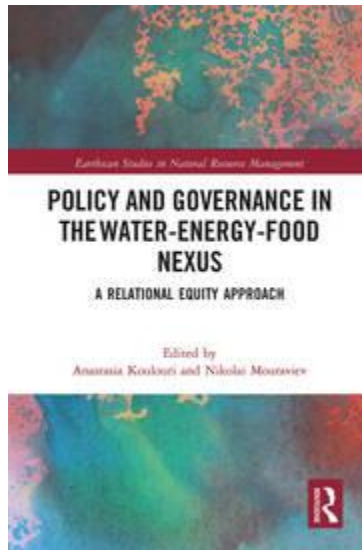


1. [Home](#)
2. [Environment & Agriculture](#)
3. [Agriculture & Environmental Sciences](#)
4. [Agriculture and Food](#)
5. [Policy and Governance in the Water-Energy-Food Nexus](#)
6. Relational equity management in water-energy-food nexus governance



Chapter

# Relational equity management in water-energy-food nexus governance

The case of the Aral Sea Basin restoration programmes

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## **ABSTRACT**

This chapter investigates the water-energy-food nexus governance in the Aral Sea – a saline lake in Central Asia on the border of two independent states – Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Over a few decades, beginning in the 1970s, the sea's continued desiccation has led to soil salinisation resulting in desertification of the sea basin, salt storms and loss of biodiversity, as well as to significant deterioration of the socio-economic situation in the Aral Sea region. The chapter identifies the priority areas for the Aral Sea Basin Programmes aimed at improving the situation with water and its uses, agriculture and energy generation and consumption. It analyses the projects involving local, regional, national and international bodies, as well as private and public entities, and delineates how the water, food and energy interdependencies in the Aral Sea Basin have negatively affected livelihoods in the local area. The chapter further shows progression in the application of relational equity to the nexus governance in the Aral Sea area during the implementation of three programmes. It argues that relational equity management sets a framework that permits better and faster achievement of the nexus governance goals.