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**DEVELOPMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS IN KAZAKHSTAN
THROUGH THE PRISM OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATIONS: KEY
TRENDS AND CURRENT ISSUES**

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to determine the political significance of the ecological movements in Kazakhstan through the analysis of NGO's activity, contribution of authorities and civil initiatives on the national level. Ecological situation in Kazakhstan is very tense and complicated: the environmental problems at the local level cannot compete with other social problems, particularly, problems of social-economic nature, and as a result, they are not perceived adequately. The unresolved environmental issues are a distinct threat to Kazakhstan's national security and challenging to the regional one in Central Asia. It is clearly visible tendency to ignore ecological imperatives and focus on the current fossil fuel based energy economy. In this regard, civil society initiatives on environmental protection are becoming notably topical.

The paper deals with the tendencies of modern ecological movement in Kazakhstan as a kind of associated interest groups. The authors give a brief history of roots and development of this movement and analyze its distinguishing characteristics as a new participant of political life. A special attention is paid on the analysis of the measures on improving the ecological situation and prove the necessity in reforming this sector. The authors conclude the article with possible mechanisms of a larger involvement of citizens and increase the efficiency of NGO's activity in the ecological sphere.

Keywords: Kazakhstan, ecological movement, environmental issues, NGOs, social movements.

INTRODUCTION

The globalization of political and economic development of the world community raise the inevitable intensification of the devastating impact of mankind on the environment, outstripping the pace of natural self-regulation of nature. Man-made disasters, depletion of irreplaceable natural resources will inevitably entail a radical change of not only the environmental situation, but also of the social system of a society, and it also have an impact on economy and policy.

The ecological perspective is not limited with optimization and harmonization of methods of environmental management; it has a social and political focus. The states consolidate efforts on the international scene, focus a geopolitics vector towards the solution of environmental problems, allocating with ecological functions authoritative international institutes (the UN, the European Union, NATO, etc.) and at the national level bodies of the state and municipal authority of many countries pursue ecologically directed domestic policy. And yet, despite the positive developments, comes the realization that the international institutions and the state in isolation from society are not able to change the negative dynamics of the global environment. Activation of the social-ecological movements at the international, national and regional levels became the answer to the inability of the authorities to reach high-quality changes in the solution of global, national and regional environmental problems. The main persons involved in movements are the international, national and regional non-governmental ecological organizations. Today these structures become important elements of civil societies and world civil society, they define the shape modern ecological the movement in many respects.