



**CAREC Water Pillar
Third Water Pillar Working Group Meeting
15-16 July 2026,
Intercontinental Hotel
Almaty, Kazakhstan**

PROCEEDINGS



I. Introduction

1. In line with the CAREC 2030 strategy, agriculture and water were introduced as a new strategic pillar in 2017 to strengthen regional cooperation on water security, with an initial focus on Central Asia. A scoping report endorsed in 2021 outlined a three-block ¹ framework that formed the basis for regional engagement and guided the establishment of the CAREC Water Pillar Working Group in 2023. The Working Group initially comprises representatives from the five Central Asian countries—Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—which was later expanded to include

¹ Climate resilient and productive water systems (Block 1); Sustainable water resources and water services (Block 2); and Nexus solutions and cross sector learning (Block 3).

Azerbaijan and Georgia from the South Caucasus. This Working Group functions as an advisory platform to support the implementation, coordination, and development of regional projects under the Water Pillar

2. [The first Water Pillar Working Group meeting](#) was held in Istanbul from 17-18 June 2024. Each of the five countries from Central Asia presented initial concepts for consideration under the first phase of CAREC Water Pillar support. These concepts can be categorized into the following two groups, (i) climate adaptive infrastructure projects that deliver transboundary benefits such as enhanced water security and irrigation efficiency, and (ii) automated monitoring systems and digital transformation initiatives aimed at promoting more evidence-based management procedures
3. [The second Working Group meeting](#) was held virtually on 16 September 2025 and shared key updates and solicited feedback from participating stakeholders. Specifically, the meeting included (i) a report on the progress of the pre-feasibility study for potential regional projects; (ii) a presentation on the engagement on Water–Energy Nexus Modelling; and (iii) an introduction to the proposed TA.
4. The Third CAREC Water Pillar Working Group Meeting was held on 15–16 July 2026 in Almaty, Kazakhstan, under the chairmanship of the Government of Kazakhstan. The meeting provided a platform for member countries and development partners to review progress under the CAREC Water Pillar and guide the next phase of regional cooperation. Participants reviewed the findings of the pre-feasibility studies for potential regional investment projects, the Water–Energy Nexus Modelling exercise, and the initial finding under TA 10567, Strengthening Transboundary Water Collaboration for Climate-Resilient Water Management. The meeting also introduced the Glaciers to Farms (G2F) Program and discussed the potential role of the Working Group in supporting its implementation. Through country presentations and breakout discussions, participants provided strategic guidance to refine regional initiatives, strengthen regional cooperation, and advance an investment-ready pipeline of projects that promote climate-resilient and sustainable water management across the CAREC region.
5. The event was attended by 79 participants, including 69 attending in person and 10 joining virtually. Participants comprised members of the CAREC Water Pillar Working Group and focal points from the seven CAREC member countries—Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The meeting also brought together representatives of regional organizations, including the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (EC-IFAS), the Scientific Information Center of the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (SIC-ICWC), the Basin Water Organization (BWO) Amu Darya, and the Basin Water Organization (BWO) Syr Darya, as well as development partners, Asian Development Bank (ADB) staff, and consultants engaged under the CAREC Water Pillar technical assistance.

II. Meeting Highlights

6. **In his welcome remarks, Mr. Utsav Kumar**, Country Director, Kazakhstan Resident Mission, expressed ADB's appreciation to the Government of Kazakhstan for its leadership in hosting and chairing the Third CAREC Water Pillar Working Group Meeting and welcomed delegates, regional organizations, and development partners from across the CAREC region. He emphasized that water security has become a strategic priority, requiring stronger regional partnerships, coordinated investments, and collective action to address the growing

impacts of climate change, glacier retreat, and increasing pressure on shared water resources. Highlighting the progress achieved under the CAREC Water Pillar, he noted that the initiative has entered a new phase—from planning to implementation. He stressed the importance of working together to translate regional priorities into concrete, investment-ready projects, while strengthening governance, innovation, knowledge sharing, and transboundary cooperation. Concluding his remarks, Mr. Kumar encouraged participants to actively contribute their expertise and guidance to shape the next generation of regional initiatives and expressed confidence that the meeting would further strengthen regional partnerships and accelerate practical, climate-resilient solutions for sustainable water management across the CAREC region.

7. **Opening session:** In his opening remarks, **Mr. Zhandos N. Salimov**, Vice Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, reaffirmed Kazakhstan's strong commitment to advancing regional cooperation under the CAREC Water Pillar. He emphasized that effective transboundary water cooperation is essential for ensuring sustainable water resources management and highlighted the region's longstanding collaborative mechanisms, including the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (ICWC), the Chu–Talas Commission, and joint reservoir management arrangements. While acknowledging the progress achieved, he stressed the importance of modernizing water infrastructure, strengthening climate resilience, and enhancing regional collaboration to address emerging water challenges. He also recognized the Asian Development Bank's continued support in advancing regional water security and expressed confidence that the meeting would foster productive dialogue and lead to tangible outcomes for sustainable and climate-resilient water management across the CAREC region.
8. **Session 1: Setting the Stage.** Mr. Kazuhiro Yoshida, focal of CAREC Water Pillar/Senior Water Resources Specialist, Asian Development Bank (ADB), provided a strategic overview of the CAREC Water Pillar and the key priorities for the Third Working Group Meeting. Mr. Yoshida emphasized that the growing impacts of climate change, rising water demand, and mounting pressure on shared water resources reinforce the need for stronger regional cooperation and coordinated action. Reflecting on the significant progress achieved under the CAREC Water Pillar, he highlighted its evolution into a collaborative platform for developing climate-resilient, investment-ready regional initiatives. Stressing that water security depends on knowledge sharing, innovation, and sustained partnerships, Mr. Yoshida reaffirmed the Working Group's pivotal role in guiding the Water Pillar's implementation and future direction. He concluded by outlining the objectives of the two-day meeting and encouraging participants to build on the progress achieved to shape the next phase of regional cooperation.
9. **Session 2: Pre-Feasibility Studies – Insights and Way Forward.** Mr. Tim Hannan, Team Leader, Cowater International, presented the key findings of the five pre-feasibility studies (PFSs) prepared under TA 9977 for potential regional investment projects under the CAREC Water Pillar, with a combined estimated investment value of approximately \$495 million. He highlighted that the studies confirmed the technical and economic viability of the proposed investments while demonstrating that addressing common regional challenges—including climate change, aging water infrastructure, inefficient irrigation systems, and limited hydrological monitoring—requires coordinated transboundary solutions and sustained regional cooperation. Mr. Hannan emphasized that the PFSs provide a solid foundation for advancing to the feasibility study stage, subject to endorsement by CAREC member countries and agreement on financing arrangements. During the discussion, participants expressed interest in replicating the approach of the Joint Automated Water Metering System in other transboundary river basins, including the Kura River Basin, and exchanged views on ongoing initiatives to modernize hydrological monitoring systems, highlighting

opportunities for coordination and knowledge sharing among development partners and regional organizations.

10. **Session 3: Water–Energy Nexus Modelling in Central Asia.** Dr. Julien Harou, Water–Energy Planning Specialist, University of Manchester, presented the outcomes of the Water–Energy Nexus Modelling initiative, highlighting the Central Asia Water–Energy System (CAWES) as an integrated decision-support tool developed in collaboration with the Scientific Information Center of the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (SIC-ICWC) and CDC "Energia" to support coordinated planning of transboundary water and energy resources across Central Asia. Using the CAWES modelling framework, he demonstrated how coordinated regional planning under different climate and socio-economic scenarios can improve water allocation, strengthen energy security, optimize infrastructure investments, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Mr. Harou emphasized that the modelling framework enables countries to better understand regional trade-offs and identify cooperative solutions that maximize shared water, energy, economic, and environmental benefits, while providing an evidence base for future policy and investment decisions. He further highlighted the importance of continued regional collaboration, data sharing, and refinement of the modelling framework to support climate-resilient and sustainable water and energy management under the CAREC Water Pillar.
11. During the discussion, participants welcomed the progress made in developing the CAWES model and explored its practical application to support national and regional water–energy planning. Discussions focused on the model's potential to evaluate alternative development and operational scenarios, strengthen regional decision-making, and build confidence through closer engagement with member countries. Participants also discussed the modelling approach and its application to future country-level studies. It was agreed that the next phase would focus on consultations and confidence-building with member countries to jointly identify and develop priority scenarios aligned with national priorities and regional cooperation objectives.
12. **Session 4: TA 10567 REG: Strengthening Transboundary Water Collaboration for Climate Resilient Water Management.** Dr. Iskandar Abdullaev, Team Leader/Water resources and irrigation specialist, TA consulting firm (International Water Management Institute [IWMI]), presented the inception brief for TA 10567. He explained that the TA was designed to move the CAREC Water Pillar from periodic dialogue to an operational routine of regional cooperation, supported by usable evidence, practical tools, and a disciplined pipeline of investment concepts.
13. The presentation set out three foundations established during inception: results discipline, operating controls, and pipeline safeguards. Each output would be linked to the DMF, the responsible actors, the evidence requirements, and the verification points. Decision logs, source and risk registers, QA/QC procedures, responsible data practices, and four-week progress summaries would support transparent delivery. Candidate projects would be screened for regional value, climate rationale, avoidance of duplication, national fit, readiness, and compatibility with ADB project preparation processes.
14. Participants were briefed on the connected logic of the three TA outputs:
(i) Output 1 would operationalize institutional mechanisms and cooperation routines by mapping relevant organizations and focal points, diagnosing capacity, maintaining records of actions and decisions, and using peer learning where it adds practical value.

(ii) Output 2 would translate diagnostics into agency-facing requirements for data systems, remote sensing and GIS, water productivity monitoring, early warning, digital platforms, training, and water–energy nexus learning.

(iii) Output 3 would convert Water Pillar priorities into a shorter and more credible pipeline through evidence sheets, screening gates, concept notes, TORs, and indicative budgets.

15. The TA team emphasized traceability from source to evidence, decision, and project preparation product. The methodology would combine document review, structured consultations, geospatial and water productivity diagnostics, review of climate and hydrometeorological systems, economic and financial appraisal, O&M assessment, and screening for safeguards, gender, youth, and inclusion. Country focal points and expert groups would be central to data validation, technical review, and ownership.
16. For the first 30–60 days, the proposed priorities were to confirm focal points and review responsibilities; issue bilingual data requests and templates; validate the inception agenda; begin institutional and technical diagnostics; open project screening; and submit the first progress summary. Early coordination decisions were requested on data custodians and confidentiality, screening thresholds, review windows, comment resolution, and the ADB formats to be used for concept notes, TORs, budgets, and related training.
17. **Session 5. Country presentations on potential regional or subregional projects:** Delegations from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan presented eight potential initiatives for consideration under the CAREC Water Pillar. The proposals covered climate-resilient infrastructure, basin planning, institutional strengthening, digital monitoring, water quality cooperation, regional capacity development, and cross-sector learning. Presentations provided preliminary information on objectives, regional relevance, beneficiaries, safeguards, indicative costs, implementation arrangements, and preparation status. Table 1 summarizes the proposals; the paragraphs that follow set out each in turn.

Table 1. Proposals presented in session 5

Country	Proposal	Indicative cost	Indicative period	Stage of preparation
Azerbaijan	River basin management plans for the Kura River Basin (Central Kura and Alazan/Ganikh pilots)	\$110,000 ² (as presented)	3 years	Earlier work requires updating to reflect current conditions
Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic	Permanent secretariat for	\$1.133 million	5 years of support; establishment within 1 year	Concept; discussed bilaterally within the Commission

² Editorial note: the indicative cost of \$110,000 was recorded as presented. It appears to cover preparatory activities only, rather than full development and implementation of the river basin management plans over three years. The figure requires confirmation by the proponent.

	the Chu–Talas Commission			
Kazakhstan	Regional study visits on transboundary water cooperation	\$484,000	5 visits over 3 years	Idea stage; program not yet developed
Kazakhstan	Institutional and infrastructure support for the Aral Geopark	\$800,000	3 years (initial)	Early preparation; needs assessment completed
Kyrgyz Republic	Climate resilience of the Tort-Gul, Kirov, and Orto-Tokoy dams	\$27 million (Tort-Gul \$5 million; Kirov \$10 million; Orto-Tokoy \$12 million)	5 years	Concept; not yet discussed with regional partners
Tajikistan	Strengthening the Secretariat of the ICWC	\$3.53 million	2027–2033	Concept; needs assessment under way
Turkmenistan	Water quality monitoring and cooperation in the Amu Darya Basin	Not presented	2027–2029 (initial)	Concept
Uzbekistan	Modernization and digitalization of water infrastructure in the Amu Darya Basin	\$16.63 million (3 components) / \$18.83 million (4 components)	2027–2030	Preparation ongoing; technical assessments available

ICWC = Interstate Commission for Water Coordination of Central Asia. Costs and periods are as presented by the delegations concerned and have not been independently verified.

Azerbaijan

18. Mr. Rafiq Verdiyev, Head of Cadastre, Accounting and Registry Department, Water Use and Protection State Supervision Service, Azerbaijan State Water Resources Agency proposed developing and implementing river basin management plans (RBMPs) for the Kura River Basin, with pilot work in the Central Kura and Alazan/Ganikh areas and possible inclusion of the Khrami/Debed sub-basins. The project would strengthen the legal and institutional framework for integrated water resources management (IWRM), prepare national programs of measures, and harmonize plans across basin and sub-basin boundaries, particularly between Azerbaijan and Georgia. The proposed three-year project identified the State Water Resources Agency, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, basin authorities, local authorities, and communities as key actors. The indicative cost was reported as \$110,000, and the delegation noted that earlier work would need to be updated to reflect current conditions.

Kazakhstan

19. Kazakhstan presented three proposals. The first would establish and initially finance a permanent secretariat for the Chu–Talas Commission to provide systematic technical and organizational support to cooperation between Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic. The five-year support package was estimated at approximately \$1.133 million.
20. The second proposed five international study visits over three years for Central Asian water sector specialists to learn from established transboundary river commissions, at an indicative cost of \$484,000. The third would support the institutional and physical development of the Aral Geopark in Kyzylorda Region, including a visitor center, information points, interpretation materials, staffing, training, and prospective cooperation with Uzbekistan on a transboundary nature tourism route, at an indicative cost of \$800,000.
21. The delegation noted that the three proposals remained at concept or early preparation stage and would require further regional consultation and technical development.

Kyrgyz Republic

22. **Ms. Zhyldyzkan Ashambaeva**, Head of the Technical Policy and Investment Division, Ministry of Water Resources, Agriculture and Processing Industry, proposed enhancing the climate resilience of the Tort-Gul, Kirov, and Orto-Tokoy reservoir dams in the transboundary Isfara, Chu, and Talas basins. The project would modernize dam facilities, strengthen monitoring and safe operation, adapt operating rules to climate change, reduce emergency risks, and support reliable delivery of irrigation water to national and downstream users. The indicative cost was approximately \$27 million over five years: \$5 million for Tort-Gul, \$10 million for Kirov, and \$12 million for Orto-Tokoy. The proposal was at concept stage. The Ministry of Water Resources, Agriculture and Processing Industry and its Water Resources Service were identified as the national implementing institutions, and the relevant bilateral water commissions as the consultation mechanisms. The presentation reported that no land acquisition, resettlement, or adverse environmental impact was anticipated, subject to subsequent screening³.

Tajikistan

23. Mr. Daler Abdurazozqzada, Head of Water Policy Department, Ministry of Energy and Water Resources proposed strengthening the Secretariat of the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination of Central Asia (ICWC) as a modern analytical, coordination, and project development body serving the Amu Darya and Syr Darya basins. The proposal responded to the Secretariat's expanded mandate and to identified constraints in staffing, professional development, digital systems, equipment, mobility, and project preparation. Four components would cover institutional and human resource strengthening; technical equipment and digitalization; the material and technical base; and analytical and project development functions.
24. The preliminary cost was \$3.53 million, with implementation proposed for 2027–2033 through the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources of Tajikistan, the ICWC, and its Secretariat. Expected benefits included stronger regional coordination, improved analytical support and information management, and greater capacity to prepare regional projects and respond to climate variability.

³ Editorial note: the statement that no land acquisition, resettlement, or adverse environmental impact is anticipated was made by the proponent and is subject to safeguard screening and categorization in accordance with ADB requirements during project preparation.

Turkmenistan

25. **Mr. Saparmyrat Charyyev**, Head of the Digital Technologies and Information Security Department, State Committee for Water Management of Turkmenistan, proposed strengthening water quality monitoring and cooperation in the Amu Darya Basin. The proposal envisaged modernization and technical support for laboratories; five integrated monitoring stations, including at Kerki and Turkmenabat; and two additional water quality sensors for the Hydrometeorological Service. It also called for satellite-based monitoring, joint capacity building, a feasibility study for modernizing major canals shared by Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and an automated data-sharing arrangement among Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. A permanent regional training center for young hydrologists and environmental specialists was proposed to support professional development and the dissemination of climate-resilient water management practices. The initial implementation period for the proposed project to strengthen monitoring and early warning systems for climate-resilient water management was 2027–2029.

Uzbekistan

26. **Mr. Tashev Rashid**, Chief Specialist, Hydraulic Structures Cadastre Department, Ministry of Water Resources Uzbekistan proposed an integrated program for the modernization and digitalization of water infrastructure in the Amu Darya Basin, combining reconstruction of the Tuyamuyun hydro complex (located in Turkmenistan but belongs to Uzbekistan), remote monitoring of 20 dredgers, and regional development of water-saving technologies and capacity. Components 1 and 2 would focus on Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, while the capacity development component would involve all Central Asian countries. The preliminary cost was approximately \$16.63 million, subject to confirmation⁴, and the proposed implementation period was 2027–2030. The Ministry of Water Resources of Uzbekistan was identified as the executing agency, with the Agency of IFAS in Uzbekistan as an implementing partner for the regional component. Existing technical assessments and pilot site analysis provided an initial basis for preparation, and consultations with neighboring countries and ADB were ongoing.
27. **Session 6: Presentation on Glaciers to Farms (G2F)**. Mr. Alex Harvey, Senior Climate Change Specialist, ADB, presented an overview of the Glaciers to Farms (G2F) regional program, ADB's flagship climate adaptation initiative in the region designed to strengthen resilience to glacier retreat and climate change across Central Asia, the South Caucasus, and Pakistan. He highlighted the program's integrated approach, linking climate risk assessments with long-term investments in water resources, climate-resilient agriculture, ecosystems, early warning systems, and community resilience, supported through blended financing from ADB and the Green Climate Fund. Mr. Harvey also outlined the role of the CAREC Water Pillar Working Group in supporting regional climate risk assessments, advising investment priorities, and contributing to knowledge sharing through the G2F External Advisory Committee. During the discussion, participants sought clarification on approaches for identifying climate finance gaps and prioritizing investments. In response, it was explained that prioritization is country-driven, drawing on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans to identify key climate risks and financing needs and reflected in Country Partnership Strategies and the ADB pipeline. The discussion also emphasized directing climate finance toward sectors with limited access to conventional financing, while ensuring broad stakeholder engagement in defining national investment priorities

⁴ Note: the figure of \$16.63 million presented in session 5 covers three components (rehabilitation of the Tuyamuyun hydroscheme, dredger monitoring, and regional capacity development). The figure of \$18.83 million presented in session 7 adds a fourth component of \$2.2 million for four hydrological posts

28. **Session 7. Breakout discussions on country-proposed regional projects:** IWMI introduced the breakout session as a structured clarification exercise intended to turn the country presentations into project concepts that could be followed up under TA 10567. The facilitators stressed that the exercise was not intended to select or rank proposals. Its purpose was to clarify project aims, scope, geography, institutions, regional value, climate rationale, implementation needs, and missing evidence.
29. The breakout discussions featured constructive and collaborative engagement demonstrating the strong commitment of CAREC member countries and regional stakeholders to advancing regional water cooperation. Participants actively exchanged views, shared national priorities and experiences, and explored opportunities to strengthen cross-border collaboration through climate-resilient and investment-ready initiatives. The discussions reflected a shared recognition of the value of regional dialogue, knowledge exchange, and coordinated action in addressing common water challenges, while providing practical guidance for further refining project concepts under TA 10567.
30. Participants were divided into three groups aligned with the Water Pillar framework (three main blocks)⁵:
- (i) Group 1 – climate-resilient and productive water systems, covering adaptation, irrigation modernization, hydrometeorology, monitoring, and drought and flood preparedness(Block 1)⁶
 - (ii) Group 2 – sustainable water resources and water services, covering resource management, salinity, institutions, financing, and data systems(Block 2)⁷; and
 - (iii) Group 3 – nexus solutions and cross-sector learning, covering water–energy–food links, modeling, renewable energy, coordination, and learning(Block 3)⁸.
31. The proposed concepts were initially grouped as follows:
- the Kyrgyz Republic's dam resilience project and Uzbekistan's Amu Darya modernization and digitalization program under group 1;
 - Tajikistan's ICWC Secretariat proposal and Azerbaijan's Kura Basin management planning proposal under group 2; and
 - Kazakhstan's institutional, study visit, and Aral Geopark proposals, together with Turkmenistan's Amu Darya monitoring and cooperation proposal, under group 3. Facilitators were invited to adjust the clustering where cross-cutting links or similar ideas justified joint discussion.
32. Each proposal was to be evaluated against five key considerations: (i) potential to strengthen regional cooperation; (ii) alignment with national priorities and existing pipelines; (iii) responsiveness to climate risks; (iv) implementation viability, including agency roles, safeguards, financing, and capacity; and (v) evidence readiness, including available data, missing studies, maps, costs, beneficiaries, and focal points. The facilitator guidance emphasized clarification rather than ranking and recommended recording open questions where evidence or agreement was incomplete.
33. Each group was expected to prepare comparable notes covering one to three priority concepts, their intended results and scope, participating countries and institutions, regional or shared benefits, implementation needs, data and consultation gaps, open questions, and

⁵ See Scoping Report (2021). <https://carecprogram.org/?publication=carec-water-pillar-scoping-report>

⁶ List of participants: Rafiq Verdiyev, Ekaterina Metreveli, Mari Tinikashvili, Nurzhan Amirzhanov, Zhyldyzkan Ashymbaeva, Saparmyrat Charyyev, Allanazar Kajarov, Tashev Rashid, Davron Ashirbaevich, Beksultan Begaliyev, Alemger Kabdykadyrov, Daulet Kisebayev

⁷ List of participants: Aytan Seyidova, Tagai Ozubekov, Safar Sharifzoda, Tirkesh Nurgeldiyev, Tulaganov Adkham, Arystan Galiyev, Zaur Bostanov, Umar Nazarov, Anuar Uskenbayev, Zarina Nazarbayerova,

⁸ List of participants :Daniyar Sharip, Daler Abdurazozqoda, Maftuna Jalilova, Jumaev Abror, Julien Harou, Yerbolat Pernekhan,

suggested follow-up. Rapporteurs were asked to report what had been clarified and what still required follow-up, rather than to present final project decisions.

34. **Group 1 (Climate Resilient and Productive Water Systems)** reviewed project concepts aimed at modernizing water infrastructure, strengthening dam safety, and advancing transboundary water cooperation, focusing on proposals from Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic together with an additional proposal from Turkmenistan. The session was moderated by Dr. Barbara Januzs-Pawletta with participation from the Ministry of Water Resources, Agriculture and Processing Industry of the Kyrgyz Republic and its Water Resources Service; the Water Resources Committee of the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation of Kazakhstan; the Environmental Protection Agency under the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan; the Ministry of Water Resources of Uzbekistan; and ADB. The group assessed regional relevance, readiness, data and consultation needs, preliminary costs, and the actions required to advance the concepts toward project preparation and potential financing.
35. Uzbekistan presented the "Integrated Programme for Modernization and Digitalization of Water Infrastructure in the Amu Darya River Basin," intended to improve the safety, efficiency, and digital maturity of transboundary water infrastructure while strengthening regional capacity for water-saving technologies. Implementation was proposed for 2027–2030 at a preliminary total cost of about \$18.83 million, subject to refinement.⁹
36. The program comprised four components. Component 1, about \$13.46 million, would rehabilitate the Tuyamuyun hydro complex — four reservoirs and more than 20 hydraulic structures of strategic importance for water supply and irrigation in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan — and introduce automated safety monitoring of the dam and hydraulic structures. Component 2, about \$1.62 million, would provide remote digital monitoring of 20 dredgers using sensors, global positioning system equipment, and data transmission equipment, to reduce downtime and failures and improve management of dredging and sediment removal works¹⁰ Component 3, \$1.55 million, would support regional training, knowledge exchange, and capacity development on water-saving technologies across Central Asia. Component 4, \$2.2 million for four hydrological posts, would establish a regional system for transboundary water monitoring and automated water accounting in the Amu Darya Basin.
37. The group recommended incorporating climate and hydrological scenario modeling, using findings from previous studies and projects, and coordinating the program with Turkmenistan through established bilateral mechanisms. It noted that detailed technical specifications, cost estimates, operational data, and institutional arrangements would be required for pre-feasibility and feasibility work.
38. The Kyrgyz Republic presented the subproject "Enhancing the Climate Resilience of Dams in Transboundary River Basins of the Kyrgyz Republic," covering the Tort-Gul, Kirov, and Orto-Tokoy reservoirs. The subproject aimed to modernize their structures and monitoring systems, reduce emergency and climate-related risks, adapt operating rules, and secure reliable delivery of irrigation water to users in the Kyrgyz Republic and neighboring countries. The preliminary cost was about \$27 million over an indicative five years: \$5 million for Tort-Gul, \$10 million for Kirov, and \$12 million for Orto-Tokoy.

⁹Note: the total of about \$18.83 million is the sum of the four components presented in session 7 — Component 1 (\$13.46 million), Component 2 (\$1.62 million), Component 3 (\$1.55 million), and Component 4 (\$2.2 million). This exceeds the \$16.63 million presented for the same program in session 5 by the addition of Component 4 (four hydrological posts). The figure is preliminary and subject to refinement during project preparation.

¹⁰ Local-currency amounts were presented as UZS161.555 billion for component 1 and EUR1.5 million for component

39. Potential works included rehabilitation or replacement of piezometers, survey benchmarks, cone valves, hydrometric and hydromechanical equipment, downstream facilities, and shafts, together with automated safety monitoring and control systems. The final scope would be confirmed by technical inspections and design studies. Because the facilities serve the transboundary Isfara, Chu, and Talas basins, preparation would require consultation with Kazakhstan and Tajikistan through the relevant intergovernmental and water commissions, alongside assessment of regional benefits and avoided losses.
40. The concept remained at an early stage and had not been discussed with regional partners at the time of presentation. The group recommended preparing technical surveys, preliminary cost estimates, a pre-feasibility study, and a full feasibility study, including climate risk analysis, economic assessment, and safeguards screening.

Additional proposal and regional knowledge exchange

41. Turkmenistan proposed including modernization of transboundary hydrological posts and hydromonitoring systems. The group supported further clarification of the proposed sites, technical standards, data-sharing arrangements, ownership, and arrangements for O&M. Participants also supported a structured exchange of experience among Central Asian countries on digital water infrastructure, dam safety, hydraulic structure inventories, and operational management.

Agreed conclusions and next steps

42. The group agreed to advance the Uzbekistan program and the Kyrgyz dam resilience subproject to the next stage of preparation by refining their scope, implementation arrangements, expected regional benefits, and preliminary financing requirements. It further agreed that climate risk assessment and hydrological modeling should be integrated into both concepts, in order to test the proposed investments against changing runoff, extreme events, future water demand, and operational risks.

Next steps agreed by the group were to:

- (i) compile the preliminary technical documentation, baseline data, asset condition information, and itemized cost estimates required to define the proposed works and support technical and economic appraisal;
 - (ii) undertake technical inspections and economic, avoided-loss, and regional benefit assessments, and use the results to prepare pre-feasibility studies followed, where justified, by full feasibility studies;
 - (iii) initiate bilateral consultations through the existing intergovernmental commissions on water management matters — Uzbekistan with Turkmenistan, and the Kyrgyz Republic with Kazakhstan and Tajikistan — to seek their views, endorsement, and support for implementation; and
 - (iv) transmit formal requests for official government information or documentation through the respective ministries of foreign affairs, in accordance with established intergovernmental communication and coordination procedures.
43. IWMI would support further development of the concepts and would request from the proponents any additional technical, financial, institutional, and baseline information required; proponents were asked to provide available information in a timely manner. Consultations would continue with the concerned sector ministries, basin organizations, hydrometeorological services, ADB, and other development partners to clarify institutional responsibilities, financing options, implementation arrangements, and coordination with ongoing initiatives.

Responsibilities

44. The group identified the immediate responsibilities set out in Table 2.

Table 2. Group 1 – immediate responsibilities

Responsible entity	Immediate task
Ministry of Water Resources of Uzbekistan	Provide technical documentation, calculations, project information, preliminary estimates, and equipment lists; initiate consultation through the Uzbekistan–Turkmenistan bilateral mechanism.
Ministry of Water Resources, Agriculture and Processing Industry of the Kyrgyz Republic / Water Resources Service	Provide asset data, technical inspection results, preliminary scopes, and cost estimates for the Tort-Gul, Kirov, and Orto-Tokoy reservoirs; initiate consultations with Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.
Project working group /TA consultants	Consolidate concepts, review evidence, coordinate consultations, and support preparation of pre-feasibility documentation.
Concerned government bodies and regional partners	Review and agree transboundary aspects, data-sharing arrangements, institutional roles, and financing options.

IWMI = International Water Management Institute.

45. **Group 2 (Sustainable water resources and water services)** reviewed the project concepts presented by Tajikistan and Azerbaijan. The session was moderated by Dr. Zafar Gafurov and was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the State Water Resources Agency of Azerbaijan; the Department of Water Policy and Water Supply of the Ministry of Water Resources, Agriculture and Processing Industry of the Kyrgyz Republic; the Investment Department of the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources of Tajikistan; the State Committee for Water Resources Management of Turkmenistan; the GEF Agency under the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS) and the Water Resources Department of the BWO “Amu Darya” of Uzbekistan; the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation of Kazakhstan, together with the Executive Committee of IFAS and the Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development (EFSD); the Secretariat of the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (ICWC); the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD); the Republican State Enterprise “Kazvodkhoz”; and Cowater International. The Group assessed the regional relevance, level of readiness, data and consultation needs, as well as the measures required to advance both concepts toward project preparation and potential financing.

Tajikistan: strengthening the ICWC Secretariat

46. Mr. Daler Abdurazokzoda, Head of the Main Department of Water and Energy Policy at the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources of Tajikistan, introduced the concept "Strengthening the capacity of the ICWC Secretariat as a basis for climate-resilient water cooperation in Central Asia." The concept aimed to improve regional water cooperation for the rational and efficient management of shared water resources by strengthening the operational and institutional capacity of the ICWC Secretariat, including creation of a single, consolidated regional database. It envisaged institutional development of a shared regional water management function and preparation of practical initiatives supporting the Secretariat's work program.
47. IWMI would support further development of the concepts and would request from the proponents any additional technical, financial, institutional, and baseline information required; proponents were asked to provide available information in a timely manner. Consultations would continue with the concerned sector ministries, basin organizations,

hydrometeorological services, ADB, and other development partners to clarify institutional responsibilities, financing options, implementation arrangements, and coordination with ongoing initiatives.

Responsibilities

48. The five Central Asian countries would participate through the ICWC and its basin water organizations, BWO Syrdarya and BWO Amudarya, with the ICWC Secretariat proposed as the lead implementing body. Implementation aspects raised included engaging international partners, including a possible World Bank grant; clarifying the financing mechanisms of the Secretariat; regular staff training and exchange of experience; and drawing on ADB's potential to support regional projects.
49. Data needs identified were hydrological data and a regional information system potentially hosted by, or integrated with, the ICWC; integration with existing databases and platforms; and stronger coordination among participating institutions. Open questions concerned the sources and mechanisms of financing, the scope of the Secretariat's mandate, and how the proposed database would integrate with national and existing regional systems. The group noted that the concept remained at an early stage of formulation, with a needs assessment targeted for completion within about two weeks of the session and an indicative start from 2027.

Azerbaijan: Kura River Basin management plans

50. Ms. Ayten Seyidova, Head of the Analysis and Reporting Division of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan, presented the concept of the project "Development and Implementation of River Kura Basin Management Plans, including the pilot areas of Central Kura and Alazani (Ganikh), agreed at the basin and sub-basin levels," prepared by the State Water Resources Agency and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan with the participation of basin administrations and local communities. The concept envisages establishing a modern basin planning system based on the principles of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), aimed at ensuring sustainable water resources management, improving water quality, reducing the risks of droughts, floods, and pollution, and preparing a Programme of Measures and an investment portfolio, with the possibility of subsequent technical harmonization with other countries sharing the basin.
51. It was noted that approximately 70% of Azerbaijan's water resources originate outside the country, making effective management of the transboundary Kura River Basin of strategic importance for ensuring the country's water security and providing a basis for further development of regional cooperation. It was also emphasized that the existing water resources management system is predominantly based on an administrative and sectoral approach and does not fully take into account the interrelationship between the main course of the Kura River and its numerous tributaries. In the context of climate change, this factor increases the risks of declining water availability, deteriorating water quality, and more frequent droughts and floods, underscoring the need to transition to a basin-based management approach.
52. The project envisages undertaking a comprehensive characterization of the basin, identification of water bodies, assessment of anthropogenic pressures and impacts, analysis of climate risks, improvement of the monitoring system, preparation of a Programme of Measures, development of an investment portfolio, and establishment of mechanisms for stakeholder participation. The project is expected to be implemented under the leadership of the Government of Azerbaijan, with the participation of relevant government agencies, basin administrations, research organizations, and local communities. The involvement of

Georgia and other countries sharing the basin may be considered at subsequent stages, subject to mutual interest and appropriate agreements.

53. During the discussion, several issues requiring further consideration were highlighted, including the final scope and geographical coverage of the project, potential sources of financing, the format of possible regional cooperation, the institutional mechanism for implementation, and the process for preparing project documentation. The proposed next steps include further refining the project concept taking into account the comments received, preparing a project proposal in accordance with ADB requirements, engaging international experts, and commencing the project preparation phase, tentatively from 2027.

Agreed conclusions and next steps

54. The group agreed to advance both concepts to the next stage of preparation by clarifying their scope, financing arrangements, and expected regional benefits. For the Azerbaijan concept, next steps were to complete basin characterization, climate risk analysis, and stakeholder mapping for the Central Kura and Alazan/Ganikh pilot sub-basins, and to prepare the stakeholder engagement action program and investment portfolio. For the Tajikistan concept, next steps were to clarify the institutional and financing model of the ICWC Secretariat, complete the needs assessment, and identify potential donors and regional partners, including possible ADB and World Bank engagement.
55. Both concepts required compilation of the hydrological, hydrometeorological, water quality, ecological, and climate data identified, and assessment of the opportunities to integrate that data into shared regional information systems. Consultations were to be initiated with regional and international partners: Azerbaijan with ADB, CAREC, and MENR, with possible future engagement of Georgia and other Kura basin countries; and Tajikistan with ICWC member states and potential financing partners, including ADB and the World Bank.
56. IWMI would support further development of both concepts and would request from the proponents any additional technical, financial, and institutional information required; proponents were asked to provide available information in a timely manner. Consultations with concerned sector ministries, basin organizations, and development partners would continue in order to clarify institutional responsibilities, financing options, and coordination with ongoing initiatives. Both concepts targeted an indicative start from 2027.

Responsibilities

The group identified the immediate responsibilities set out in Table 3.

Table 3. Group 2 – immediate responsibilities

Responsible entity	Immediate task
State Water Resources Agency / Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan	Provide basin characterization data, water body inventories, and climate risk information, and prepare a stakeholder engagement plan; lead preparation of the river basin management plans for the Central Kura and Alazan/Ganikh pilot sub-basins.
ICWC Secretariat / Ministry of Energy and Water Resources of Tajikistan	Clarify the institutional and financing model of the Secretariat, complete the needs assessment, and identify potential donors and regional partners.
Project working group / IWMI consultants	Consolidate concepts, review evidence, coordinate consultations, and support preparation of pre-feasibility documentation.

Concerned government bodies and regional partners	Review and agree institutional roles, data-sharing arrangements, and financing options, including possible participation of Georgia and other Kura basin countries, and of ADB and the World Bank for the ICWC Secretariat concept.
---	---

ADB = Asian Development Bank, ICWC = Interstate Commission for Water Coordination of Central Asia, IWMI = International Water Management Institute.

57. **Group 3 (Nexus solutions and cross-sector learning)**, moderated by Alexander Nikolayenko, reviewed three project concepts proposed primarily by Kazakhstan, with the first concept co-presented by the Kyrgyz Republic. The proposals concerned establishment of a permanent secretariat for the Chu–Talas Commission, a regional program of overseas study visits on transboundary water cooperation, and institutional and infrastructure support for the Aral Geopark. Participants assessed institutional readiness, governance and financing options, data and consultation needs, and the actions required to move the concepts toward implementation. Turkmenistan indicated that it had no new proposal for the group but requested completion of work on an existing proposal.

Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic: Chu–Talas Commission Secretariat

58. Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic jointly proposed establishing a permanent secretariat for the Chu–Talas Commission, modeled on the ICWC Secretariat, to provide systematic technical and organizational support for bilateral cooperation on the transboundary Chu and Talas rivers. The Commission has held 37 meetings since 2006. Establishment of the secretariat was proposed within one year, with ADB financing envisaged for an initial five-year period before transition to self-financing by the parties.
59. The group discussed two organizational options: a single joint secretariat, whose location remained to be determined, or two closely connected offices in Taraz and Bishkek. The financing model would depend on the option selected, with national financing for separate offices or an equal contribution by the two countries for a joint secretariat. Further work was required to strengthen the legal and regulatory framework, select the institutional model and location, define performance indicators, and specify the databases, software, and hydrological and regional information to be stored and exchanged.

Regional study visits on transboundary water cooperation

60. Kazakhstan proposed five study visits over three years for water sector specialists from Central Asian countries to institutions with recognized experience in transboundary water management, including river commissions in Europe and the International Joint Commission between Canada and the United States. The learning agenda would cover not only technical water management but also the financing of bilateral and multilateral institutions, water–energy nexus arrangements, and mechanisms for exchanging hydrological and institutional information. Participating countries would nominate candidates, with an indicative group of about 20 people subject to the approved budget. The group discussed an indicative age criterion of under 40 and the need for gender balance and women's participation.
61. Because the program is regional rather than solely a Kazakhstan initiative, the group recommended appointing an independent external partner to coordinate destinations and engagement with host institutions. Learning objectives, competencies, participant allocations, financing arrangements, and host institutions would need to be finalized. Potential synergies were identified with capacity building activities under a World Bank project implemented with IFAS.

Kazakhstan: institutional and infrastructure support for the Aral Geopark

62. Kazakhstan proposed supporting the sustainable operation of the Aral Geopark through staffing, including a full-time geologist; a visitor center in Aralsk; three information points;

signage, interpretation panels, and a tourist map; and capacity development for regional scientific and tourism cooperation. The intended outcome was a self-sustaining geopark, with donor support for the first three to five years followed by state budget financing. The concept also envisaged a future transboundary dimension with the Aral Sea territories of Uzbekistan, including Muynak and the Aralkum Desert.

63. The group recommended an independent international assessment to define the structure and boundaries of the geopark and to support their legal recognition. Development of a transboundary model would require consultations with Uzbekistan and an appropriate legal framework, which does not yet exist. Participants identified possible reference points and synergies through the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia, the CAREC tourism portfolio, and the World Bank-supported "Park of Peace" initiative of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in the Fergana Valley.

Agreed conclusions and next steps

64. Group 3 agreed that all three concepts should advance through resolution of their principal institutional, governance, and financing questions. For the Chu–Talas secretariat, the responsible parties would decide between the single-secretariat and two-office models, determine the financing arrangement, continue strengthening the legal framework, and define performance indicators and data system requirements. For the study visits, the participants would finalize the learning objectives, destinations, host institutions, participant arrangements, financing, and independent coordination mechanism. For the Aral Geopark, the proponents would commission an international assessment, clarify governance and legal designation, and initiate consultations with Uzbekistan on a possible transboundary format.
65. The group also recommended incorporating the agreed social criteria into the study visits program; pursuing synergies with relevant World Bank, IFAS, and CAREC initiatives; seeking ADB engagement on financing options for the Chu–Talas secretariat; and continuing consultations with sector ministries, basin organizations, and development partners on institutional responsibilities and coordination with ongoing initiatives.

Responsibilities

The group identified the immediate responsibilities set out in Table 4.

Table 4. Group 3 – immediate responsibilities

Responsible entity	Immediate task
Chu–Talas Commission; ministries responsible for water resources of Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic	Continue strengthening the legal and regulatory framework for the secretariat; decide between the single-secretariat and two-office options and the associated financing model; define performance indicators and data and software requirements; pursue ADB assistance with financing.
Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation of Kazakhstan (coordinator); participating Central Asian countries; relevant regional institutions (Chu–Talas Commission, IFAS bodies, bilateral mechanisms)	Define the learning objectives, required competencies, destinations, and host institutions for the study visits; finalize participant numbers and their allocation among countries, financing arrangements, and the coordination mechanism; identify an independent external coordinating partner.

Aral Geopark Public Foundation; relevant government agencies of Kazakhstan (ecology and natural resources; tourism and sports; industry and construction; water resources and irrigation); Akimat of Kyzylorda Region	Commission an independent international assessment of the geopark; define and secure legal designation of its boundaries; staff the geopark team, including a full-time geologist; develop the visitor center, information points, signage, and tourist map; initiate consultations with the relevant agencies of Uzbekistan on transboundary expansion.
Project working group / IWMI consultants	Consolidate the concepts, review evidence, coordinate consultations, and support preparation of pre-feasibility documentation for all three concepts.
Concerned government bodies and regional partners, including ADB	Review and agree institutional, governance, and financing arrangements; support data-sharing and consultation processes; and clarify coordination with ongoing regional initiatives.

ADB = Asian Development Bank, IFAS = International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea

Consolidated follow-up actions

66. Four requirements were common to all eight concepts discussed in the breakout groups, irrespective of sector or stage of preparation.
 - (i) Evidence. Each proponent is to compile and transmit to IWMI the technical documentation, baseline, and asset data, itemized cost estimates, and institutional information needed to support technical, economic, and safeguard appraisal. Several concepts were presented without a complete cost basis, and one without an indicative cost.
 - (ii) Climate rationale. Climate risk analysis and, for infrastructure concepts, hydrological scenario modeling are to be integrated into concept development rather than deferred to feasibility stage, so that proposed investments can be tested against changing climate conditions impacting water availability, extreme events, and future demand.
 - (iii) Regional consultation. Concepts with transboundary effects are to be discussed with the affected riparian states through the existing intergovernmental and bilateral water commissions, with formal requests for official documentation transmitted through the respective ministries of foreign affairs. Five of the eight concepts had not been discussed with regional partners at the time of the meeting.
 - (iv) Institutional and financing clarity. Executing and implementing arrangements, cost-sharing between countries, and the intended financing instrument are to be specified, including for the institutional concepts where post-support sustainability depends on national budget commitments. IWMI will consolidate the concepts, screen them against the criteria set out in session 4 — regional value, climate rationale, avoidance of duplication, national fit, readiness, and compatibility with ADB project preparation processes — and support the preparation of pre-feasibility documentation. Proponents were asked to respond to information requests in a timely manner, and consultations with sector ministries, basin organizations, hydrometeorological services, ADB, and other development partners will continue.
67. The record of this session does not constitute selection or prioritization of the concepts presented. Advancement of any concept remains subject to the outcome of screening, the completion of the evidence requirements above, the agreement of the countries concerned, and the applicable procedures of the financing institutions.
68. **Session 8: Reflections and Next Steps.** Mr. Kazuhiro Yoshida, focal of CAREC Water

Pillar, summarized the key outcomes of the two-day meeting, highlighting the significant progress achieved under the CAREC Water Pillar—from the completion of pre-feasibility studies and advancement of the Water–Energy Nexus Modelling to the implementation of TA 10567 and the Glaciers to Farms (G2F) Program. He noted that the country presentations and breakout discussions reaffirmed the value of regional cooperation and identified priority areas for future collaboration, including climate-resilient infrastructure, institutional strengthening, capacity development, and digitalization.

69. Mr. Daniyar Sharip, Director, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, outlined the agreed next steps, emphasizing continued collaboration between ADB, consultants, and member countries to advance the Water Pillar agenda. He announced follow-up consultations on the remaining pre-feasibility studies, further engagement with countries to develop priority scenarios under the Water–Energy Nexus Modelling initiative, continued implementation of TA 10567, and additional information on the G2F External Advisory Committee. He further informed participants that Kazakhstan would continue to chair the Working Group until May 2027 and convene a virtual Working Group meeting at the end of 2026 or early 2027, after which the chairmanship will transition to the Kyrgyz Republic, with ADB consulting the Kyrgyz Republic on the timing and venue of the first meeting under its chairmanship.
70. **In his closing remarks, Mr. Jiangfeng Zhang**, Director, Agriculture, Food, Nature, and Rural Development Sector Office (SD2-AFNR), Asian Development Bank (ADB), commended the active participation and collaborative spirit demonstrated throughout the meeting, describing the CAREC Water Pillar as an evolving and enduring platform for advancing regional water cooperation. He emphasized that, amid growing climate challenges, strengthened partnerships, institutionalized dialogue, and knowledge sharing will be essential to building climate-resilient water systems and unlocking sustainable regional development. Reflecting on the progress achieved, including the advancement of regional investment projects, the Water–Energy Nexus Modelling initiative, and the new technical assistance, Mr. Zhang expressed confidence that these efforts would accelerate the development of investment-ready initiatives and strengthen long-term transboundary water collaboration. He concluded by thanking the Government of Kazakhstan for its leadership as Chair, acknowledging the valuable contributions of Working Group members, development partners, consultants, interpreters, and the organizing team, and reaffirming ADB's commitment to supporting the next phase of the CAREC Water Pillar.

Annex 1: Agenda

CAREC Water Pillar Third Water Pillar Working Group Meeting 15-16 July 2026, Almaty Agenda

DAY 1 – 15 July 2026	
14:00 - 14:30	Registration
Opening session 14:30 – 14:40	Welcome and Opening Remarks • Mr. Utsav Kumar, Country Director, Kazakhstan Resident Mission, ADB • Mr. Zhandos Salimov, Vice Minister, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, Government of Kazakhstan
14:40 – 14:50	Photograph
Session 1 14:50 – 15:00	Setting the stage • Mr. Kazuhiro Yoshida, Focal of CAREC Water Pillar/Senior Water Resources Specialist, ADB
Session 2 15:00 – 15:35	Pre-Feasibility Study (Insights and way forward) • Mr. Tim Hannan, Team Lead, Cowater Finland
15:35 - 15:45	Tea /Coffee break
Session 3 15:45 – 16: 00	Water Energy Nexus Modelling (Outcome of activities and way forward) • Dr. Julien Harou, Water-Energy Planning Specialist, University of Manchester • Dr. Jose Gonzalez, Water-Energy Modelling Specialist, University of Manchester
Session 4 16:00-16:20	TA 10567 (REG) “Strengthening Transboundary Water Collaboration for Climate-Resilient Water Management” “Summary of initial findings and next steps: draft inception report structure, Output 1-3 delivery logic, methodology, workplan, stakeholder engagement plan, risk controls, and first 30-60-day action plan by the IWMI implementation team” • Dr. Iskandar Abdullaev, Senior Researcher, International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
16:20-16:35	Q&A/Discussion
Session 5 16:35 -18:05	Presentation by countries on potential regional or sub-regional projects Azerbaijan Kazakhstan Kyrgyz Republic Tajikistan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan • Moderator: Dr. Barbara Janusz-Pawletta, Head, Regional Representative Office for Central Asia, IWMI

19:00	Dinner hosted by ADB
-------	----------------------

DAY 2 – 16 July 2026	
Session 6 09:00 - 09:15 09:15 – 09:25	Glaciers to Farms (G2F) : A Regional Program for Central Asia, South Caucasus, and Pakistan- Overview, Updates and Role of the CAREC Water Pillar • Mr. Alex Harvey, Senior Climate Change Specialist, ADB Country Interventions
Session 7 09:25 – 11:00	Breakout sessions: group discussion on potential regional projects • Facilitator: Dr. Iskandar Abdullaev, Senior Researcher, IWMI Concept: This session will provide a structured, country-led discussion of potential regional and sub-regional projects under the CAREC Water Pillar. IWMI will guide participants in clarifying national priorities, identifying shared regional benefits, and testing project ideas against climate resilience, data availability, institutional readiness, and investment potential. Objective: Detailed discussion of the project ideas for further screening and concept-note development under TA 10567. Group work: Participants will work in three IWMI-facilitated groups organized around the CAREC Water Pillar project directions. Each group will review country and regional project ideas, identify priority opportunities, record data and coordination needs and agree on follow-up actions for TA 10567 screening. IWMI team facilitators: • Block 1 - Climate-resilient and productive water systems- adaptation, irrigation modernization, resilient infrastructure, hydromet, monitoring, drought/flood preparedness. Facilitator: Dr. Barbara Januzs-Pawletta (support: Gulchekhra). • Block 2 - Sustainable water resources and water services - resource management, water quality, salinity, service delivery, institutions, financing, data systems. Facilitator: Dr. Zafar Gafurov (support: Ilhom) • Group 3 - Nexus solutions and cross-sector learning - water-energy-food links, regional modeling, renewable energy options, coordination, capacity development. Facilitator: Alexander Nikolayenko (support: Aziz).
11:00-11:15	Tea/ Coffee Break
Session 8 11:15 – 11:25	Reflections and Next steps • Mr. Kazuhiro Yoshida, Senior Water Resources Specialist, ADB • Mr. Daniyar Sharip, Director of the International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, Republic of Kazakhstan

Closing Session 11:25– 11:35	Closing remarks • Mr. Jiangfeng Zhang, Director, Agriculture, Food, Nature, and Rural Development Sector Office, ADB
12:30 – 02:30	Lunch

Annex 2: List of participants



CAREC Water Pillar Third CAREC Water Pillar Working Group Meeting Almaty, 15-16 July 2026

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Azerbaijan

1. Mr. Rafiq Verdiyev, Head of Cadastre, Accounting and Registry Department, Water Use and Protection State Supervision Service, Azerbaijan State Water Resources Agency
2. Ms. Aytan Seyidova, Head of Analysis and Reporting Department, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

Georgia

3. Ms. Mari Tinikashvili, Second Category Senior Specialist, Hydromelioration Division, Department of Melioration and Land Management Policy
4. Ms. Ekaterina Metreveli, Head of the Hydromelioration Division, Department of Melioration and Land Management Policy.
5. Mr. Nika Gogatishvili, First Category Senior Specialist, Water Division, Environment and Climate Change Policy Department

Kazakhstan

6. Mr. Zhandos Salimov, Vice Minister, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation
7. Mr. Yerbolat Pernekhan, Head of the Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation
8. Mr. Daniya Sharip, Director, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation
9. Mr. Nurzhan Amirzhanov, Head of the Design and Survey Department of the Water Management Committee, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation
10. Mr. Beksultan Begaliyev, Deputy Director, Department for Development of Water Resources Infrastructure
11. Mr. Anuar Uskenbayev, Acting CEO, Republican State Enterprise Kazvodkhoz
12. Ms. Zarina Nazarbayeva, Project Manager, Republican State Enterprise Kazvodkhoz
13. Mr. Alemger Kabdykadyrov, Deputy Director of the branch of RSE "Kazhydromet" for Almaty and Almaty region
14. Mr. Daulet Kisebayev, Head of the Meteorological Forecasting Department of RSE "Kazhydromet" for Almaty and Almaty region
15. Mr. Diaz Orazbekov, Managing Director, Republican State Enterprise Kazvodkhoz

Kyrgyz Republic

16. Ms. Zhyldyzkhan Ashymbaeva, Head of the Technical Policy and Investment Division, Ministry of Water Resources, Agriculture and Processing Industry
17. Mr. Nurlan Nabiev, Project Implementation Unit Head, Water Resources Services, Ministry of Water Resources, Agriculture and Processing Industry
18. Mr. Tagai Ozubekov, Chief Specialist, Water Policy and Drinking Water Supply Department of the Ministry of Water Resources, Agriculture and Processing Industry

Tajikistan

19. Mr. Daler Abdurazozqada, Head of Water Policy Department, Ministry of Energy and Water Resources
20. Mr. Safar Sharifzoda, Chief Specialist, Invest Department, Ministry of Energy and Water Resources
21. Ms. Maftuna Jalilova, Leading Specialist, Department of International Relations, Ministry of Energy and Water Resources
22. Mr. Umar Nazarov, Director Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (ICWC) Secretariat

Turkmenistan

23. Mr. Tirkesh Nurgaldiyev, Head of Water Management Department, State Committee for Water Management, CAREC Water Pillar Working Group member
24. Mr. Saparmyrat Charyyev, Senior Specialist of Digital Technology and Information Security Department, State Committee for Water Management, CAREC Water Pillar Working Group member
25. Mr. Allanazar Kajarov, Lead Specialist, State Environmental Expertise, Certification and Licensing Division, Department for Environmental Protection

Uzbekistan

26. Mr. Jumaev abror, Head of Agency for International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea in Uzbekistan
27. Mr. Tulaganov Adkham, International Organizations Relations Manager, GEF Agency of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS)
28. Mr. Tashev Rashid, Chief Specialist, Hydraulic Structures Cadastre Department, Ministry of Water Resources Uzbekistan

Regional Organizations

29. Ms. Saule Shalmaganbetova, Head of the Information and Analytical Department, International Fund for Saving Aral Sea (EC IFAS)
30. Mr. Shavkat Kanjabaev, Head of Research, Analytical Division for Regional Water Management, Scientific Information Center -Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (SIC-ICWC)
31. Mr. Maripbay Saparbayev, Chief Specialist of Water Resources Department, BWO Syrdarya
32. Mr. Davron Ashirbaevich, Chief Specialist water Resource Department, BWO Amudarya
33. Ms. Nataliya Chemayeva , Head of the International Cooperation Department and Water Resources Expert , Scientific-Information Center of the Interstate Commission , for Sustainable Development of Central Asia (SIC ICSD) –(Online)

Development Partners

34. Mr. Dmitry Petrin, Senior Operations Officer, Central Asia Water & Energy Program (CAWEP), World Bank
35. Ms. Yulia Shamis, Director Strategic Projects Office, Eurasian Development Bank(EDB)
36. Ms. Botagoz Konedilova, Senior Specialist, Department of Infrastructure and Social Financing, Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development (EFSD)

37. Ms Ekaterina Karpenko, Project Manager, Department for Infrastructure and Social Financing, Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development (EFSD)
38. Mr. Roman Karazhanov, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, Programme Manager, Climate-sensitive Water Resources Management in Central Asia, Deutsche Gesellschaft für, Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
39. Mr. Bakhtiyor Faiziev, Program Management Officer, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
40. Ms. Rose Shao, Capacity Building Specialist, CAREC Institute
41. Mr. Takayoshi Kato, Economist, Environment Directorate, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD),(online)

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

42. Mr. Jiangfeng Zhang, Director Agriculture, Food, Nature and Rural Development, (SD2-AFNR)
43. Mr. Utsav Kumar, Country Director, Kazakhstan Resident Mission
44. Mr. Kazuhiro Yoshida, Senior Water Resources Specialist, SD2-AFNR
45. Mr. Alex Harvey, Senior Climate Change Specialist, CCSD
46. Mr. Begzod Djalilov, Regional Cooperation Specialist, CWRC, CWRD (online)
47. Ms. Ganjina Fazilova, Project Officer, Tajikistan Resident Mission
48. Mr. Bokhodir Rozikhodjaev, Project Officer (SD2-AFNR), Uzbekistan Resident Mission
49. Mr. Arystan T. Galiyev, Senior Project Officer (AFNR), Kazakhstan Resident Mission
50. Mr. Annrou R. Ramos, Climate Change Officer, CCSD (online)
51. Ms. Altynay Aarapova, Senior Regional Cooperation Specialist, CWRD, CWRC
52. Ms. Marie Stephanie Igaya, Senior Project Officer (SD2- AFNR) (online)
53. Ms. Mary Karlyn G. Sublado, Operations Assistant, SD2-AFNR, (Online)
54. Mr. Zaur Bostanov, Associate Project Officer (SD2 - AFNR), Kyrgyz Resident Mission
55. Mr. Takatoshi Kawamoto, Water Resource Specialist, (SD2-AFNR) (online)
56. Mr. Elbek Yusupov, Financial Management Specialist, PPF
57. Ms. Saltanat Yunussova, Associate Regional Cooperation Officer, CWRD
58. Ms. Elmira Dautova, Finance and Administration Coordinator, Kazakhstan Resident Mission
59. Mr. Yevgeniy Bulayev, Senior Regional Cooperation Assistant, Kazakhstan Resident Mission

ADB/CAREC Consultants

60. Mr. Iskandar Abdullaev, Team Lead, Wwater Resources and Irrigation Specialist Senior, International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
61. Ms. Barbara Janusz, Stakeholder Engagement Specialist, IWMI
62. Mr. Zafar Gafurov, IT/geodata and Hydrologist-Climate Specialist, IWMI
63. Mr. Alexandr Nokolayenko, Environment Specialist, IWMI
64. Mr. Ilhom Babaev, Finance and Administration Specialist, IWMI
65. Mr. Aziz Khaydarov, Researcher, IWMI
66. Ms. Gulchekra Davidyants, Finance and Administration Assistant, IWMI
67. Mr. Bunyod Holmatov, Climate Specialist/Hydrologist, IWMI
68. Ms. Dinara Begliyeva, Intern, IWMI
69. Ms. Ayaulym Nurmurat, Receptionist/Assistant, Kazakhstan Resident Mission
70. Mr. Berdakh Avezov, Cowater Finland
71. Mr. Tim Hannan, Team Leader, Cowater International Finland (online)
72. Mr. Ilmari Saarilehto, Project Planning and M&E Specialist, Cowater International Finland (online)
73. Mr. Stanislav Rudnev, Cowater Finland (online)

- 74. Mr. Julian Harou, Water Energy Planning Specialist, University of Manchester
- 75. Mr. Jose Gonzalez, Water-Energy Modeling Specialist, University of Manchester
- 76. Mr. Muhammad Ali, Technical Assistance Coordinator, TA 9977 REG: Developing the CAREC Water Pillar

Interpreters

- 77. Ms. Aida Zhumyrova
- 78. Mr. Vladimir Mashnin
- 79. Mr. Zhalgas Asylbekov