



13TH CENTRAL ASIAN LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME ON ENVIRONMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CALP)

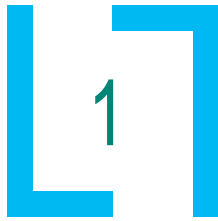
REPORT

«Leaders of Central Asia – engaging youth in national climate change priorities, regional cooperation and climate finance for sustainable development »

Almaty, Kazakhstan

September 18-22, 2023





GRATITUDE TO PARTNERS

In 2023 the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) in cooperation with partners conducted 13th Central Asian Leadership Programme (the 13th CALP) «Leaders of Central Asia – engaging youth in national climate change priorities, regional cooperation and climate finance for sustainable development» for environmental young leaders of Central Asia.

CAREC is grateful to all partners and donors for the support, commitment and contribution in organizing of the 13th CALP in 2023, namely: OSCE Program Office in Astana, OSCE Program Office in Dushanbe, and the Secretariat of the High-Level Dialogue Platform of the Swiss Blue Peace Central Asia Initiative and Coca-Cola. Our partners provided a great support to the enhancement of youth programs and networks, capacity building of the young leaders from Central Asia by promoting the values of regional cooperation, leadership, sustainable production and consumption, green economy and circular economy.

CAREC is grateful to the 13th CALP facilitator, moderators and speakers, representatives of state bodies of the Central Asian countries, international, regional and non-governmental organizations, programs and projects for the participation and contribution to the success of the 13th CALP.

CAREC is also grateful to all the staff members, consultants and experts of CAREC, who shared their invaluable experience with the participants of the 13th Leadership Programme on priority environmental, leadership, sustainable production and consumption, green economy and circular economy issues of the Central Asian region.



The 13TH CALP:

Goals and objectives

The 13th CALP was a dynamic and interactive five-day leadership programme designed to empower young professionals in Central Asia to actively engage in addressing national climate change priorities, fostering regional collaboration, and exploring climate financing mechanisms for sustainable development. Through a combination of expert lectures, interactive sessions, case studies, and networking opportunities, participants developed leadership skills, enhanced their understanding of climate change challenges, and contributed to practical solutions for sustainable development in the region.

The overarching goal of the 13th CALP was to provide opportunities for young professionals in the region to become influential leaders in the field of environmental sustainability. By equipping young professionals with the necessary knowledge, skills and networks, CALP aims to develop a new generation of people capable of addressing climate change, promoting sustainable development and building regional cooperation to build a sustainable and green future in Central Asia.

Thematic Directions:

- Adaptation to climate change;
- Biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management;
- Sustainable energy and green technologies;
- Water Resources Management;
- Circular economy and waste management;
- Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems;
- The Role and Opportunities of Youth in Strengthening Regional Cooperation in Central Asia.

Principles:

- 1) Think globally, act locally collaborate regionally!
- 2) Transparency - an online system for registration, all countries are represented in the selection committee; the list of selected candidates is published publicly.
- 3) Openness - partners from international organizations and programs, civil society organizations and the private sector will be given the opportunity to moderate thematic sessions.

Topic of the day: Opening of the 13th CALP, greetings from international partners, introduction to the CALP agenda and thematic areas.

At the opening of the 13th CALP, greetings to the participants were given by the Executive Director of CAREC, Mr. Zafar Makhmudov, Dauletiarova Natalya, Director of the Department of Environmental Policy and Sustainable Development on behalf of the Vice-Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Dosbol Bekmagambetov, and the Ambassador and Head of the OSCE Program Office in Astana, Dr. Volker Frobarth and Ms. Dimka Stanchev from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.



The greetings emphasized that youth play an important role in overcoming the environmental crisis and shaping the future. It was also noted that in the context of climate change and increasing environmental risks, the promotion of good neighborly relations, the participation of women and youth in the decision-making process is more relevant today than ever. The partners also thanked CAREC for developing the program over many years, organizing the 13th CALP and wished the young professionals good work.

Next in the program there was an introductory report by **Ms. Tatyana Shakirova, an expert from CAREC.**

The expert noted that CALP is CAREC's flagship program, which supports not only cooperation, but also friendship between representatives of Central Asian countries. Each time the program has different thematic priorities based on country needs. CALP creates conditions for the development of skills and competencies that allow graduates to participate in decision making. Over the past 12 years, the alumni network has included 370 people from 6 Central Asian countries. They represent various sectors (water, energy, environmental protection, etc.). The CALP alumni network has an organizing committee that participates in the organization of the program and ensures the presentation of Central Asian youth at various international platforms.

Upon completion of the opening remarks, the participants began work in **Session 2 “Water resources management: concepts, approaches and frameworks”**. Facilitator Evgenia Postnova presented the goals and objectives of the session, and also walked participants through a “Mental Framework” exercise, emphasizing that water resource management requires decision makers to have a broader vision.

The moderator of the session, Ms. Tais Reznikova, WIS¹ program manager, made a presentation on “Water resources management in Central Asia: Choosing a path for sustainable development” and presented the history of the process in the field of sustainable water resources management. SDG – 6 (6.5). the expert noted that the concept of IWRM began to take shape in the 60s of the 20th century, but everyone began to talk about it only after the Dublin Conference, when the famous 4 principles of IWRM were formulated.



¹ Water Initiatives Support Program

To organize an exchange of views, the expert asked the audience a question: “Do you think IWRM is a system or a process?” After a short discussion, the expert revealed 4 principles of IWRM and the principle of basin management.

Together with the moderator, the group discussed whether there are advantages of the hydrographic principle in water resource management? Based on the results, the group concluded that compared to the administrative approach, the outcome of basin management will be more effective, while taking into account the needs of all water users.

During the discussion, CALP participants noted that in Central Asia administrative and basin approaches to water resources management are mixed and that in the Central Asian countries there are still problems with the implementation of IWRM. They also talked about the lack of interdepartmental coordination and that only now is there an understanding of what kind of IWRM the region needs, what can be implemented and what cannot.

Next, the Water Footprint Concept and its application in Central Asian countries was presented by **Mr. Bo Libert, SDC expert**. The session was held online. The expert revealed the essence of such concepts as “Green water footprint (rainwater)”, “Blue water footprint (surface or groundwater)”, “Gray water footprint” and others. He also gave examples of measures to reduce the water footprint in order to obtain more crops and increase the economic value of water consumed.

The presentation showed interesting diagrams of the water footprint of Central Asia, for example, that about 80% of water remains in the region, and about 20% is exported. The water footprint is different for different Central Asian countries. For example, Uzbekistan consumes 49% of water (high consumption due to cotton cultivation), Kyrgyzstan - 3%, etc.

The expert explained that the water footprint can be assessed using reports from the Ministry of Agriculture (crop yield statistics), i.e. It is possible to calculate how much water was used, but there is a problem with the reliability of the data.

At the end of the presentation, there was a general discussion during which participants asked numerous questions. A participant from Tajikistan was interested in the details of the methodology for calculating the Water Footprint. A participant from Kazakhstan clarified the differences in the concepts of water footprint and virtual water footprint, etc.

Gender expert, Ms. Shokhida Tulieva added that in Tajikistan they are already distributing materials about the water footprint in a form accessible to the population. For example, in the form of popular facts that are interesting for discussion. (Example: to prepare 1 kg of pilaf you need 6000 liters of water).



After lunch and a short warm-up “Almaty Rain”, the facilitator invited the participants to continue the work of Session 2 and move on to issues of water diplomacy.

The report by Mr. Kerry Schneider, Senior Manager of the SIWI program “Water Diplomacy: Theory and Practice”² presented the areas of work of the Stockholm International Water Institute. The organization is known for hosting International Water Week in Stockholm, working on how to solve water problems that are common to all. During the

² The session was held online.

report, water diplomacy was defined and the methodological foundations for its construction were given.

The session was continued by the representative of the **Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Turkey, Ms. Burcu Calli**. She described how the principles of water diplomacy work in practice in Turkey and neighboring countries in the Tigris and Euphrates river basin. An interesting case study was also presented by colleagues from Lesotho, which successfully solves water problems in conditions of acute moisture deficiency.

This was followed by an online presentation by **Dr. Matus Samel, representative of The Economist magazine** on the topic “How to access cross-border cooperation: Blue Peace Index and other tools”.³

The expert presented both general information about the initiative and more specific information regarding research in the Amur Darya and Syr Darya basin. At the end, a link to materials from the Blue Peace initiative was left for program participants: <https://impact.economist.com/projects/bluepeaceindex/#/>



The subsequent discussion showed that participants were most interested in updating basin data, since many use it to prepare master's theses, dissertations and other research projects.

After the break, the facilitator invited the participants to continue working under the topic “Water and Gender”.

Moderator Ms. Irina Yugay, Specialist of the Water Initiatives Support Program, organized the session and invited **Mr. Tim Kraenzlein, OSCE Adviser on Environmental Affairs** and **Dr. Saule Ospanova, OSCE Senior Adviser** to the report “Gender Approach to Water Resources Management in Central Asia” on environmental issues.

Ms. Ospanova highlighted OSCE initiatives in the field of gender aspects of water resources management, as well as publications on this topic, in particular: <https://www.osce.org/node/503986>

She also spoke about the OSCE network “Woman water Management network in Central Asia and Afghanistan”, presented the history of the “Water and Women” process at the global level.



³ The session was held online.

The discussion showed that most of the participants' questions related to the recruitment procedure for the "Woman water Management network in Central Asia and Afghanistan". Ms. Ospanova said that initially, to form the OSCE network, there was a process of nomination from countries. The network primarily includes professional women, although recently the circle has been expanding and events are becoming more accessible to a wider range of participants.



The session was continued by **Ms. Shokhida Tulieva, an expert on gender issues**, who presented the experience of Tajikistan and spoke about the Women's Water Forum on the eve of the High-Level International Water Conference (2018, 2022), and that a platform has already been created in the Central Asian region - the Basin Women's Forum Syrdarya River (2022), USAID, as well as the Kofarnigan River Basin Women's Forum platform (2019), SDC. The expert revealed the reasons for the passivity of women and youth in the water sector and showed ways to involve these groups in the decision-making process at the local level. The problem of lack of statistical data on gender was also noted.



After a short team-building exercise organized by the facilitator, the Session continued under the theme "Water and Digitalization". The moderator, **Ms. Irina Yugay**, invited **Mr. Diego Hara, Legal Officer at the IUCN Environmental Law Center**, to speak. Mr. Hara presented tools for sharing data and information, and ways to promote collaborative management and governance of transboundary water resources.

At the end of the session, in order to consolidate the acquired knowledge, a Water Quiz was organized for the participants: facts about water resource management and diplomacy on a global scale. The quiz was held in a fun, relaxed atmosphere and the participants really enjoyed it.

Summing up the results of the day was organized by the facilitator Ms. Evgenia Postnova in the form of an interactive exercise "Rainbow of Opinions". The exercise showed that the participants experienced emotional uplift and were full of expectations from the upcoming work.

DAY 2 – September 19, 2023

Topic of the day: OSCE Model



Evgenia Postnova, program facilitator, started the work, she organized the regrouping of participants and briefly presented the program of the second day. Next, Ms. Natalya Laptieva, a Soft Skills business coach, conducted a short exercise with the group “Names and Hobbies” to strengthen acquaintance.

At the end of the exercise, the moderator of the session, OSCE expert Ms. Ida Manton, a consultant on international negotiations and conflict management, held a conversation with the participants about what the OSCE is, how the

organization became what it is today. The expert noted that the OSCE, which unites 57 participating states from North America, Europe and Asia, is the world's largest regional organization dealing with security issues. The expert said that the OSCE works for the sake of stability, peace and democracy in a space with a population of more than one billion people, establishes political dialogue and conducts practical work aimed at building and strengthening peace and stability. Through its institutions, expert units and network of field operations, the OSCE has been shown to address a range of issues affecting overall security, including arms control, terrorism, good governance, energy security, trafficking in persons, democratization, freedom of the media and national minorities. At the end of her speech, Ms. Ida Manton spoke about the cooperation of the OSCE participating countries in the field of security and about the 3 dimensions of the OSCE, with an emphasis on the economic and environmental program.

The expert noted that the economic and environmental dimension of the OSCE originated in the second so-called “basket” of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975: “Cooperation in the fields of economics, science and technology and the environment.” She also explained that the activities of the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) include monitoring economic and environmental processes, as well as assisting in the development and implementation of economic and environmental policies and projects aimed at strengthening security and co-operation in the OSCE region. Environment and Security Initiative



During the discussion, the group discussed such areas of OSCE work as the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC), Water Resources Management, Climate Change, Hazardous Wastes, etc.



During the coffee break, Ms. Ida Manton invited the participants to develop into 2 groups and discuss the question “What is leadership to you? What should a leader be like?”

Based on the results of the groups’ work, the following was formulated:

Group 1 noted the following qualities: respectable, experienced, educated, authoritative, inclusive, responsible, inspiring, decisive, responsible, innovative, communicative.

Group 2 – competent expert, strong analytical skills, action based

driven, open and innovation and creative ideas.

After a lunch break, Ms. Natalya Laptieva, business coach, organized a short exercise “Facts and Assumptions” to reveal the personal characteristics of the participants.

Next, Ms. Ida Manton continued the session and focused the participants’ attention on the features of organizing the negotiation process. The concept of “negotiation process” itself, as well as its types and main characteristics, was examined. During the discussion, issues such as “Negotiations on an integrative scenario” were considered; “Protection and Persuasion”, etc.



The group then continued to work on the topic “Leadership, trust and coalition building.” The moderator emphasized that the main task of a leader is to be able to lead people, to create connections between people in the group that contribute to solving certain problems. CALP participants discussed that leader influence is viewed as human behavior that brings about changes in the attitudes, behavior, and feelings of others. Influence is exercised through ideas, words spoken or written, suggestions, persuasion, emotional contagion, coercion, examples or personal authority.



In the afternoon, sessions of the program were held at the Kazakh-German University (DKU) ⁴.

The representative of the Kazakh-German University, Ms. Larisa Kogutenko, coordinator of water programs, opened the event and spoke about the mission and programs of the university. Next, CALP participants were invited to participate in an interactive session “Filmopolis”, during which a screening of Andres Veiel’s film “Ecocide” and its subsequent discussion were organized.

DAY 3 – September 20, 2023

Topic of the day: OSCE Model

The opening of the third day was organized by the facilitator Ms. Evgenia Postnova in the form of a creative exercise “Morning in the City of Apples” and a free exchange of opinions about impressions of yesterday. Many participants noted that they were impressed by the performance of expert Ida Manton and her deep knowledge of history, others noted their interest in the film “Ecocide”. Almost all participants enjoyed the group work and teamwork exercises.

Further on the program, the work was continued by expert Ms. Ida Manton, who, during the presentation “Negotiation, conflict management and decision-making in the OSCE,” showed the variety of methods, styles and strategies of negotiations, spoke about the role of the OSCE and its structures in the decision-making process at the basis of consensus, as well as policies for conflict prevention and resolution.



At the end of the expert’s report, business coach Natalya Laptieva conducted a series of short games for the participants to develop attention and strengthen the spirit of cooperation in the group.

Next, the moderator of the session, Ms. Ida Manton, spoke about the goals of the game “OSCE Model: Environmental Cooperation for Regional Security”, organized the distribution of participants into teams by country and gave the task of preparing “speeches” from the countries.

The OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum 2018 was chosen as the event for simulation in the game.

The participating countries for the game were: USA, Russia, Slovakia, Serbia, Kyrgyzstan, Canada, Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Uzbekistan. Moreover, each of the participants in the 13th CALP had the opportunity to represent one of these countries. 3 participants were united in the “Secretariat” group



⁴ <https://dku.kz/>

(Chairman, OSCE Secretary General, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA)).



After a coffee break, the participants began preparing descriptions of their countries (according to a special template sent by the moderator in advance) and then proceeded to the next stage of the game called “**Simulation I**”, simulating the Plenary Meeting of the OSCE participating States.

The moderator instructed participants that each country is expected to introduce itself, state its position (which should be in the document), seek allies, and seek to advance its interests. It was also noted that communication can only be done in diplomatic language, and “sensitive” issues can be discussed in behind-the-scenes meetings.

The meeting was opened by the OSCE Secretariat group, which announced the agenda and invited countries to dialogue. The presentation of the “countries” showed that they have different priorities in environmental policy (ranging from the transition to a digital economy and ending with the protection of marine ecosystems), based on differences in needs.

During the **second stage of the game, Simulation II**, which simulated bilateral and informal (unmoderated) negotiations, participants were given the opportunity to discuss their priorities and “build” alliances with other “participating countries” of the forum.

After a lunch break, the group moved on to the **third stage of the Model OSCE game - Simulation III**, dedicated to finalizing the draft environmental governance document.

A lively discussion showed that the participants were actively involved in the game and were committed to promoting the interests of the countries they represent. The game became especially interesting at the stage of the emergence of contradictions. Taking into account the moderator’s remark that decisions in the OSCE should be made on the basis of consensus, the “Secretariat” tried to get approval from all participants in the negotiation process and, as a result, the group managed to achieve the goal of the game - to adopt the final document on environmental management by general vote.

Summing up and discussion

At the end of the game, Moderator Ms. Ida Manton led a discussion during which the participants concluded that achieving consensus is a rather difficult task and sometimes requires many hours of negotiations using the full range of diplomatic skills. The group noted the benefits of the exercise and discussed the possibility of using the acquired skills in the future.

The day's results were summed up by the facilitator Ms. Evgenia Postnova in the form of a free exchange of opinions. Participants also took a group photo with expert Ida Manton.



Topic of the day: Game NEXUS

CAREC staff and facilitator Ms. Evgenia Postnova organized the movement of participants to the gaming auditorium, where they were to spend the whole day. Next, the facilitator informed the participants about the beginning of Session 6 “Game NEXUS: Introduction and First Round” and gave the floor to Ms. Markhabo Yodalieva, Head of the Capacity Development and Education Department of the USAID Regional Water Resources and Environment Project.



Ms. Yodalieva led a discussion with participants about what the NEXUS approach is, noting that it is a fundamental system that encourages the use of innovative methods to ensure the sustainability of the water-energy-food-environment sectors.

Additional information is available at the link <https://www.water-energy-food.org/ru/about-us>

Practice” communication and outreach platform various stakeholders in the field of water, energy, food and environmental security.

Next, Ms. Yodalieva moved on to the beginning of the NEXUS game, which allows you to present the concept of the “water-energy-food” approach in an accessible interactive format.

The moderator talked about the history of the game and introduced its basic rules, noting that there are no winners or losers in this game, and that it helps to understand why our countries face the problems that they currently have.

Participants were also introduced to the capabilities of the USAID “Communities of Practice” communication and outreach platform www.riverbp.net/community_of_practice to unite



Further, the following roles were distributed among the participants: Minister of Water Resources of the downstream country, Minister of Energy of the upstream country, Minister of Agriculture of the upstream country, Prime Minister of the upstream countries, Minister of Water Resources of the downstream country, Minister of Energy of the downstream country, Minister of Agriculture of the downstream country, Prime Minister minister of the downstream country, 2 NGOs (advocates for general well-being, including vulnerable groups), Development Bank (World Bank), journalist. Participants were also asked to choose names for their countries.

The moderator announced the beginning of the first round of the game and that the rainy season was beginning in the countries of Firdaustan and Avatar⁵ and water resources had arrived in the upper reaches of the country. Acting in accordance with their roles, the participants went through several cycles, and after each, with the help of a moderator, they assessed the resources spent and acquired, as well as pollution. Despite the apparent complexity, the participants quickly learned the rules of the game and actively discussed how to effectively distribute available resources in the created conditions.

⁵ Names of countries chosen by participants.

After the coffee break, the second round of the Nexus game began. The moderator of the session, Ms. Markhabo Yodalieva, informed the participants that the second year also begins with the rainy season, and this time more water flows into the river. Taking on the role of ministers of agriculture, energy and water, participants were faced with the need to compromise between the water, energy and food sectors to make effective decisions.

After lunch, facilitator Evgenia Postnova led the group through a warm-up to strengthen the team, including exercises “Tail of the Dragon” and “Heroes of Legends”.

Upon returning to the classroom, the Final Round of the Nexus Game began. All participants actively negotiated, exchanged views and proposed joint solutions for transboundary water management, and found ways to benefit from the comparative advantages of upstream and downstream countries. The game clearly illustrated the well-known problems and conflicts between upstream and downstream countries. For example, participants were able to put themselves in the shoes of downstream countries that were not ready to put up with water pollution coming from upstream countries.



After a coffee break, the **results of the game** were assessed.

Overall, participants experienced in practice how interconnected all three sectors are, and also learned about synergies and trade-offs between competing interests in the use of water, land and energy resources. The group thoroughly enjoyed the gameplay. Some also asked where they could purchase the game and where they could get training on how to play it. The final evaluation of the gameplay showed that this interactive experience expanded the knowledge of the

Nexus approach among all participants and they came to the conclusion that it was necessary to apply the approach in real life.

A post-questionnaire was also used to summarize the work of the fourth day.

DAY 5 – September 22, 2023

Topic of the day: CAREC

The work of the fifth day of the program began with feedback organized by facilitator Evgenia Postnova in the form of an interactive exercise “Emoji Parade”. The exercise showed that all participants highly appreciated the NEXUS game held the day before and were more optimistic about the possibilities of intercountry and interdepartmental coordination.

Next, to open Session 7, the facilitator gave the floor to Ms. Valeria Orlova, manager of the ESD program, who made a presentation “Education for Sustainable Development”.

The presentation provided an overview of projects and program activities, including the REAP Project, which aims to promote resource efficiency in the agri-food sector (until 2024) (<https://reap-centralasia.org/>). Participants learned about the concepts: SCP (sustainable production and consumption), green and circular economy.

Further, from the online presentation of **Mr. Rajat Batra, Senior Technical Expert of STENUM Asia**, the group learned about successful examples of the REAP project, demonstrating positive environmental and economic results through the introduction of resource-efficient practices in agri-food production. Mr. Batra also noted that the training of SPC consultants is important, and to date, about 400 small and medium-sized businesses in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have introduced SCP principles into production.

The subsequent interactive session was also lively. The descriptions of mini-projects on SPC proposed by the expert Mr. Rajat Batra were interesting for discussion and stimulated the creative energy of the participants.

Next, a presentation about the CAREC Water Initiatives Support (WIS) Program was made by Ms. Tais Reznikova, Program Manager. Her report provided a detailed overview of CAREC projects and program activities, including Blue Peace Central Asia (<https://bluepeace-centralasia.ch/ru/>). The expert noted that CAREC's water program originated about 20 years ago and it was CAREC that developed the first basin management plan for the Ili-Balkhash basin. Ms. Reznikova emphasized that initiatives on Water Diplomacy and Support to the regional working group on water quality in transboundary basins of Central Asia also play a critical role. In response to questions from participants, the expert explained exactly how periodic meetings of delegates from different countries help develop dialogue and solve cross-border problems. More detailed information on some aspects of the water program was also presented by Ms. Irina Yugay and Ms. Dimka Stanchev from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

At the end of the session, various handouts were also distributed to the participants.

After a coffee break, CALP participants proceeded to familiarize themselves with the CAREC Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Program (CCSE).

The work of the program was presented by CAREC specialist Ms. Irina Bubenko and her colleagues (Azamat Kauazov, Sanzhar Mustafin), who spoke about projects and program activities, such as:

- CAMP4ASB - Program for adaptation to climate change and mitigation of its consequences for the Aral Sea basin. The project is aimed at solving common problems and challenges related to the consequences of climate change in the countries of Central Asia by increasing access to improved knowledge and data in the field of climate change for key stakeholders (decision makers, expert communities, etc.); and through increased investment and technical capacity building. <https://ca-climate.org/about/projects/climate-adaptation-and-mitigation-program-for-aral-sea-basin-camp4asb/>
- CACIP - Information portal on climate adaptation and mitigation in Central Asia - A Central Asian climate information platform that aims to help stakeholders access, analyze and visualize publicly available data (e.g. mapping tools for data layers and mapping hotspots and risk areas, etc.) to support awareness raising, assessment and decision support. Link to resource - <https://ca-climate.org/>
- GIZ COP28 – CAREC, with the support of the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), held on July 24, 2023 a meeting of country representatives to prepare a regional statement on behalf of the governments of Central Asian countries at the 28th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP-28 UNFCCC UN) - <https://ca-climate.org/about/projects/climate-adaptation-and-mitigation-program-for-aral-sea-basin-camp4asb/>
- RECATH (REGIONAL CLIMATE ACTION TRANSPARENCY HUB FOR CENTRAL ASIA) - <https://carececo.org/en/main/activity/projects/recath/> - thematic area of the hub: transparency of climate action, reporting, measurement and verification (MRV) systems, reporting to the UNFCCC, calculation of greenhouse gas emissions, etc.

The morning session was concluded by Ms. Lyudmila Kiktenko, Environmental Management (EM) Program Manager, who provided an overview of projects and activities. The moderator noted that the purpose of the program is to promote and demonstrate best approaches to sustainable natural resource management, support national strategies and regional initiatives, support dialogue between government agencies and NGOs on environmental management issues, and support countries in fulfilling obligations under multilateral environmental agreements.

Summing up the content of the program, the facilitator Ms. Evgenia Postnova organized feedback by distributing to the participants their “Letters to themselves” written on the first day of the program. The facilitator asked participants to read out their expectations/goals and comment on how they were/were met. The exercise showed that the events of the 13th CALP fully met the expectations of the participants, who noted the usefulness of the knowledge gained and the high level of invited experts (see Appendix 1).

After a lunch break, the Closing Ceremony of the 13th CALP began, which was opened by Mr. Zafar Makhmudov, Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia (CAREC), who congratulated the program participants and expressed wishes for professional growth and cooperation in the future. Congratulations to the graduates of the 13th CALP were also sent by Mr. Rati Japaridze, responsible officer of the OSCE Program Office in Dushanbe.

The ceremony ended with the presentation of certificates of participation and a photo session.

Conclusions:

- The overall assessment of the results of the program, according to the final questionnaire (see analysis in Appendix 2), corresponds to the “good” option, while out of 15 people, 4 also chose the “excellent” option.
- The choice of “Water Resources Management” as a key topic seemed right to the participants, although many of them (according to expectations - see Appendix 1 and the final assessment data) would also like to pay more attention to the topic of climate change.
- Many of the participants highly appreciated the reports on water diplomacy and the OSCE Model, as well as practical exercises to develop negotiation skills. However, some participants noted that the large theoretical unit on diplomatic skills proved difficult to master.
- The opinion of all CALP participants regarding the NEXUS game turned out to be unanimous. The game received many positive reviews and proved to be an excellent tool for explaining the principles of regional cooperation.
- Participants of the 13th CALP also noted the well-prepared final day reports on CAREC programs and projects. This part of the program also aroused great interest among the group.

Recommendations:

1. Within the framework of the following CALPs, along with topics on water resource management, more attention will be paid to the topics of climate change, sustainable energy and air quality. No less important is the topic of Green and Circular Economy;
2. If possible, keep in the programs of the following CALPs 1 day dedicated to the NEXUS game and a content block dedicated to presentations of CAREC projects and programs.
3. Provide more time within the program to familiarize participants with environmental issues in each country in the region.
4. Provide opportunities for presentations from delegations from program participating countries in the next CALP, highlighting their current projects, initiatives, etc.
5. If possible, include cultural evenings, a short city tour and other cultural events in the program of the next CALP.

Appendix 1

Expectations of the participants of the 13th CALP

- As a result of the program, I want to achieve an understanding of how to preserve the country's ecology, what youth and patriots of their country can do to preserve nature and the future.
- I look forward to gaining information, experience and the opportunity to collaborate with Central Asian countries in protecting and conserving both water resources and the environment.
- Advanced training in the field of climate change, exchange of experience, new interesting knowledge and contacts.
- Find new friends and learn to be a leader in your field.
- Enrich your knowledge in the field of water diplomacy and environmental protection, gain legal experience through participation in the OSCE Model, get acquainted with the NeXUS game.
- My expectation from the CALP 2023 is to develop my decision-making skills, diplomacy knowledge, and strengthening my networking and cooperation. Also to find further professional job opportunities.
- Deepen your knowledge of NDCs, improve your understanding of the national interests of neighboring states in the field of climate change, and increase awareness of the sustainable development goals.
- Meet participants and experts, knowledge and tools, contribute, explore new concepts and potential topics, networking
- New useful acquaintances, networking
- I hope that I can get to know everyone well and we will meet in other places, I hope that I will organize a COP-28 side event.
- Much needed connections with regional youth and CAREC experts and leadership.
- My expectations from the program. The most important thing is to get to know participants from different countries, to get acquainted with their culture and activities. Gain practical knowledge in solving specific problems in the field of water management, ecology and environmental protection. Gain and improve your leadership skills in decision making. I also want to understand what inclusivity is.

Appendix 2

Results of the survey of participants of the 13th CALP

1. What is your overall assessment of the 13th CALP? Please underline.

- Great - 4⁶
- Good - 10
- Satisfactory - 1
- Not satisfactory - 0

2. What sessions do you feel brought you new knowledge and understanding?

- Water resources management in Central Asia, IWRM - 5
- Application of water footprint in Central Asian countries - 2
- Water diplomacy - 2
- Gender equality in water management - 2
- Nexus game – 10
- Model OSCE - 6
- OSCE commitments in the 2nd dimension – 1
- Who are you negotiating with - protection and persuasion - 1
- Leadership, Trust and Coalition Building – 1
- Blue Peace Index – 1
- Session at KNU – 1
- CAREC programs – 3
- Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Program – 1
- Environmental Management Program – 1
- Water Initiatives Support Program -1
- No – 1

In principle, there was theoretical knowledge in all sessions, but practical/role-playing games also provided an opportunity to learn/evaluate one's skills and potential - 1

3. Are there any important topics of interest to you that were not included in the CALP Agenda? If so, what are these topics?

- There are no such topics / All topics have been covered – 6
- Process of implementation of NDCs of Central Asian countries – 1
- In general, it would be nice to include a topic about the environmental crisis – 1
- Water, safety and local communities/ water resources, ecology, environmental protection – 2
- Air quality – 1
- Climate and Security/Climate Issues, NDC – 3
- More topics on climate change – 1
- Involving youth in the climate agenda of Central Asian countries – 1
- Climate forecasts (scenarios) in the changing climate of Central Asia - 1
- Tools, approaches, technologies of economic, social, environmental, political analysis - 1
- I wanted to know more about the policies and agreements between the Central Asian countries – 1
- Business communication skills - 1

⁶ Here and below, the numbers show the number of people who chose an answer to a particular question (or answer option to a question).

4. Did you develop any new skills/competencies during your participation in the 13th CALP? If yes, what are these skills?

- Proper and rational management of water resources – 1
- Communication skills - 2
- Teamwork skills, in my opinion, have improved, since we often had to work in groups - 1
- Teamwork skills, diplomatic negotiations / Negotiation skills - 3
- Understanding the behavior of other departments - 1
- Participation in Nexus game – 2
- Model OSCE - 1
- Leadership skills, timely decision making – 2
- Confidence in speaking, proactivity, communication – 1
- During the OSCE Model – diplomacy and psychology skill - 1
- Innovation – 1
- The ability to think strategically - 1
- No - 2
- It's probably not easy to decide on the newly acquired skills and competencies, since the process is still ongoing, but in terms of networking, the program helped a lot.

5. Have you received any new values, inspiration, spirit of friendship, etc. Please describe.

- Yes/yes, of course – 3
- New values and new knowledge – 1
- During the Nexus game, our team cooperated well and there was a spirit of friendship - 1
- The most important and interesting thing is meeting new people – 1
- Yes, we have a very interesting team and we quickly found a common language. I hope we will continue to maintain our friendly relations - 1
- The Nexus game was awesome! Ida had an interesting simulation, but the group was absolutely unable to play it - 1
- Inspiration through speakers and moderators, as well as participants. The spirit of friendship among our group, support and networking – 1
- Began to value natural resources more – 1
- Spirit of friendship and cohesion between Central Asian countries – 2
- The atmosphere was friendly, I think we all became friends – 1
- Certainly! Firstly, different cultural values, inspiration for something new, the desire to overcome obstacles, strive for something new, etc. - 1
- Yes, we received new inspiration to develop and strive to improve and increase our knowledge - 1

6. To what extent did the 13th CALP facilitate new relationships with participants from other countries in the region? Please underline.

- To a large extent – 13
- Partly - 1
- Weak - 1
- Almost nothing-0

7. Name 3-5 most interesting speakers/sessions - in order of preference.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Speaker 1	Tais Reznikova	Ida Manton	Tatyana Shakirova	Ida Manton	Markhabo Yodalieva	Evgenia Postnova	Lyudmila Kiktenko	Shokhida Tyulieva
Speaker 2	Bo Libert	Tais Reznikova	Matus Samel	Tais Reznikova	Ida Manton	Valeria Orlova, Valeria Robu	Evgenia Postnova	Bo Libert
Speaker 3	Ida Manton	Shokhida Tyulieva	Natalia Laptieva	Irina Yugay	Shokhida Tyulieva		Tais Reznikova	Ida Manton
Speaker 4		Markhabo Yodalieva	Markhabo Yodalieva	Larisa Kogutenko	Bo Libert			
Speaker 5		Lyudmila Kiktenko	Valeria Orlova	Markhabo Yodalieva				

	9	10	11	12	13	14
Speaker 1	Markhabo Yodalieva	Ida Manton	Tais Reznikova	Tais Reznikova	Markhabo Yodalieva	Ida Manton
Speaker 2	Model OSCE/Ida Manton	Tais Reznikova	Shokhida Tyulieva	Ida Manton	Ida Manton	Saule Ospanova
Speaker 3	Zafar Makhmudov	Shokhida Tyulieva	Markhabo Yodalieva	Markhabo Yodalieva	Tais Reznikova	Irina Yugay
Speaker 4	Valeria Orlova	Markhabo Yodalieva	Valeria Orlova			Lyudmila Kiktenko
Speaker 5	Dilovarsho	Natalia Laptieva	Lyudmila Kiktenko			

1 participant left this question without comment

8. Are there any logistical aspects that CAREC needs to improve in the future?

- Everything is fine / no / everything was great – 5
- I would like to improve the logistics aspects, since our road was very difficult and long, it would be possible to find another way / Choose, if possible, a shorter and more direct route - 2
- It took a lot of time to transfer from the hotel to the office. It would be more convenient to conduct the course close to the place of residence, for example, in a hotel conference room / organize a conference near the place of residence - 2
- I would like City tour - 1
- You can add a team-building game session - 1
- You can organize a cultural evening - 1
- The essence of Ida Manton's sessions was not clear – 1
- Larger office – 1
- The place for a coffee break is poorly organized - tables are arranged, there is no space - 1
- Yes, no explanation – 1
- No comments – 2

9. Do you feel that participation in this Program was beneficial for your personal development?

Yes-15/ No-0

If yes, to what extent was it helpful to you? Please underline.

- 100% useful - 9
- Mostly useful - 4
- Somewhat useful - 2
- Hardly useful

10. How will the knowledge/skills acquired help you contribute to your work?

- Better to negotiate and work as a team – 1
- They will help me become more competent in many issues, look into the future and think through strategy - 1
- IWRM, negotiation skills, knowledge on water resource distribution, water and gender, security.
- Make rational decisions, conduct dialogue, etc. – 1
- Dating, networking – 1
- I saw that all the people were working on cool projects and really making the world a better place. I hope that I can become more proactive and bold in my goals - 1
- Very important for my direction – 1
- I began to better understand my field and keep abreast of the stages of other projects - 1
- The knowledge I gained may be useful someday - 1
- All acquired knowledge/skills enable you to continue your activities more effectively and competently - 1
- I can definitely say that they will definitely help, but this will be visible as the work progresses - 1
- Will help you see new development prospects - 1
- No comments – 2

11. What do you plan to implement after completing CALP to disseminate your new knowledge/information/skills at the national/local/institutional levels?

- Implement skills at the local level – 1
- Information campaign, apply information, knowledge and resources for scientific research – 1
- I want to write new projects on environmental protection - 1
- I would really like to become a part of this wonderful organization and take part in their projects! - 1
- It is possible to hold a couple of joint events with participants - 1
- I want to do a joint project with participants to inform young people about opportunities - 1
- Share experience and acquired knowledge, as well as information with peers and young leaders – 1
- To the extent possible: I will publish all the information on the organization's website, on my social media page. Networks, application of acquired knowledge and skills in the decision-making process - 1
- First of all, I will share the knowledge gained with the team - 1
- I haven't planned anything yet - 1
- While I'm thinking: ideas and projects – 1
- I will continue to work - 1
- Nothing - 1
- No comments – 2

12. Your wishes to CAREC and its donors/partners for the future.

- Good luck in your work and may you achieve the desired result!
- I wish you successful implementation of your projects! Thank you for the interesting experience!
- Thanks everyone. I wish good luck to everyone! There are more such seminars to share your knowledge with more people!

- Please review the program. Games can be rescheduled for 1-2 days for ice-breaking and team building. You can express your thoughts more concisely. More comprehensive coverage of topics (energy, climate, air, etc.).
- More such schools, trainings, more involvement of young people and opportunities to develop!
- Thank you for the wonderful organization! Very useful program! I hope that the alumni network will expand!
- Thanks to all moderators! Lera, Valeria for helping us with everything we went through. Many thanks to Mr. Zafar Makhmudov!
- Selection of participants is stronger. Half the group did not speak English, which hindered the learning process.
- I would wish prosperity that CAREC continue to hold such events for young professionals and scientists for their further development.
- We are very grateful for organizing such an event, we wish you further development and expansion of the number of CALP graduates.
- Continue the program, expand it a little and increase the duration of the course. Special thanks to the organizers of this event.
- Thank you so much for your support and contributions to us and this program.
- Wishes of prosperity and success. Thank you!
- Much money!
- Thanks for all!