

Draft energy law released for public comment

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Senior law expert Ye Rongsi said Monday that 2009 would be the earliest possible date for China's Energy Law to take effect.

Ye, deputy head of a team responsible for drafting the law, made his remarks in an interview with The Beijing News.

On Monday, the National Energy Leading Group (NELG) officially published a draft of the law on its website for public comment. The draft will also be carried by selected newspapers. The public will be able to submit opinions or suggestions by mail, fax or e-mail to the NELG.

The draft stipulates that the government will establish a partially market-based energy pricing system, which will reflect supply and demand, as well as environmental costs.

The draft does not, however, mention the establishment of a ministry of energy, which has been suggested by many energy experts.

The public-comment period ends February 1, 2008.

Since the start of 2006, China has drawn up four versions of the energy law. A draft was prepared for discussion in September by the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, National People's Congress, local governments, companies and industry associations.

The draft energy law has 15 chapters and 140 articles that define energy management, strategy, development, supply, storage and conservation.

The law will also cover energy technology, international cooperation, fiscal and tax policies, and other issues.(Xinhua)

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