



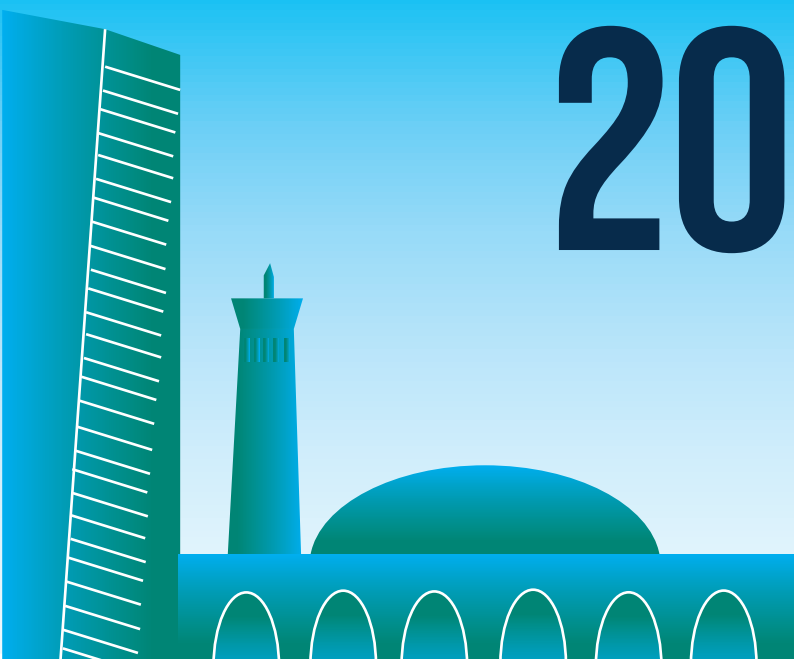
# Central Asia:

5 countries – 1 region – 1 voice

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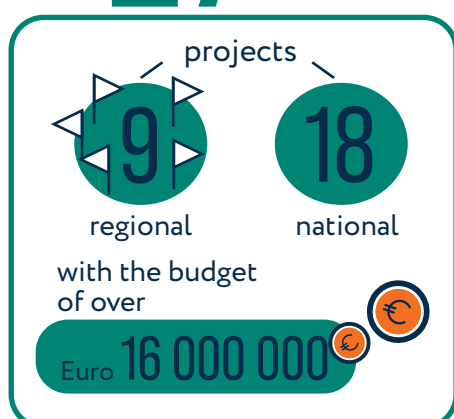
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Report

21



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27



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102



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## 20 years: 2001-2021

CAREC and  
its partners  
have jointly  
implemented

over 280

environmental  
protection and  
sustainable  
development  
projects



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*Climate change is real, it is happening right now. It is the most urgent threat facing our entire species, and we need to work collectively together and stop procrastinating.*

**Leonardo DiCaprio**

UN Messenger of Peace for Climate

For 20 years, the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) has been working on joining the efforts of Central Asian countries in protecting the environment and combating climate challenges. The Centre's consistent actions and innovative projects have ensured significant achievements at national, regional, and global levels.



## GLOBAL ACHIEVEMENTS

For the first time in the history of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP), CAREC has represented the states of Central Asia to the world community as **a single region with a single voice** at the Central Asia Pavilion at COP-26 in Glasgow, UK.

The countries have expressed their unity in the Pavilion's slogan **“5 Countries – 1 Region – 1 Voice”**, showcasing their investment potential and role in the global climate agenda, as well as gaining ample opportunities for international collaborations and partnerships.



**Zafar Makhmudov**

CAREC Executive Director,  
Central Asia Pavilion Closing Ceremony,  
COP-26, Glasgow

“

*Central Asia has demonstrated to the international community the success of addressing climate change jointly. We will continue collaborating with the international community on combatting climate change and turning its challenges into sustainable development opportunities.*

**The Voice of Central Asia Regional Statement** – drafted with CAREC’s support and announced at the COP-26 – has become the first joint statement **on behalf of the governments of all Central Asian states** calling upon the international community, primarily the UN agencies, to pay special attention to the challenges the Central Asian Region has been facing due to climate change and COVID-19 pandemic.

Also at the Central Asia Pavilion the Region’s NGOs announced the **Regional Statement of Central Asian Non-Governmental Organizations on Climate Change** urging the governments to enhance national and regional initiatives to avert the climate crisis in the Region and proactively promote the Region’s interests within the framework of international climate commitments and processes.

**The Pavilion has hosted 24 events attended by over 1 400 people, including the top officials of Central Asian states.**

For the first time in its history, as an observer on behalf of the Central Asian Region CAREC has participated in the 54th Session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reviewing the latest global climate change assessment – Sixth Assessment Report.



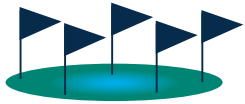
**Sulton Rakhimzoda**  
IFAS EC Chair,  
Central Asia Pavilion Closing Ceremony,  
COP-26, Glasgow

“We managed to show to the entire global community that we — all five Central Asian countries — are united. This once again indicates and proves the solidarity and the spirit of cooperation present in the Central Asian Region today.



**Bakhtiyor Pulatov**  
Director of ICSD Science and  
Information Center  
(Uzbekistan Branch)

“It would not be too far-fetched to call the *Regional Statement* a sensation. For the first time in the entire history of the UNFCCC, the countries of Central Asia have voiced their joint regional position, including on climate change.



# REGIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

## Policy, plans and strategies

In 2021, the governments of Central Asian countries pursued their efforts to reduce GHG emissions, thus confirming their ambitions assumed under the Paris Agreement. CAREC conducted a preliminary study of carbon pricing in the Central Asian Region; its findings were presented at the REdiCAP Regional Dialogue on Carbon Pricing, with CAREC acting as a technical partner. The study's outputs can lay the foundation for upgrading the environmental legislation of the countries sharing the Region.

Arid lands (over 2/3 of the entire territory of the Central Asian Region) represent a continuous source of sand and dust storms (SDS). Climate change and the drying of the Aral Sea have exacerbated both their frequency and scale. With CAREC's assistance, the Central Asian states have elaborated national action plans to combat SDS and drought for 2021–2030. The plans were incorporated in the adopted Regional Mid-Term Strategies for managing and mitigating the effects of these natural phenomena implemented via the Interstate Commission on Sustainable Development (ICSD).

**Antonio Guterres**

UN Secretary-General



*If we strive to keep the global warming below 1.5°C, already this year [2021] (CAREC's note), we must show how we will reduce emissions by 45% in the course of this decade against the 2010 baseline, and how we will reach zero emissions by mid-century.*



**Paola Agostini**

Lead Natural Resources Management Specialist, World Bank's Europe and Central Asia Region Environment, Natural Resources, and Blue Economy Global Practice



*Absolutely, we can act and restore these lands for healthier ecosystems and improved agriculture productivity, and resilience and well-being of people, communities, and nature.*

## Strengthening regional dialogue

At the **Fourth Central Asia Climate Change Conference (CACCC-2021)** in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, the Central Asian countries have exchanged their experiences in implementing climate policies. For the first time in the Region's history, the ministers of environmental protection and ecology of Central Asian states have discussed the prospects and challenges of regional cooperation at the Conference's high-level segment.

Twenty-seven international and 17 national speakers reported on the most relevant climate issues, including:

- Civil society engagement in the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions;
- Climate finance and potential financing sources for climate mitigation in the Region;
- Mainstreaming civil society in climate policy implementation;
- Climate risks and vulnerabilities, and mitigating their consequences within the framework of implementing the Paris Agreement.

**The Dushanbe Conference was attended by over 450 delegates representing 29 countries of the world.**

At the **12th Central Asian Leadership Programme**, **38 young leaders** representing public, non-governmental, academic and private sectors have reviewed the main aspects of green and circular economy; cooperation in addressing environmental challenges caused by climate change and unsustainable use of water resources; production and consumption, transition to closed-loop economy. In 2021, the network of CALP alumni in Central Asia and Afghanistan has expanded up to **370** people.

The meetings at the **Cooperation Platform of the Representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Parliaments of Central Asian Countries** aimed to combine the forces in combating climate change consequence at COP-26, as well as to discuss multiple pressing issues, including:

- Legislation enhancements and implementation of climate actions;
- Strengthening climate change response cooperation;
- Collaboration in developing a long-term economic development strategy in the context of climate change.

The **European Union's Nexus Dialogue in Central Asia Project** has been promoting the understanding of the interlinkages among economic sectors and ecosystems (Nexus approach) within the framework of thematic demonstration projects manifesting the potential of the Nexus approach in terms of responding to challenges at

different levels. One of the demo projects aims to address reservoir sedimentation at the Tuyamuyun Hydroelectric Complex supplying the populations and irrigated lands of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan with electricity and drinking and irrigation water.

**In 2012, the Nexus Dialogue in Central Asia Project has held 10 regional and transboundary dialogues in the Central Asian countries attended by over 250 people.**

The **Swiss High-level Dialogue Platform Secretariat Blue Peace Central Asia** has continued holding expert dialogues in the Central Asian Region focusing on monitoring and improving water quality, as well as transboundary cooperation. The Project's preliminary outcomes were presented at the 9th World Water Forum in Dakar (2022).

The **Water Footprint** and **Blue Peace Index** studies were conducted in five Central Asian states, specifically in the Amudarya and Syrdarya River Basins. Their findings confirm that informed water collaborations are crucial for responding to emerging challenges.

With the support of SIWI, OSCE and CAREC have launched the joint **Mentoring and Career Development Programme for women water professionals in**

**Central Asia.** Women from Central Asia and Afghanistan will enhance their professional qualifications and skills to ensure their fruitful work in leadership positions.

In partnership with the National Association of Small and Medium Business of Tajikistan, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan, Adelphi Research GmbH (Germany), Austria Recycling (Austria), STENUM Asia (India), and The Energy and Resources Institute, TERI (India), CAREC has launched the **REAP Project**.

The Project aims to promote green development and sustainability in agri-food production and processing industry at **400** pilot SMEs in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

## **Facilitating access to climate finance mechanisms**

CAREC has been supporting the Central Asian Region in attracting international financing for adaptation efforts and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this regard, CAREC has focused on designing a mechanism for coordinating Turkmenistan's projects for submission to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and initiating the establishment of a regional interface for liaising with GCF.



## Developing knowledge hub

In the course of project implementation, CAREC has been building various regional knowledge and databases to inform and guide decision making and execution, as well as to ensure better consideration of local conditions.

In 2021, CAREC launched the Central Asia Climate Information Platform (CACIP) – an online aggregator of analytical and scientific information, as well as climate change data from local and international sources.

Geographically, CACIP covers all Central Asian countries. Its thematic focus includes five priority areas: water, energy, agriculture, climate-related natural disasters, and climate impacts on human health. By late 2021, CACIP had accumulated approximately **4 000** information and knowledge products, including GIS data and news reports.



CAREC continues to update and expand its Knowledge Hub ([carececo.org](https://carececo.org)), including its four thematic sections: water ([riverbp.net](https://riverbp.net)), climate ([ca-climate.org](https://ca-climate.org)), training ([elearning.carececo.org](https://elearning.carececo.org), [carececo.org/main/ckh/publications](https://carececo.org/main/ckh/publications)), and CALP Online Mobile Platform ([calp.carececo.org/mobile](https://calp.carececo.org/mobile)). In 2021, over 38 000 people benefitted from using CAREC's Knowledge Hub.





# COUNTRY ACHIEVEMENTS

## Kazakhstan

CAREC has developed two methods for calculating: (1) emissions of persistent organic pollutants by industrial enterprises, and (2) atmospheric pollutant emissions due to burning solid household waste. Both methods are included in the new Environmental Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

## Kyrgyzstan

Under the auspices of Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection, CAREC and the Platform for Sustainable Development (NGO, Ukraine) have jointly implemented the Project "Improving the Safety of Tailings Management Facilities in Kyrgyzstan", incorporating a series of events with the participation of national and international experts, representatives of government agencies; and a training video (in two languages) on the application of tailing dump safety assessment methodology and methods. The Project outputs and recommendation were presented to competent public authorities.

## Tajikistan

CAREC has assisted in developing two sections ("Environmental Impact Assessment" and "Environmental Strategic Assessment") of the draft Environmental Code of the Republic of Tajikistan. CAREC has also helped the national Agency for Land Reclamation and Irrigation and Committee for Environmental Protection in drafting the by-laws and methods for the new law "On Land Reclamation and Irrigation", including: Methodology for calculating losses to the state due to water violations; Instructions on the procedure for approving and issuing special water use permits; and Procedure for standardizing pollutant discharge into water bodies.

## Turkmenistan

CAREC has contributed to the development of the agricultural forecasting database of Turkmenhydromet under the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan, as well as to enhancing the technical capacities for observing agricultural crops and yield forecasting.

## Uzbekistan

Together with the Ministry of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the World Bank, CAREC has held a series of eleven strategic dialogues on green growth and climate change in Uzbekistan. The Dialogue Series aimed to support the country's efforts to advance its green and

low-carbon industries and economy; build up Uzbekistan's climate resilience; mobilize green financing; and develop a green growth road map. The Dialogues were conducted within the framework of the Project "Supporting Uzbekistan's Transition to Green Economy."

# GREEN ACHIEVEMENTS

## Kazakhstan

Afforestation efforts at the dried bottom of the Aral Sea are ongoing based on the multi-sector approach. One (1) shade-house and two (2) saxaul nurseries are already operating; and 2 000 black saxaul seeds have been planted.

## Kyrgyzstan

Within the framework of the National Forest Inventory Execution and Capacity Building Project, the UNIQUE/CAREC Consortium has collected and analyzed data from 2 465 sites to populate the national forestry database.

## Tajikistan

Under the CAMP4ASB Project, seven (7) automatic weather stations with the necessary computer equipment were installed to expand the Tajikhydromet's weather and climate observation network.

## Turkmenistan

CAREC has supported the State Water Management Committee in installing an automated water metering system at the newly built Bereket Reservoir in Balkan Velayat.

## Uzbekistan

The Uzhydromet's weather and climate observation network was expanded with fifty (50) automatic weather stations, an upgraded MODIS receiver station, and the procured mobile environmental lab.



CAREC is thankful for cooperation and full-fledged support of its distinguished partners: World Bank, European Union, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), UN agencies, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), UN Convention to Combat Desertification, Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (UBA), Green Climate Fund (GCF), UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), EU's Switch Asia (Sustainable Consumption and Production, SCP) Programme, and Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI).

CAREC also expresses gratitude for close cooperation to its national partners from Central Asian states, as well as government agencies working on environmental protection, water and energy management, green economy, and sustainable development issues.



## REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE FOR CENTRAL ASIA

### **CAREC Head Office**

40 Orbita-1, Almaty City  
Republic of Kazakhstan  
Ph.: +7 727 265 43 33, 265 43 27, 265 43 42  
info@carececo.org  
carececo.org

### **CAREC Country Office Kazakhstan**

Kazhydromet Building (Suite 207)  
11/1 Mangilik Yel Ave., Nur-Sultan City  
Republic of Kazakhstan  
Ph.: +7 717 255 20 16  
kazakhstan@carececo.org

### **CAREC Country Office Kyrgyz Republic**

3B Tolstoy St., Bishkek City  
Kyrgyz Republic  
Ph.: +996 31 288 45 19  
kyrgyzstan@carececo.org

### **CAREC Country Office Tajikistan**

5/1 Shamsi St., Dushanbe City  
Republic of Tajikistan  
Ph.: +992 37 236 60 05  
tajikistan@carececo.org

### **CAREC Country Office Turkmenistan**

15 Bitarap Turkmenistan St., Suite 49, Ashgabat City  
Turkmenistan  
Ph.: +993 12 22 43 47  
turkmenistan@carececo.org

### **CAREC Country Office Uzbekistan**

7 Bunyodkor Ave., Office 217, Tashkent City  
Republic of Uzbekistan  
Ph.: +998 71 277 37 87  
uzbekistan@carececo.org