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CLIMATE CHANGE: AS A TRIGGER FOR THE FUTURE POSITIVE CHANGE?



Historians
without Borders

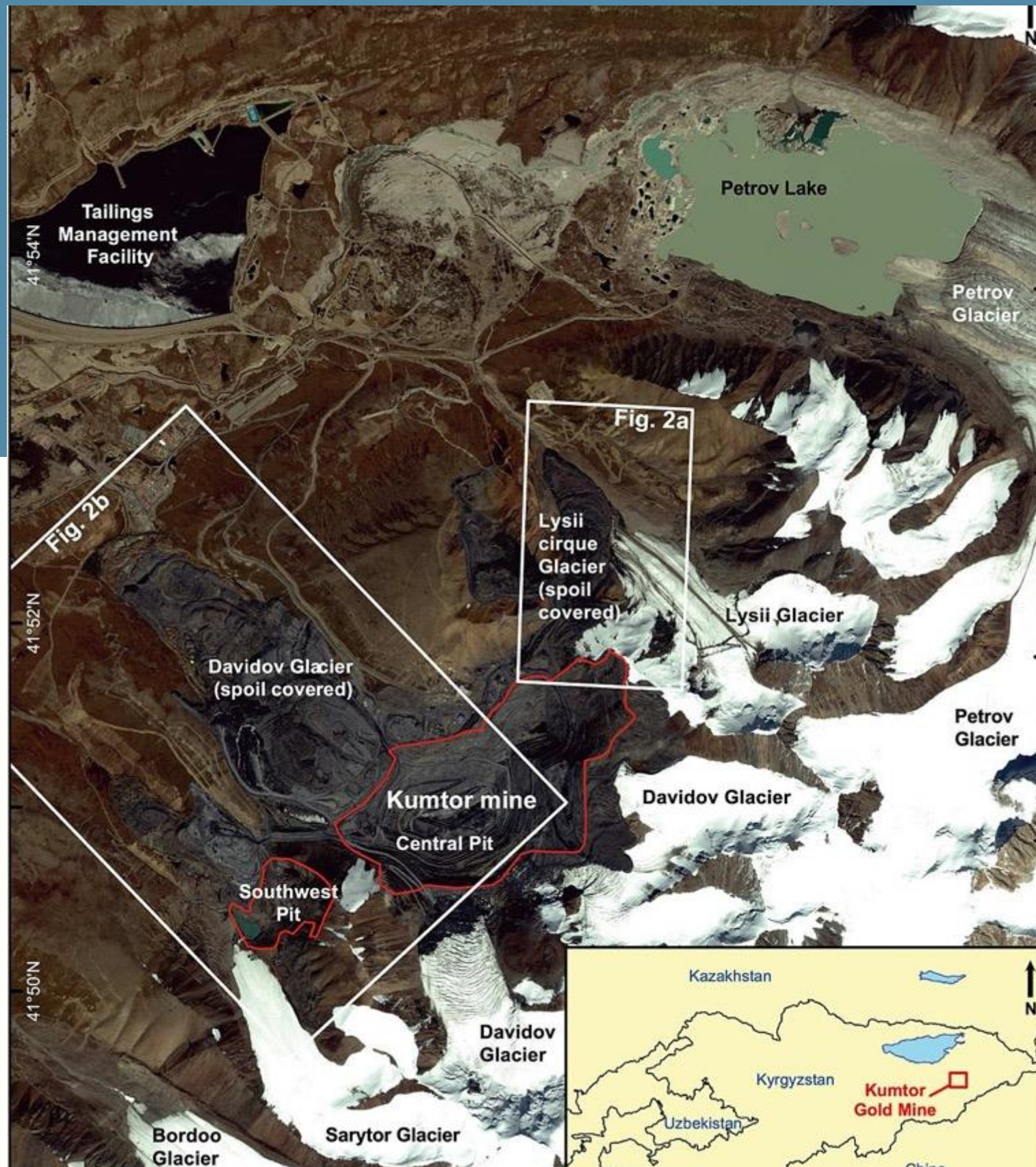


HELSINKI +50





Glacier Destruction in Kyrgyzstan



- Kyrgyzstan's Petrov and Davidov glaciers have lost most of their mass: from 700 million to just 200 million cubic meters.
- Glacier melting has generated around 2 billion tons of waste, containing ice, acids, and heavy metals, threatening Lake Issyk-Kul and the Naryn River.
- According to geologist William Colgan, mining at Kumtor has accelerated glacier retreat far beyond natural climate change effects.
- Mining activities have removed ice at a rate of over 30 meters per year, compared to 10 meters from natural retreat.
- Environmental groups highlight a lack of transparency and serious ecological risks at the Kumtor site.



https://bankwatch.org/bw_in_media/mining-company-shirks-blame-for-glacier-damage-in-kyrgyzstan

Impact on Biodiversity



Protecting Snow leopards - NABU beyond borders

Snow leopards are among the most endangered big cats on earth. Only 4,000 to 6,400 animals now live in the wild. NABU has been committed to the survival of snow leopards in Kyrgyzstan since 1999 and has extended its commitment to...

NABU

The Kyrgyz Republic is a mountainous with 94% of the country being above 1000 m and 41% above 3000 m. Snow leopards in Kyrgyzstan inhabit about 89,000 km² and may number 300-350 individuals. Threats include poaching for skins and body parts, poaching and excess hunting of prey, and habitat fragmentation.



<https://en.nabu.de/topics/species/snow-leopard/index.html>

This year is critical.



All countries must create new national climate action plans that align with limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius - essential to avoid the worst of climate catastrophe.

This is a vital chance to seize the benefits of clean power. I urge all countries to take it, with the G20 leading the way. We also need action to tackle pollution, slam the brakes on biodiversity loss, and deliver the finance countries need to protect our planet.

Together, let's get to work and make 2025 the year we restore good health to Mother Earth.



<https://www.ohchr.org/en/civic-space>



What is civic space?

Civic space is the environment that enables civil society to play a role in the political, economic and social life of our societies. In particular, civic space allows individuals and groups to contribute to policy-making that affects their lives, including by:

- accessing information,
- engaging in dialogue,
- expressing dissent or disagreement, and
- joining together to express their views.

An open and pluralistic civic space that guarantees freedom of expression and opinion as well as freedom of assembly and association, is a prerequisite for making development and peace sustainable.



<https://news.un.org/ru/story/2025/04/1463531>

Climate crisis triggers increased gender-based violence



Climate change worsens gender inequality and increases the risk of violence against women and girls.

A 1°C rise in global temperature leads to a 4.7% increase in partner violence.

If temperatures rise by 2°C by 2090, an additional 40 million women and girls could face partner violence each year; a 3.5°C rise would double that number.

Climate shocks also trigger rises in femicides (28% during heatwaves), child marriages, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation, especially after climate-induced migration.

Three baskets of OSCE

OSCE Political Basket

OSCE Economic Basket

Human Rights



<https://osce.delegfrance.org/OSCE-s-three-dimensions>



<https://www.osce.org/helsinki-final-act>

As the world grapples with the escalating impacts of climate change, it is becoming increasingly clear that climate resilience is not just an environmental or economic challenge — it is an interconnected, transboundary matter of our collective security. It is a challenge we are facing together. Climate security challenges are not only climate or environmental concerns, but also deeply intertwined with political, economic, and social stability.

Three baskets of OSCE:

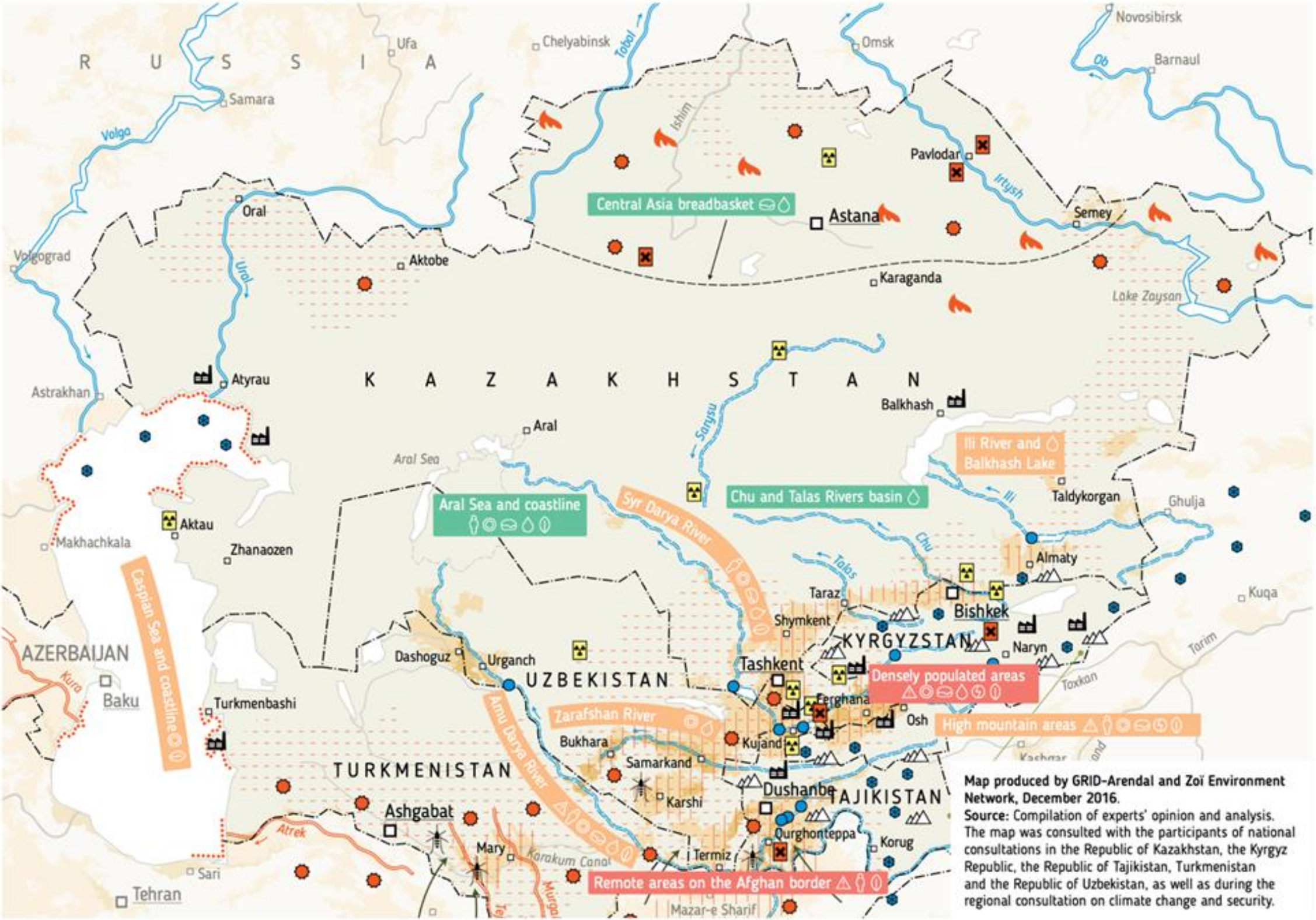
→ Gaps between the decision-making process at the level of Basket 1: local communities and civil society organizations are not involved on a parity basis.

→ As a result, the needs of the beneficiaries are not taken into account and the needs of the beneficiaries are not addressed. This affects the increase of risks and disasters and the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and human dimension from local to global level.

→ **Recommendation:** Localization of international donors' projects with involvement of experts, leaders of local communities and public organizations is necessary.



Climate change and security hotspots in Central Asia



Symbol	Meaning
Red dashed line	Vulnerable coastal areas (e.g., Caspian Sea coastline)
Orange dots with flame symbol	High wildfire risk zones
Blue dots with water droplet symbol	Water scarcity hotspots
Orange shaded area (with red outline)	Remote areas near Afghan border (climate and security risks)
Pink shaded area	Densely populated regions vulnerable to climate impacts
Orange shaded area	High mountain zones (sensitive to glacier melt)
"Ili River and Balkhash Lake" label	Fragile water systems at risk
"Chu and Talas Rivers basin" label	Important river basins for regional water supply
"Aral Sea and coastline" label	Critical environmental degradation area (salinization, biodiversity loss)
Black square with factory symbol	Industrial activities (pollution sources)
Eco-icons near Aral Sea	Indicate issues like biodiversity loss, water scarcity, migration, agricultural decline

Climate change and security hotspots in Central Asia



<https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/5/8/331991.pdf>

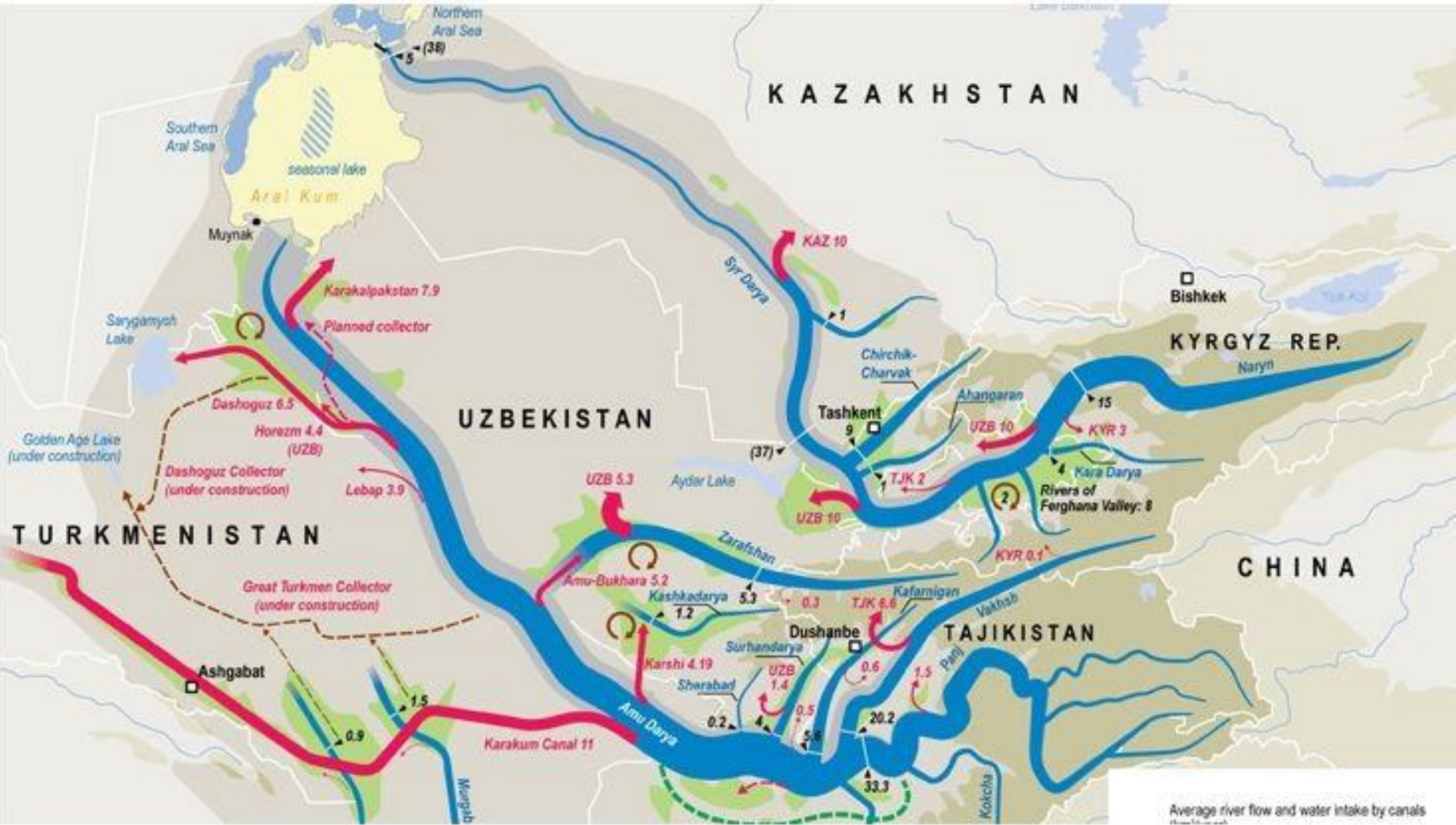
What are the main entry points for civil society engagement in OSCE's economic and environmental dimension?

- Civil society inclusive dialogue between authorities and local communities who live in disaster risk zones, such as the methodology of the research “View from the Frontline” (VFL) on promotion of voices of local communities from local to global that was successfully implemented from 2018 in 3 regions of Kyrgyzstan including 92 uranium tailings where Maily Suu is included in Top-10 most radioactive places in the world in partnership with Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR).



- Gaps between the decision-making process at the level of Basket 1 of OSCE: local communities and civil society organizations are not involved on a parity basis in decision making processes. As a result, the needs of the beneficiaries are not taken into account and the needs of the beneficiaries are not addressed. This affects the increase of risks and disasters and the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and human dimension from local to global level.

Shared Water Resources in Central Asia



Cooperation for Survival



<https://www.newscentralasia.net/2017/04/24/центральная-азия-общие-водные-ресур/>

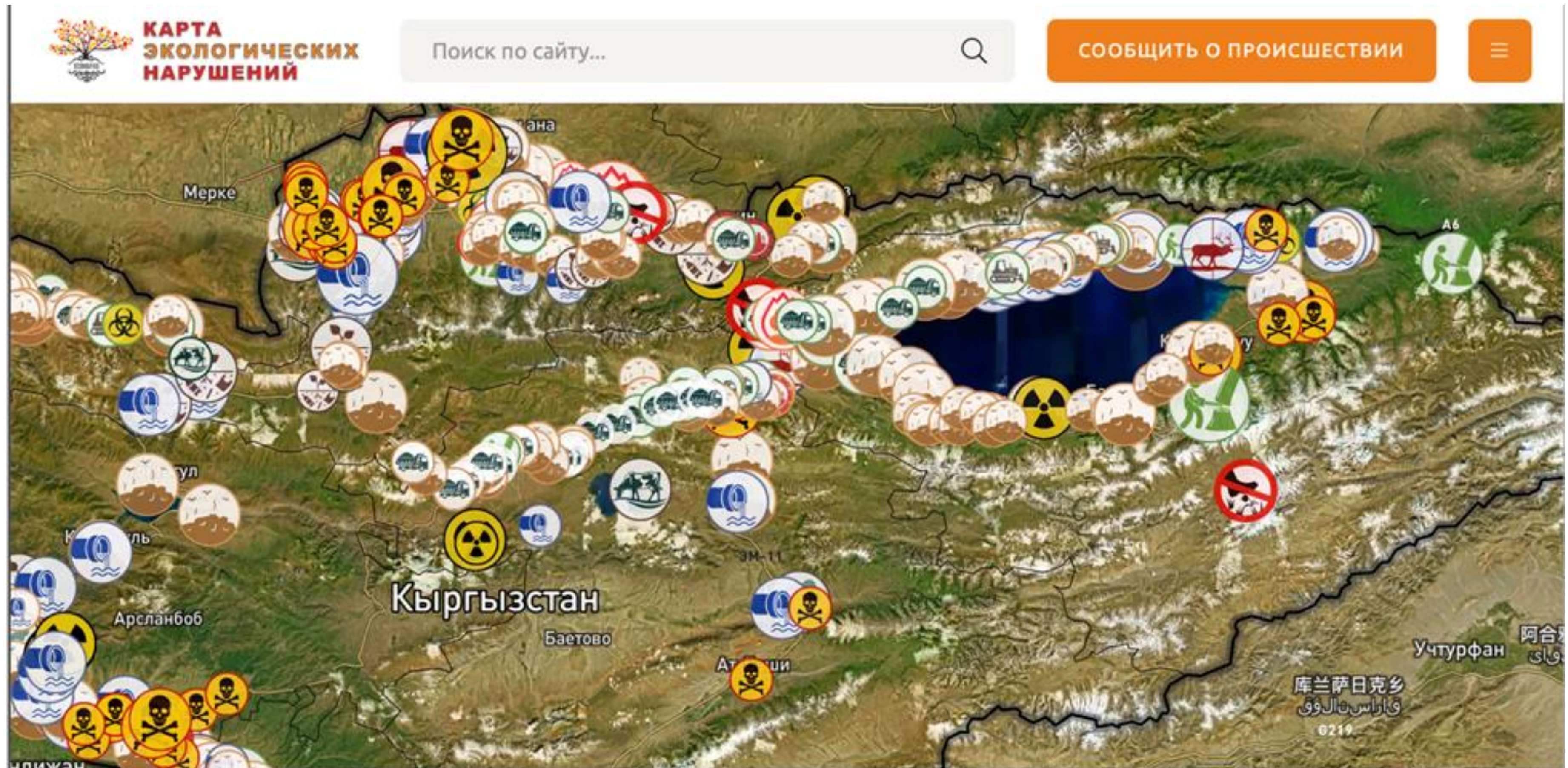
Symbol / Element	Meaning
Thick blue rivers	Main natural river flows (e.g., Amu Darya, Syr Darya, Zarafshan)
Thick red lines	Planned or under-construction collectors and canals (man-made water infrastructure)
Green lines	Smaller irrigation canals and water distribution systems
Cities marked (e.g., Bishkek, Tashkent, Dushanbe)	Major cities depending on river water supply
⚡ Dams and reservoirs (names like Toktogul, Kayrakkum)	Key water storage and hydropower sites
➡ Arrow indicators on rivers	Direction of water flow
▬ Labeled distances (e.g., UZB 5.3, 7.9)	Distance or capacity of canals/collectors in kilometers or cubic meters
Light yellow area (Aral Sea zone)	Degraded or at-risk water bodies (e.g., shrinking Aral Sea)

Impact of Climate Change on Central Asia

- Climate change increases pressure on water resources, agriculture, and the energy sector.
- Water security remains a top priority, especially regarding transboundary rivers.
- Sufficient water supply is projected until 2035, but by 2050 many regions will face declining availability.
- Population growth and economic development will intensify competition for water and land, particularly during dry years.
- Special attention is needed for mountainous areas, densely populated zones, and southern borders due to the risk of resource-based tensions.



Map of environmental violations





Air Pollution in Bishkek & the Human Right to a Safe Environment

Despite Kyrgyzstan's development strategies (2018–2040 and up to 2026), air pollution in Bishkek remains critically high.

In 2022, average PM2.5 levels were nearly 7 times higher than WHO norms; winter levels peaked at 200–300 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ vs. the 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ limit (MoveGreen data).

According to UNICEF, 112 deaths in 2022 were linked to smog; respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses are on the rise.

Economic losses due to air pollution in 2021–2022 reached 2 billion KGS, equal to the city's annual healthcare budget.

Contradictory Actions

The Bishkek City Hall removed all trolleybuses, despite their purchase with \$23.5 million from the EBRD, violating climate goals.

This contradicts national mitigation plans that aim to expand electric transport and reduce emissions in the transport sector.

Human Rights and Climate Justice

A clean and healthy environment is a recognized human right (UNHRC Resolution 48/...).

Air pollution directly undermines this right and jeopardizes Kyrgyzstan's commitment to the Paris Agreement and its 2030 climate targets.

More info: bishkeksmog.info

Hashtag: [#BishkekSmog](https://twitter.com/BishkekSmog)

<https://bishkeksmog.info/2025/04/26/prava/>



Rare Earth Elements in Central Asia: Imperatives and Constrains



- Central Asia (especially Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan) is emerging as a key player in the global rare earth elements (REEs) and rare metals (RMs) market.
- Demand for critical minerals is rising due to the green energy transition and geopolitical tensions with China and Russia.

⚙️ Opportunities:

- Major rare earth deposits discovered, e.g., in Kazakhstan's Karaganda region (935,000 tonnes).
- Western countries (USA, EU, UK, Canada) are increasingly interested in Central Asia's resources to diversify supply chains.
- Kazakhstan, with its uranium mining history, has the highest potential, but lacks full processing capabilities.

⚠️ Challenges:

- Infrastructure limitations, political risks, and environmental concerns.
- Heavy Chinese and Russian influence: China controls mining rights in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan; Kazakhstan relies on Russian logistics.
- Fragmented regional cooperation could delay development and deter investors..



Trends and challenges for the second OSCE corridor, especially environmental!

1. Technogenic and damage to sustainability and economy

2. Economic costs and damage

3. New resettlement, as in Batken oblast 2025

4. Systemic problems, with uranium tailings

5. Threats from uranium tailings, like Kumtor and others

6. Reg challenges, from business, from Afghanistan and others.



Recommendations for the OSCE:

For the sustainability of the OSCE's economic dimension development, it is important to continue the Finnish OSCE-Malta and 2025 initiative:

- For OSCE member states
- For the Finnish Chairmanship Finland 2025

For civil society:

- Develop a culture of corporate partnership with innovative technologies and creativity principles (+IT)
- Develop a culture of new approach how to promote development and citizen participation through public policy
- GP2025 Themes
- Every Day Counts, Act for Resilience Today





The overall theme of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, 'Every Day Counts, Act for Resilience Today' embodies an urgency to course correct the trajectory of progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework goals, as articulated in the midterm review.

With two years elapsed since the midterm review of 2023 and five years remaining until 2030, there is a final window to accelerate action. Towards this end, the GP2025 aims to mobilize collective action towards building resilience through assessing progress on and giving practical guidance on accelerating the implementation of the Sendai Framework and of the calls made in the Political Declaration itself.



Under the theme Resilient together in a changing climate, the event will focus on ways for participating States to strengthen their resilience and responses to economic and environmental challenges stemming from climate change. The first day will take place at Hofburg/Neuer Saal in plenary format, including an opening and closing, as well as two thematic sessions. Discussions will focus on the triple planetary crisis, resilient energy systems, their systemic link to climate change, and their impact on security and stability in the OSCE region. The second day will include a field visit organized by the Chairpersonship to showcase how innovation can be used to integrate renewable energy generation with biodiversity concerns. In line with the Chairpersonship's overarching priorities, the event will also provide a platform for representatives from OSCE participating States to engage constructively and comprehensively through a whole-of-society approach.



**THANK
YOU!**



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