



## **European Union's Strategy for Central Asia**

### **Platform for Environment and Water Cooperation**

#### **FOURTH MEETING OF THE EU-CENTRAL ASIA WORKING GROUP ON ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

*8-10 July 2015, Tashkent (Uzbekistan)*

#### **Summary of Conclusions and Decisions**

The Fourth Meeting of the European Union – Central Asia Working Group on Environmental Governance and Climate Change (WG EGCC) was held on 8-10 July 2015 in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) at the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The meeting was attended by government officials and other stakeholders from five countries of Central Asia (CA), the European External Action Service, the European Commission (including DG DEVCO, DG CLIMA, and DG Environment), the European Environmental Agency, and Member States of the European Union (EU) (Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Romania and the United Kingdom). Ministries of environment, water, agriculture, and foreign affairs were part of the delegations of Central Asian countries. Representatives of several international and regional organisations, NGOs, and the private sector were also present. The meeting was chaired by the WG EGCC's Chair, Mr. Massimo Cozzone (Italy) and Mr. Bakhtier Abdusamatov, Chairman of the State Committee for Nature Protection (Uzbekistan).

The meeting participants:

- Adopted the meeting's Draft Agenda without amendment;
- Took note of the EU's continued interest to support regional cooperation and national-level work aiming at the promotion of sustainable development in Central Asia, including support to environmental, water, and climate policy in the framework of the EU-Central Asia Strategy of 2007;
- Acknowledged the urgency of submitting Intended Nationally Determined Contributions to the 2015 Climate Agreement, shared information about their preparations towards the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris and their domestic climate action, and highlighted the need to further work on improving domestic climate policies for the implementation of the Convention;

- Welcomed progress made by the European Union in decoupling economic growth and emissions;
- Re-iterated the need to further work on improving environmental governance in their countries and shared ideas of areas for priority action, including in terms of ratification and implementation of UNECE conventions and other multilateral environmental agreements, sustainable management of natural resources, and further making operational the principles of a Shared Environmental Information System;
- Took note of the information about the activities of EU Water Initiative's Working Group for countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia in involved Central Asian countries with support from the EU and the interest of the EU in continuing cooperation in this sector;
- Took note of the interest in activities related to the mitigation of the Aral Sea problems;
- Took note of activities carried out in the region by non-governmental and international partners and welcomed future sharing of such information within the Working Group on a regular basis;
- Expressed satisfaction with the outcomes of the EU Regional Environmental Cooperation Programme for Central Asia (EURECA) – Phase 1;
- Welcomed the core elements (architecture, outcomes, and types of activities) of the tentative EURECA Phase 2 Programme, as well as the invitation to provide written comments by 15 August 2015 and took note of the next steps in its identification and formulation;
- Agreed with proposals to amend the Terms of Reference of the WG EGCC and tasked the Chair of the Working Group to finalise the text based on feedback provided during the meeting and through written amendments by 31 July 2015;
- Took note of the dates for the Milan High-level Meeting set on 12-13 October 2015;
- Took note that the first draft Communique of the Milan High-level Meeting was shared with Central Asia partners for comments by 31 August 2015;
- Agreed to hold the next meeting of the Working Group in Brussels in the Autumn of 2016;
- Thanked the Government of Uzbekistan for hosting the meeting;
- Adopted the Meeting's "Summary of Conclusions and Decisions".