

CAREC

NEWSLETTER



THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE
FOR CENTRAL ASIA

ISSUED QUARTERLY DECEMBER, 2017



Dear reader,

The outgoing year for CAREC is marked both by successful launch of new initiatives and continuation of key projects in all countries of Central Asia, development of scientific partnership and the strengthening of trust in the region to address common environmental problems. At the last meeting of the Board of Governors, the organization's performance was rated "excellent" for the third year in a row, once again proving that the achievements of CAREC are the results of a constant systemic work.

The last few months have followed suit. Our experts presented the results of two regional projects that were successfully completed this year: "Promotion dialogue for conflict prevention related to water nexus in Central Asia. Central Asia Water Nexus Cooperation" with support of the European Union and "Phase II: Support towards local initiatives on environmental governance and water resources management in CA" with support of the Government of Norway. The first project was to build trust between countries on the management of transboundary water resources, taking into account nexus-interrelation between water and various sectors of the economy. The second one was a qualitative work with the local population in

the countries, and the pilot implementation of incentives for ecosystem services.

At the regional level, CAREC's environmental partnership has been strengthened through the signing of a memorandum of cooperation with the Executive Committee of the International Fund for saving the Aral Sea (EC IFAS), which identifies partnership vectors, as well as the development of a Roadmap with concrete actions. In addition, systematic work continues through meetings to increase the capacity and cooperation of regional organizations. These events were held on a rotational basis: under the auspices of EC IFAS in Ashgabat and the Interstate Coordination Water Commission of Central Asia in Tashkent. The future meeting is planned by the Regional Mountain Center of Central Asia in Bishkek in 2018.

Speaking about the plans, at the moment, preparations are under way for the Central Asian International Environmental Forum, which will be held in Tashkent in 2018 – a number of high-level meetings are scheduled ahead of this important event for our countries. At the national level, meetings with representatives of the business community

are planned in the countries, following the example of the first steps of joint work and meetings of NGOs in the region that were made this year. We also expect the successful passage of several international accreditation processes. In particular, the Green Climate Fund and the European Union.

Thus, next year for CAREC, strengthening of multilateral cooperation for the sake of preserving the environment and sustainable development in the region remains a priority. Thanks to the cooperation with our partners and relying on strong human resources, we will continue to actively assist the governments of Central Asian countries in addressing environmental challenges.

With all my heart, I wish all of us success in the New Year 2018! Much health, well-being, happiness to every family, and magical holidays!

Yours faithfully,

Dr Iskandar Abdullaev,

Executive Director

the Regional Environmental
Centre for Central Asia

SPEECHES OF ALUMNI, PRESENTATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS, ANALYSIS OF SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF REGIONAL COOPERATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIP - THIS IS ALL ABOUT THE CENTRAL ASIAN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM, WHICH WAS HELD AT THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE FOR CENTRAL ASIA ON SEPTEMBER 11-19. PLEASE LEARN MORE IN **OUR REPORT**.

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1

TWO REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED

AT THE END OF NOVEMBER, THE EXPERTS OF CAREC PRESENTED THE RESULTS OF TWO ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS IN ALMATY.

On November 21, a conference on the occasion of the end of the European Union's project **"Promotion dialogue for conflict prevention related to water nexus in Central Asia. Central Asia Water Nexus Cooperation (CAWECOOP)"** was held.

"The results of the project demonstrate that intercountry trust in Central Asia is growing, and this is the result of regular interaction and an open exchange of views and knowledge," Dr. Iskandar Abdullaev, Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Centre of Central Asia, opened the conference. - Without a systematic partnership and dialogue on transboundary water in the region, serious competition for water resources can arise.

We and our partners are working on small rivers, supporting the work of regional working groups and promoting a comprehensive discussion of these issues."

The project has been implemented by CAREC for two years with the participation of representatives of foreign ministries, parliaments, ministries and departments for water management, regional organizations of Central Asian countries. The main objective of the project was to increase the level of transnational and political participation in water and energy cooperation in the region. NEXUS in the title of the project implies the principle of interdependence of various water issues: energy, food security, water quality.



November 22, the conference on the results of CAREC's project entitled **"Phase II: Support towards local initiatives on environmental governance and water resources management in CA"** was held. The project was supported

by the Government of Norway, and the main directions of the project were the pilot implementation of incentives for ecosystem services.



In addition, according to the results of CAWECOOP, a map of "best practices" on the use of water, land and energy resources in the countries of Central Asia was drawn up. The map is also available [online](#).

2

RETHINKING WATER IN CENTRAL ASIA – A NEW STUDY IS PUBLISHED

A joint study conducted by CAREC and adelphi within the framework of the Switzerland's Blue Peace Central Asia Initiative is published. The publication demonstrates the cost of inaction

and benefits of cooperation in the field of water management between the countries of the region. By raising awareness of these costs of inaction, and by setting out a variety of pathways towards

eliminating them in the future, the present report seeks to encourage and support Central Asian policy-makers in strengthening regional water cooperation and improved water governance.

A policy brief summarizes the key messages of "Rethinking Water in Central Asia". Both the policy brief and the report are also available in Russian.

[Read the study](#)
[Read the policy brief](#)

3

MEETING WITH JOURNALISTS IN A NEW FORMAT

CAREC Branch in Uzbekistan within UzWaterAware project, funded by the European Union, organized the first informal meeting in “open kitchen” format with representatives of Uzbek media.

During the non-standard event, the editors-in-chief, journalists and bloggers got acquainted with the project team, as well as learned detailed information about its goals and plans.



[Learn more here](#)

4

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF IFAS AND CAREC SIGNED A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING



A solemn ceremony to mark the signing of a Memorandum between the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (EC IFAS) and CAREC was held on November 13, 2017, in Ashgabat. The document was signed by Mr. Guizgeldi Baidzhanov, Chairman of the Executive Committee of IFAS, and Dr. Iskandar Abdullaev, Executive Director of CAREC.

[Learn more](#)

5

THE VISIT OF CAREC'S RESEARCHERS TO THE USA

A group of researchers traveled to the US to meet a number of US research and academic institutions within the project ["Provision of science based evidence on climate induced water quality challenges in Amu Darya basin"](#).

October 23, Sacramento, they paid a visit to USGS-CAWSC to exchange ideas and knowledge on climate change and water research and discuss potential cooperation.

October 28, Oxford, the group met with Dr. Martin Locke (Director), Dr. Ronald Bingner (Watershed Research), Dr. Lindsey Yasarer (Hydrology) and Dr. Roger Kuhnle (Hydraulic Engineering) of the US Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, National Sedimentation Laboratory (USDA-ARS-NSL).

October 31, 2017, Washington DC, CAREC was hosted by the US Global Development Lab at USAID, Dr. Annica Wayman, Division Chief and Dr. Jason Porter, Research Advisor of the Research Partnerships for Development Team in the U.S. Global Development Lab at the U.S. Agency for

International Development (USAID).

Discussions with US colleagues included methodological aspects of the research, transboundary implications beyond the region, quality of data and their field validation, update on US meetings and state of cooperation in terms of research tools and models, and possible impact of the study on policy change and science. USAID colleagues suggested CAREC to put in contact with USGS on their large capacity building water related initiative in Afghanistan.

In the end, CAREC [was hosted](#) by the West Virginia University (WVU), specifically the Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) Department of the Benjamin M. Statler College of Engineering and Mineral Resources (SCEMR).

November 1-2 a workshop was held jointly with the University of West Virginia, which was scheduled to a detailed discussion of the PEER project. In particular, the tools and subsequent development of scenarios for the development of agriculture were considered. A training visit to the

Drunkard Creek River was also conducted as part of the workshop, where were demonstrated field measurement methods by conducting a hands-on

training workshop on water quality analysis for key indicators.



6

WORK WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN SELECTED WETLANDS

Wetlands are invaluable water resources with numerous natural functions that support human well-being and balance of natural environmental processes. Wetlands in the arid Central Asian region, represented by rivers, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, marshlands and other types, are important water resources and biodiversity hotspots.

In order to strengthen regional cooperation on conservation and rational use of wetlands in Central Asia the Ramsar Regional Initiative of Central Asia (RRI-CA) was established in 2016. As a first project of the RRI-CA, the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention and the Government of Japan is currently supporting the project ["Update on the](#)

[status of wetlands in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan by collection and dissemination of good practices for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands by local communities"](#).

Learn more



HIGH-LEVEL PARTNERSHIP: AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE SECURITY OF CENTRAL ASIA WAS HELD IN SAMARKAND

November 10-11, CAREC participated in the international conference «Central Asia: One Past and a Common Future, Cooperation for Sustainable Development and Mutual Prosperity», held in Samarkand under the auspices of the UN. Participants supported the proposal on drafting a mutually agreed UN General Assembly Resolution

by the Central Asian states on enhancing regional and international cooperation to ensure security, peace and sustainable development in the Central Asian region.

The event gathered not less than 500 participants, including foreign ministers of Central Asian countries, high-level official delegations

from the CIS countries, Europe, Asia and the USA, heads of international organizations, including the UN, EU, OSCE, and SCO along with foreign media. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev delivered a speech.

[Learn more](#)



MEETINGS OF NGOs IN THE CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES

As part of its joint work with regional NGOs, CAREC held national meetings in the countries of Central Asia.

In [Kazakhstan](#), it was held on October 27 in Astana. The main result of the meeting is the agreement to establish a working group to hold consultations in the Republic of Kazakhstan on existing environmental problems.

The meeting in [Turkmenistan](#) was held on November 18. Participants examined the role of NGOs in the development of the "Environment for Central Asia" process and the establishment of a regional dialogue platform - the Central Asian International Environmental Forum (CAIEF).

In [Kyrgyzstan](#), the meeting was held in Bishkek on November 29. The participants discussed the possibilities of uniting efforts in the region to draw general attention to environmental issues in the region.

On December 12, the CAREC Branch in [Uzbekistan](#) held an introductory meeting with the participation of water and environmental NGOs, state and youth organizations.

A similar meeting in Tajikistan is planned for 2018.



9

CAREC ROUND TABLE GATHERED MEDICAL AND ECOLOGICAL SPECIALISTS

On November 3, the round table on presentation and discussion of educational course on “Environmental Epidemiology” was held in Tashkent Institute for Advanced Medical Education under the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The event was organized by CAREC within the “Environment and Health” Programme. Such educational course was developed for the first time in Uzbekistan with active involvement of the Ministry of Health of Uzbekistan, the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection, Tashkent Institute for Advanced Medical Education, and Tashkent Medical Academy.

[Learn more](#)



10

COP23 AND OVERVIEW ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN CENTRAL ASIA

The world's nations met in Bonn for the 23rd annual “conference of the parties” (COP23) under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which aims to prevent dangerous global warming. CAREC team participated in several side-events and considered the countries' experience in addressing climate change issues in different economic sectors, different instruments and mechanisms used for both the mitigation of, and adaptation to climate change.

We prepared [a short review on the main topics](#), and also [overview on the climate change problem in the region](#).



11

ALMATY HOSTED A SEMINAR FOR REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

On November 16-17, a seminar on financial and project management for representatives of regional organizations dealing with sustainable development and environmental issues was held in the CAREC building.

financial reporting procedures, project monitoring and evaluation systems, knowledge management methodology and resource mobilization, several examples of information support for the activities of regional organizations.

The participants of the seminar considered



12

CAREC ED TO ADVISE THE CHINA COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

On December 8-12, Dr. Iskandar Abdullaev attended the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED) as Special Advisor, in Beijing, China. He has been invited by CCICED to be a Special Advisor to its Phase VI in 2017-2021.

In the coming five years, the CCICED will focus on issues such as green transformation, bio-

diversity conversation, climate change. The special advisors are expected to provide professional consultations and advice to the thematic studies and policy recommendations.

[Learn more](#)



13

JOINT PLANNING OF THE TRANSBOUNDARY MONITORING NETWORK AND VISUALIZATION OF DATA ON WATER QUALITY

On December 4, Almaty hosted a training on "Joint planning of the transboundary monitoring network and visualization of data on water quality".

The training was conducted for representatives

of hydrometeorological and environmental agencies of 5 CA countries, who are centrally involved in the evaluation of the quality of surface waters in the respective countries and have the mandate to conduct operational transboundary

monitoring (of both quantity and quality of water).

[Learn more](#)



14

ALMATY WILL HOST THE CENTRAL ASIA CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE



On January 24-25, 2018, Almaty will host the Central Asia Climate Change Conference, which will be divided into five Plenary Sessions on: (1) Climate Policy and National Actions (2) Science and Climate Research (3) Best Climate-Resilient Practices and Technologies (4) Finance for Climate Adaptation (5) Climate Information Services.

Please follow the updates [here](#)



15

THE 39th MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

THE MEETING WAS HELD ON DECEMBER 5 IN ALMATY



[The Board of Governors](#) is a decision-making body of CAREC. The Board represents the organization at national, regional and international levels. Since its establishment in 2001 there were 39 meetings of CAREC Board of Governors. These meetings serve as a platform for discussion and decisions on various issues that have contributed to the formation and strategic development of the organization.

Learn [more](#)

OUR TRADITIONAL COLUMN, WHERE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AS WELL AS UNCONDITIONAL LOVE FOR NATURE ARE EXPRESSED IN SIMPLE WORDS.



Ms. Shakhnoza Umarova

*Director of CAREC Branch in
Uzbekistan*

I was born in sunny Uzbekistan, graduated from the specialized English school No. 17 in Tashkent. In the eleventh grade, participated in the ACCELS student exchange programme for one-year training in the USA.

From the very childhood I knew for sure that I would study the law and the sphere of international relations. And it happened. In 1998, I graduated from one of the prestigious Uzbek universities – the University of World Economy and Diplomacy, where I also worked as an assistant for a lecturer at the Chair of Law for two years. Then I worked in the United States for six years in the field of medical administration, worked in the public

sphere and dealt with women's health issues.

I came to CAREC in 2015 for a new thematic programme entitled "Environment and Health". In December of the following year I have already become a Director of CAREC Branch in Uzbekistan. Close cooperation with state bodies and international partners, participation in various events, constant self-development, and, most importantly, teamwork - that's my pace in CAREC. This all strengthens my ecological spirit and shapes my attitude to the environment.

The main thing in the nature protection of every country is not to be indifferent. At all levels. These issues are very sensitive: they often intersect

someone's interests or require certain investments. And here the main thing is the call of the heart: if it really worries, you can solve any problems, find the right ways and the same interested people.

In the future, we expect a clean environment and well-distributed resources. But on the condition that the countries will act together, respecting the rights and interests of each other.

Remind yourself of love. About the love of self, first of all, about the love of neighbor, about the love of work, about the love of nature and about the love of the Motherland. And the love of the Motherland is a reflection of our today's actions, on which our future depends.



Ms. Saltanat Zhakenova

*Environmental Management
Programme Leading Specialist*

I was born in Alma-Ata in the family of teachers of the Kazakh State Agricultural Institute. Since early childhood, parents have built in us a respect for nature and careful attitude to its resources, forming useful habits and traditions.

After school, I entered the Almaty Institute of the National Economy, after which I began to work as an assistant for the project of the United Nations Development Program and the Ministry of Ecology, aimed at developing the National Environmental Action Plan for Sustainable Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Since then, for almost 20 years, I have been working in the field of sustainable development, being involved in the work not only of international and non-governmental organizations, but also of transnational companies.

First and foremost, CAREC is a dynamically developing organization that transforms environmental management systems and creates an enabling environment for growth not only at the level of the region and countries, but also at the level of its employees. We are no longer promoting the environmental dimension of regional cooperation outside of any context, but we show its growing value in synergy with issues of socio-economic benefits, including the health and well-being of people living in Central Asian countries.

I believe that now we are in the right place and at the right time, in order to change consumer, and therefore already outdated views on the environment. Since the beginning of the 20th century, progress in the development of human

civilization has inexorably accelerated and for the last 20 years we have been "living" witnesses to an incredible technological leap that fundamentally changes the level and intensity of consumption of natural resources.

We need to remember that one of the biggest mistakes committed by a person is a delusion when we take what we want for reality and "fall into" self-deception, believing that the activities of environmental organizations will be enough to solve the problem of the deteriorating environment. The scale of consumption by the humanity of the resources of the planet Earth grows incommensurably with its capabilities and abilities for self-recovery and the choice of each of us is that we either join forces, or silently look at how it dies before our eyes.



Alexey Kim

*Climate Change and Sustainable
Energy Programme Specialist*

I graduated from the University of International Business in Almaty with a degree in International Relations. There, about the second year, I became interested in the UN Model, a simulation of the meetings of the Organization's bodies, where students play the role of official representatives of UN member countries, defend the interests of countries and try to solve global problems.

In addition to issues of a political and socio-economic nature, we also considered the environmental problems that were later identified in the Agenda for Sustainable Development until 2030. At that time, I was interested in environmental issues.

Honestly, before joining CAREC, I did not know about the existence of this organization. By chance, I learned about it through the OSCE network, and came to the organization for an intern position

in December 2015. Now I work as a specialist in the program "Climate Change and Sustainable Energy". I was very lucky to be in the team of experienced professionals who generously share experience and knowledge, and who care about my professional growth.

Currently, I am completing the Master's program at the University of KIMEP and writing a thesis on the Concept of Transition of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the "green economy". I am very grateful to CAREC for providing all the conditions for combining work and study.

I work in this field because I consider it to be important and significant for the world in which we live today.

The main value is people. Relatives and friends, colleagues, people who surround me. In

professional terms, it seems to me unimportant, whether it is a government institution, an NGO or a private sector, the development of human capital is the key to the success of any structure. I remember the phrase of Jack Welch, the former CEO of General Electric. Once he was asked: "You invest so much in training your employees. Are not you afraid that you will teach them, and they will leave? ". To which he replied: "I'm afraid, of course. But I'm even more afraid that I will not teach them, but they will stay."

I wish all of us to live here and now. Most of us live thinking, that something will change and only then we will be happy. But sometimes, the road itself or the path is more important than the destination.

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Prepared by CAREC staff

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