



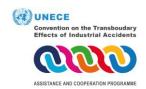




## Key recommendations for follow-up activities on mine tailings safety and the prevention of accidental water pollution in Central Asia

Subregional workshop — 25-26 May 2023, Dushanbe, Tajikistan and online —

- Central Asian countries highlighted the importance of the ongoing work and projects by UNECE
  in the region and considered the Industrial Accidents Convention to be an effective
  instrument in the system of international cooperation to strengthen industrial safety. It was
  recommended that all Central Asian countries accede to the Convention.
- Participants stressed that transboundary cooperation among Central Asian countries was
  critical for the prevention of tailings accidents and related water pollution; and they
  highlighted the need to continue sharing good practices and knowledge in this area. Both highlevel and technical participants agreed that it is essential to develop a regional approach to
  further strengthen industrial safety and reduce the risks of all types of disasters in Central
  Asia.
- Kazakhstan suggested establishing a joint working group (at a technical level) on the monitoring and control of the transboundary tailings management facilities (TMFs) in Central Asia. Tajikistan also suggested setting up a coordination council (at the political level) between Central Asian countries to explore the potential risks related to tailings management facilities and prevention of accidental water pollution.
- Central Asian representatives underlined the noticeable negative impacts of climate change,
  the exposure of their countries to extreme weather events and natural disasters, and the need
  to mitigate the Natech risks, while stressing the lack of knowledge available in this area to date.
  The International Water Assessment Center (IWAC) Deputy Director and Joint Expert Group on
  Water and Industrial Accidents (JEG) member proposed launching a pilot project on assessing
  the impacts of climate change on tailings safety in Central Asia to study the impacts and
  possible adaptation measures.
- As the countries of Central Asia are prone to natural disasters and extreme weather events,
  exacerbated by the impact of climate change, the Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster
  Risk Reduction (CESDRR) Director, among others, highlighted the need to establish a
  sustainable early warning and alert system at the national and regional levels, e.g. to detect
  seismic movements, to help countries to prepare for hazardous climate-related events.
- Participants emphasized the results achieved under the <u>project on "Development of joint measures to prevent and respond to pollution of the Syr Darya River in emergency situations (Phase I)."</u> The Deputy Minister of Emergency Situations of Uzbekistan pointed out the need to develop joint contingency plans, notably in river basins, in Central Asia. A representative of Tajikistan from the Executive Committee of International Fund for Saving of Aral Sea (IFAS) highlighted the necessity to implement the Phase II of the above-mentioned project, e.g. through the development of the joint contingency plan in the Syr Darya River Basin. Representatives of Central Asian countries supported this idea, recommended the









implementation of Phase II above-mentioned project and highlighted the importance of the implementation of the recommendations, prepared under the Phase I of this project.

- Participants stressed the vital role of the Inter-institutional Working Groups on Tailings Safety
  and Prevention of Accidental Water Pollution (IIWGs) as multi-stakeholder platforms for the
  exchange and coordination on issues, lessons learned, and next steps related to the prevention
  of accidental pollution from tailings facilities. They also highlighted the need to continue this
  work and recommended the establishment of such groups in other Central Asian countries.
- The Group work featured at the workshop allowed for a transparent dialogue and exchange among different stakeholders, including national authorities, operators, NGOs and academia, on the most pressing challenges and needs related to tailings safety and preventing accidental water pollution in Central Asia. The needs highlighted by the groups comprised, among others, the following: additional inspections/controls at the TMFs; staff capacity-building, notably training of national authorities' officials and TMFs' personnel, and legislation enhancement.
- Participants also recommended to organize an on-site training at a TMF in Europe in order to improve the qualification and exchange experience and hold trainings of competent authorities and operators at the local/regional levels, including the creation of training courses with the support of UNECE.
- Participants agreed that integrating a multi-hazards/multi-risk approach into legislation, in national and transboundary settings, and strong governance can be effective solutions to build disaster resilience and climate change adaptation.