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IFAS

**REPORT ON THE REGIONAL MEETING CAPACITY BUILDING FOR COOPERATION OF
DAM SAFETY IN CENTRAL ASIA¹**

Almaty, Kazakhstan, 2-3 March, 2011

¹ This report has been issued without formal editing by the Environment Division of UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

A. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

1. The Regional meeting on cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia has held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, from 2 to 3 March, 2011. The meeting was organized by the Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), in close collaboration with the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS) and the Executive Board of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea in the Republic of Kazakhstan (EB IFAS).

2. The meeting was conducted under the framework of the second phase of the project "Dam safety in Central Asia: Capacity Building and Regional Cooperation", which is conducted by the UNECE under the financial support from the Government of Finland and the additional funding provided by the Government of the Russian Federation. The project undertaken under the auspices of the SPECA PWG-Water/Energy as a contribution to the implementation of the SPECA Cooperation Strategy on Rational and Efficient Use of Water and Energy Resources in Central Asia was aimed at strengthening national capacity in dam safety and improving the regional cooperation.

1. Purpose of the Meeting

3. The meeting is called to identify further actions to achieve the harmonization in the basic legislative framework of relevant national regulations, regulatory and technical documentation, regulatory efforts to ensure the safety of hydraulic structures (HSs), and continuing work on drafting the regional agreement on dam safety cooperation as well as to proposals for priority areas of cooperation to ensure the safety of hydraulic structures at national and regional levels. In addition, the purpose of this event was to exchange relevant experiences among the participants.

2. Participants

4. The meeting was attended by 20 participants from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; IFAS was represented by 6 participants. There were also representatives of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), UN Development Programme (UNDP), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), Agency for International Cooperation of the United States (USAID), Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC), Eurasian Development Bank (EDB). Together with the staff of the UNECE secretariat, consultants and representatives of other organizations the meeting attended 45 people. The list of Attendants is shown in the Appendix 1 to this report.

3. Opening Ceremony

5. The Meeting was opened by Mr. Zhumabek Muhatov, the Head of the Operation and Maintenance Department of the Committee on Water Resources, Ministry of Agriculture of the republic of Kazakhstan. He noted that the economies of Central Asia are closely related to the use of transboundary water resources. The flow of transboundary rivers is almost basically regulated by the cascade of reservoirs. The hydraulic structures which regulate the flow of rivers were built decades ago and, according to their age, they require more and more investment for the monitoring of their technical condition, repair and rehabilitation works to ensure their safe operation. However, due to lack of sufficient funding for these purposes, major dams and other hydraulic structures located on transboundary rivers, have started to constitute a growing threat to human life and health in Central Asia. He stressed that to ensure the safety of large dams on transboundary waters it is necessary to continue to improve regional cooperation and harmonization of national regulatory frameworks on safety of hydraulic structures and training of relevant personnel. He noted that it is required to reach the conclusion of the regional agreement on dam safety cooperation in the Central Asia. In conclusion, Mr. Zhumabek Muhatov confirmed Kazakhstan's interest in cooperation on safety of hydraulic structures and wished participants successful deliberations.

6. Bo Libert, Regional Adviser on Environment, Housing and Land Management Division UNECE in his address drew attention to the fact that the second phase of the Project "Dam Safety in Central Asia: Capacity Building and Regional Cooperation" is nearing to completion. He briefly mentioned the progress made and thanked the national project coordinators and experts for their contribution to the project and also thanked the EC IFAS and EB IFAS for their cooperation with the UNECE in the project. He called on the representatives of the countries to comment on possible ways and forms of further cooperation in ensuring safety of hydraulic structures in the region. Mr. Bo Libert noted that several projects relating to cooperation on safety of hydraulic structures, are included in the Action Programme to assist countries in the Aral Sea Basin for the period of 2011-2015 years (ASBP-3), under which it will be possible to develop regional cooperation in this region.

7. Mr. Sagit Ibatullin, Chairman of the EC IFAS greeted the participants of the meeting. He noted that EC IFAS has worked in close cooperation with the UNECE in order to support cooperation between the countries of Central Asia to ensure safety of HSs. He also noted that the countries in the region have expressed their willingness to continue cooperation in this field, to assume greater responsibility in the organization of cooperation and take particular actions to improve the safety of hydraulic structures, especially the hydraulic structures of the interstate status built on transboundary rivers. Mr. Sagit Ibatullin also pointed out that the establishment and strengthening of regional institutional platform for cooperation on dam safety will contribute to achieving the objectives defined in the Declaration of the Heads of States - members of the IFAS dated April 28, 2009. In conclusion, he wished fruitful work to the meeting.

4. Election of Chairs

8. Messrs. Iskeneder Dzholdoshaliev, the Head of Technical Policy and Investment of the State Committee for Water Management and Reclamation of Kyrgyzstan; Mavlon Kazakov, Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan in the EC IFAS; Kurbangeldy Ballyev, Representative of Turkmenistan to the EC IFAS, and Shukhrat Talipov, Chairman in charge of the State Inspectorate for the Control and Supervision of the technical condition and safety of major and strategically important hydraulic structures under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Gosvodkhoz nadzor), have chaired the sessions of the meeting.

5. Adoption of the Agenda

9. The following agenda of the meeting has been adopted:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Election of Chairs and adoption of the agenda of the meeting
3. On implementation of the project "Dam Safety in Central Asia: Capacity Building and Regional Cooperation"
4. Review of the safety of hydraulic structures in Central Asia: Status of national regulatory frameworks on safety of hydraulic structures
5. Support of the international organizations and financial institutions for cooperation in ensuring safety of hydraulic structures in Central Asia
6. On the development of the Regional Agreement on cooperation of hydraulic structures safety
7. On the assistance to the countries concerned in improving national legislation on safety of hydraulic structures
8. On the harmonization of regulatory, legislative and technical documentation for the safety of hydraulic structures in Central Asia
9. On priorities for further development of project activities at national and regional levels
10. Formulation of recommendations of the meeting
11. Others
12. Closure of the meeting

10. The program of the Regional Meeting on Dam Safety Cooperation in Central Asia is presented in Appendix 2.

B. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

11. In respect to item 3 of the Agenda “On the implementation of the project “Dam Safety in Central Asia: Capacity Building and Regional Cooperation”, Mr. Bo Libert, informed the participants on the progress and key outcomes achieved during the implementation of its second phase of the project "Dam Safety in Central Asia: Capacity Building and Regional Cooperation".

12. In respect to item 4 of the Agenda, "Overview of activities to enhance the safety of hydraulic structures in Central Asia. Status of national regulatory frameworks on safety of hydraulic structures ", the National Project Coordinators provided brief presentations on the status of national regulatory frameworks in their respective countries. In particular, it was noted that Kazakhstan has reconsidered the possibility of developing and adopting a separate law on safety of hydraulic structures. In Kyrgyzstan, in accordance with the amendments to the Water Code, it is planned to establish a National Commission on Dams as a state regulator to ensure the safety of hydraulic structures; in Tajikistan the Law on dam safety has entered into force since the January 1, 2011 and now a lot of work shall be undertaken to establish new organizational structures to meet the provisions of the Law. Turkmenistan considers proposals to improve legislation for the State Control over the safety of hydraulic structures while in Uzbekistan the amendments to the Law on the Safety of Hydraulic Structures adopted in 1999 are awaiting the approval in the parliament.

13. In respect to item 5 of the Agenda, “Support of the international organizations and financial institutions for cooperation in ensuring safety of hydraulic structures in Central Asia”, the representatives of GIZ, EDB, the OSCE and UNDP informed the meeting about their activities to improve the safety of hydraulic structures in the Central Asian countries and their support to the regional cooperation in this area. The representative of the GIZ, in particular, referred to the recently completed project on establishment of the system for monitoring the technical condition of Ravathodzhinsky Hydrosite in Uzbekistan and on conduction of the regional workshop on sustainable and safe operation of large hydraulic structures in Central Asia, held in Tashkent in November 2010 organizes jointly with the assistance provided by the UNECE. The representative of the EDB has confirmed their interest in the countries' efforts to ensure the safe operation of hydraulic structures, and reported that the bank has financed the drafting of a regional report on the safety of hydraulic structures, prepared by EC IFAS. He also mentioned about the contribution of the bank to the budget of an international training course on safety of hydraulic structures for high-level managers from the countries of Central Asia, held in August 2010 in Moscow. The OSCE representative spoke about the long-term support to the cooperation between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on safe operation of interstate facilities in Chu-Talas Rivers Water Commission (CHTVK).The representative of UNDP stated its intention on rendering support to the project on improvement of safety of the Kirov dam on the river Talas in Kyrgyzstan.

14. In the discussion of agenda item 6 on the development of a regional agreement on cooperation in the field of safety of hydraulic structures, it was noted that significant progress was achieved in drafting this agreement, the latest version of which dated September 24, 2009 was circulated amongst the foreign ministries in the region by the EC IFAS on October 2, 2009 along with the request letter to issue comment and proposals. However, it was noted that not all countries have officially replied to this message. Most participants expressed their opinion on continuation of further work on the draft regional agreement in accordance with the schedule of the steps listed below in Part II, section "Conclusions and Recommendations".

15. In the discussion on agenda item 7 on the assistance of the countries concerned in improving national legislation on safety of hydraulic structures, it was noted that some improvement has been achieved in the national legislations and institutional arrangements. It was also commonly agreed that in spite of the above achievements it is necessary to continue cooperation to improve national legal frameworks and institutional structures to ensure state regulation in safety of hydraulic structures.

16. In the discussion on agenda item 8, "On the harmonization of regulatory, legislative and technical documentation for the safety of hydraulic structures in Central Asia", the opinion that the revised draft model technical regulations on safety of hydraulic structures requires a further consideration in each country concerned prior getting the approval at the next final meeting of the project has prevailed in the discussion.

17. On agenda item 9, "On priorities for further development of project activities at national and regional levels ", the meeting presented a wide range of topics for further regional cooperation in the field of safety of hydraulic structures. It was proposed to identify the priorities out of all proposals in order to further address them to the potential donors for financial support.

C. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

18. The meeting took the following decisions and recommendations on the agenda:

I. On the preparation of documentation for regulatory and technical regulation of safety of hydraulic structures

1. The model version of the draft technical regulation "On safety of hydraulic structures" shall be adopted as a basic document.
2. National Project Coordinators shall submit to the secretariat of the project any comments and suggestions to this document until April 1, 2011.
3. The final version of the draft model technical regulations "On safety of hydraulic structures" shall be submitted for approval at a regional meeting of the project which is scheduled on June 2011.

II. On the draft Agreement on Cooperation in the field of safety of hydraulic structures in Central Asia

1. The work on the draft regional agreement on safety of hydraulic structures, based on the version of September 24, 2009 shall be continued.
2. The EC IFAS shall be asked to address the relevant Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Central Asian states with the request to issue their comments and proposals to the draft agreement dated September 24, 2009 before May 1, 2011.
3. The UNECE secretariat shall be requested to prepare a consolidated draft of the agreement, incorporating the suggestions of the Central Asian states in its version dated September 24, 2009 and submit it the Executive Committee of IFAS prior June 1, 2011.
4. The EC IFAS shall be requested to arrange the meeting of the experts - representatives of the countries concerned to finalize the draft agreement under possible financial support of the UNECE.
5. The EC IFAS shall be requested to inform the Board of IFAS on the progress in preparing the draft agreement.

III. On future possible project activities

1. The selection, formulation and implementation of specific projects for the next phase of cooperation in the field of safety of hydraulic structures shall be made in compliance with the regional project of the UNECE on dam safety with the use of already accumulated outcomes of the project in future work.
2. The List of proposed areas for cooperation to ensure the safety of hydraulic structures in Central Asia as given in the Annex 3 shall be taken as a basic priority list for further activity.
3. The National Project Coordinators shall identify the priorities from the Priority List in close consultation at the national level and inform the Secretariat of the project before May 1, 2011.
4. The Project Secretariat shall prepare brief project proposals in priority areas and send them to the National Coordinators before May 15, 2011.
5. The project proposals shall be submitted for consideration at the regional meeting of the project, which scheduled in June 2011.
6. The National Coordinators shall consider establishing an expert group to provide consultation on various aspects of safety of hydraulic structures to the countries concerned based on their request.

IV. On establishment of the Working Group on the Implementation of projects on safety of hydraulic structures under the auspices of the IFAS

1. The inclusion of several areas of cooperation relating to the safety of hydraulic structures in ASBP- 3 has been noted with satisfaction.

2. The request to support the implementation of ASBP-3 projects referred to cooperation on safety of hydraulic structures shall be addressed to the international community.
3. The EC IFAS shall be requested to consider establishing a working group consisting of representatives from countries concerned and collaborating international organizations to coordinate the implementation of ASBP- 3 projects on the safety of hydraulic structures.

V. Others

1. The National Project Coordinators shall finalize the report on the UNECE questionnaire in accordance with the comments made during the meeting and submit the report to the secretariat of the project before April 1, 2011.
2. High appreciation shall be expressed to the UNECE for its support and taking a leading role in the implementation of the project on dam safety cooperation in Central Asia. The UNECE management shall be requested to provide further assistance and keep its leading role in implementing the follow-up project activities in this area.
3. The appreciation for rendering support to the project shall be expressed to the Government of Finland and the Government of the Russian Federation.
4. The appreciation for supporting the efforts of Central Asian countries to ensure the safety of hydraulic structures shall be expressed to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Eurasian Development Bank.
5. The gratitude shall be expressed to the Executive Board of IFAS in Kazakhstan for its excellent organization of the meeting.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
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Almaty, Kazakhstan, 2-3 of March, 2011

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PROGRAMME

Regional meeting of the project “Capacity-building for cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia”,
2-3 March 2011, Almaty Kazakhstan

The Meeting is held in the the Alтын Kargaly Hotel, conference room, Zhandosov Street 204a, Almaty, Kazakhstan

Wednesday, 2 March, 201	
09:00 – 09:30	Registration
First Session	
09:30 – 9:45	<p>Opening Ceremony</p> <p><i>Chair – Mr. Zhumabek Mukhatov, Kazakhstan</i></p> <p>Welcoming remarks on behalf of the Government of Kazakhstan</p> <p><i>Mr. Zhumabek Muhatov, the Head of the Operation and Maintenance Department of the Committee on Water Resources, Ministry of Agriculture of the republic of Kazakhstan</i></p> <p>Welcoming remarks on behalf of the UNECE</p> <p><i>Mr. Bo Libert, UNECE Regional Adviser on the Environment</i></p> <p>Welcoming remarks on behalf of EC-IFAS</p> <p><i>Mr. Sagit Ibatullin, Chairman of the Executive Committee, IFAS</i></p>
09:45 – 10:00	<p>Adoption of Agenda</p> <p>Presentation of the Programme of the Meeting:</p> <p><i>Mr. Bo Libert, UNECE</i></p>
10:00 – 10:30	<p>Progress report on the second phase of the project: “Capacity-building for cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia ”<i>Mr. Bo Libert, UNECE</i></p>
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee –break
11:00 – 12:30	<p>Review on the activities of Central Asian countries on the improvement of safety of hydraulic structures: The national legal basis.</p> <p><i>National Project Coordinators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Mr. Medet Ospanov, Kazakhstan;</i> – <i>Mr. Iskander Djoldoshaliyev, Kyrgyzstan;</i> – <i>Mr. Akbarkhoja Nabiyev, Tajikistan;</i> – <i>Mr. Kurbangeldy Ballyev, Turkmenistan;</i> – <i>Mr. Timur Kamalov, Uzbekistan.</i> <p><i>Mr. Yuri Steklov, Consultant</i></p>
12:30 – 13:00	Discussion
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
Second Session	
Promotion of Cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia by international organizations and financial institutions	
<i>Chair – Mr. Kurbangeldy Ballyev, Turkmenistan</i>	
14:00 – 14:10	Introductory remarks: <i>Mr. Bo Libert, Regional Adviser UNECE</i>
14:10 – 15:00	- <i>Representative of UN Regional Center of Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia;</i>

	<p>–<i>Representative of the GIZ Programme “Transboundary Water Resources Management in Central Asia”;</i></p> <p>– <i>Representative of the Eurasian Development Bank;</i></p> <p>– <i>Representative of EC/UNDP project ”IWRM and Transboundary Dialogue in Central Asia”;</i></p> <p>– <i>Representative of OSCE;</i></p> <p>– <i>others</i></p>	
15:00 – 15:30	<p>– Possible projects on improvement of dam safety</p> <p><i>Representatives of Central Asian countries</i></p> <p>– On the survey of the Joint Group of experts from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on the condition of the Kirovsky reservoir dam located on the Talas river</p> <p><i>Representatives of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan</i></p> <p>– On the IFAS project on dam safety</p> <p><i>Representatives of the EC IFAS</i></p>	
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee-break	
16:00 – 18:00	Round Table Discussion: Identification of priorities for the further support of cooperation on safety of hydraulic structures in Central Asia from international organizations and financial institutions.	
Thursday, 3 March, 2011		
Meeting of Working Groups		
	<p>Working Group on draft agreement on cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia</p> <p><i>Chairman – Mr. Mavlon Kazakov, Tajikistan</i></p>	<p>Working Group on harmonization of legal and technical regulation on dam safety in Central Asia countries</p> <p><i>Chairman – Mr. Iskender Djoldoshaliev, Kyrgyzstan</i></p>
09:00 – 09:30	<p>On draft cooperation agreement on safety of hydraulic structures in Central Asia</p> <p>Brief introduction</p> <p><i>Mr. Yuri Steklov, Consultant</i></p>	<p>Brief information and proposal on activity of the Working Group</p> <p><i>Mr. Erkin Orolbayev, Consultant</i></p>
09:30 – 10:15	<p>Review of the comments of countries to the draft regional agreement on hydraulic safety in Central Asia</p>	<p>On the draft model technical regulation “On Dam Safety”</p> <p><i>Mr. Dimitrii Radkevich, Consultant</i></p>
10:15 – 10:45	Discussion	
10:45 – 11:00	Coffee-break	
11:00 – 12:30	Discussion	
12:30 – 13:00	Adoption of Recommendations	Adoption of Recommendations
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	
Final Session		
<i>Chairman – Mr. Shukhrat Talipov, Uzbekistan</i>		
14:00 – 14:15	Progress report of the Working Group on the draft cooperation agreement on hydraulic structures safety in Central Asia	

	<i>Chairman of the Working Group – Mr. Mavlon Kazakov, Tajikistan</i>
14:15 – 14:30	Discussion
14:30 – 14:45	Progress report of the Working Group on harmonization of the Central Asian countries legal basis on dam safety <i>Chairman of the Working Group – Mr. Iskender Djoldoshaliev, Kyrgyzstan</i>
14:45 – 15:00	Discussion
15:00 – 16:00	Review of proposal on priorities of further project activities at national and regional levels <i>National Project Coordinators:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Mr. Medet Ospanov, Kazakhstan;</i> – <i>Mr. Iskander Djoldoshaliyev, Kyrgyzstan;</i> – <i>Mr. Khairullo Ibodzoda, Tajikistan;</i> – <i>Mr. Kurbangeldy Ballyev, Turkmenistan;</i> – <i>Mr. Timur Kamalov, Uzbekistan.</i> <i>Mr. Yuri Steklov, Consultant</i> <i>Mr. Bo Libert, Regional Adviser UNECE</i>
16:00 – 16:30	Coffee-break
16:30 – 17:00	Discussion on decision and recommendations
17:00 – 18:00	Approval of decisions, recommendations and report of the Meeting Closing ceremony

The list of possible areas of cooperation to ensure safety of hydraulic structures Central Asia

I. Strengthening national capacity in ensuring safety of hydraulic structures

1. Continued support for the improvement of national regulations on safety of hydraulic structures
2. Support in enforcement of regulations on safety of hydraulic structures:
 - a) Update the regulatory framework
 - b) Insight in normative and technical documents on safety of hydraulic structures employed in other countries
 - c) Development of model systematic documents for technical regulation on safety of hydraulic structures
 - d) Assistance in adapting the model normative and technical documents to the conditions of particular countries
 - e) Facilitate the establishment of national registers / inventories on HSs
3. Support in establishing and strengthening governing organizations in the field of HSs safety
 - a) Raising awareness of administrative staff and staff qualification
 - b) Establishment and strengthening of diagnostic centers and provision them with equipment
 - c) Establishment and improvement of mobile diagnostic laboratories
 - d) Establishment and maintaining of training centers
4. Support in the establishment of diagnostic information systems for HSs (type BING-3 or others)

II. Promote regional cooperation on HSs' safety

A. Support of international cooperation at the regional level

1. Harmonization of national legal documents on the safety of hydraulic structures.
2. Improvement of coordination mechanism between national organizations specialized in safety of hydraulic structures
3. Unification of technical standards on safety of hydraulic structures
4. Improvement of awareness amongst administrative staff involved in the regulation of safety of hydraulic structures
5. Advanced training of staff involved in ensuring safe operation of hydraulic structures
 - a) Cooperation between national training centers on safety of hydraulic structures
 - b) Collaboration with academic training centers in Russian Federation and other countries
6. The development of model HSs safety rules
7. Development of guidelines for determining the residual operation life of potentially hazardous HSs
8. Preparation of Glossary on HSs safety in Russian and English languages, as well as state languages of Central Asian countries
9. Unification of national inventory registers /cadastre of hydraulic structures
10. Ensuring safety of small low-pressure hydraulic structures, some pumping stations and cascades of pumping stations

B. Support to cooperation in the river basin and bilateral levels

1. Cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan on safety of HSs on small rivers in Fergana valley
2. Cooperation between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on safe operation of structures of interstate importance under the framework of the Chu-Talas River Basin Water Management Commission
3. Implementation of pilot project between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to improve safety of operation of the Kirov dam on Talas River