

CHANGE
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2001-2016



STRONGER TOGETHER!

7th Central Asian Leadership Programme on Environment for Sustainable Development

Dedicated to CAREC's 15th Anniversary

REPORT

October 2016
Almaty

15 YEARS
OF EXPERTISE
FOR BETTER
ENVIRONMENT



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Acknowledgements

The 7th Central Asian Leadership Programme (CALP) on Environment for Sustainable Development took place September 19-27, 2016 within the framework of events dedicated to the 15th Anniversary of the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC).

This report constitutes CAREC's contribution to strengthening regional collaboration on environment and sustainable development as well as promoting leadership as a tool for building youth capacity and bringing up a new generation of regional leaders in Central Asia and Afghanistan.

CAREC expresses gratitude to all its partners and donors – including, UNEP, OSCE Programme Office in Astana, Government of Norway, USAID and European Union – for their efforts, indispensable contribution and commitment to supporting the 7th CALP in 2016.

Likewise, CAREC expresses its gratitude to international, regional and national speakers as well as facilitators and moderators who shared their experience and expertise with the participants in the course of the 8 days of the 7th CA Leadership Programme.

Acronyms and abbreviations

CA	Central Asia
CALP	Central Asian Leadership Programme
SDG's	Sustainable Development Goals
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
UNDP	UN Development Programme
CAREC	Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia
EU	European Union
ICWC SIC	Scientific and Information Center of the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
SIWI	Stockholm International Water Institute
USAID	US Agency for International Development

Background

In 2016, CAREC celebrated its 15th Anniversary. The organization entered the new phase of its development as a catalyst of environmental cooperation in Central Asia. The international conference held by CAREC on June 21, 2016 reinforced the Centre's status of a regional knowledge hub and a neutral platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue. In addition, the conference opened a series of Central Asian environmental annual forums to be held in Central Asian capitals.

Thus, the CALP's format and the beneficiary pool underwent fundamental rethinking allowing this CAREC's flagship activity to gain a new momentum in its development in the context of the Centre's experience, mega-projects, and expertise.

The 7th Central Asian Leadership Programme on Environment for Sustainable Development was successfully held during September 19 and 27, 2016 at CAREC's Almaty headquarters and, for the first time, consisted of two parallel modules. Module I brought together young specialists representing public, non-governmental, academic and business entities, whereas Module II targeted representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Parliaments of CA countries.

In the course of the 8 days of the event, 38 participants from 6 countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan) shared their experiences, gained new knowledge and examined best practices in the areas of environmental protection, sustainable development, management of natural resources as well as built their leadership skills. Participation of decision-makers, diplomats and parliamentarians in the training yet another time demonstrated the timeliness, success, significance and relevancy of the Leadership Programme initiative.



Participants of the 7th Central Asian Leadership Programme

Central Asia Leadership Programme: a tool for capacity building in the Central Asian Region

What is CALP?

CALP is an example of successful cross-sectoral and interprogram collaboration promoted by CAREC in Central Asia, including Afghanistan, since 2010.

In 2006-2016, CAREC has successfully carried out 3 programs for young leaders of Central Asia and 7 CA Leadership Programmes with **more than 200 alumni** representing state/ government agencies, civil society, business, and academic organizations engaged in the area of environmental protection and sustainable development. Currently, the alumni are making significant contributions to promoting regional collaboration and sustainability issues in various sectors across the Central Asian Region.

As of today, CALP is a unique regular capacity-building programme on environment for sustainable development in Central Asia targeting public, academic, private, and non-governmental sectors and ensuring comprehensive understanding of the sustainable development agenda among corresponding specialists. CALP is based on the achievements and lessons learnt of CAREC Young Leaders Programme (2006-2008) and the Leadership Program carried out by UNEP at Tongji University in China.

Thematically, CALP focuses on water resources and other **water-related issues, climate change, "green growth", and SDG's** as well as on promoting and mainstreaming "green" and sustainable development practices in everyday life, behavior and environmentally friendly decision-making in Central Asia and in Afghanistan.

This year, CAREC decided to amend CALP's approaches, format and target audience to reflect the thematic aspects and specifics of the EU-funded Central Asian Water and Energy Cooperation (CAWECOOP) Project and the USAID- funded Smart Waters Project.



Central Asia Leadership Programme: contributing to CAREC Knowledge Hub development

Presently, CAREC is transforming into a Central Asian regional knowledge hub on environment. The Centre views knowledge as key to addressing severe sustainability and environmental challenges of the region. In this context as well as taking account of the youth's role in promoting innovations, best practices and novel methods, the youth's readiness for changes as well as the role of young leaders in strengthening regional collaboration and partnership across various sectors and levels, CALP represents one of the major tools of CAREC's establishment as a Knowledge Hub.

CAREC's Central Asian Leadership Programme is an effective instrument of forging partnerships and collaborations in Central Asia. By way of participation in the CALP, young specialists of the region become the pioneers of environmental cooperation and partnership in the Central Asian Region.

The speakers of the 7th CALP included heads and leading experts of international and regional organizations, acknowledged research centers, including OSCE, UNEP, USAID, UNECE, UNESCO, UNDP Istanbul Regional Office, ESCAP, GEF/SGP, IFAS EC, GIZ, York University, International IT University and many others.

Knowledge and skills transfer is an extremely important element of building the capacity of young specialists on environmental protection and sustainable development, and – with the assistance of partners – reinforces CAREC's status as a leader in environmental expertise.

Goals and objectives of the 7th Central Asia Leadership Programme

The main goals of the 7th CALP was to demonstrate the benefits and advantages of regional cooperation and to build the capacity of young leaders from Central Asia and Afghanistan.

The motto of the 7th Central Asian Leadership Programme was "Stronger Together!"

Special attention during the event was rendered to issues of regional collaboration on environment and sustainable development, water resources management as well as international and regional cooperation on climate change, implementation of SDG's and Agenda 2030 in Central Asia, role of leadership in promoting SDG's, mediation, and a number of other priority regional issues.

The program included multiple thematic plenary sessions, interactive exercises, practical sessions, round tables, discussions, participation in international events and excursions. Participants of Module I examined the international experience on water use and sustainable development presented in reports by invited international speakers.

CALP participants had an opportunity to share their experiences and build capacity on best world practices in the area of water diplomacy, mediation, international and regional water law, ongoing regional development programs. They, likewise, reviewed economic tools of environmental cooperation, examples of successful inter-country collaboration as well as underwent short interactive trainings on team-based decision-making.

The Programme consisted of the following blocks:

- 1 Introduction to CALP: the Programme's history and lessons learnt, global goals and objectives and their mainstreaming in the Central Asian Region, specifics of the 7th CALP and multilateral partnership;
- 2 CAREC's role as a facilitator of regional cooperation on water, energy and sustainable development in Central Asia (based on the outcomes of the CAREC's 15th Anniversary Conference);
- 3 International level:
 - Processes (SDG's, post-Batumi and post-Paris) and global/regional international environmental and water conventions, which may serve foundation of regional cooperation;
 - International environmental and water conventions already under implementation in CA or which might be of interest to CA countries;
 - International environmental and water conventions, which might be of interest to Central Asia and Afghanistan.

4 Regional level:

- Regional cooperation institutes in Central Asia: development opportunities and avenues.

5 National level:

- Reforms in water and environment sectors of CA countries: goals, objectives, motives, advantages and drawbacks;
- Differences and similarities in approaches to reforming water and environment sectors of CA countries.

6 Cooperation tools:

- International water/environmental law;
- Water diplomacy, Berlin process, mediation and negotiations;
- Financial and economic tools for water resources planning and management;
- Fundraising: attracting grants, credits and loans for the promotion of national and regional priorities;
- GIS/RS as tools to enhance transnational trust;
- Modern information exchange tools: data presentation and visualization.

Special attention during the Programme was paid to the experiences and expertise of the 7th CALP participants. They were given an opportunity to report on national and local policies, programs, and projects as well as their ideas on mainstreaming SDG's, environmental and sustainable development agendas in the region.

Module II of the 7th CALP included the third meeting of diplomats and parliamentarians from Central Asian countries to promote the dialogue on water resources management and environmental protection on the political level. The draft Road Map for CAREC Cooperation with Diplomats and Parliamentarians from Central Asia Countries developed jointly with the participants became the key output of the Module.



Photo on top
Iskandar Abdullaev
Executive Director of CAREC
Alexander Nikolaenko, Bo Libert
and Iskandar Abdullaev

Photo below
Programme Leaders
in the CAREC garden



Partners and donors

Traditionally, the partners who supported the 7th CALP included UNEP, Government of Norway and OSCE Programme Office in Astana. In 2016, a number of new partners – European Union and USAID – joined the Programme, which demonstrates recognition of its importance and relevancy as a tool of regional cooperation and capacity building of young leaders.

Execution of the 7th CA Leadership Programme

Selection of CALP participants.

Altogether, **38 participants from five CA countries and Afghanistan** took part in the 7th CALP, including 10 (Module II) representing the parliaments and ministries of foreign affairs of Central Asian countries and 28 (Module I) young leaders.

Potential Module I participants representing public agencies of CA countries and Afghanistan were nominated by national partners. Public servants constituted about 40% of the total number of the module audience. Competitive selection included representatives of NGO's, business, academic and public entities in target countries.

Participants of Module II were nominated by national Ministries of Foreign Affairs, including representatives of deputy corps.



Photo on top
Module I participants
Photo below
Module II session

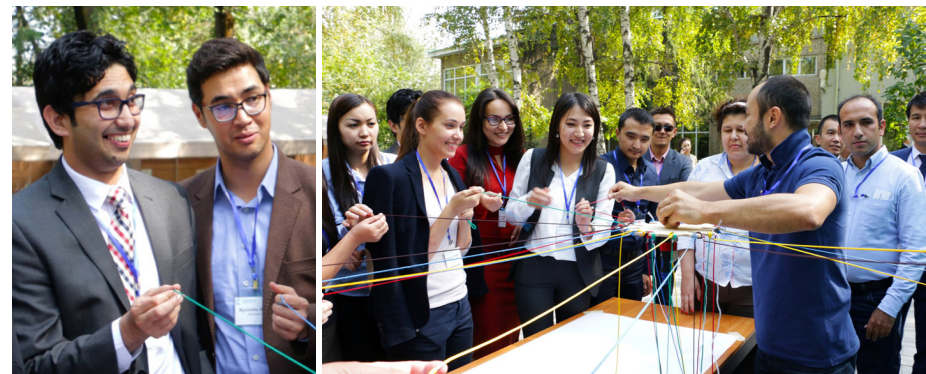


Photo on top
"Group Painter" exercise
Photo below
Module I facilitators
Galiya Khamitova
and Bakhytzhhan Sanbayev

The main approaches CAREC employed during the 7th CALP (regional focus, inter-agency and cross-sectoral engagement, transboundary water-energy collaboration, etc.) remained unchanged, however, target audience, thematic focuses of lectures and group exercises underwent certain alterations.

Module I facilitators, Galiya Khamitova and Bakhytzhhan Sanbayev, utilized a wide range of methods and approaches, including **"Icebreaker"**, **"Group Painter"**, and **"Leadership Wheel"** exercises allowing to build a leaders' team, enhance interaction and cooperation, plan future joint actions and enhance leadership skills. The exercises allowed the participants to learn about each other in personal and professional terms, forge their individual visions of leadership, examine individual perspectives on their role within the Programme as well as clearly see the importance of their active engagement in all Programme activities. The Programme was designed to facilitate processing of large volumes of information received by young leaders on daily basis. Warm-up and morning respiratory exercises, game and open-air (in the orchard on CAREC premises) sessions became indispensable in this respect.



Warming-up in the CAREC garden



7th CALP speakers

Photo on top

Natalia Alexeeva
György Szabó
Heinrich Wyes

Photo below

Kuralay Karibayeva
Alexander Nikolaenko



Lecturers, speakers and observers of the 7th CALP represented such organizations as the US Agency for International Development (**USAID**), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (**OSCE**), United Nations Environmental Program (**UNEP**), United Nations Development Program (**UNDP**), Secretariat of the UN Commission for Europe (**UNECE**), German Society for International Cooperation (**GIZ**), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Programme (**UNESCO**), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (**ESCAP**), etc.

The leading speakers at the 7th CALP included acknowledged international experts on environmental protection and management of corresponding programs and processes possessing extensive target knowledge, including **Charles Hopkins**, Adviser of the United Nations University and UNESCO Chair at York University (Toronto); **David Dishman**, construction engineer with a 30-years' experience of designing and supervising water

resources projects; **Dr. Theresa Magnusson**, Director of the Transboundary Water Management Unit of Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) – the organizer of the World Water Week held in Sweden's capital; **Thierry Umbehr**, Regional Adviser on Water Resources and Natural Risk Reduction Sector of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in Central Asia; **Chuck Cullom**, Manager of the Central Arizona Project who headed water negotiations between the US and Mexico that led to successful implementation of multiple agreements; **Vinay Nangia**, holder of the 2014 Outstanding Young Scientist Award, possessing 10 years' experience of progressive research on agricultural water resources management and sustainable development of agriculture; **Elisabeth Yaari**, responsible for developing and managing SIWI programming related to water diplomacy with specific geographic focus on the Middle East and Central Asia; **Lina Benette**, Head of Education Department of UNESCO Central Asia Cluster Office in Almaty managing multiple educational projects across Central Asia, and many others.



7th CALP speakers

Photo on top

Marat Narbayev
Bo Libert
Lina Benete

Photo below

Madina Ibrasheva
Nikolay Pomoshchnikov



Photo on top
Young leaders during the session



Photo below
Doctor Charles Hopkins with young leaders

A number of famous regional experts – **Natalia Alekseeva**, Director of UNEP Sub-Regional Office in Central Asia; **Alexander Nikolayenko**, GIZ Regional Adviser on Transboundary Water Management in Central Asia with a 20-years' experience of implementing institutional development, water and environment initiatives in Kazakhstan and Central Asia; **Dinara Ziganshina**, Deputy Director of ICWC Scientific Information Center leading its legal and international projects and supervising the work of the Center's Planning, Foreign Relations and Advanced Training Units – also acted as the speakers of the 7th Central Asian Leadership Programme.

Doctor Charles Hopkins, UNESCO, speaker of the 7th Program of Leadership:

«I think that the Programme participants gained a deeper understanding, firstly, of the concept of sustainable development and, secondly, of the regional approaches to what they can actually do. This training programme served a wonderful platform for them to understand the specifics of regional-level approach with the account of national priorities of each target country».



Visit of the Central Asian Water Forum and Exhibition "The Future of Water Resources in Central Asia"

"Pyramid of Sustainability" exercise

The presentations on national and local initiatives related to SDG's, sustainable development, water cooperation, and pilot projects by the participants of Module I were devoted a separate session within the 7th CALP agenda. The reports allowed the young leaders to dwell on the development of national water sectors and environment-related legal frameworks, best sustainable development practices used on national and local levels, national priorities in the context of SDG's and Agenda 2030. Likewise, it was a great opportunity for the participants to learn about the experiences of neighboring countries, colleagues and partners as well as to discuss opportunities for their transfer and adaptation to priorities of other countries of the region.

On September 21, 2016, jointly with the World Bank CAREC organized a visit of the 7th CALP participants to the **Central Asian Water Forum and Exhibition "The Future of Water Resources in Central Asia"** held in Almaty. The young leaders got acquainted with various world practices on upgrading information water resources management systems, attended the exhibition and participated in the CAREC-organized side-event as well as the Forum sessions devoted to regional water cooperation in Central Asia and Afghanistan.

The participants of Module II finished their Programme with a joint plenary meeting with the participants of Module I. The session was mainly devoted to discussing the prospects of regional cooperation and was followed by multiple questions to diplomats and parliamentarians on behalf of the participants of Module I.



Photo on top
Certificate award ceremony of Module I

Photo below
Certificate award ceremony of Module II

Certificate award ceremony of Module I

The final day of the 7th CALP (September 27) for the participants of Module I – young leaders from Central Asian countries and Afghanistan representing public, non-governmental, academic and business entities – featured a joint **exercise “Pyramid of Sustainability”**. Its main purpose was to plan steps that the young leaders could take upon returning to their respective countries after the training. The exercise contributed to the development of the regional vision and strengthening collaboration among CA countries and Afghanistan.

The 7th Central Asian Leadership Programme was closed on September 27, 2016 with the **certificate award ceremony** during which each of the Programme’s participants received a standard international certificate of successful completion of the 7th CALP.

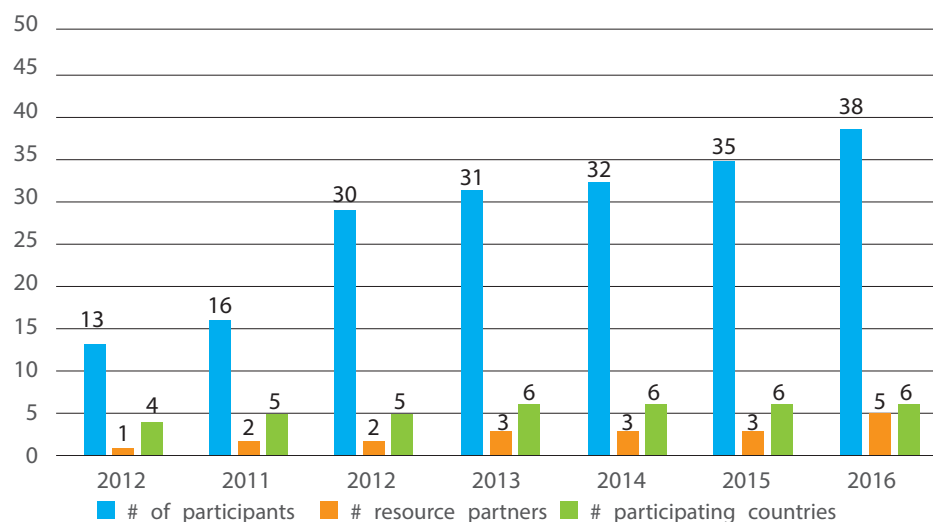
PR support of the 7th CA Leadership Programme

Promotion of leadership as a tool of regional cooperation via the Mass Media is an important component of CAREC activities. The progress of the 7th Central Asian Leadership Programme was regularly featured on the official CAREC website, Facebook and Twitter, and in CAREC newsletters. The outcomes of the 7th CALP will be described in the final video containing interviews and statements of the Programme participants, partners, donors, international speakers and leaders. It is planned to upload the video to CAREC official website, affiliated web resources as well as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook accounts by the end of this year.

Outcomes of the 7th CA Leadership Programme

As one of CAREC anniversary activities in 2016, the 7th CALP became a dialogue platform to discuss water cooperation, environmental protection and sustainable development. The Programme significantly contributed to disseminating the outcomes of CAREC work in the course of its 15 years of operation as a knowledge hub on environment and sustainable development. Yet another time, the 7th Central Asian Leadership Programme drew the attention to the importance and need of enhancing regional water and environmental cooperation among young leaders of Central Asia and Afghanistan, as well as allowed to demonstrate corresponding future regional plans and priorities.

From year to year, the Central Asian Leadership Programme has been dynamically developing, enhancing and adapting to global priorities and challenges as well as needs of target countries and groups. For this reason, it remains an interesting, recognized and demanded event by all stakeholders, including national partners, donors, young leaders, decision-makers, the public at large, and the Mass Media.



Summing up the results of the 7th CALP, it is important to note the continually increasing interest as to participation in the Programme. The positive dynamics of the number of CALP participants from 2010 (17) until 2016 (38) is rather obvious. The national partners, including public agencies in Central Asian countries and Afghanistan, also demonstrate a growing attention to the initiative and refer their employees to the training to enhance their leadership skills as well as to improve their understanding of environment, sustainable development, water resources management and other issues of priority to the region.

The Programme is increasingly viewed as a relevant activity constituting a priority among regional events and recognized as important by target countries, the youth, partners, donors, and CAREC itself.

Whereas the 1st CALP (2010) was supported by the UNEP Regional Office in Bangkok, Nazarbayev University and CAREC, the 7th CALP was organized and carried out by CAREC jointly with already five partners (UNEP, OSCE Program Office in Astana, Government of Norway, USAID, and European Union). This fact confirms the interest in the Programme on behalf of partners and donors as well as testifies to its importance and relevance in the eyes of the international community.

Besides, it is expected that the outcomes of the 7th CALP will improve the composition of information and analytical products, methodologies and innovative approaches for holding events on water, environment, climate change and sustainable development within the framework of ongoing as well as new planned projects (CAMP4ASB) by CAREC and its regional partners.

Experience and expertise exchange, building and strengthening professional linkages and friendly relations among CALP alumni who will become the leaders of the XXI century contribute to the overall sustainable development of the region.

CAREC plans to continue holding the Central Asian Leadership Programme jointly with its partners and donors as well as invites all potentially interested parties to join.

The key outcomes and achievements of each of the modules of the 7th CALP are of thematic and regional value and will be considered during planning and designing the 8th CALP as well as regional projects in Central Asia.