

Activities in Central Asia to support the implementation of international water law

Timing: Thursday, 19 November, 08:30 - 09:45
Location: Lehar
Organizers: UNECE
Languages: English and Russian with simultaneous interpretation

Background and objective of the side-event

Central Asia is facing major difficulties in the management of trans-boundary water resources. At present the rapid melting of glaciers results in increased water flows which alleviate water shortages. At the same time increasingly visible effects of climate change, soil degradation, demographic growth and economic development are likely to lead to increased pressure on shared water resources already in the medium-time perspective. A strengthened regional cooperation building on the principles of international water law is an important component to address these challenges.

Three Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) are Parties to the Water Convention. While Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are not Parties, their governments actively participate in transboundary water cooperation and have expressed their respect for the basic principles of international water law.

International water law does not offer certain formulas which can be automatically applied to any given situation and provide precise answers. Ratifying the Water Convention or accepting its principles is not enough. Central Asian countries need to make joint efforts to correctly interpret and implement them, and find joint mutually acceptable solutions.

The objective of the side-event is to discuss how the basic principles of international water law can be better applied in Central Asia.

Programme

Chair: Volker Frobarth, Programme Manager, GIZ
Introduction (5 min)

- *The principles of international water law at work: information management for cooperation, Marton Krasznai, UNECE (5 min)*
- *Water convention work programme in Central Asia, Bo Libert, UNECE (5 min)*
- *Central Asia country statements and reactions: Application of principles of international water law and the Water Convention work programme*
- *Statements by representatives of Switzerland and UNRCCA*
- *Discussion*

Guiding question of the side event: How can the application of the basic principles of international water legislation be improved in Central Asia?

- *Conclusions by the Chairman (5 min)*