

COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON HYDROMETEOROLOGY OF THE CASPIAN SEA (CASPCOM)

Information bulletin on the state of the Caspian Sea level No.15 15 March 2018

The Bulletin on the state of the Caspian Sea level is issued twice a year in accordance with the recommendations of CASPCOM and is a joint product of hydrometeorological services of the five Caspian littoral states.

The mean Caspian Sea level at the seasonal peak in July 2017 occurred 10 cm lower than in the previous year. However, the rate of its seasonal fall was also less than in the same period of the previous year. As a result, the mean sea level in December 2017 went few cm higher than in December 2016 (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1 Seasonal run of the Caspian Sea level in the second half of 2017 as compared to 2016

Figure 2 presents the graph of Caspian Sea level changes in the last two years according to the data by CMEMS (Copernicus Marine Environment Monitoring Service).

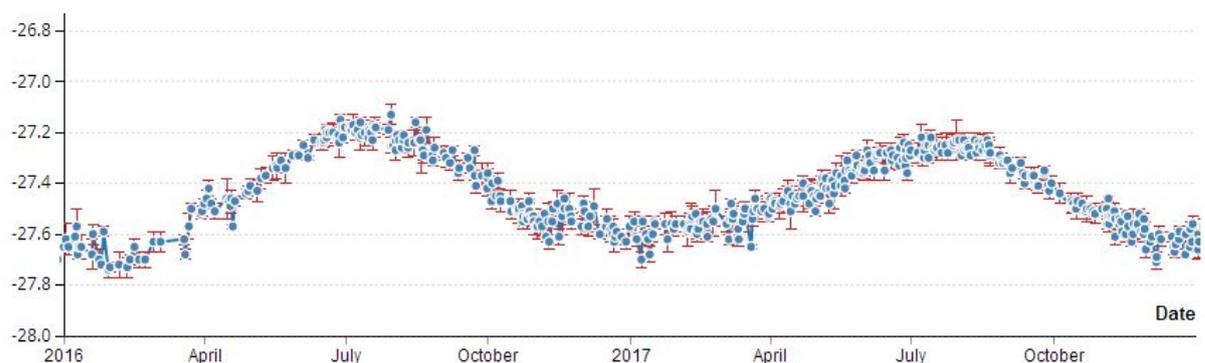


Fig. 2. Changes of the Caspian Sea level in the period from 01.01.2016 to 21.12.2017 (CMEMS data)

The main reason of such unusual seasonal run of the sea level in the second half of 2017 was rather moderate but abnormally long-lasting flooding of the Volga River in 2017. The Volga discharge at its delta top measured 2 times higher in July 2017 and 1.5

times higher in August 2017 than the mean value for 1961-2016. In autumn, it was also by 10% higher than this mean value.

Both the satellite monitoring data and the observation data provided by NMHS of the Caspian littoral states show that the mean Caspian Sea level did not differ substantially in 2017 from that of the previous year and stayed at the mark -28.0 BS¹. In 2018, the sea level “started” with higher value than in the beginning of 2017 that allows for a preliminary projection to make that its mean value stays close to this mark in 2018 as well, or exceeds it by just 5-10 cm.

This bulletin is intended for the authorities, enterprises, organizations and coastal communities as well as for all whose activities are connected with the Caspian Sea. Its preparation became possible only due to the cooperation of hydrometeorological organizations of the Caspian littoral states. The data of the General Catalogue of the Caspian Sea level elaborated under CASPCOM umbrella were used to compile the bulletin

¹ By the moment of this bulletin preparation, the data has not yet been completed by all NMHS. Complete information on the mean Caspian Sea level and the Volga River discharge in 2017 will be given in the next issue of the bulletin