

GWP CACENA in May 2009

The first round of the policy dialogues and training seminars on IWRM was conducted during April – May by the CWP and GWP CACENA Secretariat in all eight countries. This round of dialogues and seminars is an element of the awareness campaign and capacity development program to facilitate National IWRM planning process in all CACENA countries. The target is capacity development for key players of planning and IWRM implementation process, not only involving water specialists, but also water users and other stakeholders (around 25-30 persons in each country were attended to the meetings).

The Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as UN Secretary-General's Special Representative Miroslav Jenca are taking part in the Summit of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, held on 28 April in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The Summit was address the issues related to activities of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, establishment of new charter bodies, expansion of cooperation with international organizations, financial institutions and donors. Find the Almaty Statement on the web: http://www.cawater-info.net/bk/water_law/pdf/ifas_almaty2009_e.pdf The International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea was established in 1993 by the decision of the Central Asian states in order to finance joint actions and programs saving the Aral Sea, environmental recovery of the Aral Sea basin. The Fund was established by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The President of the World Water Council Mr. Loic Fauchon visited Uzbekistan during 6-10 May 2009. During this visit Mr. Fauchon met with Vice Prime-Minister Mr. Azimov and conducted negotiations with the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of Uzbekistan. It was underlined in the course of negotiations that gradual reforms carried out in Uzbekistan in all fields, particularly in agriculture and water sector, produced weighty results. This is important for the development of mutual relations with external partners. Nowadays, water shortage is a pressing problem for many countries. The improvement of water management and use allows achieving sustainable agricultural development and food security, improving people's health, protecting environment and keeping ecological balance. Mr. Fauchon visited Fergana Valley and Samarqand, where he recognized on-going activities addressing to IWRM implementation and Automation of water delivery. He met with a big number of water experts, including partners of GWP CACENA. In the result of this visit the prospects of mutually beneficial cooperation between Uzbekistan and the World Water Council were agreed in area of agriculture and water sector, in application of rational water use and water conservation technologies, for better experience sharing at international level and relations strengthening.

GWP CACENA Secretariat in Uzbekistan hosted delegation from Finland (Mr. Kaj Barlund and Mr. Ari Makela) during 11-15 May 2009. The objective of this visit was the fact finding for the formulation of Finland's water cooperation strategy for the Central Asia until 2013, which will be part of the strategy for the Finland's EECCA water strategy. It is worth to underline that GWP CACENA program during 2004-2008 was partly supported by funds from the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Inter-Regional (GWP CEE and CACENA) ToolBox Workshop on Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) was held on 24-28 May in Kiev, Ukraine. This workshop was an answer to regional needs of the two regions, where GWP CEE in 2007 launched its book *Sustainable Sanitation in Central and Eastern Europe – addressing the needs of small and medium-size settlements*. In May 2009 GWP CACENA launched its draft report *Problems of Water Supply and Sanitation of the Countries in Central Asia and Caucasus*.

The Workshop was aimed at:

1. Helping partners of the two GWP regions to position themselves in the context of water supply and sanitation for IWRM plan preparations and policy implementations, like the EU WFD.
2. Mainstreaming GWP activities with other actors who are directly involved with water supply and sanitation
3. Use of GWP ToolBox as a source of IWRM knowledge

With the Goals:

- To discuss and agree on inter-regional cooperation to strengthen "intellectual capacity" to address WSS issues
- To create mechanisms to respond to critical challenges in WSS issues for CACENA countries based upon experience from CEE countries
- To assess existing tools and develop new tools regarding IWRM and WSS
- To share and provide technical support at all levels of the GWP network.

Representatives came from all eight CACENA countries, CEE coordinator, GWPO, ToolBox and invited WSS experts from four organisations, Ukrainian NGO Mama-86, NGO Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB), Stockholm Environment Institute, GWP Slovakia partner (ADConsulting company), i.e. in all 25 participants.

This was a very interactive workshop:

- CACENA countries commented the in-depth studies of the WSS report, which will be updated with recent data and published in English and Russian by end of 2009.
- ToolBox gave guidance on the context and how to use it. New case studies from reported projects will be included.
- Invited expert from Slovakia, Juraj Namer, shared his experience on implementing “conventional sanitation” projects in the EU context. He stressed the responsibility of national governments to make strategies, priorities and find financing sources, while EU’s commitment of WSS standards must be resolved
- Anna Tsvetkova, Mama-86 reported on successful rural sustainable sanitation projects in Ukraine where only 9% of the population of 15 million rural people have safe sanitation and where wastewater is the main polluter of Dnieper River (bigger than Danube River)
- Gunnar Norén, CCB, reported on experiences of *Open Wastewater Planning* as a method to meet sustainability criteria of sanitation as well as to deal with health, poverty and financing. He strongly recommended focusing on such pilot projects where GWP can help to coordinate stakeholder meetings.
- Thor-Axel Stenström, SEI in its Sida-funded sanitation programme, Ecosanres, work with Capacity Development. They are in the process to set up *Regional Knowledge Nodes*. The SEI sanitation programme is closely related with WHO and the International Protocol on Water and Health which integrates sectors of health, environment and water with a link to IWRM via ToolBox.. SEI work in partnership with organisations on request, like Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF). There is a great potential for cooperation with GWP in the field of policy, legislation and community level work.
- Kazakhstan WSS expert Valeriy Syundukov confirmed the need for a Central Asian Water Operators Partnership as a way forward to start solving the WSS gaps in the region with a request for ADB to fulfil their commitments of the UN “Hashimoto Action Plan”.



Juraj Namer discussing with Arevik and Danka



Thor-Axel Stenström, SEI



GWP CACENA Chair Nino in action



CCB Director Gunnar Norén and Milan



Kiev and Dniepr River



Kiev Water Awareness Exhibition

The workshop was an essential contribution to region-to-region collaboration. It provided mutual exchange of knowledge regarding WSS; it demonstrated a universal application of IWRM tools in spite of the fact that these two regions are at different stages of infrastructure development. CACENA participants learnt that any plans for better delivery of water services to people must be considered in an overall water (and national development) strategy.

Next steps:

1. ToolBox WSS Case Studies from CEE (2 cases from Ukraine and Slovakia) and CACENA (2 cases from Georgia and Armenia) were identified and will be developed
2. CACENA report on WSS with recommendations to be translated into English and published for dissemination by the end of 2009
3. Set up of pilot projects on *Open Wastewater Planning* at local, rural levels to be facilitated by GWP regions and respective CWPs. The support from both RWPs will be given for searching donors
4. CCB proposed set up of new pilot projects for Open Wastewater Planning in both regions, e.g. *village Richnava* in Slovakia
5. SEI is ready to cooperate with GWP at regional and country levels. GWP CACENA should make a strategy based on the data of their report and in the IWRM context. There are funds available at WSSCC Sanitation Fund, EU, et al.
6. GWPO is requested by GWP CACENA to assist in discussions with ADB on their continued support to the development of Central Asian Water Operators Partnership, which was established in 2008. ADB committed them-selves already in August 2007 to support establishment of WOPs in Central Asia and reconfirmed a two year support in March 2008 at a meeting in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.