

Gas Exporting Countries Study OPEC Model

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Gas-producing countries are studying OPEC's experience as they try to build a global natural gas market, the head of the recently launched Gas Exporting Countries Forum, or GECF, said Monday.

Leonid Bokhanovsky told reporters that the group was set to propose a gas market model based on OPEC's experience. GECF, whose members hold about 70 percent of the world's conventional gas reserves, could be seeking to have more control over supply and demand and, eventually, gas prices.

Bokhanovsky said GECF would meet in Doha, Qatar, on Dec. 2 to review a five-year plan and long-term issues will be discussed at a more representative summit scheduled for 2011. "In Doha we are going to propose a model of this market. Gathering information, data swaps between the [GECF] countries are the basis of the model," Bokhanovsky said. "And the model itself is based on a positive practice of creation of the oil market ... worked out with

participation of OPEC and the International Energy Agency."

Although GECF members have repeatedly said they are not going to seek an OPEC-like model of commodity price influence by raising or lowering output, consumers are sensitive to any steps designed to increase control over gas market by the group.

GECF is a developing but still loose collection of many of the world's largest gas powers, including Turkmenistan, holder of the world's fourth-largest gas reserves. It has yet to attempt to coordinate supply policy in a market more fragmented than oil, where producer group OPEC wields influence over prices through supply policy.

Bokhanovsky said the group was working on inviting more countries to participate, including from "America and Asia."

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