

Foreword

This book is a compilation of scientific and technical texts purposefully prepared to present the main results of the cooperative research project “Crop irrigation management for combating irrigation induced desertification in the Aral Sea Basin”, funded by the European Union, INCO-Copernicus Program (Contract number: ICA2 – CT-2000 – 10039).

The idea of preparing this book results from the successful collaboration among the scientists and professionals from Portugal, France, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan throughout the project. Excellent understanding and cooperation were developed throughout the duration of the project. Differences in background schools of partners were attenuated by the interest in going further in upgrading knowledge, assessment methods, and research and management tools and practices. Collaboration was dictated by common grounds:

- contribute to solve the irrigation-induced desertification
- make irrigated agriculture in the Central Asia effectively sustainable
- develop new knowledge and scientific tools that would be useful to all participant institutions and the respective countries.

Achievements are of diverse nature: on one hand, the development of information technologies for irrigated agriculture and natural resources, on the other hand, preparation of new grounds for implementing new methods, techniques and models. The application perspective, the implementation conditions and the usefulness for the end users were always present in this research. The book is also a mean to make available the essential of project findings to all interested in the solution of the problems of the Aral Sea basin, as well as of other regions facing water scarcity and desertification problems. This contribution is small and limited in scope but is for sure useful for many.

Thanks are due to Mr. Luis Correia and Mrs. Vanda Rodrigues for revising and preparing the final formats of the English versions of the papers, to Ms. Oygul Usmanova and Mrs. Victoria Dashina for translating into English the Russian texts, to Dr. Iskander Beglov and Mr. Bakhodyr

Turdybayev for preparing the final formats of the Russian versions of the papers and to Ms. Paula Paredes and Ms. Raisa Kadyrova for facilitating the project management through all these years. The great support and dedication by the technical officers in charge of the project, first Mr. Michele Genovese and later Dr. Enrique Playan (EU, DG XII) are greatly acknowledged.

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