

## **SESSION REPORT**

### **TITLE OF THE SESSION**

IWRM as a Basis for Social and Economic Development in Central Asia

### **SESSION CONVENERS**

1. Prof. Victor Dukhovny, Vice-President ICID, Director of Scientific-Information Center ICWC;
2. Dr. Vadim Sokolov, Chairman, GWP CACENA

### **KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

1. Dr. Anatoly Ryabtsev, Chairman of State Committee on Water Resources, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan
2. Mr. Salibjon Dusmatov, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Water Management of the Republic of Uzbekistan
3. Prof. Yarash Pulatov, Director NGO "Water", Republic of Tajikistan
4. Mrs. Eline Boelee, Health and Irrigation Specialist, International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
5. Mr. Begench Mommadov, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Water Management of Turkmenistan
6. Mr. Nariman Kipshakbaev, Director, Kazakh Branch of SIC ICWC, Republic of Kazakhstan
7. Dr. Galina Stulina, Leading Specialist in Climate Change, Project "Solving the Problems of Water Shortage and Drought in Central Asia Induced by Climate Change", Republic of Uzbekistan
8. Mrs. Malika Ikramova, Central Asian Scientific-Research Institute for Irrigation (SANIIRI), Republic of Uzbekistan
9. Mr. Valery Syundyukov, President, "Kazakhstan Su Arnasy" Association, Republic of Kazakhstan
10. Mr. Oda Hideaki, Executive Secretary of the Japan Water Forum, Japan.

### **CONVENORS GENERAL REMARKS ABOUT THE SESSION**

It is necessary to emphasize the strengths, weaknesses and peculiarities of the Central Asian region in relation to the IWRM implementation (unique institutional arrangements, legal regulations, management tools, etc.). We hope to obtain new ideas on how to meet political and environmental challenges existed in the region within the framework of strategic planning for future social and economic development.

### **SYNOPSIS**

The open debates of the outputs of the local actions addressed to IWRM implementation and its influence to the social and economic development in the countries of Central Asia. To demonstrate what lessons from the region would be useful for the world wide dissemination.

## **LOCAL ACTIONS PRESENTED DURING THE SESSION**

### **Local action 1: Testing of the Practical Ways to Implement IWRM Concept in Central Asia within the Pilot Projects**

The real IWRM implementation could be achieved if there will be proper transition:

- From administrative boundaries to hydrographic ones (within basin or system);
- From sector governance to inter-sector one (inter-departmental coordination);
- From authoritarian principle “top-down” to more democratic two-fold principle: “bottom-up” (water requirements and participation) and “top-down” (restrictions and support);
- From administrative-command method to corporative one with water users and other stakeholders participation at all hierarchic levels;
- From resource management to demand management;
- From closed professional systems of water managers to open and information transparent system with water users and stakeholders involvement.

A number of the pilot projects ongoing in the region are good basis to justify practical measures in water management reforms. The following projects are taken into account: (1) “IWRM in Fergana Valley” funded by Swiss SDC and implemented by Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, (2) “Feasibility Study for IWRM in Lowlands of Amudarya and Syrdarya” funded by the USA State Department and implemented by Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, (3) “National IWRM and Water Efficiency Plan for Kazakhstan” funded by Norway, facilitated by UNDP and GWP CACENA.

### **Local action 2: Multi Stakeholder Dialogue on Ways for Future Water Resources Development in Central Asia**

Actual state of economy of Central Asian countries in general and water sector in particular is complicated and determined by collapse of the previous command management system, change of water use structure and character, market relations among supplies and consumers as well as globalization processes. Also, there are increase of water users’ number, low financial basis for water institutions, monitoring system, development and management in water sector. Meantime, there are a number of destabilizing factors impacted to water related and social-economic situation:

- high rate of population growth (2,5...3,2 % per annum) with trend of rural population stability;
- low national income per capita;
- growing water deficit due to growing needs and poor demand management;
- significant environmental damage due to lack of attention to requirement for ecosystems (deltas, Aral sea, etc.).

In conditions of independence all these destabilizing factors were aggravated by financial weakness both of water organizations and water users. The UN ESCAP since 2000 implemented project “Capacity building in natural resources strategic planning and management in Asia and Pacific”, within framework of which since August 2002 SIC ICWC with involvement of the national water authorities has organized activity “Water resources strategic planning and management in Central

Asia” (SPM). SPM system has a goal to realize IWRM principles to achieve water sector sustainable functioning, solve priority issues of social-economic development.

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

Local action 1 has its focus on broad circle of water professionals including decision makers determining water policy and reforms in water governance and management over the Central Asia. It is also addressing to civil society representatives interested in proper reforms realization. Actors involved should realize from the beginning that their country, region and settlement already faced serious water-related problems and to understand that these issues could not be now resolved by traditional methods.

Though IWRM principles gain popularity among specialists, water users and stakeholders participating in some regional pilot project, the SPM technology still is difficult job for them. Moreover, authors of the national SPM reports assessing IWRM situation and national plans for IWRM development could not give strict recommendations for pilot projects in their countries.

It is necessary to apply for further SPM exercises tested outputs form different pilot projects and strategic solutions should be adapted to appropriate zonal and specific complexes of water development.

## **KEY MESSAGES**

To sustain the ongoing processes with IWRM practical implementation there are needed the following actions in coming future:

- IWRM national plans development for all countries in the region. Funds allocation through GWP and UNDP from Norway allowed Kazakhstan to start this activity that will serve good example for other countries of the region. Main task of national plan is create clear understanding of IWRM implementation, its objectives, effects, stages and scope of work.
- Give political support to water issues and IWRM implementation.
- Public participation at all hierarchic levels.
- Capacity development and training activity.
- Juridical and financial support to water sector.
- Technical measures (managerial tools dissemination).

## **ORIENTATIONS FOR ACTION**

The Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (ICWC) is recognized in the countries of region and beyond as a key conductor of started process of reformation of water sector towards practical use of IWRM principles. The collaboration of this Commission with Interstate Commission for Sustainable Development in Central Asia, same as involvement of the key stakeholders (including CAREC, GWP CACENA) is crucial for meeting MDGs related to water.

Almost in all countries of Central Asia the concept of IWRM is officially recognized as a base of state policy in a field of development of water sector. The Governments expressed formal political support to IWRM concept in all countries, and Kazakhstan even expressed full commitment for practical IWRM implementation.