

An aerial photograph of a large, calm lake in Finland, surrounded by dense green forests. The lake has several small islands and peninsulas. The water is a deep blue, and the surrounding forest is a vibrant green. The image is partially obscured by a dark blue curved shape on the left side, which contains the text.

Better water monitoring and information, transboundary water cooperation and tools for cross-sectoral challenges at the heart of Finland's technical and diplomatic support to Central Asia

Dr. Annukka Lipponen

**Chief Specialist on Water Resources Management
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland**

Scope:

- Basis: Long-term engagement with Central Asia**
- Better monitoring and information: technical projects as contribution to TEI**
- Transboundary cooperation and Water Convention's instruments**
- Finnish water diplomacy informed by analysing the context, actors, conflict factors, dynamics**
- Value of TEI and EU-CA platform as frameworks**

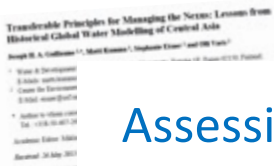


Some roots and underpinnings of the current Finnish water sector activity in Central Asia

Aalto University research on Central Asian basins

MoFA Programme for Finland's water sector support to Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (2014-2018)

Assessing the linkages between water, agriculture and hydropower



The Major Central Asian River Basin: An Assessment of Vulnerability

OLLI VARIS & MATTI KUMMU



vast water use in central Asia

ESTIMATION
100 km²
100 km²
100 km²

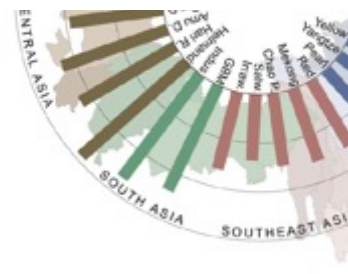


Figure 6. River basin vulnerability index (RBVI) comparison between the Central Asian b (this study) and Asia-Pacific basins (Varis et al., 2012). (a) Vulnerability profiles for the four reg (b) RBVI for all basins, with map of regions in the background.

Considering possible cooperation and conflict paths + water diplomacy actions

Water diplomacy paths – An approach to recognise water diplomacy actions in shared waters

Marko Keskinen, Erik Salminen, Juho Haapala

Water & Development Research Group, Aalto University, Finland (E-mail: marko.keskinen@aalto.fi)

This manuscript was handled by S. Ben, Editor-in-Chief, with the assistance of S. Ben.

Water diplomacy is gaining increasing attention among both researchers and policy-makers. The literature is

Enhancing water security through equitable and integrated management of water resources
- Implementation through multiple partnerships: International organisations (UNECE, OECD, UN Women, WHO, OXFAM, AKF). Wide range of national partners. SYKE coordinated.
Bilateral capacity building projects on monitoring

Syr Darya WEF nexus assessment

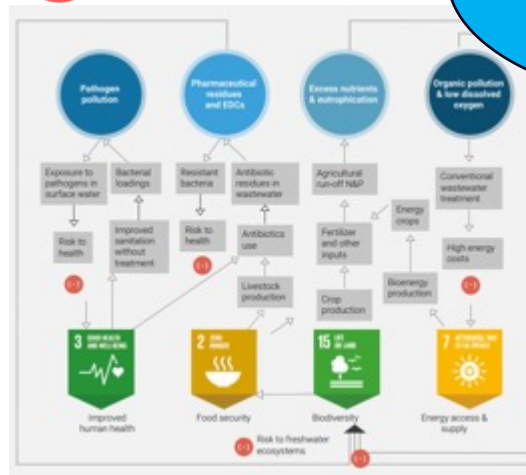
Participatory process. Scoping level analysis of main intersectoral issues, future scenarios, joint solutions
Development of a multi-country power systems mode to investigate water- power system dependencies

- 1) Long term engagement on monitoring & data
- 2) Cross-sectoral dynamics affecting waters (nexus)
- 3) Conflict and cooperation, water diplomacy

Information: Olli Varis & Marko Keskinen (@aalto.fi)

Contributing to TEI with better monitoring and water information: Institutional Cooperation Instrument projects

- Consolidating Institutional Capacities for National Surface Water Quality Monitoring in the Kyrgyz Republic (KGZ-Water III), MFA, 2021-2023
- Development of Tajik surface Water Monitoring by Quality Management and Collaboration (TJK Water Quality II), MFA, 2021-2023
- Under preparation: water quality monitoring project in Uzbekistan
- Strengthening the Mastering of Natural Resources for National Welfare in the Kyrgyz Republic, phase II/ Uzbekistan/ Tajikistan, phase II (Training and some procurement)
- Improving the quality of hydrometeorological and climate services in Uzbekistan.



Total: 7.6
MEUR



FINNISH
METEOROLOGICAL
INSTITUTE



SYKE



Helsinki Water Convention (1992): Tools and experience, support towards stronger cooperation: Finland's lead engagements 2022–2024

Monitoring, assessment and data exchange

Co-Lead Parties: Finland & Senegal

- Joint monitoring and data sharing a prerequisite for trust building
- Working group on Monitoring and Assessment
- Updated Strategies for Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters
- Global collection of good practice

Water allocation

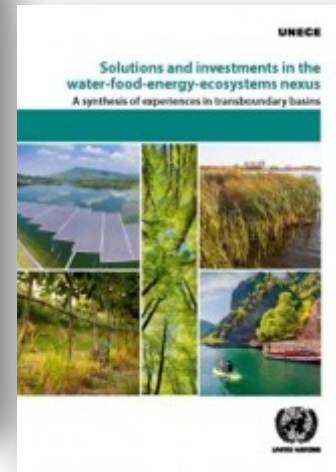
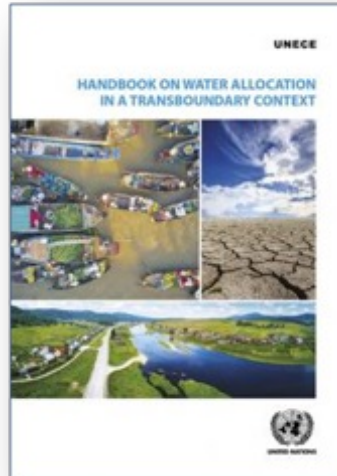
Co-Lead Parties: Hungary & Finland

- Handbook on water allocation in a transboundary context: dissemination & experience sharing

Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus

Lead Party: Finland

- Task Force
- Series of assessments of basins for intersectoral links, trade-offs and benefits. Includes a review of the resource base, resource uses, governance...
- Operationalization of nexus (cross-sectoral) solutions and investments



'Finnish Water Way' – current approach to water diplomacy

- Interministerial **International Water Strategy of Finland 2018** – mission to promote water security, Water & Peace one of the pillars
 - Solid basis in Finland's transboundary water cooperation
 - Water diplomacy scoping studies Salminen et al. (2019) and Salminen et al. (2020), Foreign Ministry's evaluation of Finnish Water Diplomacy and directions for the future (2021)
 - *Water diplomacy seen as prevention and resolution of political tensions over water and its use by drawing on water expertise and diplomatic tools*
- Multi-track approach nationally and internationally
 - **Finnish water diplomacy network** brings together experts from ministries, research institutes, NGOs and private sector



- **Finnish Water Way – Water Cooperation and Peace** – capacity building project in 2021-2024 (coordinated by Finnish Environment Institute and Finnish Institute for International Affairs, funded by MoFA, MoAF and MoE)
 - Strengthen Finnish water diplomacy collaboration internationally
 - Strengthen international transboundary agreements and their implementation by supporting the active participation and experience sharing of Finnish experts
 - Identify and respond to Finnish and international water diplomacy training and competence-building needs
 - Deepen cooperation between experts in foreign and security policy, peace mediation, and the water sector
- Variety of other projects (WEI, IKI etc.), duties at UNECE and Finnish transboundary cooperation
- Web page: syke.fi/projects/waterdiplomacy



*Expert Opinion
To be considered at the United Nations 2023 Water Conference
Interactive Dialogues*

September 2022

We, the experts representing the convening and contributing organizations of the side-event 'Value of Water in Times of Armed Conflicts' at the Stockholm World Water Week 2022 and partners, propose the following key messages to be considered in the preparation of the United Nations 2023 Water Conference Interactive Dialogues on Water for Cooperation.

Regional workshop on transboundary water allocation and development of cooperation on joint use of water resources in Central Asia (Astana, 2–3 November 2022)

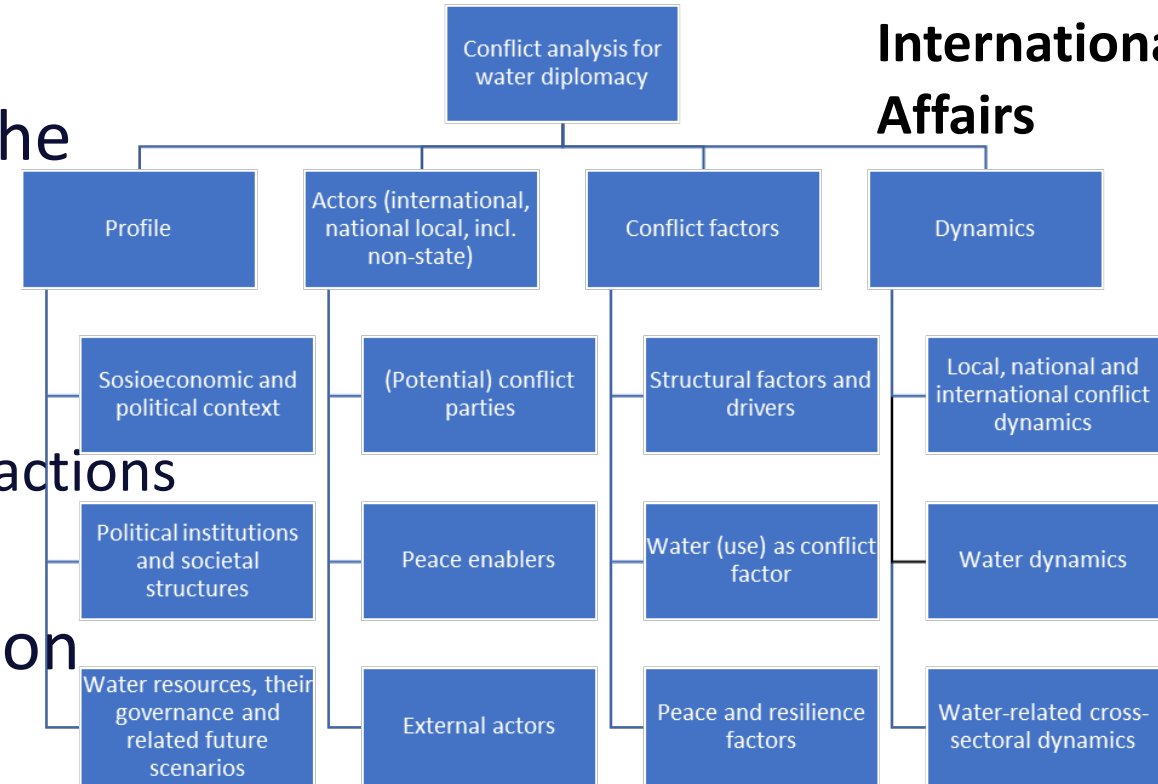
- For **ministry officials and experts from the Central Asian countries** (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan ja Turkmenistan), Regional and international organizations participated
- **Organized** by the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) and SYKE, under the auspices of Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan. Financing Finland and Switzerland. UNECE contributed.
- Contributed to the **Programmes of Work** of the Helsinki Water Convention and IWAC.
- **Objective:** to promote studying, applying and discussing the international experience on transboundary water allocation synthesized in the global Handbook on Water Allocation in a Transboundary Context.
- **Outcome document with recommendations:** e.g. strengthening water-energy cooperation, data exchange, cooperation on basin level adaptation
- Followed by the Finnish Ambassador's water diplomacy roundtable about the foreign and security policy on the basis of the technical discussion



Conflict analysis for water diplomacy – piloted on Central Asia

Finnish
Institute of
International
Affairs

- Better contextualised understanding of the role of water in conflict dynamics
 - Awareness of the operating environment
 - Conflict-sensitivity and do-no-harm
 - Identification of potential water diplomacy actions
- Helps to integrate water factors to foreign/security policy & conflict resolution
- Tool for foresight and conflict prevention
- Components of the analysis:
 - Profile: Overview of context, institutional background; including water resources
 - Actors: Conflict parties, peace enablers, external actors; Conflict factors: Structural factors and drivers; water use
 - Dynamics: Local, national & international developments affecting conflict;



Conclusions

- By bringing together EU technical and financial support with diplomacy to engage with the Central Asia, the High-Level Conference presents an invaluable opportunity for commitments to strengthening **regional cooperation**.
- Underpinned by analysis, the main **directions for Finnish water diplomacy**: Promoting mutual benefits through transboundary water governance, and strengthening regional **(cross-sectoral) dialogue** on the linkages between water, energy, agriculture and environment
- Finland is **combining technical support for better water information, with intergovernmental instruments and diplomacy** : We appreciate the opportunities with EU-Central Asia Platform for Environment and Water Cooperation and TEI to increase leverage through cooperation with **international partners**
- Our engagement is evolving as a function of demand and opportunities: We are open to partnerships!
- P.S. Finnish private sector solutions can add value!