

TAJIKISTAN

Cooperative Activities under the SPS Programme



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Tajikistan has been involved in NATO science activities since 1996. In total, scientists and experts from Tajikistan have had leading roles in 20 activities, and more joined various cooperative activities as participants and key speakers.

Today, NATO science activities enable close collaboration on the two key priorities of **defence against terrorism** and **countering other threats to security** and are managed under the Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme. SPS activities contribute to NATO's strategic objective of partnership, helping to connect scientists and experts from NATO countries with their counterparts from Partner and Mediterranean Dialogue countries through workshops, training courses, team collaborations and multi-year projects.

All activities supported by the SPS Programme are approved by NATO nations on the basis of consensus.

Examples of Activities

An SPS networking workshop on “**The Impact of ICT on Reduction of Disaster Outcomes in Central Asia**” took place from 30 April-3 May 2009 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. It was organised by local experts at the Tajikistan Research and Education Network Association (TARENA) in collaboration with American networking experts. Participants from several NATO member countries, as well as countries in the Caucasus and Central Asian regions including Afghanistan, gathered to address the growing number of natural disasters in Central Asia, many of which are related to the changing

climate. The basic goal of the workshop was the creation of a regional information network and database of disasters to be used for risk reduction and the eventual drawing of a risk map for the region. The expected benefits include international cooperation in designing and developing a seismological monitoring information network; forging of professional relationships among scientists from NATO countries and those from the countries of the former Soviet Union; and cooperative use of the information network in the long run. [ref 983669]



A school in Taboshar, Tajikistan, with more than 200 pupils, was built on Uranium process tailings.

Investigators from Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Slovenia have cooperated since February 2006 in a project to manage uranium industry wastes in order to prevent adverse effects on the health of local populations and on the environment. The project, “**Uranium Extraction and Environmental Security in Central Asian Republics**”, involves determining how radionuclides migrate, the extent of local contamination and the doses to which different population groups have been exposed, with particular focus on drinking-water supplies near uranium tailing and waste ore deposits. Since the start of the project, missions have been carried out to selected uranium waste sites. The results of this work are of particular interest to various municipal and national regulatory authorities in the countries involved, who will have access

to data on radon levels in private homes and public buildings, as well as on radioactivity in drinking water supplies located in close proximity to uranium waste deposits. Recommendations will also be made on ways to limit exposure.[ref 981742]

Tajikistan, along with the rest of the countries of Central Asia, has benefited since 2002 from internet connectivity for academic institutions and universities, provided through the SPS “**Virtual Silk Highway**” initiative. The connectivity is currently delivered by satellite and will be switched to a system based on optic fibre by mid- 2010. [ref 978777]

Additional networking infrastructure grants have contributed to the extension and upgrading of the **Tajikistan Research and Educational Network Association (TARENA)** through the provision of networking equipment and information technology to universities and institutions. The projects have enabled academicians and young scientists to have easy access to the World Wide Web and the possibility to exchange large documents and datasets with their local and foreign counterparts. In addition, researchers can sign up to distance learning programmes and set up video conference facilities. This helps promote collaboration and integrates local institutes in the international scientific community. [ref 982940]