With funding from the:

Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space · Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg · CASIB Central Asia Sustainable Innovation Bureau · Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan · AI & Digital Ministry · astana hub · alem.ai · QAIRU

CASIB Regional Conference on Future-Oriented Research and Innovations

How Research Drives Sustainable Development and Transformation in Central Asia



Day 1 **17 November 2026** | Alem.AI – Plenary Hall

09:15 Registration and Coffee Break

10:00

Welcome

Moderated by: **Dr. Peter Liebelt, MLU/ CASIB**

Prof. Dr. Pablo Pirnay-Dummer
Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg

Dr. Heike Renate Peitsch
Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Astana

Patricia Romanowsky
German Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR)

Daniyar Meirbekov
Ministry of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Renat Yelshibekov
Science Committee of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan

10:30

SESSION 1

Research and Innovation for a Sustainable Future

Moderated by: **Dr. Peter Liebelt, MLU/ CASIB**

SESSION DESCRIPTION

This session will present research and innovation projects supported by BMFTR and DFG that contribute to sustainable development and climate resilience in Central Asia. The presentations will highlight innovative approaches in agroforestry, crop breeding, soil science, water management, sustainable mobility, and AI-driven urban resilience, demonstrating how international research cooperation can address regional challenges and translate scientific knowledge into practical solutions.

Innovating Agroforestry Value Chains
Prof. Dr. Dietrich Darr, Weihenstephan-Triesdorf is the University of Applied Sciences
SUFACHAIN project, funded by BMFTR

Building a Joint Innovation Platform for Fruit Genetic Resource Conservation and Climate-Resilient Crop Breeding in Central Asia
Dr. Thomas Wöhner, Julius Kühn-Institute
project KLINU, funded by BMFTR

Integrating Research Innovation and Capacity Building for a Soil Science Excellence Cluster in Central Asia and Mongolia
Dr. Olga Shibistova, Leibniz University Hannover
project ExSOIL, funded by BMFTR

Cross-border analysis of changes in water consumption in agriculture from 1987 to 2025 in the Ili River basin
Simon Spengler, IAMO
project TRANSILI, funded by BMFTR

Blue-Green Water Infrastructure for Climate-Resilient Water Management in Kazakhstan
Dr. Aliya Assubayeva, Nazarbayev University
funded by DFG

Advancing Research and Innovation for Sustainable Mobility in Uzbekistan
Dr. Elbek Khodjaniyazov, Urgench State University
RISMUz project, funded by BMFTR

Shaping a Sustainable Future: AI-Driven Urban Resilience and Climate Adaptation in Central Asia
Prof. Dr. Mehdi Bagheri, Dr. Parya Broomandi, Nazarbayev University
project NETSTAN, funded by BMFTR

11:45

Q&A
All Speakers

12:00

Lunch

13:00

Excursion Alem Ai by Astana Hub
by Dr. Aliya Sembayeva

14:00

SESSION 2

From Research to Solutions for Sustainable Transformation

Moderated by: **Assiya Sagymbay & Raushan Amanzholova, MLU/ CASIB**

SESSION DESCRIPTION

This session will explore how research, innovation, and international cooperation can be translated into practical solutions for sustainable transformation in Central Asia. Presentations will focus on inclusive climate action, digital monitoring and reporting, energy transition, green and circular economy, sustainable agriculture, and digitalization in healthcare. The session will highlight the role of research institutions, international organizations, and business networks in supporting evidence-based policies and driving sustainable change across the region.

Bridging the Gap: How the Just Transition Center (JTC) Translates Research into Inclusive Climate Solutions
Prof. Dr. Tietje, Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg
funded by EU

Digital MRV as a Catalyst for Central Asia's Green Transformation
Dr. Bakhyt Yessekina, Director of the Scientific and Educational Center "Green Academy", Coordinator of the Green Climate Hub

Supporting Energy Transition for Security and Climate: Insights from the EU for a Green Turkmenistan project
Dr. Caroline Milow, German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)

Driving Economic Transformation: How German Chamber of Commerce in Central Asia Fosters a Green and Circular Economy Through its Eco-Platform
Anna Kim, AHK-Central Asia

Driving the Circular Shift: Strategic Roadmaps for Sustainable Transformation
Dr. Sebastian Schmuck, University of Duisburg-Essen

UzFarm Barometer project, a scientific research initiative investigating farmers' decision-making and the adoption of innovative agricultural practices in Uzbekistan
Dr. Nilufar Rashitova, Westminster International University in Tashkent
funded by BMFTR

Transformation Processes in Healthcare Systems: The Role of Digitalization and Participatory Research
Dr. Franziska Fink, KPTG
Centre of Excellence for Participatory Research and Transformation in Healthcare, Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg

15:15

Q&A

15:30

Coffee-Break

Signing Ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding between GIZ and Central Asian Partners

16:00

SESSION 3 · PANEL DISCUSSION

Partners for Progress: Challenges and Opportunities in International Research Alliances

Moderated by: **Prof. Dr. Christian Tietje, MLU**

SESSION DESCRIPTION

This panel discussion will explore the challenges and opportunities of building international research partnerships and strengthening cooperation between Central Asian and international institutions. Particular attention will be given to opportunities for early-career researchers and young scientists, including access to international research networks, joint projects, funding programmes, academic mobility, and innovation ecosystems. The panellists will discuss how institutional partnerships can create new pathways for young researchers to develop their careers, exchange knowledge, and contribute to addressing regional challenges.

Dr. Aliya Sembayeva
Astana Hub

Khamrobek Khudoykuliev
Agency for Innovative Development under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan (tbc)

Dr. Caroline Milow
German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)

Elena Resch
University Alliance Ruhr

Karina Anguelieva
International Science and Technology Center (ISTC)

Dr. Aliya Assubayeva
Nazarbayev University

17:00

Closing Remarks

Day 2 **18 November 2026** | QAIRU – Qazaq AI Research University, Room 100, 1st floor

WORKSHOP

Transforming Scientific Knowledge into Economic Value – Participatory Approaches for Regional Development

09:30

Practical experiences on knowledge transfer from science to business

moderated by **Centre of Excellence for Participatory Research and Transformation in Healthcare, Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, KPTG**

Prof. Patrick Jahn
Centre of Excellence for Participatory Research and Transformation in Healthcare, Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg

Anna Kim
Centre for Green Economy, AHK - German Chamber of Commerce in Central Asia

Khamrobek Khudoykuliev
Agency for Innovative Development under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Astana Hub (tbc)

Dr. Philipp Schroeder
Nazarbayev University

Nazarbayev University Research and Innovation System (NURIS) (tbc)

Elena Resch & Dr. Sebastian Schmuck
University Alliance Ruhr

Dr. Vitaly Kim
Anhalt International University

Oliver Krumpek
Fraunhofer Institute for Production Systems and Design Technology IPK

10:45	**Flip chart – Session with Coffee Break** SWOT Analysis on knowledge transfer, moderated by KPTG
11:45	**Analysis Results: Presentation, Discussion, and Actionable Recommendations**
12:30	**Closing Remarks**

Day 2 **18 November 2026** | QAIRU – Workshop space

DFG NETWORKING SESSION

Science Café and Information Seminar with the German Research Foundation

14:00

Science Café, organised by DFG

Welcome coffee with opportunity for individual consultations between researchers and funders

14:30–16:00

Information Seminar

moderated by DFG

- **Presentation of the DFG's activities and funding opportunities in the region**
- **Lightning talks of research projects**
- **Q&A with best practice exchange**