german cooperation
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

Implemented by:
giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Green Central Asia
Enhancing environment, climate and water resilience

ISSUE
No. 2 [5]
September 2023

Green Central Asia: Newsletter

Validation is a Key Issue – Representatives of Central Asian Hydromet Services on the Droughtmap-Aral Sea Basin (ASB) Tool

On May 3-5, 2023, within the framework of 'Green Central Asia' Tashkent gathered the representatives from all five Central Asian Hydrometeorological Services (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan) for the second Droughtmap ASB workshop. The workshop was organised by the Martin-Luther University Halle-Wittenberg (MLU) and the German Geoscience Research Center (GFZ).

The aim of the workshop was to further develop the online information system and bulletin services that were specified during the previous workshop in 2022, and to initiate cooperation on the usage and validation of the new online tool, which should be fully operational at the end of 2023. (https://droughtmap.geo.uni-halle.de/droughtmap).

The successful workshop consisted of presentations and discussions, and two technical trainings in response to the partners` feedback from the 2022 workshop. The first part of technical training included the registration of all partners in the Droughtmap-ASB tool, which would ensure the provision of bi-weekly, monthly, and seasonal bulletins for selected districts and regions from all five countries. The second part of the training was on the use of the Droughtmap data for validation based on soil moisture and other data from agrometeorological stations in the Central Asian region.

The participants showed great interest in validation results, field visits and a drought forecasting strategy.

Green Central Asia at the Central Asia Climate Change Conference

'Green Central Asia' actively participated in the 5th Central Asia Climate Change Conference which took place on 16-17 May in Dushanbe. The conference was organised by the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) in cooperation with the Committee on Environmental Protection under the Government of Tajikistan supported by the World Bank, the European Union and other partners.

Representatives from the development sectors affected by climate issues in all five countries of the region, internationally recognised experts, and international organisations supporting the fight against climate challenges of the 21st century came together.

Dr. Caroline Milow presented the "Nexus Approach in Green Central Asia" by inthe session "Multi-sectoral Cooperation for Climate Action" She spoke about common approaches in developing cross-sectoral linkages and integrated management used in the implementation of the German Government's Green Central Asia Initiative.

The conference provided a multi-stakeholder dialogue platform for national and international partners to discuss the most important elements of regional cooperation in the areas of climate change adaptation, water management, climate finance, sustainable water, energy, food and environmental security and decarbonisation in Central Asia.

For more information, visit: https://carececo.org

GCA Supports International Environmental Instruments: UNECE Subregional Workshop on Mine Tailings Safety and the Prevention of Accidental Water Pollution in Central Asia

On May 25-26, 2023, in Dushanbe, representatives from industrial safety and water authorities of Central Asia, operators, NGOs, academia, and international organisations gathered for a subregional workshop on mine tailings safety and the prevention of accidental water pollution in Central Asia. This workshop was jointly organized by UNECE in cooperation with the Government of Tajikistan, the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, OSCE and the United Nations Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation.

The main objectives of the subregional workshop were to strengthen tailings risk governance; to present recent achievements by Central Asian countries in this area, notably since the last subregional workshop on this topic, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan in 2019; and to exchange experiences, good practices and lessons learned on the prevention of accidental water pollution from tailings at the regional level.

The workshop featured a high-level panel discussion among Vice-Ministers from the region on key challenges and needs concerning tailings safety; a round-table discussion on strengthening joint contingency planning in the Syr Darya River Basin; and examples of applying a multi hazard/risk approach in Central Asia and beyond.

AARHUS CONVENTION: Effective Public Participation for Good Governance, Healthy Environment and Sustainable Development

On June 1-2, 2023, in Tashkent, UNECE and the Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of Uzbekistan jointly with Green Central Asia and other international partners (OSCE, UNDP) co-organized a regional round table on the Aarhus Convention: Effective public participation for good governance, healthy environment and sustainable development.

The round table promoted a better understanding of the benefits and opportunities offered by the (Aarhus) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters and its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (Protocol on PRTRs) as effective tools for supporting the countries in achieving good governance, healthy environment and sustainable development.

The participants discussed the importance of the rule of law, transparency, effective dissemination of environmental information using modern digital technologies, public participation in environmental decision-making at national and international levels, access to justice and the practice of the establishment and operation of Aarhus Centres across the pan-European region. In addition, the issues to support the implementation of the concept of environmental protection in the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030 adopted by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on 30 October 2019 PD-5863 and the implementation of recommendations of the 2020 Environmental Performance Review of Uzbekistan were discussed.

“Green Central Asia” Contributed to the International Conference “Central Asia: Towards a Sustainable Future Through a Strong Regional Institute” (30th anniversary of IFAS)

On June 5-7, 2023, in Dushanbe, Green Central Asia actively participated in the International Conference “Central Asia: Towards a Sustainable Future through a Strong Regional Institution” dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea.

Session 1 on inter-basin dialogue was co-organised with the Swiss Development Cooperation and the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE); session 4 on policy-science dialogue was co-organised with USAID Regional Water and Vulnerable Environment Activity; all Green Central Asia consortium partners (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Martin Luther University Halle Wittenberg (MLU), GeoResearch Centre Potsdam (GFZ), Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) and German-Kazakh University (DKU) contributed with presentations.

GIZ Programme Manager Dr. Caroline Milow also participated in the panel of the workshop on institutional reform of IFAS organised by the World Bank. *For her contribution to the water sector in Central Asia and the development of IFAS, Dr. Milow received an Order from EC IFAS*.

During the conference award ceremony, Green Central Asia awarded the winners of the competitions announced in the frame of the 30th anniversary of IFAS for the best animation films and for the best infographics. Prizes were awarded to E. Gromova, Kazakhstan, Sh. Toirova, Tajikistan and B. Aitmetov, Uzbekistan.

Introduction of Competition Winners

We take pride in introducing the winners of the Green Central Asia competitions who serve as examples for the communities in Central Asia and the world. All of them are engaged citizens who day by day contribute to making the world a little bit better.

Regional competition for the best-animated film on Climate change and its impact on the Central Asia (Tajikistan):

Toirova Shoira Muzafarovna, candidate of philological sciences, in 2015 defended her dissertation work "Peculiarities of the Development of Modern Tajik Environmental Journalism in the Light of Water Resources Problems, the Construction of the Rogun Hydroelectric Power Station and Emergency Situations." She has worked in television journalism for over 15 years.

Author of articles and video materials "Nature has no bad weather", "Comparative analysis of dissemination of information about emergencies related to water", "Hurricane Katrin 7 years later", etc. In recent years, she has devoted herself to the development and implementation of socially important projects, and also actively participates in the implementation of environmental projects. In 2019, with the support of the US Embassy in Tajikistan, she implemented the project "Promoting ecotourism among girls in the Shakhrituz region". In cooperation with the Internews organization, she prepared a number of media content on "Tolerance in intra-family relationships based on religious and national views." While working for Good Neighbors in Tajikistan, she organized fundraising campaigns to help children from low-income families that enabled more than 10 successful surgeries for children diagnosed with heart disease. In 2021-2022, she held events aimed at promoting the work of contemporary writers on the Internet.

Introduction of Competition Winners

Regional competition for the best-animated film on Climate change and its impact on Central Asia (Kazakhstan) :

Gromova Ekaterina Romanovna graduated from the Almaty Technological University, specialty: Environment - "Ecology", Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Ekaterina is an eco-activist, has an active life position, participates in voluntary clean-up actions, planting trees, encourages citizens to consciously consume resources, donates recyclables to collection points, draws public attention to environmental problems in Almaty.

Ekaterina defended with excellent marks her thesis on one of the most pressing problems in the world: "Research on the problems of biopolymer waste disposal".

Author of scientific articles: "Analysis of the municipal solid waste processing in Kazakhstan"; "Robotic technologies for cleaning oil sludge"; "Environmental pollution from textile production"; "Wasteless technologies – transition to green economy".

Ekaterina is also involved in volunteer activities, takes part in planting seedlings, at conferences on the environmental education of schoolchildren, and in various environmental projects.

Introduction of Competition Winners

Regional competition for the best infographic on regional cooperation within the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS) dedicated to 30 years anniversary of IFAS:

Aitmetov Bobir Rustemovich graduated from the Tashkent State Polytechnic University named after Abu Rayhon Beruniy, speciality: in hydrogeology and engineering geology.

In 2014, after graduating from the university with honors in the speciality "Hydrogeology and engineering geology" and to the present time he has been contributing to the development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the field of geology and hydrogeology. Independently, he continues scientific work along with implementing it. He is a participant in many scientific and practical conferences and the author of several articles.

Bobir is actively involved in public affairs. In 2015, he took an honorable first place in the competition "The Most Active Young Geologist". In 2016, he participated in a training seminar on "Modern monitoring and analysis of groundwater" and received a certificate from this institute. He actively and successfully participated in sports competitions and won several prizes. He also holds several honorary degrees. Bobir is the author of the information system http://waterbase.uz/ . Graphic applications and diagrams for compiling infographics for the Republic of Karakalpakstan were prepared and are available on this system. The compiled infographics were created to provide an overview of the natural resources of the Republic of Karakalpakstan and for rational and efficient use without damaging the environment.

Currently, Bobir participates in distance learning in the master's program in "Project Management" at the Higher School of Business and Entrepreneurship in Tashkent.

PIK News: Workshop for Journalists “Communicating the Climate Crisis: Causes, Pathways, and Solutions in Central Asia”

The PIK team in cooperation with N-OST on June 4-8 organised a workshop for journalists “Communicating Climate Crisis: Causes, Pathways, and Solutions in Central Asia” in Dushanbe (Tajikistan) in which environmental journalists with different backgrounds from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan participated. The workshop schedule included a diverse range of sessions that covered topics of climate change issues in Central Asia. During the four-day event, participants developed their own projects that were finalised within the next 8 weeks with the support of PIK and N-OST teams. Journalists covered a wide range of topics from small-scale renewable energy sources for the rural population in Tajikistan to the impacts of climate change on agriculture production in Kazakhstan.

OSCE Regional Consultation Workshop “Towards Enhanced Co-operation for Addressing Climate-related Security Risks in Central Asia”

The Regional Consultation Workshop “Towards enhanced co-operation for addressing climate-related security risks in Central Asia” took place on June 20-21, 2023, in Tashkent and gathered 60 representatives from various government and civil society organisations in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as regional and international organisations. The workshop offered a platform for discussing climate-related challenges in high mountain areas and lowlands while also exploring opportunities for collaboration to address these challenges.

Green Central Asia Communication Officer Mukhabbat Kamalova presented at the workshop the GCA activities and received great interest from all participants. Green Central Asia is very much interested in cooperating and exchanging information with all climate initiatives and was unanimous with the participants who stated that when countries work together to address climate change and protect natural resources, it promotes positive relationships between neighbours, prosperity, stability, and security.

Green Central Asia: Turkmenistan News

Conference "Financial and Investment Support of Water Resources Rational Use Measures"

On June 20, 2023, Green Central Asia was presented at the international conference "Financial and investment support of water resources rational use measures" in Ashgabat.
The forum was attended by the Deputy Ministers of the relevant ministries dealing with water in Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, the UN Resident Coordinator in Turkmenistan, the Director of the Austrian Multi-Country Office, the UN Office for Project Services, the Coordinator of the UNECE national water dialogues, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, the Director of Scientific - Information Center of the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination, Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia, Director of the Scientific Information Center of the Interstate Commission for Sustainable Development, representatives of the GIZ, scientists and experts in the field of water resources and climate change.

Dr. Milow presented Green Central Asia's activities around the drafting of a regional climate change adaptation strategy for Central Asia, informed about the planned content and action plan of the strategy and also introduced the new regional project: Climate sensitive water resources management in Central Asia, which is part of the German Government Green Central Asia Initiative and financed by the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development.

Within the framework of the conference, the participants exchanged views on the problems of rational use of water resources, including the issues of financing the water sector of Central Asia for the purpose of efficient water use in the context of climate change, investment support for coordinating interaction on water and energy in the region, as well as environmental, social, and economic aspects of integrated water resources management.
Special attention was paid to the issues of regional cooperation for the implementation of the ESCAP resolution "Consideration of the conditions for the creation of a special United Nations program for the Aral Sea basin", as well as the interaction of countries in the field of cooperation on climate change adaptation in Central Asia, including the preparation of a joint strategy on water resources management considering climatic factors.

Meetings

Introduction to the New Climate-sensitive Water Resources Management in Central Asia Project: Meeting at the State Committee for Water Management of Turkmenistan

On June 21, 2023, Dr. Caroline Milow and Senior Regional Advisor A. Nikolayenko met the representatives of the State Committee for Water Management of Turkmenistan. The discussion concentrated on the new GIZ Climate-sensitive water resources management in Central Asia project, which aims to strengthen regional cooperation in the water sector in the Central Asia region and to promote the principles of sustainable integrated water resources management (IWRM).

The main implementation partner in Turkmenistan, the State Committee for Water Management of Turkmenistan will submit their proposals and identify pilot sites and necessary technical actions. Great interest was given to the study of new technologies in the field of digitalization, automatization, and its sustainability/modern technologies as well as the exchange of best practices. In addition, the State Committee for Water Management of Turkmenistan expressed its interest in activities aimed at capacity building (seminars and trainings) as well as at the implementation of practical measures.

Preparing for the EU Turkmenistan Facility : Meetings at the Ministry of Energy of Turkmenistan and Turkmengas State Company

During the trip to Turkmenistan Dr. Caroline Milow and Senior Regional Advisor A. Nikolayenko met representatives of the Ministry of Energy of Turkmenistan and Turkmengas State Company. The goal of the meetings was to inform TKM partners about the launch of the new EU Facility project in Turkmenistan. This EU action is intended to promote the EU's long-term interests in supporting Turkmenistan's re-engagement with the outside world while supporting sustainable, inclusive, and democratic development. It therefore, prioritises economic and trade cooperation (within the framework of the rules and norms governing EU external relations, including on human and labour rights), EU policy priorities (in particular, on Green Deal and governance, human rights), and the SDGs. GIZ and the International Trade Centre (ITC) will implement this action for the EU starting in 2024 for four years. GIZ Green Central Asia will in particular focus on the topics of policy discussion, implementing the National Climate Change Strategy, methane and greenhouse gas emission reduction and renewable energy promotion.

Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan visits Potsdam Institute for Climate Research

On June 22, 2023, Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan Aziz Abdukhakimov led a delegation to the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK). The visit aimed to strengthen German-Uzbek collaboration in science, higher education, and capacity building to address the pressing issue of climate change in Uzbekistan.

The delegation engaged in fruitful discussions on climate change, highlighting the importance of developing higher education capacity to resist future challenges. PIK showcased their ongoing projects, including the Green Central Asia initiative funded by the Foreign Office, emphasizing their role in assessing climate impacts across different sectors.
The visit underscored the significance of international partnerships and knowledge exchange in addressing global environmental challenges.

Kyrgyzstan Interested in the Effective Implementation of the German Green Central Asia Initiative

We are happy to share with you that Kyrgyzstan is interested in the effective implementation of the Green Central Asia initiative, considering the growing challenges and threats in the mountainous region against the backdrop of global climate change, President of Kyrgyzstan, Sadyr Zhaparov, told during negotiations with German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

"Currently, we are implementing the Green Economy Development Program, a fund for the development of green energy has been created, and dozens of projects are being implemented to build medium and small hydropower plants. In this regard, we propose to consider the possibility of investing in green projects in Kyrgyzstan. Their joint implementation could contribute to the country's economic development while simultaneously achieving climate and environmental goals under the Paris Agreement," Sadyr Zhaparov said.

Source: http://en.kabar.kg/news/kyrgyzstan-interested-in-effective-implementation-of-german-green-central-asia-initiative/

Another Step Towards a Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategy in Central Asia

On July 4-5, 2023, in Almaty, Green Central Asia organised the 4th regional inter-governmental working group meeting on the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategy in Central Asia.

In this meeting, representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, relevant sector ministries and state committees, as well as international, regional, and national experts worked on the finalisation of the Strategy document. The delegates actively and very lively discussed the draft document and could agree on all major issues. After some fine-tuning in additional consultations, the finalized text was shared with all Central Asian countries' governments in mid-August. There was a consensus that the final and approved Strategy, if possible, shall be presented in December at COP-28 in Dubai.

Climate-Sensitive Water Resources Management in Central Asia

Dear readers!

We would like to introduce a new regional GIZ project which is part of the Green Central Asia Regional Action Plan "Climate-sensitive water resources management in Central Asia" commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). We are happy to announce that this project is a multi-donor action and will be implemented together with the Swiss Development Cooperation. We are currently in the process of concluding the contract.

Programme region:

Republic of Kazakhstan
Kyrgyz Republic
Republic of Tajikistan
Republic of Uzbekistan
Turkmenistan

Main Partners:

Kazakhstan: Ministry for Ecology and Natural Resources
Kyrgyz Republic: Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision
Tajikistan: Ministry of Energy and Water Resources
Turkmenistan: State Committee for Water Management
Uzbekistan: Ministry of Water Resources

Duration :

2023–2027

Commission manager/Contact person:

Dr. Caroline Milow
caroline.milow@giz.de

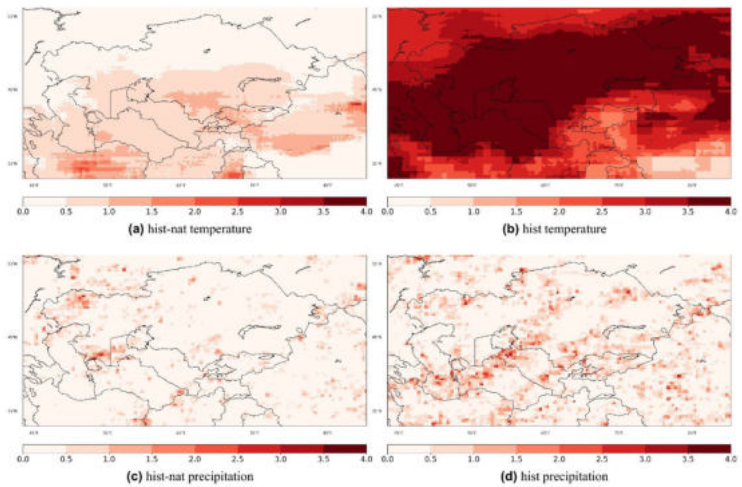
The aim of the project is to strengthen regional cooperation in the water sector in the Central Asia region and to promote awareness of the principles of sustainable integrated water resources management (IWRM) among all countries.

The project develops systematic, regionally coordinated approaches to climate-sensitive water resources management and thus, will contribute to increasing short- and long-term resilience.

Planned activities

- Establishment of a river basin dialogue between the relevant representatives of national and regional organisations in the Amu Darya and Syr Darya river basins;
- Exchange of information and experience as well as capacity building on various topics of climate-sensitive IWRM, planning processes, international water law and water diplomacy;
- Implementation of 4 regionally coordinated climate adaptation measures in the field of integrated water resources management (IWRM) in each of the two water catchment areas of Amu Darya and Syr Darya in a gender-sensitive exemplary manner;
- Implementation of pilot measures for improving water efficiency in these pilot areas by 10%;
- Creation of a gender-sensitive training concept including a training manual for river basins for the national water ministries and the regional Basin Water Organisations (BWOs) Amu Darya and Syr Darya with the support of the Martin Luther University Halle Wittenberg and the ETH Zurich;
- Implementation of pilot measures on climate-sensitive IWRM with coordination of the respective competent water, environment or geology ministries of the five Central Asia countries;
- Strengthening capacities in water quality monitoring in line with EU standards

Green Central Asia Scientific Publications: Anthropogenic Influence on Extreme Temperature and Precipitation in Central Asia



The new paper "Anthropogenic influence on extreme temperature and precipitation in Central Asia" authored by Dr. Bijan Fallah and the PIK Team has been published in the Nature Scientific Reports. (https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-023-33921-6)

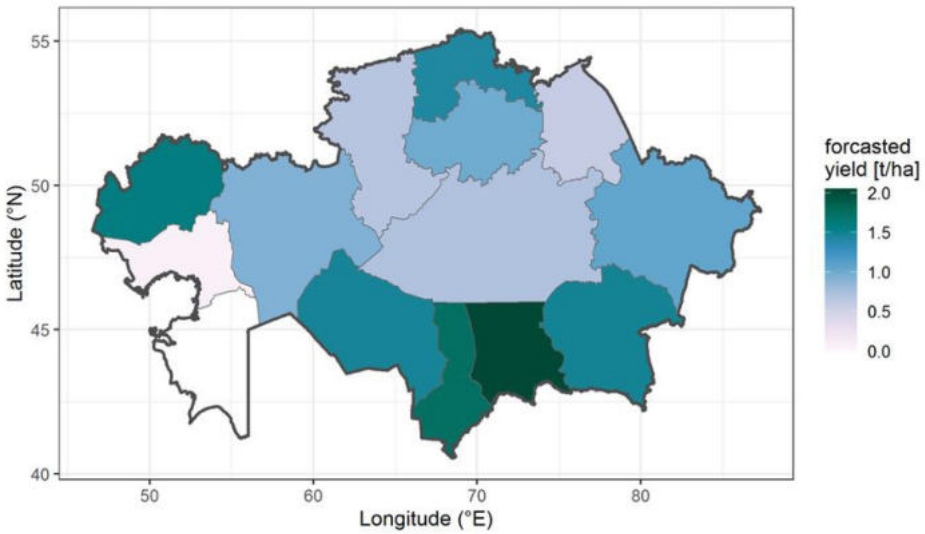
The study investigates the contribution of anthropogenic influence forcing extreme temperature and precipitation events in Central Asia during the last six decades.

The added value of this study lies in its use of high-resolution data and downscaling methodology to investigate the contribution of anthropogenic forcing to extreme temperature and precipitation events in Central Asia. In addition, the high-resolution data set can be used in impact studies focusing on attributing extreme events in Central Asia and is freely available to the scientific community.

This study is unique in its focus on the contribution of anthropogenic forcing to extreme temperature and precipitation events in Central Asia using high-resolution data and downscaling methodology. Furthermore, the results can inform mitigation and adaptation policies in the region.

Link to the full article: www.greencentralasia.org

New Scientific Paper Published by PIK Team on the Successful Forecast of Wheat Production in Kazakhstan



Wheat production in Kazakhstan is fundamentally contributing to food security in Central Asia providing a majority of the required wheat in the region. Timely and reliable estimates of Kazakh wheat production are important for food security planning and management. In this study, it was developed a statistical weather-driven crop model that can successfully forecast wheat yields at the oblast level up to two months before the harvest. The statistical model is run with publicly available weather and yield data and requires low computational power, making it easily replicable. The forecast model can be used as a replenishment to currently applied forecasting methods supporting countries in Central Asia to meet their food demand.

Link to the full article please find at: www.greencentralasia.org

Published by: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Green Central Asia: Transboundary dialogue on climate, environment and security in Central Asia and Afghanistan
Address: 100128 Uzbekistan, Tashkent,
401 Labzak 1A, 4th floor
T. +998 71 241 40 48
www.giz.de / www.greencentralasia.org

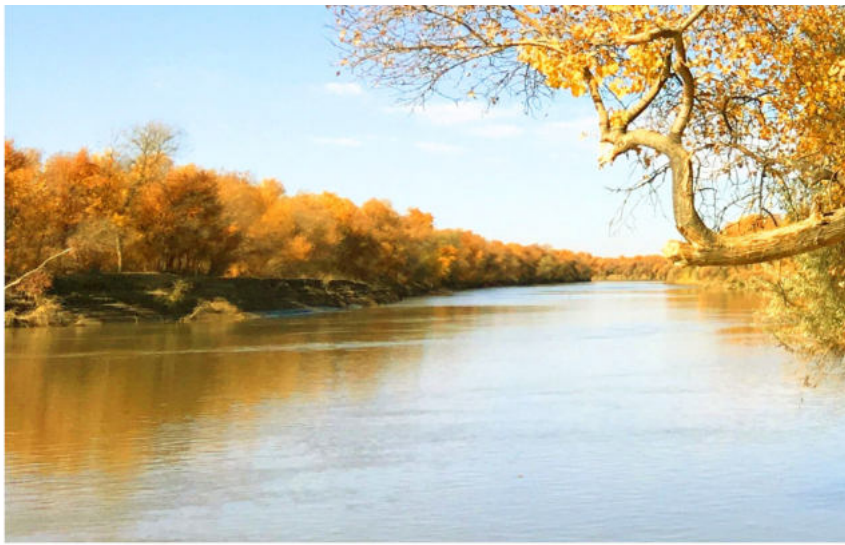
Design: Nilufar Fayzimurodova, Tashkent

Photo credits: GIZ, freepik.com

Cover pictures: Karakalpakstan by Dr. Caroline Milow GIZ

Authors: Team GCA

On behalf of: German Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt)
Division 408: Climate Change Geopolitics, Climate and Security, Water Diplomacy



In cooperation with: DKU Deutsch Kasachische Universität; GFZ Helmholtz Centre Potsdam; Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg; PIE

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication