

**APN/START International Workshop on Global Change,
Sustainable Development and Environmental Management in
Central Asia (APN 2002-NCB02)**

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APN funding

US\$ 30,000

Participating countries

Participants from the following Central Asia countries are to be funded: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Other international experts are also expected to be funded by APN and other international funding bodies.

Brief introduction and background

In many parts of Central Asia, intensive human activities have resulted in meso-scale change of climate and ecosystems, e.g. the large-scale ecological disaster in the vicinity of the Aral Sea caused by the sea drying. Everywhere in the region, the response to global change is superimposed on natural variability and human activity impacts. Recognizing that resource management decisions may have a strong impact, positive or negative, on the region's environment and sustainable development, sustainable development programmes need to assess the role of each of these factors and understand the potential impact of mitigation measures. For example, water scarcity is one of the major problems in the Central Asia region. Decrease or mismanagement of water resources can lead to security problems in the region. Consequently, there is a need to improve the understanding of the complex interactions and impacts of global environmental change on ecosystems and human society in the Central Asia region to help guide decision-making processes on regional sustainable development.

Outline of activities to be conducted

A workshop is scheduled to be held from 26-28 March 2002, in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The objectives of the workshop are:

- To raise awareness of the APN and the opportunities it presents for cooperation in regional collaboration in research and capacity building;
- To raise awareness on the programmes and activities of the ICSU-related global change science programmes (START and its co-sponsors IGBP, WCRP, IHDP and DIVERSITAS), and explore potential linkages to the scientific community of Central Asia;
- To review the status of global change activities in Central Asia, and identify priority knowledge gaps that may serve as the basis of future research and capacity building activities in the region;
- To discuss the future direction of global change studies in the Central Asia region and help define priorities;
- To help define a relevant regional agenda focussed on global environmental change issues, and identify potential funding sources for future projects; and
- To encourage regional networking, international cooperation, and close linkages with APN, international scientific organizations and their donors, START and its four co-sponsors (IGBP, WCRP, IHDP and DIVERSITAS).

Possible topics to be discussed include issues relating to:

- Climate change;
- Aridification and desertification;
- Water resources change and land management;
- Regional ecosystems change;
- Socio-economic drivers and impacts of regional environmental change, and environmental management practices; and
- Information needs of sustainable development and environment protection for decision-makers.

Expected outcomes and products

Based on identified priority knowledge gaps, participants will be expected to develop a proposal for funding agencies. The Workshop will help create linkages between Central Asian scientists and APN, START, and the Global Change science programmes.

Expected future directions and follow-up work

Central Asian participants will develop a regional network of regional global change scientists to undertake collaborative research on water, land use/degradation issues, and contribute to future IPCC assessment reports. Central Asian regional global change scientists will actively participate in regional global change research by taking advantage of funding opportunities from international funding agencies, and through integrating Central Asian research and capacity building initiatives with activities of the global change science programmes' core and joint projects.