

External evaluation of the project “**Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins**” (June 2019)

Progress report as at 31 December 2020

#	Recommendation	Management response	Responsibility	Target date/deadline	Date of implementation/comments
1	The UNECE should consider continuing to pay particular attention to the interests of both countries and to the region as a whole as well as to support transboundary cooperation in the basin. It is also necessary to promote intersectoral nature of the water issues showing that working on water-related problems countries can solve other important problems in such areas as e.g. energy, security and agriculture.	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>The UNECE continues to support transboundary water management and intersectoral approach in integrated water resource management in Central Asia as well as in the Chu-Talas basin through providing guidance and expertise in development and financing of the river basin organisations, data sharing, climate change adaptation and water allocation through its global events, publication of the relevant guidance, EUWI+ programme as well as at the regional and bilateral events in Central Asia.</p>	Water Convention Secretariat		<p>Implemented as of June 2020</p> <p>The UNECE contributed to the 27th meeting of the Chu-Talas Commission organised on 21st May 2020 virtually and to bilateral discussions with the representatives of the relevant authorities from both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on 14, 19 and 20 May and 18 June aiming to support transboundary water dialogue in the region. UNECE also facilitated contribution of both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to the global events and activities under the Water Convention and preparations to them, for example, to the World Water Day (23 March 2020) and World Water Week At Home (24-28 August 2020) focused on water and climate change, Second Meeting of the Expert Group on the Transboundary Water Allocation Handbook (30 - 31 March 2020), the webinar on SDG indicator 6.5.2: supporting countries in preparing national reports for the 2nd reporting exercise (28 May 2020) and Virtual Workshop on designing legal frameworks for transboundary water cooperation (28 - 29 July 2020).</p> <p>The UNECE continues to lead the process of the National Policy Dialogues in Central Asia which helps to support inter-sectoral dialogue in the region and better identify both national and regional priorities.</p>
2	Currently, the UNECE should continue to promote and facilitate Strategic Action Programme (SAP) approval by the governments of the countries (in particular, the Kyrgyz Republic).	<p>UNECE accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The UNECE will use various opportunities to facilitate SAP approval through different channels by raising this topic at the relevant meetings in the Chu-Talas basin and at international occasions and by liaising with the representatives of the</p>	Water Convention Secretariat	December 2021	<p>In progress as of December 2020</p> <p>The UNECE contributed to several transboundary and national discussions on the SAP during the first half of 2020 and is in close contact with UNDP regarding SAP approval.</p>

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		CTWC and water authorities in Kyrgyzstan who are in charge of further implementation and sustainability of the project results.			
3	Expenditures for staff costs and consultancy should be better anticipated at the stage of the project proposal preparation.	<p>UNECE accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>UNECE will better anticipate costs for staff and consultancy at the planning stage of the future projects based on the evaluated project (approximately staff should be involved at least 30% during entire project duration).</p>	Water Convention Secretariat	December 2021	<p>In progress as of December 2020</p> <p>Since no similar project was prepared, the UNECE was not able to incorporate this recommendation during the first half of 2020 but will do so at the planning stage if other projects are in place.</p>
4	It is important for UNECE to help to develop local human potential in the Chu-Talas basin (experts, technicians, politicians) interested in the further development of transboundary cooperation between the countries.	<p>UNECE partially accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>UNECE is providing capacity building support and shares knowledge and expertise with representatives of the national and local authorities as well as expert community from the Chu-Talas basin through global and regional events of the Water Convention, publication of the relevant guidance and EUWI+ programme. The areas of cooperation include climate change adaptation, monitoring and data sharing, water allocation, financing transboundary cooperation and application of intersectoral approach in integrated water resource management. UNECE remains ready to provide additional support to the Chu-Talas basin community in</p>	Water Convention Secretariat	Implemented as of June 2020	<p>The UNECE involved representatives of both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan into various capacity building activities under the Convention including such areas as climate change adaptation, development of agreements, water allocation and reporting under SDG indicator 6.5.2. The activities included such events as World Water Day (23 March 2020), the webinar on SDG indicator 6.5.2: supporting countries in preparing national reports for the 2nd reporting exercise (28 May 2020), Virtual Workshop on designing legal frameworks for transboundary water cooperation (28 - 29 July 2020).and World Water Week At Home (24-28 August 2020), More information is available at https://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/water/meetings-and-events.html#/.</p>

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		transboundary river basin management if there is a political commitment from both countries and funding available. Intergovernmental approval of SAP is a prerequisite for further fundraising because SAP, when approved, will serve as the main document in planning and implementing transboundary river basin management in the Chu-Talas.			
5	It is recommended to support further activities targeted on incorporation of project results into regular government programs in both countries to ensure sustainability of the project results, for examples, by promoting SAP indicators into National Indicators System (NIS) in Kyrgyzstan.	<p>UNECE partially accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>Overall UNECE accepts this recommendation; however, UNECE considers the Chu-Talas Water Commission and the relevant national water and environment authorities as the main beneficiaries of the project results and welcomes their contribution to further incorporation of the results into regular government programs. UNECE stands ready to consider requests for support arising from member States.</p>	Water Convention Secretariat	December 2021	<p>In progress as of December 2020</p> <p>The UNECE is in regular contact with the Chu-Talas Commission Secretariat with regards to incorporation of the project results into government programs.</p>
6	In order to increase the impact of future projects, the UNECE is recommended to continue support of CTWC (Chu-Talas Water Commission) in close cooperation with other donor programs. This will also improve information sharing and coordination between donors.	<p>UNECE partially accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The answer to this recommendation is similar to the recommendation 4. UNECE is providing capacity building support and shares knowledge and expertise with representatives from the river basin organisations including the Chu-Talas Water Commission through global and</p>	Water Convention Secretariat	December 2021	<p>In progress as of December 2020</p> <p>The UNECE provided guidance and advice to the representatives of the Chu-Talas Commission during 2020 through bilateral discussions and capacity building events under the Convention.</p>

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		regional events of the Water Convention, publication of the relevant guidance, EUWI+ programme and at the meetings of the Chu-Talas Commission. The areas of cooperation include climate change adaptation, monitoring and data sharing, water allocation, financing transboundary cooperation and application of intersectoral approach in integrated water resource management. UNECE remains ready to provide additional support to the Chu-Talas Water Commission in transboundary river basin management if there is a political commitment from both countries and funding available (including intergovernmental approval of SAP which can serve as the main document in planning and implementing transboundary river basin management as well as a prerequisite for further fundraising).			
7	It is crucial to promote the results of the projects among senior leadership from the countries to increase project impact and visibility.	<p>UNECE accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>UNECE is promoting the project results among the senior management of the water and international affairs authorities of both countries as well as through the current Kazakh Chairmanship of the Water Convention.</p>	Water Convention Secretariat	Implemented as of June 2020	The UNECE discussed the importance of the project results with the senior management of the environment and water authorities of both countries during the visit to Kyrgyzstan to participate in the 26th and 27th meetings of the Chu-Talas Commission on 19 December 2019 and 21 May 2020 accordingly as well as during bilateral consultations on SAP on 14, 19 and 20 May 2020.
8	For future activities, UNECE could use the gender approach used in the project as an example and basis for planning the gender aspects. The approach should include	<p>UNECE accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>UNECE will involve gender experts, will cooperate with women (directly and through civil society organizations) and will</p>	Water Convention Secretariat	December 2021	In progress as of December 2020 The UNECE was in continuous contact with the Secretaries of the Chu-Talas Commission who are female as well as other female representatives of the Working Groups under the Chu-Talas Commission.

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	involvement of the gender expert with further development of suggestions for the project, direct involvement of women into the project as well as through civil society organizations and listening to their expertise and needs during project implementation with further incorporation into project activities.	take into account female knowledge and needs in the other projects focused on transboundary cooperation on waters in Central Asia and other regions of the world.			The UNECE also take into consideration gender perspective while organising activities tailoring Central Asia. On 9 September 2020, the UNECE organised the Webinar on gender mainstreaming in environmental policies and strategies.