

SUMMARY

of

The two-day regional seminar

“Dialogue and partnership on the issues of the protection of environment and sustainable use of water resources in Amudarya/Panj basin”

c. Khorog, September 28-29, 2017

The participants of the regional seminar on “Dialogue and partnership on the issues of protection of environment and sustainable use of water resources in the Amu-darya/Panj river basin”, Khorog, September 28-29, 2017, representing governmental, public and international organisations, mass media of the Republic of Tajikistan (RT) and relevant organisations of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (IRA) stressed the importance of addressing the shared ecological issues and the possibility of resolving them through joint efforts, including the implementation of the provisions of “the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Cooperation in the Field of Development and Management of Water Resources of Panj and Amu-darya rivers” (2010) (*see the program of the seminar – Enclosure 1, the list of participants – Enclosure 2.*)

The seminar was organised with the support of the EEC of the UN on “Strengthening cooperation on the Field of hydrology and protection of environment between Tajikistan and Afghanistan in the Amu-darya/Panj river basin”.

Having assessed and discussed the issues in the field of the protection of environment and hydro-meteorology, being the subject of common interest of the two countries, and having taken into consideration:

- The relevant information on cooperation in the field of the protection of environment and hydrology as per 2011 – 2016 between Tajikistan and Afghanistan;
- The results and recommendations of the expedition to the upper reaches of Panj river, including the Tajik Darwaz, Rushan, Khorog, Ishkashim and the Afghan Darwaz, Ishkashim and Wakhan for the period of September 20-27, 2017

The participants made the following recommendations:

I. On ecological issues;

- To broach the possibility of joint measures for the protection of environment and evaluation of trans-border lake-reservation Zorkul;
- To activate the work of scientists on the both sides of the trans-border river towards the preservation and rehabilitation of genetic richness of the indigenous (endemic) specimens and species of flora and fauna in the Amu-darya/Panj river basin including work on the wild relatives and local varieties of agricultural crops;
- To conduct monitoring and exchange registration data of wild species of animals through Wakhan with the aim of ensuring the preservation of the unique wild nature;;
- To implement measures in fighting deforestation and capacity-building for adaptation to climate change, especially in the east of the Tajik Pamir and on the territory of the Afghan Little Pamir;

- To carry out a joint monitoring of natural hazards, including potential threat of high mountain lakes and works for raising awareness among the population;
- To implement inventarisation of the polluted problematic areas and coordinate measures for cleaning the riverbeds from garbage and hard consumer waste, and exchange experience in the work of improved collection, transportation, processing and neutralising the harm of waste;
- To disseminate information pertaining to issues of environment;
- To continue the practice of exchange of experience, organising seminars and expedition, including informative work with the local authorities and resident population;

II. On hydro-meteorological issues and exchange of data;

- To continue and strengthen information exchange between the incumbent bodies of the countries on all issues, including on the state of reserves of the snow and water on the upper end of the river, on the modern equipment of hydro-posts and providing for the safety of observation;
- To wider disseminate information on hydro-meteorology and raising the level of efficiency of its application in planning management activities as well as in the ongoing evaluation of the state of environment on the basis of common indicators;
- To carry out the practice of the exchange of experience and organise joint trainings and expeditions (trips and visits) with the participation of specialists on hydrology;

III. On issues of sustainable development:

- To undertake measures for fighting (through application of ecologically accepted methods) agricultural parasites in the Darwaz and Shognan district of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO);
- To provide assistance in the electrification (small hydro-power plants or solar batteries) in small populated areas on the Arakht river in the Afghan Shognan, in reducing the incidents of cutting trees and wild grown plants and their use as burning fuel;
- To take advantage of the opportunities of cross-border markets for mobility and marketing of the local produce, obtained through sparing utilisation of resources;
- To assist in the development of eco-tourism, including the dissemination of maps and brochures on itineraries through historical, cultural and attraction sites;
- To apply simplified procedures (short-term) authorisations for crossing the border for the representatives and residents of border areas for participation in ecological functions subject to the authorisation of the local bodies of authorities;
- To assist the idea of construction of motor-bridge via the Panj river in the locality of Khandud (Wakhan) – Yang (Ishkashim) for improving the quality of life of more than 25 thousands residents;
- To coordinate the plans of riverbank fortification works through the territories of Rushan, Shognan and Ishkashim districts of GBAO of RT and the Shognan and Ishkashim districts of the Badakshan province of IRA;

IV. On issues of cooperation with international partners;

- To collect and summarise information on current and planned activities of international donor-organisations, projects and initiatives in the Panj/Amu-darya river basin in Tajikistan and Afghanistan for improving their interactions and contributions in the protection of environment and hydrological monitoring;
- To actively cooperate in processes such as the projects of the Asian Development Bank on the Panj river basin, the Aga Khan Foundation in Tajikistan and Afghanistan on river bank fortification works and cross-border trade, the initiatives of the UN Programme on the protection of environment on the United Nations development Programme (UNDP) as well as the projects of the Society for the preservation of the wildlife (WCS) in Wakhan;
- To design and propose projects for reducing the level of erosion of mountain slopes and on the construction of installation for purification in Khorog;
- To strengthen dialogue and practical interactions in processing agricultural produce and above all, products of animal husbandry;
- To provide assistance in programs of study to raising the ecological education and enlightenment including those of the Korog State University and Teacher Training College in the Afghan Shognan.

The participants of the seminar expressed hope that formalising the bilateral ecological cooperation on the basis of Memorandum of Understanding would provide a momentum for undertaking practical measures for the period up to 2020 in the work of the protection of environment. The UN international decade of action “Water for sustainable development” for 2018-2028 is also the basis for the implementation of the Tajik-Afghan measures undertaken for sustainable development on the Panj river.

In conclusion the participants of the seminar expressed gratitude to:

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the state Agency for protection of environment of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (NEPA) for participation in the expedition and the seminar,
- To the Committee of protection of environment under auspices of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, the regional bodies of protection of environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan for participation in organising the measures,
- To the heads of the local bodies of authorities of Darwaz, Rushan, Shognan and Ishkashim districts of Tajikistan, Nusay, Shognan, and Ishkashim wuluswalis of Afghanistan for expressing interest and active participation in the course of preparation and supporting the expedition as well as for providing assistance in successful conduct of the seminar,
- To EEC of the UN and expert-consultant for technical and consulting support for organising the expedition and holding the seminar,
- To the Agency of Aga Khan for Habitat (AKAH) for assisting in the implementation of measures and the AKAH representation in Afghanistan for providing information and assistance in the course of the expedition on the territory of Afghanistan,
- To the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Khorog for assisting in organising the expedition.

Khorog, September 29, 2017

Two-day regional seminar
“Dialogue and partnership on issues of protection of environment and sustainable utilisation of water resources on the Amu-darya/Panj river basin”
Khorog, September 28-29, 2017

Within the framework of EEC of the United Nations project on “Strengthening cooperation in the field of hydrology and protection of environment between Tajikistan and Afghanistan in the Amu-darya/Panj river basin”

Programme

Venue: “Amonatbank Education Center (National Teahouse in the vicinity of the Botanical Garden of Khorog).

Date: September 27, Thursday

Arrival of the participants in Khorog. Accommodation in the hotels “Kevikes”, “Botanical Garden”, “COTUS”, “Delhi Darbar”.

19.00 Dinner, served for arriving guests (restaurants and cafes “Shognan”, “Delhi Darbar”, “Shomi Badakshan”).

Date: September 28, Friday

8.30 – 9.00 Registration of participants of the seminar and the representatives of media outlets in the “Amonatbank”

09.00 -09.30 The ceremony of opening of the seminar, welcoming and introductory speeches of the participants:

- **Shodikhon Jamshedov** Head of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast,
- **Kurbonov Wali** – Chief of Department in the Committee for the protection of environment of the Republic of Tajikistan.
- **Ghulam Nabi Sarfaro**z – Chairman of NEPA of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

09.30-10.50 **Plenary session 1.**

The ecological issues of the region. The results of expedition on the upper reaches of the Panj river (September 20-27, 2017).

Moderators – **Shodikhon Jamshedov, Abdunazar Abdunazarzoda.** Talks-presentations – each for 10 minutes.

- On problems in the protection of environment on near-Panj territories of GBAO, possibilities of resolving them. Presentation by **Abdunazarov Abdunazar**, Deputy-Chairman of GBAO.
- On issues of protection of environment in the Badakshan highlands in the conditions of climate change. Presentation by **Kurbonov Wali**, Head of Department of the Committee for the Protection of environment of the Republic of Tajikistan.

- On the current state of water resources on the upstream Panj river and their impact on the life of the population on the territories near the Panj river. Состояние водных ресурсов в верховьях реки Пяндж и их влияние на жизнь населения припанджских территорий. Presentation by **Ghulam Nabi Sarfarozi**, Representative of NEPA of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Head of the Department of services on floods management of the Ministry of Energy and Water of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.
- On eco-systems in upstream Panj river and bio-diversity on the highlands of the Badakhshan region. Presentation by **Odilbekov Kuwatbek**, Deputy-Director of the Pamir Biological Institute, a participant of the expedition.
- On flora and fauna on upstream Panj territories, including the Wakhan Corridor. Presentation by **Ghulam Nabi Sarfarozi**, Head of NEPA in the Badakhshan province of Afghanistan.
- On the wildlife in the region and measures for its preservation. **Alidodov Munawwar** Head of the public organisation “Darshay”, Officer of public organisation “Pantera”, a participant of the expedition.
- On the impact of climate change on the living conditions of upstream Panj valleys. Presentation by **Abdulbasir Konit**, Manager of the Department of Services in the Amu-darya/Panj highland basin, based in Faizabad, the Badakhshan Province of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, a participant of the expedition.

10.50-11.10 Questions and Answers

11.10-11.30 Coffee break

11.30-13.00 Plenary session 2.

The role of the local bodies of authorities in using the existing infrastructure in the region, the contribution of interested parties in resolving ecological problems and the prospects of cooperation.

Moderators – **Boymamad Alibakhsov** Director of Khorog-based Orkhus Center, **Khomidov Anwar**, member of group of cooperation in the field of hydrology and protection of environment between Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

- Recreational tourism and eco-tourism – shared interests and opportunities in the upstream Panj valleys. Presentation by **Isrorov Dawlatyor**, Deputy-Director of the reservation “Zorkul”.
- Organising monitoring of eco-tourism in the base of the reservation “Zorkul”. Presentation by **Nazarbekova Ramziya**.
- Fighting pollution on the Panj river, the problems of waste on riverbanks’ eco-systems. Presentation by **Mamadnazarbekov Farhad**, Head of department for the protection of environment of the Khorog city administration, member of expedition.
- The role of information on ecology and hydrology in issues of natural hazards and risks on the upstream Panj valleys and the possibility of reducing negative impact on the residents of the highlands. Presentation by **Mirzonabotov Rashid**, specialist of the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (AKAH), participant of the expedition.
- Rational utilisation of water and land resources. Technologies, applied by the resident population along the Panj river. Presentation by **Mamadghoziev Bakhtul**, Deputy-Director of the Water Users’ Association “OB Umed” of the Shognan district of GBAO, Tajikistan.

12.30 – 13.00 Discussions/Questions and Answers

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00-16.30 Group work (Detailed discussion of issues on the major themes of the seminar and devising recommendations and proposals on the results of the seminar)

Group 1

Coordination of actions, information exchange and creating awareness on the protection of the wild nature and ensuring cleanliness of environment (including assessment of the impact of tourism, agricultural activities, industrial enterprise, etc.).

Moderators– **Aabdulnazarzoda Abdunazar**, Deputy-Chairman of GBAO Administration, **Nawruzshoev Dowud**, Director of the Pamir Biological Institute, Doctor of Biological Sciences.

Group 2

Exchange of information on water/hydrology, climate, glaciers and monitoring of environment, issues of professional education (courses of study in college, the Khorog State University, University of Central Asia) on environmental studies.

The role of Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in enhancing cooperation in the field of development and management of water resources on the Panj/Amu-darya (2010).

Group 3

Moderators – **Хомидов Анвар**, member of the working group for cooperation in the field of hydrology and protection of environment between Tajikistan and Afghanistan. **Kenjaev Firuz**, leading specialist on research in waters of the Agency of Hydrology of the Republic of Tajikistan.

18.00 – Dinner

September 29, Saturday

8.30- 13.00 Excursions:

Visit to the sites of ecological interest, while continuing working in places on the materials, designed in working groups and preparing the draft of the final concluding document.

13.00 – Return to the Education Center.

13.00- 14.00– Lunch

14.00-16.00. Summarising the results of the seminar:

Moderators - **Alibakhshov B.** Chairman of the Association “Milal-Inter”, **Abdulnazarov A.** Deputy-Chairman of GBAO Administration.

- Presentations of the representatives of the working groups

- Discussions, questions and answers

- Discussing and adopting recommendations of the participants of the seminar for the final concluding document..

16.00-19.00 – Rest, free exchanges among the participants

19.00 – Dinner

September 30, Sunday

Farewell and departure of the participants of the seminar

The List of the Participants of the Seminar

“Dialogue and partnership on issues of the protection of environment and sustainable utilisation of water resources in the Amu-darya/Panj river basin”

Khorog, September 28-29, 2017

№	Name and Initials	Title of Organisation, Position	Contact Address e-mail/phone
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Республика Таджикистан			
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