

Press Release

Berlin, 12th of September 2017

Saving The Life-giving River From Drying Out

German-Iranian Research Initiative in the Zayandeh Rud Catchment

Landmark of the historical city of Isfahan, lifeline of an entire region, and almost vanished: The Zayandeh Rud River in Central Iran is dying. The reasons are climate change and a wasteful use of water resources. Since 2010 a German-Iranian project team has been working on solutions for sustainable resource management for saving the river from complete drying out. The results of the first project phase have now been published in an edited volume. They show how progress in water management can be achieved and sustained by combining modern environmental engineering, new management approaches and local know-how.

For the Zayandeh Rud River it is both a blessing and a curse to be the “life-giving river” (as is its literal translation) in Central Iran. It provides water for more than 4 million people, large agricultural areas, important industries and a unique ecosystem including the Gavkhuni wetland, an acknowledged UN Ramsar site. At the same time the river suffers from climate change impacts and the lack of a holistic management strategy. In recent years it has dried up a number of times, with fatal ecological, economic and social consequences accordingly.

The Aim: Cooperative Management of Water Resources

Sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), an interdisciplinary German-Iranian team has been working on finding solutions for integrated water resources management (IWRM) in the Zayandeh Rud catchment since 2010. The IWRM project works “integrating” in several respects: by merging the skills of the German and Iranian partners; by developing solutions looking at the catchment in its entirety; and by combining innovative approaches and traditional, local knowledge.

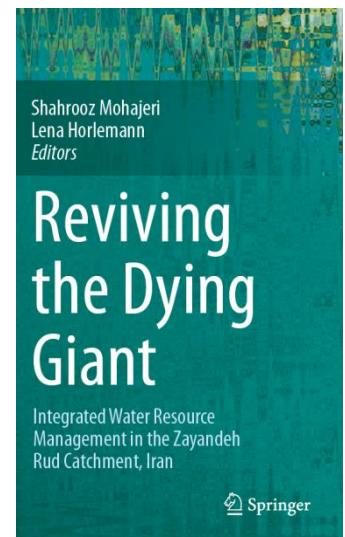
These approaches range from the application of modern technology in wastewater treatment plants or for wastewater recycling to the shaping of alternative agricultural strategies together with local farmers. The development of an IT-based model of the catchment’s water resources serves as a connective element which also promotes trust and cooperation among the stakeholders and institutions along the way.

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The book “Reviving the Dying Giant“ presents the results of the first project phase and is thus the first publication attending to the Zayandeh Rud from various perspectives. In 16 chapters, the 25 German and Iranian authors present their approaches and proposed solutions for saving the river from dying. In his preface, the Iranian Minister of Energy Hamid Chitchian also highlights the importance of the Zayandeh Rud for the entire country. The book is available as eBook and printed version.

In addition, the booklet “Integrated Water Resources Management Zayandeh Rud – German-Iranian Research and Development Cooperation for a Better Future” which was published in early 2017 in English and Farsi provides a comprehensive overview over the entire project and the activities of the second project phase.

Reference

Shahrooz Mohajeri / Lena Horlemann (Eds.) Reviving the Dying Giant – Integrated Water Resources Management in the Zayandeh Rud Catchment, Iran. 267 pages, Springer Nature, Cham / Switzerland, 2017. ISBN 978-3-319-54920-0 (eBook 978-3-319-54922-4)

Shahrooz Mohajeri / Lena Horlemann/ Helke Wendt-Schwarzburg/ Mohammad Naser Reyhani (Hg.) Integrated Water Resources Management Zayandeh Rud, inter 3 Institute for Resource Management, Berlin, 2017.

For more information see: www.iwrm-zayandehrud.com

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