

**HIGH LEVEL PANEL ON WATER (HLPW)
VALUING WATER INITIATIVE
CENTRAL ASIA REGIONAL CONSULTATION**

Thursday, 6 July 2017
Dushanbe, Tajikistan

MORNING OPENING AND WELCOME SESSIONS

1. Welcome and Official Government Statements

The consultation began with formal welcomes from Mr. Sulton Rahimzoda, First Deputy Minister of Energy and Water Resources of the Republic of Tajikistan, Mr. Dirk Jan Kop, Ambassador of Kingdom of the Netherlands to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Ms. Farzona Mukhitdinova of World Bank and Ms. Guljamal Nurmukhamedova, Chair of Regional GWP Central Asia and Caucasus (CACENA).

Welcome remarks by Tajikistan Sherpa – Mr. Sulton Rahimzoda, First Deputy Minister of Energy and Water Resources of the Republic of Tajikistan

Minister Rahimoza explained the High-Level Panel on Water (HLPW), its 13 initiatives and the expectations for Valuing Water consultations to get views on the HLPW valuing water work. He also explained that valuing water ties into the UN Decade for Water. He referred to the existing water stress and the existing global actions to limit it. Water is key to economic and social development as well as to maintaining an equilibrium with the environment, hence its important value. Among the activities undertaken by the High-Level Panel on Water (HLPW) of the United Nations Organisation (UN), was included the upcoming UN Water Decade (2018-2028) in which the Government of Tajikistan is closely involved as well as in working out Principles on Valuing Water, that lead to the Regional Consultations on Valuing Water for Central Asia in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. These consultations will also be held in Bangladesh, Jordan, Mexico, Peru and Senegal, and follow one that was already organized in South Africa.

Welcoming Remarks by Mr. Dirk Jan Kop, Ambassador of Kingdom of the Netherlands to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

Ambassador Kop highlighted that water is a political factor in Central Asia. In history many wars have been fought over scarce water resources, yet it makes more sense nowadays to join forces. He underlined the value of water for peace and security in the region and hence the need for collaboration and improved efficiencies. Ambassador Kop shared 3 messages: water is precious and not free; there is more value to water than price, and; participants input was needed to help make the valuing water exercise work. Having stressed the existing challenges to water management in Central Asia of technical and political character, he referred to the need to raise awareness of all stakeholders of the divergent values of water, and to work out common principles of valuing water to enable all

stakeholders, who have diverging understanding of water values, to “speak a common language” to improve decision making process within the water management.

Welcoming Remarks by Ms. Farzona Mukhitdinova of the World Bank

World Bank (WB) Representative Ms Farzona Mukhitdinova noted that the WB was a co-sponsor of the HLPW and that the world needed a new approach to water management. She noted that the value for water differed among groups and that it is more than economic. She stressed the WB engagement in supporting the UN launched Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among others the Valuing Water Initiative. Among the most important values of water she stressed the social aspects, especially the access to clean drinking water and sanitation, which in Tajikistan, is a sticking issue. She called upon the participating stakeholders to reinforce the need of rethinking our approach to water, keeping in mind the needs of future generations, reinforcing the most basic human right, which is the right to live.

Welcoming Remarks by Ms. Guljamal Nurmukhamedova, Chair of Regional GWP CACENA

GWP Regional Chair Guljamal Nurmukhamedova referred to the GWP Development Agenda and called for maximizing the use of the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) tool in valuing water, as a comprehensive data basis of national experiences and international achievements in integrated approach to water management at all levels. She called up to not to lose the philosophical approach to valuing water referring to the experience and knowledge implemented in the IWRM approach.

2. Official Delegation Remarks

The welcome remarks were followed by official delegation statements. Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Kazakhstan Erlan Nzysanbaev assured participants that views expressed would be considered. Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources of Uzbekistan Shavkat Hamraev said that valuing water initiative was timely and that Uzbekistan was committed to the SDG and the 2030 agenda. He outlined several goals for Uzbekistan which will depend on valuing water. They included water security, technology, cross boundary cooperation in the region, need for interstate cooperation; support for preventive diplomacy, and for revitalization of the Aral Sea. Mr. Yanov Pashiev, representative of the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of Turkmenistan noted that the Central Asian states are united by joint waters; growing demands for water, multiple scenarios of increasing demand for water; the Aral Sea initiative; changing water regimes. He called for “fair” distribution of water.

Several participants shared views on the initiative and what was heard. Most saw the issue as timely and the Aral Sea issue were mentioned again. Participants asked the question, “Where are the fishermen and others impacted by water resources decisions? The observation was made that valuing water is important but that powerful ministers of water should do that in Central Asia. Cost recovery, subsidies and cost recovery were noted as crucial to HLPW initiative. Better water accounting was called for as it would lead to water balancing and more rational use of water. Some participants also noted that when we trade for water it can lead to more effectively use of water. We should cost water resources as a natural resource and have this reflected in balance sheets as part of the eco-system,

Participants were also interested in knowing how other countries joined the HLPW and how it actually functions. It was explained that the UNSG has asked for a plan and UN DESA is producing an action

plan for the HLPW. In addition, there are proposals from Canada to host a Secretariat for the Decade of Water. A High-Level Conference is planned to evaluate progress of the Decade.

INTERACTIVE CONSULTATION WORKSHOP SESSIONS

1. **Interactive Consultation Session:** Presentations and group discussions on examples and experiences of Valuing Water – Brief presentation of Valuing Water theory and some examples from around the world.

Interactive consultation Session 1 sought to explain how the HLPW viewed VW and to discuss how countries in the region viewed and did VW. The session began with a short presentation on how the HLPW viewed valuing water and was followed by open discussions among participants who were invited to share their experiences of VW.

Ms Marion van Schaik, Senior Policy Adviser Water and Environment of the Ministry of Foreign affairs of the Netherlands, presented the concept of valuing water to the participants. Ms van Schaik drew attention to the importance of this emerging concept and to the difficulties of its practical implementation. Finally, several worldwide best practises has been presented to picture the existing actions undertaken across countries reflecting water values from economic, environmental and social perspectives. A number of valuable worldwide examples to increase water efficiency, decrease pollution of water, etc., which strengthen the value of water, were presented. The system of pricing of water from republic of South Africa was recalled. Also, Costa Rica's payments to downstream users for protection of forests were mentioned. Experience from Netherlands, with a watershed taxes and creation of territorial space for flooding were referred to. Water footprint analysis, which is to be conducted as a precondition for receiving of industrial permits in Mexico were named.

The presentation was followed by a moderated discussion to share experiences from Central Asian states of valuing water. Also, lessons from the region that shall be captured in the VW principles were presented. Participants, who were asked what are the 1-2 main lessons about valuing water in the region, came up with a following examples, which are listed below:

1.	Water Tariffs adjusted to specific of basins
2.	Tariffs for water delivery to households and farms
3.	Drip irrigation
4.	Introduction of water effective crops
5.	Hurdles to the interstate cooperation due to existing constrains among counties
6.	Royalties (in the sector of energy)
7.	Water as basis for food and energy security
8.	State policies prioritizing water
9.	State subsidies to water users

10.	Saving of flood water for dry periods
11.	New water saving technologies
12.	Incentives for business for using of eco-sound technologies
13.	Science based decision making on water technologies
14.	Water credits for buying water saving technologies
15.	Reuse of irrigation water
16.	Existence of transboundary institutional cooperation, i.e. Intergovernmental organizations (IFAS, ICWC)
17.	Licensing of water usage according to not accurate assessment of water resources
18.	Mandatory water assessment

2. Interactive consultation session: Valuing Water Initiative: Principles and Preamble Session introduction

Interactive consultation session 2. The session was set in workshop format. Participants were asked for key messages and views to the HLPW. These included actions necessary, proposed modifications to the preamble and draft principles, as well as any stories, tools and other issues that should be taken on board, as part of the proposed amendments. Over 50 stakeholders from a variety of organizations in the region offered 26 messages to the HLPW concerning the preamble and principles.

a. Consultation methodology

Participants were seated in tables of 7-10 participants. Participants were first asked to silently and individually write down one key message to the HLPW. They were then invited to discuss these messages among themselves at each table and to identify the main messages at their table. The facilitator then requested the tables for one main message. After receiving one message from each table, the floor was opened to all tables and individuals to add any other messages that were discussed at the tables.

As these messages were received, they were written on wall charts and simultaneously projected on a large screen. As the messages emerged, discussions around messages among the groups was encouraged. To complete the session, each participant was given 3 “sticker” dots and asked to paste them next to messages they thought most important to send to the HLPW. Participants could distribute dots in any way they desired across the message to indicate what messages they thought most important. Participants were assured that all messages would be preserved but that the resultant distribution of dots indicated the strongest collective feelings among the group at that time.

b. Messages and Issues to the HLPW on the Preamble and Principles

From the around 50 participating stakeholders 26 key messages and comments regarding the draft of the Principles and Preamble were offered to be shared with the HLPW. After an interactive moderated

discussion, the messages proposed to the HLPW were prioritised by the participants starting from the most important one.

The strongest overall message was that there is a need for working out a worldwide acceptable Charter to include water management related principles.

For the preamble, the strongest sense of the group was that the preamble must include a clear reference to the concept of the Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM). As for the principles, the participating stakeholders mostly highlighted that the VW formulation should be based on Dublin Principles.

These and other messages regarding the preamble and principles are listed below, and based on the identified frequency distribution:

1.	Need of development of a Water Charter	18
2.	Generating of new thinking on VW for all stakeholders	15
3.	VW formulation should be based on Dublin Principles	8
4.	Water Sanitation sector shall be main foundation for recycling and waste water	6
5.	In preamble: No reference to IWRM	5
6.	Preamble: add water can be a cause of conflict	4
7.	Selection of areas for other reason like: water and environment and hygiene legislation	4
8.	Replace "value" with "significance" (in Russian translation)	3
9.	No regional specifics included to facilitate socially responsible business	3
10.	No adequate reference to Public Private Partnership concept	3
11.	Preamble #8: add threat of terrorism and war	3
12.	Translation into Russian not accurate	2
13.	Extended financing for fundamental science for water planning to be added	2
14.	Change priority of principles: 2,3 4,	2
15.	Development of economic process, moving from quantities to distributive benefits	2
16.	Russian translation of #2: balance between values	2
17.	# 3 principle: should cover as many water sources as possible	2
18.	Add a need to stimulate business by tax preferences of soft loans	1

19.	Principles 3: add reference to supervise unjustified uncontrolled intakes	1
20.	Preamble: Add human pressure after “growing crises”	1
21.	Change the process of Preamble and Principles preparation using model of international documents	0
22.	Principle #6: Decisions to be justified on benefit and cost analysis	0
23.	Mandatory environment expertise while importing materials, including seeds and fertilizers	0
24.	Preamble: can be improved, use reference to 5 factors (Water, food, air, heat, light) of life instead of 3 - to be proper science	0
25.	Water not as precious but as invaluable – issue of translation into Russian!	0
26.	Preamble, 6: allocation can take different forms – ensures environmental safety	0

3. **Interactive consultation session:** Reflections on messages and political perspectives – Group discussion on political perspectives, messages and possible actions and on how the principles may or may not help in the decision making

Interactive consultation Session 3 encouraged participants/stakeholders to suggest actions that the HLPW and individuals might take in implementing the principles and preamble. Participants generated a list of 16 suggested actions along with much discussion to be completed on how the principles may or may not assist its mandate.

1.	Establish dedicated water body in countries
2.	HLPW institute/enhance implementation of NY 1997 convention
3.	Multi donor trust funds for additional scientific research in water management
4.	Water factor not to be used as war tool or part of warfare – make some sort of convention to do this
5.	Non-downstream country ratified Helsinki – so take into account that all countries implement whether down or upstream – Central Asia should have its own charter
6.	Central Asia convention would be step back – need a global framework (ref #5) International convention would prevail over sovereignty
7.	HLPW can discuss Aral Sea basin

8.	HLPW exist to bring messages of water to countries – need for realistic recommendations adopted by all countries – more research and increase funding good ideas – there are other priorities like energy and power
9.	Need political messages that the HLPW use to push Politicians
10.	HLPW discuss other methods to financing
11.	Water can also cause conflict; use water to avoid war to development strategies
12.	Risk management and better water focus
13.	Do not limit valuing water only as economic so need public awareness to education
14.	Need great new/change thinking - recognition of the broad problem – need to harmonize activities (put self in others place) at all levels to do this
15.	Green farms can generate money need to adjust priorities
16.	In addition to technical and economic analysis need an environmental analysis in feasibility study

CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. Sulton Rahimzoda, First Deputy Minister of Energy and Water resources of the Republic of Tajikistan closed the consultation by reflecting on what he heard and reiterating how the information gained would be used. Referring to the HLWP he sums up the main ideas of the ongoing process to discuss worldwide the values of water- economic, social and environmental. Also, he underlined the importance of the regional consultations as reflection of a bottom-up approach in valuing water.

Appendix 1 - Agenda

08:30 – 09:00	Participants registration
09:00 – 09:30	<p><u>Welcoming Remarks:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Mr. Sulton Rahimzoda – First Deputy Minister of Energy and Water Resources of the Republic of Tajikistan</i> - <i>H.E. Mr. Dirk Jan Kop, Ambassador of Kingdom of the Netherlands to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan</i> - <i>Ms. Farzona Mukhitdinova, Water Resources Specialist, World Bank</i> - <i>Mrs. Guljamal Nurmukhamedova, Chairman of GWP CACENA</i>
09:30 - 10:30	<p><u>Statements by heads of official delegations (10 minutes each):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Republic of Kazakhstan - Turkmenistan - Republic of Uzbekistan - Republic of Tajikistan - other states
10:30 – 11:00	<p>Introduction to High Level Panel on Water: International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028 and "Valuing Water" Initiative</p> <p>High Level Panel on Water (HLPW)</p> <p>HLPW Action Plan</p> <p>International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028 initiative</p> <p>Purpose, Expectations and Contents of the Valuing Water Initiative</p> <p><i>Speaker: Mr. Sulton Rahimzoda – First Deputy Minister of Energy and Water Resources of the Republic of Tajikistan</i></p>
11:00-11:15	Group Photo
11:15 – 11:45	Coffee-break
11:45 – 12:30	<p>Session 1: Presentations and group discussions on examples and experiences of Valuing Water - Brief presentation of Valuing Water theory and some examples from around the world</p> <p><i>Ms. Marion van Schaik - Senior Policy Adviser Water and Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Discussions of experiences in the region of Valuing Water -Lessons that should be captured in the principles. <p><i>Moderator: Dr Jerome Delli Priscoli and Dr. Barbara Janusz-Pawletta - Regional Facilitator, Kazakh-Germany University in Almaty</i></p>
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch

14:00 – 15:30	Session 2. Valuing Water Initiative: Principles and Preamble Session introduction Interactive table discussions on the Text of preamble and Principles Interactive discussion on messages to HLPW Prioritization of messages <i>Moderator: Dr Jerome Delli Priscoli and Dr. Barbara Janusz-Pawletta - Regional Facilitator, Kazakh-Germany University in Almaty</i>
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee-break
16:00– 17:30	Session 3. Reflections on messages and Political perspectives –Group discusses political perspectives, messages and possible actions and on how the principles may or may not help in their decision making -Prioritization of key actions -Summary reactions from Sherpas and HLPW Rep’s: what was heard and how information will be used <i>Moderator: Dr Jerome Delli Priscoli and Dr. Barbara Janusz-Pawletta - Regional Facilitator, Kazakh-Germany University in Almaty</i>
17:30 – 18:00	Wrap-up <i>Chairperson: Mr. Sulton Rahimzoda – First Deputy Minister of Energy and Water Resources of the Republic of Tajikistan</i>
18:00 – 19:00	Break
19:00	Departure to Varzob
19:30	Reception: Restaurant “Kokhi Malika”