



RésEAU Webinars – 2018

Webinar 1:

The costs of inaction: how to make the case for reform

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Rethinking Water in Central Asia

The costs of inaction and benefits of water cooperation

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Rethinking Water in Central Asia: The costs of inaction and benefits of water cooperation

Cost of inaction: the difference between what we have, and what we could have

Study has three parts:

- 1) Reasons for the current state of water cooperation in Central Asia**
 - 2) Assessment of the costs of inaction**
 - 3) Pathways for reducing the costs of insufficient water cooperation**
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Rethinking Water in Central Asia: **Methods & limitations**

Methods:

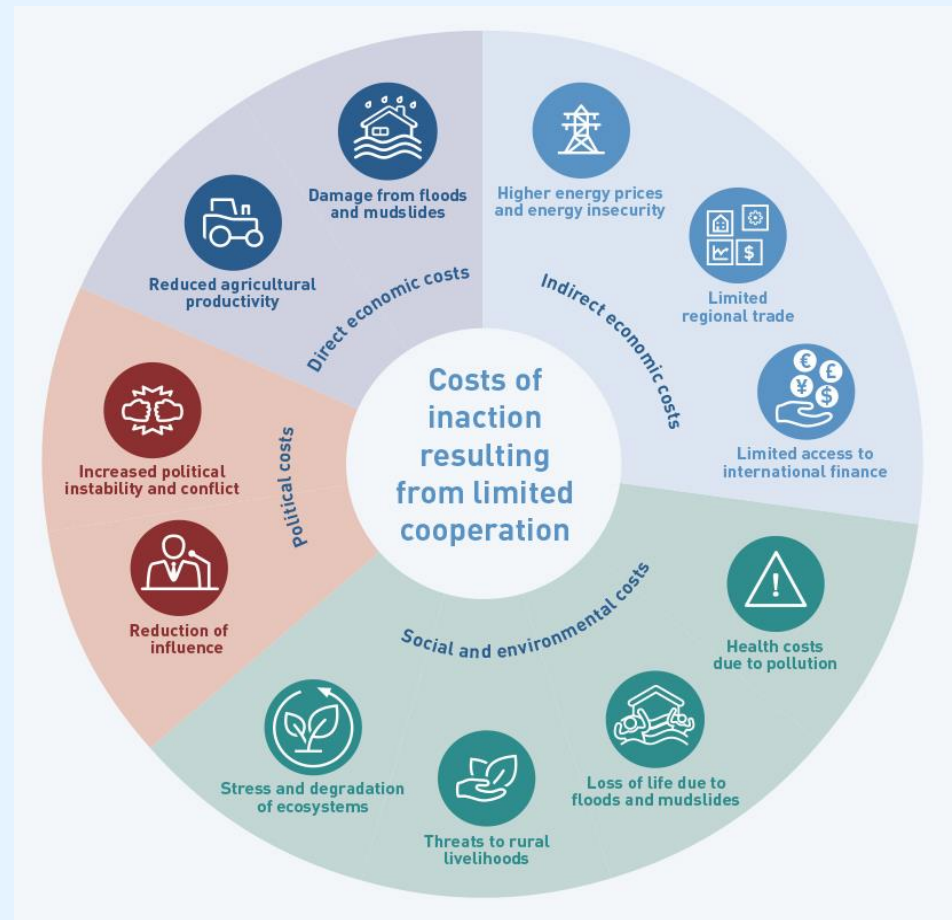
- **Literature review**
- **Stakeholder interviews on causes of limitation in cooperation**
- **Stakeholder workshop on national risk perceptions & cooperation priorities**

Limitations:

- **Dearth of easily accessible data**
 - **Limited primary research, only single workshop**
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Rethinking Water in Central Asia: Identifying the costs of inaction

- Framework developed in engagement with Central Asian experts
- Importance of indirect costs resulting from limited cooperation



Rethinking Water in Central Asia: Assessing the costs of inaction

- Based on different studies & methodologies
- Very partial estimate
- **Although the amount is significant, it understates the true cost of inaction**



Rethinking Water in Central Asia: Scenarios for strengthening cooperation

Strengthened technical cooperation

Increased exchange of
data and information

Establishment of joint
monitoring and early
warning systems

Joint research activities

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Reinforced sub-regional cooperation

Agreements on
regulations of water flows
in specific sub-basins,
potentially linked to related
issues

Joint operation of existing
infrastructure

Joint investment in new
infrastructure projects...

Reinforced regional cooperation

Institutional and legal
framework for the joint
management of the basin
resources

Comprehensive
agreements on the
management and
protection of water
resources but also related
issues ...

Rethinking Water in Central Asia: **Entry points**

- **Start with focusing on mutually shared and complementary interests**, e.g. dam safety, improved irrigation practices, joint water quality monitoring
 - **Embrace a pragmatic sub-regional approach** at bi- and trilateral (sub-) basin level, complementing the current focus on the regional framework
 - **Pursue a poly-centric approach to cooperation** at technical and political level at all relevant scales but ensure consistency with regional approach
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THANK YOU!

There is also a bilingual draft policy brief on the study:

POLICY BRIEF

Rethinking Water in Central Asia: the costs of inaction and benefits of water cooperation

International cooperation over water resources that are shared between several countries offers significant opportunities. Cooperation helps minimize the impacts that water use in one country may have on other riparian countries, and allows for a maximization of overall benefits for all basin countries. Despite a general commitment to cooperation, Central Asia is witnessing intense competition over water resources. Water policies are often driven by uncoordinated national strategies. A combination of low water efficiency, strong interdependencies, and competing national priorities has caused disagreements, and contributed to political and diplomatic disputes between Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Insufficient water cooperation entails significant costs and major risks for the future development of the region. Even if only parts of these costs are taken into account, they amount to more than 4.5 billion US\$ per year.

By raising awareness of the costs of inaction, and by setting out a variety of pathways towards eliminating them in the future, this policy brief seeks to support the political rationale for improving water cooperation.

Any further questions
after the webinar?

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