

Caspian Sea Environment Programme

Project Characteristics:

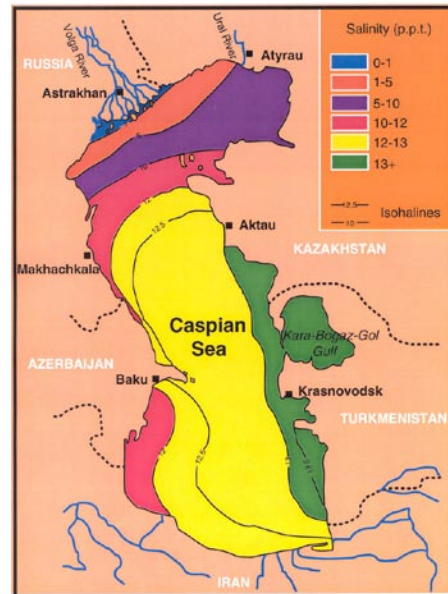
- *High-level International Government Thematic Cooperation and Negotiation*
- *5 Year Environment Programme Coordination*
- *Coordination of Scientific Core Areas*
- *Data and Information Management*
- *Coastal Zone Management*

The Caspian Environment Programme was born of a common goal - developing a plan for environmentally sustainable development and management of the Caspian environment. The coastal population has a vested interest, as do international scientists who have been intrigued by the fact that it is the largest land-locked body of water on earth without an outlet. The petroleum industry has been tapping its oil and gas wealth for decades and reputes it to be up to 300 billion barrels of crude and its equivalent in natural gas, which is 50% more than the proven reserves of Europe, North and South America, Africa and the rest of Asia combined. The coastal population is impacted by rapid water level fluctuations. Production of oil and gas is significant and new exploration activity is under way. Oil and oil products generate a constant traffic that has been estimated to total around 10,000 shipping movements annually, the extraction and transport activity constituting a serious risk to water quality. In addition, the development of numerous industrial complexes on the river banks with the associated waste discharges, as well as non-point source pollution from intensive agriculture, leads to bio-accumulation of metals and persistent organic pollutants in the sturgeon from these waters.

As a result, the Caspian Environment Programme (CEP), born out of a desire for regional cooperation, was established by the Caspian littoral states, aided by numerous international agencies. As part of the Caspian Environment Programme, consultants at the Woods Hole Group have worked with academia, the oil and gas sector, the international development banks, and the international donor agencies (UNEP, UNDP, World Bank, as well as US AID) for the past several years.

Consultants from the Woods Hole Group embarked upon the initial PDF-B phase of the programme with the region, which included the following activities:

- 1) establishing an effective Coordination Framework for the Caspian Environment Programme, at the regional, country-specific and donor agency levels;



- 2) identifying the elements of a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis for the Caspian region;
- 3) preparing a GEF Project Brief and UNDP Project Document for the further development and implementation of the Caspian Environment Programme.

As the Caspian Environment Programme has progressed, Woods Hole Group consultants have played major roles in development and implementation of activities central to the project. Our participation has included traveling throughout the Caspian region meeting with high-level government officials as well as potential private sector participants in the CEP, in order to ensure funding of the programme, as well as merging national research efforts into central documents, to provide consistency and cohesion. Moreover, Woods Hole Group consultants have held key roles in breaking down barriers between the littoral countries, such as providing objective negotiation assistance when needed, as well as translation services for documents.