



ONE CENTRAL ASIA CAREC IN 2023



TABLE OF CONTENT

- 3 CAREC at the International Level
- 6 CAREC at the Regional Level
- 9 CAREC's Main Strategic Directions

2023 :



15 projects implemented



74 events conducted



712 participants



44 publications



the overall budget

over € 2 million

CAREC AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL



ZAFAR MAKHMUDOV

CAREC Executive Director



“In 2023, CAREC continued extensive work on uniting the countries of the Central Asian region in their joint efforts to tackle national and regional problems related to the environment and climate change.”

In 2023, the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia [CAREC] continued its strategic activities aimed at uniting the region of Central Asia on the global level.

CAREC provided comprehensive technical and expert support and assistance to the countries of the Central Asian region in preparing for the 28th UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties [UNFCCC COP28].

CAREC made its expert and technical contribution to the CA countries' achievement of the following results at UNFCCC COP28:

- Kazakhstan obtained a rotating membership on the Board of the Loss and Damage Fund;
- Led by Kyrgyzstan, mountain development issues were integrated into COP28 key resolutions;
- Tajikistan joined an ambitious initiative to reduce ice melting [the Ambition on Melting Ice];
- FAO will assist the Central Asian countries in ensuring their successful participation in the GEF funding program;
- A new European Union's 'Team Europe' initiative to support the countries of Central Asia was presented.

Most importantly, however, CAREC contributed to the strengthening of the CA visibility during the negotiation process, attracting international experts and strengthening cooperation with the CA national delegations by conducting a series of preparatory meetings prior to COP28, which were dedicated to the discussions and preparations for the topics of the upcoming negotiations allowing the countries of the region to smoothly blend into the mainstream of the UN global climate forum.



One of the most significant results of this work was a presentation of all the countries of the region – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan at UNFCCC COP28 in the joint Central Asia Pavilion and preparation of national statements on behalf of the governments of the CA countries, NGOs and the youth.

So far, the Pavilion of the CA countries is the only platform on the global climate arena today that unites all the countries of the region. It was here, that the solidary achievements of the region to combat climate change were presented.

The CA Pavilion gives the Central Asian states an access to the global microphone, grants an opportunity to talk about national priorities of each county, their position in the negotiation process, and identify common interests of the region at the UNFCCC Conferences of the Parties.

44 EVENTS OF THE PAVILION WERE ATTENDED BY



more than **270**



speakers from Central Asia, Andorra, Nepal, Bhutan, Kenya, Germany, Finland and other countries: state agencies, international organizations, private companies and NGOs.

more than **30**



business meetings to form new partner relations and cooperation in and outside of the region.

The CA Pavilion was organized by CAREC in cooperation with the governments of the CA states with the financial support of GIZ, OSCE, World Bank, USAID, European Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In addition, CAREC focuses on gender issues from an environmental perspective. At the UN 2023 Water Conference, CAREC presented to the global community the efforts to promote gender equality taken by in the Central Asian region, including the work of the Women in Water Management Network in Central Asia and Afghanistan.

CAREC AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

The Central Asia Climate Change Conference (CACCC-2023), conducted by CAREC every year, became a large-scale regional event in 2023.

Being a unified platform for cooperation and promotion of innovative ideas on climate change in Central Asia, CACCC-2023 gathered together more than 750 representatives of state agencies of the CA countries, intergovernmental groups of climate change experts, international development partners, the civil society, the youth and mass media from CA and other countries. Thus, the conference gained the geographical coverage of the planetary scale.



CACCC-2023 is a good example of an exchange of experience at a high regulatory level, where each country of the region presented its national climate change mitigation and adaptation policies, strategies and programs, including integration of updated NDCs into each country's strategic documents.

Discussions on further strengthening of the regional cooperation amidst the changing global political environment also took place during CACCC. Problems of public health and climate resilience associated with problems of air quality and local communities' adaptation to climate change drew a lot of attention.

CACCC-2023 results laid a new basis for the development of new projects on climate change mitigation and adaptation in the region.



MAVLODOD ABDULKODIR

Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Environmental Protection of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (CEPGRT)



“This conference fosters a stronger regional dialogue, information and knowledge exchange to support the evidence based and climate resilient decision-making system, which enables a search for opportunities to implement climate projects of international financial organizations and development partners in Central Asia.”

Supported by GIZ, CAREC organized a high-level discussion of the expansion of regional, international and intersectoral cooperation in the form of meetings of representatives of MIA and parliamentarians of the countries of Central Asia.



“Having a dialogue in such a format aimed at improving the climate change adaptation and mitigation legislative activities, presenting information and analysis of international experts helped us to identify true tasks and develop cooperation in this area.”



AZAT SEIDIBAYEV

Deputy of the Majilis of Turkmenistan

The meetings were of an extended nature; in 2023 they were attended by UNFCCC coordinators for CA and representatives of international organizations. The range of topics discussed included a progress in improving national legislations, expanding institutional frameworks to carry out countries’ climate policies, fulfilling commitments within NDCs, achieving the carbon neutrality and climate adaptation.

2023 has become a milestone year for CAREC in terms of recognition of the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem Nexus approach [WEFE Nexus], which had been promoted since 2018. The sector interconnectedness and the need for intersectoral cooperation were voiced at the Summit of the Heads of States of Central Asia in Dushanbe on September 14, 2023. Sectoral interconnectedness analysis by modeling of the Nexus approach was introduced in the civil servant professional development programs and education of the new generation of experts in the five countries of Central Asia.

Continuing the dialogue on evidence-based water cooperation, CAREC organized a number of events on the Blue Peace Central Asia platform, including regional group meetings on water quality, a bilateral working group on environment and water quality in the Syrdarya river basin between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan. Engaging the academic community and fostering technical dialogue and opportunities for data exchange are an irrevocable part of an effective and productive water diplomacy in the region. These principles along with the engagement of the youth and women are fundamental for the water dialogue supported by CAREC.

Significant and successful events organized by CAREC in 2023 included:

- The 13th Central Asian Leadership Program [CALP] for young people nominated by non-government organizations, the private sector, state and academic institutions. Priority topics include climate change, 'green' development, sustainable production and consumption, water cooperation, transition to carbon neutrality, circular economy, water, energy and food security nexus [NEXUS];
- The 'Climate Change Impact on Transboundary Water Resources from the Source to the Sea' session of Blue Peace in Central Asia at CACCC-2023 became a platform for the global experience exchange in the area of water resources and transboundary basin management on different continents and in Central Asia;
- A series of CAREC's special events to promote green investments based on the Nexus approach and climate transparency for a green transition at the EU-Central Asia High-Level Conference on Environment Cooperation in Rome, Italy;
- Regional Network of Academic Societies on water, energy, food and environmental security was renewed and increased by 20% and unites 33 universities and academies of the countries of Central Asia today;
- A series of events of the Community of Practice on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene [CoP4WASH], including joint studies, publications and meetings for the exchange of experience;
- The Days of Amudarya and Syrdarya in the cities of Nukus [Uzbekistan], Dashoguz [Turkmenistan], Nurek [Tajikistan], Daroot-Korgon [Kyrgyzstan] and Khiva [Uzbekistan] brought together 328 participants that reside in and use these basins' ecosystems.



The Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Program for Aral Sea Basin (CAMP4ASB) demonstrated CAREC's achievements on the regional level. Over 80 839 people (55% women) were covered, 6 799 permanent and 12 452 additional seasonal jobs were created, income of 11 000 farmers increased by 30% - 79%, 910 new farms were created, and 354 200 hectares of abandoned land were reclaimed.

CAREC'S MAIN STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS



“Having a unique status of an independent, non-for-profit and non-political organization of an international nature, CAREC successfully fulfilled its important strategic tasks throughout 2024.”



SVETLANA MOGILYUK

The member of CAREC Board of Governors

Policies, Plans and Strategies

CAREC actively continued to create a sustainable transparency framework, build the professional capacity of members of national delegations, experts and stakeholders in the countries of the region, responsible for the development and implementation of national strategies, plans and reporting within the Paris Agreement.

Activities in these areas set the stage for increasing efficiency of climate actions at the national and regional levels, accessing funding and developing climate resilient, green, low carbon economies in the region.

CAREC provided governments of the Central Asian countries with a range of tools to devise mitigation and adaptation policies, assisted in developing and updating nationally determined contributions (NDC), national action plans on emission reduction and climate change adaptation (NAP). In addition, CAREC provided methodologies and comprehensive mechanisms to control climate action implementation.

CAREC provided support to:

- The Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan in adding the Karakol lake to the Ramsar wetlands list. Recognition of the lake at the international level guarantees preservation of its unique eco-systems and biodiversity and ensures access to international resources;
- The Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision of the Kyrgyz Republic in updating Specially Protected Areas Management Plans (SPAMP) with a focus on ecotourism development. CAREC has also contributed to the preparation of proposed amendments to the Law on SPAMP;
- Tajikistan in preparing a national report for the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, which contained an analysis of requirements for mapping and data completion;
- Turkmenistan in preparing a national report for the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, which contained an analysis of requirements for mapping and data completion.



A project was launched to develop the Zarafshan river basin management in the Republic of Uzbekistan based on the CAREC's methodology to establish basin councils and develop basin plans.

Facilitating Access to Climate Finance Mechanisms

CAREC has conducted a series of events thus expanding possibilities of climate finance for national partners. These included regional dialogues and workshops on:

- green investments, climate finance;
- funding of environmentally friendly technologies: existing financial products and sources of finance for representatives of financial institutions in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan;
- opportunities to use Article 6 of the Paris Agreement;
- Nexus project financing;
- mobilization of resources to implement regional programs, introduce practical methods and sustainable consumption and production technologies for small and medium businesses in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan;
- banking terminology, the concept of ecosystem and sources of finance.

Based on their results, project proposals were developed.



Engagement of the Civil Society and Academic Institutions at the National and Regional Levels

CAREC country offices conducted a series of meetings with environmental NGOs to exchange information and plan joint activities.

In Kazakhstan, together with Tabigi Orta NGO from Western Kazakhstan, CAREC worked on adding the Karakol lake to the list of the wetlands of international significance.

In Kyrgyzstan, CAREC continued its cooperation with the Forest and Land User Association of Kyrgyzstan on agroforestry and certification of forest products, became a member of the Green Alliance.KG Legal Entity Association; signed a memorandum on cooperation with the Aarhus Center in Bishkek, conducted a meeting with environmental NGOs of Kyrgyzstan on ecotourism,

funding of biodiversity by commercial banks and cooperation with state agencies.

In Tajikistan, CAREC together with the Climate Network of the Republic of Tajikistan organized a meeting to raise public awareness on climate change and climate actions as well as climate dialogues on climate change adaptation.

In Turkmenistan, at the initiative of the Kazakh German University and Yashil Shokhle NGO, CAREC provided consultations on assessing the water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus for state officials and representatives of academic institutions, NGOs and businesses.

CAREC also supported activities of the Bosfor Youth Center aimed at implementation of a mini project on the rational use of the Karakum river water resources.

CAREC's Uzbekistan country office signed a Memorandum of cooperation with the environmental movement of Uzbekistan and the environmental party of Uzbekistan to prepare and promote national projects on environmental protection, ecology and climate change.

Developing Knowledge Hub

Effective response to climate change requires a gradual formation of an environmental mindset and way of thinking. Understanding and careful treatment of all natural resources involved is the basis for successful climate actions of the future generation.

In 2023, CAREC focused on the development of training modules, courses, and training materials on such important for Central Asia topics of sustainable development as a rational use of water resources and clean technologies, legislation and strategies.

The following were developed:

- a training module on financial sustainability of small basin council operations for requalification and mandatory attestation of experts conducted by all agencies of Turkmenistan biennially;
- a water management course for the Academy of Civil Servants under the President of Turkmenistan;
- an integrated water management course for the Ashgabat Agricultural University and for the Dashoguz Agricultural Institute;
- a course on water diplomacy and international water law.

The courses consist of training materials, case studies and workshop sessions.

In addition, a clean technology funding product prototype was developed for local financial institutions.

In 2023, 26 training workshops were conducted for experts of ministries and agencies of Central Asia on a wide range of climate and environmental issues important for the region.

CAREC's knowledge base includes online courses, training materials, publications and resumes of experts from Central Asia:



Eurasian River Basin Portal



Central Asia Climate Information Portal



CAREC's free online courses



CAREC's publications



CAREC would like to thank its esteemed partners – Adelphi German consultancy bureau, Association for the Promotion of Recycling and Environmental Protection in Austria (AREC), CARITAS Switzerland, Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), EU SWITCH-Asia Programme, German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), GFA Consulting Group, Green Climate Fund (GCF), Initiative for Climate Action Transparency (ICAT), Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), International Secretariat for Water (ISW) in Tajikistan, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), OSCE Program office in Astana, OSCE Program Office in Bishkek, OSCE Program Office in Dushanbe, OSCE Secretariat, STENUM Asia Sustainable Development Society, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Coca-Cola Foundation, The USAID Mission to Central Asia, the World Bank, The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UN Development Program in the Kyrgyz Republic (UNDP), UNEP Copenhagen Climate Centre (UNEP CCC), Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention), The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

CAREC would also like to thank its distinguished national partners from the countries of Central Asia, state agencies overseeing issues of environmental protection, water and energy management, green economy and sustainable development, regional partners represented by International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, Interstate Commission for Water Coordination, Sustainable Development Commission as well as business organizations of the CA countries, and civil society representatives for close collaboration.

CONTACT INFORMATION

CAREC Head Office

40, Orbita-1 micro-district,
Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan
Tel.: +7 727 265 43 33, 265 43 27, 265 43 42
info@carececo.org
www.carececo.org

Kazakhstan Country Office

11/1 Mengilik El street, Kazhydromet
building, office 207
Nur-Sultan, Republic of Kazakhstan
Tel.: +7 717 255 20 16
kazakhstan@carececo.org

Kyrgyzstan Country Office

142 M. Gorky street
Bishkek, Republic of Kyrgyzstan
Tel.: +996 312 88 45 19
kyrgyzstan@carececo.org

Tajikistan Country Office

5/1 Shamsi street,
Dushanbe, Tajikistan
Tel.: +992 37 236 60 05
tajikistan@carececo.org

Turkmenistan Country Office

15 Turkmenistan Bitarap street, off. 49
Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
Tel.: +993 12 22 43 47
turkmenistan@carececo.org

Uzbekistan Country Office

7, Quarter I, Buniodkor ave., office 217
Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan
Tel.: +998 71 277 37 87
uzbekistan@carececo.org