

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the members of the newly established information network of water organizations from Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Caucasus I would like to express our deep respect and appreciation for your agreement to take us under your Network's wings.

We have thought about the establishment of such structure for a long time; however, some objective factors impeded this. The common historical evolution of organizations that become the members of this new structure and the interconnection of water resources in our formerly common territory have predetermined great interest in joint work. Our joint work would become especially important as a result of fruitful cooperation and coordination with other members of INBO.

Despite specific water situations in our countries, the most important water topics are common and raise a need for coordination, exchange of information and development of a platform for solving one or another issue.

Which problems are of major concern?

1. Incompleteness and vagueness of regulations within the international water law.
2. Almost all large rivers in our territory are transboundary. Having no legal framework, transboundary water management is often subjected to emotions or political leverage.
3. Growing pollution of water resources is a topical issue for all the countries in our commonwealth.

There are a lot of vain wishes and elegant slogans for addressing this global harm but still little concrete efforts and evident inefficiency of mechanisms to reverse this destructive tendency.

4. Drinking water supply is an exceptionally important issue. Most population in our countries, especially rural people do not have access to clean water that has a negative impact on health and lifespan.
5. Nowadays there is a dialogue about global climate problems all over the world. Abnormal heat and drought that damaged crops in Russia this year back a need for preventive measures that should combine economic adaptation and environmental damage prevention.

Moreover, it is meant that climate changes, first of all, affect water resources.

6. Water sector management is a major issue, which is justly in focus in the Water Framework Directive. There is an open field for work in this direction in our countries and particularly in Russia.

We are to address all those issues jointly, and, in this context, we reckon on help and support from INBO.

We are not going to turn over a new leaf in our work. In the last years, the world community has elaborated and documented a lot of useful decisions.

These are resolutions of the World Water Fora, as well as the Water Framework Directive, UN's resolutions, and national Governments' directives. This is also the Russia's Water Strategy up to 2020 adopted in 2009 and many other documents.

Based on best practices accumulated in various countries, we are going to insist on new initiatives and concrete proposals, as well as press authorities and decision makers for taking decisions that aim at changing attitudes for water issues and implementing effective measures for adoption of integrated water resources management.