

## **International cooperation in transboundary watercourses management for harmonization of water quality standards and norms**

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Under arid climate conditions of Central Asia, water resource is a key factor in the maintenance of ecological balance of natural ecosystems and social & economic development on most part of the region.

Limited water resources are the basic problem as well as a problem of the security of the whole Central Asian region. One of acute ecological problems is that related to fresh water.

Natural deficit of water resources is aggravated by growing production demands, problems of water allocation among the countries, and considerable losses at transportation. Industrial and domestic pollution of water sources brings to reduced quality of population's life and deterioration of water ecosystems.

Protection and improvement of transboundary water quality is a topical problem that can be solved by the governments of the Central Asian countries through mutual commitments on proper water and economic policy and protection of transboundary water quality.

According to general principles and standards of the international law, the watercourse countries must use the transboundary watercourse within their boundaries on equitable and reasonable basis.

Many ecological problems that arise in the Central Asian countries are regional in scope and can be solved more efficiently and at lower costs only through cooperation of the states and with the assistance from international financial institutions.

At present, there are no uniform, scientifically-ground surface water quality standards and single technical approach to environment-oriented regulation of water resources use, which is manifested by multiple different ecological regulation methods in EC and CIS.

In this context, Uzbekistan implemented review and analysis of legal and institutional frameworks for water quality management. A national cross-sectoral basis was developed for international agreements on the harmonization of water quality standards and norms with the purpose to make the national water quality standards more close to the European standards in terms of integrated pollution and control indices.

In the Republic, the Methodology of Comparative Analysis and Harmonization of the Requirements of National Regulations with those of International and Foreign Regulations was developed and put in force; it was endorsed by the Uzbek Agency for Standardization, Metrology, and Certification (# 12-93 as of November 27, 2009). This methodology defines the procedure for harmonization of the regulations in accordance with the requirements of international, inter-state, and regional ones.

At present, when monitoring water bodies and performing control of soil contamination, eco-analytical laboratories and subdivisions of the State Committee for Nature Protection apply measurement methods attested and registered in the Uzbekistan Standard Agency that were developed with account of the international requirements.

Nevertheless, some guidelines on sampling and analysis of sewage and natural water are still to be finalized, taking into account international requirements.