

Environmental security of the Caspian Sea
Information and analytical bulletin
17 December – 23 December 2012

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Introduction

The Caspian Sea, formerly the part of the World Ocean, at present is one of the largest lakes on the planet and because of that is the natural heritage of all the humanity.

In the XX th century the Caspian Sea ecosystem suffered irreversible changes, caused by new species immigration, natural resources exploitation and other reasons.

Things to be preserved, including the largest on Earth sturgeon population, need protection for the sake of the humanity and especially the population of the coastline countries.

Environmental security of the Caspian Sea means that its ecosystem is being protected from various threats caused by humans. People can avert these threats, but to do this they must be aware of the consequences of their activity and decisions.

Threat ‘map’, presented in the bulletin, will help the reader to trace the path of direct threats to ecological security and their reasons and sources. One of these sources is marine activity as well as land activity.

The bulletin contains information characterizing a) the extent of anthropogenic load on the Caspian Sea ecosystem – issues “Marine activity condition” and “Hydrocarbon transportation”; b) planned and performed measures, aimed at ecological security increase – issue “Environment protection”; c) the relations of Caspian states with each other and other states, directly or indirectly influencing on ecological security of the Caspian - issue “International relations”. Relevant views and opinions on the bulletin topic are presented in the column “Quotation of the day” and “Selected”. All the data are collected from mass media sources.

The bulletin is updated once a week; each issue involves the news for the past 7 days. The bulletin is prepared by KaspMNIZ within the frame of monitoring of natural and anthropogenic processes influence on the ecosystem condition and research of marine and other activity effect on the marine environment.

The three corner stones of monitoring are observation, assessment and forecasting. Formerly monitoring was discussed in terms of observation system organization. Today the focus is on the assessment of monitoring objects condition.

We don’t yet know how to measure the condition of the Caspian Sea ecological security. But the bulletin shows the search for approach to this problem solution. In particular, the issues

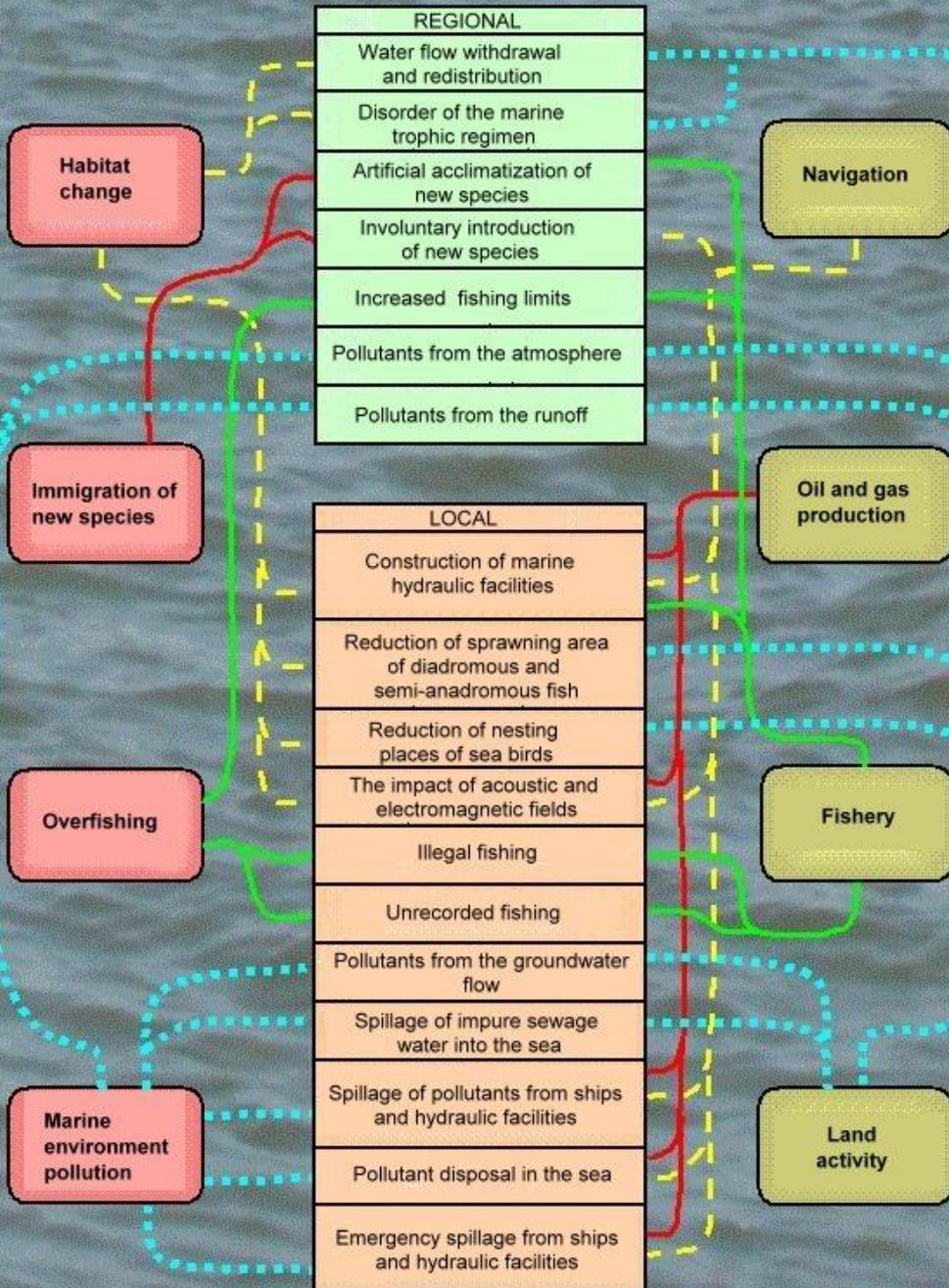
covered in it are subdivided into those having direct effect (Ed) and those having indirect effect (Ei) on the Caspian Sea condition.

Everything that happens on the Caspian Sea and around it is subdivided into following events: a) national scale (Sn)– the events referring to the territory of one of the Caspian states and adjacent sea territory, b) regional scale (Sr)- the events happening on the territory of a Caspian region or referring to the relations between the Caspian states, c) global scale (Sg)– events happening outside the Caspian States referring to the relations of the Caspian states with states not bordering on the Caspian Sea.

For the convenience of the reader all the information messages, included in the bulletin, are marked with indices. Sometimes you can encounter the index (Ad), meaning that the assessment of the event covered is difficult to perform.

In the end of the bulletin the reader can find generalized and tabulated information about the events covered, which we further plan to use for the analysis of the change of condition of the Caspian Sea environmental security.

THREAT MAP



Quotation of the day

19 December

This year there has been a decline in oil production. I'm pleased to announce that the situation in this field is being stabilized.

I.Aliyev
President of Azerbaijan

21 December

Those who are playing an active part in the Caspian region have the future.

H.Sayari
Admiral, Commander of the Iranian Navy

State of marine activity

Oil and gas production

18 December

EiSg On December 18, BP CEO Robert Dudley paid a visit to the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic. Welcoming the guest, SOCAR President Rovnag Abdullayev said that the subcommittee established under the decision of the Steering Committee on the development of Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli fields' block effectively operates both in London and Baku, effective measures were being carried out and plans were being prepared for short and long-term development of the fields.

BP CEO Robert Dudley appreciated the works done for stabilization of extraction in ACG block during the last three months and thanked the Azerbaijani side for support and help.

<http://www.newsazerbaijan.ru/oilgas/20121218/298261716.html>

22 December

EdSn SOCAR has commissioned the well #306 from the platform #14 on Gunashli field in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea. It was drilled to Fasila Suite by the order of 28 May Oil and Gas Processing Department. Daily production rate of the well makes 90 tons of oil and 10,000 cubic meters of gas from 3118-3074 metres interval.

<http://www.trend.az/print/2101965.html>

Navigation

18 December

EdSn On December 16 Captain of Astrakhan Port instructed that all the ships be piloted by icebreakers as the air temperature fell to minus 17 degrees below zero and ice started to form in the North Caspian.

In accordance with the instruction of Rosmorrechflot, icebreakers "Kapitan Bukaev", "Kapitan

Chechkin” and “Kapitan Metsaik” have started piloting ships, as the press-service reports. The start of winter navigation was announced on 1 December 2012.

<http://portnews.ru/news/151637/>

21 December

EiSr Assembly of the transport barge to build offshore platforms on the Vladimir Filanovsky field started in Baku. LUKoil is going to start active stage of the field construction in 2013, reported LUKoil.

The barge will be used to strengthen the support foundations of the offshore platforms and to install transitional bridges between them using the offshore crane with the cargo carrying capacity of 400 tons as well as installation of upper buildings of the drilling platform, central technological platform and the platform of the residential module. The cargo carrying capacity of the barge is 13,450 tons, its length is 140.3 meters and width is 62.3 meters.

<http://www.vesti.az/news.php?id=141393>

21 December

EiSn Akim of Mangistau Region Baurzhan Mukhamedzhanov held a meeting devoted to the issue of the construction of a ferry complex in Kuryk Port.

The construction of the port is scheduled for 2013-2016.

General Director of KazMorTransFlot Marat Ormanov made a statement that Kuryk port has good prospects and its capacity can be used for the development of shipbuilding and ship-repair industries and ferry transportation.

<http://www.bnews.kz/ru/photonews/post/116441/>

22 December

EdSn Powerful Iranian Navy is monitoring every movement in the Caspian Sea, Navy Commander Rear-Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said on Wednesday.

According to IRNA, addressing the provincial official in Sari, he said the Iranian Navy is monitoring any movement by radars throughout the Caspian Sea region.

The Islamic Republic of Iran plays significant role to give clearance to the commercial, military and industrial fleet, he said.

He said that the Caspian Sea is a major energy field holding about dlr 50 billion of oil and gas reserves.

Volume of trade through the Caspian Sea is about 65 million tons a year with Iran constituting 20 percent, he said.

http://iran.ru/rus/news_iran.php?act=news_by_id&news_id=84844

Fishery

19 December

EiSn Director of Iran Fisheries Organization Gholam Reza Razeqi said that Iran hadn't held commercial sturgeon catch for the past two years. He noted that currently favourable conditions are created for the production of black caviar at fish breeding farms. Last year fish breeding

farms produced 100 kg of black caviar which was later exported. Currently fishery enterprises are planning to produce 1 t of black caviar.

http://iran.ru/rus/news_iran.php?act=news_by_id&news_id=84810

23 December

EiSg The Turkmen State Committee for Fisheries will sign a contract with the Hong Kong Richie Company, Limited (Hong Kong) to purchase two fishing and freezer vessels and a flexible, customized fishing and transport one, an official Turkmen source said today. The corresponding decree was signed by the Turkmen President. The deal will increase the fish production. Turkmenistan has recently made a policy of intensifying sea transport. According to the data as of May 2012, the country's merchant fleet is composed of nine vessels, of which four cargo ships with a total capacity of over 13,000 tons and five river and sea tankers with a total capacity of 23,600 tons.

<http://www.turkmenistan.ru/ru/articles/38144.html>

Hydrocarbons transportation

18 December

EiSg The EU-Azerbaijan cooperation in the energy sector was discussed in Brussels on Monday, Trend news agency reported referring to the EU Council. During the thirteenth meeting of the Cooperation Council between the EU and Azerbaijan the sides confirmed their commitment to the negotiations with Turkmenistan on the construction of the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline. Trans-Caspian gas pipeline running to around 300 kilometres will be laid from the Turkmen coast of the Caspian Sea to Azerbaijani, where it will be linked to the Southern Gas Corridor. Negotiations between Turkmenistan and the EU and other countries on the construction of the Trans-Caspian pipeline have been on-going since the late 90s.

<http://www.oilcapital.ru/transport/190408.html>

Environmental protection

20 December

EiSr Ashgabat is hosting a regional meeting on Dec. 19-20 to discuss the draft agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources of the Caspian Sea. The top managers and experts from the relevant bodies of the five Caspian littoral countries - Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan attend the meeting. The Foreign Ministry and the State Enterprise on the Caspian Sea under the Turkmen President are the organizers. "This is the second meeting of experts this year," the organizers said. "Their mission is to develop a draft agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources of the Caspian Sea, designed to create an effective mechanism of interaction between the Caspian countries in this important area."

<http://www.turkmenistan.ru/ru/articles/38134.html>

21 December

EdSn The Republic Seismological Center of ANAS told APA that the quake was recorded on 117 km away from Nardaran – in the Caspian Sea on December 21 at 09:25. The quake was not felt.

<http://ru.salamnews.org/ru/news/read/47647/pv-azerbaydanskom-sektore-kaspiyaproizoshlo-zemle>

22 December

EiSr The Azerbaijani parliament ratified yesterday the protocol "On Regional Preparedness, Response and Cooperation to Incidents of Oil Pollution" to the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea.

Milli Majlis vice speaker and chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Natural Resources, Energy & Environment Valeh Alasgarov informs that the protocol was also joined by other Caspian countries - Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan.

<http://abc.az/rus/news/70461.html>

International relation

17 December

EiSr A two-day meeting of the special working group at the level of deputy foreign ministers of the Caspian littoral states on the development of a draft convention on the legal status of the Caspian Sea starts in Ashgabat, an official Turkmen source said on Monday.

In addition, Ashgabat is scheduled to host a meeting of representatives of the Caspian littoral states to discuss the draft agreement on the protection and rational use of biological resources of the Caspian Sea on Dec.19-21, 2012.

<http://www.turkmenistan.ru/ru/articles/38124.html>

18 December

EiSr National Iranian Gas Company head Javad Owji arrived in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, on Dec. 17 for meetings with Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimukhammedov and Foreign Minister Rasit Meredov, Fars News Agency reported. Iranian Oil Minister Rostam Qasemi visited Ashgabat in November. The agenda of the meeting covered the issues of strengthening Turkmen – Iranian cooperation.

http://iran.ru/rus/news_iran.php?act=news_by_id&news_id=84779

21 December

EiSr Специальная The next meeting of the Caspian littoral states' special working group on the development of the draft Convention on the Caspian Sea Status has started today.

APA reports quoting the Turkmen media that the meeting of the foreign ministers will last for two days.

The draft agreement on the protection and rational use of biological resources of the Caspian Sea will be discussed by the representatives of the Caspian littoral states in Ashgabat, on December 19-21.

<http://abc.az/rus/news/70420.html>