

THE IRTYSH RIVER BASIN: TRANSBOUNDARY CHALLENGES AND PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

KEY FINDINGS

ANALYTICAL REPORT '25/2

TRANS-BOUNDARY RIVER IRTYSH CONNECTS CHINA, KAZAKHSTAN AND RUSSIA IN A SINGLE HYDROLOGICAL SYSTEM



4,248 km
river length



91.5 km³
volume of average annual river runoff



1.65 mln km²
total area of the Irtysh basin



17 mln people
population living in the Irtysh basin

DEMOGRAPHY AND GEOGRAPHY — FACTORS INCREASING COMPETITION FOR WATER RESOURCES IN THE IRTYSH BASIN



China
1/3
of XUAR's*
water resources



Kazakhstan
1/3
of the total water resources



Russia
90%
of water use —
Omsk and Omsk region

Increase in water withdrawal amid population growth and vulnerability to water stress

Black Irtysh outflow at risk of complete withdrawal

Risk of environmental disaster in case of excessive water withdrawal in China

Setting limits on inflows from China and transit to the Russia

Tense water and environmental situation in the regions bordering Kazakhstan

Risk of water deficit spreading throughout the river basin in dry years

* XUAR — Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region

COORDINATION — BASIS FOR WATER BALANCE AND QUALITY IN THE IRTYSH BASIN

1 Strengthening of bilateral co-operation

- Inclusion in the bilateral agreements between Kazakhstan and China and Kazakhstan and Russia of key provisions of international conventions

2 Soft infrastructure development

- Joint monitoring
- Exchange of hydrological information
- Joint research
- Joint training

3 Investment projects coordination

- Shulbinsk HPP, 2nd stage
- Semipalatinsk HPP
- Modernisation of the Irtysh-Karaganda Canal
- Krasnogorsk hydrosystem

4 Russia-Kazakhstan-China corridor

- Restoring shipping
- Access to sea routes
- New ports
- New shipyards

TRILATERAL AGREEMENT — OPTIMAL SOLUTION



Eurasian Development Bank