



**The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

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Regional capacity building workshop on biodiversity and human health for the
Europe Region, 23-25 October 2017, Helsinki, Finland

Environmental policy

The environmental policy implemented in the Republic aims to ensure continuous development providing protection of the existing ecosystems and economical potential and rational use of natural resources

Environmental protection problems are always at the center of attention of the Azerbaijan government and fundamental reforms are being carried out

Azerbaijan's balanced development policy

Ensures economic development;

Conservation of forests, protected areas is enhanced;

Impact on climate is reduced.

“Azerbaijan – 2020: vision for the future” is the country’s strategy for sustainable development. Balance between the public and the environment can be reached by developing new environmentally safe and economically optimized model of sustainable development.

Strategic roadmaps on the national economy and its main sectors (11 sectors) were approved by the Decree of the President in the end of 2016. Strategic roadmaps include economic development strategies and plan of actions for 2016-2020, a long-term vision for the period up to 2025, and the target view for the period after 2025. The provisions of the roadmaps will be a guideline in the preparation of strategic plans, development conceptions, strategies, action plans on the activity directions of the economic sphere.

Azerbaijan’s experience in sustainable development can be seen at the example of mitigation of climate change impact.

Example of mitigation of climate change impact

In 1990, Azerbaijan emitted 73 million tons of greenhouse gases. Now it is 51 million tons.

Despite the fact that Azerbaijan has no quantitative commitments under Kyoto Protocol, we have succeeded to reduce the GHGs emissions by more than 600 million tons since the Kyoto process started.

According to Nationally Determined Contribution – NDC document, Azerbaijan has set a target to decrease the emissions of greenhouse gases by 35% until 2030 compared to the baseline year of 1990.

Paris Agreement was ratified by the Government of Azerbaijan on 28 October 2016.

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Climate action

Azerbaijan is supporting the legal framework for future climate change activities at the global level. It ratified the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol in April 2015, and has set a target to reduce its emissions of greenhouse gases by 35% by 2030, drawing the praise of the Climate Action Network for taking the lead in climate change mitigation. Azerbaijan is party to key international treaties, including on Climate Change, Land Degradation and Biodiversity, has enacted important national environmental laws, and has integrated environmental concerns into national policies and programmes.

Climate change is acknowledged as a major health risk multiplier, with existing effects that are expected to increasingly affect human health, including through negative changes to land, oceans, biodiversity and access to freshwater, and the increasing frequency and higher impact of natural disasters.

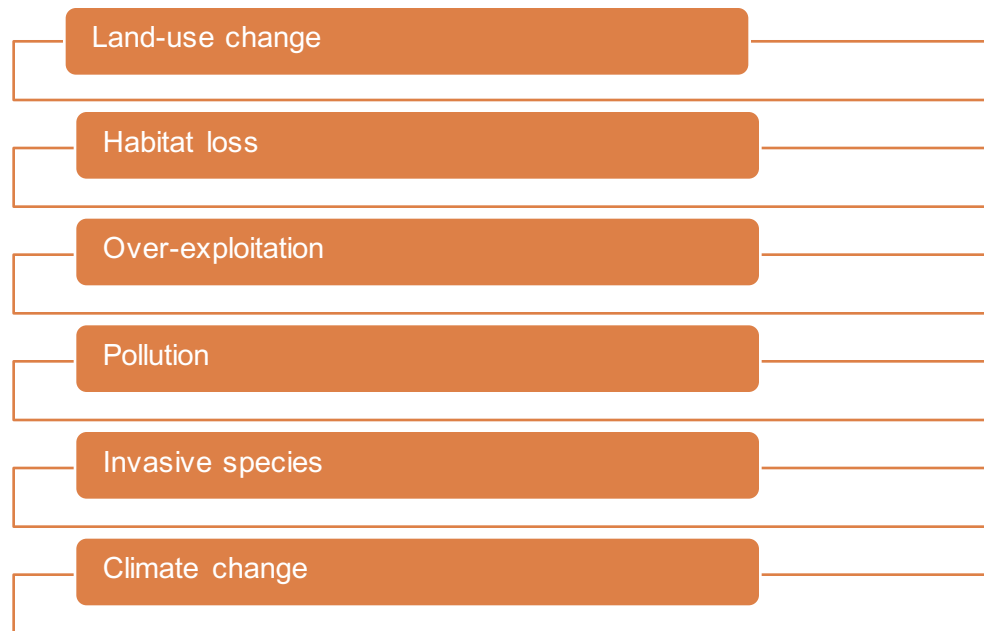
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Climate action

For ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change, biodiversity protected areas have increased from 4.5% of the country's area to 10.4%, and forest cover has risen from 11.4% to 11.8% increasing absorbed carbon by 2 million tons. Azerbaijan's greenhouse gas emissions account for 0.1% of global emissions, with emissions per capita equivalent to 5.4 tons of CO₂, down from 10.4 tons in 1990. Emissions were reduced by half after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and are still 70% of the 1990 level despite intensified economic growth.

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Direct drivers of biodiversity loss



Human population health is determined, to a large extent, by social, economic and environmental factors.

Many of these drivers affect human health directly and through their impacts on biodiversity

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The National Strategy

“National Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity for 2017-2020” has been approved by the Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 03 October 2016

The National Strategy has the following priority objectives:

- ❖ Ensuring broad extension of environmental education in the society for improving awareness of population on biological diversity and ecosystem services;
- ❖ Improving biodiversity monitoring systems;
- ❖ Restoring and conserving biodiversity, ecosystems, genetic diversity;
- ❖ Developing and effectively managing the protected areas and expansion of the current network;
- ❖ Reducing the negative impacts on biodiversity and its sustainable use;
- ❖ Improving regulatory framework for ensuring the sustainability of biodiversity;
- ❖ Increasing public participation in biodiversity conservation at the national and local level;
- ❖ Developing collaborative management in biodiversity conservation;
- ❖ Providing adequate resources for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;
- ❖ Strengthening institutional capacities in the planning, management and use of biodiversity

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Measures

- Use of alternative energy sources and energy efficient technologies;
- Shift from black oil to natural gas;
- Expansion of forest territories;
- Reduction of emissions volume of the associated gas to the atmosphere and conventional fuel unit used for electrical energy production;
- Solar panel factory with the annual production capacity of 50 Megawatts and solar collectors production has been established.

Environment Benefits

- Improved air quality

Health Benefits

- Reduced air pollution related diseases (e.g. respiratory ones)

The main goal – to increase the renewable energy share up to 25% by 2030

Reforestation and greening

For the last 15 years, 100 million trees have been planted in 144 hectares;

Forest areas have been expanded from 11,4% to 11,8%;

Due to strengthening control and gasification policy the number of woodcuttings extremely reduced;

For the last 8 years, 5 million trees have been planted, all areas provided with modern drip irrigation systems.

Environment Benefits

- Improved air quality, reduced heat island impacts, lessened storm-water flooding, intercepted pollutants

Health Benefits

- Improved human resilience to extreme weather conditions; reduced levels of stress and mental health benefits; increased outdoor physical and recreational activities and thus reduced obesity

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PROVIDING REMOTE VILLAGES WITH SAFE WATER

The “Program of improving the provision of population with the ecologically pure water” is purely based on the principles of ecological civilization

- Modular treatment plants have been established in 384 residential settlements - 625 thousand inhabitants;
- Production of water treatment facilities in the country;
- No water was extracted by digging wells. We were satisfied by water given naturally;
- Water distribution points were established (no water supply for every house).

Environment Benefits

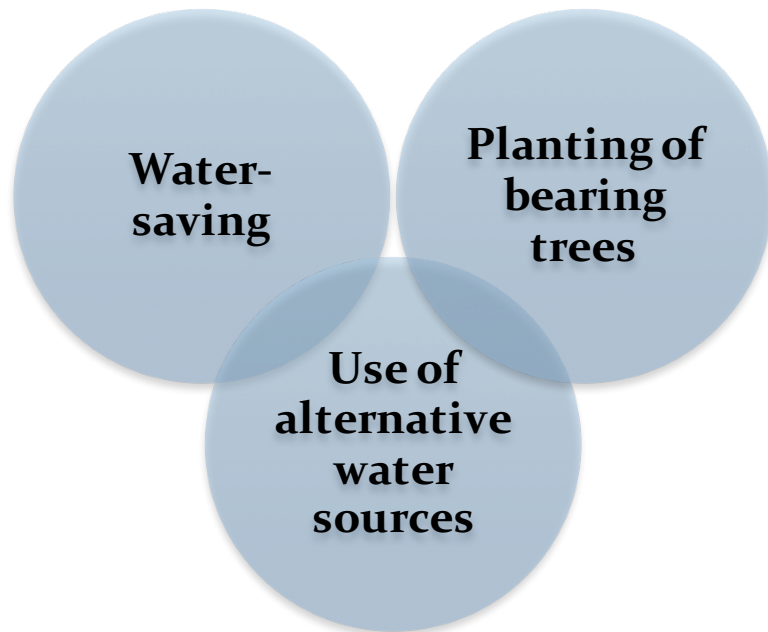
- Improved water quality and quantity

Health Benefits

- Reduced incidence of diseases associated with poor water quality (e.g. diarrhoeal, etc.) and/or with poor personal hygiene

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Sustainability of greenery projects



- **Water-saving** - drip irrigation systems
- **Use of alternative water sources:**
 - Seawater desalination plant;
 - Water reuse (“Shirvan” channel, “Hovsan” aeration station).
- **Planting of bearing trees :**
 - 1 265 thousand olive trees have been planted in 1890 hectares;
 - In 2015, for the first time, 16 tons of olive trees were used as seeds;
 - In 2016, 100 tons, in 2025 14 thousand tons of products are expected;
 - We are working towards the establishment of olive farms.

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Biodiversity protection

Specially protected nature areas were increased by 2 times and reached 893 thousand hectares covering 10,3% of country territory (9 National Parks, 11 Nature Reserves and 24 Sanctuaries)

First Biosphere reservation in the South Caucasus has been established

Shamakhi Safari Park has been established

Nowadays, main focus is on updating the infrastructure of protected areas



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Efforts to increase of sea bioresources

5 billion fishes were bred during the last 15 years

Modern artificial breeding fishery, “Khilli” Hatchery has operated since 2003

For the first time in Azerbaijan extraction of caviar using caesarean section is used. This method keeps mother fish safe



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Status of biodiversity

Approximately 4,500 species of vascular plants have been recorded in the country, of which 210 are considered endemic to Azerbaijan. This represents around 65% of the floral diversity of the Caucasus region.

25,000 species of insects and 1,837 species of arachnids have been identified in Azerbaijan. Vertebrates include 11 species of amphibians, 61 reptiles, about 400 birds, and 110 mammals.

Azerbaijan uniquely includes examples of nine of the world's key climate types, which defines this diversity of species and ecosystems. Within a two-hour drive it is possible to visit several ecosystems in Azerbaijan.

Status of biodiversity

A wide range of Azerbaijan's flora is used as a source of food and medicine (Around 800 plant species of medicinal value have been recorded in Azerbaijan, including 150 species used in pharmacology)

cherries; plums; cornel; hawthorn; forest strawberry (*Fagariavesca*); Russian cherry-plum (*Grossularia reclinata*); sea-buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*); apple; medlar; sour cherry; blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*); raspberry (*Rubus caesius*); *Rubus* spp., dog-rose (*Rosa* spp.) and wild varieties of onion (*Allium*).

elecampagne (*Inula helenium*), origanum (*Origanum vulgare*), coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*), valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*), and sandy immortelle (*Helychrisum arenarium*).

Thank you for your attention

