficient and environmental friendly economy.

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