

GWP CACENA in June and July 2009

The second round of the policy dialogues and training seminars on IWRM was conducted during June -July by the CWPs and GWP CACENA Secretariat in all eight countries. This round of dialogues and seminars is an element of the awareness campaign and capacity development program to facilitate National IWRM planning process in all CACENA countries. The target is capacity development for key players of planning and IWRM implementation process, not only involving water specialists, but also water users and other stakeholders (around 25-30 persons in each country were attended to the meetings).

The **public manifestations** were organized in Yerevan, Tbilisi and Baku (capital cities of the Caucasian countries) on 2 June to attract public attention to the IWRM issues and specific problems of the transboundary Kura and Araks river basins. It was already sixth annual action conducted by the CWPs in association with principal water NGOs from three countries of the Southern Caucasus and supported by GWP CACENA **to celebrate the Day of Kura and Araks rivers.**

Regional Coordinator of the GWP CACENA, Vadim Sokolov took active participation in the **1st Annual Progress Review Meeting of the Asia Pacific Water Forum(ATWF) Knowledge Hubs**, which was held on 24 June 2009 in Singapore. Just one year ago the APWF Knowledge Hubs Network was launched with support of ADB and Singapore Water PUB. This network was created on the basis of 13 existing organizations located in different countries of the region, including the Central Asia IWRM Resource Center (based on the ICWC Training Center and the Information Center). For more information about the APWF Knowledge Hubs, visit: www.apwf-knowledgehubs.net



Representatives of the network KHubs presented the results of their activity during the last year and also discussed the most critical issues related to the network efficiency. The following items have been discussed at the meeting:

- More orientation onto the network clients, analysis of the interested stakeholders and consumers, new approaches for communication strategy
- How to adapt the national knowledge bases to the regional level
- How to ensure marketing of the knowledge centers in the Asia Pacific Region and links at the global level
- How to organize the control and coordination of the concurrent themes and experience in some sub-regions
- What is the knowledge centers network value added and how to evaluate progress
- Whether the self-repayment network strategy is needed and how to attract the donors
- Whether there are new technologies for management improvement and knowledge dissemination

At the second part of the meeting the new KHubs were accepted to the network and their business plans on the following themes were discussed:

- Transboundary Water Resources Management – Mekong River Commission, Laos;
- Water and Climate Change Adaptation in South Asia – Energy and Resources Institute, India;
- Groundwater Management – IGES, Japan;
- Sanitation – Institutions Consortium from Japan.

At the meeting it was underlined that the following priority themes, for which the candidates to maintain the network centers will be appointed in the near future, still haven't been covered:

- Water Supply for Rural Areas and Small Towns;
- Water and Energy;
- Watershed Management.

ADB invited the UNESCO-IHE institute as the resource center in order to guarantee the network coordination. Its activity will be coordinated with the Network secretariat, which will be created in the near future at the ADB headquarters in Manila, Philippines.

Also for monitoring of the service quality the Steering Committee was created on the basis of voting and the following specialists were selected:

- Vadim Sokolov – GWP CACENA
- Herath Manthirithilake – IWMI, Sri Lanka
- Peter Olivier – International Water Centre, Australia.

The next coordination meeting will be held in Manila at the end of October 2009, together with the training seminar for managers of databases and the training centers representing the network centers. This seminar will be organized by UNESCO-IHE on the basis of analysis of those critical matters, which were discussed in Singapore.

Regional Coordinator of the GWP CACENA, Vadim Sokolov took active participation in the **5th Governing Council of the Asia-Pacific Water Forum**, which was held in Singapore on 26 June 2009. Representatives from 40 regional organizations and international agencies took part in the meeting. Professor Tommy Koh, Ambassador of Singapore in the UN, was a chairman of the meeting.

The key organizations presented the progress reports on each of the priority themes of the APWF at the first session:

- ADB and JICA presented information about water financing in Asia;
- The ICHARM Center has presented information about regional programme on risks management connected with natural disasters;
- Water PUB, Singapore, has presented the report about activities of the KnowledgeHubs network;
- FAO Asian office (Mr. Thierry Facon) presented the progress report on the regional policy development on the increasing water deficit control for agriculture;
- Ms. Taeko Yokota (in her new status of the UN-Habitat employee) has presented information about the assistance program to local initiatives on potential development;
- UNESCAP (Mr. Ti Le Huu) has presented information about preparation process to the high level meeting, which will be held 27-29 October in Bangkok to advance initiative "Ministers for water security", which was initiated in Istanbul, March, 2009;
- UNESCO jointly with NARBO have presented new publication "Guidelines on IWRM for River Basins" that was presented for the first time in Istanbul on March;
- SWITCH programme (international sustainable development initiative) has presented the initiative to conduct the regional conference "Sustainable Water Management Initiative" that will be held on 1-4 December in Indonesia;
- Japan Water Forum jointly with UN Global Compact have presented new publication by the Asia community leading group about water security problems in the region (www.asiasociety.org/water);
- GWP CACENA (V. Sokolov) has presented information about meeting of Central Asia Presidents on the Aral Sea problems and on next steps being undertaken under coordination of EC IFAS in the sub-region as summarized on this meeting;
- GWP (Mrs. Mercy Dikito-Wachtmeister) has presented proposals for ways of cooperation between GWP and APWF.

At the second session, following the results of discussions on the above-listed presentations, the Governing Council accepted the appropriate decisions. The more significant ones is related to decision that the 2nd Water Summit of regional countries in 2010 will not be held because it is unlikely to involve the heads of the states into summit's participating (as it was initially planned). It was decided to conduct the Summit of Water Leaders of the Asia Pacific water management organizations in June 2010. The Steering Committee was commissioned to prepare for this event. The APWF Secretariat (presented by the Japan Water Forum) was commissioned to define date and venue of the 2-d Water Summit of the APWF political leaders.

ADB has to continue preparation of the Water Development Outlook 2010 in Asia by the working group. The main theme of the Outlook 2010 is the water security improvement in the Asia Pacific countries. The working meeting of the experts group was held on 29-30 June 2009 in Singapore.

GWP CACENA supported regional review of the water supply and sanitation issues in all eight countries, which was completed in July in accordance with the Goal 1 of the Regional Strategy for the period of 2009-2013: **Promote water as a key part of sustainable national development.** Objective of this review is to conduct an expertise of the need in rehabilitation of WSS systems on the basis of current situation analysis, in order to provide people with quality and accessible potable water and sanitation. The review is based on information, which had been published in various sources, as well as in the expertise and assessment reports of the national experts involved. Summary conclusions of the available reviews are rather pessimistic.

All countries of the region face common problems and unaddressed tasks in the sphere of water supply, namely:

- High rate of wear-and-tear of the water supply systems;
- High water loss rate;

- Insufficient level of accessibility of the potable water for populations, especially in the rural settlements, plus the high rate of interruptions in the water supply;
- Low tariffs for potable water and low collection rate of the water fees, which does not cover the cost of operation and maintenance of the water supply systems;
- Inadequate equipping of consumers with water-meters (basically, in the households) that have a negative impact on the actual metering of supplied and consumed water, as well as to the water fee collection rate;
- Inadequate governance of the water supply systems, low qualification level of the specialists, especially in the remote areas and territorial subdivisions;
- Considerable difficulties with provision of people with the potable water of the required quality;
- Low technical equipment level of the WSS sector;
- Incomplete legal and regulatory framework;
- Low awareness level and poor culture of the water use, undeveloped information database;
- Use of potable water for irrigation in urban areas.

Virtually in all countries of the region the sanitation and sewage water treatment systems are in extremely poor state. Lack of the adequate operation and repair, as well as the constantly insufficient funding (and oftentimes its complete lack) for their maintenance have brought to the crisis of the sanitation systems.

In many of CACENA countries the functions of the WSS sector's regulation are distributed among various ministries and state institutions that have different priority objectives, which does not contribute to coordinated functioning, operation and overall and equal development of the WSS sector. Therefore, institutional structures in the majority of the states need reassessment and reforming depending on the current national policy and strategy of each country.

All countries have recognized IWRM as efficient mechanism for addressing the tasks on the water resources management, including the issues pertaining to the water supply and sanitation sector. International network of the Global Water Partnership that promotes and supports introduction of IWRM tools is not sufficiently effective in the states of the Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus. In enhancement of the GWP's role in the countries of the region, the Country Water Partnership networks will be crucial, and they need support of the state institutions, as well as the GWPO Headquarters and other international organizations.

For the purpose of integration of the water supply and sanitation sector into IWRM the following measures should be arranged and (at the least) implemented in the region:

- Elaboration of the strategy of the small-scale water supply and sanitation systems';
- Development and implementation of the pilot projects in the sphere of water supply and sanitation introducing the advanced, acceptable and affordable technologies on sewage treatment, modern techniques of the potable water's quality monitoring;
- Conduction of the workshops and trainings fro the specialists working in the WSS sector;
- Assistance to the involvement of private sector in the WSS management.

The completed review report will be published in Russian and English in August 2009 for wide dissemination.