

4

SECTION

Cooperation between
the Countries
of Central Asia
on Water and Other
Matters

4.1. Bilateral collaboration

4.1.1. Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan

High-level contacts

In 2023, the President of Kazakhstan paid a working visit to Kyrgyzstan to take part in the [II EU – Central Asia Summit](#) (Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan, June 2). In his turn, the President of Kyrgyzstan had **working visits** to Kazakhstan to take part in the [Astana International Forum 2023](#) (Astana, Kazakhstan, June 7) and in the [Summit of the Organization of Turkic States](#) (Astana, Kazakhstan, November 2-3).

Cooperation within the Chu-Talas Water Commission

Bilateral water relations between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are regulated by the [Agreement on the Use of Water Management Facilities of Intergovernmental Status on the Chu and Talas Rivers](#) (January 21, 2000). The Chu-Talas Water Commission (CTWC or Commission) is a joint body, the mission of which is to ensure the joint operation of the water facilities of interstate use and estimate operational costs required for their safe and reliable operation.

Meetings. From 2006 to 2023, the Commission convened 32 meetings, and the CTWC Secretariat held over 30 meetings. In 2023, the 32nd Commission meeting took place. Key discussions included: review of progress made on decisions adopted at the previous CTWC meeting in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on December 7, 2022; assessment of work completed in 2023, approval of repair and rehabilitation plans for 2024, and discussions on increasing Kazakhstan's shared financing for operation and maintenance (Almaty, Kazakhstan, December 22). The parties also adopted the 2022-2030 Strategic Action Program (SAP) for the Chu and Talas River Basins⁵⁵ aimed at addressing climate change impacts and promoting sustainable development through water cooperation, focusing on water quality, quantity, ecosystem conservation, and monitoring.

Working Group on environment protection (WGEP) under the CTWC Secretariat. At its 11th meeting held on

November 21 in Almaty, the WGEP discussed the following reports: (1) findings from the 2023 monitoring of the Chu and Talas rivers, including seasonal coordinated water sampling; (2) results of hydrometeorological monitoring at mutually selected gauging stations conducted by Kazakhstan over 2022-2023; (3) annual reports on water quality in both countries. The WGEP also adopted its work plan for 2024.

Bilateral water-related arrangements

The Kazakh Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation and the Kyrgyz Minister of Agriculture met to discuss the construction of the Chu Bypass Canal-2 (CBC-2). Both sides agreed to provide necessary materials and facilitate hydrological and hydrogeological observations. Kazakh scientists gained access to historical hydrogeological data on the Chu River basin. A joint letter was sent to GIZ seeking support and expertise to assess the potential environmental impact of the CBC-2 (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November).

The parties also agreed on water delivery to irrigated land in Zhambyl region through Tuite canal on the Talas river. Kazakhstan proposed adding several canals and facilities on the Kurkureusu, Chu and Talas rivers to the list of interstate water facilities.

Other bilateral arrangements

The 11th meeting of the Kazakh-Kyrgyz Intergovernmental Council was held during the first Kyrgyz-Kazakh interregional forum. The meeting focused on interstate cooperation in water use, energy, agriculture, trade, and other areas. The Prime Minister of Kazakhstan **highlighted** the importance of developing cooperation in ecology and rational water use, emphasizing its direct impact on citizens' livelihoods. He stressed the need for an effective monitoring mechanism through the digitization of interstate water canals and the exchange of hydrological information, including reservoir inflows and water withdrawals throughout the basin (Taraz, Kazakhstan, September 23).

4.1.2. Kazakhstan-Tajikistan

High-level contacts

The President of Tajikistan paid a **state visit** to Kazakhstan. During this visit, the Heads of State signed the [Declaration on Allied Co-operation](#) between Tajikistan and Kazakhstan in which, among others, they highlighted that: (1) one of the key factors of sustain-

able development of Central Asia is the integrated and rational use of water and energy resources; (2) Kazakhstan and Tajikistan reaffirm the important role of IFAS; (3) the parties will continue developing cooperation on environmental protection and natural and man-induced emergencies prevention and response. Additionally, a wide range of matters related

⁵⁵ SAP was developed as part of the GEF-UNDP-UNECE [project](#) "Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins"

to bilateral co-operation were addressed and, in total, over 60 new cooperation documents were signed at ministerial and business community level. As part of the state visit, the President of Tajikistan was awarded the Kazakhstan Order "Altyn Qyran" (Golden Eagle) (Astana, Kazakhstan, [May 3-4](#)).

The President of Tajikistan paid a **working visit** to Kazakhstan for attending the [opening ceremony of the Days of Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan in Kazakhstan](#) (Astana, Kazakhstan, [August 25](#)). The President of Kazakhstan had **working visits** to Tajikistan to take part in the [Fifth Consultative Meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia](#). The heads of state met to discuss a number of issues, including strategic partnership and interactions in trade-economic, transport-

logistics, cultural-humanitarian and other priority areas (Dushanbe, Tajikistan, [September 14](#)).

On the sidelines of the [Gulf Cooperation Council-Central Asia Summit](#), the heads of state discussed the issues of further expanding the trade and economic cooperation, strengthening the cultural-humanitarian ties and implementing the agreements reached during Tajik President's visit to Astana (Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, [July 19](#)).

In the course of **telephone conversations**, the Presidents discussed such issues as transboundary water use, deepening cooperation in trade-economic and cultural-humanitarian spheres, and further strengthening of Kazakh-Tajik relations (January 7, October 5).

4.1.3. Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan

High-level contacts

The President of Turkmenistan had a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan who arrived in Turkmenistan for attending the [16th Cooperation Forum "Central Asia-Republic of Korea"](#). The sides discussed a wide range of bilateral cooperation issues, in particular in the transport, logistics and energy spheres (Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, [November 1](#)).

During bilateral negotiations, ministers of foreign affairs of the both countries discussed bilateral cooperation on the Caspian Sea and under umbrella of IFAS in the political-diplomatic, trade-economic, cultural-humanitarian and other priority areas (Astana, Kazakhstan, [February 27](#); Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, [October 30](#)). Following the results of the meeting in October, the Cooperation Program between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2024-2026 was signed.

Bilateral working groups

The following meetings took place: (1) 12th meeting of the Intergovernmental Turkmen-Kazakh Commission on economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation. The parties discussed further development of cooperation in such spheres as trade-economy, transport, finance, agriculture, water management, construction, culture, tourism, education, science, and oil and gas (Astana, Kazakhstan, [May 15](#)); (2) 1st meeting of the Turkmen-Kazakh working group on transport, transit and logistics, as a result of which the Memorandum on transport interconnectivity was signed (Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, [November 26-27](#)).

The Majilis (*Council*) of the Kazakh Parliament adopted the Law [No.2-VIII ZRK](#) of 28.04.2023 "On ratification of the Treaty⁵⁶ between the Republic of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan on the regime of the Kazakh-Turkmen State Border".

4.1.4. Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan

High-level contacts

Presidents of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan had an **informal meeting** in Shymkent on [March 3](#). The parties reviewed the progress on agreements reached earlier in [December 2022](#) and discussed a number of issues, including further increase of mutual trade turnover, mobilization of investments, enhancement of cooperation on industry, energy, agriculture, transport and logistics.

The President of Uzbekistan paid a **working visit** to Kazakhstan to take part in the [Summit of the Organization of Turkic States](#) (Astana, Kazakhstan, November 2-3).

In the course of **telephone conversations**, the Presidents discussed topical issues on the bilateral and

regional agenda, including on implementation of high-level agreements and progress on major cooperation projects in trade, industry, energy, transport, agriculture and other economic sectors ([May 1](#), [May 17](#), [June 12](#), [July 10](#), [July 24](#)).

Kazakh-Uzbek Joint Working Group (Commission) on Environment Protection and Water Quality in the Syr Darya River Basin

The Commission on Environment Protection and Water Quality in the Syr Darya River Basin (hereinafter referred to as the Working Group) comprises experts from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. It was established under

⁵⁶ Treaty was signed on [25.11.2021](#) and entered into force on [28.11.2022](#)

the framework of the 2017-2019 Strategy for Economic Cooperation between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, signed by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev during his visit to Kazakhstan, as well as the [1997 Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan on cooperation in the field of environmental protection and management](#).

Meetings⁵⁷. As of 1 January 2024, the Working Group has convened six times: [September 27-28, 2018](#) in Tashkent; [November 7-8, 2019](#) in Nur Sultan; [December 24, 2020](#) via video-conference; [December 13, 2021](#) in Almaty; [December 14-15, 2022](#) in Tashkent; and, [December 14, 2023](#) in Astana (hybrid).

During the 6th meeting, the parties discussed the implementation of the Commission's 2023 Work Plan. Key topics included: coordinated water quality monitoring on the Syr Darya River, information exchange, pollution source inventory due to the need to identify and address pollution sources along the Keles and Chirchik rivers, analysis of the impact of CDW discharges on water bodies, and measures to reduce these impacts. To further deepen cooperation and develop joint projects to improve the Syr Darya River Basin, Commission members expressed their willingness to hold future meetings with expanded participation, including experts from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

The meeting also reviewed the outcomes of the RWG-WQ meeting held on [December 13](#) in Astana and the UNECE project "Strengthening action in Uzbekistan on water, sanitation and protection of water resources from accidental pollution in the face of climate change." Based on the meeting results, the parties approved the Work Plan for 2024.

4.1.5. Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan

High-level contacts

In 2023, the President of Tajikistan paid **working visits** to Kyrgyzstan to take part in the [II EU-Central Asia Summit](#) (Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan, [June 2](#)) and in the [meeting of the Council of Heads of CIS Member States](#) (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, [October 13](#)). In his turn, the President of Kyrgyzstan had a **working visit** to Tajikistan to take part in the [5th Consultative Meeting of the Heads of CA States](#) (Dushanbe, Tajikistan, [September 14](#)). As part of these visits, the heads of state discussed the topical issues and prospects of the Kyrgyz-Tajik bilateral cooperation, priorities of the regional and international agenda. The Presidents also paid particular attention to delimitation and demarcation of the Kyrgyz-Tajik state border, as earlier discussed on the sidelines of the 78th UNGA session (New York, USA, [September 19](#)) and during **telephone conversations** ([January 14](#)).

Joint Kazakh-Uzbek Working Group on developing proposals for deepening bilateral water cooperation⁵⁸

As of 1 January 2024, the Working Group has convened eight times: December 8-9, 2016 in Tashkent; February 15, 2017 in Shymkent; April 12, 2017 in Tashkent; November 7-8, 2017 in Astana; May 3-4, 2018 in Kyzylorda; February 26, 2019 in Almaty; November 5, 2019 in Almaty, and March 2, 2023 in Shymkent.

During the 8th meeting in 2023, the parties discussed: a draft agreement between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan on joint management and use of transboundary water bodies; the development of a draft regional strategy for the rational use of transboundary water resources in Central Asia.

Other bilateral working groups

In 2023, the parties held the following meetings: (1) 20th Intergovernmental Commission Meeting, which resulted in the signing of the Roadmap for the International Center for Industrial Cooperation "Central Asia", a Joint Action Plan on labor activities and migrant worker rights protection, and the 20th meeting protocol (Tashkent, Uzbekistan, [May 5](#)); (2) 1st Interparliamentary Council Meeting, which discussed the approval of the intergovernmental agreement on transboundary water bodies and the creation of an international water and energy consortium in Central Asia. The Statute of the Interparliamentary Council was also signed (Tashkent, Uzbekistan, [October 26](#)); (3) Working Group Meetings on Cooperation Projects and Import Substitution, focused on the development of the draft [intergovernmental agreement](#) on transboundary water bodies ([February 27](#), [March 2](#) in Shymkent; [July 17](#) in Astana; [December 4](#) via video conference).

Bilateral water-related arrangements

On [July 27](#), delegations from Batken district, Kyrgyzstan and Isfara district, Tajikistan met to discuss, among other issues, delivery of necessary quantities of irrigation water through canals. The meeting took place in the border area between Orto-Boz village, Kyrgyzstan, and Hochai-Alo village, Tajikistan.

Other bilateral arrangements

The topographical working groups on delimitation and demarcation of the Kyrgyz-Tajik state border met several times in the course of the year ([October 12-18](#), [November 1-8](#) and [December 17-23](#) in Buston, Tajikistan; [December 8-14](#) in Batken, Kyrgyzstan). As of December, they, reportedly, reached agreement on more than 90% of the shared border.

⁵⁷ since 2019, regular meetings of the Commission have been held with the support of the Blue Peace Central Asia (SDC) Initiative implemented by CAREC

⁵⁸ established in 2016

4.1.6. Kyrgyzstan-Turkmenistan

High-level contacts

The President of Turkmenistan paid a **working visit** to Kyrgyzstan to take part in the regular meeting of the Heads of CA State. During the visit, the Presidents of Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan **discussed** trade and economic cooperation, as well as collaboration in the energy sector (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, **October 13**).

The President of Turkmenistan received the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan on **January 11** and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan on **November 1** in Ashgabat. During these meetings, the parties discussed advancing bilateral

partnerships in key sectors, including transport, energy, and agriculture. They also explored the implementation of investment projects and collaboration in science, education, culture, sports, and tourism.

Foreign affairs ministers of Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan held negotiations on the sidelines of the **C5+1 Ministerial Meeting** on **February 28** in Astana and the **16th meeting of the Central Asia-Republic of Korea Cooperation Forum** on November 1 in Ashgabat. The parties discussed key aspects of Turkmen-Kyrgyz cooperation in the trade-economic, investment, transport-logistics, and energy sectors, as well as in the area of cultural and humanitarian collaboration.

4.1.7. Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan

High-level contacts

During the **state visit** of the President of Uzbekistan to Kyrgyzstan, the parties engaged in **negotiations** focused on enhancing bilateral cooperation in political, trade-economic, investment, transport-communication, water-energy, and interregional sectors. Discussions included plans for implementing new joint investment projects in industries such as manufacturing, textiles, energy, mining, and agriculture. Particular emphasis was placed on the construction of the Kambartat-1 hydropower plant. The heads of state signed the **Declaration on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Uzbekistan**, reaffirming their commitment to the integrated use of water and energy resources. They also underscored the importance of developing sustainable mechanisms for mutually beneficial cooperation that align with shared interests and needs. Following the talks, the parties **signed** 25 documents, including: (1) Protocol on the Exchange of Instruments of Ratification of the Treaty on Certain Sections of the Uzbek-Kyrgyz State Border; (2) Program of Strategic Trade and Economic Partnership for 2023-2025; (3) Emergency Situations Prevention and Response Agreement; (4) **Memorandum of Understanding** between the Ministry of Energy of Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Energy of Kyrgyzstan on the construction of the Chotkal HPP Cascade; (5) Agreement on Cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture of Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Agriculture of Kyrgyzstan (**January 26-27**).

The President of Kyrgyzstan paid a **working visit** to Uzbekistan to participate in the ECO summit (Tashkent, Uzbekistan, **November 8**). In the course of talks, the heads of state discussed bilateral Uzbek-Kyrgyz cooperation and emphasized the early implementation of major infrastructure projects in the Central Asian region. The President of Uzbekistan had working visits to Kyrgyzstan to attend the II EU-Central Asia Summit (Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan, June 2) and the meeting of the Council of Heads of CIS Member States (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, **October 13**).

During **telephone conversations**, the Presidents of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan discussed key issues related to the development of Uzbek-Kyrgyz relations, multifaceted cooperation, and their comprehensive strategic partnership. They reviewed joint projects in sectors such as machine construction, energy, electrical engineering, textiles, agriculture, and others, while also exchanging views on regional cooperation. (**May 1, July 10, July 24, December 6**).

Joint water commission

The joint water commission between the Ministry of Water Management of Uzbekistan and the Water Resources Service at the Ministry of Agriculture of Kyrgyzstan⁵⁹ was established by the **Agreement between the Ministry of Water Management of Uzbekistan and the Water Resources Service at the Ministry of Agriculture of Kyrgyzstan on water cooperation** (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, November 3, 2022).

Meetings. By 1 January 2024, the Commission have held three meetings: (1) August 19, 2022 in Bulan Sogottu village, Issyk-Kul region, Kyrgyzstan; (2) **April 11-12**, 2023 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The Commission **signed**



⁵⁹ by Decree No.354 dated 25.12.2023, the Water Resources Service at the Ministry of Agriculture of Kyrgyzstan was transformed into the Ministry of Water Resources, Agriculture, and Processing Industry

the agreed schedules of water withdrawals from interstate canals, discussed funding for dam screen repair and automation of the Kasan-Sai (Orto-Tokoy) reservoir, and explored principles for joint water management of the Andijan (Kempir-Abad) reservoir; (3) August 21 in Chok-Tal village, Issyk-Kul region, Kyrgyzstan. The parties focused on implementing water withdrawal schedules from the Orto-Tokoy (Kasan-Sai) reservoir through interstate canals and other issues.

Bilateral water-related arrangements

Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan signed an investment agreement for the construction of the Kambarata-1 HPP in Kyrgyzstan's Jalal-Abad region. Additionally, they established a joint commission to manage the water resources of the Andijan (Kempir-Abad) reservoir⁶⁰. During the 1st meeting of this Commission in 2023, the parties discussed: (1) water withdrawal schedules for 2023; (2) historical reservoir filling and emptying data for the past 30 years; (3) reservoir filling regimes, planned release volumes, and maximum water level

forecasts; (4) mechanisms for joint online monitoring of water releases and bypasses. Following the meeting, the parties signed a protocol (Khana-bad, Uzbekistan, March 10).

The Ministers of Energy from Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan met to discuss energy cooperation. They reached an agreement on the transit of electricity from Turkmenistan to Kyrgyzstan through Uzbekistan's infrastructure for the year 2024 (Tashkent, Uzbekistan, May 18-19).

Other bilateral arrangements

The following meetings took place: (1) 1st meeting of the Uzbek-Kyrgyz Working Group on Agricultural Cooperation⁶¹, where the parties discussed the Roadmap for joint investment projects in the agro-industrial complex for 2023-2025 and signed a Memorandum of Understanding and a meeting protocol (Tashkent, Uzbekistan, March); (2) 10th meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Commission on Bilateral Cooperation between the Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan (Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan, August 16).

4.1.8. Tajikistan-Turkmenistan

High-level contacts

During the **state visit** of the President of Turkmenistan to Tajikistan, the Presidents of the two countries discussed a broad range of interstate relations and exchanged views on key regional and global issues. They reviewed trade and economic cooperation, emphasizing the development of partnerships in industrial cooperation, energy, agriculture, transport, and communication. As a result of the visit, the parties adopted the Declaration on Deepening the Strategic Partnership and signed a total of 23 documents aimed at expanding Turkmen-Tajik relations. Among them was the Roadmap for Expanding Cooperation in Agriculture between the Ministry of Agriculture of Tajikistan and the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan⁶² for 2023-2025 (Dushanbe, Tajikistan, May 10-11).

The President of Tajikistan paid a **working visit** to Turkmenistan to participate in the 1st Trilateral Summit of the Heads of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan (Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, August 4). The President of Turkmenistan made working visits to Tajikistan to attend the Fifth Consultative Meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia and the Meeting of the Council of the Heads of IFAS Founding States (Dushanbe, Tajikistan, September 14). During these events, the heads of state held bilateral meetings to discuss cooperation in the political, trade, economic, humanitarian, and cultural spheres. Particular emphasis was placed on the implementation of agreements reached during the

President of Turkmenistan's state visit to Tajikistan in May.

On January 27 during a **telephone conversation**, the Presidents of Turkmenistan and Tajikistan discussed prospects of development of mutually beneficial cooperation and exchanged views on the topical issues on international and regional agenda.

Political consultations were held at the level of foreign ministers of Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. The parties discussed Turkmen-Tajik relations, cooperation in the areas of economics, trade, energy, transport and logistics, interregional contacts and cultural-humanitarian exchange (Dushanbe, Tajikistan, March 8-9; Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, July 15-16).

Bilateral working groups

On November 27-28, the 12th meeting of the Joint Turkmen-Tajik Intergovernmental Commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation was held in Dushanbe. During the meeting, the parties discussed: key aspects of trade, economic and investment cooperation; intensifying collaboration in energy, water resources, and agriculture; enhancing partnerships in transportation and logistics; developing cooperation in education, science, medicine, culture, and sports. Following the meeting, a protocol was signed. Additionally, a separate meeting was held between the co-chairs of the commission, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan

⁶⁰ by the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic on joint management of water resources of Andijan (Kempir-Abad) reservoir dated November 3, 2022, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

⁶¹ as part of the visit of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic, head of the presidential administration of the Kyrgyz Republic Akybek Japarov from March 8th to 10th

⁶² by Decree No.240 dated July 14, 2023 of the President of Turkmenistan, the Ministry of Agriculture of Turkmenistan was established on the basis of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan

T. Atahallyev and Deputy Prime Minister of Tajikistan Ziyozoda Sulaimon Rizoi. The meeting focused on implementing the Memorandum of Cooperation between

the State Committee for Water Resources of Turkmenistan and the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources of Tajikistan.

4.1.9. Tajikistan-Uzbekistan

High-level contacts

The President of Uzbekistan paid **working visits** to Tajikistan to attend the [Fifth Consultative Meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia and the Meeting of the Council of the Heads of IFAS Founding States](#) (Dushanbe, Tajikistan, [September 14](#)). The President of Tajikistan had a **working visit** to Uzbekistan to take part in the [16th ECO summit](#) (Tashkent, Uzbekistan, [November 9](#)). As part of the visits, the heads of state met to discuss the aspects of future improvement of Uzbek-Tajik relations, strategic partnership and alliance.

The heads of state addressed the matters related to bilateral cooperation in political, trade and economic, industrial, energy, cultural and humanitarian spheres on the sidelines of the [1st China-Central Asia Summit](#) (Xi'an, PRC, [May 18](#)) and the [Gulf Cooperation Council-Central Asia Summit](#) (Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, [July 19](#)).

During **telephone conversations**, the Presidents of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan paid attention to expansion of Uzbek-Tajik relations and cooperation, implementation of cooperation projects in trade, investment, industry, energy, agriculture and other priority areas. ([May 5](#), [July 10](#), [July 24](#), [October 5](#)).

Bilateral water-related meetings

A. Nazarov, the First Deputy Minister of Water Management of Uzbekistan, met with officials from the Sughd Region Water Authority and Zafarabad Water Management Division of Tajikistan in the Lower Syrdarya BISA. The meeting aimed to discuss water cooperation, address border area issues, and familiarize the Tajik officials with water management reforms in the Syrdarya region, including PPP projects, specialized water services, and digital technology integration

in Akaltyn, Sardoba, and Khavast districts (Syrdarya region, Uzbekistan, [February 13](#)).

Working Group on integrated transboundary water use in Central Asia

During the state visit of Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to Tajikistan in March 2018, a working group (WG) was established to focus on integrated transboundary water use in Central Asia and Tajikistan. By January 1, 2024, the WG had convened five times. At the 5th WG meeting in 2023 (Dushanbe, Tajikistan), the parties: (1) discussed progress on the project "Rehabilitation of two gauging stations along the interstate Great Fergana Canal and North Fergana Canal"; (2) finalized and approved the draft instruction for joint monitoring at the Patar (Big Fergana Canal) and Sarvat (North Fergana Canal) gauging stations; (3) recognized the necessity for rehabilitation and automation of the Tangivorukh gauging station on the Isfara River.

Cooperation on the Zarafshan River

In [2018](#), the parties reached an agreement on Uzbekistan's participation in the construction and operation of two hydropower plants on the Zarafshan River. In [June 2021](#), the parties signed an agreement on the development of a feasibility study for the construction and operation of a hydropower plant and on the establishment of a joint-stock company. The project consists of two stages: stage 1 – Construction of the 140 MW Yavan HPP to generate 800 million kWh per year (cost: \$282 million); stage 2 – construction of the 135 MW Fondaryo HPP to generate 600 million kWh a year (cost: \$ 270 million). Work on the first stage commenced with the establishment of the joint-stock company "TaUz Hidro" and the completion of geological survey and exploration works. Construction of the Yavan HPP⁶³ began on [June 2, 2022](#).

4.1.10. Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan

High-level contacts

The President of Uzbekistan paid a **working visit** to Turkmenistan to attend the [1st trilateral summit](#) (Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, [August 4](#)). The President of Turkmenistan had a working visit to Uzbekistan to take part in the [16th ECO summit](#) (Tashkent, Uzbekistan, [November 9](#)). The heads of state held meetings on the sidelines of the above events to discuss: (1) how to consolidate efforts of the two countries for resolving the issues of sustainable development; (2) further strengthening of

the Uzbek-Tajik relations and strategic partnership; (3) the issues on the regional and global agenda.

During their **telephone conversations** on [April 15](#), [July 10](#), [July 24](#), [September 22](#), the leaders of the countries focused on enhancing trade and economic cooperation, implementing collaborative projects in key sectors such as industry, energy, agriculture, and transport, and expanding mutually beneficial ties in Central Asia.

⁶³ for more details refer to Section 4 of the Water Yearbooks for [2019](#), [2020](#), and [2021](#)

On the sidelines of the 16th meeting of the Cooperation Forum "Central Asia-Republic of Korea", the foreign ministers of Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan signed the Program of Joint Activities (the 'Roadmap') for further developing cooperation between the two countries in 2023-2024. The document outlines key areas of collaboration, particularly in energy, water management, and environmental protection (Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, [November 1](#)).

Bilateral Commission on water (management) issues

The joint Turkmen-Uzbek Intergovernmental Commission on water issues was established by the [Agreement between the Government of Uzbekistan and the Government of Turkmenistan on the joint Uzbek-Turkmen intergovernmental commission on water issues](#) which was signed on May 26, 2021 (Ashgabat, Turkmenistan). Over 2021-2023, the Commission convened three times: [September 13, 2021](#) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan; [July 1, 2022](#) in Dashoguz, Turkmenistan, and [April 22, 2023](#) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

At the [meeting](#), the parties discussed the removal of the rotating schedule for workers maintaining Uzbekistan's waterworks facilities in Turkmenistan, as well as the automation of the joint water management system for the Amu Darya River and the data exchange. They also addressed issues such as minimizing water losses through joint bank protection and river training work on the Amu Darya, and ensuring smooth water flow.

Additionally, the parties reviewed the restoration of operations at two border posts, 'Tallimarjon-Tallymer-

djen' and 'Drujba-Gazodjak,' and the issuance of entry visas for foreign specialists involved in the 'Karshi Pumping Cascade Rehabilitation Phase III' project, as well as the construction of the cut-off wall at the Sultansanjar Dam of the Tuyamuyun hydroscheme. As a result of the meeting, the Commission signed the Protocol.

Bilateral working groups

The 17th meeting of the Uzbek-Turkmen Intergovernmental Commission on Trade-Economic, Scientific-Technical, and Cultural-Humanitarian Cooperation was held on [March 6](#) in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. During the meeting, the parties discussed the implementation of decisions reached at the [16th meeting](#), the expansion of trade-economic cooperation, and the strengthening of bilateral cooperation in the field of transport. The parties also exchanged views on cooperation in the energy, agriculture, water, and other sectors. As a result of the Intergovernmental Commission's work, the relevant Protocol was signed.

Commission on Water Allocation in the Amu Darya lower reaches

Water cooperation between Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan is also maintained within the framework of the Commission on Water Allocation in the Amu Darya Lower Reaches, which includes the BWO Amu Darya. In 2023, the Commission held 15 meetings. By January 1, 2024, the Commission had convened a total of 252 times.

Source: BWO Amu Darya

4.2. Multilateral Collaboration

4.2.1. Trilateral water-related arrangements (Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan)

The energy ministers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan signed the 'Roadmap' for the implementation of the 'Kambarata-1 HPP Construction' project, with a planned capacity of 1,860 MW, on the Naryn River in Kyrgyzstan (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, [January 6](#)). Over the course of the year, the heads of water and energy departments from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan met several times to discuss water and energy cooperation. During these meetings, they reviewed the progress of the 'Roadmap' implementation, the basic principles of cooperation, and the stages of project preparation. Key issues under consideration included the regional water-energy situa-

tion, the current state of the power industry, and the rational use of water resources. They also discussed the protection of the Toktogul reservoir during the summer irrigation period, electricity transit through the power grids of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to the Kyrgyz Republic, and cooperation among the Republics within the Unified Energy System of Central Asia for the 2023-2024 autumn-winter period. Additional topics included the volumes of water releases to agricultural consumers in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan during the growing season through the Uchkurgan HPP (Tashkent, Uzbekistan, [March 15](#) and [July 2-3](#); Astana, Kazakhstan, [August 25](#)).

4.2.2. Trilateral arrangements (Turkmenistan-Tajikistan-Uzbekistan)

On August 4, the first trilateral summit was held in Ashgabat with the participation of the Presidents of Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. During the summit, the heads of state discussed expanding

partnerships in the political, diplomatic, trade, economic, cultural, and humanitarian spheres, and exchanged views on developing cooperation on international and regional platforms. As a result of the summit, a



Joint Statement was adopted and included the following key points from the heads of state: (1) Clause 6. The Parties, recognizing the importance of developing cooperation in the energy sector, emphasized the

particular significance of cooperation in the supply of natural gas, oil, oil products, and electricity; (2) Clause 14. The Parties agreed to conduct joint research and development in areas such as the effective management, protection, and rational use of water resources, ensuring the safety of hydraulic structures, land reclamation, the efficient operation and modernization of water management infrastructure, and the conservation and reuse of water. This would include utilizing the capabilities of existing authorized regional bodies. They also expressed support for strengthening mutually beneficial cooperation between countries on the integrated and rational use of water and energy resources, while considering the interests of their respective states; (3) Clause 15. The Parties stressed the priority importance of the rational use of the Amu Darya River's water resources. They also highlighted the need to further improve multilateral mechanisms to effectively address new challenges, including those related to climate change and the potential increased pressure on the water resources of the Amu Darya River; (4) Clause 16. The Parties emphasized the importance of continued cooperation on climate change mitigation and adaptation, combating desertification, land degradation, glacier melting, environmental protection, early warning systems, ecology, and biodiversity conservation. They called for the promotion of joint initiatives that align with common interests, within both regional and international cooperation frameworks and platforms.

4.2.3. Regional Working Group on Water Quality (RWG-WQ)

The RWG-WQ was established between 2009 and 2012 by UNECE and CAREC as part of the "Water Quality in Central Asia" project. It includes representatives from national departments and ministries of water resources and the environment from the five Central Asian countries (see United Nations and its Specialized Agencies, Water Yearbooks for [2019](#) and [2020](#)).

Since 2019, the following meetings of the RWG-WQ have been held with the support of the Blue Peace Central Asia (SDC) Initiative: on [November 11-12, 2019](#), in Tashkent, Uzbekistan; on [June 30, 2020](#) (via video conference); on [May 21, 2021](#) (via video conference); on [December 13-14, 2021](#), in Almaty, Kazakhstan; and on [December 13, 2022](#), in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. At the regular RWG-WQ meeting in 2023, participants discussed the strategic development of the RWG-WQ as a

community of water quality experts in the region and initiated the process of updating the RWG Charter. To strengthen the RWG-WQ's efforts, SDC proposed involving the group in an inter-basin dialogue on the Syr Darya, funded by Germany, Switzerland, and GIZ. Experts shared updates on institutional reorganizations and the creation of a new environmental ministry in Uzbekistan, the development of water and environmental codes in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, water reforms in Tajikistan, new strategies and programs related to water quality in Kyrgyzstan, and progress on wastewater issues in Turkmenistan. Additionally, international experts presented practices on wastewater reuse, advanced technologies for decentralized wastewater treatment applicable to Central Asia, and other related topics (Astana, Kazakhstan, [December 13](#)).

4.2.4. Regional Working Group (RWG) on a mutually beneficial mechanism for water and energy cooperation under the Green Central Asia Initiative

Since 2022, the RWG held two meetings: one via video conference on May 19, 2022, and another in Almaty on [December 15, 2023](#).

At the second meeting, the results of expert work and recommendations for developing a mutually beneficial mechanism for water and energy cooperation were presented and discussed. CA countries' propo-

sals on this mechanism were also shared. Following the meeting, the parties agreed to continue supporting CA countries by providing expert advice, assessing various economic methodologies and financial instruments, legal mechanisms, and other assistance at the request of the countries.

Source: <https://greencentralasia.org/ru>

