



**Permanent Mission
of the Republic of Azerbaijan
to the UN Office and other
International Organizations**

GENEVA

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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to transmit herewith the information received from the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan, on the achievements in environmental protection in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Enclosure: 3 pages

Geneva, 16 November 2018

**Office of the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights
GENEVA**

Achievements in environmental protection in the Republic of Azerbaijan

In the last century, the rapid development of the economy has resulted in the increase of adverse effects of human activity on the environment and extreme exploitation of natural resources. Currently, maintaining the ecological balance, the rational use of natural resources, protection of water, soil and atmospheric air from pollution are global issues affecting all of us.

Along with demographic growth, there is also a number of issues that concern the humanity such as the sharp increase in consumption and exhaustion of natural resources that could not be restored in the future, and have had influenced the environment-related thinking and activities.

In the global ecological crisis, the maintenance of a balance between economy, society and environment can be achieved only through the development of a new environmentally friendly and economically viable optimal model - sustainable development.

While each country has a specific environmental strategy and policy line, global goals are aimed at ensuring people to live in a healthy environment, protecting and developing the environmental values of society, and improving the quality of the environment.

In Azerbaijan, addressing environmental issues, improving the environmental situation are essential parts of the state policy and country's sustainable development strategy.

Minimization of environmental pollution and improvement of its protection to ensure environmental safety, efficient use of natural resources, utilization of alternative energy sources and achieving energy efficiency to meet the needs of present and future generations, assessing national needs for global environmental issues, identifying solutions, expansion of ties with international organizations are the main directions of the country's environmental policy.

The country's environmental strategy focuses on the protection of natural resources at the national, international and regional levels through the coordination of activities in the field of environmental protection, application of science-based development principles, and the sustainability of the country's economic and human resources.

Azerbaijan adopted the environmentally sustainable National Program on Socio-Economic Development even in 2003. In line with the Action plan on ensuring environmental sustainability as one of the Sustainable Development Goals, sustainable development principles have been incorporated into state policies and programs.

To this end, remediation of contaminated areas, increasing the scale of forest covered areas, biodiversity conservation, landscaping of arid lands, protection of the marine environment of the Caspian Sea, reducing negative impacts of climate change, modernization of hydrometeorological observation systems and monitoring network, improvement of legislation, international cooperation, increasing the level of environmental awareness of the population has been the main activities.

Currently, the projects named "Improving the ecological condition of the former Yod-Brom plant's fields contaminated with wastewaters in Surakhani district and restoration of the landscape", "Improvement of the ecological condition of the Chukhurdere ponds and restoration of the landscape" at the Heydar Aliyev International Airport, "Inventory and Evaluation of Contaminated Lands in Absheron Peninsula" are being implemented for the purpose of environmental rehabilitation of oil and oil products contaminated areas.

Relevant measures are being taken to manage wastes, including plastic wastes, and campaigns were organized to carry out waste recycling.

As a result of the afforestation and reforestation measures to increase the scale of forest covered areas, the area covered by forest accounts for 12% of the country's territory. Over the past 17 years, 152.4 thousand ha of afforestation and reforestation measures have been implemented, 96.445 million trees have been planted.

In the lands of the non-forest fund, characterized by arid lands, 5 386 thousand trees have been planted in the area of 4438 hectares. All areas have been provided with drip irrigation systems to ensure the sustainability of greenery projects. The alternate water resources such as desalinated seawater, as well as wastewater are used in irrigation. Moreover, plantation of harvesting trees, including olive and other fruit trees are preferred.

The total area of specially protected natural areas has been increased from 478,000 hectares (2003) to 893,000 hectares. The entire area accounts for 10.3% of the country's territory (10 national parks, 10 state natural reserves and 24 state nature reserves).

In the direction of increasing aquatic bioresources in water basins, in the last 17 years about 7 billion fish, including sturgeon and salmon fries were grown and released into water basins.

In the modern era energy security and environmental pollution, global climate change are major problems that humanity is concerned with. All states are trying to attract new energy sources to their fuel-energy balance. Alternative energy sources such as wind, sun, biomass, wave, hydrology of small rivers take a special place in this race.

The clean technologies are applied to resolve environmental issues arisen from the development of all economic sectors in the country. Measures are being implemented to widen the use of environmentally sound alternative energy sources, minimize greenhouse gases and effectively utilize energy in industry, transport, construction and other areas.

Azerbaijan is highly vulnerable to and is already experiencing negative impacts of climate change by increased number of natural phenomena such as floods, droughts, heat stresses and others. This is also showcase of adequate adaptation measures.

In this regard, some major infrastructure projects such as construction of water reservoirs and power plants, forestry and water projects are implemented by applying environmentally-friendly technologies in areas vulnerable to climate change.

At the 21st Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Paris in 2015, the Paris Agreement, a global level international legal instrument in the field of fight against climate change for the post-2020 period was adopted. The Paris Agreement aims at enhancing global response to climate change in the context of efforts to achieve sustainable development through the extension of the Convention's implementation and poverty eradication.

Taking into consideration national context of the country, future development prospects and national interests, in its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution by 2030 Azerbaijan targets 35% reduction in the level of greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990/base year as its contribution to the global climate change efforts.

Increasing the use of renewable energy sources and energy-efficient technologies to reduce impacts of climate change, cease of the use of black oil at thermal power plants and using natural gas instead as a cleaner fuel, expansion of forest areas, annual reduction of volume of associated gases to the atmosphere and conventional fuel unit used to generate electricity and other measures have been taken to mitigate climate change impact in Azerbaijan. In the future, it is considered to continue these activities in various sectors of the economy which will further increase the national contribution to the efforts to reduce the impact on global climate change.

Recently, application of new technologies in the field of hydrometeorology to strengthen control over the hazardous hydrometeorological phenomena caused by climate change, forecasting and improving early warning system, modern telecommunication system installed that allows to store and manage the data safely, and the number of automatic meteorological stations has reached 68.

At the same time, the Monitoring System has been improved and new modern technologies have been applied in evaluating and forecasting environmental processes, the latest generation of automated stations has been set up to conduct continuous monitoring of atmospheric air pollution, and online information on the state of atmospheric air has been provided.

In recent years, measures have been taken to improve the legislation in Azerbaijan and to bring the existing normative legal acts in line with the provisions of international treaties, including the EU legislation. Some new laws have been adopted to improve the environmental legislation, amendments have been made to existing laws. This mainly covers areas such as atmospheric air, water resources, household and industrial wastes, aquatic bioresources, biodiversity conservation. Along with the adoption of new laws, making additions and amendments to the existing laws, the relevant normative acts and regulations have been elaborated and approved to ensure their implementation.

To address existing issues, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources attaches great importance to the expansion of relations with international organizations and countries. Thus, cooperation with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), NATO, Global Environment Facility (GEF), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), World Bank, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and others is underway. At the same time, bilateral agreements with developed countries are established by relevant agreements.

Great attention is paid to joining multilateral international agreements in the field of environmental protection. So far, the Republic of Azerbaijan has acceded 18 conventions.