



Transboundary Water Management in Central Asia Programme

Federal Foreign Office reference: **404-468.30/7**

GIZ project number: 2013.9048.3

Phase III Interim report no. 1

Reporting period: 01 February 2015 – 31 January 2016

Author: Dr. Volker Frobarth

Date: 31 January 2016

Overview (Volker)

Schematic overview of the programme activities (Alexandr and Mayya)

Table of Content

Description of programme and programme management	4
Individual measures at country/regional level	6
1. Observations and remarks on regional level	6
2. Observations and remarks on country level	8
Need for action	11
Outgoing funds.....	12

Description of programme and programme management (Mayya)

Individual measures at country / regional level

1. Observations and remarks on regional level (Alexandr with support from the team)

Questions to consider

- Description of the implemented actions and their tangible results
- Which partners are involved?
- Is the selected implementation methodology right or do we need adjustments?
- What are the difficulties/challenges/highlights in cooperation with partners (Implementation partners (EU, UNECE, CAREC as well as national partners (Ministries)? What works, what does not?
 - UNRCCA and its work on regional level =>view ahead on their role in TM IFAS Chairmanship
- New USAID-CAREC project
- Are the implemented measures sustainable, what is the potential for continuation of the measures?
- What is our general impression on cooperation with national partners and their attitude towards regional cooperation in Central Asia– what needs/could be changed in the course of the phase?

UNECE Observations and remarks

Work on the institutional and legal strengthening of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea continued at a slow pace, mainly focusing on the Inter-State Commission on Sustainable development and improved decision support through better information management. Cooperation with the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea remained rather limited despite the Statement of Intent signed between EC IFAS and the UNECE in October 2014 that contains a number of proposals for joint action.

The UNECE continued to seek “windows of opportunity” for regional action that included support to the Inter-State Commission on Sustainable Development, setting up and supporting the Coordination Group on a regional space for energy, water and environmental information and launching a new effort to support the implementation of key principles of international water law in Central Asia.

Due to the late disbursement of funds, activities planned for the second quarter of 2015 had to be postponed to September or later. However, while not directly funded by GIZ an informal meeting of Central Asian representatives was organized in Geneva 23 June in collaboration with and participation of GIZ. During this meeting the regional cooperation was discussed

and information on current projects and initiatives was exchanged. The meeting report can be found on:

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2015/WAT/06Jun_23_Geneva/23_June_2015_CA_meeting_minutes_rus.pdf.

The first meeting of the Coordination Group took place on 1 and 2 September in Almaty. It was attended by all IFAS organizations and institutions, including EC IFAS, ICWC Secretariat, SIC ICWC, ICSD Secretariat, SIC ICSD, BVO Syrdarya, BVO Amudarya, the Coordinating Dispatch Centre Energy, the Regional Mountain Centre of Central Asia, the Regional Centre on Hydrology, the Central Asian Regional Environment Centre as well as the World Bank.

The Group identified the lack of coordination between the environment, water and energy sectors and between national and regional organizations as a major problem. The creation of a unified information space would require the definition of, and agreement on primary sources of information, agreed protocols and formats for data exchange, harmonized methodology for the processing of information and preparation of analytical reports and an agreed set of criteria and algorithms for modelling and forecasts.

The involvement of the energy sector (long excluded from any IFAS activity) in the work of the Coordination Group proved useful. The participation of the Coordinating Dispatch Centre Energy in the work of the Coordination Group may help to resolve one of the main problems identified during the first meeting, the lack of information on the operation of large reservoirs which are under the control of the ministries of energy.

Support to ICSD continued although the decision by its Turkmen Chairmanship to cancel the ICSD meeting planned for December 2015 (due to celebrations on the occasion of 20 years of neutrality) is causing delays in programme implementation. An informal ICSD meeting at the end of November in Almaty offered an opportunity to touch base with member States on ongoing activities (without the adoption of any decision).

The visit of Saghit Ibatullin, the Chairman of EC IFAS during the Kazakh IFAS Chairmanship to Ashgabat at the end of November helped to renew dialogue with the Government of Turkmenistan on the UNECE's offer to build the capacity of the Turkmen IFAS Chairmanship team before the actual take over. A renewed offer to start capacity building for a Turkmen core team in February 2016 has been sent to Ashgabat. The Government is being advised to follow the procedure described in the draft rotation protocol (despite the fact that it has not been formally discussed or approved) in order to eliminate the long transition period that was characteristic of earlier rotations.

The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia (UNRCCA) has in recent years conducted a series of meetings to present the advantages of a new, sub-regional water agreement that would contain a clause on compulsory third party arbitration. The UNECE at the same time conducted activities to build the capacity of Central Asian countries to implement key principles of the Water Convention and convince upstream countries to accede to it. After an initiative to support the implementation of universally accepted principles of international water law in a more pragmatic way than before was launched at a side event of the Meeting of the Parties of the ECE Water Convention, UNECE and UNRCCA

have agreed to organise joint activities in Central Asia to support the implementation of key principles of international water law to resolve disputes and strengthen cooperation.

Observations and remarks on country level

Kazakhstan (Alexandr)

Kyrgyzstan (Mayya)

Tajikistan (Alexandr)

Turkmenistan (Venera)

Uzbekistan (Caroline)

3. Need for action **(Caroline with support from Volker)**

Are there conceptual changes to the programme needed?

Outcomes of the Berlin conference?

What are the ongoing issues/activities between the Federal Foreign Office and TWM, also with consideration of current exchanges with national MFAs/exchange of diplomatic notes?

Any further actions in the light of upcoming transfer of IFAS Chairmanship?

4. Outgoing funds (Mayya and Elvira)

Distribution of funds in 2015