



## **OUR VOICE Azerbaijan Norway Organization**

We - Azerbaijanis living in Norway call “Cronimet” Company to take measures to protect the environment and to stop the environmental crime.

Despite the fact that, “Cronimet” Company declares its commitment to the standards of quality, efficiency, safety and all other requirements, Zangazur and Copper Molybdenum Combine which its shares was acquired by “CRONIMET Mining AG” causes environmental terror polluting Okchuchay, left tributary of the Araz River, that takes its source from Armenia and passes through the Zangilan region of Azerbaijan. The Araz River, the largest right tributary of the Kura River, is playing a crucial role in providing the water resources to irrigate the farming lands in Azerbaijan.

According to the monitoring carried out in January-March 2021, the content of nickel is 7 times, iron is 4 times, and copper-molybdenum compound is 2 times higher than the norm. As well as, ammonium 1.3 times, manganese 3.6 times, nickel 3.4 times more than norm. Periodically a color of the Okhchuchay River was changing either to a white or to an acid-yellow one. A mass trout mortality in the river was recorded in March 2021.

The high content of heavy metals in the waters ruins not only the fluvial fauna, but is also extremely dangerous for the human health. Usage of the contaminated water can bring to detrimental consequences – from the disorders of gastrointestinal tracts, destructive processes in kidneys and bone tissue up to the disorders of cardiovascular, nervous and hematopoietic systems of the body.

It is a common fact that a major number of the salts of heavy metals enter the environment by the anthropogenic way – mainly as a result of emissions from the extractive and processing enterprises. This gives reason to believe that the Zangezur Copper Molybdenum Combine (operating the Kajaran mine), as well as the «Chaarat Kapan» Company (the former Kapan Mining and Processing Combine), are not complying with the environmental standards, dumping their production wastes directly into the Okhchuchay River, without any preliminary treatment. A potential for the self-purification and self-regeneration of the Okhchuchay River is decreasing due to a high content of heavy metals in it and due to an increase of the water intake by the combine.

Government agencies of Armenia also recognize the ecological crime in Okhchuchay River. L.Margaryan, member of Ecology Protection Safety Center at Yerevan University, confirmed a deterioration of the water quality due to a high content of molybdenum, iron, copper, zinc, chromium and other heavy metals. Environmental activist B.Sargsyan, has noted that Okhchuchay River was polluted along its entire length - along 50 km. It is an unprecedented huge catastrophe with enormous pollutions. The bad smells are spreading all around the neighborhood territories

In October 2019, the Press Service of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Armenia reported that hazardous waste from the Kajaran Copper Molybdenum Combine flowed into the Okchuchay. Armenian officials have repeatedly said that the plant discharges massive hazardous waste. Although “Cronimet”, which operates in dozens of countries around the

world, declares its commitment to quality, efficiency and safety standards, Okhchuchay's situation proves otherwise.

We once again express our regret on the issue mentioned above and call on Company not to turn a blind eye to environmental crime and to take appropriate measures in this regard.

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Sign  .