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# The Absheron Project: BP's Production Sharing Agreement in Azerbaijan

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# Thecasesolutions.com *Basics*

- The Caspian Sea is the world's largest inland sea, or lake
- found by the Ancient Romans
- they discovered that the water was about a third as salty as regular seawater
- named after the Caspian tribe that lived there
- Bordered by Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Iran
- measured surface area is 371,000 sq km (143,244 sq mi), and the maximum depth is at 1025 m (3,363 ft)



## *Inflow*

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- **about ninety feet below sea level**
- **at it's deepest it is a little over three thousand feet deep**
- **The Volga River is the main inflow of water; the rest comes from other smaller rivers**
- **the damming and diversion of the Volga's water for industrial, agricultural and residential purposes have led to the lowering of the Caspian's water leve**

# Outlet

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- The Volga enters the Caspian Sea through the Volga delta at the mouth of the river where the city of Astrakhan is located
- But what is unique about Caspian is that there is no outlet; most of the sea's water evaporates in the Kara-Bogaz-Gol



# ***KBG***

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- **The Zaliv Kara-Bogaz-Gol, or KBG, is a large, shallow lagoon, or bay of the Caspian Sea**
- **acts as a natural evaporation basin for the waters of the Caspian Sea and deposits the seas salt on its shore as the water evaporates**
- **The size of the KGB has varied considerably over the course of the past century, from 0 sq. mi. to as much as seven thousand mi sq**
- **about 30 ft deep**





## *Drought & diversion*

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- The bright, salty, sediment-filled water of the Zaliv Kara-Bogaz-Gol contrasts sharply with the dark and clear water of the Caspian Sea
- This shallow basin is connected to the Caspian Sea by a narrow channel, which is its only source of fresh water
- Over the past century water level in the Zaliv Kara-Bogaz-Gol has varied tremendously, with detrimental affects for the local environment
- Drought and diversion of water from the Volga and Kür Rivers (the primary sources of fresh water for the Caspian) lowered the level of the Caspian Sea for most of the 20th Century



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- **In 1980 the Soviet Union completed a dam that blocked the flow of water from the Caspian into the Zaliv Kara-Bogaz-Gol**
- **This caused the KBG to dry out almost completely**
- **As a result, sturgeon spawning grounds were destroyed and dust storms drove away the local inhabitants**
- **Shortly after the dam was built, however, a rise in the Caspian's level necessitated the release of water back into the Zaliv Kara-Bogaz-Gol**
- **In 1992 the dam was destroyed.**