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First Ministerial Meeting of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan Energy Ministers to Advance Kambarata-1 HPP Project

Participants of the First Ministerial Meeting

On January 27, 2025, the Ministry of Energy of Uzbekistan hosted a round table with the participation of Jurabek Mirzamakhmudov, Minister of Energy of Uzbekistan, Taalaibek Ibrayev, Minister of Energy of the Kyrgyz Republic, and Sungat Yesimkhanov, Deputy Minister of Energy of Kazakhstan, as well as Tatyana Proskuryakova, World Bank Regional Director for Central Asia.

The World Bank was also represented by Carolina Sanchez-Paramo, Director for Strategy and Operations for the Europe and Central Asia Region, and Charles Cormier, Regional Director for Infrastructure for the Europe and Central Asia Region.

The discussion centered on the advancement of the Kambarata-1 Hydropower Plant (HPP) Project in the Kyrgyz Republic, a key regional initiative implemented through joint efforts of the three countries, that is expected to transform energy production and strengthen water and energy cooperation in Central Asia.

The governments of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan emphasized the Kambarata-1 HPP Project's critical role in ensuring long-term regional energy security, enhancing water-energy collaboration, transitioning to a green economy, and fostering social and economic development across Central Asia.

To support project preparation and financing, the countries have sought technical and financial

assistance from the World Bank. The World Bank has already allocated $18.6 million to the Kyrgyz Republic, some of which is through the Central Asia Water and Energy Program (CAWEP), to provide technical assistance for updating the project's feasibility study, which evaluates its technical, economic, financial, environmental, and social aspects. Learn more about this project.

The World Bank confirmed its commitment to supporting Kambarata-1 HPP. Alongside other international development partners, it stands ready to provide the necessary investments to help the three countries implement this important project.
The round table participants agreed on the key principles, milestones, and overall project structure. Going forward, regular ministerial and international donor meetings will be held to ensure effective coordination, sustained progress, and continued collaboration on the project.

Experts from Central Asia Participate in a Series of Water-Energy Systems Modelling Workshops

Members of the technical working group, including SIC staff, regional experts, modellers from SEI and WB staff participated for in-person modelling workshops at the SIC-ICWC headquarters

Water and energy in Central Asia are deeply interconnected—hydropower relies on river flows, irrigation depends on energy for pumping—and climate change is intensifying pressures on both. Water-energy systems modelling is an approach that helps experts and policymakers understand these connections, predict future challenges, and develop strategies that ensure sustainable access to both water and energy.

In a region like Central Asia, where upstream and downstream countries rely on shared resources, this modelling is essential for balancing agricultural needs, hydropower generation, and urban water supply across national borders.

Recognizing the importance of water-energy modelling, CAWEP supported the first series of water-energy systems modelling workshops that took place on February 10, February 23, and March 10–14, 2025 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Organized by the World Bank, in partnership with the Scientific Information Center of the Interstate Commission of Water Coordination of Central Asia (SIC-ICWC) and the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), these workshops aimed to build the capacity of regional experts and strengthen cooperation on managing shared water and energy resources.

A technical working group coordinated by SIC-ICWC and consisting of thirteen experts from Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan participated in the workshops. They engaged in hands-on training, focusing on practical applications of modelling tools to analyze water allocations, reservoir operations, and the impacts of climate change on regional water and energy security.

A key tool featured in the training was the Water Evaluation and Planning (WEAP) system, developed by the Stockholm Environment Institute. WEAP helps water managers simulate different scenarios—such as changing climate patterns, new infrastructure investments, or shifts in agricultural water use—supporting more informed planning and smarter policy decisions.

Workshops participants paid field visits to water control structures and hydropower plants on the Chirchiq River

During the workshops, experts used WEAP to model the Aral Sea Basin, assessing how various policy and investment decisions might affect agriculture and hydropower production along the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers. By incorporating basin hydrology, crop water requirements, and climate impacts, participants gained practical skills applicable to real-world decision-making.

In addition to WEAP, the workshops also featured the Long-range Energy Alternatives Planning (LEAP) system—a tool used for energy system analysis and planning. LEAP helps experts evaluate different energy development scenarios based on factors such as economic growth, technology changes, and environmental policies.

The knowledge gained through these workshops goes beyond technical discussions—it directly impacts the lives of people in Central Asia. Farmers can benefit from improved irrigation planning, ensuring they have enough water to grow their crops. Energy consumers may experience more reliable

electricity supply as hydropower and water use are optimized. Governments can apply these insights to prevent water shortages, reduce conflicts, and strengthen economic growth.

The hybrid training included virtual workshops, an in-person session, and a study tour to transboundary water infrastructure along the Chirchik River managed by the Syr Darya Basin Water Organization, which gave participants the opportunity to see real-world applications of water-energy modelling.

Looking ahead, CAWEP will continue to support regional experts in developing their professional capacity through additional workshops exploring deeper linkages between water and energy systems. During the upcoming series of workshops, participants will explore integrating LEAP with WEAP modelling to assess how energy production impacts water availability and vice versa. Water-energy system modelling delivers important evidence for integrated water-energy policies taking into account climate resilience and sustainable development.

By investing into integrated water-energy modelling capacity, the region is taking important steps toward a future in which competing water uses are reconciled, and water and energy planning complement each other.

Through initiatives like this, CAWEP is fostering stronger regional cooperation, helping countries plan more effectively and ensuring a secure water and energy future for all.

Shaping the Future of Energy: CAWEP Workshops Focus on Decarbonization and Energy Security in Central Asia

Photo from Pixabay

Transition to renewable energy sources will lead to cleaner air and a healthier environment, reducing the adverse effects of climate change. Additionally, the economic benefits of decarbonization, such as lower energy costs and new jobs in the renewable energy sector, will improve the quality of life for households. To advance this vision and to bring the region one step closer to a low-carbon future, CAWEP held two workshops on the prospects of decarbonization in Central Asia. The workshop titled *Regional Trade and Renewables in Central Asia Decarbonization Pathways by 2050* held on February 19, 2025, was part of the Central Asia regional initiative to review the results of the study on the Rogun Hydropower Project's potential to decarbonize the region.

The workshop gathered 28 development partners and donors who examined energy security, gas and power trade, and energy end-use sector trade-offs and opportunities across the five countries of Central Asia. Discussions highlighted the role of solar, wind, hydro, and hydrogen in decarbonizing transport, industry, and buildings (heating) with better economic outcomes for households amid climate change.

The second workshop held on February 26, 2025, and titled *Helping to Shape the Future: Co-Designing a Central Asia Energy HUB* focused on how the results of the Central Asia energy system modeling can form the basis for a publicly available regional energy database.

This database aims to connect historical energy sector data with World Bank projections for the five countries of Central Asia, including reference cases and decarbonization scenarios. The workshop provided a platform for regional policymakers and international investors to address questions relevant to all aspects of the energy value chain. The event concluded with bilateral discussions on collaboration opportunities with the United Nations (UN), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), and the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).

The creation of a Central Asia Energy HUB and a publicly available database will empower policymakers and investors with the necessary data and projections to make informed decisions fostering sustainable development and regional cooperation.

These CAWEP workshops highlight the importance of regional cooperation and the potential of renewable energy to transform the region's energy landscape while achieving better economic outcomes for households and addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

IFAS and CAWEP Collaborate to Enhance Water and Energy Security in Central Asia

IFAS Executive Committee and UK FCDO discussing cooperation

On March 13, 2025, Askhat Orazbay, Chairman of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS) Executive Committee, met with Sarah Cooper, Director for Central Asia Development at the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, which is one of CAWEP's donors.During the meeting, the parties discussed the cooperation of the IFAS with the World Bank, the European Union, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom through CAWEP to create conditions for enhancing water and energy security at the regional level and in beneficiary countries, particularly in the context of a changing climate.

CAWEP has been actively supporting the activities of the Working Group on Improving the Organizational Structure and Legal Framework of IFAS over the past few years. This support aligns with CAWEP's priorities, which include fostering regional cooperation and strengthening institutional capacity for managing water and energy resources more effectively. By enhancing the organizational structure and legal framework of IFAS, CAWEP aims to ensure that the Fund can operate more efficiently, thereby contributing to the overall goal of improving water and energy security in Central Asia.

The collaboration between IFAS and CAWEP helps to address the complex and interlinked challenges of water and energy management in the region. By supporting IFAS, CAWEP is working towards building a more resilient and sustainable future for the countries of Central Asia, ensuring that they are better equipped to handle the impacts of climate change and other environmental pressures.

CAWEP funds initiatives that improve water and energy management under a changing climate, strengthen national and regional

institutions, and facilitate regional dialogue on water and energy security.

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