

# INBO ARTICLE - UZBEKISTAN

## Participatory concept under the RIVERTWIN Project

SIC ICWC of Central Asia together with partners from a number of European countries (such as Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, and Sweden) and from Benin, Africa is implementing specific research RIVERTWIN Project. The project objective is to develop an integrated regional model for strategic planning of water resources management (WRM) in twinned river. Three river basins were selected for modeling in different regions (the Neckar river, the Queme river, and the Chirchik river in Germany, Benin, and Central Asia, respectively). Based on modeling and subject to social, economic, and ecological sustainability indicators, it is planned to elaborate integrated development scenarios for each of the river basins as a basis for basin water management plans. The project is coordinated by partners from Germany.

SIC ICWC carries out research for transboundary Chirchik river basin, which is located within the area of three republics, such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

One of the components of RIVERTWIN Project is «Public participation and awareness» (PPA), which provides for wider involvement of public at all stages of the project.

The main aims and objectives of PPA under RIVERTWIN Project are to:

- inform all concerned parties about project objectives;

- involve public in discussions on river basin development scenarios;

- develop a system of public support to bodies dealing with selection of development scenarios and transition to hydroecological management with strong intersectoral coordination;
- contribute to transition to civil society and ensure transparency of decision-making process in part of WRM.

Appropriate social, analytical, and special research will be carried out and a campaign will be organized to raise public awareness on WRM in the Chirchik river basin. One of the priorities is capacity building of public involved in WRM. Those people should be, to a certain extent, water and ecology professionals who have access to information of interest and can bring their ideas on how to achieve basin sustainable development to decision makers.

It is supposed that participatory process should be manageable. To this end, the following conditions should be met:

- ensure balanced involvement of non-governmental institutions in WRM;

- develop and approve formal, along with informal, rules of involvement for both non-governmental and governmental institutions;

- develop the rule enforcement mechanisms and procedures of penalties for non-observance of those rules in order to avoid lob-

bying of particularistic interests and demagogu.

One of the ways to raise public awareness is to make information collected under the RIVERTWIN Project easily understood (depending on consumer category) and to present output at the following levels:

- *scientific*: in scientific publications, at conferences and workshops in proceedings;

- *popular*: in mass media; Internet: on relevant web-sites – about progress made in development of integrated scenarios for the Chirchik basin;

- *educational*: training of major water users and other concerned persons in advanced approaches to WRM; other forms of communicating knowledge;

- *project report*: proposals on improvement of public participation in making decisions on sustainable WRM in the Chirchik basin.

Various workshops are planned to hold under PPA component where representatives of water management and environmental institutions, as well as non-governmental non-profit organizations at various levels (transboundary, basin, local) would participate.

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