

RESOLUTION
EECCA NWO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
Water for Land Reclamation, Economic Sectors and Natural Environment
in the context of Climate Change

The participants of the Conference held within the framework of the Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central Asia Network of Water Management Organizations (EECCA NWO) on 6-7 November 2018 in Tashkent addressed the current matters of land reclamation and water supply in economic sectors and for the natural environment in the context of climate change. They also summarized the results of the Network's activity over the past year and discussed tasks for the future.

The participants presented in-depth reports and exchanged opinions in the following focus areas:

- strategy of survival in the face of imminent water scarcity,
- assessment of the impacts of geopolitical changes;
- transboundary water cooperation: how to ensure irrigation, energy and nature nexus in the context of climate change,
- water conservation and rational nature use,
- cooperation of regional organizations in the Aral Sea Basin (IFAS-ICWC-ICSD) in searching for additional water reserves,
- building capacities of water-management, basin and land reclamation organizations.

Having summarized results of the discussion, the Conference participants have decided the following:

1. Stress that the *current challenges* that the EECCA countries face, including climate change, potential increase of river water withdrawal by neighboring countries (Afghanistan, China, Iran), population growth, and changing economic and social behavior patterns require that *appropriate and timely adaptation measures* be taken.

2. In this context, it is important to elaborate long-term (2030-2050) *water strategies* for each country and the region as a whole, proceeding from ongoing changes. Additionally, all EECCA countries need to develop a common line of conduct aimed at sustainable and peaceful development that would be based on the wider *science engagement* in the solution of pressing problems of sustainable development, including water, energy, environment and security, and the regular and systematic *building capacities* and raising awareness.

3. Support an initiative on the establishment of an *independent think-tank* involving experts from concerned sectors and disciplines to develop scientifically grounded decisions and recommendations for decision makers. Organize a lead group for drafting of a roadmap for the establishment of such a think-tank and take poll

among EECCA NWO members on topics and directions of future activity of this platform.

4. Unite efforts in inventing, adopting and developing environmentally friendly energy- and water-saving technologies, increasing regional and inter-regional cooperation in the sphere of water saving and sound transboundary water use, while simultaneously ensuring intersectoral harmonization.

5. Activate *climate change* direction at the global level, also as part of implementation of the Work program 2019-2021 of the UNECE Convention on protection and use of transboundary watercourses and international lakes and the activity of its Task Force on water and climate and the global network of basins dealing with adaptation. Given the complicated environmental and geopolitical situation, ask representatives of the Russian Federation in EECCA NWO to talk with the Russian leadership concerning consideration of a possibility of cooperation with a European Arctic Group for reopening of the discussion on possible diversion of a water share of Siberian rivers at expense of its discharge into the Arctic Ocean and usage of this share for Central Asia and desert areas in Mongolia, Eastern Siberia and China.

6. Underline the role of the Paris Pact on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Basins of Rivers, Lakes and Aquifers that offers a number of practical adaptation measures, among which:

- adaptation in the water sector to climate change, including at the river basin;
- strengthening of governance;
- adequate financing.

7. Note with satisfaction *effective and fruitful activities of EECCA NWO* over the past 10 years. With the support of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Government of the Russian Federation, the Scientific-Information Center of ICWC and the International Network of Basin Organizations, the Network contributed to exchange of ideas, information and best practices on different aspects of water related activity and promoted unity and mutual understanding among professionals from various sectors and countries in the region.

Key activities and events organized by the Network in 2017-2018 included:

- Conference of the EECCA water-management organizations “Challenges of River Basin Management in the context of Climate Change” (18-19 May 2017, Moscow, Russia);
- International science and practice conference “The 25 years of water cooperation in Central Asia: lessons learnt and future outlook” (23-24 November 2017, Tashkent, Uzbekistan);
- International science and practice conference “Transboundary cooperation in Central Asia – security, stability and well-being of the entire region” (7 September 2017, Almaty, Kazakhstan);

- All-Russian water congress “Water resources in Russia for sustainable development, ecological security and health” (27-30 June 2017, Moscow, Russia);
- First Aral International Forum of Sustainable Development (30-31 May 2017, Kyzylorda, Kazakhstan);
- Network’s publications, including the collection of scientific papers “Challenges of River Basin Management in the context of Climate Change”;
- maintenance of the Central Asian knowledge portal - CAWater-Info (cawater-info.net) - as part of the system of uniform tools for implementation of IWRM that are adapted to specific conditions of water management in river basins with different water stresses in arid and semi-arid zones of EECCA countries;
- Development of an on-line “Atlas of water-management and environmental organizations in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.”

8. Strengthen efforts of the Network’s members in the following focus areas:

- Organization of joint interdisciplinary research in the spheres of water management, land reclamation and nature protection;
- Further development of information space in the above mentioned spheres, including exchange of information on best practices and sharing lessons and knowledge;
- Organization of training workshops and study tours to explore best practices and share experience and knowledge in the area of water management and land reclamation,
- Development of extension services and knowledge hubs (regional and national ones) to render assistance to water users at different hierarchical levels;
- Taking advantage of cooperation, coordination and exchange of information with National water policy dialogues in the EECCA countries;
- Engagement of other basin organizations in the Network’s activity.

9. Note that the exchange of knowledge would be more productive and the knowledge base on water, economy and irrigated agriculture would be strengthened if donors provide wider support.

10. The next conference of the Network is to be held in 2019 on “Science and innovations for water security” at part of the XV International scientific-practical symposium and exhibition “Clean Water of Russia 2019”, which will be held in Yekaterinburg under the slogan “Water security as a factor of sustainable development”.

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