



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE,
THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
AND THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR SAVING THE ARAL SEA**

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), referred to hereinafter as the Regional Commissions, on the one side, and

The International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS), acting on the basis of its Charter and the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Government of Turkmenistan and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the status of IFAS and its organizations of 9 April 1999, on the other side:

PREAMBLE

Recalling the Tashkent declaration of 26 March 1998 on the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) which is being jointly implemented by the Regional Commissions and the States of Central Asia;

Taking into account the Statement of the Heads of Central Asian States Founders of IFAS of 28 April 2009 reconfirming their readiness to further improve the organizational structure and legal framework of IFAS and develop further the cooperation between IFAS and the United Nations system;

Noting with satisfaction of the adoption of the UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/63/133 of 11 December 2008, that provides an observer status for IFAS in the General Assembly;

Recognizing the importance for the Central Asian region of the “Action programme to assist the countries of the Aral Sea basin in the period 2011-2015” (ASBP-3), the formulation of which was mandated by the Heads of States to the IFAS Executive Committee along with the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination and the Interstate Commission for Sustainable Development;

Highlighting the valuable cooperation between the Regional Commissions and IFAS in recent years within the SPECA framework, in particular the successful implementation of the project on dam safety;

Emphasizing the importance of further strengthening relations and developing cooperation between the Regional Commissions and IFAS and taking this Memorandum as the basis for the further expansion of activities for the achievement of sustainable development and the protection of the environment in Central Asia.

Agreed on the following:

Article 1. AREAS OF SHARED INTERESTS AND COOPERATION

The Regional Commissions and IFAS will collaborate, within their mandates and areas of expertise, on targeted activities on thematic programme areas, in particular in the field of capacity-building, drawing upon the comparative advantages of each organization.

1.1. Collaboration on thematic programme areas:

- 1.1.1. IFAS will be involved as a strategic partner in the implementation of activities on environment protection, the promotion of integrated water resources management, dam safety, climate change, and sustainable development;
- 1.1.2. IFAS will facilitate the participation of Central Asian countries in SPECA activities under the above programme areas;
- 1.1.3. IFAS will participate in the follow-up of the Cooperation Strategy to Promote the Rational and Efficient Use of Water and Energy Resources in Central Asia, elaborated within the SPECA framework;
- 1.1.4. The Regional Commissions will interact with IFAS in the preparation of relevant policy and research papers related to Central Asia;
- 1.1.5. IFAS will assist the Regional Commissions in gathering and processing information on relevant activities;
- 1.1.6. IFAS and the Regional Commissions will collaborate in the development and implementation of ASBP-3.

1.2. The Regional Commissions will assist IFAS in strengthening institutional and legal frameworks for regional cooperation as well as in its capacity-building activities, subject to availability of resources:

1.2.1. Advising IFAS in formulating policy and research papers in the above mentioned areas and other selected programme and project documents;

1.2.2. Organizing training and supporting IFAS institutional capacity-building activities, including when required, by providing resources persons;

1.2.3. Inviting IFAS representatives to participate in relevant international workshops, seminars and meetings convened either within the SPECA framework or under relevant projects of each Regional Commission.

1.3. The Regional Commissions and IFAS may also seek to strengthen collaboration in other specific fields of mutual interest.

Article 2. MODALITIES OF COOPERATION

2.1. The Regional Commissions and IFAS represented by its Executive Committee will keep each other informed of respective programmes and activities through formal and informal staff contacts, exchange of newsletters, country- and region-specific studies and other relevant documents and publications.

2.2. The Regional Commissions and IFAS will make appropriate arrangements to jointly undertake programme and project planning, implementation and evaluation.

2.3. SPECA Focal Points in the Regional Commissions and the Chairperson of the Executive Committee of IFAS will be responsible for realization of the objectives embodied in this Memorandum.

2.4. Officials of the Regional Commissions and the Executive Committee of IFAS will annually evaluate the implementation of this Memorandum.

Article 3 ENTRY INTO FORCE, AMENDMENT AND TERMINATION OF THIS MEMORANDUM

3.1. This Memorandum shall come into force on the date of signature and will be valid for five years and is subject to renewal by mutual agreement.

3.2. Subject to mutual agreement between the Regional Commissions and IFAS this Memorandum may be amended. Any such amendment will be reflected in a separate protocol which would form an integral part of this Memorandum.

3.3. The Memorandum may be terminated by either Party giving six months written notice to the other.

Signed in Geneva on 15 October 2010 in three copies each in the English and Russian languages, with all texts being equally authentic.

On behalf of IFAS

On behalf of the Regional Commissions

Sagit Ibatullin, Chair
Executive Committee of IFAS

Ján Kubiš, UNECE Executive Secretary

Noeleen Heyzer, ESCAP Executive
Secretary