

GWP CACENA Six-monthly Regional Journal

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According to the Regional Strategy adopted for 2004-2008, during 2008 – the last year of the cycle GWP-CACENA network must develop an agreement on subsequent strategic actions for period 2009-2013 aiming broader development of water partnership in the region in order to reinforce the results in hand in promoting the concept of IWRM.

The Plan of Activities in 2008 included five dimensions of activities in accordance with the outputs approved by the GWPO (Stockholm) headquarters:

1. IWRM Water Policy & Strategy development facilitated at relevant levels

Activities of past six months (July – December):

Output 1a. During August – September second round (first round was held in March) of the political dialogues on IWRM implementation at the national level in seven countries of the region (except Turkmenistan). It was organized using grant from Government of Finland in the form of inter-sector round tables led by Regional Council members and CWPs in each country. The principal issues for discussion were how to create inter-sector platform to facilitate governmental commitment to the process and details of the IWRM national planning activities, and coordination with International donor agencies, which are acting in the region in the similar projects and programs.

Output 1b. On October 22-24 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan there was organized by Interstate Commission for Water Coordination in Central Asia and OSCE Workshop “Environmental Security – the Key Factor for Effective Use of Water in Central Asia “. GWP CACENA presented to participants new publication “IWRM in Uzbekistan” published in Uzbek language, which is a good example of input to the public awareness.

Output 1d. Technical assistance to the national IWRM planning projects. GWP CACENA was invited by UNDP-Kazakhstan to prepare paper “How-to Guide Institutional Principles – Capturing the Experience from Kazakhstan”. This paper was published in July 2008 and presented lessons learned from the Project “National IWRM and water efficiency plan for Kazakhstan” which recommended to be taken into consideration for coming similar projects, which are under preparation in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, led by UNDP regional office in Bratislava and country UNDP offices in Tashkent and Bishkek. The main gaps are:

National level – it was created only proper institutional environment for IWRM (including legal framework and inter-sector platform) and Plan it-self in the form of the Governmental Program

till 2025. But, there were not elaborated certain mechanisms for practical IWRM implementation in the form of technological tools and information system. There was not established permanent system for capacity development to support IWRM planning and implementation.

The same problems are relevant and for Basin level, where only institutional reforms were started by creation of the Basin Councils, but not any technological aspects for real-time water management practices were suggested.

No any outcomes for levels below Basin.

Outcomes and the past activities that influenced them:

GWP CACENA has helped to establish a policy environment for implementation of IWRM principles through facilitation activities in all CACENA countries since 2003. For instance, in Armenia and Kazakhstan the governments recognize GWP CACENA as an advocate of active public involvement in most events initiated by the government bodies. All governments have started the process of finalizing national water legislation for regulating IWRM principles. It is planned to continue dialogues in the form of inter-sectoral roundtables. The Finnish Government is providing support to these activities since 2005. Expected outcome is to form government commitments on IWRM principles, which must be implemented in practice (through national water policies, laws, local actions, etc.). Neutral platforms of Country Water Partnerships should play greater role in the process of nationwide IWRM promotion and implementation.

On the basis lessons of the Kazakhstan project there could be proposed the following cooperation areas in the coming future:

Area 1 - alliance of approaches on IWRM – UNDP supports National and Basin levels and involves into implementation as a pilot activities at the level below Basin already tested IWRM implementation mechanisms of the SDC/ICWC/IWMI/GWP CACENA experiences from the past and on-going projects. It was suggested that joint activities could be organized and finalized in the form of “Central Asian IWRM ToolBox”, and first draft of it could be submitted to stakeholders at the special regional conference in 2010.

Area 2 - alliance for joint capacity building program on IWRM. GWP CACENA as a neutral networking platform in the region could conduct cooperation among UNDP, SDC and ICWC (with possible involvement other international and bilateral agencies and donors) to provide holistic capacity development program on IWRM aspects for all five Central Asian countries using parallel funding. As the first step it could be formulated and agreed joint capacity building program for Uzbekistan and Kyrgyz Republic national IWRM plans for the period 2009-2011. This program could include coordinated training activities and exchange of study tours. One of the key activities could be coordinated policy dialogues, organized jointly with involvement the EU Water Initiative, UNECE, CapNet and others payers acting in Central Asia with expansion to the countries of the Southern Caucasus. If GWP CACENA will play in this program leading role – it will require additional financial support from GWPO (or from donors via GWPO) – specifically directed to conduct joint program.

2. IWRM Programs & Tools developed in response to regional and country needs

Activities of past six months (July – December):

Output 2a. During September there was organized second round of training seminars in seven of eight CACENA countries (excluding Turkmenistan). This round of seminars is an element of the capacity development program to facilitate National IWRM planning process in CACENA

countries. This activity is continuation of actions started in 2005 and continued in 2006-2008 with support from the Government of Finland. 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 attended). The principal basis for training courses are the GWP paper “Catalyzing Change...” and the set of TEC Policy and Technical Briefs (nine issues), and also the CapNet “Manual on IWRM planning” - all were translated into Russian. Also experience of a number of ongoing pilot projects (“Kazakhstan National IWRM plan” and “IWRM-Fergana”) were used for dissemination during these seminars.

Output 2c. ToolBox Training: Baku, Azerbaijan on 15-18 July 2008

This training was a preparatory step of the GWP CACENA initiative on WSS which aims at describing the status in each of the countries in an IWRM context and to identify the role of GWP. The compilation of data for all eight countries is part of the new regional work program. Seven countries (of eight) participated to discuss their preliminary results and to agree on the structure of a final report to be ready by May 2009. This was a small and target oriented group of around 30 experts (of which 20% were women).

The Azerbaijani hosts showed their convening capacity by involving the First Deputy Chair of the governmental Agency of Land Reclamation and Water Resources (the former Ministry of Water Resources) Mr. Mamedsadyk Guliev and the Chair of the Environmental Committee of the Azerbaijani Parliament Mr. Shamil Guseinov. Both high-level members confirmed the relevance of WS&S as a key issue in the water resources management.

The meeting chair and GWP CACENA Regional Coordinator, Vadim Sokolov, stated that this was the first time the region organized a meeting on WS&S. There is a reason to learn from Europe (GWP CEE) and how they deal with the 20 million people who lack proper sanitation. The regional ToolBox Focal Point, Mr. Arslan Berdiyev, led the training in a very interactive way. National reports that were presented by the country experts served as basis for a continuous plenary discussion. In this way experiences were effectively exchanged and active participation and ownership was kept throughout the meeting - an example of GWP’s new meeting culture.

Issues shared and discussed:

- Action must be taken to prevent a collapse of the great Balkash lake in Kazakhstan to avoid the fate of the Aral Sea due to too high water demand from all sectors ,where water supply to urban areas and industry add significant pressure
- GWP has to put pressure on governments to solve the SyrDarya water resources problem (transboundary cooperation to share limited resources) by implementation of IWRM principles at the basin level
- Role of River Basin Councils (as a stakeholders platform) to set rules and regulations, i.e. limits to water use
- In Azerbaijan the Ministry of Health is responsible to supply rural people with 20 l per day and person of safe drinking water. In a pilot project 65 rural settlements (Rayons) will be supplied with WS&S systems
- In Georgia the water works and wastewater treatment plants in the three biggest cities were sold out to a Swiss company. There is a fear of increased economic burdens of the water users
- In Kazakhstan the WS&S was taken back to public operation and maintenance from a French company. Wastewater ponds serve as sources for irrigation.

- In Turkmenistan drinking water is free of charge
- In general drinking water supply in CACENA region has to be given a quality guarantee. In many rural cases the common drinking water source is irrigation canals which often are polluted

On the third day an excursion was done for visits to the water works and water reservoir, supplying around 4 million people with drinking water over the Apsheron Peninsula, where Baku city is located. A visit to a field office of the unique project to store about 280 million m³ of water in a new reservoir with 150 m dam. The part of the project is a reconstruction of old, 200 km long water supply canal with water intake from the transboundary Samur river on the boarder with Russia. This will supply the water to Baku city area by gravity and save huge pumping costs that exist today. The Azerbaijan Government allocated about 700 million USD from Oil Fund to finance the project.

Outcomes and the past activities that influenced them:

Capacity building is one of the basic elements of the Finnish support to the CACENA with the aim to facilitate the process of national IWRM planning in all regional countries. Consequently during whole 2008 about 450 persons from eight countries who are involved in the process of the IWRM planning and implementation including not only water managers, but also water users and other stakeholders have improved their capacity to support the incorporation of IWRM principles into respective work programs.

During Baku meeting in July there were formulated some principal conclusions for next steps in more effective use of ToolBox:

- The new situation today makes it important for GWP CACENA to take certain responsibilities on WS&S issues
- Strong cross-sectoral participation needed, i.e. health, environment, irrigation (agriculture)
- to promote political will in a forgotten area of national politics, in particular sanitation
- to bring in an IWRM approach to WS&S in the Millennium Development Goals' context
- to promote sustainability aspects, which are documented in the CEE Sanitation book with their application in CACENA countries.

3. Linkages between GWP and other frameworks, sectors & issued ensured

Activities of past six months (July – December):

Output 3b. On October 30 in Batumi, Georgia it was organized by CWP – Georgia public manifestation in light of the International Day for the Black Sea Protection. Working with the most active NGOs, GWP CACENA disseminated knowledge of IWRM among public in general and involve civil society into the process of “bottom-up” policymaking.

Output 3c. Contribution from Helsinki University of Technology for Water and Development Group (TKK WDG)

The active and supportive involvement of Finland with its own water and environmental experts is much appreciated by the CACENA regional experts, both in terms of technical knowledge sharing and in widening the network. In this respect, the Helsinki University of Technology and

in particular the Water and Development Group was involved into the 2008 work plan of GWP CACENA as a specific project.

During the 7th Regional Conference of GWP CACENA held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on 24-27 November 2008, the meeting was attended by eight young water resources specialists from the Helsinki University of Technology. A joint workshop between Central Asian young professionals and the Finnish group was held on 26 November together with senior professionals and GWP CACENA council members. For practical reasons the Central Asian group was limited to Tajik students and two young professionals from Armenia and Georgia. At the occasion the Finnish group, led by Ms. Suvi Sojamo and Ms. Mira Kakonen, launched the book “Central Asian Waters – Social, Economic, Environmental and Governance Puzzle” (Edited by Muhammad Mizanur Rahman and Olli Varis, 148 pp., Water & Development Publications, Helsinki University of Technology, TKK-WD-03, downloadable at: www.water.tkk.fi/global), which had been written in cooperation with GWP CACENA.

Outcomes and the past activities that influenced them:

Recognizing that implementation of the theoretically agreed integrated water resources development and management principles is at the heart of achieving water related targets set by Agenda 21 (1992), UN Millennium Development Goals (2000) and WSSD’s Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (2002) along the Central Asia and Caucasus Region, the project supported by Finland was focused on providing practical oriented education for outstanding regional and Finnish young professionals involved with water resources development and management. During 2008 the project provided young professionals from eight CACENA countries and Finland a platform intended to:

- Gaining knowledge about IWRM concept and water related development goals.
- Promoting and encouraging long-term synergy among outstanding regional and Finnish young water professionals.
- Identifying and examining the existing and potential water related development challenges along the region.
- Sharing ideas and transferring knowledge.
- Discussing the expectations of the young water leaders related to the implementation of IWRM, achieving sustainable development and water related development goals.
- Developing future water scenarios and mechanisms to improve IWRM implementation capability at the local and regional level.
- Identification of feasible modes of future involvement of young professionals and universities in the possible future GWP activities.

It was agreed to conduct joint message about the project outcomes during side event, organized in Istanbul during 5th WWF in March 2009.

4. GWP Partnership established & consolidated at relevant level

Activities of past six months (July – December):

Output 4a. Country Water Partnership networks in CACENA continued their efforts to facilitate more effective involvement partners into GWP CACENA program.

Output 4c. Operational web-site of the GWP CACENA. Regional Secretariat permanently conducted process to upgrade the web-site: www.gwpcacena.net

Output 4b. The 7th Regional Conference of GWP CACENA held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on 26-27 November 2008. Around 40 participants from the region met in a format of a Regional Consulting Partners Meeting. The official opening was honored by the Tajik Government representatives, Deputy Minister of Ministry of Land Reclamation and Water Resources, Mr. Kamol Nuraliev, and Deputy Chief of Dept. Ecology and Emergency Situation, Mr. Joumabek Kurbonbekov. Both ministers valued the neutral platform of GWP CACENA for meetings on difficult and most urgent water resources problems of Central Asia. Tajikistan in its upstream position has plenty of water for all its need and wants good cooperation with its neighbors.

1. Report on activities and outcomes from the 2008 work plans from regional and country levels

An impressive reports of strategic activities in from the countries were presented, e.g.:

- CWPs in Armenia, Azerbaijan (not formally accredited yet) and Georgia have finalized a three project on Gender and Water Resources of South Caucasus. This unique cooperation was conducted by GWP and financed by USAID.
- In Azerbaijan stakeholders met on 20 November to approve the charter for establishing their CWP
- GWP Kazakhstan is involved in high-level activities on national, regional and transboundary rivers issues with China and Russia.
- Both GWP Kyrgyzstan and GWP Tajikistan is participate in their respective national IWRM plan work

2. Presentation and discussion on the 2009-13 Regional Strategy and the 2009 Work Plan

After a long clarifying discussion the outline of regional strategy the 2009 Work Plan were both approved.

On 27 November all participants visited the hydropower station in the mountains about 100 km east of Dushanbe. With its present 3000 MWs it is the largest hydropower station in Central Asia. Another 3000 MW is under construction upstream. This natural resource is an asset for the regional development that could be better used if an IWRM approach could be agreed upon between the five countries in the region. Therefore it is a challenge for GWP CACENA to assist in such a work.

Output 4d. Collaboration with neighboring countries and regions.

With the outputs of the Bishkek Conference (May 2008) as a basis – GWP CACENA supported preparation of the National position papers for WWF-5, which were drafted by members of ICWC and National Authorities of Caucasian countries. In agreement with ICWC, GWP CACENA submitted a proposal for a Central Asian and Southern Caucasus Side Event to the Virtual space of the WWF-5, which was adopted by Organizing Committee of the Water Forum. GWP CACENA further agreed with MFA Finland to co-organize a regional Side Event at WWF-5 in Istanbul on March 18, 2009.

Representative of GWP CACENA Dr. Pulat Umarov (Director of ICWC Training Center) participated in the 4th Governing Council Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Water Forum (APWF), which was held in Singapore on 14-15 November. The meeting was chaired by Prof. Tommy Koh, Ambassador-at-Large of Singapore. It was the last GC meeting towards 5th WWF in

Istanbul, and was addressed to review progress on proper preparations for the forum and in the same time it agreed further steps for preparations for the 2d Asia-Pacific Summit, which will be organized in 2010.

Regional Coordinator of the GWP CACENA Vadim Sokolov took participation in the Asia-Pacific Regional Synthesis Meeting for the 5th World Water Forum, which was held in Tokyo, Japan on December 15-16. There was submitted Central Asia and Southern Caucasus Sub-Regional Perspective Document, which will be a part of the APWF document for 5th WWF. GWP CACENA was invited to become an active member of the working team for preparation Asia Water Development Outlook 2010, which is leaded by ADB.

Outcomes and the past activities that influenced them:

The GWP CACENA Secretariat provided support to the CACENA partners in specific activities for developing partnership networks in each country. Currently there is no distinct organizational model of a country water partnership in the region – each country choose its own way, structure and arrangements, but all created CWP (for the moment – six) supported the general line of actions within the regional work program.

The GWP CACENA proved its key role as regional coordinator for more efficient involvement and preparations for World Water Forum 5 (in cooperation with ICWC) and for APWF activities (in cooperation with IFAS).

5. GWP Network effectively developed & managed

Activities of past six months (July – December):

Output 5a. Delegation of six persons from CACENA took active participation in the CP meeting on 15-17 August in Stockholm contributing to discussions on new GWP Strategy for 2009-2013. The proper contributions were made for the TEC meeting and Regional Chairs and Coordinators meeting during 10-14 August.

Output 5b. Members of the GWP CACENA Regional Council met two times during second half of 2008. First meeting was held in occasion of the ToolBox workshop in Baku in July and second meeting in occasion of the 7th annual Stakeholder Conference in Dushanbe in November. The Regional Council members under proper coordination from Regional Secretariat drafted GWP CACENA Work Plan for 2009, which was submitted to GWPO HQ on 15 September. The Work Plan includes four dimensions of activities in accordance with the goals of the GWP Strategy 2009-2013.

Outcomes and the past activities that influenced them:

Regular coordination between GWP headquarters and CACENA Secretariat and among regional network of partners is in place. Appropriate operation and management system of GWP CACENA network has been put in place. It is expected that the OM approach will be fully implemented into practice during the first half of 2009.

The key is a hard discussion among the Regional Council members of the actual status of IWRM with respect to the situation in the region and also in the framework of the new GWP strategy for 2009-2013. There is a general consensus to bring in IWRM assistance at the country level on real issues such as WS&S, National IWRM plans implementation, IWRM plans at the basin level,

etc. There is an upcoming demand in the region to support the government in the water resources policies. In particular there is a decrease in transboundary cooperation in Central Asia, which needs new ways for coordination and facilitation.