

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA STATE ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE





Armenia is a mountainous country with complicated geological composition and diverse landscape. Around 76.5 percent of the country's territory is located at an altitude of 1000-2500 meters above sea level. The minimum altitude is 375 meters above sea level.

Existence of various altitudes is an important factor for the climate and the formation of vertical landscape zones. Armenia's territory has high seismic activity with exogenous processes that contribute to the evolvement of landslides and land erosion.





Though Armenia is not a coastal zone, a number of activities, measures and programs are being implemented in the environmental sphere, including water resources sustainable governance, with the following major achievements;

- The regulatory environmental legislation improvement;
- Enhanced activities by National Council for Sustainable development;
- Enhanced scope of Armenia-EU cooperation and negotiations between RA and EU on environmental issues under Association Agreement;
- Increase of the absolute watermark of Lake Sevan and approval of the Management Plan for Sevan National Park.
- Introduction of electronic system for granting environmental permits, including water use permits.





INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

International cooperation is implemented at global, regional, subregional, levels and with individual countries.

Currently the Republic of Armenia is a party to 22 Multilateral International Environmental Agreements (MEA).

GLOBAL LEVEL

- **UN Environmental Program**
- **Global Environment Facility**
- **Sustainable Development;** activity of the United Nations National Council for Sustainable Development headed by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia.





REGIONAL LEVEL

European Region;

- During the recent years, a primary objective of the foreign policy of Armenia has been expansion of collaboration with the EU including the environmental sector.
- In November 2006, the “Annual Action Plan for Armenia-EU” was signed in Brussels, Belgium, indicating the avenues for environmental collaboration. Within the framework of the EU Eastern Policies, Armenia has been carrying out an action plan since 2008 that comprised a number of environmental activities.





REGIONAL LEVEL

European Region;

- During last period Armenia has been involved in extensive work to conform the Armenian legislation to that of the European Union. Within the scope of EU Water Initiative Armenia has undertaken projects that lay ground for the introduction of comprehensive management of water resources within the country.
- A new phase in Armenia-EU cooperation began in 2010 with the commencement of a negotiation process associated with the signing of “Armenia-EU Association Agreement”. Under this process the contents of the “Environment “ Section of the Association Agreement were coordinated and deadlines for implementation of the EU environmental requirements were specified.





REGIONAL LEVEL

UN Economic Commission for Europe;

- Armenia is a member to four UNECE Conventions and is actively implementing their principles.
- Armenia has made its contribution to the activities of the Committee on Environmental Policy of the UNECE, under which includes the formation of country's position on the principal document on "*Sustainable Management of Water and Water-Related Ecosystems*".

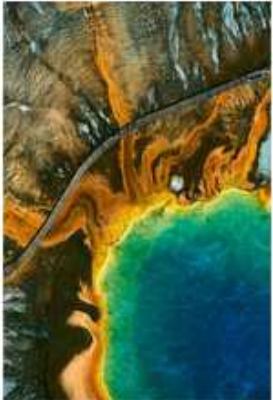
The Black Sea Region; The Republic of Armenia is one of the 12 member-states of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). New prospects of involvement with the environmental projects in the given region are associated with the EU Black Sea Synergy initiative launched in Brussels in 2010.



COOPERATION AT THE LEVEL OF THE CAUCASIAN REGION

Armenia is carrying out a policy of partnership with all the countries in the region.

Environmental cooperation at a regional level is basically carried out through international funding, within the scope of regional environmental projects. And the Regional Environmental Center for Caucasus (REC Caucasus) plays a major role in coordination of the environmental cooperation among the states of the Caucasian Region.



Water Resources Management Sector



- Armenia's territory is notable by its developed and irregular hydrological system typical to mountainous countries. It accommodates around 9500 small and medium rivers, the total length of which is 25 thousand km.
- The average annual flow volume of water in the Republic of Armenia is about 6.2 billion m³, of which the average annual flow volume of groundwater is about 3 billion m³.
- About 96% of water used for drinking comes from groundwater resources. This water is very clean.



WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SECTOR



- The greatest lake of Armenia is *Sevan* – one of the largest high-mountain fresh-water lakes. Presently, the level of the lake is 1898 m, the surface area – 1257 km², the volume – 33.4 km³.
- Armenia also has 100 small mountainous lakes, with the total volume of 0.8 km³.
- The total water abstraction in Armenia was 1735.5 mln.m³, Most of the water used in the Republic is for irrigation.





WATER SECTOR REFORMS IN ARMENIA

- Concept paper on water sector reforms, 2001.
- Water Code, 2002.
- National Water Policy, 2005.
- National Water Program, 2006, including program of short, medium, and long-term measures.
- Over 80 normative acts.





LEGISLATIVE IMPROVEMENT

During the past decade notable improvements have been recorded in the sector of water resource management in Armenia in terms of legislative reforms. The main direction of such reforms has been the introduction and implementation of the comprehensive water resource management principles in the country.

The Water Code of the Republic of Armenia adopted in 2002 is the principal document regulating the issues of water resource management and preservation.

Today the reformation process of the water sector is in a transitional phase associated with the decentralization of water resource management functions (from the central body to basin management departments).





LEGISLATIVE IMPROVEMENT

Special attention should be paid to the model guidelines for river basin management plans developed in 2006-2008, within the scope of the USAID Project on “Strengthening of the Legal and Institutional Framework for Water Sector in Armenia”.

Within the framework of the EU Water Initiative for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA), in accordance with the Water Code of the Republic of Armenia and the EU Water Framework Directive, starting from 2008 a model plan for water basin Management was developed and approved by the government of Armenia in 2011.





LEGISLATIVE IMPROVEMENT

The model plan includes;

- *the basic description of the water basin,*
- *the anthropogenic and biogenic impacts (inclusive of climate change) on the water resources and the evaluation of such impacts,*
- *the current and preferable prospective scenarios of water use,*
- *the financial estimates for the implementation and other aspects.*

Today the legislative amendment and other progressive changes implemented in the water sector of the Republic of Armenia are acceptable not only for the regional, but also for internationally known experts and organizations.





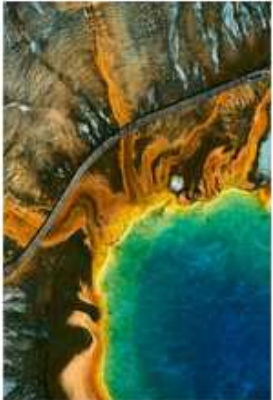
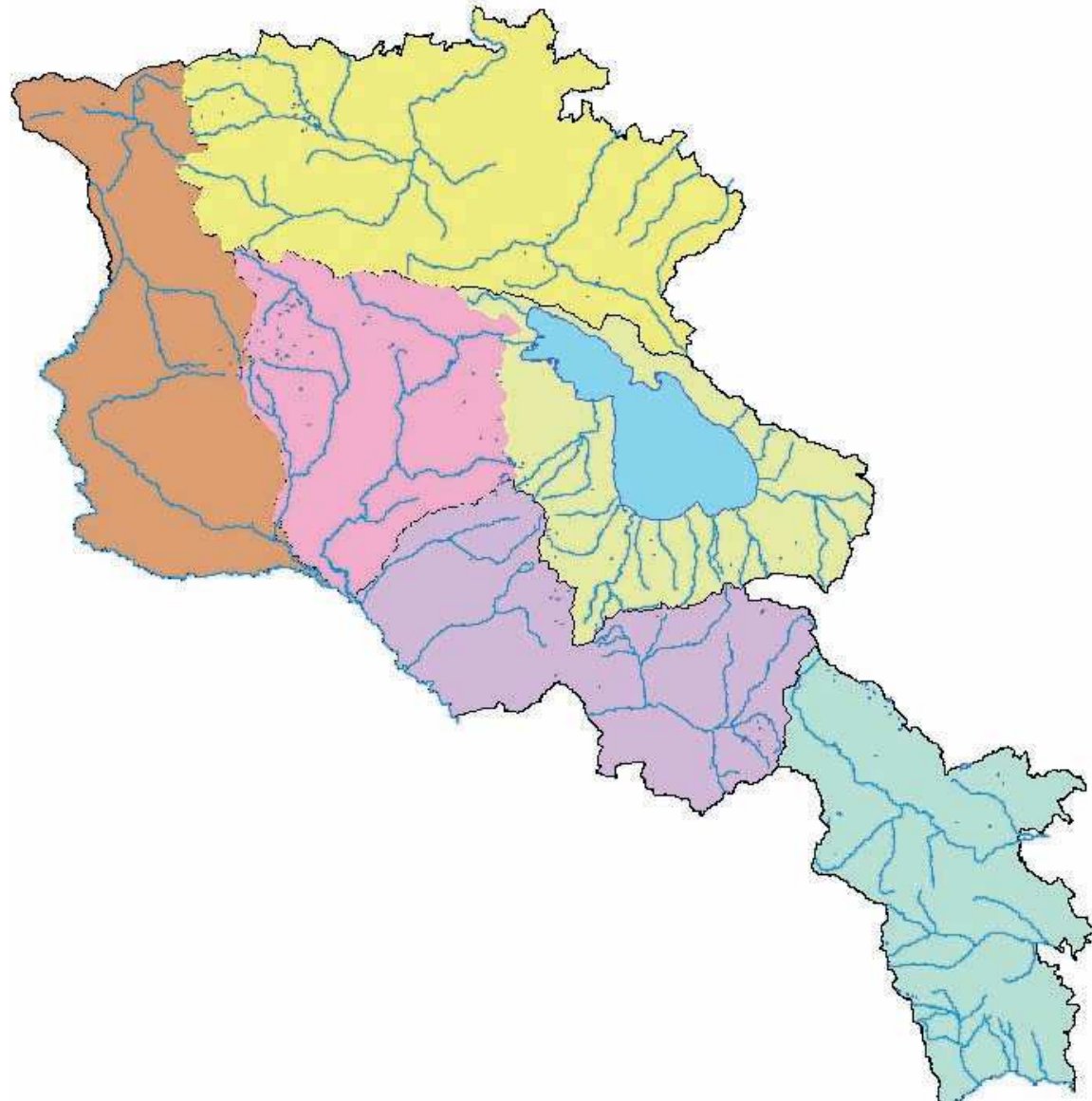
WATER BASIN MANAGEMENT

In the recent years, the legislative and institutional reforms on water resources in the country have carried on in harmony with the principles of comprehensive water resource management. Some of the critical steps in that reform process were *the creation and strengthening of territorial water basin management bodies and the implementation of water basin management plans as an important development towards the decentralization of water resource management and reasonable administration.*

The system of water basin management was implemented and the management of the country's water resources is currently carried out through six water basin areas that coincide with the natural hydrological river basins.



THE WATER BASIN MANAGEMENT AREAS IN RA





WATER BASIN MANAGEMENT

The National Water Program of the Republic of Armenia, as well as the Water Code of the Republic of Armenia requires an adjustment of water resource management bases through a decentralization of water resource management functions.

A prerequisite for the decentralization of water resource management functions would be the development of water basin management plans to become the primary document for the Territorial Departments of Water Basin Management. Comprehensive management of water resources at basin level would then be carried out in conformance with the developed plans.





LAKE SEVAN ISSUE

As a part of Armenia's water ecosystems, Lake Sevan is of utmost importance with its water collection pond, preservation, sustainable use and management. It is the largest alpine freshwater lake in the South Caucasus and well-known for its unique fish species. The lake is fed by 28 rivers and streams. Aggregate basin surfaces of the rivers total 2780 km.

Considering the importance of Lake Sevan in the social and economic development of the country, the Government of Armenia took and continues to take a number of following measures to preserve ecosystems of Lake Sevan and its water collection pond, restore ecological balance of the lake and ensure proper and balanced development of biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources;





LAKE SEVAN ISSUE

- *The level of the lake rose by 247 cm creating good conditions for the restoration of water ecosystem and biodiversity (up to 1900.20m).*
- *The fish population of Lake Sevan was replenished under a state program.*
- *In 2010 after a long pause, some improvements were reported in endemic species of the lake.*
- *Under Comprehensive Recovery Program research into characteristics of endemic fish species in Lake Sevan basin and water collection pond, examination of the current state of its natural spawning sites were performed.*
- *Considering the negative impact of submerged coastal forest plantations on the quality and pureness of water in the lake caused by its raised level, the Government funded and took actions to clean forest plantations under Medium Term Expenditure Program.*



LAKE SEVAN

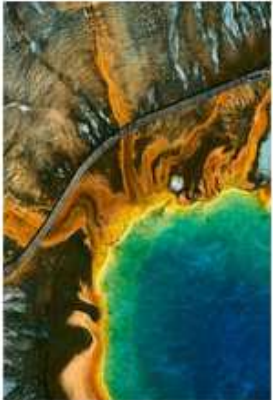




COOPERATION IN WATER SECTOR

- The Republic of Armenia has signed the Protocol on Water and Health in 1999. It is in the process of ratification.
- The Water Program has been initiated based on recommendations of the REC Caucasus International Advisory Council and the results of the First International Conference of 2001 dedicated to Water Management in the South Caucasus. REC Caucasus plans to achieve it through: Calling and facilitating a dialogue between concerned parties on transboundary water resources management; Fostering public participation in water related decision-making processes through an increased awareness, information and knowledge of the stakeholders and public in water related issues; Assisting the Governments of Caucasus countries in their initiatives towards integrated management of transboundary water resources.





CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP

- The Caucasus and Central Asia Global Water Partnership has been established in 2002. Along with the neighboring countries, Armenia is involved in its Joint activities.
- At present, GWP CACENA is a well-organized regional network that assists in addressing the complex inter-state water management issues and supports the countries of the region to develop their strategies and techniques of the practical implementation of the integrated water resources management.
- Provision of a neutral platform for dialogues got a significant development from the moment of the regional network's creation in 2002 and in 2006 the Regional Water Partnership was completely formed.



*EUROPEAN UNION'S WATER INITIATIVE FOR THE
COUNTRIES IN EASTERN EUROPE, CAUCASUS AND
CENTRAL ASIA*

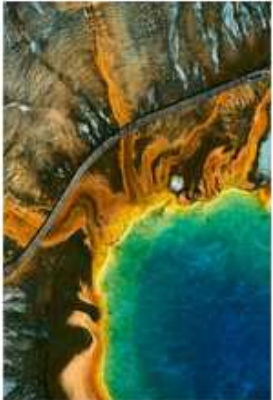


- The European Union's Water Initiative (EUWI) and its component for the countries in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) were launched at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002.
- The main objective of the EUWI is to support developing countries' and transition economies' actions to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on water supply and sanitation (WSS) and on integrated water resource management (IWRM).



EUROPEAN UNION'S WATER INITIATIVE FOR THE COUNTRIES IN EASTERN EUROPE, CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA

- In April 2006 Armenia stressed its interest to the European Union, in starting a process of the National Policy Dialogue (NPD) in the water sector and asked the European Commission to support that initiative. The main purpose of that dialogue is to improve the use of water resources and provide for sustainable investment in implementing the Millennium Development Goals. Particularly, within the framework of the NPD it was envisaged to develop a financing strategy for rural water supply and discharge, taking into consideration the Millennium Development Goals, as well as promote the introduction of the integrated water resources management principles, according to the approach of the EU Water Framework Directive.





ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΩ 😊

Thank you!!!

