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Greeting

Dear readers!

The first months of the 2018 year turned out to be very intense. We started the year with the Central Asia Climate Change Conference. This topic is vital for the region, even according to the best forecasts, Central Asia will undergo significant changes: warming, reduction of water resources. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss possible solutions to problems at all levels.

The event will be held annually; it was supported by the World Bank and other partners. And this is one of the indicators that we carry out the mission, which was trusted to CAREC, we are forming a platform for dialogue and cooperation.

Also, in January, a meeting of representatives of the MFA and the parliaments of Central Asia and Afghanistan was held. The purpose of the meeting was to unite the resources of the legislative institutions and diplomats to solve urgent problems related to environmental protection. We understand that environmental issues require the joint work of our countries because the challenges are global.

Also, over the past period, we would like to note the 25th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Central Asia and the European Union. The European Union remains one of the key partners of the region in the field of environmental protection. From the beginning, the European Union has offered technical, institutional and legislative solutions, furthermore its expertise. CAREC was established precisely as a result of such cooperation. We are very grateful, and we believe that the European Union is a reliable partner for the region.

There were many other events throughout this period; I can't note all of them in details. But it is worth to mention that preparation for the II Central Asian International Environmental Forum (II CAIEF) have begun, the forum will be held in Tashkent on June 5-8. In addition, work on CAREC programs continues. A huge number of events are taking place; I want to highlight that we manage these events together with our partners.

CAREC also continues to expand the network of cooperation. For example, we are setting up relations with the Asian Development Bank; they have the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program. We consider those areas where we can combine efforts, such as water management, water infrastructure, preservation of the environment, infrastructure projects related to environmental protection. Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia sees great opportunities for productive teamwork ahead.

As for the future work of the centre, there will be many events dedicated to the II CAIEF in the next few months. For example, a meeting of regional organisations, particularly when the region already has political support at the level of presidents.

Recently, the presidents of the countries and the chairman of the parliament of Turkmenistan met in Astana; parties discussed the cooperation in the field of water resources and ecology. The problem of the Aral Sea was raised, the joint restoration of the sea. Participants of the meeting also agreed that in August 2018, within the framework of Turkmenistan's chairmanship, Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea will host a meeting of the presidents. All this demonstrates that the protection of the environment, water management and sustainable development of the region are at the centre of attention of top leaders.

We've been waiting for such support for a long time, and now our responsibility is to use all the platforms that we created to solve strategic problems. That is, to move from the division of environmental issues along state borders to the regional cooperation.



Best regards, Dr Iskandar Abdullaev

Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia

2 The Central Asia Climate Change Conference

ALMATY. The event was held from 24 to 25 January. The main theme of the conference is “Building path towards sustainable regional adaptation”, and its main objective is to support the regional dialogue, dissemination of knowledge and information on adaptation to climate change and to identify opportunities for further joint actions between all stakeholders.

It brought together more than 250 representatives from governmental and non-governmental agencies, scientific community, development partners, multilateral development banks, civil society and business companies.

The conference was composed of five sessions to elaborate discussions on climate policy, research, best practices, climate finance and climate information services.

The program, photos and presentations from the conference [are available here](#).

Aside from that, CAREC specialists prepared a publication on key messages which were formed as a result of discussions at the conference. [Learn more](#)



Meeting of the representatives of the MFA's and parliaments of Central Asia and Afghanistan



ALMATY. On January 26, a regional meeting of representatives of the MFA's and parliaments of the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan was held in Almaty. The meeting was organized by CAREC with the support of the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI).

“Strengthening multilateral cooperation for the benefit of the environment and sustainable development of Central Asian countries undoubtedly remains a priority. Thanks to this, relying on strong human resources, the region can achieve impressive results. We have all ingredients of such success, which are a common history, language and culture and, most importantly, political will,” – noted Dr Iskandar Abdullaev, Executive Director of CAREC.

Based on the results of this meeting, the roadmap and work plan for the period 2018–2020 will be finalized, after which all documents will be officially sent to the countries for final comments and approval. [Learn more](#)

25TH Anniversary of EU-CA relations

ASTANA. On February 22–23 the EU and countries of the region celebrated the jubilee of diplomatic relations at the international conference “25 Years of the European Union – Central Asia Relations: From the Past to the Future”. [Read more](#)

BRUSSELS. February 6–7, CAREC took part in the 7th meeting of the European Union – Central Asia Environment and Climate Change Working Group. Participants discussed recent achievements in the development of environmental policy and outlined ways to improve the access of Central Asian countries to “green” financing from International Financial Institutions. [Read more](#)



5 The official start of preparation for the II Central Asian International Environmental Forum in Uzbekistan



TASHKENT. On February 20 CAREC branch in Uzbekistan organized a briefing workshop for representatives of diplomatic missions, international and financial organizations working in the country. The forum, which is to take place in Tashkent on June 5–8, will be devoted to discussion of “Strengthening cooperation in the field of environment and sustainable development in Central Asia.” It is organized by the government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and CAREC.

“I think this forum is a really important initiative. And what’s particularly helpful is it brings together all the partners who need to take actions: not just talk about the environment but also take action,” Ms Helena Fraser, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative in Uzbekistan, said after the event. “From the briefing, we’ve had just now, this looks like a really practical and action-oriented Forum, which should deliver really concrete results and partnerships to tackle the very challenging environmental and ecological problems that face not only in Uzbekistan but in the Central Asian region and, of course, in a wider world.” [Read more](#)

You can read the program and register [on the page of the II CAIEF](#).

Registration for the 9th Central Asian Leadership Programme is open

The main objective of the 9th CALP is to develop capacity and understanding of young leaders about the trends, current and new challenges, existing opportunities and efforts to preserve the environment and achieve sustainable development in the Central Asian region.

We welcome young specialists from Central Asia and Afghanistan, working in the state, non-governmental, academic and business sectors. Participation in the CALP is free of charge; selection is based on open competition. The Programme organizers will cover air travel, accommodation and transfer in Almaty for participants living outside Almaty.

All information about the programme and online registration is available [on CALP website](#)



First steps in strengthening the Platform for cooperation between CA countries and Afghanistan



ASTANA. The national working group of Kazakhstan has been established. The responsibilities of the national working group include preserving the information obtained during the Platform's regional meetings, promoting the experience and knowledge, and also preparation for regional meetings.

[Learn more](#)



8 Photo contest “50 images of climate change”

CAMP4ASB project, which is implemented by CAREC and funded by the World Bank, held a photo contest «50 images of climate change». The competition was attractive not only for professional photographers but also for people from a wide range of professions from different parts of the region who are not indifferent to environmental problems.

Photo contest got many replies, in total, more than 300 works were sent, of which 156 were selected corresponding to all the criteria of the competition. [Learn more](#)



Photo by Konstantin Kikvidze



Photo by Alexander Vlasjuk



Photo by Didor Sadulloev



Photo by Erkin Bolzhurov

CAREC enhances the network of cooperation

- **Next step in cooperation between CAREC and the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection**

TASHKENT. On December 27, 2017, CAREC met with the representatives of the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Ecology and Environmental Protection to discuss further cooperation. As a result of the meeting, parties signed the framework agreement. [Learn more](#)

- **CAREC and the Embassy of Tajikistan in Kazakhstan have discussed cooperation prospects for 2018**

ASTANA. CAREC is conducting a series of bilateral negotiations with the Embassies of the Central Asian countries in advance of regional environmental events scheduled for 2018. [Read more](#)

- **CARECs combine efforts for the better environment in Central Asia**

ALMATY. Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program has changed its focus from infrastructure projects to human development; this new direction gives more alignment for partnership with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia. [Learn more](#)

- **CAREC Office in Tajikistan joined the program of activists for the protection of stray animals**

DUSHANBE. The organizations will conduct the sanitary and epidemiological assessment and discuss possible ways to help stray animals. [Read more](#)

- **CAREC met with Turkmenistan public environmental organizations**

ASHGABAT. The Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia and environmental Turkmenistan NGOs discussed the results of the first meeting and preparations for the II Central Asian International Environmental Forum. [Read more](#)



World Water Forum

- **Transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia presented at the 8th World Water Forum**

BRASILIA. On March 21 CAREC and the Executive Committee of the International Fund for saving the Aral Sea (EC IFAS) held a joint event “Transboundary Water Cooperation in Central Asia” in the frame of the 8th World Water Forum, the world’s most important event on water, which was held on March 18–23 in Brasilia (Brazil).

It is still early to talk about the results of Central Asia’s participation in the 8th World Water Forum. But it should be noted, that the very fact of the involvement in the most significant event of the world in the field of water resources and, moreover, the consolidated voice of civil society, demonstrated to the world community that people of Central Asia have already joined efforts to meet environmental challenges together. [Learn more](#)

- **CAREC expressed Central Asian civil society views at the World Water Forum in Brazil**

DUSHANBE. February 14–15, in the framework of preparation for the 8th World Water Forum, CAREC participated in the Central Asian Citizens Forum on water-related issues. The event was organized by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Kazakh–German University. The Forum was supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the OSCE, as well as the CAREC-USAID “Smart Waters” project. [Learn more](#)



The first meeting of the Regional Working Group on the Nexus Project

TASHKENT. On March 13 the Regional Working Group held its first meeting. The main topic of discussion was multi-sectoral cooperation in the context of the Aral Sea Basin Programme (ASBP).

The event was held in the framework of the EU-funded project “Central Asia Nexus Dialogue: Fostering Water, Energy and Food Security Nexus Dialogue and Multi-Sector Investment”, Nexus.

It is implemented by CAREC and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

[Read more](#)



Photo by Marat Sadykov



The development of the course “Environmental Epidemiology” has been completed

On March 2018, the Tashkent Institute for Advanced Medical Education under the Ministry of Health jointly with the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan, have completed the development and introduction of the course “Environmental Epidemiology”.

Such educational course was developed for the first time in Uzbekistan. The project was implemented in the period 2017–2018 by CAREC within the Environment and Health Program with the 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 (TMA).

Tashkent Institute for Advanced Medical Education will launch the course with a further introduction to the learning process in training and retraining of the specialists of the Ministry of Health, the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection, TMA and other specialised agencies.

[Read more](#)



CAREC and USAID handed over GIS equipment to Tajikistan water specialists



The newly acquired equipment allows to receive signals from all existing satellites and to carry out measurements underwater.

Besides, the modern receiver can accurately determine the coordinates, even if it is not possible to provide a vertical position of the milestone, for example, near buildings or hydraulic structures. [Learn more](#)



Ramsar Regional Initiative for Central Asia

RRI-CA was established in 2016 to enhance regional cooperation and interaction on the conservation and rational use of wetlands for the effective implementation of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands at the national and regional levels. Following the internal agreement between the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and CAREC, RRI-CA technical secretary is based at CAREC Headquarters.

- **World Wetlands Day in Kazakhstan**

ASTANA. On 2 February Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Ramsar Regional Initiative for Central Asia have discussed the current problems of Kazakhstan's wetlands. [Learn more](#)

- **Preparatory meeting for the 13th Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands was held in Sri Lanka**

The Asia preparatory meeting for the 13th Conference of the Parties took place from 26 February to 2 March in Sri Lanka. The meeting was attended by 28 Asian Contracting Parties, including Central Asian countries. The Conference of the Parties is to be held in October 2018 in Dubai. [Read more](#)

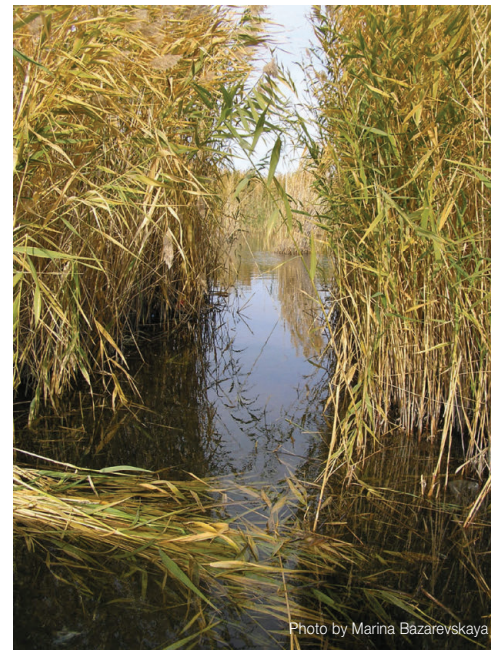


Photo by Marina Bazarevskaya

Strengthening the regional cooperation on water in Central Asia

- **Professional standards for water management were discussed in Astana**

ASTANA. On February 28 the Executive Board of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea in Kazakhstan (EB IFAS), held a Roundtable on the discussion of the draft of professional standards on water management and other specialties of the Agro-industrial complex of the Republic of Kazakhstan. EB IFAS organised the event in cooperation with CAREC, and with the support of USAID “Smart Waters” project, it took place in the office of the national chamber of entrepreneurs of the Republic Kazakhstan “Atameken”. [Read more](#)

- **Turkmenistan national experts to adopt international experience of transboundary water resources legal regulation**

ASHGABAT. Water management specialists and representatives of state organizations discussed international legal norms and observed the best world practices in the field of water resource management. [Learn more](#)

- **CAREC participated in the global workshop on transboundary water cooperation**

GENEVA. Participants discussed the benefits of water cooperation and stressed that losses with insufficient cooperation in Central Asia could reach 4.5 billion US dollars. [Learn more](#)

- **One river – two republics**

The first meetings on the preparation of Padshaata (Padysh-ata, name used in Kyrgyzstan) River basin plan were held in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

On January 24 an introductory training on basin planning was held in the Small Basin Council of the Padysh-ata River in Kyrgyzstan. [Learn more](#)

A week later, on February 1, CAREC held the first meeting of stakeholders of the pilot territory of the Padshaata River in Uzbekistan. [Learn more](#)

Increasing the capacity of Central Asian specialists



- **The first experience of training specialists in the repair of mobile devices and digital TV sets in Uzbekistan**

On February 7-8, 2018, CAREC Branch in Uzbekistan held a round table and training “Innovative Solutions in Professional Education” in Tashkent, with the participation of the Tashkent Professional College of Information Technologies (TPCIT) and Samsung. [Read more](#)



- **Training for strengthening IT potential of water and environmental NGO's**

TASHKENT REGION. On February 22-23 CAREC held training for local water and environmental NGO's on “The use of modern means of communication for raising public awareness on the activities of NGOs and projects in water and environmental sphere”. The training is organized within UzWaterAware project, which is implemented by CAREC and funded by the European Union. [Read more](#)

CAREC faces

Jusipbek Kazbekov, UzWaterAware project manager, Smart Waters project specialist

I was born in the Tahtakupyr district, in the northernmost part of Uzbekistan near the Karateren lake. This lake provided food for all villagers. By the way, I used to think that all these people are our relatives when I was a child. Nobody had house gates, the borders of the plots were also unknown, and people didn't argue and were kind.

My parents worked as physics teachers, but I didn't like physics, I dreamed of becoming an artist. For a time, I took a fine arts classes where I enjoyed drawing stilllife paintings. In winter our brushes froze in glasses, but we didn't care, we warmed them with our breaths and continued to draw.

In the 8th grade, there was a turning point, my father led me to the entrance exam to the experimental school of the Tashkent Institute of Irrigation and Agricultural Mechanization Engineers (TIAME) without any preparation. There was a man from Tashkent, he gave me two math assignments, which I could not solve - and he gave me a big and fat "2". It really hurt me - I cried all night. But I worked hard, passed the exams and got into the experimental class at the TIAME, and later into the institute itself. I liked studying there.

The attitude of people to water has changed since I started working in the field of water management. At first only water specialist spoke about water, and now everyone realized the importance of that resource. The leaders of the countries talk about water now, countries adopt new programs for effective water use. But this is not enough.

Water is a resource that has a limit. Water management requires certain expenses, but if there is not enough water, the costs can be even greater. Water shortage can change the economy itself. Farmers will have to give up moisture-loving crops, and manufacturers won't be able to use water-consuming technologies. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce water-saving technologies. To do this it is necessary to develop science, update training programs and apply new information technologies in scientific research. The application of drones, programming languages, automatization - all this should be included in study programs.



CAREC faces

Balzhaz Zhumagazina, Environmental Management program specialist

I was born and raised in the North Kazakhstan region near the Petropavlovsk city. When it was time to choose the profession, I didn't even think about ecology, because I haven't heard that there was a need for specialists in that field, the school gave only general information about the test sites and so on. Therefore, I entered the Kazakh Economic University, where I studied management.

But in the end, job search led me to CAREC; this is my first job. I still remember my interview here. A multicultural team, as well as the constant activity, events, meetings one by one – all this was very unusual and interesting to me.

Often the question arises, how can you work in the same organization for so many years? I've been working in CAREC for five years already. The answer is – I had changed the field of work, so there was no time to get bored. I moved from the administrative department to the Environmental Management Program.

The last two years were also very intense, as in 2015 I entered the Kazakh – German University and got the Master's Degree in Regional Studies: Central Asia.

I see CAREC as a big live mechanism where each element works in two modes: independently and within a team. At first glance, it can be difficult to explain what each element does and how they are related. But, when you get used to it, it becomes clear that everyone is working to preserve not only the ecological situation in the region but also to establish friendly and trusting relations between colleagues. That's how I understand interconnection. That is when my work in one sphere has its positive consequences in the other spheres. As a result – joint solutions which are beneficial for all parties.

I would say that I continue to learn every day because new responsibilities come up. I've learned to notice some things that were out of my attention before. Things like saving resources in everyday life, communicating with people from other regions and learning about traditions. And recently, I've started writing news and press releases, which is also interesting and useful experience!



CAREC faces

Irina Bekmirzaeva, Environment and Health program manager

I'm from Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan. There, I graduated from school with the in-depth study of English, and then I went to study in Russia and got two diplomas of higher education in pedagogy and jurisprudence.

In 1999, I joined the environmental law department of the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on nature protection. At this committee I also worked as the head of the department for international cooperation and programs, where I coordinated the establishment of partnership relations with international financial institutions, foundations, and secretariats of global conventions on ecology.

Before joining CAREC, for 8 years I worked as a manager of multicomponent projects (of the UNDP in Uzbekistan and the Global Environment Facility) on land degradation and, biodiversity conservation, improving standards of living for population of Aralkum and Kyzylkum Desert (Bukhara Region). I've gained broad experience of work with the local population, farmers, businessmen, etc. For the successful realization of the project I've received one of the most prestigious awards in environmental protection – Global Energy Award.

I've been watching CAREC for a long time. Observing its' activities in recent years, I can say with confidence that the role of the organization as a key regional organization in Central Asia has been significantly strengthened. And that is, definitely, a great achievement of our leader, Executive Director of CAREC Dr Iskandar Abdullaev, as well as all the members of the CAREC team.



Currently, I am the manager of the “Environment and Health” program, the main goal of which is to identify the interconnection between human health and the environment and to help reduce the burden of environmental problems on the health of people of Central Asia.

Almost all of my work experience, for 18 years now, is connected to environmental protection. When dealing with the environment, you should never forget – a human is one with nature. To love nature and your native land means to love the motherland! And love for the motherland is the source of all our victories and achievements!

New knowledge products

- **Annual report**

We are pleased to present our Annual Report 2017. It offers detailed information on the key achievements and activities undertaken by CAREC in 2017, as well as our visionary priorities for the current year. [Learn more](#)

- **Policy brief #1**

CAREC starts a new analytical series on issues of relevance and importance to regional policy making that emerge from its ground and research work and work of others in order to critically reflect from time to time on key accomplishments, insights, lessons and implications and hopefully provide some blueprints for further actions and strategic thinking. [Read more](#)

“The moving together overcome the path”: unification of the Central Asian countries forces in the fight against climate change. [Read more](#)

- From a series of papers on the Nexus. [Article 1](#) and [article 2](#)

CAREC VACANCIES

- [HR manager](#)
- [Intern at Knowledge, Projects and Resource Management Unit](#)
- [Climate impact assessment and adaptation specialist](#)

