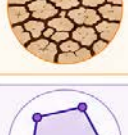
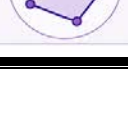


Monitoring results of changes in the water surface and wetland area of the Aral Sea and the Aral Region 23 September 2026

The SIC ICWC conducts continuous remote monitoring of the Western and Eastern parts of the Greater Aral Sea and the water surface of the Southern Aral Sea region using Landsat 8,9 satellite imagery. Based on the satellite images, the areas of open water surface, wetlands, and dried territories within the study polygon were determined. The monitoring results as of 23 September 2026 are presented in Figures 1–2 and Tables 1–6. Figure 3 presents the dynamics of the Amu Darya River discharge at the Samanbay gauging station.

	The Southern Aral Sea region is a natural-geographical area whose territory includes the water bodies of the Amu Darya River delta and the Main South Karakalpak Collector (MSKC).
	Water body is a natural or artificial water feature characterized by specific morphometric parameters (area, volume, depth).
	Water surface refers to the portion of a water body directly covered by open water at a given time; it is one of the main indicators of the water body's condition.
	Wetlands are natural complexes characterized by excessive moisture; they represent part of the water body territory.
	Dried area is a territory previously occupied by water surface but transformed into land due to declining water levels during monitoring; it represents part of the water body territory.
	Polygon is a spatial object representing a closed area with defined boundaries, used for mapping and analysis of territories in satellite imagery.

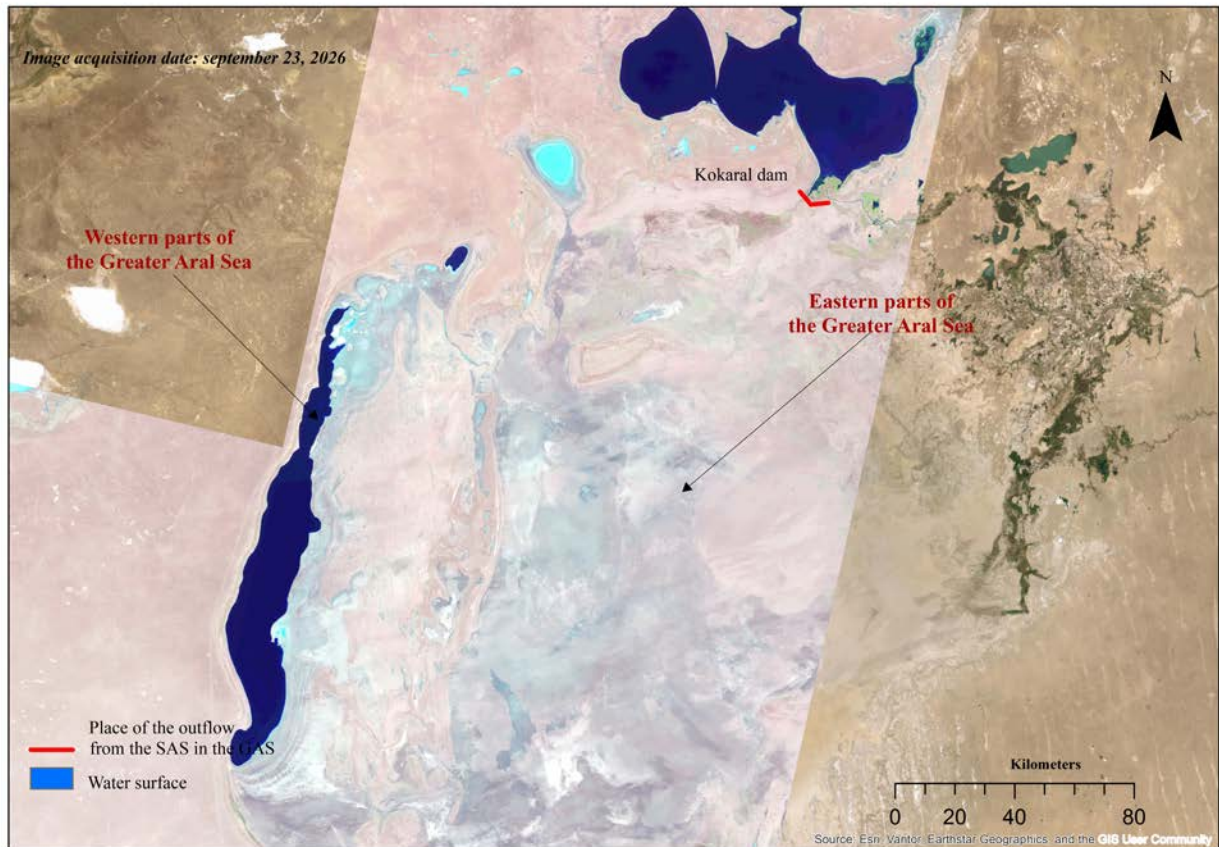


Figure 1. Western and Eastern parts of the Greater Aral Sea based on Landsat 8 imagery (September 23, 2026)

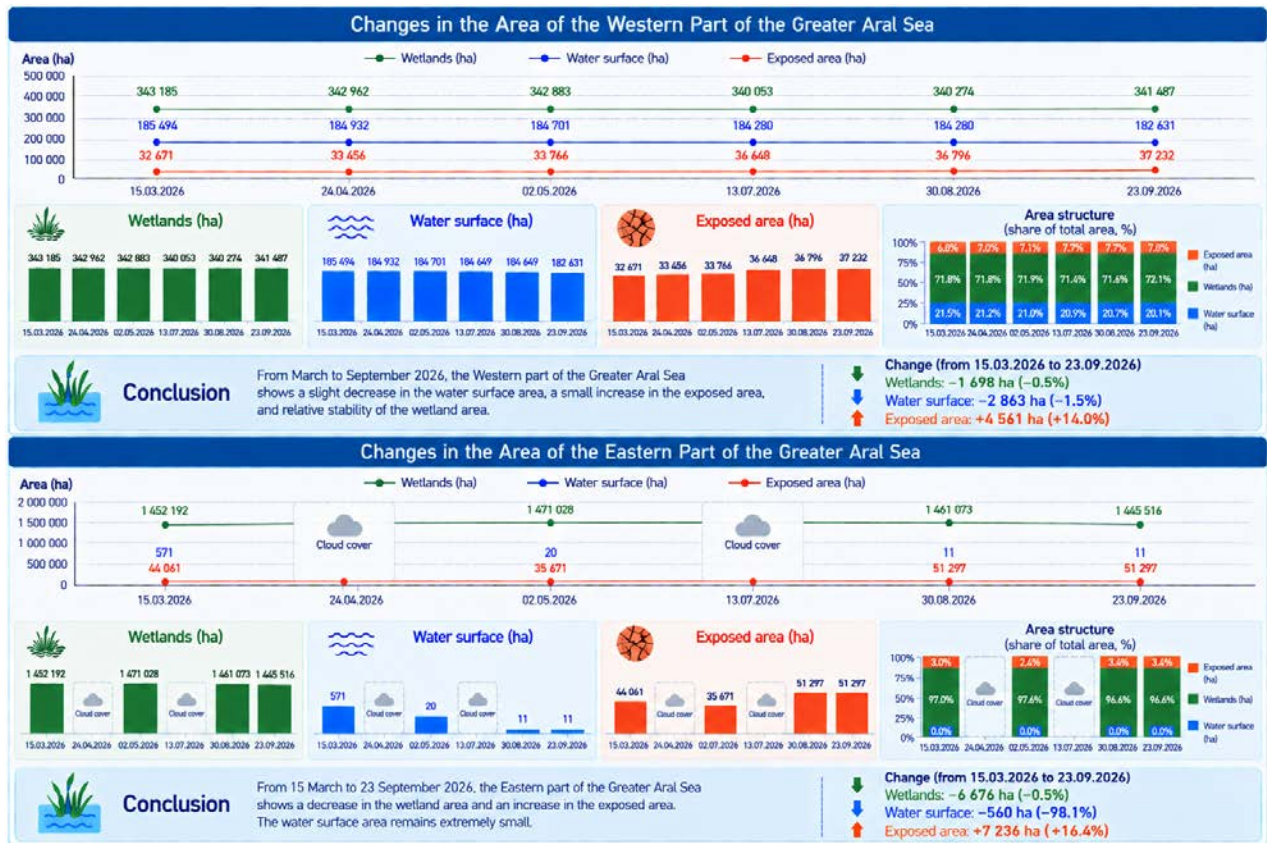
Table 1

The area of wetlands, open water surfaces and dried area in the Western and Eastern parts of the Greater Aral Sea

	23.11.2025	15.03.2026	24.04.2026	02.05.2026	13.07.2026	30.08.2026	23.09.2026
	Western part of the Aral Sea, ha						
Wetland	352274	343185	342962	342883	340056	340274	341487
Water surface	186661	185494	184932	184701	184649	184280	182631
Dried area	22415	32671	33456	33766	36648	36796	37232
	Eastern part of the Aral Sea, ha						
Wetland	1483877	1452192	Cloudy	1471028	Cloudy	1461073	1445516
Water surface	37	571		420		80	11
Dried area	12910	44061		33766		35671	51297

Following the regression of the Aral Sea, zones with shallow groundwater tables (0.5–3 m) formed on the desiccated seabed, facilitating capillary moisture rise and the maintenance of moist

soils. These hydrogeological conditions provide the basis for the persistence of wetlands and the development of hydrophilic vegetation even in the absence of open surface water¹.



¹ Sektimenko V. The change in soil cover on the exposed bed of the Aral Sea. Journal of Marine Systems, 47(1–4), 121–125. DOI: 10.1016/j.jmarsys.2003.12.014

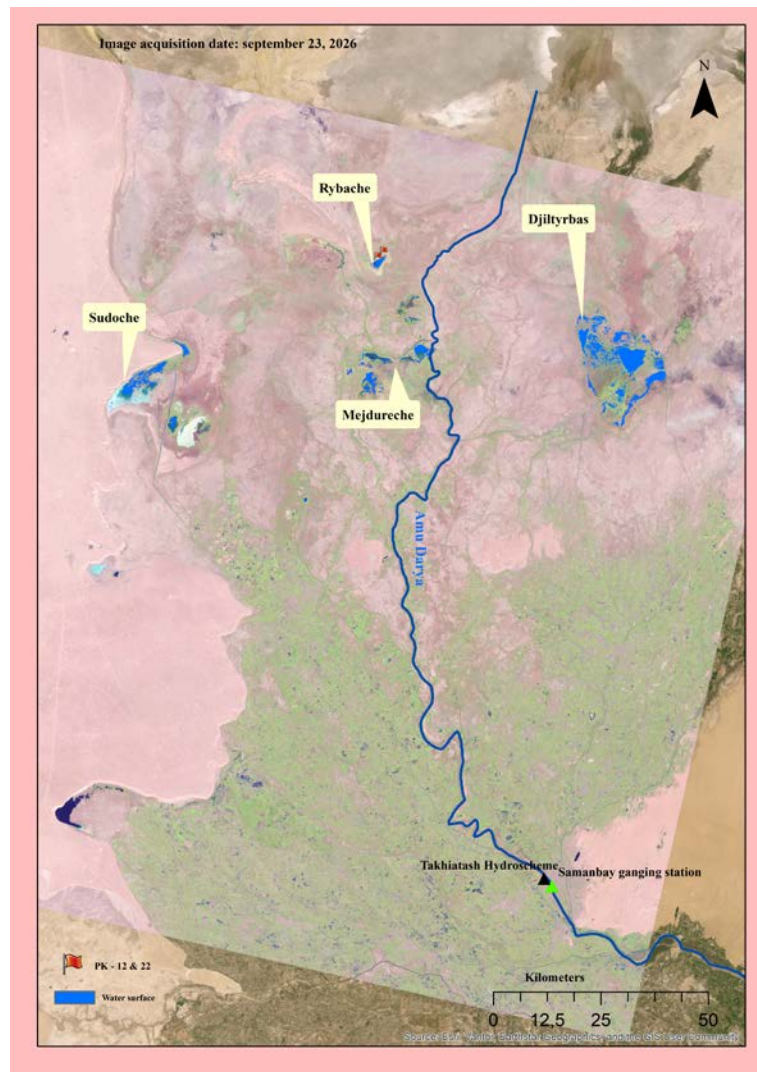


Figure 2. Southern Aral Sea region based on Landsat 9 imagery (September 23, 2026)

Table 2

Wetland areas of the Southern Aral Sea region, ha

Water body	15.03.2026	02.05.2026	27.06.2026	13.07.2026	30.08.2026	23.09.2026
Sudoche	23170	8223	5280	7973	7404	8265
Mejdureche	4301	715	634	805	965	985
Rybache	1668	123	113	147	112	101
Muynak	3863	537	129	56	48	54
Djilyrbas dam-terminated	17251	13167	1745	713	598	887
Djilyrbas (together with former right and left streams)	35929	6058	407	377	888	1064
Dumalak	1731	21	4	4	1	0
Makpalkul	993	535	23	63	40	43
Mashan Karadjar	2826	602	206	118	75	102

Water body	15.03.2026	02.05.2026	27.06.2026	13.07.2026	30.08.2026	23.09.2026
Water surface southward of Muynak	3554	21	0	0	0	0
Water surface southward of Kazakhdarya	1453	10	0	0	0	0
Zakirkol	70	39	19	15	25	35
Total:	96809	30051	8560	10271	10156	11536

Table 3

The area of open water surface in the Southern Aral Sea region, ha

Water body	15.03.2026	02.05.2026	27.06.2026	13.07.2026	30.08.2026	23.09.2026
Sudoche	8198	12227	6228	5785	3245	2242
Mejdureche	11718	9952	4182	5762	2441	2035
Rybacha	1543	1035	233	374	123	307
Muynak	1454	320	43	15	9	9
Djilyrbas dam-terminated	12787	10654	5007	4741	4051	3484
Djilyrbas (together with former right and left streams)	1324	2606	69	18	28	15
Dumalak	2	0	0	0	0	0
Makpalkul	1817	817	56	128	72	100
Mashan Karadjar	1083	1026	284	198	48	40
Water surface southward of Muynak	158	0	0	0	0	0
Water surface southward of Kazakhdarya	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zakirkol	449	476	148	147	116	75
Total:	40533	39113	16250	17168	10133	8307

Table 4

Dried area in the Southern Aral Sea region, ha

Water body	15.03.2026	02.05.2026	27.06.2026	13.07.2026	30.08.2026	23.09.2026
Sudoche	41329	52247	61189	58939	62048	62190
Mejdureche	21765	27117	32968	31217	34378	34764
Rybach	8282	10335	11147	10972	11258	11085
Muynak	10847	15307	15992	16093	16107	16101
Djilyrbas dam- terminated	17434	23651.39	40720	42018	42823	43101.39
Djilyrbas (together with former right and left streams)	61698	90287	98475	98556	98035	97872
Dumalak	14317	16029	16046	16046	16049	16050
Makpalkul	5874	7332	8605	8493	8572	8541
Mashan Karadjar	23292	25573	26711	26885	27078	27059
Water surface southward of Muynak	5893	9584	9605	9605	9605	9605
Water surface southward of Kazakhdyra	3298.5	4741.5	4751.5	4751.5	4751.5	4751.5
Zakirkol	2272.3	2276.3	2624.3	2629.3	2650.3	2681.3
Total:	216302	284480	328834	326205	333355	333801

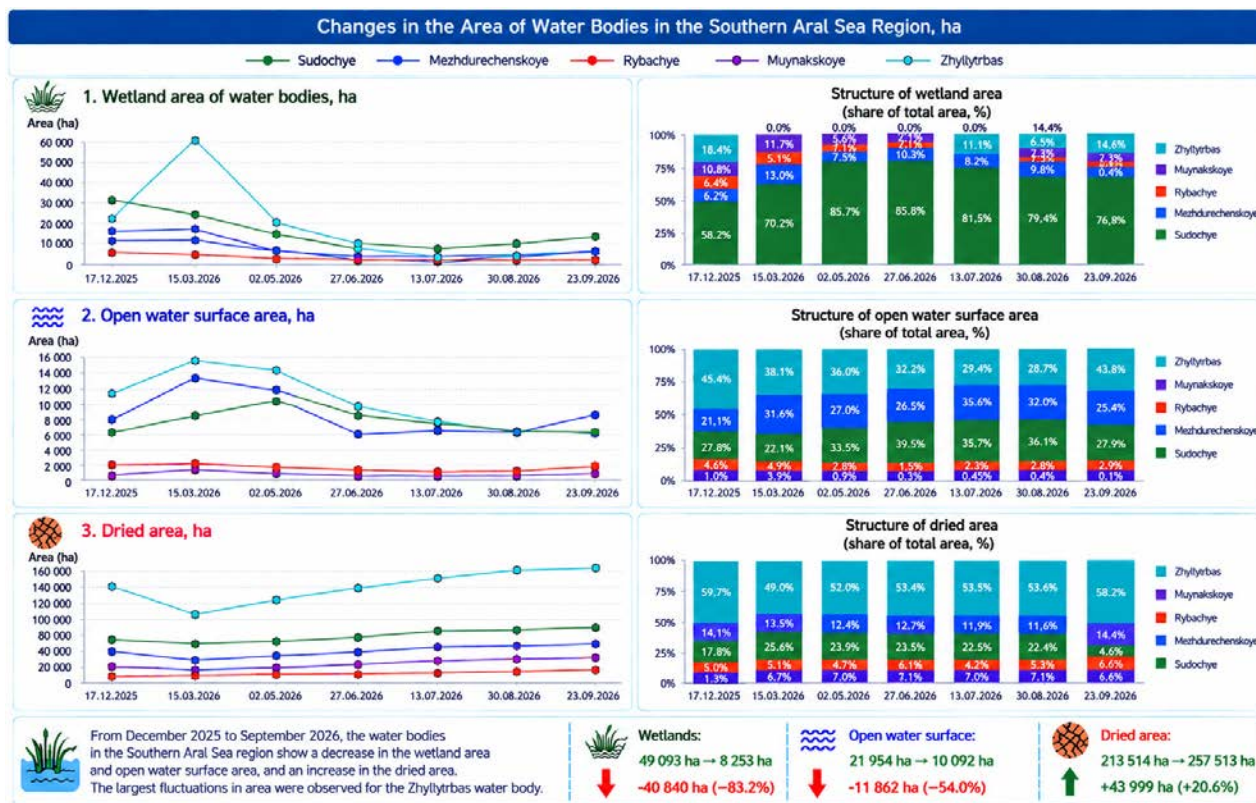


Figure 3. Dynamics of the Amu Darya River runoff at the Samanbay gauging station

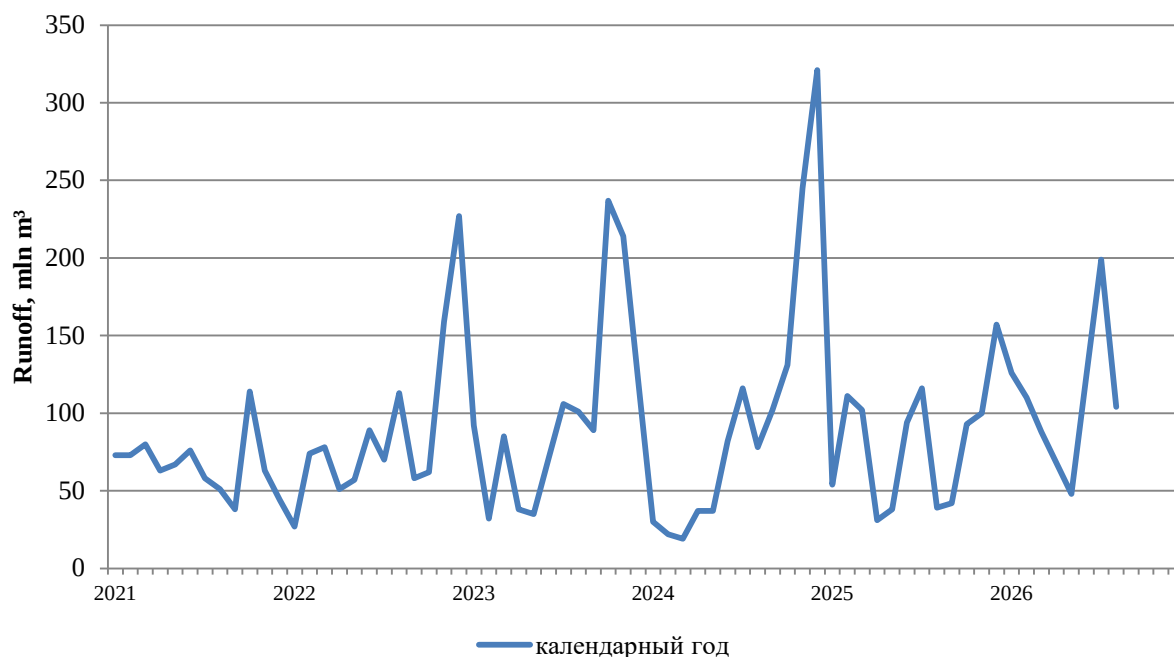


Table 5

Inflow to the Southern Aral Sea region, mln m³

Month	Delta			MSKC***	Total
	From Amu Darya River*	From canal systems**	Collector-drainage runoff**		
January	126	46	41	17	230
February	110	38	33	21	202
March	88	0	75	36	199
April	68	0	107	52.6	227.6
May	48	0	67	174.7	289.7
June	123	0	54	211.3	388.3
July	199	0	60	59.13	318.13
August	104	0	100	45.44	249.44

*Source: Uzhydrometeoservice (Samanbay) (fig. 2)

** Source: Ministry of Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Suenli, Bozatau, and Kyzketken canals), (collectors KS-1, KS-3, KS-4, and KKS)

***Source: BWO “Amu Darya”

Table 6

Outflow to the Greater Aral Sea, mln m³

Month	From Amu Darya River*	MSKC**	Outflow from SAS***	Total
January	0	17	0	17
February	0	21	0	21
March	0	36	0	36
April	0	52.6	0	52.6
May	0	174.7	0	174.7
June	0	211.3	0	211.3
July	0	59.13	0	59.13
August	0	45.44	0	45.44

* Aral Sea Delta Management Authority, Rybachye Dam, PK 12 and PK 22 (fig. 2)

**Source: BWO “Amu Darya”

*** The National Hydrometeorological Service of Kazakhstan (fig. 1)

The monitoring results are as follows:

1. **Western part of the Aral Sea.** As of 23 September 2026, compared with August 2026, the water surface area decreased by 1,649 ha, while the wetland and dried areas increased by 1,213 ha and 436 ha, respectively.

2. **Eastern part of the Aral Sea.** As of 23 September 2026, compared with August 2026, the water surface area decreased by 69 ha, the wetland area decreased by 15,557 ha, while the dried area increased by 15,626 ha.
3. **Water bodies of the Southern Aral Sea region.** As of 23 September 2026, compared with August 2026, the total wetland area increased from 10.1 thousand ha to 11.5 thousand ha. The open water surface area decreased from 10.1 thousand ha to 8.3 thousand ha, while the dried area increased from 333.3 thousand ha to 333.8 thousand ha.
4. **Inflow to the Southern Aral Sea region.** In August 2026, the inflow volume amounted to 249.44 million m³. The main contribution was provided by the flow of the Amu Darya River, with additional water supply from canals and the collector-drainage system.

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