



Committee on Water  
Resources of the  
Ministry of Agriculture of the  
Republic of Kazakhstan



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Office of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
The Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan (the Senate and the Mazhilis)  
The Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
Ministry of Environment Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
Akimat of the Almaty Oblast  
Akimat of the Almaty City  
National Development Institutes of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
Embassies to the Republic of Kazakhstan  
Non-Governmental Organizations of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Herewith we would inform you that the International Conference on 'Integrated Water Resources Management in the Ile-Balkhash River Basin: Joint Solutions and Prospects', organized by the European Union, UNDP, OSCE, and the Water Resources Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture, under the EU-UNDP project Transboundary Dialogue and Cooperation in the Ile-Balkhash River Basin was held in Almaty on 11-12 October 2010.

The Conference was attended by the representatives of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment Protection, the Eurasian Water Center, the Akimats of Almaty Oblast and districts, research and design institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan and of the People's Republic of China, the embassies accredited to the Republic of Kazakhstan, international organizations and institutions, national development institutions, NGOs, etc.

The Conference discussed such issues as introducing integrated water resources management and advanced water use technologies in some economy sectors (primarily in agriculture), preserving favorable environmental conditions, and improving cross-border dialogue and cooperation in the Ile-Balkhash basin.

We, the organizers and participants of the Conference, believe that all the above issues are relevant and well-timed, since the solution of these problems determines the welfare of the population and the environment, preservation of the unique Lake Balkhash, as well as phased development of the economy of the region. Ultimately all this matters concerns the national security of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Please find enclosed to this letter the Conference Resolution as well as additional proposals developed at the section meetings. We hope that the conference's recommendations will be useful in formulating various decisions related to water development, provision of water to industrial facilities, and maintaining supportive environment of the Ile-Balkhash region and the country as a whole.

Sincerely,

Norbert Jousten,  
Head of the Delegation of the European Union  
to the Republic of Kazakhstan

Stephen Tull,  
UNDP Resident Representative  
in the Republic of Kazakhstan

Alexandre Keltchewsky,  
Ambassador of the OSCE Centre in Astana



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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE:  
Integrated Water Resources Management  
in the Ile-Balkhash River Basin: Joint Solutions and Prospects

RESOLUTION

Almaty, 12 October 2010

We, the participants of the International Conference 'Integrated Water Resources Management in the Ile-Balkhash River Basin: Joint Solutions and Prospects', representatives of the competent bodies in the field of water management and environmental protection, representatives of international organizations, as well as scientific, engineering and non-governmental organizations, recognizing the importance of the issues discussed at the conference, have adopted the following Resolution:

Having heard and discussed the reports of the leading researchers and experts at the plenary session and in the section meetings, namely, 'Integrated Water Resources Management of the Ile-Balkhash Basin', 'Environmental Protection in the Ile-Balkhash Basin', 'Modern Energy Saving Technologies and Efficient Use of Water Resources', and 'Transboundary Cooperation in the Basin: Legal and Institutional Framework and Its Development', the conference participants pointed out that the persisting consumer attitudes towards water resources of the basin as well as the ignorance of the environmental needs of the Lake Balkhash, may result in the lake repeating the fate of the Aral Sea. While analysing the current situation, the conference participants came to the agreement that the issues raised during the discussion of the reports are of great importance for the preservation of the Ile-Balkhash basin ecosystem, and in particular of the Lake Balkhash, and consider the following measures necessary:

1. Continue to work on promoting cross-border dialogue on transboundary river basins with China with the support of the EU, UNDP, OSCE and other international organizations. To offer the Chinese side to take active part in enhancing cross-border cooperation on issues of interstate water relations, both at the level of bordering regions (*oblasts*), border areas (*rayons*) and rural districts.
2. Adopt the strategy for restraining water off-take both by China and Kazakhstan as a measure promoting sustainable management of the basin water resources, introduction of resource saving technologies in agriculture and other sectors, as well as mutual confidence and development of good neighbour relations, etc.
3. Promote the development of multilateral cooperation in the region in the context of using international best practices in joint settlement of transboundary issues.
4. Approach the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Water Resources Committee of the Ministry with a proposal to speed up the adoption of the National Programme 'Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Conservation in Kazakhstan', developed with the support of the UNDP, OSCE and the Government of Norway, since this programme will facilitate the implementation of IWRM principles, including in the Ile-Balkhash basin.
5. Approach the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan with a request to take appropriate measures for strengthening institutional capacity of the authorized water management public body, with organization of individual governmental body such as Agency or Ministry, in accordance with the Water Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, is



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designed to regulate water resources management and protection and whose effective operation largely determine the national water security, as well as preservation of a favourable ecosystem of river basins, including that of the Lake Balkhash.

6. Encourage the EU, UNDP, OSCE and other international organizations, donor countries, as well as Kazakhstani national companies to join efforts to promote the implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management in the Ile-Balkhash basin, as well as introduction of modern technologies in irrigated agriculture and other economy sectors to ensure maximum effective and economical use of water resources, and preserve the Lake Balkhash.
7. Request that the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme provide overall support for the Ile-Balkhash basin projects aimed at efficient and economical use of water resources and provision of training on legal and institutional issues (such as establishment of rural consumer cooperatives of water users and other associations), as well as fostering the environmental care skills.
8. Approach the Water Resources Committee of Kazakhstan and propose taking measures to accelerate the adoption of the Programme for introduction of water use volume measuring devices and automated control systems for water allocation.
9. Approach the Balkhash-Alakol Basin Council and the Basin Inspection as well as industrial enterprises of the region and propose adopting the program of accelerated implementation of water recycling systems to reduce pollution of water resources.
10. Approach the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan for ensuring budget means for funding the Basin Councils on the basis of the Kazakh Water Code provisions.
11. Approach the Akimat of Almaty oblast and propose adopting the special programme called 'Rivers of Almaty Oblast' for efficient management and protection of the Lake Balkhash. Request that the EU, UNDP, OSCE and other international organizations, donor countries, as well as national companies in Kazakhstan continue supporting the efforts of the Oblast Akimat in adopting and implementing this programme.
12. Encourage the EU, UNDP, OSCE and other international organizations, donor countries, as well as national companies of Kazakhstan to provide further technical and financial support to the project, in order to ensure the sustainability of its results.
13. Approach the Ministry of Agriculture with a proposal to develop a programme for making research into land zoning of Kazakhstan based on agroclimatic, water requirement and land reclamation principles, with a view to determining the possibility of using these lands for irrigation using water-saving irrigation technologies.
14. Approach the National development institutes of Kazakhstan with a proposal to organise the production of water-saving irrigation technologies and techniques. In addition to this, establish the enterprises in Kazakhstan producing liquid compound fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and herbicides used in growing crops.
15. Approach the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Education and Science with a proposal to launch training water management engineers and allocate state education grants for training hydraulic engineers, water facilities engineers, as well as mid-level specialists in the field of water management, land reclamation, and irrigation.



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The conference participants:

Would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Water Resources Committee of Kazakhstan, the EU, UNDP, OSCE and the Centre for Health Protection and Eco-Designing for their assistance in organizing this conference.

Would like to thank the representatives of governmental, international and non-governmental organizations, leading scientists and experts for the provision of information and scientific and methodological materials, and ask the conference organizers to publish the reports of the conference and other papers devoted to the Lake Balkhash problems.

Support the activities of the EU-UNDP project "Transboundary Dialogue and Cooperation in the Ile-Balkhash River Basin", and recommend that the conference materials and outcomes are distributed among all stakeholders.

Additional proposals developed by the conference participants at the section meetings

#### Section 1: Integrated Water Resources Management of the Ile-Balkhash Basin

1. Revise the land zoning in terms of hydrogeology and reclamation, following the change in the land reclamation and hydrological conditions in the irrigated lands of the Ile-Balkhash water basin, in order to clarify the water use standards in the given area of cultivated crops. To determine the limits of (irrigation regime) under drip irrigation.
2. Recommend to the interested governmental, central and local executive bodies, research institutes and NGOs to intensify their work on developing progressive public opinion on the careful attitude to water resources, professional development of top managers, public awareness raising and training through the media, as well as by means of organising seminars and courses.
3. Develop a mechanism to implement the integrated water resources management plan;
4. Provide for cleaning of drainage and waste waters within the schemes and projects of the Institute for Comprehensive Use and Protection of Water Resources (KIOVR).
5. Recommend the Water Resources Committee of Kazakhstan to expedite the establishment of the Water Management RGP (republic state enterprise) in the Almaty Oblast on the basis of the Sarkand RSE HRU-72.
6. Recommend the Water Resources Committee of Kazakhstan to make a proposal to revise the articles of the Administrative Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan in accordance with Articles 37 and 40 of the Water Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan.
7. Approach the Government of Kazakhstan with a request for the support to rural production cooperatives of water users (SPKV) in funding the development of design estimates for the maintenance of ownerless water facilities in good condition, with a view to subsequent transferring them to SPKV ownership.
8. Recommend the Water Resources Committee to pay special attention to the small cross-border rivers, revise the agreements signed at the level of local executive bodies and bring up these issues to the level of the governments of Kazakhstan and China.
9. Continue, within the framework of the Almaty Oblast Akimat, implementing the National Programme 'Sustainable Development of the Balkhash-Alakol Basin for 2007-2009'.



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Consider the draft of the integrated management plan of the Ile-Balkhash Basin for 2011-2021 (prepared by CAREC in 2007) to clarify and update for further approval.

10. Approach the Ministry of Industry and New Technologies of the Republic of Kazakhstan with a proposal for re-evaluation of groundwater supplies at the expense of the national budget (groundwater makes up the strategic reserves).
11. Approach the Water Resources Committee with the proposal to expedite the development of the sector programme for rehabilitation of irrigated agriculture lands.
12. Speed up determination of the water protection zones and belts, take steps to remove pollution sources outside of the land of water resources inventory.

## Section 2: Environmental Protection in the Ile-Balkhash basin

1. The priorities must be identified for the activities of interstate commissions and for the negotiations on cross-border water issues.
2. It is necessary to define the concept of an 'environmental flow' and use it in the negotiations.
3. It is necessary to harmonize the water quality standards within the region.
4. It is necessary to strengthen inter-agency cooperation on water resources at national and regional level.
5. The water body itself must be given the status of an equal participant in international negotiations.
6. The UNESCO international negotiating methodology should be applied which prioritises the needs of ecosystems as compared to other needs.
7. The common economic mechanism must be developed for redistribution of revenues and profit return. A water-economic consortium is to be set up for implementation of this mechanism.
8. It is important to use the efficient performance indicators within the basin. Such indicators must be developed using the European Union classification of water bodies.
9. it is necessary to implement the basin planning system and systematic monitoring of water bodies.
10. Geographic information technologies must be introduced and applied for the Ile-Balkhash basin.
11. Financial mechanisms must be developed to attract big capitals to the enlarged recovery of the Ile-Balkhash basin resources on the basis of futures contracts and concessions for future income from the recovery of ecosystems
12. The portal for scientific, technical and commercial cooperation should be set up in the field of advanced technologies for the restoration of shared water and mountain ecosystems of Central Asia.
13. To attract big businesses it is necessary to assess the economic potential of the Ile-Balkhash basin in terms of implementation of modern technologies for ecosystem restoration.



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14. A call for proposals for large-scale environmental business projects must be held as well as a round table involving the representatives of business, academic community, and NGOs.
15. The Ministry of Environment Protection, The Water Resources Committee, and public organizations and businesses should prepare a plan for preservation of the Lake Balkhash ecosystems, using the recommendations of the projects of the European Union, UNDP, CAREC and other organizations, to reduce wasteful water loss, as well as a package of long-term Green Economy investment projects (including organic farming, renewable energy, eco-tourism, fisheries, shipping, etc.)

### Section 3: Modern Energy Saving Technologies and Efficient Use of Water Resources

To improve ameliorative condition of the lands and increase productivity and efficiency of irrigated lands it is the necessary, as follows:

1. Promote the establishment and operations of agricultural consumer cooperatives of water users (SPKV) to sustain ameliorative conditions on irrigated lands.
2. Carry out comprehensive reconstruction and repair of irrigation systems to allow for modern management of water resources and a transition to modern irrigation technology.
3. Restructure the acreage to give priority to the crops such as sugar beets, rice, oilseeds and forage crops, to grow on irrigated areas.
4. Organize regular training and demonstration workshops for agricultural goods producers and water users' cooperatives on modern agricultural production technologies, water accounting and irrigation techniques.
5. Set up the centers of excellence within the system of agricultural training institutes for the specialists engaged in water and agriculture spheres.
6. Increase the number of water and land reclamation specialists, by means of increasing university graduates as well as training mid-level specialists.
7. Introduce modern water-saving irrigation technologies.
8. Apply modern technologies and methods of water accounting for all kinds of irrigation networks.
9. Carry out the activities to restore eroded lands, organise special crop rotations, decommission eroded lands, use modern technologies in agriculture, land leveling, etc.
10. Carry out systematic reclamation of saline lands within the single set of measures including farming, melioration and irrigation, and drainage activities.
11. Where rice systems are used, apply drainage waters to re-irrigate crops.
12. To restore and update the soil-reclamation maps, agrochemical cartograms of crop rotations and fields, to plan for agricultural crops, regulation and rational use of mineral fertilizers, pesticides and other herbicides.

### Section 4. Transboundary Cooperation in the Basin: Legal and Institutional Framework and Its Development



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1. Facilitate the availability of information about the water level as well as the pollution levels. Establish a hydrological post in Balkhash town, equipped with modern equipment for online recording water level of the Lake Balkhash. Such a post should be established within the Kazhydromet city office or within the city environmental protection department, so that the interested persons could request and receive the information by telephone or other means of communication.
2. Create information centers within the Green Bridge Astana Initiative, a multilingual portal about the Kazakh-Chinese 'green' business cooperation using Web-TV, Internet TV, especially at the border areas;
3. Apply to the Government of Kazakhstan for additional funds for urgent creation of the information centre 'Water Resources of Kazakhstan' at the Water Resources Committee of the Ministry of Agriculture.
4. Develop the legal regulations for protection and use of the Lake Balkhash (*Law On the Lake Balkhash*, etc.)
5. Revise the international treaties in the light of today, in particular the agreement between Kazakhstan and China of 2000 on water sharing of the Ili River, in connection with the fact that Kazakhstan's requirements on water intake for China are not envisaged in this agreement.
6. Develop a project to restore the light commercial navigation on the river or between Kazakhstan and China by means of deepening the river bed and disposal of sludge.
7. Develop a water cooperation programme, which could affect all the economic and environmental aspects.
8. Create training centers to address issues of effective use and protection of water resources.
9. Water consumption should take into account the whole ecosystem located in close proximity to the water source.
10. Create international public Council for preservation of the Ile Balkhash basin with non-governmental organizations and environmental leaders.
11. Establish a Commission (the organization) to address the issues of efficient water resources management. To arrange this with the Joint Commission Secretariat, since its absence is a barrier to solving many issues.
12. Transfer the specialized water enterprises of the *rayons* (for example the Charyn-Irrigation Enterprise in the Almaty Oblast) from communal property to the republican property.
13. To consider using space research, in particular, the images of landscape areas of transboundary water bodies.
14. Provide for quality and quantity control of water resources, provide a possibility for decreasing the level of harmful components to allowable limits in the final section of the watercourse.

Participants of the International Conference:  
"Integrated Water Resources Management  
in the Ile-Balkhash River Basin: Joint Solutions and Prospects"