



The Executive Committee of International Fund for saving the Aral Sea and International Cooperation

The Executive Committee
of the International Fund for saving the Aral Sea
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Executive Committee of International Fund for saving the Aral Sea and International Cooperation	2
Cooperation with UN agencies	3
Main directions of cooperation with UN institutions	5
Cooperation with OSCE	7
Cooperation with other international organizations	9
Implementation of joint regional projects	11



The Executive Committee of International Fund for saving the Aral Sea and International Cooperation



The Donors' conference in Almaty, May 20, 2010

The Joint Statement of the Heads of the founder-states of the International Fund for saving the Aral Sea emphasized the great importance of the necessity of broad cooperation with UN agencies, including the Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) and other organizations.

In light of this decision, an agreement was signed with the UNECE and the Deutschen Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on July 2009, according to which, and with the financial support of which, the program "Management of transboundary water resources in Central Asia" is currently being implemented. This Agreement has become the basis for international cooperation and specific actions of EC IFAS.

Cooperation with international organizations progresses in improvement of environmental and socio-economic situation in the Aral Sea basin. Under this framework, from 2009 until



Mr. Folker Frobarth, German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ)

present, EC IFAS has completed over 100 activities aimed at strengthening international cooperation: it has organized and conducted meetings, consultations, discussions with representatives of international organizations and donor community.

Amongst the most important of these are the meetings and negotiations with UN Deputy Secretary General, the Executive Secretary of UNECE, Mr. Ján Kubiš (2009-2011), Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs Dr. Kerry-Ann Jones (February 1, 2011), MEP from the European Union, Struan Stevenson (25 September 2009 and March 23,

2011), the UN Deputy Secretary General, the Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Ms. Noelin Heyzer (May 4, 2011), the Delegation of the Parliament of Germany (June 18, 2011), Director of USAID Mission in Central Asia, Erin Elizabeth McKee (June 24, 2011), the World Bank Country Director Motto Kanishi (August 3, 2011), Director of the GIZ/UNECE program “Transboundary Water Resources in Central Asia” Volker Frobarth (August 13, 2011).

At the same time, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of IFAS, Saghit Ibatullin had participated in many international conferences and high-level meetings where he highlighted the activities of IFAS aimed at improving the environmental and socio-economic situation in the Aral Sea basin.

Cooperation with UN agencies

The UN Deputy Secretary General, the Executive Secretary of UNECE, Mr. Ján Kubiš, visited the office of the IFAS twice – in 18.07.2009 and 16.07.2010. He is an active supporter of interaction between the UNECE and IFAS, deepening cooperation among the Central Asian region giving great attention to the support of the negotiation process on the Aral Sea basin. During the multiple meetings the Chairman of EC IFAS and the Executive Secretary of the UNECE discussed various regional issues to resolve in the counties of the Aral Sea basin, ways of finding a mutually acceptable mechanism for integrated water resources management and environmental protection in Central Asia with regard to the interests of all states in the region.

The Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, Head of the UN Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), Mr. Miroslav Jenca visited the Executive Committee of IFAS three times. Under the framework of cooperation with IFAS the Regional Centre jointly with the Executive Committee of IFAS, had organized three major regional meetings building on the results of the Almaty Summit of Heads of the IFAS founder-states and the visit of the UN Secretary-General to the countries of Central Asia. Taking into account the willingness of the EC to take preventive action with respect to the regional management of water resources, mitigation of the climate change and environmental degradation in the Central Asian region, the steps are being undertaken to:

- develop an early warning system for potential problematic situations on the transboundary rivers in Central Asia;
- strengthen capacity to apply best practices in resolving transboundary water issues in Central Asia;



UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Muynak, April 4, 2010.

- establish mechanisms for monitoring and preventive responses to environmental threats in the Aral Sea basin.

The UN Deputy Secretary General, the Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Ms. Noelin Heyzer during her visit to EC IFAS and subsequent meetings with the Chairman noted that she also supported the process launched.

The Executive Committee of IFAS works closely with other agencies and programs of the UN, in particular with UN Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). As a result of this cooperation the UN agencies fully support the Executive Committee.

One important result of interaction of IFAS with the UN agencies was the visit of the UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, to the Central Asian countries, including Kazakhstan. The UN Secretary-General noted that the responsibility for the Aral Sea disaster rested not only on the peoples of Central Asia, but on the entire world. He praised the work of IFAS, which was established at the initiative of the Heads of the Central Asian states. It was noted that Kazakhstan had the right to become the leader of international efforts to address the problems of the Aral Sea basin, to exert all necessary efforts for restoring the ecology in the region. The Secretary-General noted that the main task was to stop further degradation of the Aral Sea: "This problem must be shared by the region and the world community. On our part, we will try to involve all UN agencies and organizations that are relevant to such issues so that they can provide maximum assistance".

Ján Kubiš, UN Deputy Secretary-General,
The Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe



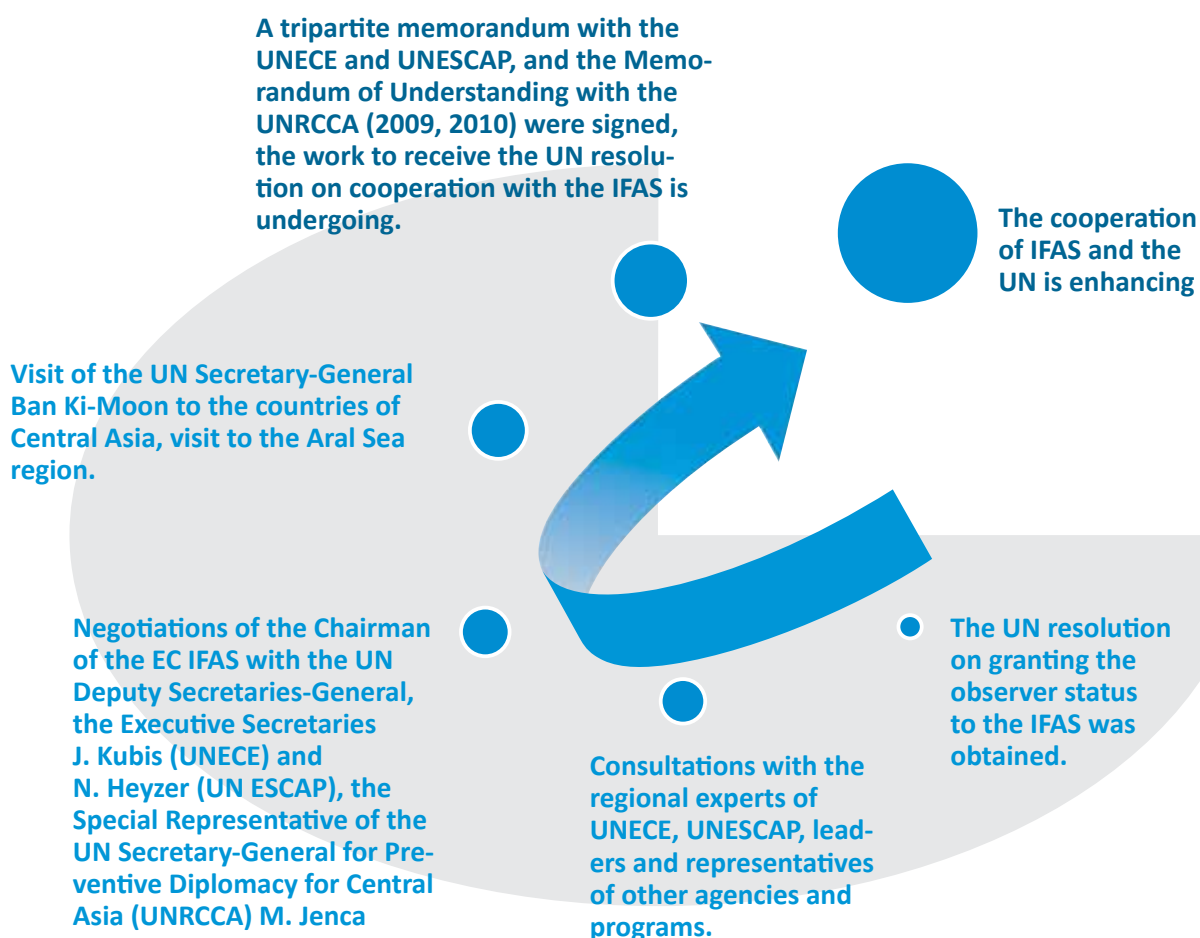
Main directions of cooperation with UN institutions

The UN General Assembly	The UN General Assembly has adopted the resolution (A/63/454) of 11 December 2008, granting the International Fund for saving the Aral Sea the observer status at the UN General Assembly
The UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) - The main partner of the EC IFAS	The joint project “Regional dialogue and cooperation on water management in Central Asia” is being implemented, The tripartite memorandum between the IFAS, UNECE and UNESCAP was prolonged.
The UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)	The Work under the tripartite memorandum between the IFAS, UNECE and UNESCAP is undergoing
The UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia (UNRCCA)	The Work under the signed Memorandum and the Road Map is undergoing
The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)	Cooperation and joint consultations
The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Provided experts for development of the ASBP-3
The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	Cooperation to develop technical specifications for the project “Reforestation and afforestation in the Aral Sea Basin”
World Meteorological Organization (WMO), World Bank	A joint project on “Modernization of Hydro - meteorological Service in Central Asia” is being developed
World Health Organization (WHO)	Cooperation and joint consultations

The draft resolution of the General Assembly on “Cooperation of UN and IFAS” is being developed with the participation of all concerned governmental agencies in IFAS member-countries, and this work has now entered its final stage: the draft resolution agreed upon by all Central Asian states was submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan to be incorporated, through diplomatic channels, to the agenda of the Sixth

Session of the UN General Assembly.
Cooperation of the Executive Board of IFAS in the

Cooperation with UN agencies



In the framework of cooperation three major regional meetings building on the results of the Almaty Summit of Heads of the IFAS founder-states and the visit of the UN Secretary-General to the countries of Central Asia.

Ambassador Miroslav Jenca (UN) - Head of the Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia
(at the office of EC IFAS)

Cooperation with OSCE

Republic of Kazakhstan with the OSCE and its institutions continued under the framework of the Presidency of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the OSCE. The Executive Board was involved in the preparation and implementation of the Chairmanship Plan, was a member of the State Commission and the Working Group of the economic and environmental dimension.

September 25, 2009 – the OSCE Chairman's Personal Representative for Ecology and Environment, member of the European Parliament, Struan Stevenson had meeting with the EC IFAS. As a result of this meeting and the agreements reached with Mr. Stevenson a Public hearing on the problems of the Aral Sea was held during one of the sessions of the European Parliament (October 12, 2010).

On June 25, 2009 in Astana and July 16, 2009 in Ashgabat – in course of consultations during the coordination meeting for the Summit of Heads of the IFAS founder-states, the Chairman of EC IFAS, S. Ibatullin met with the Coordinator of the Economic and Environmental Services, OSCE, Mr. Goran Svilanovic, and discussed the development of preventive mechanisms for responding to environmental threats. As a result of the meeting a memorandum between the Executive Board of EC IFAS in Kazakhstan and the



Struan Stevenson, Member of the European Parliament from the Scottish Conservative Party, the personal representative of the OSCE Chairman in Ecology and the Environment



Andrei Barannik, the Regional Adviser on Environment for Asia, USAID

OSCE Centre in Astana was signed.

With support of the OSCE Centre in Kyzylorda, on 17-19 May 2011, a Round table on “Contemporary problems of water and ecological security of Kazakhstan’s part of the Aral Sea and the solutions” was held including an on-site trip to the Aral Sea. The event was attended by representatives of 20 foreign embassies in Kazakhstan.

During the meetings of the OSCE Permanent Council on July 29, 2010 in Vienna and the European Parliament on October 12, 2010 in

Brussels, the Chairman of EC IFAS S.Ibatullin made presentations on contemporary threats and challenges in Central Asia, linked to the global climate change, population growth, environmental degradation, desertification, shortage and mismanagement of water resources. These presentations were acknowledged by the representatives of the European Union, the United States and other participating countries.

Cooperation with other International Organizations

The Executive Committee of IFAS continues to develop cooperation with other international organizations.

The main partners of the EC IFAS are the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), the UNECE, the European Union/European Commission (EU/EC), the World Bank, the Eurasian Development Bank (EDB), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and other international organizations of high-level format.

The first international organization which has offered cooperation was the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), thanks to its efforts the German government funded activities for development of regional dialogue on water under the Berlin process. The GIZ together with the UNECE based on the agreement signed with EC IFAS, began development of regional projects, “Transboundary Water Resources Management in Central Asia” and “Improvement of the

economic and environmental well-being in the Aral Sea region (EEWA)”. The offices of GIZ were established in the building of EC IFAS, and in the cities of Nukus and Kyzylorda, which contributed to the rapid achievement of results and the overall project success. The project supports the activities of the Executive Committee to implement the decisions of the IFAS Summit of April 28, 2009.

The support delivered by the EU/EC and the World Bank should be also noted as they were among the first organizations which provided experts for development of the ASBP-3, they were in the core of the activities undertaken by EC IFAS to attract donors to development and implementation of the ASBP-3.

The long-standing support for the regional cooperation in Central Asia has been continuously provided by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The table below provides some basic information about international organizations and donors who play key roles in strengthening regional cooperation in Central Asia within the IFAS framework.

Currently, the second phase of work of the expert and consultative group of donors, studied the proposals

Representatives of the World Bank, UNECE and the European Commission at the Executive Committee of IFAS



Cooperation with international organizations

European Union/European Commission (EU/EC)	<p>Provided experts for the development of the ASBP-3.</p> <p>Organized the presentation to be made by the Chairman of EC IFAS to the European Parliament at the Public hearing on the Aral Sea issues.</p>
World Bank	<p>Provided experts for the development of the ASBP-3.</p> <p>Actively participates in implementation of the draft ASBP-3.</p> <p>Signed an agreement on joint implementation of the project of “Modernization of Hydrometeorological Service in Central Asia”</p>
Eurasian Development Bank (EDB)	<p>Work in conformance with the signed Memorandum and the Road Map.</p> <p>Joint projects developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Impact of climate change on water resources in Central Asia”; - “Safety of hydraulic structures”.
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	<p>Negotiations on the draft Agreement between the Governments of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan and Republic of Uzbekistan “On water and energy resources of Syrdarya river basin» are underway.</p>
The German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ)	<p>Close cooperation, financial support to the processes of improvement of the structure, legal framework and the development of the ASBP-3.</p> <p>The GIZ is involved in implementation of the draft ASBP-3.</p> <p>Participates in the joint project “Regional Water Dialogue” under UNECE Initiative.</p>
The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)	<p>Participated in the process of drafting the ASBP-3, now cooperates in the implementation of the Programme.</p> <p>Contracts have been prepared for the joint projects on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Comprehensive analysis of the economic value of the integrated use and conservation of water resources in the Aral Sea Basin”; - “Analysis of vulnerability of economic infrastructures to climate change: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan”
The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	<p>Participates in implementation of the draft ASBP-3.</p> <p>Jointly with the Executive Committee of IFAS and SIC ICWC implements the project on “Information System of the water sector in Central Asia”</p>
French Global Environment Facility (FFEM)	<p>Participates in implementation of the draft ASBP-3.</p> <p>Implements the initial stage of the joint project “Capacity building in data administration for assessing transboundary water resources in the EECCA countries” (Pilot area - the Aral Sea) under UNECE Initiative.</p>
Other international organizations of high level and format	<p>Participated in the development of the ASBP-3 and the preparation of the International Donors’ Conference, now support the activities of EC IFAS.</p>

received from countries following the review of the draft ASBP-3 in state agencies for amendments and changes, had commenced.

The supplemented and amended draft of the ASBP-3 was forwarded by EC IFAS to the members of the Board of IFAS.

In general, cooperation of IFAS with international organizations and the donor

community continues and has now entered the implementation phase with respect to the projects under the ASBP-3.

Implementation of joint regional projects

The implementation of the joint project on “Regional dialogue and cooperation on water resources management” in the framework of the “Management of transboundary water resources in Central Asia” project, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany through the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) (since July 2009) is underway. These projects are implemented under UNECE Initiative.

Since 2010, the German society also implements the Program of “Improvement of the economic and environmental well-being in the Aral Sea region (EEWA)” in the region. It is important to note that apart from their participation in the drafting and implementation of the ASBP-3, the GIZ provides financial support to the processes of improvement of the structure and legal framework of IFAS.

In 2009, a number of regional projects were launched. In particular, through the technical support and cooperation of the Eurasian Development Bank (EDB), joint projects on “The impact of climate change on water resources in Central Asia” (2008-2009); “Safety of hydraulic structures” (2010-2011) were developed. The project results were published in the respective publications, they are widely used by professionals and decision-makers in the countries of Central Asia.

In the spring of 2011 a joint regional “Project of modernization of hydrometeorological services in Central Asian countries for the period of 2011-2016” was launched in cooperation with the World Bank.

In March 2011, a joint project was launched with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) on “Support to the Regional Transboundary Water Dialogue”, which consists of two components:

Comprehensive analysis of the economic value of the integrated use and conservation of water resources in the Aral Sea Basin;

Analysis of vulnerability of economic infrastructures to climate change: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan.

EC IFAS supports the regional project of UNECE “Dam Safety in Central Asia: Capacity Building and Regional Cooperation” with respect to discussions and coordination in Central Asia. The developed draft agreement on dam safety is undergoing the process of discussion and coordination in the governments of the countries.

Implementation of the project was launched in 2010 jointly with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) “Central Asian Regional Water Information Base (CAREWIB)” continues. The project has developed a “Concept of development of information exchange and relationships mechanisms for its members in Central Asia”.

The joint project Implemented with the French branch of the Global Environment Facility (FFEM) and the

Kerri-Ann Jones, Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for Oceans, Environment and Science.





Representatives of international organizations on the Coordinating Conference of Donors for the Third Aral Sea Basin Program, Almaty, December 9, 2010.

International Water Assessment Centre (IOWater) “Capacity building in data administration for assessing transboundary water resources in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA)” (Pilot area - the Aral Sea) is undergoing. The UNECE is also part of the project. On 25-26 May 2011, the FFEM had organized a Workshop for the Kazakh users of the final product of the project, the information database.

In conformance with the objectives of the ASBP-3, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is implementing two major regional projects: “Multi-Country Programme for climate risk management in Central Asia for 2010-2015» and “Strengthening regional capacity for natural disasters’ risk reduction in Central Asia”.

The joint project of EC IFAS and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) “A mutually acceptable arrangement for the integrated management of water resources in Central Asia through the application of the scenario approach” is currently at the preparatory stage, and is funded by the Government of Turkey.