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**Blue Peace**

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# Blue Peace

## Switzerland's water diplomacy initiative

Dr. André Wehrli, Regional Water Advisor for Central Asia, Swiss Embassy to Kazakhstan

ICWC "25 years of water cooperation in Central Asia" Conference

23./24.11.2017

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## What is Blue Peace?

## Blue Peace

The Blue Peace approach

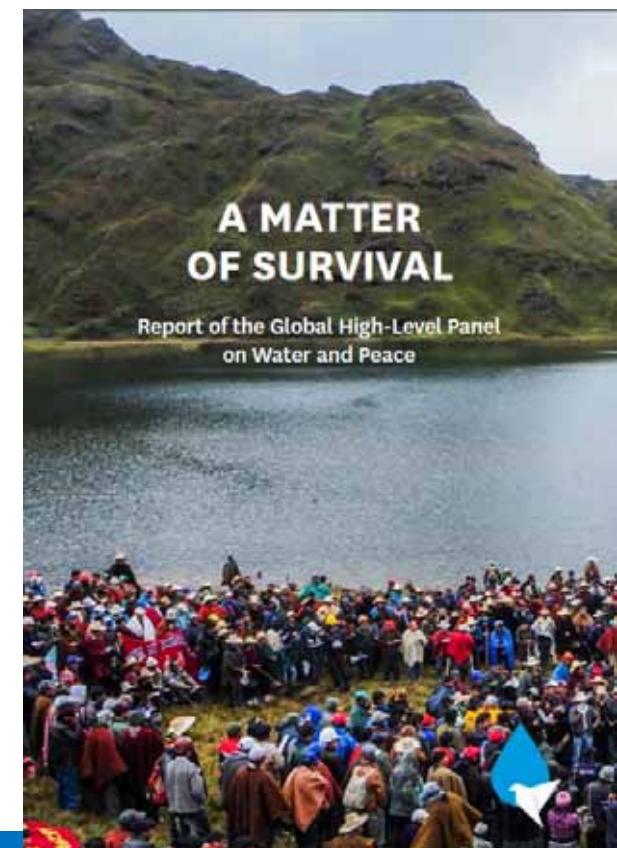
- promotes trans-boundary water cooperation as a tool for peace-building (*«an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure»*)
- combines policy level with technical work on the ground

Components of the *Blue Peace «movement»*

- Blue Peace Central Asia
- Blue Peace Middle East
- Global Blue Peace: Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace

[https://www.genevawaterhub.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/A\\_Matter\\_of\\_Survival\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.genevawaterhub.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/A_Matter_of_Survival_FINAL.pdf)

29/11/2017





# Why do we need it?

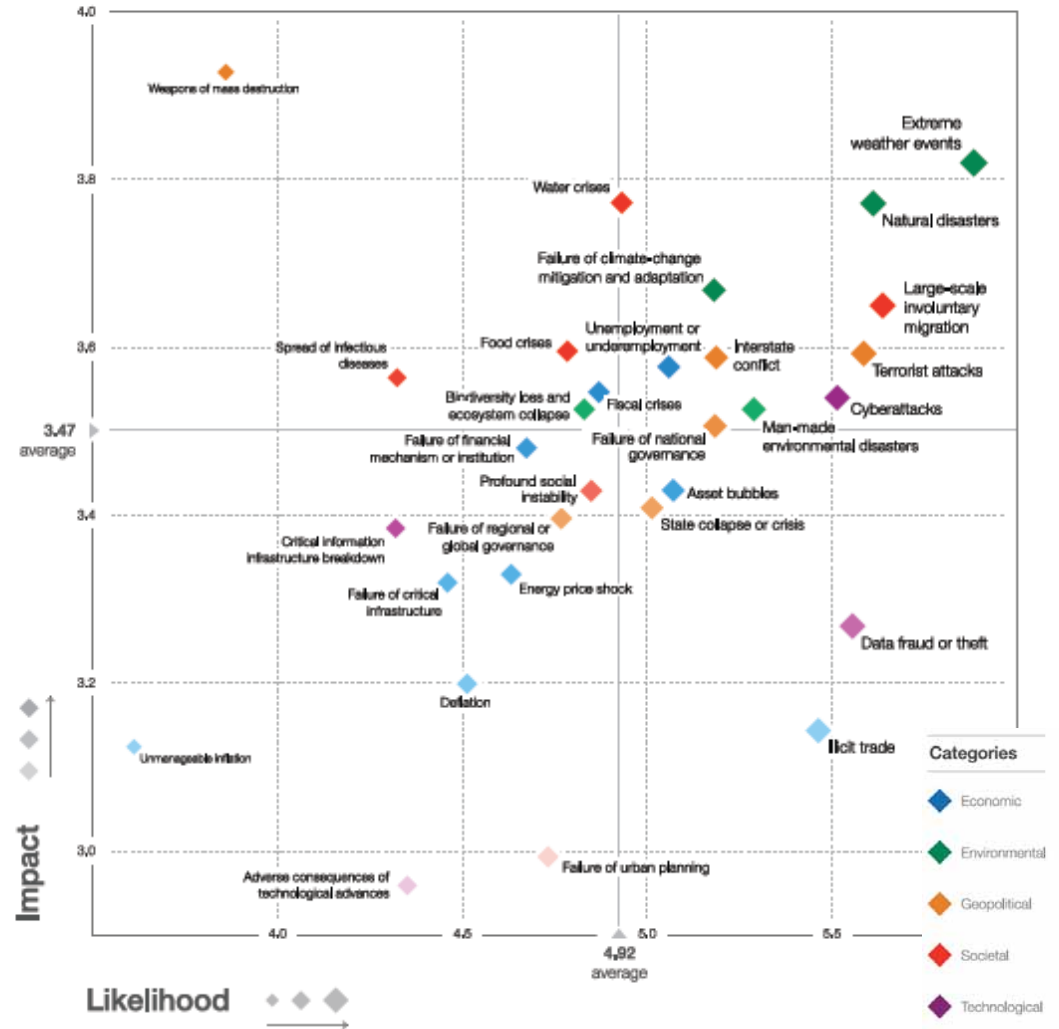
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- Water is Life.
- Global water crisis as a major risk (WEF 2017)

Top 10 risks in terms of Impact

- 1 Weapons of mass destruction
- 2 Extreme weather events
- 3 Water crises
- 4 Natural disasters
- 5 Failure of climate-change mitigation and adaptation
- 6 Large-scale involuntary migration
- 7 Food crises
- 8 Terrorist attacks
- 9 Interstate conflict
- 10 Unemployment or underemployment

Figure 3: The Global Risks Landscape 2017





## Why now?

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- Global changes including climate change
    - Population growth
    - (un-)sustainable economic development
    - growing pollution, biological/chemical degradation
    - changing climate with more frequent/intense extremes
- >> water resources are expected to decline over the next 3-4 decades – and stationarity is dead
- >> but preventive action is still possible *now*.



# Why Switzerland?

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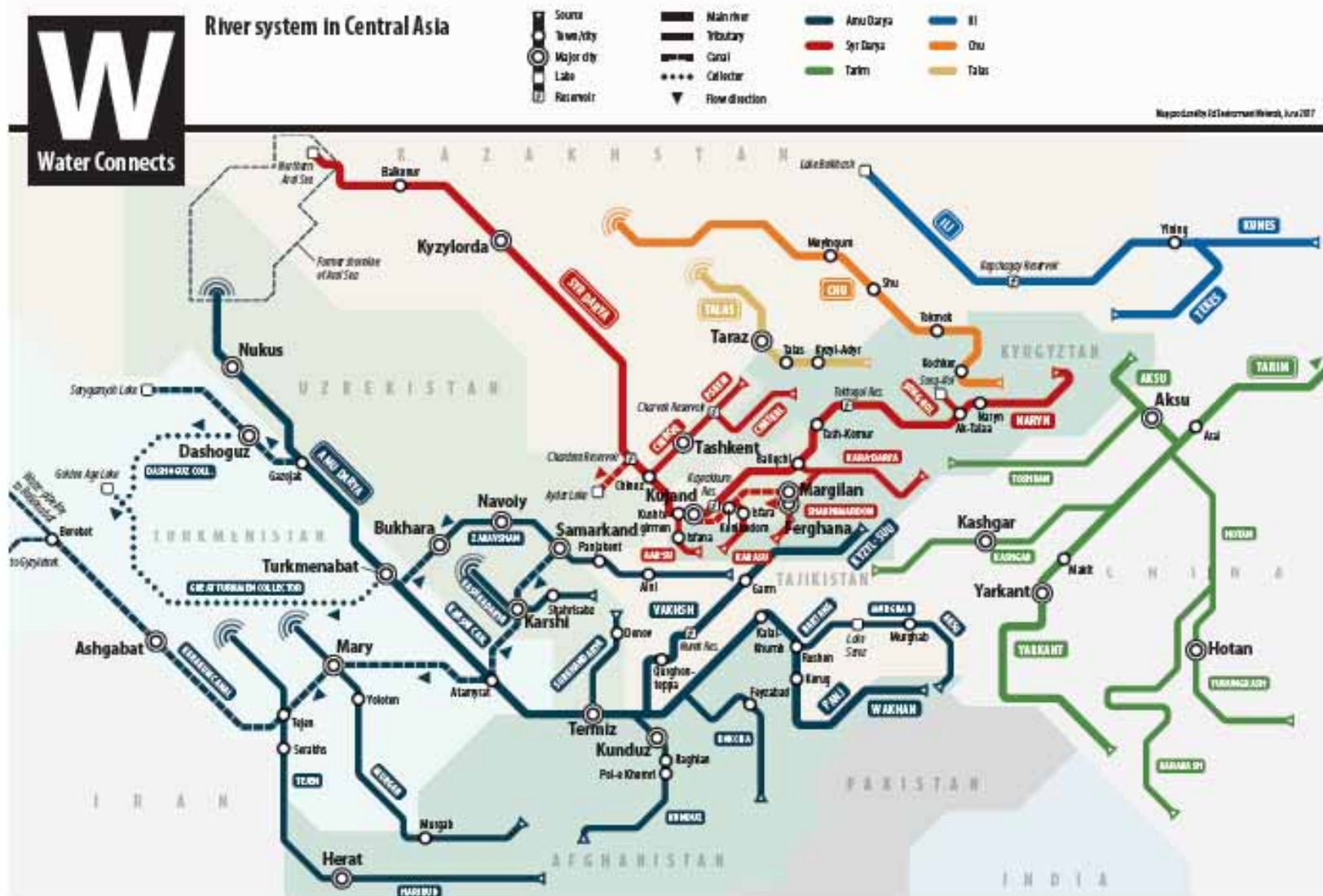
Switzerland is Europe's water tower...





# Blue Peace Central Asia (BPCA)

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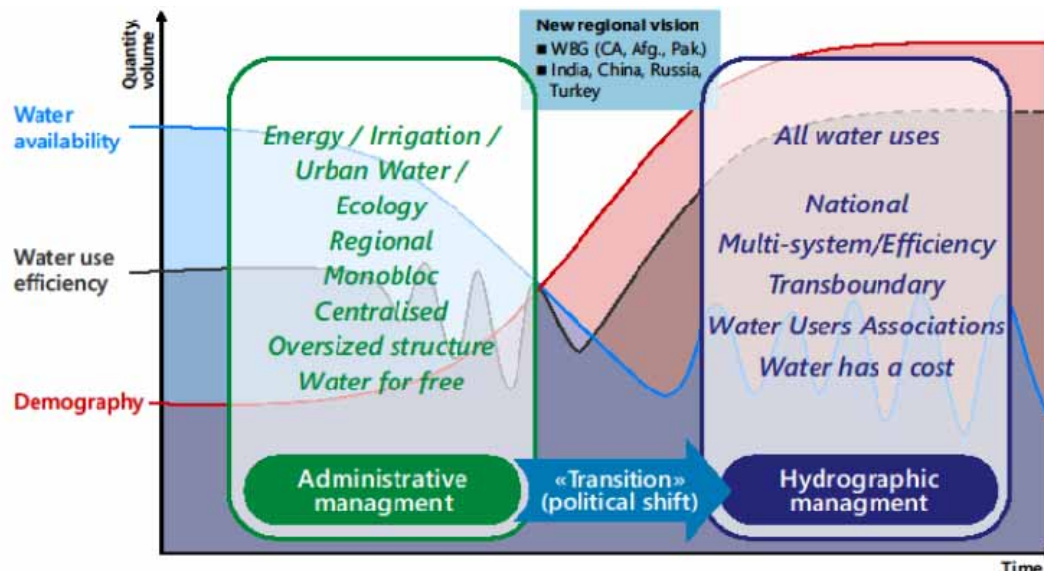




## Challenges in Central Asia...

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- legacy from the past
- transboundary basins provide the lifeline for about 60 M inhabitants (and population increases)
- unsustainable water use and insufficient transnational cooperation
- changing climate (i.a. mountain storage changes)



**>> cost of inaction on the rise (4.5bn USD/a)**



## ...and opportunities

- Geographical location
- «one road, one belt»
- **Water-food-energy nexus** as key for prosperity
- Political momentum



- >> **Regional approach is needed and possible**
- >> **start pragmatically, and start now**





## Switzerland's water engagement in CA

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- Swiss Cooperation in CA since early 90ies
- Support of IWRM in entire CA, but focus on KG, TJ, UZB
- KG: data exchange and information systems (Chu-Talas), NWRM
- TJ: WASH, NWRM, DRM
- UZB: WASH, NWRM (incl. DRM)
- Strategy 2017-2020 with **new regional domain:**  
Infrastructure – Water – Climate Change (from source (glaciers) to the end users)



## **BPCA-Pillar I: Hydro-diplomacy in motion** **Blue Peace**

2014: Basel Conference in IWRM, Basel Switzerland

- Identified key interests: data sharing, water quality standards, joint infrastructure

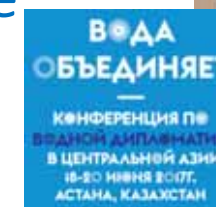
2016: Intl. Scientific-applied Conference on WR, Almaty, KAZ

- Event driven by KAZ commitment ; importance of cooperation confirmed; relevance of new technologies



2017: BPCA Conference, Astana, Kazakhstan

- Discussions: new collaborative schemes, new funding options, stronger involvement of the future generation



From 2018: High Level Dialogue Platform

- Exchange on commonly identified regional priorities

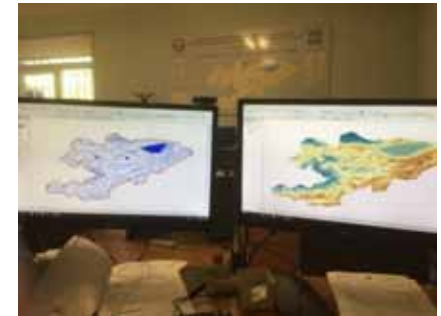


## BPCA-Pillar 2: Action on the ground

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### Smart water practices

- Hydro data: improvement and sharing
- Climate change adaptation (Cryosphere)
- Water quality
- Joint infrastructure (blue investment)





## BPCA-Pillar 3: The future generation

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### Next generation of water champions

- Education: Capacity building for young water professionals
- Networking: building networks at regional level > transboundary dialogue
- Engagement of new generation in water sector





### Participants:

- High level officials from CA countries (representatives in charge of water/MFA)
- Swiss Special Envoy for Water, Michel Mordasini

### Working Modalities:

- Consensus based
- Annual meetings (& additional activities)

### Expected outcomes:

- Strengthened technical cooperation
- Reinforced sub-regional and regional cooperation
- Enhanced partnership between CA countries and Switzerland



### Focus (*demand-driven*):

- Knowledge exchange and initiation of sustainable water practices
- Learning and capacity building for the future generation

### Planned activities 2018 (i.a.):

- Ministerial study tour to West Africa on joint infrastructure and benefit sharing
- Laying the foundation for regional cooperation on cryospheric climate services (towards climate resilient water/risk management)
- Launching new educational activities on water policing, integrated water resource management and hydro-diplomacy for young water professionals in Central Asia.

>> HLDP to *initiate and accompany* the execution of these activities.



## Links to other initiatives...

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- Myriad of initiatives have been launched in the last 25 years by multiple stakeholders
- Success at the regional level is still modest, and needs to be improved
- Stronger coordination & cooperation of external actors needed *under the guidance of CA states!!*





**Thank you for your attention!**

**Blue Peace**

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