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A Source of Peace - Transboundary Water Management in Central Asia

Effective water resource use in the transboundary Padshaota river basin

Context

Population growth and climate change are factors influencing the decrease in water resources of the transboundary Padshaota River, which runs through Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. As such, there is an urgent need to improve how the river's water resources are managed.

The Padshaota River originates in Kyrgyzstan in the Chatkal Range, flows through Uzbekistan's Namangan Oblast, and then flows back into Kyrgyzstan. The river is fed by mountain glaciers, has a mean basin elevation of about 2,000 metres above sea level, is about 130 km in length, and has a catchment area of 443 km^2. Average annual discharge is estimated at 5.5 m^3 per second.

Around 130,000 people live in the Uzbekistan part of the river basin. The total area of irrigated land in the whole river basin stands at 27,800 ha, of which 24,000 ha are located in Uzbekistan and 3,800 ha in Kyrgyzstan.

According to the water allocation scheme agreed in 1980 between the two riparian countries, 36% of the available water resources of the Padshaota River are used by Kyrgyzstan and 64% by Uzbekistan. Water measurement and allocation is carried out at the Oporniy hydropost located inside Kyrgyzstan, 20 km from the Uzbekistan border.

Objective

The objective of the programme is to improve the livelihoods of local farmers and water users in the Padshaota river basin by developing sustainable water management and integrated co-operation in water resources management between the two riparian countries.

Project name	Transboundary Water Management in Central Asia Programme
Commissioned by	German Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt)
Project region	Namangan Oblast, Uzbekistan
Main partner	Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan
Duration	December 2012 to September 2014

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the programme carries out the following activities in the Uzbek part of the basin:

- Supporting the development of a basin plan for the Padshaota River to ensure the development of integrated water resources management (IWRM).
- Improving record keeping, accounting and data exchange on water resources between the riparian countries and within the Uzbek part of the basin.
- Enhancing the institutional and human capacities of water management organisations in basin planning. It is achievable through a series of training sessions on IWRM principles, water-saving technologies, data management and cooperative partnerships with higher-education institutions.

L. to r.:

1) The Padshaota River
2) The Nanai Headwork

Photos: © GIZ/ Ilkhom Nazarov and Shavkat Rakhmatullaev

Photo credits: ©CAREC/Djamil Kasimov, Natalya Alekseeva

L. to r.:

1) Training on basin planning
2) Seminar on drip irrigation

Measures

Programme activities include both technical measures and institutional capacity building.

The technical component comprises the rehabilitation of important water distribution infrastructure as well as the development of a modern water information system, which includes procuring and installing relevant hardware and software. In addition, a drip irrigation system has been installed on a seven-hectare plot of farmland to demonstrate water-saving technologies to farmers.

The capacity-building component seeks to develop a basin plan based on a comprehensive analysis and assessment of the current water management situation in the Padshaota river basin. This process is supported with a series of training sessions on IWRM, basin planning and transboundary water management covering legal and environmental aspects.

To ensure the wider dessemination of programme results, the programme has included support for a cooperation network between technical water management organisations and scientists.

The network creates synergies by exchanging best practice and transferring knowledge to young water planners. All programme activities are ongoing.

Expected results

The overall outcome sought from programme activities in the Uzbek part of the Padshaota river basin is improved integrated water management that is embedded and operational across all water management levels. This will result in increasing agricultural outputs, which directly benefits local livelihoods. It will also improve transboundary cooperation between the two riparian countries given that the installation of water information systems will ensure the transparent and reliable exchange of information and data on water resources.

Furthermore, a series of training sessions on IWRM principles and basin planning will strengthen the institutional, technical and human capacities of national water management organisations and water consumer associations, and the programme will rehabilitate important hydro-infrastructure in the Padshaota irrigation system.

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