

Support from Government of Finland to the Global Water Partnership of Central Asia and Caucasus

The support by the Finnish Government to the work of GWP CACENA on sustainable development from a water resources and environmental perspective, is ongoing since late 2004. With an annual Finnish support of 100,000 € the GWP CACENA work has boosted the awareness and built capacity among high-level policy makers and professionals of environmental and water professionals.

The Finnish support has helped the five of eight countries in the region to set up Country Water Partnerships of which the last two in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were launched in early 2008. This in turn has helped the Governments in their IWRM plan preparations.

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 (TKK WDG www.water.tkk.fi/global) was involved into the 2008 work plan of GWP CACENA as a specific project.

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, this project 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.

The main outcome of this joint project is the book "Central Asian Waters. Social, Economic, Environmental and Governance Puzzle" (eds. Muhammad Mizanur Rahman and Olli Varis) that was published in 2008 (the publication is available electronically at www.water.tkk.fi/global/publications).