

## Chinese cities see fewer 'good air' days in H1

Chinese cities have reported fewer days with "good air" in the first half (H1) of 2017, with the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei area suffering from higher density of key pollutants, official data showed.

The 338 cities monitored by the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) enjoyed good or excellent air quality on 74.1 percent of the days in H1, down 2.6 percentage points year on year, according to Liu Zhiquan, head of the environmental monitoring department at the MEP.

During the same period, the density of hazardous fine particle matter PM2.5 remained unchanged from a year ago while the density of PM 10 was down 2.2 percent.

Air quality in 13 cities in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei area was rated good or excellent on 50.7 percent of the days in H1, down 7.1 percentage points year on year. In June, the ratio was only 34.1 percent, 14.2 percentage points lower than a year ago.

The density of PM2.5 and PM10 in these regions also climbed 14.3 percent and 13.2 percent, respectively, indicating worsened air quality.

Of the country's 74 major cities, Haikou in southern China's Hainan Province had the best air quality while Handan in northern China's Hebei Province was the most polluted, MEP data showed.

The worsened air quality came despite the government's strengthened oversight of environmental violations.

In H1, China investigated and dealt with 17,169 violations of environmental protection laws and regulations, previous MEP data showed.

Over 610 million yuan (about 90.44 million U.S. dollars) in fines were issued in 503 cases where violators must pay daily fines until they address their wrongdoings, up 131 percent and 64 percent year on year respectively

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## Xi urges solid efforts to advance reform

Chinese President Xi Jinping Wednesday called for solid moves to advance reforms.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks at the 37th meeting of the Central Leading Group for Deepening Overall Reform, which he heads.

All localities should be devoted to delivering reforms, shouldering their due responsibilities and making concrete and pioneering efforts, Xi said.

The group called for green and sustainable development of agriculture. Relevant departments should properly deal with the relationship between green development and ecological protection, grain safety, and raising farmers' income, according to a statement released after the meeting.

Agricultural development should be compatible with the environment and resources, and should stay coordinated with production and people's livelihoods to achieve sustainable growth.

The group urged the establishment of a national technology transfer system, with a focus on strategic industries of far-reaching significance. Technology transfer should play a better role in upgrading technological innovation and boosting economic and social development, the statement said.

Reforms should be made to promote corporate governance structures in public cultural institutions to improve management and services, and to inject vitality into these institutions, according to the statement.

Boards of directors should be the main form of corporate governance structure in these institutions, such as libraries and museums.

Representatives of the industry, professionals and people from all walks of life would also be invited to participate in the management of these institutions, it said.

The conference stressed efforts to enhance and improve people-to-people communication with other countries, emphasizing confidence in the path, theories, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

In an effort to raise the professional level of civil servants, the appointment system should be introduced in recruiting personnel to posts with special expertise requirements, according to the statement.

To protect consumer interests and ensure good quality is the bottom line, it said. The group called for the establishment of a safety monitoring and quick response system for imports and exports.

The meeting highlighted the importance of ensuring good quality drugs and medical equipment. The drug approval system should be improved to enhance innovation and research capabilities of medical businesses.

Regarding the national park system, the group urged priority to be given to ecological protection.

Legal protection and oversight should be put into place to establish a

natural reserve system of which the national parks play a major part.

Since the third plenary session of the 18th CPC Central Committee was held, a package of pilot reforms have been implemented. They are replicable and applicable, as a role model and a breakthrough in the comprehensive reform agenda.

Relevant departments should review the progress of the reform and correct the wrongdoing in a timely fashion.

To deal with difficult reform agenda, officials should push and track the reform progress in person. Pioneering efforts are needed to break major barriers and well implement the pilot reforms, the statement said.

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## [Acrylamide: un vote en faveur de la proposition de la Commission visant à en réduire la présence dans les denrées alimentaires](#)

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## Acrylamid: Zustimmung zum Vorschlag der Kommission zur Reduzierung des Gehalts in Lebensmitteln

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## Acrylamide: vote in favour of Commission's proposal to reduce presence in food

Once implemented, the new regulation will require that food business operators (FBOs) apply mandatory measures to reduce the presence of acrylamide, proportionate to the size and nature of their establishment.

Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, welcomed the vote: *"Today we took an important step in protecting the health and well-being of citizens. The new regulation will not only help to reduce the presence of this carcinogenic substance but also will help raise awareness on how to avoid the exposure to it that oftentimes comes from home-cooking."*

The text agreed today will now be sent to the Council and the European Parliament. The two institutions will have three months to examine it before final adoption by the Commission. The entry into force could be foreseen spring 2018.

The Commission is also planning to initiate discussions on additional measures, such as setting maximum levels of acrylamide in certain foods without delay once this Regulation is adopted.

### **Background**

Acrylamide [\[1\]](#) is a carcinogenic substance that forms from naturally present free asparagine (amino acid) and sugars during high temperature processing, such as frying, roasting and baking, particularly in potato-based products, cereal-based products, coffee and coffee substitutes.

The presence of acrylamide in food was initially detected in 2002 and since then research was undertaken to identify measures to reduce its presence in food. The European Food Safety Authority ([EFSA](#)) confirmed in 2015 that acrylamide is a carcinogenic substance and that current levels of dietary exposure to acrylamide indicate a concern with respect to the carcinogenic effects. EFSA also stated that the levels of acrylamide were not consistently decreased in recent years. In addition, the investigations performed by the Member States on the basis of the Commission Recommendation showed that the implementation by food business operators of the voluntary mitigation measures to reduce the presence varied widely.

Following EFSA's opinion, the Commission started discussions with Member States' authorities to determine appropriate regulatory measures to reduce the presence of acrylamide in food.

[\[1\]](#)

[https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/chemical\\_safety/contaminants/catalogue/acrylamide\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/chemical_safety/contaminants/catalogue/acrylamide_en)

Text of the draft proposal available

here: [http://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiatives/ares-2017-2895100\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiatives/ares-2017-2895100_en)