



Delta-Eko

Cinnah Cad. 106/6, Çankaya, 06550 ANKARA

Tel: 0312-440 7940 Fax: 0312-440 1011

www.delta-eko.org

19.02.2009 – 26.02.2009

Take time to think, great haste makes great waste

Turkish Union of Chambers of Engineers and Architects, or TMMOB, called for the withdrawal of the Environment Arrangement Plan, which was adopted by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Council on Feb 13.

The new Environment Arrangement Plan was adopted by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Council on Feb 13, yet the plan still waits for the approval of Mayor Kadir Topbaş.

The Environment Arrangement Plan, which would aim to stop the corrupted urbanization and industrialization, promoting the developments of rural areas, undertaking ecology, economy, culture, social and physical issues as whole, balancing the protection and utilization, was prepared in one year by a group of academicians and professionals. However the reaction came quick to the new 1/100,000 scaled Istanbul City Environment Arrangement Plan. Ten vocational chambers affiliated to Turkish Union of Chambers of Engineers and Architects, or TMMOB, called out the municipality to withdraw the plan because is in favor of the municipality's profit.

Raising environment damage

In Turkey, just like in European Union member countries, the large-scale physical plans are known as an Environment Arrangement Plan, which should be purveying green, functional and ecologic management.

Plans adopted throughout the history of Turkey have always been criticized for their lack of organization, research and sensitivity to the environment. Corrupted urbanization, inappropriate usage of agricultural fields, opening dangerous geologic areas and coastal areas for housing, damaging natural and historical assets raised environmental problems.

After the vocational chambers of TMMOB sued, the 1/100,000 scaled plan, approved in 2006, was cancelled in March 2008. The Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality reworked the plan, completed and sent it to Metropolitan Municipality Council for approval.

The plan has been sent for approval just before local elections March 29 was unanimously approved during the council's last meeting.

TMMOB City Planners Chamber Istanbul Office secretary Tayfun Kahraman said the plan being approved in the council is a politic arbitration. "Kemal Kılıçtaroğlu, mayor candidate from Republican People's Party, or CHP, a few weeks ago stated that he and his team will prepare an Environment Arrangement Plan for Istanbul. And right after his statement the prepared plan was sent to approval. The present government wants to show that they already had an Environment Arrangement Plan for the city before the elections take place," Kahraman said.



Delta-Eko

Cinnah Cad. 106/6, Çankaya, 06550 ANKARA

Tel: 0312-440 7940 Fax: 0312-440 1011

www.delta-eko.org

No one from the TMMOB is in the decisive board, he said although the municipality said the plan was also supported by City Planners Chamber's, the municipality council has never showed the plan to the city planners.

"The City Environment Arrangement Plans are like the 'constitution' of the cities. The schematic and thematic plan covers topics such as the areas that should be protected and transportation connections. Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality is the only arbitrating force. Ministry of Environment and Forestry should also have a decisive authorization but with a protocol both sides signed the municipality is now the single power," Kahraman said.

Opening preservation areas for construction

Although the ratification process is not yet complete officers of Istanbul branches of the Civil Engineers Chamber, Environmental Engineer Chamber, Electrical Engineer Chamber, Map and Cadastral Engineers Chamber, Geophysics Engineers Chamber, Mining Engineers Chamber, Forest Engineers Chamber, Landscape Architects Chamber and Agriculture Engineers Chamber, affiliated to TMMOB, gathered at Architects Chamber's Istanbul office to protest the new plan.

The plan was distributed to council members for examination before be put to a vote. "We had a hard time receiving the plan but somehow we managed," Architects Chamber Istanbul office Chairperson Eyüp Muşcu said, adding that the municipality should be transparent. Instead, after presenting the plans to the council, they asked opinions from TMMOB. "The same day the former plan was cancelled, Topbaş said we would approve the same plan again. Not only have they offered the same plan, but they also have added negative decisions. The plan is not satisfactory and it does not give priority to people living in the city," Muşcu said.

"The new plan will have negative affects in the city and will harm instead of healing the situation in Istanbul. The plan not only brings back the former plan it also brings the unwanted urban projects such as Kartal, Zeyport and Haydarpaşa," he said. "The new plan also opens preservation areas to construction. Istanbul will loose many of its important values with the new plan."

The reports that mentioned the dangers of the city expanding to the north are prepared until today to protect the forests, drinking water and basins are not taken into consideration in the new Environment Arrangement Plan, further more it covers decisions for the city to grow northerly.

"Some agricultural areas are shown as university plans and some as public housing areas. These plans may well be the examples of former negotiations between sides," Muşcu said during his declaration.

Decision for third airport

According to Muşcu there is also a decision about a third airport of Istanbul. "The planned airport on an agricultural area in Silivri wasn't on the cancelled plan. The unneeded airport project will turn the protected areas into attraction centres," he said.



Delta-Eko

Cinnah Cad. 106/6, Çankaya, 06550 ANKARA

Tel: 0312-440 7940 Fax: 0312-440 1011

www.delta-eko.org

The plan has one month waiting period for mayoral approval and since there is still time the Architects Chamber asks Topbaş to withdraw the plan. In the contrary case Mahçu said they would bring a suit against the Environment Arrangement Plan.

Chairman of the Civil Engineers Chamber's Istanbul office Cemal Gökçe asks the municipality to inform the people living in Istanbul.

Mahçu said he wished the municipality prepared a more scientific plan by including vocational chambers, project managers and professors. "We could have helped them with our reports on environmental management for the city."

Green solutions to minimize garbage

Two composting tanks, with a capacity of 10,000 tons each, have been activated in Ankara to minimize the amount of garbage being buried.

Melih Gökçek, mayor of Ankara Metropolitan Municipality, spoke to Anatolian news agency and said the capital is producing 4,500 tons of garbage every day and the majority of this amount is being buried underground. Gökçek said if they keep burying the majority of the garbage, the solid waste yards in Sincan and Mamak districts will not be enough to answer the needs of Ankara for the years to come.

"When these waste yards were being selected the measurements were not accurate, especially not for Çadırtepe. Ankara's waste potential was considered 1,500 tons for the year 2020. Their capacity was arranged to handle that much." Gökçek said since the daily production of garbage for Ankara is already almost 4,500 tons, the present zones will not last five years if they continue to bury all of it.

Minimizing the amount

"That is why we have been working on minimizing the amount of garbage for burying. We have built two composting tanks of 10,000 tons of capacities at the waste yard of Mamak. After these tanks are full, 250 tons of organic garbage will be put into them every day. Therefore there will be a reduction of 500 tons each day for the garbage saved for Mamak."

Gökçek said the tanks are operational and will reduce the garbage's damage to the environment and provide recycling. Gas emitted by the garbage will be used for providing electricity to Ankara through generators and the compost will be put to use as manure for green areas, Gökçek said.

Gökçek said there are plans to recycle 60 percent of Ankara's garbage in two years, therefore, the amount to be buried will be reduced to 20 to 30 percent and the final goal is reducing it to zero.

Gökçek said Mamak and Sincan will be saved from being waste yards by the facilities to be built and solid waste will be recycled for the economy. He said some of the organic waste might be used for construction purposes. Ankara will reach a stage like no other province of Turkey in three years in terms of recycling solid waste and less pollution for the environment and underground resources, Gökçek said.



Delta-Eko

Cinnah Cad. 106/6, Çankaya, 06550 ANKARA

Tel: 0312-440 7940 Fax: 0312-440 1011

www.delta-eko.org

He said another benefit of the compost tanks was that they solve the greatest problem of waste yards: garbage liquids. Gökçek said the liquid garbage from the original waste used to be collected and purified before being transferred to sewers.

"Right now we are moving those liquids back to the tanks from collectors. This provides faster composting and helps prevent pollution of underground water resources."

Close watch on summer's forest fires

Through new technology, the General Directorate of Forestry is keeping a close watch on the Karabük, İzmir, Muğla and Antalya forests, which are defined by the Early Fire Warning System as sensitive forest areas. The new warning system includes alerting fire departments and immediate intervention with the Fire Management System in case of a fire.

Cameras were positioned in strategic locations in the forest. The cameras will help detect a fire in 10 to 25 seconds and then sound an alarm. "We take all the necessary precautions in fighting forest fires. Two cameras were put in the Karabük forests within the Early Fire Warning System," said Turgut Gül, protection branch manager of Zonguldak Regional Forest Directorate.

"The cameras can film the forest via the Internet. We manage the cameras from Zonguldak. It is also possible to watch the fires from miles away, and to take precautions from that distance. This system is a big step toward the protection of the forests," he said.

The Forest General Directorate has continual access to the various equipments used in extinguishing the forest fires on the computer system, Gül said.

"After the Early Fire Warning System sounds an alarm, the Fire Management System sets in. The next step is to allocate the nearest fire teams. Both systems are of great importance to the protection of the environment. The success of the camera system has also grabbed the attention of some other countries. Only Turkey and Germany have this fire system. Germany set it up at 350,000 Turkish Liras and the cost of the system amounted to 45,000 liras just in Karabük," Gül added.

Source: www.hurriyetdailynews.com