

Minister Sees 50% Reduction in Flaring

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Gas flaring in the Urengoi field in the Yamal-Nenets autonomous district. Russia is a global leader in flaring gas. **Maxim Stulov**

Natural Resources and Environment Minister Sergei Donskoi said Russia could cut its gas flaring in half by the end of this year, a statement on the ministry's website said.

Donskoi joined fellow ministers at a meeting of the Eurasian Economic Community's ecological council in Astana, Kazakhstan, this week. His comments follow up on the steps that the government took earlier this year when it approved increasing fees for companies whose work has a negative impact on the environment, including sanctions for excessive burning of associated petroleum gas.

The measures have already helped to stimulate companies to reduce their emissions of pollutants and greenhouse gases as a result of gas flaring, Donskoi said. As such, companies invested about 5.6 billion rubles (\$172 million) into making better use of associated petroleum gas.

Russia is a global leader in gas flaring. The World Wildlife Fund estimated that the amount of gas that Russia burns annually is about equal to the amount needed to supply Moscow.

Russia burned over 17.1 billion cubic meters of associated petroleum gas in 2012, a WWF report from 2013 said. Utilization of this gas could bring revenues of more than \$24 billion.

Last month, the public organization Green Patrol announced plans to update its list of 100 biggest polluters in Russia by the end of the year, RIA Novosti reported. One of the new methodologies used will be to divide companies according to the sector they work in.

The re-evaluation of the list will begin with oil and gas companies where, among other criteria, ecologists plan to check statistics on gas flaring.

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