



Section 1

2019 Calendar
of Events

January

- **3 January** – Field session of the International Press Club “Uzbekistan-24” – afforestation of the dried bed of the Aral Sea, Muynak – Surgul, Uzbekistan
- **16-18 January** – 9th International Micro Irrigation Conference, Aurangabad, India
- **24-25 January** – 6th High Level Conference “European Union - Central Asia: Priorities for Environment and Water Resources Cooperation”, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- **29-31 January** – Twenty-fourth session of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy, Geneva, Switzerland

February

- **5-6 February** – 2nd International Forum “Uzbekistan 2035”, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- **5-7 February** – Meetings of the Parties to the Espoo Convention and to the Protocol on SEA, intermediary sessions, Geneva, Switzerland
- **19-20 February** – International Conference “Connectivity in Central Asia: Challenges and New Opportunities”, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- **21-22 February** – 3rd International Conference on Climate Change, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- **21-22 February** – Seminar “The Principle of No Significant Harm – What Implications for Water Diplomacy?”, Hague, Netherlands
- **27-28 February** – Twenty-eighth meeting of the Bureau of the Water Convention, Geneva, Switzerland

March

- **7-9 March** – Women and Rivers Congress, Nagarkot, Nepal
- **8-9 March** – International Conference on Climate Change Adaptation and Multidisciplinary Issues, Taipei, Taiwan
- **8-10 March** – International Conference on Advances in Water and Wastewater Treatment Technology, Shenzhen, China
- **11-15 March** – Fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly, Nairobi, Kenya
- **14 March** – International Day of Action for Rivers
- **14-15 March** – 3rd General Assembly of the Asian Water Council, Makati City, Philippines
- **21-22 March** – Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE region, Geneva, Switzerland
- **22 March** – World Water Day
- **26 March** – Aral Sea Day
- **27 March** – Sixth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, Bangkok, Thailand

April

- **3-4 April** – Central Asia Climate Change Conference, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- **16-17 April** – International Scientific and Practical Seminar “Ecosystem and Water Resources of the Aral Sea Basin”, Nukus, Uzbekistan
- **19 April** – 76th meeting of ICWC, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- **25-27 April** – Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, Beijing, China
- **29-30 April** – Global Workshop on Ecosystem-based Adaptation in Transboundary Basins, Water Convention, Geneva, Switzerland

May

- **1 May** – 10th meeting of the Task Force on Water and Climate, Geneva, Switzerland
- **7-9 May** – International Conference on Sustainable Water Resources Management, Alicante, Spain
- **8 May** – Foundation laying ceremony of a new settlement near Turkmen Lake “Altyn Asyr”, Turkmenistan
- **13-14 May** – UNESCO International Water Conference, Paris, France
- **14-16 May** – World Hydropower Congress, Paris, France
- **22 May** – International Day for Biological Diversity
- **27-31 May** – 75th session of ESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand

June

- **5 June** – World Environment Day (Ecologist's Day)
- **5 June** – International Conference on the “Role of Water Diplomacy in Achieving the Sustainable Development in Central Asia”, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
- **5-11 June** – 2nd Baku International Water Week, Baku, Azerbaijan
- **6-7 June** – Singapore International Water Week, Singapore
- **16-20 June** – 12th IWA International Conference on Water Reclamation and Reuse, Berlin, Germany
- **17-20 June** – 17th “Europe-INBO 2019” International Conference for the Implementation of the European Water Directives, Lahti, Finland
- **24-26 June** – All-Russian Water Congress, Moscow, Russia
- **26 June** – CAREC meeting “Promoting Water Cooperation and Experience Exchange: Initiating Discussions”, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- **26 June** – Video-conference of the GWP for Central Asia and Caucasus, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- **26-27 June** – Water Leaders Summit, Milwaukee, USA

July

- **5-6 July** – EU-Central Asia Forum, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- **8 July** – International Conference “Innovative Approaches to Solving Global Environmental Problems: World Experience (the Aral Sea case study)”, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- **8-10 July** – European/CIS Regional Ministerial Conference on Green Economy, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- **9-18 July** – High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, New York, USA
- **22-24 July** – 5th International Congress on Water, Waste and Energy Management, Paris, France
- **29 July** – Earth Overshoot Day
- **30-31 July** – 2nd meeting of the Regional Working Group on Development of the Aral Sea Basin Program (ASBP-4) and on Improvement of Institutional and Legal Framework of IFAS, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

August

- **11-12 August** – First Caspian Economic Forum, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
- **12 August** – Day of the Caspian Sea
- **25-30 August** – World Water Week, Stockholm, Sweden

September

- **1-7 September** – 3rd World Irrigation Forum & 70th International Executive Council (IEC), ICID, Bali Indonesia
- **2-13 September** – Fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 14), New Dehli, India
- **4-7 September** – Korea International Water Week, Daegu, Republic of Korea
- **5-6 September** – Second Central Asian Expert Forum “Dialogue on Water Issues in Central Asia: From the National to the Regional Levels”, Nur-Sultan and Burabay, Kazakhstan
- **16-18 September** – International Conference “Water Security: New Technologies, Strategies, Policies and Institutions”, Beijing, China
- **17 September** – Opening of the 74th Session of the UNGA, New York, USA
- **23 September** – UN Climate Action Summit, New York, USA
- **23-24 September** – International Conference of EECCA NWO “Science and Innovations for Water Security”, Yekaterinburg, Russia
- **23-27 September** – XV International Scientific-Practical Symposium/Exhibition “Clean Water of Russia 2019”, Yekaterinburg, Russia
- **30 September-3 October** – 11th INBO World General Assembly, Marrakesh, Morocco

October

- **2 October** – 23rd Session of the Working Group on Water, Energy and Environment, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- **2-4 October** – 5th International Conference on Water and Society, Valencia, Spain
- **15 October** – International Day of Rural Women
- **15-17 October** – Budapest Water Summit, Budapest, Hungary
- **17-22 October** – First International Environmental Marathon “ARAL MARATHON”, Tashkent – Samarkand – Bukhara – Urgench – Nukus – Muynak, Uzbekistan
- **18 October** – Water as a Catalyst of Regional Cooperation in Central Asia - Workshop on Water, Energy and Environmental Cooperation in Central Asia, Budapest, Hungary
- **21 October** – First meeting of the Expert Group on the Transboundary Water Allocation Handbook, Geneva, Switzerland
- **22-23 October** – Consultative Workshop on Improving Services related to Climate Information and Early Warning for Resilience, Beijing, China
- **22-24 October** – Fifteenth meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management under the UNECE Water Convention, Geneva, Switzerland
- **23 October** – Meeting of the ICSD's Working Group, Nukus, Uzbekistan
- **24 October** – Meeting of ICSD, Nukus, Uzbekistan
- **24 October** – Regional Meeting of Water Agencies, Nukus, Uzbekistan
- **24-25 October** – International High-Level Conference under UN Auspices “Aral Sea Region – a Zone of Environmental Innovations and Technologies”, Nukus, Uzbekistan
- **28-30 October** – Conference on Water Security and Climate Change, San Luis Potosi, Mexico
- **28-30 October** – Forum on Rural Development and Food Security, Manila, Philippines

November

- **5 November** – 77th meeting of ICWC, Almaty, Kazakhstan
- **5-6 November** – International Conference "Rational Use of Water Resources – the Basis for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals", Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
- **11-12 November** – 3rd Annual Congress on Soil, Plant and Water Sciences, Madrid, Spain
- **14-15 November** – Regional workshop “Use of Innovative Technologies for Sustainable Water Management in Central Asia”, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
- **18-21 November** – SPECA Days, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
- **25-26 November** – 3rd Meeting of the Regional Working Group on Development of ASBP-4 and on Final Improvement of Institutional and Legal Framework of IFAS, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
- **29 November** – Second Consultative Meeting of the Heads of Central Asian States, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

December

- **2-3 December** – Meeting of the Implementation Committee of the UNECE Water Convention, Geneva, Switzerland
- **2-13 December** – 25th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 25), Madrid, Spain
- **4 December** – Conference “Implementation of International Water Law: Global, Regional and Basin Perspectives”, Geneva, Switzerland
- **4-5 December** – Global Workshop on Exchange of Data and Information in Transboundary Basins under the UNECE Water Convention, Geneva, Switzerland
- **6 December** – Fifteenth meeting of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment under the UNECE Water Convention, Geneva, Switzerland
- **18-19 December** – Regional Central Asian Conference on “Innovative Approaches and Solutions in the System of Sustainable Water Resources Management and Opportunities for their Use in Central Asia”, Almaty, Kazakhstan

Major Events in Central Asia

Central Asia Climate Change Conference, 3-4 April, Tashkent



The Central Asia Climate Change Conference (CACCC-2019) was organized within the framework of the Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Program for Aral Sea Basin (CAMP4ASB)¹ with the support of WB, EC-IFAS, UzHydromet, and CAREC.

The main objective of the Conference is to promote regional cooperation and partnership on climate adaptation and mitigation in Central Asia.

The Conference brought together 390 representatives of Central Asian governments, international and regional organizations, diplomatic missions,

multilateral development banks and civil society organizations, as well as leading experts in the field of climate change, young leaders and representatives of the environmental sector.

Three pre-conference sessions were organized on April 2:

(1) the first session focused on building scientific and professional capacities for effective water resource management and climate actions. It discussed current gaps and needs for developing research and academic capacities, the ways for cooperation between national academic partners of the region and with international scientific institutions;

(2) the second session focused on informing about the up-to-date progress in implementation of local climate investment initiatives and establishment of new partnership to scale-up and replicate successful practices and technologies in energy, agriculture and water sectors;

(3) the third session “One planet – one future ... Empowering youth for climate actions” mobilized youth voices for climate change action.

The results of pre-conference sessions were presented at the plenary sessions of the Conference.

¹ The first Conference of the project was organized on January 24-25, 2018 in the city of Almaty, Kazakhstan. The findings of the CACCC-2018 are elaborated into key messages and formulated the thematic content for the CACCC-2019 program

The Conference was divided into five Plenary Sessions on: (1) Global climate policy and national commitments (2) Climate change impacts and adaptation in global and regional context (3) Climate services (4) Climate technologies and practices (5) Climate finance.

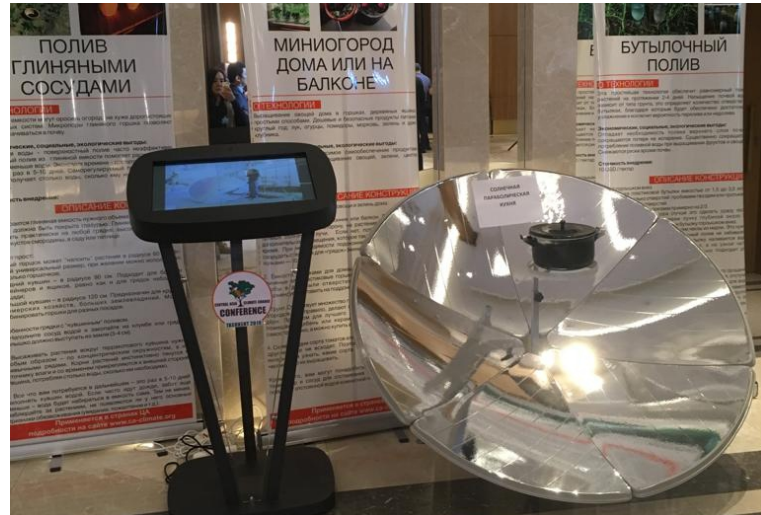
Furthermore, five parallel sessions were conducted: (a) knowledge platforms and communication on climate change; (b) integrated natural resources management approaches in Central Asia; (c) science and evidence-based water and land management solutions for strengthening climate resilience in Central Asia; (d) regional environment protection for sustainable development in the context of climate change; and (e) the role of civil society and private sector in activating climate actions in Central Asia.

During the Conference, an exhibition was organized to demonstrate low-cost climate-resilient technologies, videos and practical guides to their production. The participants got acquainted with the most widespread technologies of water supply systems, water conservation, alternative energy sources and rational land use.

At the end of the Conference, a final [“call for action”](#) document was adopted that promotes regional cooperation and joint implementation of measures to adapt to climate change and mitigate its effects. This paper calls for regional efforts to bring attention to the issue of climate change; making immediate, science-based decisions in the management of energy, industrial, land, transport and urban systems; revision of the quantitative obligations of the Central Asian countries to the UNFCCC by increasing them, etc.

[A Climate Network of Public Organizations of Central Asia](#) is an important outcome of the Conference to actively involve the public in the process of implementing regional and national

climate change priorities and policies. It is an informal, voluntary association of national network organizations of civil society in Central Asia: EcoForum of Kazakhstan, the Climate Network of Kyrgyzstan, the TajCN Climate Network of Tajikistan, the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Turkmenistan, and the Ecological Movement of Uzbekistan. Within the framework of the post-conference session, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed, and a joint action plan at the regional and national levels was developed (5 April, Tashkent).



International High-Level Conference “Aral Sea Region – a Zone of Environmental Innovation and Technology”, 24-25 October, Nukus

The [International High-Level Conference](#) under the auspices of UN – “Aral Sea Region – Zone of Environmental Innovation and Technology” – was held as part of the implementation of initiatives and proposals voiced by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan at the Summit of the Heads of the IFAS Founder-States.

The goal of the Conference was to create favorable conditions for foreign investments in

the development and implementation of environmentally friendly technologies and green economy principles, promotion of ecotourism, adoption of environmentally friendly, energy- and water saving technologies to contribute to food security, and prevention of desertification and environmental migration.

More than 200 experts and analysts from Central Asian, European, American and Asian

countries, official representatives of UN and its special agencies, leading international organizations and financing institutions attended the Conference.

The Conference included the plenary session entitled “The results of joint efforts in overcoming the Aral crisis” and parallel sessions on the following topics: (1) enabling conditions for foreign investments in the development and implementation of environmentally friendly technologies; (2) promotion of green economy principles, environmentally friendly, energy- and water-saving technologies; (3) water-saving technologies and food security; (4) prevention of desertification, environmental migration and development of ecotourism.

The participants discussed drafts of the following documents: Concept “Aral Sea Region – Zone of Environmental Innovation and Technology”; special resolution of the UN Gene-

ral Assembly on declaring the Aral Sea region a zone of environmental innovation and technology; and, Regional Program on the rational water use in Central Asia.

The regular meeting of ICSD was also held as part of the Conference. In this meeting, the ICSD chairmanship was transferred from Turkmenistan to Uzbekistan, Regional Environmental Program for Sustainable Development in Central Asia was adopted, and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by UNECE and ICSD (see “[ICSD of Central Asia](#)”).

The conference participants visited Mynak, Ship Cemetery on the dried bed of the Aral Sea, Nukus, and the Karakalpakstan State Museum of Arts named after I.V.Savitsky and were presented the exposition of current green technologies and on-going projects on mitigation of the Aral Sea disaster.

The First Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Mr. Ochilbay Ramatov opened the Conference and read out the message of the President Shavkat Mirziyoyev:

“It is impossible to restore the Aral Sea. Therefore, our task is to reduce the negative impact of the Aral Sea crisis on the environment and people’s livelihoods in the region. We propose turning the Aral Sea region into a zone of environmental innovations and technologies”.

In his video message to the Conference participants, the UN Secretary General António Guterres underlined:

“I recall the shock I experienced when I visited Aral Sea region in 2017. The effects of the crisis have been disastrous for the environment, the fishing industry, agriculture, and human health. Progress is possible, as we can see in the region”.

Helena Fraser, the UN Resident Coordinator in Uzbekistan, stressed that despite the catastrophic consequences of the Aral Sea crisis, the Aralkum desert needs to be transformed into an attractive economic zone.

“We should not talk about tragedy, but about the development in this region. Focus on human resources”, – she urged.



Following the International Conference:

- a package of priority investment projects for implementation of environmental innovations and technologies has been formed;
- proposals have been presented for inclusion in the reviewed drafts of Concept, special UN General Assembly Resolution, and Regional Program;
- the Communiqué has been adopted.

The Communiqué underlines that the Conference participants:

- "...supported the establishment of the UN Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region in Uzbekistan...;
- stressed the great importance of the establishment of the International Innovation Center for the Aral Sea Basin under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan...;
- supported the initiative of the President of Uzbekistan to declare the Aral Sea region a zone of environmental innovation and technologies...;
- welcomed the proposal of the Republic of Uzbekistan to adopt the special UN Ge-

neral Assembly Resolution on declaring the Aral Sea region a zone of environmental innovation and technologies;

- ...emphasized the importance of enhancement of international cooperation for promotion of target projects on mitigation of negative consequences of the Aral Sea catastrophe and socio-economic improvement in the Aral Sea region...".

In the course of the Conference, the UN Resident Coordinator in Uzbekistan Ms. Helena Fraser and the Chairman of Goskomecology (State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Ecology and Environmental Protection) Mr. Bakhrom Kuchkarov launched the nation-wide 5-year campaign to plant million trees initiated by FAO, Goskomecology, Goskomles (State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Forestry), and the Ministry of Agriculture in Uzbekistan.

On the eve of the Aral Conference, the international ecological marathon – "[ARAL MARATHON](#)" – was organized under the motto "We are responsible for the future!" (17-22 October, 6 cities in Uzbekistan: Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Urgench, Nukus and Muynak). A cup with a symbolic drop of water from Tashkent was passed from one city to another to reach the Aral Sea region. It is planned to organized the Aral Marathon annually.



Regional Central Asian Conference “Innovative Approaches and Solutions in the System of Sustainable Water Resources Management and Opportunities for Their Use in Central Asia”, 18-19 December, Almaty

The [Regional Central Asian Conference](#) was organized by the Executive Board of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea in the Republic of Kazakhstan together with the United Nations Development Program in Kazakhstan.

The Conference was aimed to form a platform of project proposals for further investment and applied solutions to improve the welfare of the population in Central Asia through the development of regional dialogue, exchange of experience and study of modern methods, technologies and systems.

The Conference brought together representatives of interested ministries and agencies of the Central Asian countries, scientists, experts, UN structural units, international organizations and financing institutions, researchers and academia.

The Conference was organized around 7 sessions: (i) inter-basin water transfers as one of methods for water augmentation; (ii) low-pressure small hydropower stations as a guarantor of the protection of river ecosystems; (iii) restoration and reconstruction of river valleys as a way to improve river water quantity and quality; (iv) modern methods of water conservation and balancing; (v) methods and prospects of using geothermal and industrial groundwater; (vi) new methods for local drainage systems in small towns and rural communities; and (vii) innovative adaptation practices for water conservation, drainage and application of remote sensing.

Presentation of the [UN Special Program](#) for the Aral Sea Basin (UN SPAS) was held as part of the Conference. The participants saw the video demonstrating the main steps planned by Turkmenistan in the preparation of multilateral consultations in the UN-IFAS format and launching a pilot project of UN SPAS.

The Conference provided a platform for regional dialogue on sustainable water resource management, sharing knowledge and experience in innovative approaches and solutions. The participants have laid a foundation for new projects to address pressing water and environmental problems in the region. As a result, recommendations have been drafted:

“...For the achievement of SDGs in Central Asia, consolidation of research and production potential, integration of scientific communities

and water management organizations, and mutually beneficial cooperation between the leading national economic sectors are needed”.

“...The Conference considers it necessary to continue joint work in the field of: provision of access to clean drinking water for rural population; integrated water and energy management; increased use of renewable energy and geothermal water; automated water monitoring and water conservation; reduction of water pollution; preservation of aquatic and water-related ecosystems; mitigation of land degradation; afforestation; reduction of disaster risks, including floods, mudflow, droughts, sandstorms, and salt and dust movement from the dried Aral Sea bed”.

“...The Conference considers it necessary to submit the RECOMMENDATIONS developed by the Central Asian Regional Conference ... for information to the Board Members of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea”.

Regional Central Asian Conference on the topic:
«Иновационные подходы и решения в системе устойчивого управления водными ресурсами и возможности их использования в условиях Центральной Азии»



