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# Water Management and Basin Organisations in Central Asia

## Study tour on the Self-Management of Water and Soil Utilisation of Lower River Basin Units in Germany

### Context

Although centralised planning and management of water resources continues to predominate in the five Central Asian states, reform of the current water management system is ongoing in most of them. The aim is to complete the transition of major functions to the local level.

A study tour was conducted for Central Asian representatives of national ministries concerned with water and land resources management and for the representatives of local water administrations. The purpose of the tour was the study of methods for the self-administration of water and soil utilisation in Germany. The experience gained will provide the water managers from Central Asia with new ideas for shaping and improving on the reforms taking place in their own countries.

### Objective

The objective of the study tour was to demonstrate methods for the self-administration of water and land resources, for the protection of these resources, and for maintenance measures by the water and soil associations in sub-river basins within the German Federal State of Brandenburg. Focus was on the Nuthe and Welse river basins.

The study tour also highlighted the integrative work of water professionals from the national governmental level to the provincial level and to highlight challenges and solutions for sustainable water and land management.

In addition, the participants became acquainted with the key objectives of the European Union's Water Framework Directive and the main results of its implementation.

Project name	Water Management and Basin Organisations in Central Asia (WMOCA)
Funded by	European Union Co-funded by the German Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt)
Project region	German Federal State of Brandenburg
Participants	Representatives from national ministries concerned with water resources management and representatives of the local water administrations of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan
Duration	04-11 May 2014

### Measures

During the eight-day study tour, the participants from Central Asia visited the Nuthe and Welse Water and Soil Associations and met their main partners in cooperation: the Ministry of Environment, Health and Consumer Protection of the Federal State of Brandenburg, the district environmental agencies, and provincial administrations and farmers in the region.

Besides learning about the roles of the different institutions and how they collaborate, the participants were familiarised with various means for financing maintenance measures and managing water and land resources.





They also learned how to involve the public and to give due consideration to objections people raise.

The study tour also had a closer look at the role of the European Union's Water Framework Directive, its influence on the management of water resources in sub-river basins, and the implementation of measures to fulfil its objectives.

The project Water Management and Basin Organisations in Central Asia (WMBOCA) aims generally at supporting integrated water resources management (IWRM) at basin level, and at transboundary river basin management in particular. Project activities focus on the staff of existing water management organisations at the basin level, on newly established joint water management structures in the selected basins and sub-basins, and on policymakers for the water sector in the Central Asian states. WMBOCA is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH in partnership with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC).

## Results

The participants were impressed by the efficiency and high quality of water and land resources management in the Nuthe and Welse river basins. Specifically, they rated as best practice the close coordination and interaction of different institutions and sectors (water, agriculture, energy, tourism etc.) at different levels (from central government to local).

They also praised the inclusion of the public and the fact that their objections were taken into consideration in the implementation of given measures.

Aside from the input on administration and maintenance of water resources, the study tour also gave the participants an opportunity to exchange impressions and experiences with one another. In the aftermath of the study tour, the participants expressed their desire to have a platform for the ongoing exchange of ideas and technical knowledge.

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