

**Memorandum of Cooperation
between the Executive Committee
of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea and
the Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia**

The Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (EC IFAS) and
the Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia (CAREC),
hereinafter referred to as the "Parties",

based on the desire to further develop and strengthen cooperation between the countries of the Aral Sea basin on improving the socio-economic and environmental situation in the Aral Sea region, the rational use of water resources, and ensuring a high level of environmental protection in this region, as well as for the practical implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals,

taking into account the experience gained in the field of international water and environmental cooperation within the framework of EC IFAS and CAREC,

taking into account the need for continuous improvement of information and communication links, the implementation of environmental and scientific-technical projects and programs aimed at the environmental rehabilitation of areas affected by the Aral Sea crisis to ensure the sustainable development of Central Asia,

recognizing the need for systematic update of knowledge and strengthening the capacity of employees, specialists, and managers of institutions and organizations working in the field of sustainable development,

noting that the development of regional cooperation is of great importance for ensuring sustainable development and the developing urgent measures to mitigate the negative consequences of the Aral crisis,

based on the Protocol of the meeting of authorized representatives of the Central Asian countries on the establishment of the Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia dated July 20, 1999,

have concluded this Memorandum on the following:

Article 1

This Memorandum:

- consolidates the efforts of the Parties and defines its participants;
- does not impose obligations on its participants and is an expression of the desire to undertake joint efforts for the activities of the Parties in the field of regional cooperation;
- does not violate the rights (including intellectual property rights) of any of the Parties regarding the provision of information to the other Party.

Article 2

The objectives of this Memorandum are:

- to create conditions for effective interaction between the Parties, exchange of information, and coordination of joint actions, as well as ensuring the consistency and mutual complementarity of their efforts aimed at promoting sustainable development in the Central Asian countries;

- to coordinate interaction at the regional and national levels for the joint implementation of projects, forums, conferences, seminars, and other activities at the regional level in the Central Asian countries;

- to support and jointly promote initiatives aimed at developing cooperation in the region in the areas of water resources, environmental protection, and sustainable development.

Article 3

1. The main areas of cooperation between the Parties:

- joint development and implementation of current projects and programs in the fields of water resources, environmental protection, and sustainable development;

- exchange of information and support for the creation of a unified regional information system and database for the Aral Sea basin, and monitoring of the Fourth Aral Sea Basin Program (ASBP-4) and the Regional Environmental Program for Sustainable Development in Central Asia (REP4SD-CA);

- expert support in the development of strategic documents, projects, programs, preparation of reviews, conducting monitoring, and other analytical activities;

- cooperation in organizing regional dialogue platforms, such as conferences and seminars in the field of water cooperation, environmental protection, and sustainable development in Central Asian countries;

- utilizing the opportunities of international organizations, donors, and financial institutions to attract investments to address the issues of the Aral Sea.

2. The Parties may develop cooperation in other areas of mutual interest.

Article 4

1. The main forms of cooperation between the Parties:

- implementation and monitoring of ASBP-4 and REP4SD-CA;

- extensive use of the existing meeting platform of regional organizations for ongoing interaction with national, regional, and international organizations, and financial institutions;

- strengthening information exchange, developing the information space in the field of water resources management, environmental protection, and sustainable development at the regional level;

- organizing international, regional, and national conferences, seminars, and training sessions in the Republic of Kazakhstan, participating in regional and international dialogue platforms;

- strengthening the capacity of national and regional organizations through technical assistance, exchange of experiences, knowledge, and demonstration of best practices;

- promoting regional projects and programs at the national level;

- attracting and hiring experts for the development of strategic documents, projects, programs, reviews, monitoring, proposing initiatives, and other analytical activities of the Parties;

- joint participation and interaction within regional and international processes, including the Paris Climate Agreement, World Water Forum, Ministerial Conferences “Environment for Europe,” Central Asian Climate Change Conference, World Water Weeks.

2. By mutual agreement, the Parties may develop and utilize other forms of cooperation.

Article 5

1. EC IFAS, within the scope of its authorities:

- provides support to CAREC initiatives and project activities;

- coordinates plans for the implementation of joint national and regional projects and programs of the Parties;

- coordinates plans and timing for joint conferences, forums, seminars, trainings and other activities for the development of dialogue platforms and information platforms;

- provides assistance in the participation of high-level representatives of national organizations and specialists of EC IFAS at international symposiums, forums, conferences and other dialogue platforms;

- provides an opportunity to inform about CAREC initiatives and project activities at regional meetings held by EC IFAS and IFAS structures;

- invites CAREC to participate in events organized by EC IFAS;

- involves CAREC in the development of project proposals and the search for potential international organizations and donors to finance project proposals in the areas of cooperation specified in Articles 3 of this Memorandum;

2. CAREC, within the framework of its projects and capabilities:

- promotes the implementation of the goals and objectives of strategic regional documents (ASBP-4, REP4SD CA), the implementation of which is coordinated by EC IFAS, the Interstate Coordination Water Commission and the Interstate Commission for Sustainable Development of IFAS;

- invites EC IFAS to participate in events organized by CAREC;

- provides EC IFAS with information on the progress of implementation of joint projects and programs of CAREC;

- provides EC IFAS with technical assistance within the framework of allocated funds for implemented project programs in accordance with the actual needs of EC IFAS.

Article 6

The Parties may amend and supplement this Memorandum, which shall be formalized by separate protocols and shall be an integral part of it.

Article 7

Any disputes regarding the interpretation and implementation of this Memorandum will be resolved through consultations and negotiations between the Parties.

Article 8

This Memorandum comes into force from the date of its signing and is valid until the end of the period of activity of EC IFAS in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

This Memorandum may be terminated by one of the Parties by written notice to the other Party.

This Memorandum is the basis for other special agreements of the Parties for the implementation of joint programs and projects.

This Memorandum does not affect the rights and obligations of the Parties arising from other agreements concluded by them.

Completed in the city of Almaty on May 27, 2024, in two copies in Russian.

**Executive Committee
of the International Fund for
Saving the Aral Sea**

Chairman

_____ **A.Orazbay**

**Regional
Environmental Center
for Central Asia**

Executive Director

_____ **Z. Makhmudov**