



REGIONAL PROCESS SESSION DESCRIPTION FORM 2.

10TH WORLD WATER FORUM

This Regional Session Description Form 2 is for the specified program of the session. Please complete this form no later than 30th of April 2024 (CET time).

**The Regional session description 1 (online form) is separately requested for the Regional session coordinators to deliver a concise session outline with the contact info and the logistical requests.*

Regional Session Code and Title:

RP8, Transboundary Water Cooperation in the Aral Sea basin for a better Future

Regional Session Coordinators (Name, Position, Organization, email, mobile number):

1. Mr. Serik Bekmagambetov, Official Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, serik.ifas@gmail.com, +7
2. Ms. Zhanar Mautanova, Director of the International Water Assessment Center, zh.mautanova@iwac.kz, +7 7022155757

Regional Session Description including objectives and expected outcomes (500 words maximum):

Water is crucial for the sustainable development of five Central Asian countries - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. In mountainous countries, hydropower is a vital energy resource, while for downstream countries, river water serves as a source for irrigated agriculture.

Intensive water uses in Central Asia threatens the water supply for the population, which, according to the World Bank, exceeds 78 million people. By 2050, the number may reach 90-100 million people, and water scarcity is projected to increase up to 25-30%. At the same time, the demand for water resources used for irrigation agriculture may increase up to 30% by 2030.

The pressure on the region's water resources related to the demand for economic growth of countries is increasing due to climate change. Central Asia, being in the arid climate zone, is most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Currently, there is a steady increase in the average annual air temperature and, according to some expert forecasts, it may increase by 2.5-6.5 °C by the end of the XXI century. The impact of climate on water resources in Central Asian countries has already become serious. Changes in the hydrological regime and related droughts, floods, reduced precipitation, and other climatic phenomena have led to a significant water crisis.

All these factors combined can limit the economic development of countries and cause social instability in the region. In these circumstances, the development of a long-term joint vision for the use of water resources, considering all climate risks, is a strategically important task. Responding to climate change and managing water resources requires cooperation and the mobilization of collective efforts.

The sub-regional session "Transboundary Water Cooperation in the Aral Sea Basin for a better future" is organized to assist countries in developing common approaches to the use of water resources in the Aral Basin and concrete actions aimed at implementing the priorities of the basin.

Goal of the session is to assist the Central Asian countries in building a common vision for sharing and protecting water resources in a changing climate. The session will facilitate:

- discussion of climate risks for the region's water sector, obstacles, and barriers to the implementation of joint measures.
- identification of regional priorities for the Aral Sea basin and specific actions for their implementation.
- intensifying exchange of experience, knowledge, and ideas on improving water infrastructure resilience to negative climate impacts, introducing innovations and technologies, mobilizing financing for transboundary water cooperation, etc.

Expected outcomes of the session:

- Exchange of knowledge and experience among the participants for better understanding of the problems of increasing water resources resilience to climate change in Central Asia.
- Elaboration of concrete recommendations and measures to strengthen co-operation of the basin countries on shared use and protection of water resources.
- Promotion of a common vision on the use and protection of water resources and harmonized management of water resources in the basin.

Detailed Regional Session Plan:

ESTIMATED TIMING	ITEM DESCRIPTION / ROLE	SPEAKERS	SPEAKERS STATUS (OK OR TBC)
13:00-13:05	<u>Welcome speeches</u>	Ms. Zulfiya Suleimenova, Advisor to the President - Special Representative of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on International Environmental Issues Mr. Abdulkhamid Azad, Leading Specialist on Water Resources	Tbc Ok
13:05-13:20	<u>Keynote Speech:</u> Cooperation in the Aral Sea Basin: Progress and Achievements, Problems and Prospects of Cooperation in a Changing Climate	Mr Askhat Orazbay, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea	Ok
13:20-13:55	<u>Panel discussion 1</u> <i>Questions: What joint measures need to be taken to reduce disaster risks associated with negative climate impacts on water resources in the basin? How to ensure and strengthen regional cooperation to enhance the resilience of the basin's water resources to climate change?</i>	Mr Bolat Bekniyaz, First Vice-Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation of the Republic of Kazakhstan Mr Almazbek Sokeev, Deputy Minister of Water Resources, Agriculture and Processing Industry - Director of the Water Resources Service of the Kyrgyz Republic Mr Jamshed Shoimzoda, First Deputy Minister of Energy and Water	Ok Ok

		Resources of the Republic of Tajikistan Mr Durdy Genjiev, Chairman of the State Water Committee of Turkmenistan Mr Shavkat Khamraev, Minister of Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan	Ok Tbc Ok
13:55-14:25	Panel discussion 2 <i>Questions: What solutions can increase resilience to climate change impacts on water resources in the Aral Sea Basin? How to improve planning of joint adaptation measures? How to attract and increase climate finance for joint measures to improve the resilience of water resources in the Aral Sea Basin?</i>	World Bank: Mr. Abdulhamid Azad, Leading Specialist on Water Resources and Mr. Aleix Serrat Capdevila Chief Specialist on Water Resources & Coordinator of Water component of the CAWEP-4 Program ADB: Ms. Yasmin Siddiqi, Director of Agriculture, Food, Nature and Rural Development Sector Group UNECE: Mr. Marco Keiner, Director of Environment Division - OECD - GIZ - USAID	Ok Ok
14:25-14:30	Wrap up and closure	Mr Askhat Orazbay, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea	Ok