

China to announce annual water-quality rankings

Starting from this year, China will publish the annual rankings of cities with the best and poorest water quality, as the government moves to further increase transparency.

In addition, results of investigations into major or sensitive environmental emergencies, their impacts on the environment, and assessments of losses will also be made known to the public in line with the law, according to the central government's agendas for 2017 unveiled by the State Council.

Water quality has not drawn as much attention from the public as air quality, and the rankings will serve as a form of supervision over local governments, as well as motivate them to step up efforts to treat polluted water and improve water quality, said Peng Yingdeng, a Beijing-based researcher in urban environmental pollution control.

China still has a long way to go in the treatment of polluted and odorous water, Peng said, adding that the rankings will prompt cities that have done poorly in this regard to strive harder for improvements.