



# COVID-19: water issues in Central Asia region during and after COVID-19

CAREC Institute

Deputy Director: Iskandar Abdullaev



# WATER IN CENTRAL ASIA: KEY STATEMENTS

- Access to water is a key **human right**
- Water is a **key ingredient** of individual, household and economic development
- Access to water, food and sanitation are most important **development aspects** in Central Asia (even before COVID-19)
- **Efficient response policies** to COVID-19 outbreak include **water strong water component**

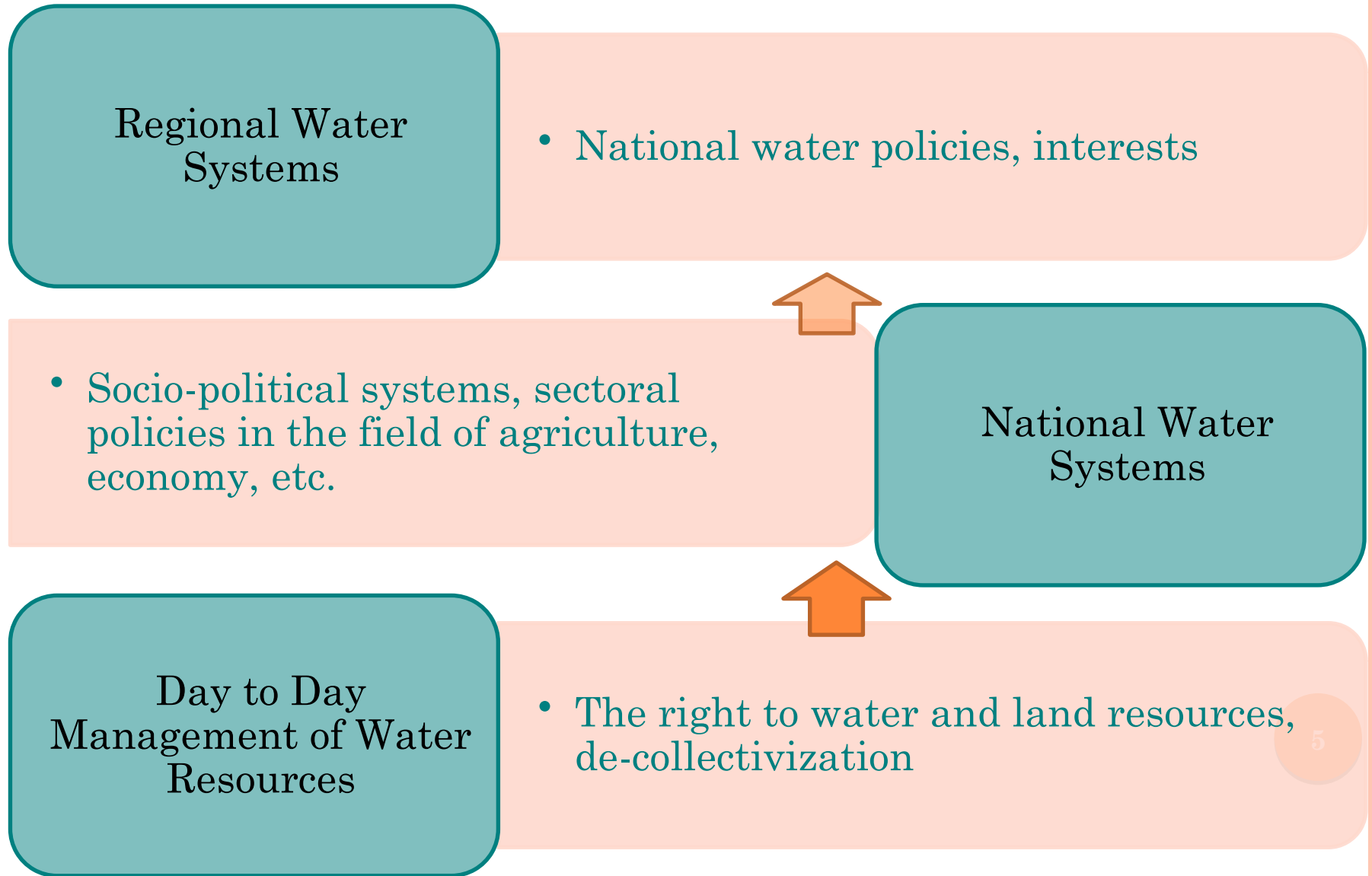
## WATER IN CENTRAL ASIA: TRANSBOUNDARY CONTEXT

- Central Asia experienced **pragmatic and long-term process** of water cooperation- institutional and instrumental elements
- The water cooperation a **non-linear process**, affected by the development of national systems
- Regional cooperation institutes **handled well** the processes of the post-soviet period, without any serious conflicts
- Countries set up **national** environmental and water governance systems

# WATER IN CENTRAL ASIA: IMPORTANT ELEMENTS

- Central Asian states part **global processes** on Sustainable development, signing MEA's, climate and water conventions
- IWRM, green development, sustainability concepts paved its way to the region and helped to **shape national reforms** in Central Asian states
- Major challenge in the region on environmental and water cooperation: how to **synergize national interests** and craft regional priorities

# WATER IN CENTRAL ASIA: DIFFERENT LEVELS



# WATER IN CENTRAL ASIA: NEW EMERGING TRENDS

- **Improved political environment** in the region: more of cooperation and less conflictive approach in environment and water issues;
- **More cooperation** in dry years of 2018-2019:
  - not competition among the countries
  - energy trade (regional) increased
  - coordination in water sharing have been intensive
  - water management - internal issue;
- **Sensible decline in water demand** due to reduction of cotton and promotion of water saving in Uzbekistan

# WATER IN CENTRAL ASIA: MAJOR PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

- **Water Reforms:** governance, management type, land and water linkages
- **Water Sector Financing:** budgetary, service fees, role of private players, FDI's to water sector
- **Water Infrastructure:** maintenance and development, priorities, long-term planning, privatization and responsibilities
- **Water Sector Research:** role, integration, financing, setting focus

# WATER IN CENTRAL ASIA: ENVIRONMENT

- **Climate change impact** and adaptation measures - a strategic area
- Scattered and country-wise approach- more **regional approach is needed**. Environmental systems are integrated
- **Lessons from Aral Sea** problem is not yet internalized- Region is not immune from new “Aral Sea” disasters- **Improved Environmental Policies**
- Environment is still end use- **ignorance of ecological water demand**- inclusion of environment as 7<sup>th</sup> water user (5CAS+ AFG +AS)



# WATER IN CENTRAL ASIA: DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION

- **Urban vs. rural gap:** water supply and sanitation services differ greatly
- **Drinking water vs. sanitary services:** National governments are having special drinking water programmes in every CAREC country, however sanitation improvement programmes are rare
- **Data quality:** data/statistics on drinking water and sanitation is not well structured
- **Control on quality of services:** quality of services are irregularly controlled/monitored

# WATER IN CENTRAL ASIA: FINANCING

- **Water sector is state funded- O&M is mostly from the state budgets**
- **Currently states budgets unable to fund fully - infrastructure, human, transport and technological needs are inadequately funded**
- **Delayed investments in the water sector - water infrastructure in inadequate conditions**
- **Shrinking and insufficient financing - serious delays in O&M**
- **Central Asia's need for investments to rehabilitate and build new infrastructure (including water infrastructure) is around 6-8% of GDP annually or \$33-38 billion per annum.**

# WATER IN CENTRAL ASIA: NEXT STEPS?

## ○ **Reducing tensions** over water and energy issues:

- Bilateral or multilateral dialogues?
- How to set up sustainable water partnerships?

## ○ **Extending role of private sector in water sector** operation and maintenance:

- How much and where?
- Role and format of engagement?

## ○ **Water and Environment:**

- Share, role and priority for environment in water management?
- Economic and political support for environmental priorities?

## ○ **Integration and joint benefit sharing:**

- How to identify water sharing indicators?
- How to set up joint management and decision making?

# WATER IN CENTRAL ASIA: NEXT STEPS?

## ○ **Infrastructure:**

- rehabilitation, renovation, operation and maintenance
- Joint management and operation

## ○ **Instruments:**

- Equipment, monitoring, innovations and systematization
- Data and information gathering and sharing;

## ○ **Institutions:**

- Cooperation, capacity building, rules and procedures.
- Joint decisions making, long-term planning

# CENTRAL ASIA REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (CAREC) INSTITUTE

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[E-mail: deputydirector2@carecinstitute.org](mailto:deputydirector2@carecinstitute.org)