

RAHBAR KISAN INTERNATIONAL

“Green” development of New Uzbekistan and the fight against climate change

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Uzbekistan, endowed with unique natural resources and a rich cultural heritage, is advancing its role in the global fight against climate change. The country is implementing sustainable and green development strategies, aligning national efforts with international climate goals. In September 2023, Uzbekistan adopted the “Strategy of Uzbekistan-2030,” which prioritizes creating a

favorable environmental landscape for citizens while promoting sustainable practices. This strategy builds on the national “Yashil Makon” initiative, aimed at planting 200 million tree seedlings annually and increasing greenery coverage to 30%. Efforts under this initiative include the creation of forest plantations, expansion of greenery, and measures to stabilize the ecological situation, particularly in the Aral Sea region, which has been severely affected by desertification and climate change.

Recognizing the importance of biodiversity conservation, Uzbekistan is actively monitoring natural pastures, preventing the illegal exploitation of flora and fauna, and introducing measures to preserve endangered species. Waste management reforms have also been prioritized, with a focus on reducing landfill usage by 50% and modernizing waste incineration processes. The government is implementing over 10 decrees and resolutions to strengthen environmental governance, promote eco-tourism, and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources.

Significant amendments to the Constitution in April 2023 reinforce these efforts, placing responsibility on both the state and its citizens to uphold environmental protection.

The development of renewable energy plays a pivotal role in Uzbekistan’s green agenda. Solar and wind power plants with a combined capacity of 1.6 gigawatts are operational, contributing significantly to the national energy grid. Hydroelectric facilities with a capacity of 183 megawatts

have also been established. To further promote clean energy, solar panels with a capacity of 457 megawatts have been installed across public buildings, social facilities, and private residences. These installations generate approximately five billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually, conserving natural gas resources and reducing the country's carbon footprint. The "Yashil Makon" project has seen remarkable progress, with over 138 million tree seedlings planted in 2024 alone, exceeding initial targets. This includes large-scale reforestation efforts in the Aral Sea region, turning degraded lands into productive ecosystems.

Efforts to mitigate industrial pollution have been intensified. Inspections at over 3,300 pollution sources have led to the installation of dust and gas cleaning equipment at 42 large enterprises. Furthermore, local treatment facilities have been upgraded at 37 industrial sites, ensuring better wastewater management and reducing pollutants entering natural water bodies. To combat desertification and soil erosion, forest cover has been planted on 220,000 hectares of land, while 771 tons of seeds have been cultivated to support economic and ecological activities. Medicinal and nutritious plant cultivation has expanded, producing over 660 tons of raw materials, contributing to both environmental and economic resilience.

Transparency in environmental monitoring has improved significantly, with pollution data now accessible to the public through dedicated online portals. This initiative ensures accountability

and encourages active citizen participation in environmental conservation efforts. Additionally, waste management reforms have introduced innovative projects integrating waste recycling, alternative energy generation, and the production of organic fertilizers. The government aims to produce 2,000 megawatts of energy from waste and 1.1 million tons of organic fertilizers annually by 2028.

Public environmental education has emerged as a cornerstone of Uzbekistan's sustainability efforts. Youth engagement programs, awareness campaigns, and community events have been organized to foster eco-conscious behaviors among citizens. Initiatives such as eco-marathons, tree-planting drives, and school-based environmental projects have encouraged widespread participation in sustainability efforts.

Central Asia is among the regions most vulnerable to climate change, with challenges like water scarcity, desertification, and extreme weather patterns threatening the livelihoods of millions. Acknowledging this shared vulnerability, Uzbekistan has strengthened regional cooperation to address environmental challenges collectively. Through platforms like the Organization of Turkic States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the "C5+1" diplomatic format, Uzbekistan collaborates with neighboring countries to develop unified strategies for climate adaptation and mitigation. The "Green Central Asia" project, supported by the German government and GIZ, has

facilitated the creation of a Central Asian adaptation program, which includes the establishment of a regional Secretariat to oversee its implementation.

Uzbekistan has also been proactive on the global stage, showcasing its achievements and commitments at the COP28 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Dubai. The country participated with national pavilions, presenting its advancements in renewable energy, reforestation, and environmental legislation. A regional pavilion organized by the Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia (CAREC) highlighted collective efforts by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. This platform emphasized the importance of regional cooperation in addressing climate change challenges and presented innovative technologies and best practices developed within Central Asia. Discussions among Central Asian environmental ministers are ongoing to form a cohesive group for international climate negotiations, ensuring stronger representation on the global stage.

In addition to its domestic and regional efforts, Uzbekistan is exploring new technologies and partnerships to advance its sustainability goals. Research institutions and universities are actively engaged in studying climate resilience and developing solutions tailored to Uzbekistan's unique environmental conditions. International partnerships have also enabled knowledge sharing and the transfer of green technologies, further accelerating progress.

Through its multifaceted approach, Uzbekistan is setting a strong example of how a nation can effectively address climate change while fostering economic growth and social well-being. By integrating green development principles into its policies and encouraging active participation from its citizens, Uzbekistan is paving the way for a sustainable and resilient future, ensuring that its natural and cultural heritage is preserved for generations to come.