

China adopts heavy metal reduction plan

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Sun is seen rising over eastern Beijing's developing skyline amid a murky layer of pollutants hovering above the city. The government has set a target of reducing emissions of five metals -- lead, mercury, chromium, cadmium and arsenic -- by 15 percent from 2007 levels over the next five years, according to the China Daily.

China has adopted a plan to tackle heavy-metal pollution, according to state media, after more than 30 major poisoning incidents since 2009.

The government has set a target of reducing emissions of five metals -- lead, mercury, chromium, [cadmium](#) and [arsenic](#) -- by 15 percent from 2007 levels over the next five years, the China Daily said on Saturday.

China discharged 900 tonnes of the highly [toxic metals](#) in 2007, the paper reported, and Environment Minister Zhou Shengxian said 75 billion yuan (\$11.4 billion) would be needed over the five years to address the problem.

The report did not say whether this funding had been allocated.

Nearly 4,500 enterprises, including mines, battery manufacturers, leather producers and the chemical industry, have been identified as key monitoring targets.

"More than 30 major heavy-metal poisoning incidents have occurred since 2009, posing a grave threat to public health, especially to children," Zhou said.

Last month 28 children, including some less than a year old, were rushed to hospital in the eastern province of Anhui with [lead poisoning](#) caused by a local battery factory.

A report earlier this week found that up to 10 percent of rice grown in China is tainted with [heavy metals](#).

The China Daily cited the breakneck expansion of heavy-metal industries, outdated technology and a lack of effective monitoring as the main reasons for the pollution.

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