



Section 8

Activities of International
Partners in Central Asia

8.1. Asian Development Bank



The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has provided technical assistance support and made investments in the water sector in the Central Asia region since its first lending (to Afghanistan) in 1970. Investments to date, totaling US \$4.4 billion, include flood management, irrigation and drainage, clean water supply, sanitation, hydropower, institutional reforms, and knowledge and capacity building support. Regional technical assistance support for transboundary water resources management have been more bilaterally, such as the enhanced river basin management in the Chu-Talas (with Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic) and Pyanj river basin (for Afghanistan

and Tajikistan). Acting nationally with investments and thinking regionally with technical assistance support place ADB as a leading development partner in the region.

ADB investments in 2019 have focused on **irrigation rehabilitation and integrated water resources management**. Investment approvals in 2019 include **for Kazakhstan**, the [Irrigation Rehabilitation Project](#) which will (1) support the rehabilitation and improvement of irrigation networks serving about 171,100 ha of land in East Kazakhstan, Karaghandra, Kyzylorda, and Zhambyl provinces; (2) promote the diversification from traditional low-yielding and low-value grain crops into high-value cash crops; and (3) build the capacity of farmers and Kazvodkhoz for improved water and irrigation management. This project is ADB's first local currency lending directly to a state-owned enterprise in the irrigation sub-sector. **In Afghanistan**, the [Arghandab Integrated Water Resources Development Project](#) will improve the availability and management of water resources in the Arghandab basin in Kandahar province by (1) increasing the storage capacity of the Dahla Dam by raising its height, (2) increasing the reliability of irrigation water supplies downstream of the dam, (3) improving agriculture water productivity by providing on-farm support to farmers to improve crop production, and (4) strengthening institutions in water resource management.

Efforts continue to improve **water supply and sanitation** (WSS) infrastructure and services in Central Asia. In 2019, ADB approved a results-based lending (RBL) operation **to the Kyrgyz Republic** for the [Naryn Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Development Program](#). The program will cover 64,000 people in Naryn and will support the design, construction, and rehabilitation of WSS facilities and institutional capacity to provide sustainable and safe WSS services

across 31 villages. In addition, the program will ensure that detailed designs are completed for 12 villages and ready for implementation when additional financing becomes available. **In Uzbekistan**, the [Second Tashkent Province Water Supply Development Project](#) will support rehabilitation and expansion of a regional water supply system located in the Yangiyul and Chinaz districts of Tashkent province. The project also supports institutional reforms and capacity building for Tashkent Province Suvokova, the WSS services provider.

The **Project Readiness Financing (PRF) for urban services projects in Georgia, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan** will support early preparation of engineering designs and procurement documents as part of advanced actions prior to project approval to ensure timely start up and completion of project activities

ADB has supported the [Central Asia Regional Economic \(CAREC\) Program](#). A partnership of 11 countries supported by six multilateral institutions,⁵⁵ it is working to promote development through cooperation, leading to accelerated growth and poverty reduction. In 2017, CAREC introduced agriculture and water as a key pillar under the CAREC 2030 Strategy. This now provides a conducive and trusted platform to engage in addressing water scarcity and water productivity issues as a step towards future cooperation on regional water resources management. In 2019, ADB held the first CAREC side session in Tashkent, Uzbekistan involving development partners to discuss opportunities for advancing water cooperation in the region. As a follow-up, ADB will help conduct a scoping study to outline the water pillar and its key objectives.

ADB, in partnership with ICID and Indonesian National Committee for ICID supported the

⁵⁵ Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, People's Republic of China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan

[3rd World Irrigation Forum](#) (1-4 September 2019, Bali, Indonesia). This provided a suitable opportunity for participation by government representatives from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to collaborate and

share experiences on the importance of sustainable agricultural water management.

Source: Asian Development Bank

8.2. Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

The [Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank \(AIIB\)](#) is a multilateral development bank with a mission to improve social and economic outcomes in Asia. Headquartered in Beijing, AIIB began operations in January 2016 and have now grown to 100 approved members worldwide.



Water related activities in 2019

In October, AIIB initiated a Call for Public Consultations on its [Draft Water Sector Strategy](#). AIIB invited a diverse stakeholder group to provide their comments and suggestions on the proposed approach to the water strategy. The [Water Sector Analysis](#) provides additional information regarding how the draft strategy was developed and how the draft strategy will be implemented once approved. In December, 18 civil society organizations from 12 countries of Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas submitted to the AIIB [initial comments](#) on the proposed draft strategy with a hope to start meaningful consultations on key environmental and social issues specific to river basin management and water infrastructure development.

AIIB has approved a US \$3.2 million loan for the [Obigarm-Nurobod Road Project](#) (October). The Obigarm-Nurobod road section of the existing M41 highway will be inundated once the Rogun HPP reservoir is filled to operating levels and will require construction of a new 76-km M41 highway alignment through mountainous terrain. Task is divided in three sections between AIIB, EBRD and ADB. AIIB will finance Section 3, which includes an approximately 800-m bridge over the Rogun HPP Reservoir, and 640 m of roadway approaches to the bridge. The objective of the Project is to maintain and improve connectivity between Dushanbe, the northeast region of Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic via the M41 highway. AIIB also continued co-financing the [Nurek Hydropower Rehabilitation](#), Phase I project that was approved in 2017 (US \$60 million)

Projects in Central Asia in 2019

AIIB has approved a US \$46.7 million [loan](#) for the construction and operation of a 100-megawatt wind power plant in southern Kazakhstan which, when completed, will be the largest in Central Asia (December). The [Zhanatas wind power plant](#), supported by a Memorandum of Understanding between AIIB and the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, will, on a yearly basis, provide the country approximately 319 gigawatt hours of renewable energy and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 260,623 tons.

In 2019, AIIB has approved co-financing of US \$82 million for the [Prosperous Villages Project](#) in Uzbekistan seeking to improve access to basic infrastructure and services by rural population in the Ferghana Valley and other lagging regions of the country. The Bank has been also considering for financing the [Bukhara Region Water Supply and Sewerage](#) in Uzbekistan, which was approved in April 2020 (a US \$ 385.1 million sovereign loan).

Source: <https://www.aiib.org/en/index.html>

8.3. European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) was established in 1991. It invests in projects facilitating the transition to open market, as well as the development of business activity. The EBRD work in Central Asian countries on water issues is very broad, including



water supply, wastewater treatment, RES, and increased climate resilience.

In Kazakhstan, EBRD focuses on diversification, balancing the role of state and market and sustainable energy. To date, the cumulative EBRD investments in [264 projects](#) in Kazakhstan amount to €8,422 million. Current portfolio of projects is €2,732 million.

In 2019, the Kazakhstan Renewables Framework, worth US \$300 million, was expanded to US \$345 million. EBRD has allocated about US \$100 million for the construction of solar power plants in southern Kazakhstan: 100 MW plant in Zhambyl province, 10 MW plant in the Zhanakorgan District, and 50 MW plant in Challakurgan.

In the Kyrgyz Republic, EBRD focuses on fostering sustainable growth; enabling SMEs to scale up; promoting the sustainability of public utilities; strengthening the financial sector; and supporting critical infrastructure. To date, the cumulative EBRD investments in [189 projects](#) in the Kyrgyz Republic amount to €788 million. Current portfolio of projects is €199 million.

In 2019, EBRD signed an agreement on financing two more water projects in the Kyrgyz Republic. About €8.125 million, including a sovereign loan (about €4 million), an investment grant from the EBRD Shareholder Special Fund (€4 million) and from the EBRD Water Fund (€125 thousand), were provided to finance [the second stage](#) of the Rehabilitation of the Water and Sewerage System in Jalalabad Project. A loan of up to €2 million by EBRD and a grant of up to €3 million from EU will finance a number of critical [water supply system improvements in the municipalities of Jalal Abad, Myrza-Ake, Kurshab and Don Bulak](#). In May, EBRD and the Kyrgyz Republic launched a [Climate Finance Centre](#) (CFC), which will attract necessary investment for climate projects in various sectors ranging from energy and water to agriculture and health in the Kyrgyz Republic.

In Tajikistan, EBRD focuses on stabilizing and rebuilding trust in the banking sector, developing private enterprises and agribusiness, improving the availability, reliability and quality of municipal services and improving the quality of energy supply, regulation and energy efficiency. To date, the cumulative EBRD investments in 130 projects in Tajikistan amount to €699 million. Current portfolio of projects is €394 million.

In 2019, EBRD considered the allocation of €7.5 million to Tajikistan [to improve water supply and wastewater services in the city of Kulob](#)

(currently being adopted). In addition, EBRD and the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) allocated funds for the Rehabilitation Program at the [Khujand Wastewater Treatment Plant](#) began in late 2018. The investment was supported by grants from EBRD and SECO collectively worth US \$1.4 million. In November, EBRD launched [Green Economy Financing Facility \(GEFF\) Tajikistan](#) (GEFF Tajikistan), which will offer loans for investments in high-performing technologies that improve the use of water, energy and land resources in Tajikistan. GEFF Tajikistan is supported by EU, GCF and South Korea.

In Turkmenistan, EBRD focuses on expanding private sector operations in the corporate and financial institutions sectors, targeted policy dialogue and fostering coordination among IFIs and donor organizations. To date, the cumulative EBRD investments in 75 projects in Turkmenistan amount to €293 million. Current portfolio of projects is €56 million. In 2019, no water projects were initiated.

In Uzbekistan, the EBRD's new Country Strategy adopted in 2018 identifies: enhancement of competitiveness by strengthening the role of the private sector's role in the economy; promotion of green energy and resource solutions across sectors; support increased regional and international cooperation and integration. To date, the cumulative EBRD investments in 78 projects in Uzbekistan amount to €1,854 million. Current portfolio of projects is €948 million.

In 2019, several water-related projects in Uzbekistan were under consideration by EBRD. Loan agreements were signed to fund the [Rehabilitation of Kashkadarya Oblast's Wastewater Infrastructure Project](#) (€53.5 million) and a [similar project in Khorezm province](#) (€80.3 million). [Namangan Regional Water and Wastewater](#) and [Rehabilitation of Water Infrastructure in Surkhandarya Province](#) projects are on hold pending the approval. Concepts were reviewed for the following projects: rehabilitation of existing HPPs on the Chirchik River at Nizhne-Bozsuy HPP Cascade ([HPP-18](#), [HPP-19](#), [HPP-22](#), and [HPP-23](#)); [Modernization of Pumping Stations Used for Irrigation Water Conveyance](#) to enhance the resilience to climate change and [Uzbekistan Climate Resilience Framework](#).

Source: <https://www.ebrd.com/>

8.4. European Union

A New Strategy on Central Asia. On 17 June 2019, the Council adopted conclusions on a [new EU Strategy on Central Asia](#), adapting the EU policy to new opportunities which have emerged in the region. The EU updated its Central Asia strategy to focus on resilience (covering areas such as human rights, border security, environment), prosperity (with a strong accent on connectivity), as well as regional cooperation. The Council reaffirms its commitment



to conclude and implement ambitious, broad-based and mutually-beneficial enhanced partnership with the interested countries of the region and emphasizes the joint interest of the EU and of Central Asian states to intensify cooperation to promote peace in Afghanistan.

EU-CA Ministerial meeting and new programs.

High-level political and security dialogues between EU and CA have been held regularly since 2013. The 15th EU-CA Ministerial meeting was held on the 7th of July in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. To underpin the EU's political commitment and kick-start the implementation of the new EU Central Asia Strategy, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini, presented [a set of EU funded regional programs](#). Coming on top of over €1 billion of bilateral and regional assistance for the period 2014-2020, these programs, worth €72 million, will benefit all CA countries and Afghanistan on the following areas:

- *Sustainable energy:* EU will invest €20 million in a new HPP in Tajikistan, with additional support from Germany. This hydropower plant will create new opportunities for Tajikistan to meet increasing demand, and to export excess electricity to neighboring countries, including to northern Afghanistan;
- *Economic empowerment:* EU will invest €2 million in the economic empowerment of women in Afghanistan. This project will be implemented together with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan;
- *Education:* EU also launched a new €36 million program in support of the education sector in Kyrgyzstan;
- *Inclusive sustainable growth:* EU has extended the activities of the SWITCH Asia Program, with an amount of €14 million. The programme will support sustainable consumption and production and promote inclusive sustainable growth. It aims to reduce poverty and contribute to economic prosperity in Central Asia.

In addition to those programs, **several others are in preparation:** EU's contribution in MPTFHS, upgraded phase of the Border Management in Central Asia program, and new technical assistance to support law enforcement capacities and regional cooperation in countering terrorism.

On 11 November, an agreement was signed for €5.2 million with EU to support MPHSTF (see Section "[UNDP in Uzbekistan](#)").

EU regional environment programs in Central Asia

EU is currently supporting two regional cooperation programs in Central Asia on environment-related issues: (1) Central Asian Water and Energy Program (**CAWEP**) implemented jointly by EU, WB, Switzerland and UK to promote water and energy security at the regional and national levels (see Section "[World Bank](#)"); (2) Regional coordination and support to improve the EU-CA Platform for Environment and Water Cooperation (see further).

"European Union – Central Asia Water, Environment and Climate Change Cooperation (WECOOP)"

The WECOOP project, with its third phase started in October 2019, aims to enhance environment, climate change and water policies in Central Asia through approximation to EU standards and to promote green investments in relevant sectors with the aim of contributing to measurable reductions in man-made pollution, including CO₂ emissions. Project activities among others include support to the EU-CA Platform for Environment and Water Cooperation: organization of annual meetings of the EU-CA Working Group on Environment and Climate Change (WGECC) and the 7th EU-CA High-Level Conference in 2022; support to the EU Water Initiative National Policy Dialogues meetings organized by UNECE; provision of trainings, policy advice; assistance in preparation of green investment projects.

Activities in 2019

Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the CA countries, of EU and of EU Member States responsible for the environment, climate change and water policies met on 24 and 25 January 2019 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, for the [Sixth EU-CA High-Level Conference](#) organized under the EU-Central Asia Platform for Environment and Water Cooperation. The parties agreed that the EU-CA Platform for Environment and Water Cooperation should continue to cover the following priority areas: environmental governance, circular economy, sustainable consumption and production, climate change (adaptation and mitigation), and IWRM.

Activities in the early 2020

Over one hundred participants from Central Asian States and EU Member States attended the 9th Meeting of WGECC chaired by the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea (12-13 February 2020). Progress and achievements in EU-CA regional cooperation and EU and CA policies in the area of environment and climate change since the 8th Meeting of WGECC and the 6th EU-CA High Level Conference on Environment and Water Cooperation were discussed taking into account the new EU Strategy on Central Asia. Moreover, the concept of the new European Green Deal was presented.

Source: <https://ec.europa.eu>, <http://wecoop.eu/>, WECOOP Project

8.5. German Society for International Cooperation



The German Society for International Cooperation or Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) implements the Transboundary Water Management in Central Asia Program (2009-2020) as part of the Berlin Process.

The Berlin Process is an offer of the German Federal Foreign Office to the countries of Central Asia to support them in water management and to make water a subject of intensified transboundary cooperation. It supplements the EU Strategy for a New Partnership with Central Asia which was adopted during the German EU Presidency in June 2007⁵⁶.

The GIZ Program is coordinating with all donor organizations active in the water sector in Central Asia. The Program is currently in its last phase which will end on 31 March 2020. It mainly is focusing on fostering regional institutional cooperation, strengthening transboundary river basin management and implementing national pilot projects. In 2019, support was given to the development of ASBP-4, as well as to the regional working group on institutional strengthening of IFAS. In December, ASBP-4 was approved by the regional working group.

GIZ works with BWOs Amu Darya and Syr Darya to strengthen capacities and rendered also technical support. In 2019, the Program, together with the Kazakh Executive Board of IFAS installed fish saving technology at the Kok-Aral Dam at the Northern Aral Sea to prevent little fish from slipping over the dam and dying there.

Technical assistance in the form of water measuring devices, vehicles and IT equipment was rendered to the partner organizations in Turkmenistan. The Program also supported the experience exchange of Central Asian water specialists and decision makers at international events and within Central Asia. The Program actively supported the coordination of water management between Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic in the Fergana Valley. In Uzbekistan, GIZ entered 2016 into a delegation agreement with EU to implement component 1 on water governance within the frame of the EU Program "Sustainable management of water resources in rural areas in Uzbekistan" (2016-2020).

Working on three levels – national, basin and local level – the first digital data management system (water and water infrastructure cadastres) were created, 60 ha of pilot sites planted with over 70.000 different fruit trees and equipped with water saving irrigation technology to showcase best practice to local water management specialists and farmers. Two river basin management plans for Aksu and Shakhrihansay Rivers were developed.

⁵⁶ A new European Union Strategy for CA was adopted in June 2019 (see above)

The Program developed an IWRM curriculum for Master studies at the Academy of Public Administration under the President of Uzbekistan and a new basin planning curriculum for the TIAME Master studies. Study tours to European countries helped to exchange information and best

practices on IWRM, water governance and legislation drafting as well as dam safety issues.

Source: GIZ Transboundary Water Management in Central Asia Program

8.6. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is a multidisciplinary inter-governmental organization comprising 36 member countries that provides a unique forum and the analytical capacity to assist governments to compare and exchange policy experiences, and to identify and promote good practices through policy decisions and recommendations.

The OECD is working to help countries meet the water challenge, with focus on economic and financial dimensions of water management and improving governance and reform of water policies. OECD has enhanced its convening power and capacity to structure discussion among stakeholders on water issues, by setting up international initiatives including the [Roundtable on Financing Water](#), [Water Governance Initiative](#), and the [Network of Economic Regulators](#). Particularly, the following events were held in 2019:

- 2 Roundtables on Financing Water: focused on the Americas (26-27 June, Washington); focused on Asia (26-27 November, Manila). [Making Blended Finance Work for Water and Sanitation](#) was published;
- [12th Meeting](#) of the OECD Water Governance Initiative, where [Applying the OECD Principles on Water Governance to Floods](#) was presented (20-21 June, Berlin). It peer-reviewed National Water Policy Dialogues (NWPDs) with Argentina, Peru, and Brazil, learned from Germany's water governance, as well as discussed the role of women in water governance;
- 2 webinars of the Working Group on Indicators ([20 May, 4 November](#)) and of the Working Group on Capacity Development ([20 May, 4 November](#)).

[The OECD Council Recommendation on Water](#) captures policy guidance that can inspire water policy reforms in countries around the globe. Non-member countries are welcome to adhere to the Recommendation with a view to create a



momentum for water policy reforms that contribute to water security and sustainable growth.

OECD work in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

In the region, OECD works with partner countries through its [GREEN Action Task Force](#), which provides a unique forum for a mutual exchange of best practices and challenges between the Eurasian region and OECD countries, building on the OECD and its partners' work on environment. The Task Force Annual Meetings have been held to trace its Programme of Work since the previous meeting. The [2019 Meeting](#) focused on the topics of sustainable infrastructure development, cooperation with development finance institutions to promote green investment, strategic planning for water management, and the role of national environmental funds. Several discussion papers and support material were prepared by the OECD to facilitate discussion at the meeting. Good progress has been achieved in the implementation of all areas of work, some of them bringing very concrete results on the ground, as for example: completion of the revisions of the Environmental Code in Kazakhstan, support to improving long-term water security in Belarus, or revising mid-term action plan for water supply and sanitation strategy implementation in Moldova.

The OECD assists EECCA in adopting a more integrated approach to water management, applying robust economic and financial analyses and improving multi-stakeholder participation. It also helps in identifying and removing some of the key obstacles to effective and efficient water management, while reflecting countries' level of socio-economic development. This work is part of the program of the European Union Water Initiative (EUWI), for which the OECD is a strategic partner, together with UNECE, and is

aimed at improving river basin management and water governance frameworks. The water-related cooperation has focused on multi-stakeholder National Policy Dialogues in both EaP and Central Asia countries and has assisted, amongst other things, in development of national long-term water strategies and water policy outlooks. In 2019, meetings of the Steering Committee of the National Policy Dialogue on IWRM were held in a number of countries: 15th meeting in Tajikistan (28 June), 8th meeting in Azerbaijan (12 July), 18th meeting in Armenia (15 October), 5th meeting in Moldova (25 October), 3rd meeting in Ukraine (5 November), and 2nd meeting in Belarus (5 December).

Within the framework of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and OECD approved in 2018, the project “Introduction of Green Growth Indicators and Preparation of the Report on Green Growth in Kazakhstan” was implemented. The main goal of the project is to assist Kazakhstan in integrating the measurement of green growth into the regular reporting and planning system, in imple-

menting the Concept for the transition to a green economy, in assessing progress and achieving green growth. The results and conclusions of the project were presented in the first National Report based on the OECD Green Growth Indicators in Kazakhstan (November). Water indicators, such as water productivity, freshwater availability and access to drinking water, were also considered among the 44 identified indicators. It is important that the project assessed qualitative indicators, for example, water use efficiency rather than simply consumption of water resources, access to clean water instead of general access to water and so on.

Recent publications from the regional program include “[Enhancing the Economic Regulatory System for Moldova’s Water Supply and Sanitation](#)” which aims at supporting the development of a sound economic regulatory system for the water supply and sanitation sector in the Republic of Moldova.

Source: <http://www.oecd.org/>

8.7. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has a long history in supporting its Central Asian participating States in the area of regional water management, focusing on water governance and support for transboundary water management, training and capacity development, research and development of standards and legislation. Following are some highlights of the OSCE's work in these areas during 2019.

The OSCE Program Office in Bishkek (POiB) with assistance of the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) organized water quality assessments in the territory of the Chu and Talas rivers and their tributary basins. The assessments were conducted by the members of the Working Group on environmental protection under the Secretariat of the Chu-Talas Water Commission between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. During the meeting of the Working Group held in Bishkek, the laboratory results on the state of water quality of the rivers were presented. They will be used for long-term planning of environmental protection activities in the basin.

The OSCE Program Office in Dushanbe (POiD) contributed to the sharing of international and

national best practice at two national conferences and two water related national platforms. POiD, together with the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources (MEWR) and the International Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (IICD) organized the International Conference “Water without Borders” in Dushanbe. The event was conducted in the framework of the World Water Day with the aim of increasing the visibility of water resources issues in general and Tajikistan’s Water Sector Reform Program 2016-2025 in particular. POiD supported the Agency of Land Reclamation and Irrigation (ALRI) by facilitating one annual membership meeting of the National Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (TajNCID) and conducting a scientific and practical conference on “Development of the Land Reclamation and Irrigation Industry”. POiD jointly with GIZ and ALRI organized a study tour for five representatives of TajNCID to learn from advanced irrigation practices within Uzbekistan. The agenda of the trip focused particularly on experiences in drip irrigation technologies applied to orchards and cotton, as well as advanced (digital) water flow meters (Smart Sticks). Finally, POiD organized its 3rd capacity building workshop for young researchers from Central Asia and Afghanistan in water policy studies. Participants enhanced their theoretical and practical knowledge to produce high quality research papers.

The OSCE Program Office in Nur-Sultan (POiN) worked together with OSCE POiB and OCEEA to facilitate the activities of the transboundary basin council for the Chu-Talas Water Commission with an ultimate goal to strengthen cooperation between the two countries. The Office supported cooperation between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on carrying out surface water sampling and analysis of water quality. Collaboration with the Russian Federation was further enhanced by supporting joint activities on sustainable water management of the transboundary Zhaiyk (Ural) River and the organization of a [technical meeting on the rational use of water resources of the Zhaiyk River](#), including an assessment of the impacts of climate change on water resources. In collaboration with UNECE and the Slovak Government, POiN supported a study tour for six government and private sector officials on legislative aspects of hydropower plants management, technical and safety supervision and practical examples of transboundary water management in Slovakia.

The OSCE Centre in Ashgabat (CiA) supported the organization of two regional events with the aim to promote regional dialogue and cooperation among the countries of the Aral Sea basin, using the platform of IFAS. The first event was the 2nd meeting of the Regional Working Groups on development of ASBP-4, which discussed the organizational structure of IFAS and the continuation of the implementation of its regional initiatives. The second event was a regional seminar focused on innovative solutions and advanced technologies for sustainable water management and aimed to showcase the advanced regional experience in water management and strengthen regional and interagency dialogue and cooperation for sustainable development of the water sector. In addition, CiA provided assistance in the publication of the Outcome Report on Turkmenistan's Chairmanship in IFAS, which is a key reference document to provide management succession and policy continuity within this regional organization.

The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan (PCUz) continued its collaboration with the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Ecology and Environmental Protection in monitoring of pollution in the Syr Darya River Basin and in the assessment of the transboundary impact of toxic wastes. The three critical areas (settlements of Vuadil, Madaniyat and Baymak along the Shakhimardan, Mayluu-Suu and Sumsar Rivers) were identified during previous phases of this project which aimed at monitoring the composition of various pollutants in the water resources as well as supporting the government of Uzbekistan in the implementation of efficient Disaster Risk Reduction mechanisms in these areas. Furthermore, PCUz continued its support to the GEF Agency of IFAS for regular monitoring of the development of biodiversity on wetlands that have formed on the former grounds of the Aral Sea. As part of its support to ICWC, PCUz published 48 copies of the 2018 Water Yearbook "Central Asia and Around the Globe", drafted and compiled by SIC ICWC.

Capacity building

OCEEA:

- organized a regional training course on water diplomacy with a special focus on gender-sensitive negotiation and mediation skills in partnership with CAREC and SIWI in Almaty.
- conducted a Training-of-Trainers on "How to Mainstream Gender in Water Governance" in partnership with the OSCE Secretariat Gender Section and PCUz.
- supported the participation of 5 participants from Central Asia at the workshop on Water Diplomacy: Best Practices in Transboundary Water Cooperation organized in collaboration with the Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine in Strasbourg.

Source: Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

8.8. Swiss Confederation (SDC and SECO)

The [Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Central Asia \(2017-2021\)](#) features a special focus on water, infrastructure and climate change, aiming at (1) Supporting Central Asian States in their efforts to provide the necessary framework that allow a joint and equitable management of regional shared waters and (2) Enhancing equitable access to and use of well-managed water resources for households, agriculture and other economic sectors in a changing climate.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

The Strategy is implemented by the two operational arms of Switzerland's International Cooperation, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) under the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Cooperation (SECO) under the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research.

In the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the Swiss programs focus on National Water Resources Management, Water Supply and Sanitation and Disaster Risk Reduction/Climate Change Adaptation. Additionally, Switzerland is also active at the transboundary and regional level, including through its program on water and peace, the [Blue Peace Central Asia initiative](#) (BPCA), which aims at supporting the countries in reaching a mutual understanding and agreement in terms of regional water resources management. Through the BPCA Dialogue platform set up under this initiative, multiple exchanges between delegations of Central Asian countries have been organized and facilitated, in cooperation with CAREC:

- Together with other like-minded development partners and the countries of Central Asia, a series of dialogues on "water as a key factor for sustainable development in Central Asia" was initiated, including a [session at the Astana Economic Forum](#) (May 2019) and follow-ups during the Stockholm World Water Week (August 2019).
- Various other exchanges between country representatives were organized, including

meetings of the Regional Working Group on Water Quality, as well as a bilateral exchange between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan representatives on water balancing on the Chu-Talas Rivers.

Finally, the Blue Peace Central Asia has been supporting the relaunch of the [Central Asia Youth for Water network](#) (CAY4W), with the aim of encouraging the emergence of a strong and capacitated young voice for water in Central Asia. The network benefits from the support of GKU and the International Secretariat for Water.

Switzerland further contributes to the Central Asia Water Energy Development Program (CAWEP), a multi-donor trust fund managed by the World Bank. It aims at strengthening the enabling environment to promote energy and water security at regional level and in the beneficiary countries. The Program supports national as well as cross-border activities. National activities, such as institutional strengthening and efficiency improvements, contribute to and present fundamental building blocks to strengthen national capacity to achieve energy and water security, sustainable development and climate resilience at the regional level. Furthermore and as regards regional or cross-border operational activities, in 2019, Switzerland continued its support to the Chu-Talas river basins on the automation of water accounting as well as on improving glacier monitoring in Central Asia.

Source: Regional Water Advisor for Central Asia, Embassy of Switzerland in Kazakhstan

8.9. United States Agency for International Development



The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) works across the whole Central Asian region to transform water sharing problems into cooperation that would lead to better and equitable water management.

Tajikistan

The US Embassy, together with the Ministry of Agriculture of Tajikistan, government representatives of Khatlon Province hosted an [event to celebrate the accomplishments](#) of the USAID Feed the Future Tajikistan Agriculture and Water Activity over the last four years (24 October, Khatlon pro-

vince). The event highlighted U.S. government contributions to increase, diversify, and add value to the production, post-harvest handling, and processing of agricultural products in an effort to address malnutrition and market surplus production in southwestern Tajikistan.

Turkmenistan

The USAID's Smart Waters program [handed over a US \\$170 thousand dredger](#) to the State Committee for Water Resources of Turkmenistan to clean up the Murghab River (10 December, Tashkopi, Mary province). It will help prevent flooding in the densely populated Mary province, as well as prevent mud deposits in the Mary province's water reservoir.

USAID and the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan (UoIE) [conducted a](#)

[fruit tree production workshop](#) for orchard owners and agronomists (24 July, Ashgabat). USAID's horticulture advisor shared key techniques and technologies to sustainably maximize production of high-value fruits with high export potential such as cherries, apples, and grapes. By equipping orchard owners with horticultural best practices and supporting export promotion, USAID and the UoIE aim to build sustainable links between Turkmen producers and new target markets.

Uzbekistan

At a workshop conducted within the "Provision of Science Based Evidence on Climate Induced Water Quality Challenges in Amu Darya Basin" project, [scientists presented findings](#) demonstrating the negative impacts of climate change on water quality in the Amu Darya River basin (11 April, Tashkent). Results from the research will help authorities make better-informed decisions on water use and management.

With assistance from the USAID Smart Waters project: (1) a [second joint meeting](#) of the Uzbek and Kyrgyz Padshaota River Small Basin Councils was held to help boost local governance, ownership, and cooperation over shared water resources between upstream and downstream countries in Central Asia (22 April, Namangan); (2) the annual [two weeks Summer School Education Program](#) was launched with TIAME. The participants learned about water infrastructure, sa-

fety, basin management, irrigation and drainage systems, and environmental aspects of water resources management.

The U.S. government-funded C5+1: Adaptation Planning project held a [two-day training workshop](#), where the participants learned climate change adaptation planning concepts and principles in the areas of agriculture and disaster risk management to prepare the country for long-term climate change (13-14 June, Tashkent). The participants were encouraged to develop a timeline and to identify concrete next steps for carrying out adaptation planning in priority sectors in Uzbekistan to reach the country's long term goals and objectives.

Regional activity

USAID supported a [two-day region-wide workshop](#) on the Concept and Prospects for a Central Asia Regional Electricity Market (CAREM). The meeting was aimed at providing support to Central Asian countries to increase regional electricity trading. Power sector representatives from all five Central Asian countries attended the workshop and shared their nation's experiences on recent developments and current priorities in their respective power sectors. International experts presented best practices of electricity markets successfully implemented in other regions.

Source: www.usaid.gov

8.10. World Bank

Central Asian Water and Energy Program (CAWEP)

In 2019, the [Central Asia Water and Energy Program \(CAWEP\)](#) continued implementation of its phase III. CAWEP is a multi-donor trust fund with a total budget of US \$12.4 million financed by EU, Switzerland and UK. The program development objective is to strengthen the enabling environment to promote water and energy security at regional level and in the beneficiary countries (five Central Asian countries and Afghanistan), aligning with the World Bank's regional engagement framework that aims at strengthening connectivity and increasing the economic value of water and energy resources in the region. The long-term vision of the program is to promote sustainable development and livelihood security within the region. The activities fall into three thematic pillars: (1) Water Security; (2) Energy Security; and (3) Water-Energy Linkages.



Ongoing water activities focus on the following key issues: (1) Improving management of sub-basins that have transboundary significance by supporting an investment needs assessment; (2) Modernizing irrigated agriculture to bring water in the region to its most productive use or more productive uses with a focus on increased awareness and development of irrigation modernization vision and strategies in Central Asian countries; (3) National water management by focusing on policy, advisory and technical support to benefit regional water security; and (4) Regional water management to strengthen the capacity of national hydrometeorological services to better deliver useful and demand-driven information services to key sectors including water, energy, disaster risk management, and agriculture.

As a part of the CAWEP effort to promote national and regional water security across Central Asia, two technical workshops were organized. One focused on [irrigation modernization](#) and the other on [water supply and sanitation](#) (November). Both considered the shared challenges of sustainability and climate resilience, and both shared information and experiences among sector professionals. The workshops helped promote regional cooperation at technical level and identify and prioritize follow-up activities at national levels.

A brochure [Towards Water Secure Sustainable Economies](#) (2019) was prepared to stimulate policy dialogue across Central Asia countries on the risks of continuing “business as usual” and the opportunities from pursuing alternative water development pathways. Three action areas are highlighted: (1) Invest in water supply and sanitation for social stability and human capital development; (2) Overhaul water resources and irrigation management for increased productivity; and (3) Invest in adaptation measures to build economic and social resilience to climate change.

The focus of energy activities is to contribute to national and regional building blocks for energy production and trade. Ongoing analytical work explores new electricity production opportunities in the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and regional energy connectivity and market development potential. Capacity building activities aim at improving sustainability of the organizational capacity of CDC “Energy” as the regional power system operator and strengthening national institutions, so they can deliver electricity services both to national customers as well as to regional systems. CAWEP helped design important policy, regulatory, and financial reform measures for the power sector that informed the Program of Financial Recovery of Barqi Tojik for 2019-2025, approved by the Government of Tajikistan in April 2019, and supported preparation of an innovative and transformational program for results in Tajikistan – Power Utility Financial Recovery Project (US \$134 million IDA grant⁵⁷).

The Central Asia Knowledge Network (CAKN) continues to connect people to enhance regional knowledge and professional capacity in the areas of water resource management, energy and climate change in the Central Asia region. CAKN supported several initiatives aimed at

assessment of the existing capacity in the region and improvement of the academic and research potential. They included: a [stocktaking review and mapping](#) of water-related knowledge and capacity building initiatives by international partners in Central Asian countries; a [review of water-related academic and research capacity](#) in Central Asian countries; and trainings for researchers to improve their technical writing skills for peer-reviewed journals on water and energy-related issues in Central Asia. CAKN supported the [First Aral Sea Summer School](#) (10-18 August, Aral, Kazakhstan), organized by the Central Asia Youth for Water Network in cooperation with the Kazakh-German University. The Summer School helped future water leaders better understand the situation in the Aral Sea Basin and learn more about nature-based solutions, ecosystem-based disaster risk management, climate change adaptation, monitoring and assessment of water use efficiency, and data tools for research and monitoring such as the [Central Asia Water and Energy Data Platform](#). The Data Platform, available in both English and Russian, provides access to data by collecting in one location much of the existing publicly available spatial data and energy and water studies (and data behind them). [E-learning video modules](#) were successfully integrated into the curriculum of the master’s program “Integrated Water Resource Management” and the master course “Land and Water Interaction” at Kazakh-German University in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Afghanistan was included as a beneficiary country for the third phase of CAWEP. Afghanistan’s strong interest to connect more closely with its Central Asian neighbors is supported through two CAWEP-financed activities. The first activity, under the Water-Energy Linkages Pillar, focuses on strengthening collaboration between Afghanistan and Tajikistan on hydromet and flood risk management. As a result of two meetings, Afghanistan and Tajikistan agreed on a roadmap for further cooperation on early warning system in the Pyanj River, joint assessments, climate change modeling, studies on glaciers, use of data from satellites and mountain radar stations, and technical capacity development (June and November). The second activity, under Energy Security Pillar, explores technical, operational, and legal requirements for Afghanistan’s integration in the Central Asian power system and will facilitate a synchronization dialogue between Afghanistan and Central Asian countries.

Source: World Bank, “CAWEP”

⁵⁷ Approved on 25 February 2020

