



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The Secretariat

Department for
Chairman-in-Office Support

Seminar on Rehabilitating the Environment

Tashkent/Urgench

10-14 October 1995

(Consolidated Summary)



List of contents

1.	Agenda and Organizational Modalities	2
2.	List of Participants	6
3.	Summaries by Session Chairman/Rapporteurs	11
	Environmental Challenges in Central Asia	11
	International Experience	13
	Concerted Effort to Tackle the Common Problem	14

1. Agenda and Organizational Modalities

TUESDAY, 10 OCTOBER

Morning Session

Opening Statements

- * Opening Address by President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan
- * *International Cooperation and the OSCE Contribution to Protecting the Environment* — Statement by Dr. Wilhelm Höynck, OSCE Secretary General
- * *The United Nations Environment Programme* — Statement by Ms. Françoise Belmont, Deputy Director, UNEP Regional Office for Europe;

Discussion

Afternoon Session

Environmental Challenges in Central Asia

- * *Central Asia and Environmentally Sound Sustainable Development* — Statement by Mr. A.S. Khabibulaev, Chairman, State Conservation Agency (Goskompriroda) of Uzbekistan
- * *Ensuring Environmental Safety of Radioactive Waste Landfills* — Statement by Mr. E. Shukurov, Director, Institute of Biology, Kyrgyzstan
- * *Nuclear Testing and its Environmental Impact* — Statement by Mr. Rysbek Ibraev, Director, Institute of Ecology, Kazakhstan
- * *The Energy Sector and Environment* — Statement by Mr. D. Ernepesov, Deputy Head, Ministry of Energy, Turkmenistan
- * *The Aftermath of War and Environment* — Statement by Mr. N. M. Safarov, Deputy Minister of Nature Protection, Tajikistan

Discussion

Inauguration of the OSCE Central Asia Liaison Office. Reception hosted by the OSCE in the MFA Mansion.

WEDNESDAY, 11 OCTOBER

Move to Urgench, visit the historic town of Khiva

THURSDAY, 12 OCTOBER
Continuation of the Seminar in the city of Urgench

Morning Session

International Experience

- * *Water Management* — Statement by Dr. P. P. Micklin, Professor at Western Michigan University, USA
- * *The Effects of Uncontrolled Use of Pesticides and Fertilizers on Fishing* — Statement by Mr. M. Bumin, Head of Department of Environment Protection, Turkey
- * *Technogenic Pollution and Public Health* — Statement by Dr. T. F. Eikmann, Professor, Germany

Discussion

Afternoon Session

- * *Clean Water Technologies* — Statement by Mr. L. Zetterberg, Head of International Department, Swedish Environmental Research Institute
- * *Economies in Transition and Environment* — Statement by Mr. Karoly Kiss, Hungary
- * *Taking the Right Decision: Environmentally Sound Investment Priorities* — Statement by Mr. Parvez Hasan, Head of World Bank Regional Mission in Central Asia

Discussion

FRIDAY, 13 OCTOBER

Morning Session

Concerted Effort to Tackle the Common Problem

- * *Rehabilitation of the Sea of Aral* — Statement by Mr. Ju. Bobko, Technical Director, Executive Committee, Inter State Council on the Aral Sea
- * *The CIS and Regional Co-operation in the Field of the Environment* — Statement by Mr. M. Matiushonok, Head of Department, CIS
- * *Environmental Monitoring in Central Asia* — Statement by Mr. N. Myrsalyev, State Environmental Committee, Kyrgystan
- * *The Role of Public Opinion and NGOs in Protecting the Environment* — Statement by Mr. S. Sitnicki, Executive Director, Regional Environmental Centre

Discussion

Afternoon Session

Round-up

Summaries by the session Chairmen/Rapporteurs
Concluding remarks by Mr. S. Saidkasymov, Deputy Prime Minister
Closing press-conference

Move to Tashkent

SATURDAY, 14 OCTOBER

Delegates depart Tashkent

Participation

- 5 participants from each participating State of Central Asia
- Representatives from other interested participating States
- Representatives from international organizations
- NGO representatives
- Secretariat staff

Timetable and Organizational Modalities

- The Seminar will be conducted in six working sessions from Tuesday, 10 October 1995 to afternoon, Friday, 13 October 1995.
- The sessions will be chaired by representatives of the Host State, OSCE Delegations and the Secretariat.
- Working languages: Russian and English.
- The following international organizations will be invited: UN/ECE, UNEP, UNDP, WHO, IAEA, EC, EBRD, World Bank, CIS.
- Japan and the Republic of Korea will be invited to participate in and contribute to the proceedings of the Seminar.
- NGO representatives may attend and participate in accordance with OSCE rules (advance notification required).
- Arrangements for press coverage will be provided for.

Transportation, Board, Lodging

Official delegates from the participating States of Central Asia will receive reimbursement of their travel costs to Tashkent and back home. They will also be provided with free board and lodging, the costs being borne by the Secretariat. Other Central Asian representatives wishing to participate in the Seminar may apply for financial assistance from the OSCE Fund for Fostering the Integration of Recently Admitted Participating States, in which case they should approach the OSCE Liaison Office in Tashkent or other OSCE institutions.

Participants will be accommodated in Hotel UZBEKISTAN. The host country will inform about the name of the hotel where the participants will stay in the city of Urgench.

Local flights and transportation will be arranged by the host Country.

Visas

Consular representatives of the Republic of Uzbekistan abroad will issue visas for the participants of the Seminar. Visas may also be obtained upon arrival at the Tashkent Airport.

Moderators

- Tuesday, 10 October — Dr. Piotr Switalski, Head of Department for Chairman-in-Office Support, OSCE Secretariat
- Thursday, 12 October — Mr. A.S. Khabibulaev, Chairman, Goskompriroda, Uzbekistan
- Friday, 13 October — Mr. Claude-George Ducret, Head of International Environmental Affairs, Swiss MFA

Rapporteurs

- Day One — Dr. Piotr Switalski, Head of Department for Chairman-in-Office Support, OSCE Secretariat
- Day Two — Mr. Vladimir Dronov, Diplomatic Adviser, Department for Chairman-in-Office Support, OSCE Secretariat
- Day Three — Mr. Oscar DeSoto, Political Economic Officer, US Delegation to the OSCE, Vienna

2. List of Participants

OSCE Participating States

Germany

Mr. Thomas F. EIKMANN Professor, Dr. med, Institute for Hygiene
and Environment Medicine, Giessen

United States of America

Mr. Andrew W. REYNOLDS Deputy Director, Department of State,
Office of Cooperative Science and
Technology Programme
Mr. Jay AUSTIN Senior Attorney, Environmental Law
Institute
Mr. Philip P. MICKLIN Professor at Western Michigan University
Mr. Barry PRIMM US Agency for International Development
Mr. Oscar DESOTO Political/Economic Officer, US Delegation
to the OSCE, Vienna
Mr. Ullrich KLOECKNER Department of State
Mr. Paul DREYER US Agency for International Development
Mr. James MARTIN Representative of the US Embassy to
Uzbekistan

Spain/European Union

Mr. Werner-Georg SCHMIDT Directorate General, External Relations
Mr. Christopher LE BRETON Task Manager, Tacis Environment
Mr. Arrigo DI CARLO WARMAT Project Director

Estonia

Ms. Eve KUUSMANN Expert

France

Ms. LENTZ Attaché of the French Embassy to
Uzbekistan

United Kingdom

Ms. Barbara HEY Ambassador of the United Kingdom to
Uzbekistan
Mr. Stephen WALKER Government Service

Hungary

Mr. Karoly KISS Environment Expert, MFA

Italy

Ms. Jolanda BRUNETTI GOETZ Minister Plenipotentiary, MFA
Mr. Giovanni COLELLA Chargé d' Affaires of Italy in Uzbekistan

Kazakhstan

Mr. Nemo SULTASHEV Head of Department for Co-operation
Mr. Nadjameden ISKALIEV Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan
Mr. Kuanishbek SIRGELBAEV Chief of the Scientific- Technical and
International Cooperation Department,
Committee on Water Resources
Ms. Ludmila LYASHENKO Head of Board, Ministry of Ecology and
Bioresources
Mr. Alexander BRAGIN Head of Department, Ministry of Ecology
and Bioresources
Mr. Rysbek IBRAEV Member of International Union of
Radioecologists
Mr. Taktasyn SAYBEKOV Deputy Head, Main Board of Radiation
Ecology Division

Kyrgyzstan

Mr. Emil SHUKUROV Director, Institute of Biology
Mr. Urmat SARALAEV External Relations Department,
Government of Kyrgyzstan
Mr. Muratbek KOSHOEV External Relations Department,
Emergencies Committee
Mr. Syrymbat MOMUNALIEV Deputy Head, Kyrgyzaltyn Corp.
Mr. Narnibek MYRSALYEV State Environment Committee

Latvia

Mr. Vilcans ANDRYS Ambassador of Latvia to Uzbekistan

Moldova

Mr. N.I. DUDENU Ambassador of Moldova to Uzbekistan
Mr. P. PADURARU Counsellor, Embassy of Moldova to
Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan

Mr. I. DZHURABEKOV	First Deputy Prime Minister
Mr. A. KAMILOV	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Mr. A. KHABIBULLAEV	Head, Goskompriroda
Mr. Djavat Dj. NOURBAEV	First Deputy-Chief, Main Administration of Hydrometeorology for the Cabinet of Ministers
Mr. M. DZHUMANIYAZOV	Governor, Khorezm Region
Mr. V.S. SHODIMETOV	President, Ecosan
Mr. Ju. BOBKO	Technical Director, Executive Committee, Interstate Council on Aral Sea Problems
Mr. V. NOROV	First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr. V. KONYUKHOV	First Deputy Chariman, State Nature Preservation Committee
Mr. L. SAFRONOV	Official of the Cabinet of Ministers
Mr. Azad KHUSAINOV	Director, Aral-Caspian Sea Enterprise on the Stabilisation of the Caspian Sea and Rehabilitation of the Aral Sea
Mr. R. T. TAKHIROV	Chairman, National Preservation Committee of the Khorezm Region
Mr. B. NEYASMATOV	Deputy Minister for Public Health
Mr. S.K. KAMALOV	Chairman, Karapalkak Branch, Academy of Science

Russian Federation

Mr. R. SIDORSKY	Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Uzbekistan
Mr. Nikoai FOMIN	Senior Counsellor, Dept. for European Co-operation, MFA

Slovak Republic

Mr. Jozef MACHISHAK	Consul of the Slovak Republic in Uzbekistan
---------------------	---

Sweden

Mr. Lars ZETTERBERG	Head of International Relations, Swedish Environmental Research Institute
---------------------	---

Switzerland

Mr. Paul WIPFLI	Ambassador of Switzerland to Uzbekistan
Mr. Claude-George DUCRET	Head of International Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Tajikistan

Mr. Nematullo SAFAROV	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Nature Protection
Mr. Kodir BATUROV	Head of Department for Information and International Relations of the Ministry of Environment
Mr. Timur NAZAROV	General Director of Scientific Centre of the Ministry of Environment
Ms. Tatyana NOVIKOVA	Head of the Control-Inspection Department of the Ministry of Environment
Mr. Makhmadsaid HAKDODOV	Head of State Ecological Expertize of the Ministry of Environment

Turkmenistan

Mr. Djora ERNEPESOV	Ministry of Energy, Deputy Head
Mr. Elaman BYASHIMOV	Inspector, Ministry of Environment
Mr. Azat CHARYEV	Director, Ministry of Energy
Mr. Amangeldy AKGAEV	Professor, Polytechnical Institute

Turkey

Mr. Erdogan AYTUN	Ambassador of Turkey to Uzbekistan
Mr. Güner TEZCAN	Director, Turkish Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources
Mr. Muzaffer BUMIN	Head of Department of Environmental Protection
Mr. Orham CAVUNCU	Turkish International Co-operation Agency

Ukraine

Mr. V.I. SMETANIN	Ambassador of Ukraine to Uzbekistan
Mr. D. P. BOJOK	Counsellor, Embassy of Ukraine to Uzbekistan

Non Participating States

Japan

Mr. Hayao TESHIMA	Environment Expert
-------------------	--------------------

Korea

Mr. Tong Op KIM	Assistant Director, MFA
-----------------	-------------------------

OSCE Secretariat

Mr. Wilhelm HÖYNCK	Secretary General
Mr. Piotr SWITALSKI	Head of Dept. for CIO Support
Mr. Alois REZNIK	Head of OSCE Liaison Office in Central Asia
Mr. Vladimir DRONOV	Diplomatic Adviser, Dept. for CIO Support
Mrs. Aldona SZYMANSKI	Secretary, Dept. for CIO Support

International and Intergovernmental Organizations

UN Environment Programme (UNEP)

Ms. Françoise BELMONT	Deputy Director, UNEP Europe
-----------------------	------------------------------

UN Development Programme (UNDP)

Mr. Abdu-Kadir ERGASHEV	Professor, UN Officer in Uzbekistan, Sustainable Development Advisor, UNDP, Uzbekistan
-------------------------	--

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Mr. Shamin CHAUDHRI	Head of the West Asia Section, Division of Technical Co-operation Programmes
---------------------	---

World Health Organization (WHO)

Mr. Bent Haugh FENGER	Programme Co-ordinator, Regional Office for Europe, European Centre for Environment and Health
-----------------------	--

Commonwealth of Independent States

Mr. Mikhail MATIUSHONOK	Head of Department
-------------------------	--------------------

Regional Environmental Centre

Mr. Stanislaw SITNICKI	Executive Director
------------------------	--------------------

The World Bank

Mr. Parvez HASAN	Head of the Regional World Bank Resident Mission in Tashkent
------------------	---

Interpreters

Mr. Alexei FEDOROV
Mr. Vadim NIKITINE
Mr. Igor SMIRNOV
Mr. Evgueni ZOLOTOV

3. Summaries by Session Chairmen / Rapporteurs

Opening Statements. Environmental Challenges in Central Asia

(Day one)

- Participants noted that environmental aspects constitute an important element of the comprehensive concept of security.
- An overview of the OSCE activities in the field of the environment was made. The OSCE's role as a forum for dialogue, norm setting and implementation review was highlighted. The OSCE can also send important political impulses in support of the work of specialised international bodies. Environmental rehabilitation can become a good example of networking between international organizations.
- Activities of specialised international bodies were presented. The UNEP's role at the regional level was characterized as consisting in facilitating the dialogue on difficult issues, promoting co-operation and acting as a catalyst. Its integrated management approaches are being now applied for the protection of the Aral and Caspian Sea.
- The IAEA provides assistance in drafting documents on norms and practices, extends technical co-operation and conducts exchanges of technical information concerning environmental risks involving nuclear energy. It has offered among others help in assessing the impact of nuclear testing.
- The European Union has recently a project in Central Asia involving 4,5 ml ECU concentrating on water management and agriculture.
- A proposal was made that organizations such as OSCE, UNEP, WHO and others should establish a plan of co-ordinated actions in the environment protection for Central Asia.
- The importance of regional co-operation was particularly stressed. Participants welcomed the recently adopted Nukus declaration on the Aral Sea as a good starting point for developing closer co-operation among the countries of the region. Proposals were made to enlarge the process so as to cover the sustainable development of the whole water basin.
- The countries of Central Asia gave a comprehensive and detailed picture of environmental challenges. The shrinking of the Aral Sea, the desertification of soil, the heritage of an extensive use of pesticides and of the cotton monoculture were particularly highlighted by Uzbekistan. For Kyrgyzstan, it is the nuclear waste deposits located in the mountainous areas which, due to the growing risk of landslides, pose a serious danger. On the Kazakhstan's territory, more than 450 nuclear tests were conducted which resulted in serious contamination of the environment, the Semipalatynsk area being a zone of ecological disaster. The technogenic contamination aggravates the environmental problem. Turkmenistan's presentation centered on industry and energy-related environmental risks resulting mainly from the use of

outdated technology. Tajikistan, a country which was stricken by a bloody domestic war, suffers from the disruption of water supply and irrigation network, extensive wood-cutting, land erosion, raising ground waters, contamination of soil and degradation of pastures, heavy industrial waste.

- Countries of the region have launched programmes and projects aimed at improving the situation. The difficulties in ensuring visible progress are mainly due to the lack of financial resources. The international community might be also helpful in developing normative and legal regulations, sharing technical experience, undertaking studies, providing clean technologies.
- The important contribution of NGOs was stressed. The OSCE was invited by the ECOSAN to support its activities in the region.

Dr. Piotr Switalski

International experience

(Day two)

- Participants paid special attention to the central role clean water plays in the context of civilization survival, highlighting challenges posed by misuse and overuse of this seemingly abundant resource.
- Various ways of rationalizing the use of water were highlighted. Those included pricing and introducing a system of fines and incentives depending on user performance.
- It was emphasized that environmental problems transcend national boundaries and call for co-operation and interaction between and among States and international organizations.
- While the UN and finance institutions as well as development agencies are actively involved in assisting development overall, they would be well advised to raise their own environmental awareness making greater emphasis on activities in this sector.
- The need to prioritize water management problems was underscored ; ideas were articulated regarding the need for compensations for harm/benefit from action of upstream or downstream water users.
- EU activities in the region were addressed, comprehensive information was provided on various EU projects in Central Asia, including efforts to work out international water sharing accords.
- An overview was made of the effects of hazardous agent build-up in the soil and water of the region. Those include salination, desertification, wildlife extinction and, as a result, health and social problems.

- Various tools to rectify the situation were discussed, namely biocontrol of pests, rational water use etc.
- Calls were made for greater international co-operation in public health care.
- An insight was provided into the health and environment situation in the Aral region.
- Participants were informed about a projected law on the status of an environment disaster area and on social safety net for people living in the areas.
- Psycho-social effects of pollution were mentioned. While of late no evidence suggests immediate health hazards in the vicinity of nuclear testing cities due to radiation uncertainty causing social tensions is on the rise.
- With reference to the European Environment and Health Committee, it was suggested that the body could place greater emphasis of the situation in the Central Asian States.
- Participants were informed about Work Bank plans to work out environment action programmes for Central Asia. An overview of Work Bank activities in Central Asia was given.
- The need for a system approach encompassing the whole production pricing-disposal cycle was highlighted.
- One delegation elaborated an environmental challenges associated with transition to market economy. Due to a greater consumerism, proliferation of disposable items, IMF advice that is not always adequately geared to local conditions, the situation is at times worse than it used to be under communism. In the view of that delegation industrialized nations tend to regard the NIS as a dump for their hazardous waste and a site for relocation of hazardous production.
- There is a trend to see development first, and seek healthier environment later.
- The need to implement relevant international legal instruments was highlighted.
- Changing role of Governments and a greater role of public opinion in societies in transition was highlighted.

Vladimir Dronov

Concerted effort to tackle the common problem

(Day three)

- Participants stressed the importance of developing an integrated and comprehensive environment monitoring system for the region. They called for better co-ordination among national and international organizations in this regard.
- Several speakers underscored the significance that the recently concluded Nukus conference had reaffirmed the commitment to a co-operative regional approach to problems faced by the five Central Asian countries, especially management of natural resources such as water. The representative of the Interstate Council for the Aral Sea (ICAS) provided an overview of efforts undertaken since 1992 and stressed the importance of continued international assistance to support these regional efforts.
- The U.S. provided an overview of its US Dollar 22 million Aral Sea assistance programme and noted that part of the programme was nearing completion. The U.S. invited other donors and regional partners to co-ordinate in health and water policy activities. The EU noted its support for widening the "Environment for Europe" process to the NIS and Central Asian States through co-operation with the Regional Environmental Centre (REC) and other activities. The EU also supported national, regional and CIS efforts to tackle environment issues.
- Several speakers commented on causes of the Aral Sea crisis and on proposals to address water problems. A lively exchange occurred which underlined the lack of agreement on such causes and appropriate solutions. There was general agreement, however, that the problems faced by the Central Asian States also related to issues of water management and value, agricultural practices, conflicting needs, law sensitivity to ecological questions, etc. These were classic sustainable development problems.
- A number of speakers mentioned the importance of the environmental aspect of security, and the need for governments, non-governmental actors and international organizations to work together to tackle environment problems. The CIS representative gave an overview of CIS member states environmental activities and obstacles faced by them. He suggested that the OSCE inform relevant organizations about Aral Sea environmental problems to stimulate their interest. He also suggested establishing a regional round table on environmental issues.
- The director of the Regional Environmental Centre (REC) pointed out that governments and businesses have different approaches to environmental questions. He underlined the positive benefits of encouraging active public participation, including NGOs, in the environmental decision making process. If engaged in the process, the public is an invaluable source of new ideas, information and support for these decisions. Many delegations voiced strong support for public participation as a means to ensure the best chance for development of sound environment policy. The REC director offered to supply additional information on encouraging public participation to the Central Asian countries.

- The economic co-operation organization, CIS Interstate Ecological Council, and the socio-ecological union were seen as important organizations, among others, whose contributions were needed to broaden the base of support to tackle regional environment problems.

- Participants considered a number of ideas on possible future action. The OSCE is well placed to play a significant role as a forum for consultation and as a facilitator in preparing the ground for a confidence-building process leading to genuine co-operation. The Nukus declaration provide an agreed inter-governmental platform on which further regional co-operation can develop. The Interstate Council for the Aral Sea (ICAS) and the executive committee can promote and implement this co-operation. The OSCE and relevant international organizations all have a role to play in supporting this co-operation. Among the ideas for possible future action participants discussed:
 - a) Focusing on public health as a high priority. Participants welcomed a proposal for undertaking a regional assessment of the public health situation. This should be performed by an appropriate international organization.

 - b) Increasing public participation in environmental decision-making. This was welcomed as a way to educate people, improve information, and gain support for sound environmental policies.

 - c) Creating the necessary legal and administrative framework to encourage sustainable development in the region and attract domestic and foreign capital. In particular, economic and legal measures for promoting sustainable environmental development in the Aral Sea region might be a good subject for a future regional seminar.

 - d) Other suggestions included encouraging studies on land use reform and ownership, as well as on the possibility of developing a regional economic free zone to foster regional security.

 - e) Participants welcomed an EU suggestion that the OSCE might undertake a survey on the status of NGO's in the Central Asian region and their capacities in order to encourage their integration into the environmental decision-making process.

Oscar DeSoto