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ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND STRATEGY OF UZBEKISTAN: PRIORITY DIRECTIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS OF THE TRANSITION TO A GREEN ECONOMY

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Abstract: This article examines the environmental policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the strategic directions of its implementation. The study analyzes the "Uzbekistan–2030" Strategy, the Green Economy Transition Concept, the nationwide "Green Space" initiative, energy efficiency policies, and waste management systems. Furthermore, the economic mechanisms of environmental policy and the significance of cooperation with international organizations are assessed. The findings indicate that Uzbekistan possesses significant opportunities to ensure environmental sustainability by promoting renewable energy sources, strengthening institutional capacity, and integrating economic growth with environmental protection.

Keywords: environmental policy, green economy, sustainable development, energy efficiency, renewable energy, ESG, environmental governance, international cooperation.

In recent years, global climate change, increasing exploitation of natural resources, and the intensification of environmental challenges have created new responsibilities for countries worldwide. Under these circumstances, maintaining a balance between economic development and environmental protection has become a critical priority. Uzbekistan has also embarked on comprehensive reforms aimed at ensuring environmental sustainability, promoting the rational use of natural resources, and implementing the principles of a green economy.

The "Uzbekistan–2030" Strategy serves as the country's long-term development framework and identifies environmental security, the expansion of renewable energy sources, the development of green areas, and effective waste management as key priorities. Therefore, a scientific analysis of the strategic foundations and economic mechanisms of environmental policy is highly relevant.

The study employs the following research methods:

- Systematic literature review;
- Comparative analysis;
- Statistical data generalization;
- Comprehensive assessment approach;
- Institutional analysis.

The research is based on national legal documents, strategic development programs, reports of international organizations, and scholarly publications related to environmental sustainability and green economic development.

The "Uzbekistan–2030" Strategy establishes specific objectives for environmental development. These include increasing the share of green urban areas to 30 percent, expanding forest coverage, improving waste recycling rates, and modernizing enterprises that pose environmental risks.

The main priorities of environmental policy include:

- Expansion of green spaces;
- Conservation of biodiversity;
- Increasing the share of renewable energy sources;

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- Reduction of carbon emissions;
- Improvement of environmental governance systems.

Priority Direction	Main Activities	Expected Environmental Outcomes	Expected Economic Outcomes
Expansion of Green Areas	Tree planting, afforestation, urban greening	Improved air quality, increased carbon sequestration	Job creation, enhanced urban attractiveness
Renewable Energy Development	Construction of solar and wind power plants	Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	Energy security, lower energy costs
Energy Efficiency	Introduction of energy-saving technologies	Reduced energy consumption	Increased productivity, cost savings
Waste Management	Recycling systems, public-private partnerships	Reduced pollution and landfill use	Development of recycling industries
Biodiversity Conservation	Protection of ecosystems and natural habitats	Preservation of species diversity	Sustainable tourism opportunities
Environmental Governance	ESG implementation and institutional reforms	Improved environmental compliance	Increased investment attractiveness

The nationwide “Green Space” program represents a practical manifestation of environmental policy. Within its framework, millions of trees and shrubs are being planted across the country. This initiative contributes to:

- Improvement of environmental conditions;
- Enhancement of carbon sequestration capacity;
- Positive impacts on public health;
- Creation of new employment opportunities.

To improve energy efficiency, Uzbekistan is implementing large-scale projects involving the construction of solar and wind power plants, the introduction of energy-saving technologies, and the development of energy storage systems.

In the field of waste management, investments are being attracted through public-private partnerships to increase recycling rates and reduce the number of landfill sites. These measures contribute to both environmental protection and economic efficiency.

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Uzbekistan actively cooperates with international organizations in implementing environmental policies. Collaboration with organizations such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), and Islamic Development Bank has facilitated important projects in environmental governance, green financing, and energy efficiency.

Institutional development initiatives include:

- Introduction of ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) principles;
- Development of carbon neutrality strategies;
- Implementation of green building standards;
- Expansion of environmental education programs.

The analysis demonstrates that Uzbekistan's environmental policy is designed to harmonize economic growth with environmental sustainability. The implementation of green economy principles contributes to improved energy efficiency, rational resource utilization, and reduced environmental degradation.

International experience indicates that the success of environmental policy depends on effective governance, adequate financial support, and active public participation. In this regard, the reforms currently being implemented in Uzbekistan are expected to generate positive long-term outcomes.

The study leads to the following conclusions:

1. Uzbekistan's environmental policy is being shaped within the framework of the "Uzbekistan–2030" Strategy and contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goals.
2. Programs such as the "Green Space" initiative, renewable energy projects, and waste management reforms create opportunities to enhance both environmental and economic efficiency.
3. Cooperation with international organizations plays a crucial role in financing environmental projects and introducing advanced international practices.
4. The adoption of ESG principles, the development of carbon neutrality strategies, and the expansion of environmental education strengthen the institutional foundations of environmental policy.
5. In the future, the broader implementation of green technologies, increased environmental investment, and the promotion of environmental awareness will further support Uzbekistan's sustainable development and transition toward a green economy.

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