



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 Kazakhstan) in 1998. 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.

Projects in Central Asia in 2020

ADB investments were impacted by COVID-19, which restricted field visits. Investment approvals in 2020 include **for Tajikistan**, the second additional financing for the “Water Resources Management in the Pyanj River Basin” project. The project aims to increase food security, water use efficiency and climate resilience. The project has supported establishing a river basin organization and strengthening its capacity for river basin management. The additional financing contributes for the construction of a sediment excluding basin, which will decrease future operation and maintenance cost by decreasing sediment inflow to the irrigation system.

Efforts continue to improve water supply and sanitation infrastructure and services (WSS) in Central Asia. ADB approved the **Second Activity under the Multifactor Activities Support Facility**. This is by using a small expenditure financing facility modality to support the ADB's ongoing “Naryn Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Development Program” (Naryn Program) **for the Kyrgyz Republic**. It funds consulting services for (1) independent verification agent to validate the disbursement linked indicators; (2) for the capacity development of the Naryn Program's executing and implementing agencies to support the overall program implementation and to achieve the program results framework.

The **Project Readiness Financing (PRF) for urban services projects in Georgia, Pakistan, and Uzbekis-**

tan will support early preparation of engineering designs and procurement documents. This is as part of advanced actions prior to project approval to ensure timely start up and completion of project activities. All projects will include water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) components to address the spread of COVID-19. **In Uzbekistan**, the PRF is preparing three projects with water and sanitation components throughout the country for 2021-2022 approval. These include the “Tashkent Province Sewerage Project”, the “Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Development Program”, and the “Integrated Urban Development Project”. The projects take a holistic approach to fill critical WSS infrastructure gaps while supporting policy reforms and strengthening institutional capacity for enhanced utility performance and services delivery.

ADB has supported the **Central Asia Regional Economic (CAREC)** Program for regional cooperation and integration. A partnership of 11 countries supported by six multilateral institutions,⁷⁰ 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. In 2020, ADB approved a technical assistance (TA) to support the development of the CAREC water pillar, with an emphasis on economic aspects and sustainable financing of water resources management. The TA is preparing a scoping study with a focus on five Central Asian republics, which largely share the water resources in the Amu Darya and Syr Darya River basins.

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 Janua-

ry 2016 with 57 founding Members and by the end of 2020 have grown to 103 approved members worldwide.

Water and environment related activities in 2020

In October 2019, the AIIB initiated a Call for Public Consultations on its water sector strategy. The AIIB's

⁷⁰ Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, People's Republic of China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan

Water Sector Strategy after public consultations was uploaded on May 2020.

In 2020, the AIIB invested US \$30 million in the **Lightsmith Climate Resilience Partners** to support and introduce climate resilience technologies in AIIB members and US \$30 million in the **ADM Capital Elkhorn Emerging Asia Renewable Energy Fund** to mobilize private capital and promote growth of renewable energy in AIIB's regional member countries.

Projects in Central Asia in 2020

In 2020, the AIIB has approved a US \$385.1 million sovereign loan for the **"Bukhara Region Water Supply**

and Sewerage" in Uzbekistan and a US \$165.5 million loan for **"The Uzbekistan: Bukhara Road Network Improvement Project (Phase 1)"**.

In 2020, the AIIB has approved co-financing of US \$750 million to the **"Kazakhstan COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program"**, co-financing of US \$100 million to the **"Uzbekistan Healthcare Emergency Response Project"**, co-financing of US \$50 million to the **"Kyrgyz Emergency Support for Private and Financial Sector Project"**, and a US \$200 million loan for the **"National Bank for Foreign Economic Activity of the Republic of Uzbekistan COVID-19 Credit Line Project"**.

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.

Projects in Central Asia in 2020

In Kazakhstan, EBRD focuses on balancing the role of state and market, development of local capital markets, green economy transition, and sustainable energy. To date, the cumulative EBRD investments in 280 projects in Kazakhstan amount to €8,022 million. Current portfolio of projects is €2,539 million.

Particularly, EBRD provided a €24.8 million loan for the construction of a 100 MW wind farm in Zhanatas, southern Kazakhstan and a €2.5 million loan for the rehabilitation of water utilities in the city of Shymkent within the **"Shymkent Water II Project"**. Within the framework of the **EBRD Green Cities Program**, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the East Kazakhstan region, under which the cities of Ust-Kamenogorsk and Semey will benefit from support offered in preparing tailored Green City Action Plans to ensure sustainable investments in urban infrastructure.

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 195 projects in the Kyrgyz Republic amount to €734 million. Current portfolio of projects is €162 million.

Funding was approved for a number of water projects: €4 million, including €1.6 million from EBRD and €2.4 million from the EU Investment Facility for Central Asia for the **"Isfana Water Project"**; up to €40 million to be co-financed from international or bilateral donors for the **"Kyrgyz Water Resilience Frame-**



work". The **"Kyrgyzstan Climate Resilience Water Supply Project"** to be approved in early 2021 passed final review. The proposed project for €50 million will finance the rehabilitation of the irrigation water conveyance infrastructure in Jalalabad, Naryn and Osh regions.

In Tajikistan, EBRD focuses on all sectors, including energy, infrastructure, financial sector, corporate sector, and SMEs. To date, the cumulative EBRD investments in 139 projects in Tajikistan amount to €738 million. Current portfolio of projects is €467 million. The new **Country Strategy for Tajikistan** approved for the period 2020-25 will be based on the following three pillars: strengthening the competitiveness of businesses and improving the business environment; fostering regional integration, energy reform and infrastructure connectivity; supporting wider access to better infrastructure and business services for women, young people and underdeveloped regions.

A sovereign loan of up to €7.5 million was approved for the **"Kulob Water and Wastewater Project"**. €150 million was allocated for road construction in eastern Tajikistan. Construction of a 44-km section of the M41 highway, the country's main transport corridor, will connect Tajikistan with Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and China.

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 85 projects in Turkmenistan amount to €291 million. Current portfolio of projects is €61 million.

In 2020, loans were mainly provided to the production and services sector, including agribusiness, for example, to support the expansion of greenhouse

facilities for growing strawberries (US \$2,7 million) and tomatoes (US \$2,5 million). EBRD approved a US \$12.9 million loan to joint venture Mawy Kenar, a provider of [environmental remediation services](#), for addressing the legacy of oil production activities in the Balkan region of Turkmenistan.

In **Uzbekistan**, the EBRD's Country Strategy for 2018-2023 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 of increased regional and international cooperation and integration. As of 31 January 2021, the cumulative EBRD investments in 93 [projects](#) in Uzbekistan amount to €2,083million. Current portfolio of projects is €1,136 million.

The Bank approved: US \$156 million in sovereign financing to support the rehabilitation of 8 small-to-medium size hydropower plants (HPPs) within the framework of the 5-year "[Uzbekistan Climate Resilience Framework](#)"; US \$70 million loan for the "[Namangan Regional Water and Wastewater Project](#)". The "[Syr Darya Power Project](#)" was approved with the provision of a senior loan of up to US \$200 million for the construction and operation of 1.5 GW combined cycle gas-fired power plant. The Project is part of an ongoing modernization of the power generation sector in Uzbekistan aimed at increasing efficiency and reducing the environmental impact. It will lead to the closure of 1,170 MW of old and inefficient capacity at the existing Syrdarya TPP.

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

8.4. European Union



On 17 June 2019, the Council adopted conclusions on a [new EU Strategy on Central Asia](#). The new-generation bilateral Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (EPCAs) is a cornerstone of EU engagement. EU-Kazakhstan EPCA entered into force in 2020 (1 March). EU-Kyrgyzstan EPCA was initiated in 2019, and work is under way to prepare the text for signing. Negotiations on EU-Uzbekistan EPCA are nearing completion. EU is preparing to engage in EPCA negotiations with Tajikistan.

EU allocated over €1.1 billion to development cooperation with Central Asia in 2014-2020. In 2020 EU mobilized €134 million through the Team Europe Program. The provided assistance is to help mitigate immediate and long-term health, social and economic challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In May, EU announced a €8 million support program to boost sustainable energy in Central Asia. The program will complement the EU's 15 regional initiatives in environment, biodiversity, climate change, disaster risk reduction, water and sustainable energy, as well as +20 EU bilateral cooperation projects with Central Asian countries in these areas. In July, EU launched a comprehensive €3 million Central Asia COVID-19 Crisis Response Solidarity Program, with a primary focus on Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.

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 [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 (third phase from October 2019 to October 2022) aims to enhance environment, cli-

mate change and water policies at national levels in Central Asia through approximation to EU standards and to promote investments in relevant sectors with the aim of contributing to measurable reductions in man-made pollution, including CO₂ emission. The project activities include support to the EU-CA Platform for Environment and Water Cooperation and its Working Group on Environment and Climate Change (WGECC), as well as implementation of the EU Green Deal's international dimension in Central Asia to advance climate action.

Activities in 2020

The [9th WGECC meeting](#) was held on 12-13 February. The participants discussed successes of the EU-CA cooperation, as well as recent developments in EU and CA environment and climate policies since the [8th WGECC meeting](#) and the [6th EU-CA High Level Conference](#). "The European Green Deal" was presented. The [first online meeting of the WGECC Coordination Committee](#) was organized on 15 June.

Support was provided in organization of National Policy Dialogue (NPD) meetings (together with UNECE and OECD). The [6th meeting](#) of the Inter-agency Coordination Council of the National Water Policy Dialogue took place on 20 November; cooperation between Kazakhstan and its neighbors in the protection and use of transboundary water resources and priorities of the national water sector development were addressed during the meeting.

Forty-four Central Asian journalists participated in the contest on "[Climate Change: The Planet's Future](#)"

is in Our Hands". An online Award Ceremony was held in August to recognize the participants and announce 3 winners.

An online Award Ceremony was held to recognize the participants and announce the winners of the "Eco-Talk" International Green Business School

(15 December). The Evaluation Committee identified 4 winners. Overall, 37 young entrepreneurs took part in the Green Business School this year and presented 16 business projects.

Sources: <https://ec.europa.eu>, <https://wecoop.eu>, WECCOP Project

8.5. German Society for International Cooperation

As a globally active federal enterprise for international development cooperation, the German Society for International Cooperation/Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH/ supports the German Federal Government in implementation of its development policy goals. Since the beginning of the 1990s, GIZ has been implementing programs and projects in Central Asia.

Regional Programs and Projects on Water, Environment, and Development

Completion of the Transboundary Water Management Program in Central Asia (2009-2020)

GIZ completed the Transboundary Water Management Program in Central Asia from 2009 until 31 August 2020 in the framework of the Berlin Process⁷¹. Overall, the German Federal Foreign Office spent €37 million to which €14 million EU co-financing were added by two grant agreements between 2011 and 2015 and one delegation agreement from 2016 to March 2020.

The GIZ Program worked on local, basin and regional level in Central Asia with its five partner countries Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Main partner institutions were the respective water management authorities. The Programme's main focus was on fostering regional institutional cooperation, strengthening transboundary river basin management, building capacities and implementing national pilot projects. The five partner countries were supported in analyzing the reform needs of the overall institutional and legal setting for transboundary water cooperation, with a focus on the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (EC IFAS and its sub-organizations). Transboundary river basin management was strengthened through: capacity building for improved data collection and management including reporting to the national level in order to strengthen informed decision making; development of basin-specific scenarios of climate change and its impacts to improve adaptation measures and disaster prevention; integrating all stakeholders in basin planning by providing for public participation, establishment of Basin Councils as consultative bodies for



water management authorities; development of basin panning methodology for several Central Asian states; establishment of a transboundary coordination and cooperation mechanism. Together with its partners the Program implemented 37 pilot projects ranging from rehabilitation of headworks for better control of water distribution and reduction of water losses; rehabilitation of hydrological monitoring posts and equipment for reliable data on water flow and intake; construction of mini hydropower stations to cleaning of drainage canals to improve melioration.

Launch of the "Green Central Asia" Program (2020-2024)

In the context of German engagement on climate change and security within the UN and support to the new EU-Central Asia Strategy of June 2019, the German Foreign Office launched on 28 January 2020 the Initiative "Green Central Asia – Enhancing Environment, Climate and Water Resilience" with a ministerial conference in Berlin. In a joint declaration, the Central Asian foreign ministers expressed their readiness for collaboration and dialogue on climate, environment and security in the context of conflict prevention and strengthening transboundary cooperation. The Berlin Process was thus enlarged not only by topics for transboundary cooperation, but also geographically by including Afghanistan. Consequently, the GIZ was commissioned with the Program "Green Central Asia: Transboundary Dialogue on climate, environment and security in Central Asia and Afghanistan". The Program started on 1 April 2020 and will last until March 2024.

The aim of the Program is to improve access to information and risk analyses to enable participating countries to assess the impact of climate change more accurately and to take preventive measures. In close cooperation with the six partner countries, the Initiative will develop a joint action plan, which will serve as a road map for joint actions – including with

⁷¹ The Berlin Process was 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 supplemented the EU Strategy for a New Partnership with Central Asia which was adopted during the German EU Presidency in June 2007

international partners – for the years 2021 to 2024. The political dialogue will be accompanied by cooperating with media and by an awareness-raising on environment, climate and water resilience via social and other media.

Scientific support will be rendered by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK), the Helmholtz Centre Potsdam – German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ), the Martin Luther University Halle Wittenberg and the German-Kazakh University (GKU). The Program will cooperate with other international organizations active in the area of climate and water diplomacy; among them are UNECE, EU, the “Blue Peace” Initiative of the Swiss Foreign Ministry, IUCN and CAREC.

Other Regional Programs and Projects

Project “Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change in High Mountainous Regions of Central Asia” (2015-2020/BMU, IKI). Countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan. The objective of the project is the integration of ecosystem-based adaptation and other climate adaptation strategies into national policies.

“Program for Sustainable and Climate Sensitive Land Use for Economic Development in Central Asia” (2017-2020/BMZ). Countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan. The objective of the Program is to ensure that land users, government agencies and the private sector in Central Asia have adopted integrated, economically and ecologically sustainable forms of land use, taking climate change into account.

Project “Technology-Based Adaptation to Climate Change in Rural Areas of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan”

(2019-2022/BMZ, DKT). The objective is to ensure that the responsible authorities in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan have improved the plans for climate adaptation in rural regions with the aid of modern information technology and geodata management.

Project “Ecologically-oriented Regional Development in the Aral Sea region” (2020-2024/BMZ). Countries: Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan. The objective is to assist the governments of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan to improve cross-border, ecologically sustainable and economic development of the Aral Sea region.

National Projects on Water, Environment, and Development

Project “Biodiversity Conservation and Poverty Reduction through Community-Based Management of Walnut Forests and Pastures” (2018-2020/BMZ) was implemented in Bazar-Korgon, a district of the Jalal-Abad region in Kyrgyzstan.

Project “Supporting Local Economy in Selected High-Mountain Regions of Tajikistan” (2016-2020/BMZ). The objective is to strengthen the competitiveness of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), including that of smallholder farmers, in the catchment area.

The global project involving Tajikistan “Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Agrarian Landscapes” (2016-2021/BMU). The objective is to strengthen individual and institutional capacities and boost knowledge on increasing biodiversity and sustainable use of ecosystem services in agrarian landscapes.

Source: GIZ Transboundary Water Management in Central Asia Program, <https://www.giz.de>

8.6. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development



The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is a multidisciplinary intergovernmental organization comprising 37 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.

OECD is working to help developed and developing countries meet the water challenge, with focus on economic and financial dimensions of water management and improving governance. In addition to analytical work, OECD works with selected regions and countries to facilitate the 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](#), the [Water Governance Initiative](#), and the [Network of Economic Regulators](#). In 2020, OECD was a key partner with ADB and the Asia-Pacific Water Forum for the 2020 edition of the Asian Water Development Outlook.

The [OECD Council Recommendation on Water](#) captures policy guidance developed by OECD and 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. The Recommendation on Water includes high-level policy guidance on topics relevant for water resources management and the delivery of water services including managing water quantity, improving water

quality, managing water risks and disasters, ensuring good water governance and ensuring sustainable finance, investment and pricing for the water and water services.

OECD work in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in 2020

In Central Asia, OECD supports partner-countries through its Task Force for the Implementation of the Environmental Action Program ([EAP Task Force](#)). At the Annual Meeting of the Action Task Force, 2021-2022 Program of Work with focus on emerging environmental aspects of the policy responses to the COVID-19 outbreak in EECCA countries was presented (13 October, online).

The OECD assists EECCA countries 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. National Policy Dialogues are jointly facilitated by OECD and UNECE and fed by robust analytical work, often

lead to practical implementation of policy advice. OECD focuses on the economic aspects of water resources management (policy coherence, managing water for growth and making the best use of economic instruments for water management), and on the financial sustainability of water supply and sanitation services (strategic and mid-term financial planning and financial support mechanisms to the sector). Meetings of the Steering Councils of the National IWRM Dialogues in Georgia (7th meeting, 5 March) and Moldova (6th meeting, 19 November) were held.

In Central Asia, recent work has included (1) analysis of the economics of water security in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan completed under the [FinWater WEI II program](#) with financial support from Finland, and (2) work on water security indicators in Kazakhstan completed with support from the government of Kazakhstan.

Recent publications from this regional program in 2020 include "[Policy Perspectives for the Irrigation Sector Reform in Tajikistan](#)", which presents key messages from studies conducted to strengthen the economic dimensions of irrigation sector reform in Tajikistan and "[Towards Water Security in Belarus](#)" which presents the results of collaboration on improving water security in Belarus, between the beneficiary country, OECD and its partners implementing EUWI.

Source: OECD

8.7. 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.

OSCE Activities in 2020

The OSCE Program Office in Bishkek (POiB) in co-operation with the Public Council on the transition to Green Economy under the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic contributed with expert support to the development and adoption of the Law on water disposal and treatment facilities of the biosphere territory "Issyk-Kul". POiB organized a clean-up activity of the Issyk-Kul Lake coastal zone, contributing to the global environmental campaign "Cleaning the Planet from Garbage". The one-day event was conducted in Cholpon-Ata city with the participation of 15 professional divers and 30 representatives of the local hotels and resort facilities, environmental services as well as public organizations of the Issyk-Kul district. The divers extracted more than 500 meters of fishing nets and 3 m³ of plastic and other litter from the lake (October). The clean-up campaigns in Issyk-Kul region are regularly conducted to raise the awareness on waste management and preservation of Issyk-Kul Lake.



The OSCE Program Office in Dushanbe (POiD) supported the Secretariat of ICWC with online video communication tools to maintain exchanges of information between the riparian states, allowing the organization of the seasonal water allocation meetings between Tajikistan and riparian states of the Amu Darya and Syr Darya. POiD supported the Inter-Basin Dialogue consultation meeting (March) within the "Coordination Unit Meeting on Implementation of the Water Reform Program" and organized a capacity-building workshop for young water professionals from Central Asia and Afghanistan, which strengthened their scientific reporting skills (October). POiD contributed to knowledge creation through conducting a survey on the energy potential within irrigation systems in Tajikistan's advanced Integrated Water Resources Management initiatives of the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources (MEWR) and the Agency of Land Reclamation and Irrigation (ALRI). POiD also supported the implementation of the National Water Strategy 2030 through an intervention on decentralized energy security in remote areas and contributed to knowledge creation in the rural sanitation sector by conducting a desk study and sur-

vey among experts and project managers on sanitation in rural Tajikistan.

The OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan (POiN) in partnership with UNDP supported the co-operation between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to facilitate the activities of the Chu-Talas Water Commission by carrying out surface water sampling collection and analysis of water quality. Collaboration with the Russian Federation was further enhanced by supporting a study of the hydrological regime of the Zhaiyk (Ural) River basin and its main tributaries in Kazakhstan. Unfortunately, COVID-19 seriously hampered these activities due to lockdowns and the inability to conduct on-site visits. As part of its long-standing efforts to engage youth and promote environmental leadership, POiN in partnership with GKU supported an online training seminar on climate change mitigation and water management for young professionals and civil servants from Central Asia and Afghanistan. The Office in partnership with GKU also contributed to the publication of a manual on the main environmental challenges in Kazakhstan, where one of the chapters is dedicated to sustainable water governance.

The OSCE Centre in Ashgabat (CiA) organized a seminar on "The use of innovative technologies as a key to rational water management" (September 2020), building on the outcomes and recommendations of the regional water seminar conducted in 2019. The seminar attracted the main national actors of the water sector of Turkmenistan such as the State Committee on Water Economy, the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, the Institute of Deserts, Flora and Fauna, as well as such international organizations as SIC ICSD. International experts from Morocco (ICARDA) and Netherlands (IHE Delft) presented the international perspective and advanced experience in institutional development of IWRM and demonstrated the scientific and technological education as a step to a holistic approach in water management, highlighting the value of water for food and for life through several case studies of actual research

for development projects. In the outcome document of the seminar, international experts jointly provided a report including recommendations for the national beneficiaries on the implementation and adaptation of advanced technologies, given the country context.

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 the monitoring of pollution in the Syr Darya River Basin and in the assessment of the transboundary impact of toxic wastes. With the aim to support the government of Uzbekistan in the implementation of efficient Disaster Risk Reduction mechanisms and with adequate safety precautions, the composition of various pollutants in water resources was monitored (settlements of Vuadil, Madaniyat and Baymak along the Shakhimardan, Mayluu-Suu, and Sumsar Rivers). PCUz continued its support to ICWC by publishing 130 copies of the 2019 Water Yearbook "Central Asia and Around the Globe", drafted and compiled by SIC ICWC. A documentary dedicated to the Aral Sea disaster and ways to address them was also developed and aired on national TV stations with the support of PCUz.

The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) contributed to the organization of the "Water Day" of the 11th Central Asia Leadership Programme organized by CAREC. The meeting brought together participants from all Central Asian countries and Afghanistan where OCEEA presented its work on integrating a gender perspective in water governance, raising awareness on the importance of inclusion of women in decision-making spaces and empowering women water professionals. In a dedicated session, the guidance document for water practitioners on "Gender Mainstreaming in Water Governance in Central Asia" was launched.

Source: OSCE

8.8. Swiss Confederation (SDC and SECO)



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs 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. 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 supporting the national water sector reforms, Water Supply and Sanitation and Disaster Risk Reduction/Climate Change Adaptation.

In the Kyrgyz Republic, Switzerland supports the promotion of IWRM through the National Water Resources Management Project in cooperation with WB. The project assists the Government of the Kyrgyz Re-

public to implement the Water Code adopted in 2005. In addition to the above mentioned key activity, the project includes a capacity building program that will increase the capacities to manage irrigation more efficiently. As part of the IWRM approach, Switzerland has also been supporting the urban water supply program funded by SECO. To date, the program has been implemented in 6 major cities of the Kyrgyz Republic, benefitting nearly half of population of the country residing in urban area.

In Tajikistan, Switzerland continued its support to the water sector reform in the Tajik Syr Darya Basin and continued its multiple activities in the water supply and sanitation sector. In addition, Switzerland supported the city of Khorog to put in place the institutions, knowledge base and systems required as a precursor to the resilient implementation of infrastructure investments in Khorog as a basis for sustainable economic development.

In Uzbekistan, Switzerland supported the Ministry of Water Resources in the development of the Water Sector Development Concept 2020-2030 (Water Concept) and the Road Map to implement its main elements in 2021-2023, which is to serve as a basis for the strategic and regulatory IWRM framework.

In addition to the works in these three focus countries, 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, several exchanges between delegations of Central Asian countries have been organized and facilitated, in cooperation with different partners. The most prominent was the launch of the program on

“Water as a Driver of Sustainable Recovery: Economic, Institutional and Strategic Aspects of Water Resources Management in Central Asia” together with the Corvinus University of Budapest, SIWI, CAREC and the countries of Central Asia. The program aims at developing cooperation between Central Asian and Afghanistan experts. The first meeting of the Program had a focus on the “Post-COVID-19 Recovery Strategies: Putting the Water Sector of Central Asia on an Economically and Financially Sustainable Path: Lessons, Problems, Opportunities”. Representatives of EU and WB and participants from Central Asia and Afghanistan made keynote speeches (3 November, online). The series of meetings will continue in 2021. In addition, BPCA has continued the support to 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. BPCA has supported the development of academic modules on water education in the sectors of water policy/diplomacy, WASH and water modelling.

Switzerland further contributes to the **Central Asia Water Energy Development Program (CAWEP)**, a multi-donor trust fund managed by the World Bank.

In 2020, 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. In particular, Switzerland has supported the improvement of water accountability in these basins. The project helped on establishment of the management information system for irrigation management at the levels of Raivodhoz and Oblvodhoz.

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 Asia region to transform water-sharing problems into cooperation that would lead to better and equitable water management.

USAID Activities in 2020

Kyrgyz Republic

USAID [partners](#) with the Kyrgyz Republic to strengthen democratic governance, accelerate economic growth and improve health and education. It aims to strengthen the Kyrgyz Republic's capacity to lead its own development and become a strong, resilient partner. Several projects were continued in agriculture, food security, economic growth, and trade, such as: “Farmer-To-Farmer” (October 2018-September 2023); “Agro Trade” (2020-2025); “Enterprise Competitive-

ness” (2018-2023); “Increasing Access to Credit” (2014-2022); “Smart Waters” (2015-2020).

Tajikistan

USAID [announced](#) a new five-year, US \$12 million, USAID's Rural Water Supply activity. At least 30,000 people in rural and suburban communities will gain access to safe water. USAID's new activity will increase community engagement in the oversight and accountability of water service stations, improve access to finance, and promote public and private investment to establish cost-effective business models for



increased public and private investment in water infrastructure in rural and suburban areas.

Through [Feed the Future](#) programming, USAID [announced](#) its new five-year US \$36 million food security activity – Feed the Future Tajikistan Agriculture and Land Governance – to reduce hunger, under-nutrition, and poverty in Tajikistan.

USAID provides [technical support](#) to the Inter-Governmental Agency of the CASA-1000 project (500 kW power line) that will connect Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Afghanistan and Pakistan. CASA-1000 will enable Tajikistan to sell electricity surplus in summer and mobilize more resources in the development of the country's energy sector. USAID representatives participated in [an inaugural ceremony](#) for the new 220-kilowatt Murghob solar power plant, which will be the largest solar power plant in Tajikistan and the highest solar power plant, by elevation, in the world.

Uzbekistan

USAID [marked the successful](#) completion of the USAID Agricultural Value Chain Program, which supported 510 organizations and businesses, including fruit and vegetable producers, processors, cold store owners, and exporters along the value chain. Through the program, USAID leveraged US \$23 million in private sector investment in the agricultural sector. USAID [announced](#) the launch of the new US \$18.9

million Agribusiness Development Project that will support private sector-led growth in agriculture and related sectors in Uzbekistan.

Regional Activities

As part of the [completed](#) USAID Smart Waters project, the following events were held: 8th meeting of the [Regional Steering Committee](#) for Water Coordination (22 January, Kazakhstan); a virtual event to celebrate the renovation of the Yomonjar irrigation system in Bukhara province (10 September, Uzbekistan). USAID handed over [14 units](#) of automated water flow measuring equipment to the Turkmen State Committee on Water Management (29 September, Ashgabat). USAID launched new five-year regional projects: ["Regional Water and Vulnerable Environment"](#) (US \$24.5 million) and ["Power Central Asia"](#) (US \$38.9 million).

USAID published: ["Export Guide for Central Asian Horticulture Exporters"](#) to disseminate detailed information to potential purchasers around the world; ["Directory of Central Asian Horticulture Exporters"](#). Both publications will enable Central Asian horticulture exporters to improve competitiveness and diversify markets.

Source: www.usaid.gov; <https://tj.usembassy.gov/>; <https://uz.usembassy.gov/>

8.10. World Bank



World Bank Activities in 2020

Central Asian Water and Energy Program (CAWEP)

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 \$12.6 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. CAWEP-funded activities have strong links with the ongoing and pipeline World Bank investment opera-

tions and have contributed to the design of more than US \$500 million worth of investments through analytical work and technical studies. The program finances three project preparation grants in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The program also informed the design of a major regional program RESILAND CA+ currently in the pipeline across four countries on landscape resilience.

Ongoing water activities focus on the following key issues: (1) improving management of sub-basins with transboundary significance; (2) modernizing irrigated agriculture to improve water productivity with a focus on increased awareness; (3) national water management by focusing on policy, advisory and technical support to benefit regional water security; (4) regional water management to strengthen the capacity of national hydrometeorological services to improve national hydrometeorological information services to key sectors including water, energy, disaster risk management, and agriculture; and (5) capacity building and pilot initiatives to improve cross-country cooperation and explore innovative solutions for water-related challenges. A new technical assistance was launched on resilience and safety of hydraulic infrastructure and groundwater management in Uzbekistan as a pilot to build capacity and explore opportunities for joint rehabilitation of existing shared water infrastructure.

CAWEP conducted a series of country-specific consultations to listen the views of senior officials in each country on water security challenges and priorities. Consultations commenced in Tajikistan (March) and continued in the Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan (August online) and Kazakhstan (October, November) after the break because of COVID-19. In 2021, consultations will continue with Afghanistan and Turkmenistan. A brochure [Towards Water Secure Sustainable Economies](#) (2019) was shared in advance and used as a starting point for discussion. Two of the action areas identified in the brochure – water supply & sanitation, and irrigation modernization – were agreed by government officials to be areas primarily for national action, and the third action area – investing in adaptation measures to build resilience to climate change (including through improved food security) – is a shared regional agenda that fits well into World Bank’s Regional Engagement Framework for Central Asia, as well as aligning with the programmatic perspectives of key donors including the [EU Green Deal](#) and [Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Central Asia](#). Three additional key action areas identified include: (1) reform of IFAS institutions and governance; (2) water data, accounting and forecasting; (3) cooperative operations and management of shared water infrastructure.

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. Other activities have a more national focus – but collectively contribute to regional power trade (e.g. technical studies for investments into Sebzor HPP, Kyrgyz renewable energy analytical work) and energy security through diversification into renewable energy, supporting investments and by strengthening national institutions.

The [Central Asia Knowledge Network \(CAKN\)](#) continues 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 to support online learning and improve the academic and research potential on gender aspects in IWRM. Technical studies of integrated landscape restoration and catchment management are ongoing in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan to inform the governments on erosion and sedimentation processes for sustainable hydropower. A disruptive technology challenge was launched to identify cutting-edge environmental solutions to address land degradation and desertification challenges in the Aral Sea region (November). Out of 159 proposals from 28 countries, the panel of experts selected 4 proposals and 4 rising star awards in agriculture and land management, sustainable forestry, socio-economic development, and information and knowledge.

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. Draft Afghanistan Hydromet Atlas, similar to Central Asia Hydromet Atlas, is near completion and will be published in 2021. 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”

