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Green Central Asia

Enhancing environment, climate and water resilience



**SPECIAL
ISSUE**
NO. 4 (12)
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Celebration of the Amu Darya and Syr Darya River Days in Central Asia

Amu Darya & Syr Darya River Days 2025

Regional Impact – One-Page Infographic



REGIONAL OVERVIEW

- 5 Central Asian countries
- Urban & rural locations
- Offline + online engagement



PEOPLE REACHED

- 2,500–3,000+ direct participants
- 1,500+ children & school students
- 500+ university students & young professionals
- 300+ volunteers & eco-activists

EVENTS & FORMATS

- 20+ activities, including:
 - Forums & roundtables
 - Environmental clean-ups
 - Creative workshops
 - Competitions (drawing, essay, video)
 - Open lessons & quizzes

EDUCATION & CREATIVITY

- Art-based environmental education
- Inclusive formats (children, youth, seniors, people with disabilities)
- Youth ideas & initiatives for water conservation



ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

- 200+ trees planted
- 240+ kg of waste collected from riverbanks
- River clean-ups, eco-runs, restoration activities



STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

- Schools & universities
- Environmental NGOs & youth movements
- Water & environmental authorities
- Scientists, educators & media

KEY FEATURES

- Youth-led engagement
- Community-based action
- Inclusive participation

OVERALL RESULT

- The 2025 River Day celebrations became a region-wide environmental movement, combining education, creativity, and practical action – and mobilizing thousands of people to protect Central Asia's shared water resources.

Dear colleagues and friends!

This year has been truly remarkable for our work in celebrating the Amu Darya and Syr Darya River Days across Central Asia. From Turkmenistan to Uzbekistan, from Tajikistan to Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, we brought together thousands of people-children, students, university youth, volunteers, eco-activists, and local communities-to celebrate our shared rivers and promote sustainable water practices.

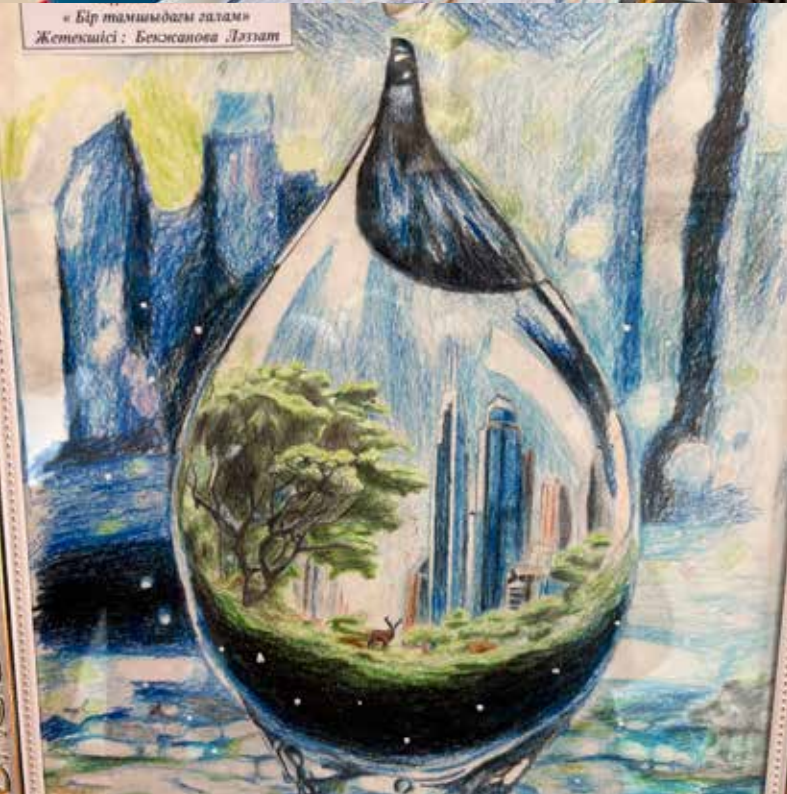
Across more than 20 creative events, participants joined hands-on workshops, environmental clean-ups, competitions, open lessons, and quizzes. Together, we planted over 200 trees, collected more than 500 kilograms of waste, and inspired young minds with art, education, and environmental stewardship. It was amazing to see how inclusive participation-from toddlers to seniors, and people with disabilities-created a vibrant space for creativity, learning, and action.

Today, we are delighted to bring all these achievements together in a special issue of our bulletin, celebrating the collective effort of everyone involved and highlighting the importance of protecting Central Asia's precious water resources. We hope it inspires you to continue caring for our rivers and the communities they support.

On behalf of our entire team, I want to thank you for following our work and for being part of this shared mission. We wish you a joyful and prosperous New Year!

Dr. Caroline Milow





OVER 1,000 SCHOOLCHILDREN PARTICIPATE IN SYR DARYA RIVER DAY CELEBRATIONS IN KYZYLORDA



On 7 November, Vice Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation Aslan Abdraimov held an open lesson on water conservation at Secondary School No. 290 in Kyzylorda. The event was organized as part of the “Save Water – Preserve the Future!” project, implemented by the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation with support from our regional programme, the National Information and Analytical Center for Water Resources, and the Akimat of Kyzylorda Region.

Engaging students both in-person and online

The lesson brought together 140 high school students from 15 schools in Kyzylorda. In addition, 900 students from seven districts, including rural schools, participated online. Vice Minister Abdraimov emphasized the importance of efficient water use, presented practical water-saving methods, and answered students’ questions. Students also shared their own project ideas for water conservation solutions.

Supporting practical initiatives

Vice Minister Abdraimov presented Secondary School No. 290 with a financial certificate for installing a drip irrigation system to green the school courtyard, demonstrating how knowledge can be translated into action.

Celebrating creativity and awareness

On the same day, the Kyzylorda Regional Palace of Schoolchildren hosted the closing ceremony of the project, which ran from 1 October to 7 November. The ceremony included an award event for a children’s drawing contest on water conservation, which attracted over 800 participants aged 5 to 10. The 20 best works were recognized with diplomas and gift certificates for art supplies.

Other project highlights

Earlier activities included the eco-run ‘Syr Darya- the Future of Central Asia’ along the riverbank, where participants collected 120 kg of household waste, cleaning the river from plastic and other debris. Winners of the eco-run also received diplomas and commemorative gifts, combining fun, environmental action, and learning.

The ‘Save Water – Preserve the Future!’ project successfully raised awareness among children and their families about the importance of responsible water use, inspiring the next generation to take care of Central Asia’s shared water resources.



UNITING FOR CLEAN RIVERS: ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGN ENGAGES VOLUNTEERS ACROSS KYRGYZSTAN



To mark the International Syr Darya River Day, we supported the Green Alliance Kyrgyzstan team in launching a large-scale environmental campaign across three regions of the country.

Collective effort for clean rivers

The initiative brought together over 100 volunteers from diverse backgrounds – university students, schoolchildren, teachers, bank employees, national park staff and local activists. Working side by side, they cleaned riverbanks, collected household waste, plastic and glass, and ensured that recyclable materials were sorted and sent to specialized recycling points, turning the campaign into both an ecological and educational effort.

Clean-up results by region

- **Salkyn-Tor, Naryn region:** 35 bags of waste collected – a result that demanded notable teamwork and dedication.
- **Ak-Buura, Osh region:** more than 40 participants joined to clean the river and surrounding areas.
- **Kugart, Jalal-Abad region:** focus placed on plastic and glass, with extra attention to small litter.



OSH FORUM: CELEBRATING SYR DARYA RIVER DAY



On 3 October, Osh State University hosted the Osh Forum titled “*Kyrgyzstan’s Water Resources: Conservation and Rational Use of the Syr Darya, Kara Darya and Naryn Mountain Rivers for Future Generations*”, as part of the Syr Darya River Day celebrations.

Bringing stakeholders together

The forum gathered over 100 participants, including representatives from the Water Resources Service, the National Academy of Sciences, the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Kyrgyz Republic, universities, and international and local organizations. Organized by Green Alliance KG with support from GIZ, the event provided a platform for dialogue on strengthening water security in Central Asia’s mountain ecosystems.

Key topics discussed

Participants explored the major climate challenges affecting the Syr Darya, Kara Darya, and Naryn rivers, such as glacier melting, reduced snow cover, and seasonal flow variability.

University researchers presented hydrological and ecological studies, highlighting the importance of localized climate adaptation strategies. International partners shared innovative water-saving technologies, concepts of artificial glaciers, and models of transboundary cooperation under regional initiatives.

Engaging the next generation

Special emphasis was placed on youth involvement. Students and young researchers proposed eco-educational initiatives and awareness campaigns aimed at promoting a culture of sustainable water use and fostering active engagement in the preservation of mountain river ecosystems.

The forum demonstrated that collaboration across governments, academia, international partners, and youth is key to addressing climate impacts and safeguarding Central Asia’s water resources for future generations.



A CLEANER TOMORROW BEGINS TODAY – FROM THE BANKS OF THE SYRDARYA



On 22 August, the shores of Bahri Tojik beach, located within the Tajik part of the Syrdarya River basin, became a place of action and responsibility rather than simple recreation. As part of the Syrdarya River Day celebrations, school students rolled up their sleeves and joined an environmental clean-up campaign – a reminder that nature’s protection starts with small steps made together.

The atmosphere of the day was filled with cooperation, energy, and optimism. Alongside the clean-up, participants also talked to people on the beach – spreading messages about keeping water clean and using natural resources responsibly. Their voices reached families, children, and passers-by, turning the event into a moving example of community-driven environmental stewardship.

The initiative brought together high school students from 15 cities and districts of Sughd Region. Their enthusiasm, teamwork, and sense of civic duty turned the event into more than just a clean-up – it became a demonstration of how the younger generation is ready to take the lead in preserving our shared natural heritage.

By the end of the day, the riverbanks looked cleaner – but even more important, the message was clearer: a cleaner tomorrow begins with actions we take today.

What the campaign focused on:

- practical contribution to keeping the Syrdarya River clean;
- collection of plastic, household waste and other pollutants threatening the aquatic ecosystem;
- raising environmental awareness among youth and local residents;
- promoting responsible and sustainable resource use.





RECOGNISING YOUNG TALENT: AWARDS PRESENTED TO COMPETITION WINNERS IN TAJIKISTAN



The city of Guliston, Tajikistan, became a stage for creativity and inspiration on 23 August, where school students and young artists were honoured during the award ceremony of creative competitions dedicated to Syrdarya River Day. The event served as a festive culmination of a series of cultural and educational activities celebrating the river that connects millions of lives across the region.

Creativity inspired by the river

Young participants showcased their talent and imagination through art, words and video. The competitions were held in three categories:

- Best video – ‘Where the Syrdarya Flows, Inspiration is Born’.
- Best essay – ‘The Syrdarya – the River of Life’.
- Best drawing – ‘Written by the Waters of the Syrdarya’.

Each work reflected personal vision, emotion and respect for the river, highlighting its cultural value and its importance for communities and ecosystems.

Celebrating achievement and heritage

Winners received certificates and commemorative prizes, symbolising appreciation for their creativity and their contribution to preserving the cultural connection with the Syrdarya. For many, the moment was not only an award, but also recognition of their voice and ideas about the future of the river.

The ceremony once again demonstrated how creative expression can bring young people closer to nature and help foster a sense of responsibility for the region’s natural and cultural heritage.



SYR DARYA – OUR RIVER, OUR FUTURE: FESTIVITIES IN KHUJAND



On 1 October, the city of Khujand, Tajikistan, celebrated Syr Darya River Day under the slogan ‘Syr Darya – Our River, Our Future’. The event was organized by the Water Resources Department of the Syr Darya Basin Zone, with support from international and national partners, including HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation, GIZ, UNDP, and others.

Engaging youth and communities

More than 250 participants attended the celebration, representing leading universities in the Sughd region, such as Khujand State University, the Mining and Metallurgical Institute of Tajikistan, and the Polytechnic Institute. The day combined learning, creativity, and action to highlight the importance of water resources for the region.

Actions for a cleaner river

An environmental cleanup campaign along the banks of the Syr Darya engaged students in hands-on conservation work, demonstrating their commitment and environmental responsibility. Following the cleanup, a quiz was held to raise awareness about sustainable water use.

Celebrating creativity and commitment

School students contributed further by presenting creative works on water protection, reflecting both imagination and environmental consciousness. Winners of the quiz and drawing competition, as well as the most active participants, were awarded commemorative gifts, recognising their enthusiasm and dedication.

The celebration highlighted the power of youth and communities in promoting sustainable water management and preserving the Syr Darya for future generations.



ROUNDTABLE 'AMU DARYA – THE RIVER OF LIFE' HELD IN DUSHANBE



On 27 October 2025, Dushanbe hosted a roundtable discussion titled 'Amu Darya – the River of Life' in the conference hall of the Committee for Environmental Protection under the Government of Tajikistan, as part of the Amu Darya River Day celebrations.

The roundtable brought together university students, eco-volunteers, and representatives of environmental and educational organizations. Participants discussed:

- The importance of the Amu Darya as a key water resource in Central Asia.
- Its role in maintaining ecological balance, supporting socio-economic development, and preserving cultural heritage.
- The need for rational water use in the context of climate change.
- Strengthening regional cooperation for environmental protection.

The event concluded with an **award ceremony** recognizing winners of creative competitions held in anticipation of Amu Darya River Day:

- **Drawing contest:** 'Written by the Waters of the Amu Darya'.
- **Essay contest:** 'Amu Darya – the River of Life'.
- **Video contest:** 'Where the Amu Darya Flows, Inspiration is Born'.

All winners received **certificates and commemorative gifts**, celebrating their creativity and commitment to raising awareness about the Amu Darya and sustainable water use.





ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGN PLANTS 200 CONIFEROUS TREES IN SUGHD PROVINCE



On 16 November 2025, a large-scale environmental campaign was held in the Bobojon Gafurov district of Sughd Province, with the planting of 200 coniferous trees. The initiative aimed to raise environmental awareness among residents and encourage youth participation in nature conservation projects.

The event was organized by the project and dedicated to the Syr Darya and Amu Darya River Days, highlighting the importance of preserving water resources and strengthening ecosystem resilience in the face of climate change.

The campaign saw the involvement of the Head of the Environmental Protection Department of Sughd Province, representatives of local institutions, and numerous volunteers.

Planting these trees contributes to:

- Improved air and soil quality;
- Restoration of green areas;
- Long-term environmental sustainability and to fostering a culture of environmental stewardship among the local community and young people.





FROM TODDLERS TO SENIORS: CREATIVE WORKSHOPS IN ASHGABAT BRING AMU DARYA RIVER DAY TO LIFE



Ashgabat lit up with creativity and color in the days leading up to Amu Darya River Day. The city hosted a series of hands-on creative workshops – proof that caring for water can be both educational and joyful.

A celebration of water – through art, creativity, and shared experience

More than awareness-raising events, these workshops became a space where people of different ages and backgrounds connected through creativity. Each activity reflected one universal message: water is life, beauty, and inspiration – and we all share responsibility for it.

Organized in close cooperation with the State Committee for Water Management of Turkmenistan, the initiative set out not only to talk about responsible water use but to nurture a sincere appreciation for nature.

Water seen through different eyes

- **Elder participants** transformed plain eco-bags into bright art pieces – waves, rivers, fish, and shimmering blues capturing the essence of water in Central Asia.
- **Teenagers** designed miniature water landscapes on ceramic plates, expressing purity, freshness, and the fragility of ecosystems.

- **People with disabilities** took part in clay modeling, shaping meaningful objects that symbolized careful water use – gentle reminders that every drop counts.
- **The youngest children**, wide-eyed and curious, learned that water matters not only to the fish they paint, but to every living being around them.

A bridge between generations

What began as creative sessions grew into something larger – a bridge between generations, where shared ideas, laughter and splashes of paint connected toddlers, adults and elders. Through art, participants reflected on the importance of water and carried home not just handmade crafts, but new awareness and pride in protecting natural resources.

These workshops became a warm prelude to the broader celebration of Amu Darya River Day, a regional initiative that brings communities together in the shared mission to preserve one of Central Asia's most precious water sources.



UZBEKISTAN'S ECOLOGICAL MOVEMENT CONCLUDES MAJOR SERIES OF EVENTS DEDICATED TO AMU DARYA AND SYR DARYA RIVER DAYS



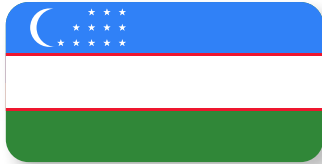
From 4 to 29 November 2025, Uzbekistan hosted over twenty meetings, roundtables, and seminars across seven regions- Andijan, Gulistan, Jizzakh, Namangan, Nukus, Urgench, and Fergana. The events aimed to raise environmental awareness and promote a culture of rational water use.

More than 500 participants attended, including representatives from parliamentary structures, water management, and environmental agencies, ecological scientists, EcoMovement activists, university professors, and students; members of NGOs and media representatives.

Participants received information on the water resources status, climate-related threats, and ecosystem preservation in the Amu Darya and Syr Darya basins.



KEY
DISCUSSIONS



4
november

Jizzakh & Gulistan:
Roundtables highlighted the Syr Darya’s importance for water supply, agriculture, and energy across Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, emphasizing careful water use and climate adaptation measures.

Namangan, Andijan, Fergana:
Discussions focused on water scarcity, biodiversity, and anthropogenic impacts, stressing the need for advanced water-saving technologies.

7–8
november

Nukus & Urgench:
Events celebrated International Amu Darya River Day, with focus on stabilizing water bodies, restoring fish resources, and maintaining river ecosystems.

Universities in Jizzakh, Gulistan, Namangan, Fergana, Nukus:
Students and researchers proposed innovative solutions for water conservation, biodiversity protection, and environmental awareness campaigns.



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