INFORMATION NOTE

International Workshop
on
Innovations in Marginal Water Resources Use for Resilient Agriculture and Food Security

Tashkent, Uzbekistan
11 to 13 December 2017

Organized by
The Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan
The Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan
The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA)

Rationale

Agriculture in marginal environments (with reference to the Aral Sea Basin countries) face challenges associated with increasing soils salinity, saline water tables, deteriorating groundwater quality, loss of farm lands productivity and biodiversity, food security instability and low income for poor-resources people. Under water scarcity and climate change considerable effort has been devoted to introduce policies to increase water efficiency based on the assertion that more can be achieved with less water through better crop management. Better management usually refers to improvement of water allocation and/or irrigation water efficiency through appropriate crop-based system promotion.

Wise investments in utilization of non conventional water sources and wastewater management will generate significant returns, as addressing wastewater is a key step in reducing water and land degradation and sustaining ecosystem services. Instead of being a source of problems, well-managed use of marginal water resources will be a positive addition to the environment which in turn will lead to improved food security, health and therefore incomes of rural communities.

Scope and Objectives

The International Workshop tackles the complex relationship between water quality, agriculture and food security. Being initiated by the government of Uzbekistan this international multi-stakeholders meeting can make a major contribution to the Government aims to develop regional water management strategy and policy framework in water reuse, water desalinization, hydrothermal water use, natural polluted water and etc..A special focus will be given to role of science and its achievements that can be undertaken to improve water and food security in the marginal environments of Central Asia region.

A special session will be dedicated to 'face-to face discussion' of constrains/barriers in integration of water resources management of the Amu Darya River Basin, leaded by Principal Investigators of PEER/USAID program . Potential of non-conventional water/land/crops resources that can be recovered to ensure commercial and economical success will be considered.

The main objectives are targeted:

- **to produce more nutritious food with less water**: Innovative technologies are required to ensure sustainable food production. They are needed to improve crop yields: implement efficient irrigation strategies; reuse of drainage water and use of water resources of marginal quality; produce smarter ways to use fertilizer and water; and create more sustainable crops-livestock production;
- **to focus on human capacities and institutional framework:** Agricultural development in CA countries lies mainly in the hands of smallholders, a large majority of whom are women. Therefore, new institutional arrangements are needed that centralize the responsibility for water regulation, yet decentralize water management responsibility and increase user ownership and participation;
- **to improve the value chain:** From production, post-harvest handling, processing, retailing, consumption to distribution and trade, efficient water and food recycling strategies can be addressed. It can help secure environmental water requirements when reuse of treated water is not culturally acceptable for other uses;
- **to use best practices:** Increase support of smallholder farmers in public and private sector to scale up best practices and adoption of self-reliant approaches for utilization of non-conventional water and land resources;
- **industries have to reduce wastewater and minimize the quantity of processed water needed** as this method has proven to be technically feasible. The demand reduction and efficiency approach should be an integral part of modern water resources management in the CA River Basins.

Main topics/sessions:

Session I. Policy framework for water governance and integrated water resources management to produce more nutritious food with less water.

Session II. Strengthened institutional capacity to manage water resources, to provide access to information and data on water resources, and to promote the inter-institutional and Inter-regional exchange of information and data on water resources.

Session III. Innovative technologies on desalination and decontamination of water and soil; alternatives for water, lands and bioresources use.

Session IV. Indigenous Knowledge and Practices on Dry Lands Water Resources Management.

The working language: English and Russian.

The agenda of the Workshop will include discussion in groups bringing together scientists, decision-makers, water users, international experts in order to identify weaknesses and strengths in applying innovative technologies and approaches for using marginal water resources for sustainable agriculture and food security.

The presentations will include contributions from specialists from research and expert community working in the area of developing innovations in marginal water resources use.

Discussion sessions in the format of break-out sessions will target specific topics to elaborate recommendations and/or Tashkent Protocol on Integrated Use of Water, Lands and Plant Resources (including alternatives sources of Water and Bioresources).

Participants

The International Workshop is expected to bring together national, regional, and international public and private organizations and institutions including:

- Decision-makers from government agencies;
- Mid-level professionals;
- Experts from research community who focus their efforts on the water and food security, use of marginal water resources and their associated environmental impact, development of water and food recycling strategies, efficient irrigation practices , efficient use of fertilizer and water, bioremediation, bio-energy and other;
- Experts from international organizations (ICBA, USAID, GIZ, EU Delegation in Uzbekistan, ICARDA, IWMI, and others), the Regional Environmental and Educational Centers and other national, regional, and International Centers of Excellence;
- Representatives of the private sector (Natural Resource Management, Environment etc).
- Representatives of NGOs and water technology companies and others.

Dates and location of the International Workshop

The International Workshop will be held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from 11 to 13 December 2017. All selected and invited participants will receive information with logistic details.

Venue: Radisson Blue Hotel, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Visa

Participants are responsible to ensure that they have a valid Uzbek visa before you leave your home country. The necessary information will be communicated with all concerned people.

Deadline for submission of Registration Form

October, 30th , 2017

Organizers and points of contact

Organizers:

Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan

International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA)

Co-organizers:

United States Agency for International Development (USAID),

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ),

The European Union (EU), Regional sub-office ,Tashkent, Uzbekistan

International Water Management Institute (IWMI),

International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA),

United States Geological Survey (USGS),

Nevada Reno University (USA),

Water Resources Research Center, Kyoto University (Japan),

International Platform for Dryland Research and Education,Tottori University (Japan)

Women and Water Network in Central Asia and Afghanistan (WWNCAA),

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO),

Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management (CACILM-2)

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