International project (Russia - Kazakhstan) Transboundary Water Resources Management in the Irtysh River Basin with the support of the French Fund for the World Environment (FFEM).

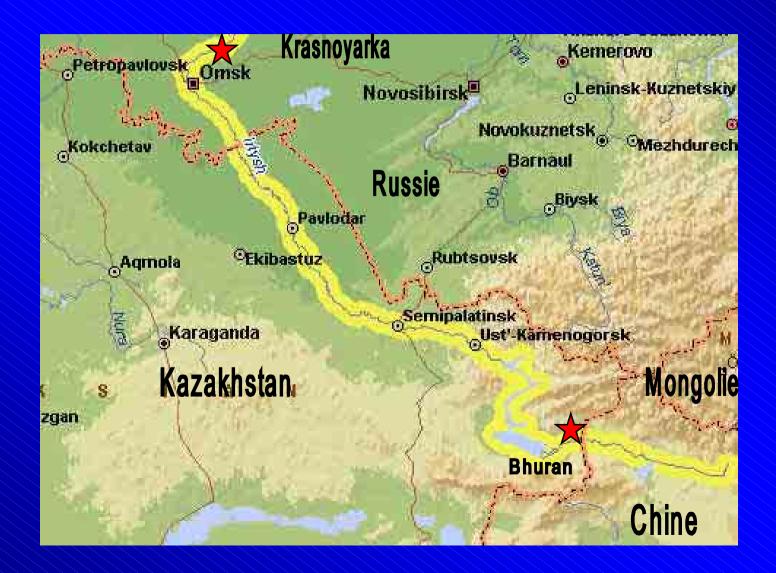
International Office for Water

Legal and financial basis of the project

- The project is carried out in accordance with a Memorandum on co-operation between Russia and Kazakhstan, which was signed in Paris in May 2000 by the Government representatives.
- Project financing (technical support) for an amount of 1 000 000 Euro is coming from the FFEM (Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial)-The International Office for Water is in charge of the management of the project.



Irtysh river, from the Upper Irtysh on the border between China and Kazakhstan (Buran) to the first station downstream Omsk (Krasnoyarka), which is approximately 1300 km.



Project description

- The project includes:
 - .3 year long technical support to Russia and Kazakhstan from the Consortium experts.
 - Financing measurement in defined locations and small equipment purchases.
 - Organizing and supporting the international meetings.
 - Training of Russian and Kazakh representatives.
 - Actions being taken
 - Expert missions, working group sessions and Irtysh river Sub-Committee meetings
- The meetings are organized within an existing organization, which is the Russia-Kazakhstan Commission, by creating in Pavlodar in April 2001, a special Irtysh basin Sub- Commission.
- The Sub-Commission meetings and working group sessions are organized two times a year.
- Three meetings have been organized so far:
 - October 2001 (Omsk),
 - April 2002 (Ust-Kamenogorsk),
 - October 2002 (Pavlodar)
- Two more meetings have been planned:
 - April 2003 (Omsk),
 - September 2003 (Pavlodar)

Creating the working groups

- To carry out the works in between the meetings, four working groups have been created:
 - Creating the basin database (IRBIS).
 - Developing the monitoring network
 - Creating the hydrological model of Irtysh river.
 - Writing a number of legal texts on co-operation and data exchange between Russia and Kazakhstan regarding the Irtysh basin.
- Each working group comprises 5 to 7 people, which are working in the organizations included in the Sub-Committee list. The groups meet on a regular basis to resolve current issues. As for the meetings between the groups, they take place twice a year, to raise and solve those issues and make those decisions, which require the joint Sub-Committee approval.

Results of the working group activities:

Working group 1 – Implementation of the Basin Information System

- A data list of the superficial waters within the area of study has been made, as well as the IRBIS database structure.
- The data to be used by IRBIS, has been collected.
- A basis of the geo-information system of basin (electronic map).
- A first version of web-site has been made.
- The necessary hardware and software has been purchased to create the IRBIS database server.

Working group 2 – Control and approval of monitoring procedures and standards

- A list has been drawn of the organizations involved in hydroclimatological, hydrological and quality monitoring of studied area surface waters.
- A list has been drawn of the procedures and standards used by the organizations for collecting, estimating, processing and interpreting the data.
- The monitoring equipment has been purchased (for Kazakhstan only).

Working group 3 – Design of the Irtish river hydrological model

The methodology of hydrological simulation has been designed.

 The data required for building up the model has been collected.

Working group 4 – Legal and institutional basis

- The Russian and Kazakh water laws have been analyzed in order to find out the common clauses and check if they comply with the international legislation.
- A number of proposals have been defined for a special Irtysh Committee, which acts within Russian and Kazak Committee for cross-border waters.

Long-term results

- Institutional socio-economic aspects
 - The information and organizational basis for the crossborder management of Irtysh river waters between Russia and Kazakhstan has been created.
 - involving China in the Irtysh water management could be a next steep.
- Ecological aspects
- The works on developing the Irtysh river water resources management are continuously under way. A most important issue is creating a hydro-chemical model of the river (water quality). An appropriate solution would be to attract financial means from international funds.

Expected benefits

- * Socioeconomic: at the national level: improvement of knowledge OF the national capabilities for designing and implementing resource management tools; at the local level: improvement of drinking water quality and optimization of fishing, agricultural and industrial activities.
- * Ecological: at the regional level: improvement of joint management of polluted water; at the local level: a more regular flow and better water quality will have positive impacts on fauna and flora.
- * Institutional: at binational level: regular dialogue between the two countries on Irtysh water management; at the national level: implementation of the Irtysh river basin management in each country.