

Light Pollution as a recognized Degradation of Environment

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Czechia had to adopt the EU rules for protection of the atmosphere.
The best way: a Clean Air Act including the previous and new rules.

The most visible pollution at night: by light from artificial sources.
To have a clean air, it should be avoided!

The idea to include the light pollution into the Clean Air Act came from the House of Representatives, June 2001.

A strange idea? An excellent one!

All the background info in Czech prepared by the astronomers, including the draft new articles of the law. A Lombardy law from 2000 as a model!

Positive reactions from the Members of the House of Representatives and the Minister of Environment.

The only question: how much it will cost?

The answer: almost nothing, if needed.

Due to lack of time, the final inclusion has been quite short, detailed rules postponed to the Government order.

But: a definition is there, and a general obligation for everybody to avoid pollution as much as possible:

Act from Feb 14, 2002

on Protection of the Atmosphere and Amendment of Some Other Acts
(the Clean Air Act)

The Parliament of the Czech Republic has adopted this Act of the Czech Republic:

§ 1 Scope of regulation

(1) This Act provides

- a) the rights and obligations of persons and the scope of administrative authorities in the course of protection of the outdoor air against input of pollutants by human activities and in the course of manipulating the regulated substances which damage the ozone layer of the Earth and manipulating the products containing such substances,

- b) conditions for further reduction of the amount of emitted pollutants affecting adversely the life and health of people and animals, the environment or the tangible property,
- c) tools to reduce the amount of substances affecting the climate system of the Earth,
- d) *measures for lowering the light pollution of the air.*

§ 2 **Principal concepts**

(1) For the purpose of this Act in the domain of protection of the air it is understood by

- a) outdoor air the tropospheric air, with exception of the air on workplaces designated by a special legal regulation and in confined space (hereinafter referred to as the “air”),
- ...

r) *light pollution every form of illumination by artificial light which is dispersed outside the areas it is dedicated to, particularly, if directed above the level of horizon.*

§ 3 Obligations of legal and natural persons

(1) *Everybody shall be obliged to limit and prevent the air pollution and reduce the quantities of pollutants specified by this Act and relevant implementation rules and discharged by himself/herself.*

Strong support within the House and the Ministry.

Opposition from some uninformed people from the lighting practice: light pollution? What's this? We don't need any law, our outdoor lighting is excellent already!

However, all politicians who studied the problem a bit, came to the conclusion: A legal protection of nighttime environment is needed, all the measures are no-regret ones.

(Skybeamers hated by everybody.)

The draft of the Government order is being prepared, no real argument against the Lombardy-like rules appeared.

More and more people are looking forward to a much better and less polluting outdoor lighting.

In Brno, we agree in some issues with the lighting company already. Some adaptations will be made even before the legal enforcement.

(regulation, shielding)



All the documents for the House and the Ministry have been public all the time, see www.astro.cz/darksky