

Concept note

Training on water resources governance in the context of climate change for Central Asia and Afghanistan, 2016

In autumn 2015, the first attempt was made to bring the young civil servants of the five countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan together to allow them to discuss various aspects of transboundary water management in the context of climate change together with national experts and representatives of international organizations. The participants represented a large number of various governmental institutions working in water and related sectors, among those ministries of water, energy resources, ministries of agriculture and nature protection, energy producers and hydrometeorological agencies of the five countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan.¹

The project was supported and organized by the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, World Bank, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia of the United Nations (UNRCCA), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE, Programme Office in Astana) and the Kazakh-German University in Almaty.

The training consisted of 2 parts: a workshop on water diplomacy and law in Almaty and a study trip to Berlin. During the workshop in Almaty, the participants were introduced to water legislation on the national, regional (Central Asia) and international levels. During the study trip to Berlin the participants visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Parliament, were introduced to the German experience in water diplomacy and technology to facilitate water resources management, Leibniz Center for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF), and International Commission for Protection of the Odra River.

Such a training is a one-of-a-kind project in Central Asia, and it follows the ultimate aim of building the capacity of the young civil servants to ensure that the next generation of water managers is has a broader, interdisciplinary perspective to the necessity of sharing the water resources between the countries of the region. Such managers will eventually be capable of developing a more effective and efficient strategy of sharing the scarce water resources of the region.

The first project of such kind has proven to be a success; this was acknowledged by both participants and partners of the project. It has been emphasized that such projects should be regional, not national, and should invite all countries of the region, including Afghanistan, to participate.

Based on the success of the pilot, there are plans to organize the second training in November 2016. The UNESCO Cluster Office in Almaty has been supporting the pilot from the beginning, and we hope for the further cooperation with you on this event.

¹ See Attachment 1: List of Participants.