



PRESS RELEASE

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EU supports Central Asia in learning from multisectoral collaboration along the Danube and Sava River Basins

Vienna, Austria – 15 participants from Central Asian ministries and interstate organizations took part in the Study Tour to the Danube and Sava River Commissions organized by the Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia (CAREC) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) on 13-18 May 2019 with the financial support of the European Union.

The participants gained good understanding on the *modus operandi* on the transboundary water management by the riparian countries from the legal, technical and managerial perspectives. Through interactive discussions with the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, based in Vienna, and the International Sava River Basin Commission, based in Zagreb, they learnt many details of the complex river basin management arrangements that take into account the agriculture, climate change, hydro and RES generation, navigation and flood management. The Commissions shared their step-by-step operationalization process, starting from the signing of the legal inter-state agreement, followed by the joint actions on the basin assessment, development of the basin management documents and up to the introduction of the joint database, monitoring and warning systems at the borders.

"It was extremely useful to learn about the Commissions' experience the first hand and build a network of contacts. The institutional setting of the Danube and Sava River Basins is very relevant to the existing transboundary water cooperation platform in the Central Asia," said Batyr Mammedov, Head of Secretariat, Interstate Commission for Sustainable Development of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea.

The technical specialists witnessed the Commissions' hydrological, meteorological and other tools in actions with detailed explanations on the software applications. Special emphasis was put on the accident prevention, control monitoring and warning systems. The climate mitigation in the river basins with respective analysis and scenarios done was also shared. The participants identified the best practices to be replicated and challenges to be avoided, in particular as regards to the water pollution.

"As a technical expert, I was interested in the environmental monitoring along the river basin. We noted that water quality is of paramount importance to both Commissions. We learnt the specifics of monitoring tools applied and most importantly about the joint responsibility among the riparian countries to conduct such monitoring, which entails substantial data sharing," Mr Egamberdi Rustamov, Head, Centre of Analytical Control of the Committee of the Environmental Protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dushanbe".

The Study Tour was organized in the framework of the Project "Central Asia Nexus Dialogue Project: Fostering Water, Energy and Food Security Nexus Dialogue and Multi-Sector Investment", which is part of the EU Global Nexus Dialogues Programme. The project is funded by the European Union and implemented by the Regional Environmental Centre of Central Asia (CAREC) in partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and with the support of the Executive Committee of International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea. Phase I will last until December 2019 (total budget: €1.52 million; EU contribution: €1.3 million).

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