Проблемы постсоветского пространства / Post-Soviet Issues | **2021;8(3):361-368**

https://doi.org/10.24975/2313-8920-2021-8-3-361-368

Инструменты внешней политики для управления водными ресурсами в Центральной Азии

Айнура М. Акталиева
Кыргызско-Российский Славянский университет, Бишкек, Кыргызстан,
akmatalievaa06@mail.ru

Аннотация: Данная статья посвящена проблеме неэффективного и нерационального управления водными ресурсами в Центральной Азии. Управление водными ресурсами приобрело трансграничный характер, государства разделены по статусу верхнего и нижнего течения, а вода воспринимается как неограниченный природный ресурс, требующий новых подходов. Автор, предлагает инструменты внешней политики для управления водными ресурсами, такие как постоянный политический диалог, создание постоянно действующего органа по управлению водными ресурсами и инициирование проектов в рамках платформ Китая «Один пояс, один путь», Большой Центральной Азии США и Большой Евразии России. Жизненная важность воды как природного ресурса для жизни и человеческого развития неоспорима и требует особого внимания в контексте изменения климата и роста населения в регионе Центральной Азии. Азиатский банк развития предоставил правительствам стран Центральной Азии три рекомендации по борьбе с изменением климата, а именно: расширение водоснабжения в будущем; повышение продуктивности воды; и сокращение будущего спроса на воду. Согласно прогнозам ООН в области народонаселения, к 2050 году в Центральной Азии будет около 100 миллионов жителей, что, несомненно, также увеличит потребность в водных ресурсах. Принимая во внимание такие факторы, как изменение климата и рост населения, потребность в водных ресурсах станет жизненно важной только в ближайшем будущем, а потребность в эффективном и рациональном управлении водными ресурсами уже должна быть в региональной повестке дня.

Ключевые слова: управление водными ресурсами, инструменты внешней политики, Центральная Азия, трансграничный статус, состояния восходящего и нисходящего потоков, политический диалог, правовая база для управления водными ресурсами

Для цитирования: Акталиева А.М. Инструменты внешней политики для управления водными ресурсами в Центральной Азии. *Проблемы постсоветского пространства*. 2021;8(3):361–368. DOI: https://doi.org/10.24975/2313-8920-2021-8-3-361-368

Статья поступила: 10.06.2021
Статья принята в печать: 17.07.2021
Статья опубликована: 24.09.2021

2021;8(3):361-368 | Проблемы постсоветского пространства / Post-Soviet Issues

Foreign Policy Tools for Water Management in Central Asia

Ainura M. Akmatalieva
Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan,
akmatalievaa06@mail.ru

Abstract: This article is devoted to the issue of ineffective and irrational water management in Central Asia. Water management has gained transboundary character, states are divided by their upstream and downstream status and water is perceived as unlimited natural resource which requires new approaches. Author proposes foreign policy tools for water management as constant political dialogue, establishment of permanent body on water management and initiation of projects within China's Belt and Road imitative, US's Greater Central Asia and Russia's Greater Eurasia platform. The vital importance of water as natural resource for life and human development is unquestionable and needs special attention in the context of the climate change and growing population of the Central Asian region. Asian Development Bank has provided three recommendations to Central Asian governments in facing climate change as expanding the supply of water available in the future; increasing the productivity of water; and reducing future demand for water. With predictions of the UN Population Prospects by 2050 Central Asia will have about 100 million inhabitants which undoubtedly will also increase the need for water resources. Taking into acount such factors as climate change and growing population the need for water resources will become only vital in the neearest future and demand for effective and rational water management must be already on the regional agenda.

Keywords: water management, foreign policy tools, Central Asia, transboundary status, upstream and downstream states, political dialogue, legal framework for water management

For citation: Akmatalieva A.M. Foreign Policy Tools for Water Management in Central Asia. *Post-Soviet Issues*. 2021;8(3):361–368. DOI: https://doi.org/10.24975/2313-8920-2021-8-3-361-368

Received: 10.06.2021
Revised: 17.07.2021
Published: 24.09.2021

INTRODUCTION

The vital importance of water as natural resource for life and human development is unquestionable and needs special attention in the context of the climate change and growing population of the Central Asian region. Asian Development Bank has provided three recommendations to Central Asian governments in facing climate change as expanding the supply of water available in the future; increasing the productivity of water; and reducing future demand for water [1]. With predictions of the UN Population Prospects by 2050 Central Asia will have about 100 million inhabitants which undoubtedly will also increase the need for water resources [2]. Taking into account such factors as climate change

and growing population the need for water resources will already become vital in the nearest future and demand for effective and rational water management must be already on the regional agenda.

People of Central Asia which have long history of building complex irrigation systems also inherited Soviet system of water resources management which creates dilemmas and challenges for the governments of the newly independent states in the realities of the 21-st century. Central Asian states — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan after gaining independence have faced remarkable challenges in water management domain from centralized use of water towards decentralization and securitizing water related aspects of national and foreign policy. The lack of mutual trust between governments along with nation-building process in all Central Asian states, have resulted in ignorance of long-term need for water-management for common goals of development in the broader region. Obviously water management caused tensions and controversercies among newly independent states due to conflict of interests between upstream and downstream states. Soviet legacy on water management primarily was focused in storing water in reservoirs of Toktogul, Kairakkum, Chardarya, Charvak and Nurek during autumn-winter months for irrigation purposes of agricultural industry while after gaining independence the growing need for electricity production in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan has created tensions. Water management in Central Asia is also faces national problems with the supply and sanitization of safe water to citizens due to the aging infrastructure and poor state management of water resources.

Central Asia's surface water resources are basically generated in the mountains of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan. These waters flow into the two main rivers to countries downstream — Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan — which are a part of the Aral Sea Basin. Water resources are critically important to the region's economy, its people, and the environment. Irrigation, for example, is vital for agricultural production and most of the densely populated areas of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

After gaining independence some challenges occurred in water management. Firs of all water management perceived its own transboundary character which requires not just local management but attracts broader geopolitical interests of various actors as well as requires mastering foreign policy tools by Central Asian governments. Indeed the common need for effective water management has been widely accepted at least at the discursive level, but on practical level still requires a lot more instruments to improve the use of water on different levels.

Secondly, states have been divided into upstream — Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and downstream states — Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan with contradicting interests and needs. For Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan water resources for energy production via hydropower plants has been primary goal, while downstream states require water for agricultural industry especially in densely populated areas of the Ferghana valley.

Thirdly, water by the majority of Central Asian citizens is not perceived as valuable resource as gas or oil, thus consumption of water resources on different levels has been widely ineffective and irrational. Water is perceived as valuable recourse on the discursive level but in practice water is used or even 'wasted' as unlimited resource. Fresh water is basically used primarily for energy, domestic and household needs, including washing automobiles and irrigating private gardens. Educational programs for rational use of water resources urgently needed in all five states starting with

kindergartens and ending with government officials. Irrational use of water in the Central Asian region can lead to large-scale environmental disasters, similar to the drying up of the Aral Sea.

LEGAL FRAMWORK FOR WATER MANAGEMENT

Transboundary character of water resources in Central Asia on the one hand led to the development of various initiatives for common use of water recourses from the yearly years of independence. Uneven distribution of water in the Central Asian region is the most acute problem of interstate interaction of the five republics. Since the beginning of the acquisition of sovereignty, the republics have repeatedly made attempts to resolve controversial issues. At the very beginning states have decided to reserve Soviet model of water resources management according to the 1992 "Agreement on cooperation in joint management, use and protection of interstate sources of water resources". Further regional norms reflected growing confrontation and dispute on whether to use water for irrigation or for electricity production. If at the beginning water for irrigation purposes were compensated by energy resources as gas and oil by downstream states, later the dispute transformed into open confrontation and ignorance of mutual interests between states.

Overall the legal framework for water management includes:

- Nukus Declaration of September 20, 1995 [3];
- Bishkek Statement of the Heads of State of May 6, 1996;
- Almaty Declaration of 1997;
- Agreement on Cooperation in the field of environmental protection and rational use of natural resources in the establishment of a water and energy consortium in Central Asia 1998;
- Ashghabat Declartion 1999;
- Dushanbe Declaration 2002;
- Joint Statement by the Head of Founder-States of the International Fund for the Aral Sea Saving 2009;
- Joint Communique of the Council of the Heads of the state — founders of the International Fund for Saving of Aral Sea (Turkmenbashy, August 2018).

Besides interstates agreements Central Asian states have conducted national laws on water management as:

- Law on water of Uzbekistan (1993);
- Water Code of Tajikistan (2000);
- Water Code of Kazakhstan (2003);
- Code on Water of Turkmenistan (2004);
- Water Code of Kyrgyzstan (2005) [4].

These Codes in general prescribe the value of water resources, the national system of water management, principles of management and the competences of the main state body on water management.

According to some authors legal framework for water management in Central Asia is far from perfect and requires attraction of the international legal framework on transboundary water resources [5]. "Despite a general commitment to cooperation, water policies in the region are mostly driven by uncoordinated national strategies" [6]. Limited cooperation in water management leads to failure of integrated regional water management which undoubtedly can be achieved only via political will and recognition of mutual benefits.

TENSION BETWEEN UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM STATES

Confrontation between upstream and downstream states periodically takes place. Kyrgyzstan, which controls river flows of Syrdarya, and Tajikistan of Amu Darya are rich in fresh water reserves, but since water, unlike oil and gas, is not a subject of trade, these republics remain less developed in socio-economic terms. The main issue of confrontation is the opposing

interests, on the one hand, of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, interested in using water to generate electricity, and on the other hand, of the other three republics, wishing to use water for irrigation purposes. Exploitation of the existing hydropower stations and plans to build new larger ones has caused serious tensions between states. For Tajikistan Rogun hydropower plant on the Vakhs River and Dastidzumskay on Panj River, while for Kyrgyzstan Kambar Ata I and II on Naryn River are considrered as part of national development goal towards energy independence from neighboring states.

Over the water of the Naryn cascade of hydropower plant, there has been a long dispute between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, the latter insisting on the discharge of water from the Toktogul reservoir during the irrigation period. Uzbekistan consumes about 77 % of water resources basically from Kyrgyzstan's Toktogul reservoir which is critical for cotton fields. In winter 2000, Tashkent temporarily stopped the supply of gas to Kyrgyzstan, in response, the Kyrgyz side released water from the Toktogul reservoir, which led to swampiness of part of Uzbekistan's cotton fields. As International Crisis Group says in its report "Rising nationalism and competition among the five Central Asia states has meant they have failed to come up with a viable regional approach to replace the Soviet system of management." [7]. Crisis group identifies four issues of water management: lack of coherent water management; failure to abide by or adapt water quotas; non-implemented and untimely barter agreements and payments; uncertainty over future infrastructure plans.

Former Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov openly expressed his concern in 2012 by stating that not just confrontation but even wars may arise around water issues [8]. Since then the possibility of water wars in Central Asian region has been speculated in the mass media and academic writings. Uzbekistan after the death of Islam Karimov have shifted its attitude toward electricity production of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan which leaves floor for developing regional cooperation over water management [9]. For the construction of new hydropower plants these two states are searching investors on various levels which are followed by delays in construction plans and payment responsibilities. Periodically state officials claim that the construction will be done by using state funds, but some experts question the mere possibility to construct plants without foreign investment [10].

It is worse to mention that it took several years for Tajikistan to proof technical safeness of building Rogun plant in the context of severe protest from Uzbek government. For Kyrgyzstan the construction of Kambar Ata I and II became a test for Kyrgyz political establishment to guarantee independence from energy rich neighbors.

FOREIGN POLICY TOOLS FOR WATER MANAGEMENT

Since gaining independence five Central Asian states have taken steps towards regulating water resources primarily on the basis of unilateral interests and actions and periodically developing regional dialogue on water management. As we have witnessed the legal framework is far from perfect and requires more attention. Cooperation between states on water management is below its potential and requires more permanently working body.

First of all periodic political dialogue between regional states should be developed as platform for further negotiation on water issues. This political dialogue may include larger regional actors and representatives of international organizations for broader dialogue. For instance Germany with so called Berlin imitative has been quite active since 1992 in developing water management projects in the region. EU also has some water related

projects as well UN and some financial institutions as ADB and the World Bank.

Secondly, the creation of a regional body on water management may provide effective platform with specific aim for cooperation over water management between all states on a constant basis. Regional body may include all national bodies responsible for national water management systems as well as include research center on water related issues. For the moment the Aga Khan foundations in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have been active in developing and studying mountain societies including water scarcity in rural areas.

Thirdly, regional actors as China with its Belt and Road Initiate, US's Greater Central Asia imitative and Russia's Greater Eurasia platform may provide closer cooperation between states in the context of developing socio-economic well-being of citizens via providing better conditions through developing infrastructural projects and opening new possibilities for vulnerable social groups as improving water infrastructure. Aging infrastructure of water supply puts thousands of Central Asian people into position when access to clean and safe water is limited which can be also tackled within broader integrational projects.

CONCLUSION

Water resources of Central Asia have gained transboundary character which requires not just unilateral actions but also mastering the foreign policy tools for multilateral constant political dialogue and cooperation between states. Adopted national documents on water management require introduction of changes with bearing in mind the international legal framework and experience as well adaptation measures to the consequences of climate change and population growth. Establishment of the regional body for water management as for constant coordination of all efforts seem to be necessary step for further cooperation. Cooperation between Central Asian governments is below its potential and requires broader dialogue with neighboring states. The conflict of interest between upstream and downstream states can be solved only via acceptance of mutual benefits and responsibility for using water resources of Central Asia. Broader educational goal for changing people's perception of water as unlimited natural resource must be gradually changed towards rational and effective use of abundant water resources of the region.

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ИНФОРМАЦИЯ ОБ АВТОРЕ / INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Айнура М. Акматалиева, Кандидат политических наук, Кыргызско-Российский Славянский университет, Бишкек, Кыргызстан; 720000, Кыргызстан, Бишкек, ул. Киевская. д. 44;
akmatalievaa06@mail.ru

Ainura M. Akmatalieva, Candidate of Political Science, Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; bld. 44, Kievskaya st. Bishkek, 720000, Kyrgyzstan;
akmatalievaa06@mail.ru