

THE WATER SECTOR IN TAJIKISTAN: ONGOING CHALLENGES AND FUTURE  
PERSPECTIVES

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## Introduction

During the Soviet times, energy policies in Central Asia were planned by Moscow in a regional sense due to the distribution of natural resources across the region. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, this interdependence in sharing resources among the new nations assumed huge importance in developing the domestic economies in each of these countries. Notably, in the case of Tajikistan, the smallest country which at the same time owns the biggest amount of water resources of Central Asia, the challenge was to idealise an energy strategy according to its domestic needs. As the poorest and less stable country of the region, since its independence it struggled to affirm its national interests in a region dominated by authoritarian and centralized governments.

In this paper, I will analyse the latest developments in the water sector related to the Tajikistan Republic. First, I will focus on the Tajik strategy adopted in the management of its own natural resources. Tajikistan is actively involved in a reforming process of water sector not only to improve the socio-economic conditions of the country but also to deal with many issues for the implementation of its own energetic strategy: climate change, an underdeveloped environment and regional tensions for the exploitation of natural resources are the main points on which the Tajik government is working for the creation of an energy security that could be independent from the regional distribution of natural resources. In the following years, the water issue has covered most of the Tajik-nation building process and has been used by president Emomali Rahmon as a tool to consolidate the people's trust in the ruling power. Moreover, the constant Tajik involvement in the water management at international level represents a surplus in Rahmon's narrative. The national objective became the realization of its hydropower potential where the Rogun Hydropower Plant considered by President Emomali as "symbol of life and death of the Tajik state"<sup>1</sup>, has a crucial role in the strategy for reaching the energy self-sufficiency. The launch of the first unit of the Rogun Hydropower plant in November 2018 paved the way not only to the development an independent energy policy but also to an improvement of the living conditions of the people of this country. Moreover, this development in the water sector could make Tajikistan the leading player in the energy chess of Central Asia and South Asia. Hence, the real question is whether Tajikistan can transform

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<sup>1</sup> Menga, Filippo "Building a nation through a dam: the case of Rogun in Tajikistan", Nationalities Papers, 9

itself from a failed and underdeveloped State to an essential country for the growth of the whole region.

### **Water resources management: reforms and adaptation to climate change**

During the 60s, the Soviet Union was very concerned about the development of the water sector in Tajikistan. Since its geographical location, which put the country between the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers, the small republic represented the heart of the construction of these new infrastructures, which should serve the whole region. Tajikistan ranks first in Central Asia and eighth in the world in terms of hydropower resources with a total installed HPP capacity in Tajikistan of 4,070 MW.<sup>2</sup> However, the lack of developed infrastructure and weak governance in energy resources has always been a problem of Tajikistan for the implementation of proper management of its water resources within the national borders.

After its independence, the Tajik government concentrated its efforts in carrying out new projects and policies in order to improve the national hydropower potential. The first step has been the adoption of a functional legal framework that could support policies in this sector and assure proper utilization of water resources. The Water Code of 2000 is the fundamental law which “regulates the water relations in order to ensure rational use of water”<sup>3</sup> and protect the rights of who are involved in these relations. It introduced the decentralization of responsibilities in irrigation management: district authorities have the task of administration of large-scale infrastructure and basic maintenance of primary canals while farmers were responsible for the management canals among farms.<sup>4</sup> As asserted in a report drafted in 2013 by the National Policy Dialogue in Tajikistan, the legislation on water sector needs further improvements shortly. Despite the amendments introduced in 2012, there are still gaps to fill in the Water Code. Many chapters and sections must be revised in order to make the legislation clearer and more detailed. For instance, the text should give a fitting description of all water resources existing in the country considering the permafrost in the Pamir as one of this, adding sections on standardization in the area of monitoring and utilization of water resources and on

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<sup>2</sup> Valamat-Zade, Timur “Tajikistan Energy Sector: Present and Near Future”, 2008, p. 1

<sup>3</sup> Law Of The Republic Of Tajikistan: Water Code, Article 1, Dushanbe

<http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/taj34375E.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Frederike Klümper, Thomas Herzfeld, Insa Theesfeld “Can Water Abundance Compensate for Weak Water Governance? Determining and Comparing Dimensions of Irrigation Water Security in Tajikistan”, Published: April 19, 2017, p. 7

water strategies of Tajikistan given climate changes occurring in the future.<sup>5</sup> Another stage was the adoption of the Law on Water User Association in 2006, which regulates the already existing organizations of farmers operating on shared irrigation systems. WUAs aim to organize in a fair way the distribution of water between its members and settling disputes between them and other water users. The creation of a decentralized governance of irrigation system helped to consolidate the self-accountability of farmers in the development of an equal allocation and management of resources among the population.

The last amendments of the Water Code introduced in 2012 created the legal framework for the adoption of a basin management approach in the process of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).<sup>6</sup> Until then, the management of water resources has been done according to administrative borders. In a time when water resources are limited worldwide, the adoption of IWRM aims to promote a joint and more efficient exploitation of them among the users, carrying out the transition to a system of management based on hydrographic boundaries. The main objective of this new WMR system is the enhancement of the irrigation system, which will give a substantial impact on agricultural production and food security. The government of Tajikistan pursued the new principle of management in the last package of reforms approved in December 2015, the Water Sector Reform Programme for the period 2016-2025. According to this programme, the country will introduce the basin principle in 2020 dividing its territory into four main basin districts according to the national river basins: Syr Darya, Kofarnikhon, Vakhsh and Panj basins. Along to this arrangement, new water sector institutions will be established in 2019 in order to ensure up-down coordination in water resources management. The River Basin Organizations are responsible for developing and coordinating the policies adopted by the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources at the basin level. Then, the River Basin Councils will provide recommendations and assistance on conflict resolution between water users and stakeholders.<sup>7</sup> Most of the funds are given to local WUAs, the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources and the Agency of Land Reclamation and

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<sup>5</sup> According to the Coordination Council of the NPD on IWRM in the Republic of Tajikistan under the EU Water Initiative, "*National Policy Dialogue on Integrated Water Resources Management in Tajikistan Under the Eu Water Initiative Report – II On analysis of water legislation with a view to its improvement and implementation of the integrated water resources management principles in Tajikistan*", (Dushanbe 2013), 18.

<sup>6</sup> "Integrated Water Resources Management in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. European Union Water Initiative National Policy Dialogues Progress Report 2013." May 2014. Accessed March 23, 2019. <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35306>, 4

<sup>7</sup> "Tajikistan Water Reform Movie – Helvetas" <https://youtu.be/ZCtgFxqNk0E?t=65>

Irrigation. Moreover, the reform programme includes rehabilitation of many infrastructures in these areas, building upon the engagement of donors in financing this revolutionary project.

Many external actors are today involved in this revival process. Asian Development Bank is operating in the Panj River basin. As the most relevant river basin of Tajikistan, the improvements in water resources management in this area will have a significant impact on the economy and food security of the country. Panj River includes most of Khatlon province, which records the largest population and agriculture production, but at the same time, it is even the poorest river basin of the country with more than half of the population living in poor conditions.<sup>8</sup> Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) launched in 2014 the National Water Resources Management project in Syr Darya river basin. It established the Syr Darya River Dialogue, which will turn into the River Basin Council in 2019, where more than 30 State and non-State agencies cooperation in the water resources management of the area.<sup>9</sup> In the Zarafshon river sub-basin, included in Syr Darya river basin, World Bank has launched a project in 2018 of rehabilitation and improvement of the irrigation system, financed by a Trust Fund of the European Union of 15.6 Million euros, with an additional investment of 10 million euros in February 2019. The project is mainly involved in the improvement of local water management and irrigation systems through the rehabilitation of river basin infrastructure.<sup>10</sup>

The reforming process, however, needs to work alongside another critical issue that is continuously evolving over the years. Climate change has become a peculiar topic in the development of water energy sector of Tajikistan. Mostly characterized by a mountainous territory, its weakest point is in the glacier-dependent river basins which supply hydropower and water resources for irrigation. According to the World Bank, Tajikistan is the region's most vulnerable country to climate change<sup>11</sup>. It had to develop its own energy strategy starting as the most disadvantaged country of the region. This is linked to the conformation of the territory which is mostly dominated by mountains, putting the country on the high risk of landslides,

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<sup>8</sup> "Tajikistan: Water Resources Management in Pyanj River Basin Project," Asian Development Bank, Accessed: March 25, 2019. <https://www.adb.org/projects/47181-002/main#project-pds>

<sup>9</sup> "Tajikistan Water Reform Movie – Helvetas" <https://youtu.be/ZCtgFqxNk0E?t=460>

<sup>10</sup> "The European Union supports the implementation of the Zarafshon Irrigation Rehabilitation and River Basin Management Project with an additional 10M EUR", *EEAS*, Dushanbe, February 21, 2019 [https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tajikistan/58496/european-union-supports-implementation-zarafshon-irrigation-rehabilitation-and-river-basin\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tajikistan/58496/european-union-supports-implementation-zarafshon-irrigation-rehabilitation-and-river-basin_en)

<sup>11</sup> Jennifer Hattam, "Oxfam: Tajikistan on the Brink from Climate Change", *treehunger*, February 20, 2010 <https://www.treehugger.com/corporate-responsibility/oxfam-tajikistan-on-the-brink-from-climate-change.html>

water flood and earthquake. With regards to the water sector, the impact of climate change affects the glaciers located in the Central Pamir region. Glaciers and permafrost that occupy 6% of Tajikistan territory form 65% of water resources of Aral Sea Basin.<sup>12</sup> The decrease in precipitation and increase in air temperature could afflict the number of Tajik water resources deeply, putting at risk the annual river runoff, which has accounted a reduction of 110 million m<sup>3</sup> per year over the last 30 years.<sup>13</sup> Future estimations show that the volume of ice will decrease by 25%, provoking a reduction in glacial feeding of rivers by 20%-40%. One of the most relevant cases is the changes had in the Fedchenko glacier located in the Pamir, known as one of the largest mountain glaciers in the world, which since 1933 has shrunk by 1,400 m<sup>14</sup>. These data are essential to understand what the future of Tajikistan will be if we consider the fact that the country is almost totally dependent on hydropower for the domestic production of electricity accounted for the 95%. As noticed by Oxfam: “Tajikistan's plight highlights the international injustice of climate change, as it is one of the countries least responsible for the greenhouse gas emissions that are causing climate change. This mountainous, poverty-stricken, Central Asian country ranks 109th in the world for all greenhouse gas emissions, 129th in emissions per capita, and its people emit less than one ton of carbon dioxide per head per year as compared to nearly 20 tons by North Americans.”<sup>15</sup> It is the reason why since the beginning of the millennium the Tajikistan government assumed a primary role in the promotion of a more sustainable use of water resources, involving the international community in water related-issues on the global agenda. In December 2016, on the initiative of President of Tajikistan Emomali, the UN General Assembly adopted the Resolution 71/222 which declared the decade 2018-2028 as *the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development”*. This new initiative aims to strengthen the international cooperation and integrated management of water at all levels in order to achieve the international goals formulated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as the ones that Tajikistan aims to reach in the framework of its strategy of sustainable development.

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<sup>12</sup> Abuduwalli, Jilili, Gulnura Issanova, Galymzhan Saparov, *Hydrology and Limnology of Central Asia*, Water Resources Development and Management (Singapore: Springer, 2019), 371

<sup>13</sup> Hydrology and Limnology of Central Asia, 8

<sup>14</sup> Fedchenko Glacier, *NASA Earth Observatory* <https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/78967/fedchenko-glacier>

<sup>15</sup> Jennifer Hattam, “Oxfam: Tajikistan on the Brink from Climate Change”

<https://www.treehugger.com/corporate-responsibility/oxfam-tajikistan-on-the-brink-from-climate-change.html>

Up to this moment, it has been demonstrated how the Central Asian country has strongly tied its national development policies in the water sector to international issues of sustainable development in order to ask support from foreign actors in its reforming process. However, the development of the Tajikistan strategy in the energy sector is still the breeding ground of tensions in Central Asia, but at the same time, it could become the starting point for the broader development of this region.

### **Towards hydropower potential: water and geopolitics**

At the time of the Soviet Union, the creation of a common energy security system served for improvements in the agricultural production, primarily focused on cotton and wheat. For this purpose, the Soviet leadership started to build a series of projects for the collection of waters and irrigation of the cultivation lands of the region. As the collection of water during winter period led to a scarcity in the production of electricity for upstream countries (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan), the downstream ones (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan) provided them with stable supplies of mineral energy resources. On the one hand, it's important to notice that the Soviet Union succeeded in the creation of a mutually beneficial system of sharing resources in Central Asia, which was at the base of the development of these five republics. On the other hand, at the demise of centralized control by Moscow over this organized mechanism, an intricate puzzle emerged in the coordination of policies pursued by the newly independent countries, especially in the administration of water resources. In 1992, an attempt to stabilize this situation has been made with the sign of Almaty agreements the Central Asian countries created Interstate Coordinating Water Commission (ICWC) which will maintain the quotas system existing in the Soviet Union, up to the stipulation of a regional agreement of the issue. However, this system is still in effect conflicting with the evolving interests of the upstream countries which want to enlarge their quotas to the detriment of downstream countries' quotas.<sup>16</sup>

The aim of Tajikistan is to develop its own hydropower potential, investing in the construction of dams for the provision of electricity. Tajikistan has a hydroelectric potential of

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<sup>16</sup> Murodbek Laldjebaev "The Water–Energy Puzzle in Central Asia: The Tajikistan Perspective", *International Journal of Water Resources Development*, (Routledge, 2010), 6

52 000 GWh/year circa, the greatest of all the countries in the Aral Sea Basin<sup>17</sup>, which corresponds to more than half of hydropower resources of the region and 4% of the world's ones. However, the country today can use only 5% of this vast potential<sup>18</sup> due to its weak management of its own resources. This unexploited potential has, as a result, the occurrence of energy crisis caused by shortages in the production of electricity. As reported by a World Bank study, 70% of the Tajik population suffers from the shortages of electricity during the winter, causing economic losses estimated around 200 million dollars per year (3% of GDP).<sup>19</sup> In January 2008, the short supply of gas led to a massive utilization of electricity as a primary source for heating.<sup>20</sup> However, both the resources were not sufficient to assure the needs of the population, which occurred in the interruption of both gas and electricity for many hours a day in the country during the harshest winter in Central Asia since 1969. In the following winter, the problem instead was linked to the worsened relations in energy supply between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as non-payment of debts by the second for the supply of natural gas.<sup>21</sup> This was the example of how the erection of trade barriers has afflicted the mechanism of sharing energy resources among the Central Asian countries, making upstream countries dependent on the richer downstream ones.

At this regard, Tajikistan seems to be more disadvantage than Kyrgyzstan, the other upstream country, in the control of its water resources. In addition to the climate change related-issues, Tajikistan has difficulties in controlling the Amu Darya, which half of the water flow comes from Panj tributary, a river without any reservoirs. This river constitutes the natural border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The two countries started to cooperate on this river, planning even the construction **build** of 10 shared dams. However, the main obstacle is bank erosion, which would require additional not affordable costs by Afghanistan for securing it.<sup>22</sup> Complexity in the management of hydropower energy gave to Tajikistan no mechanism to put

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<sup>17</sup> Murodbek Laldjebaev "The Water–Energy Puzzle in Central Asia: The Tajikistan Perspective", 9

<sup>18</sup> Tajikistan Energy Situation, *Energypedia* [https://energypedia.info/wiki/Tajikistan\\_Energy\\_Situation](https://energypedia.info/wiki/Tajikistan_Energy_Situation)

<sup>19</sup> Fields, Daryl; Kochnakyan, Artur; Mukhamedova, Takhmina; Stuggins, Gary; Besant-Jones, John. 2013.

"Tajikistan's Winter Energy Crisis: Electricity Supply and Demand Alternatives". World Bank Study. Washington, DC: World Bank. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/15795> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO

<sup>20</sup> Murodbek Laldjebaev, 9

<sup>21</sup> Murodbek Laldjebaev, 10

<sup>22</sup> "Distance Learning Module 13 - Panj and Amu Darya River Hydropower and Irrigation", University of Nebraska-Omaha <https://www.unomaha.edu/international-studies-and-programs/center-for-afghanistan-studies/academics/transboundary-water-research/DLM13/DLM13.php>

pressure over the downstream countries in the stipulation of fair energy agreements, increasing its status of dependence from them.<sup>23</sup>

In order to reach its energy potential, Tajikistan has always been involved in the implementation of infrastructural projects in this field. Most of the water management infrastructures are located on the Vakhsh river, the principal tributary of the Amu Darya which cross the country from northeast to southwest. Here is located the Nurek Dam, the biggest hydropower station operating in Tajikistan, which was built by the Soviet Union between the 70s and 80s. It serves both as a reservoir for irrigation season and as a hydropower station, the biggest in the region with its capacity of 3000 megawatts.<sup>24</sup> Nurek is the most famous one, but during the years further investments were made on this river. One of these is the Sangtuda 1 HPP. It is a project commenced in the 80s by the Soviet Union which was finally completed in 2009 with a joint agreement between Russian and Tajik governments. Russia owned most of the property of this plant, which provides the 12% of Tajikistan's electricity output. But the first goal in Tajikistan's energy strategy in this sector remains the construction of Rogun Hydropower Plant. With an estimated height of 335 meters, it will be the tallest dam in the world. The construction of Rogun was planned by the Soviet Union in the 1960s. The work started in 1974, but after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the project was stopped in 1991. At its conclusion, the dam would provide 3600 MW of hydroelectricity, doubling the current country's total capacity of 4000 MW<sup>25</sup>. The first achievement will be the energetic self-sufficiency of Tajikistan, providing even an enormous surplus in the summer which could be exported to neighbouring countries. As a result, it will turn this small country into a regional energy power able to fulfil the demand of countries which are more populated than it, like Pakistan and Afghanistan.

As far as it will give an enormous impact on the social and economic conditions of the country, the construction of Rogun has also a considerable political meaning. Finally, it will guarantee to Tajikistan political leverage over the other Central Asian countries concerning the distribution of resources. This implies the end of the cold and dark winters that the country had to deal with every year due to the constant shortages of electricity. The restarting of the work in 2008 provoked a strong reaction by Uzbekistan. As the major beneficiary of the Amu Darya

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<sup>23</sup> Murodbek Laldjebaev, 6

<sup>24</sup> Murodbek Laldjebaev, 5

<sup>25</sup> Menga, "Building a nation through a dam: the case of Rogun in Tajikistan", Nationalities Papers 6

river flow, the improvements made by the Tajik government in enhancing the governance over its water resources as always conflicted with the Uzbek national interests. The construction of dams on the flow of Amu Darya could lead in the long term to negative effects on the economy of Uzbekistan since most of its cotton plants are served by this river. The Uzbek government has always asserted that the Amu Darya has to be considered as a trans-boundary river, and the discussion over the exploitation of resources has to be put on the regional and international level rather than an issue between the two countries.<sup>26</sup> Hence, the governments of both countries requested to The World Bank Group an independent assessment on the implementation of this project, which occurred a further stop in the works. The publication of the assessment in June 2014 on the preliminary evaluation on the practicability of the project has been immediately seen by the government of Tajikistan as a green light for continuing its work on the Amu Darya river, while Uzbekistan continued to oppose the results of the assessment strongly.<sup>27</sup>

Tensions between the two former Soviet republics on this issue is simply the result of the Soviet legacy over the management of natural resources in Central Asia, showing the impossibility of maintaining the old Soviet mechanism in a world which is continuously undergone to growing interests. In this longstanding dispute, Russia decided to side Uzbekistan. But a new external actor was behind the corner, ready to enlarge its influence in the Central Asian region. Through its growing economic weight, in the latest year, China is increasingly becoming the main player in the region, and its cooperation with Dushanbe is getting deeper. As far as the military cooperation in the Pamir region, the main involvement of Beijing in the small neighbouring country is the investments in the power-engineering sector.<sup>28</sup> Since its geographical location along the One Belt One Road Initiative, the cooperation between China and Tajikistan could guarantee enormous benefits for Dushanbe from the huge economic development that is going to occur.<sup>29</sup> For this reason, Tajikistan is planning the

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<sup>26</sup> Daly, John C.K., *The Geopolitics of Tajikistan's Water*, The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst, November 26, 2014 <https://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/13098-the-geopolitics-of-tajikistans-water.html>

<sup>27</sup> Shokhrukh-Mirzo Jalilov et al., *Managing the water–energy–food nexus: Gains and losses from new water development in Amu Darya River Basin*, Journal of Hydrology, 2016, 3

<sup>28</sup> Shahbazov, Faud “China’s Long March into Central Asia: How Beijing Expands Military Influence in Tajikistan”. *The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*. February 21, 2017 <http://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/13429-china%E2%80%99s->

<sup>29</sup> Putz, Catherine “Edward Lemon on Tajikistan’s Trajectory” *The Diplomat*. December 18, 2018. Accessed March 26, 2019 <https://thediplomat.com/2018/12/edward-lemon-on-tajikistans-trajectory/>

provision of electricity in the Autonomous Region of Xinjiang through the construction of a system of power lines of 550km.<sup>30</sup>

### **Conclusion. Regional cooperation as a solution**

As discussed so far, Tajikistan is today struggling to reach its energy self-sufficiency in a region where interests about this matter have often been conflictual. It's not only about the national interest of each country to take over energy resources of the region. The growing population and climate change effects put a great challenge to the whole region, making it necessary to find as much as widely-shared solutions. In the case of Tajikistan, a small country surrounded by bigger neighbours in terms of territory and population, the key for a successful strategy of development is the cooperation with other countries of the region. The Karimov's death in 2016 opened a new scenario in this sense. The former President of Uzbekistan has strongly opposed any project of Dushanbe on the management of water resources, saying that water resources "could lead not just to confrontation, but even to war"<sup>31</sup>. Trade barriers built between the two countries were the main cause of electric power shortages in Tajikistan during the winter times. The new presidency held by Shavkat Mirziyoyev, however, is characterized by a more cooperative approach towards other Central Asia's republics on regional issues. According to Edward Lemon, the rapprochement between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan has vital importance in reconnecting societies and economies of the two Central Asian countries. Railroads and flights are opened again since 1992, giving a boost in developing the strategic role of Tajikistan in China's New Silk Road.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, Dushanbe restarted to export electricity to Uzbekistan, renewing the exchange of gas and electricity between the two countries. About the usage of water resources, Mirziyoyev stated that "problems of water, peace and security are inextricably linked. There is no alternative to addressing the water problem other than equally taking into account the interests of the countries and nations of the region."<sup>33</sup> The Uzbek president decided to adopt a different strategy, based on radical reforms in the agricultural sector to reduce the water usage of Tashkent. During the Karimov's

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<sup>30</sup> Чоршанбиев, Пайрав, Таджикскую электроэнергию будут поставлять в Китай, *Asia-Plus*, Published: May 27, 2019.

<https://news.tj/news/tajikistan/economic/20190327/tadzhikskuyu-elektroenergiyu-budut-postavlyat-v-kitai>

<sup>31</sup> Leonard, Peter "Central Asia and water: No time left for squabbles", *New Eastern Europe*, October 31, 2017. <http://neweasterneurope.eu/2017/10/31/central-asia-water-no-time-left-squabbles/>

<sup>32</sup> Putz, Catherine "Edward Lemon on Tajikistan's Trajectory" *The Diplomat*. December 18, 2018. Accessed March 26, 2019 <https://thediplomat.com/2018/12/edward-lemon-on-tajikistans-trajectory/>

<sup>33</sup> Persing, "Perspectives Uzbekistan & Tajikistan: Catalysts for a Regional Water Solution" <https://eurasianet.org/perspectives-uzbekistan-tajikistan-catalysts-for-a-regional-water-solution>

presidency, Tashkent was more concerned to point an accusing finger at Dushanbe's policies rather than dealing with its water mismanagement. This new thinking led to a more sympathetic approach over the construction of the Rogun dam, making it possible for both countries to pursue their national strategies without damaging each other.

With regards to broader regional cooperation, Tajikistan is active in the realization of the Central Asia-South Asia project (CASA-1000). It aims to create a functional electricity system from Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan with the transmission of 1300 megawatts of electricity from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to Afghanistan and Pakistan.<sup>34</sup> Considering this, the role of Dushanbe in the future in the development of the region is going to become crucial. If it would be able to implement its reforms successfully in the water resources management, Tajikistan will probably become an actor of the foremost importance in the energy sector of the Asian continent and an energetic hub for the neighbouring countries.

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<sup>34</sup> “CASA-1,000: Project to start functioning by 2020”, *The Express Tribune*, Accessed: March 29, 2019. Published: November 21, 2018 <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1851505/2-casa-1000-project-start-functioning-2020/>

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