

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR UZBEKISTAN'S GREEN ECONOMY AND ECOLOGICAL RESILIENCE

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Abstract: This article analyzes Uzbekistan's evolving green-economy policy in the context of global ecological change and the critical role of international cooperation. It reviews national strategies, recent reforms, and global partnerships, and discusses how foreign investment, technology transfer, policy frameworks, and cross-border diplomacy support Uzbekistan's sustainable future. It also examines challenges and proposes key recommendations.

Key words: Uzbekistan, Green Economy, Sustainable Development, Ecological Resilience, Climate Change Policy, International Cooperation, Environmental Diplomacy, Renewable Energy, Carbon Market, Biodiversity Conservation, Green Finance, Regional Ecological Cooperation, Technology Transfer, Low-Carbon Development, Inclusive Green Growth

1. Introduction

Climate change, environmental degradation, and the depletion of natural resources represent existential challenges for nations around the world. For Uzbekistan—a country grappling with water stress, land degradation, and legacy environmental issues such as the Aral Sea catastrophe—the **green economy** offers a transformative development path. However, the success of this transition depends on not only domestic reform, but also **international cooperation**.

2. Uzbekistan's Green-Economy Policy Landscape

2.1 Strategic Frameworks and National Priorities

In November 2024, President **Shavkat Mirziyoyev** declared 2025 the “**Year of Environmental Protection and Green Economy**”, underscoring the country's commitment to sustainability.

The “**Uzbekistan – 2030**” Strategy integrates green growth objectives, including raising renewable energy capacity, greening urban areas, and adopting energy-efficient technologies.

Uzbekistan's **Green Economy Strategy (2019–2030)** emphasizes resource efficiency, carbon mitigation, and expanding green financing.

In his policy speeches, President Mirziyoyev outlined a national low-carbon development plan, setting a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by **35% by 2030** and boosting green investment to 50% of new project financing.

2.2 Institutional & Financial Reforms

A **National Green Taxonomy** (PKM-561) has been introduced to define environmentally sustainable economic activities and attract private green investment (e.g., infrastructure, housing).

In November 2025, the **AIIB approved a US\$ 500 million Green and Resilient Market Economy Program** to support Uzbekistan's green transition, including reforms in energy, procurement, and carbon credit trading.

According to the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), Uzbekistan's 2024–2028 planning framework includes initiatives to scale up climate-smart agriculture, establish MRV systems for carbon markets, and promote green cities.

Development of major waste-to-energy infrastructure is underway: Uzbekistan plans to turn 4.7 million tonnes of solid waste per year into electricity by 2027, with foreign partners.

2.3 Biodiversity and International Environmental Engagement

In collaboration with the **UNDP and GEF**, the government launched a \$6.5 million program in early 2025 to update its National Biodiversity Strategy and restore key ecosystems in the Nuratau and Tien Shan regions.

To drive environmental diplomacy, Uzbekistan proposed key climate resolutions at the United Nations and launched regional climate strategies with neighboring states.

3. Role of International Cooperation in Green Transformation

3.1 Climate Diplomacy & Governance

Global cooperation has been vital to Uzbekistan's green ambitions. Through climate diplomacy, the country aligns its policy with international frameworks (e.g., Paris Agreement) and secures support through global environmental institutions. These partnerships provide legitimacy and access to finance, while improving transparency and institutional capacity.

3.2 Technology & Institutional Knowledge Transfer

Transitioning to a green economy demands cutting-edge technologies—renewables, smart-grid systems, water-efficient agriculture—that Uzbekistan alone cannot scale quickly. Through cooperation with development agencies (AIIB, GGGI, UNDP), the country gains access to technology, expertise, and institutional support to build domestic capacity.

3.3 Green Finance & Carbon Markets

International finance is central to Uzbekistan's green plans. The AIIB program helps build a **carbon credit trading mechanism** by funding institutional reforms, establishing MRV systems,

and creating transparent markets for carbon. This approach links domestic emissions reductions to global demand for credits, attracting private investment.

3.4 Regional Ecological Cooperation

Uzbekistan's environmental issues do not stop at its borders. Shared water resources, climate risks, and land degradation require regional collaboration. International ties—as well as cross-border environmental initiatives—are critical for long-term resilience.

3.5 Sustainable Development & Social Inclusion

Through cooperation with UNDP and IUCN, Uzbekistan's green policies also emphasize conservation, biodiversity, and social equity. These partnerships contribute to sustainable land management, ecosystem restoration, and inclusive green growth.

4. Challenges and Risks

Even with strong policies, the transition faces real obstacles:

Institutional Fragmentation — Different ministries handle different parts of green policy (energy, ecology, urban planning), which can lead to inefficiencies.

Capacity Building — Implementing MRV for carbon credits and maintaining robust verification systems requires significant institutional learning.

Social Equity — Ensuring that green development benefits rural and marginalized communities, rather than primarily large investors, is essential.

Investor Risk — While green financing is growing, macroeconomic stability, regulatory clarity, and policy permanence remain critical for attracting long-term green investors.

Environmental Trade-offs — Large infrastructure projects (e.g., hydropower) can themselves have ecological costs; balancing green development with biodiversity protection is complex

5. Recommendations

To maximize the benefits of international cooperation for its green transition, Uzbekistan should:

Strengthen **institutional coordination**: create a central green-economy council that integrates ministries, international partners, and civil society.

Accelerate development of **carbon market infrastructure**: build robust MRV systems, allow public participation, and ensure transparency.

Expand **green financing instruments**: issue green bonds, promote green mortgages, and use local capital together with international funds.

Promote **inclusive green growth**: develop rural green jobs, ensure community participation in green projects, and address social risks.

Deepen **regional cooperation**: collaborate with Central Asian neighbors on water management, renewable energy, and ecosystem restoration

6. Conclusion

Uzbekistan's bold vision for a green economy represents a significant step in national development and ecological responsibility. However, the success of this transformation depends heavily on continued and deepened **international cooperation**. Through partnerships with multilateral institutions, development agencies, and global funds, Uzbekistan is laying the groundwork for a sustainable, low-carbon, resilient future. The next decade will be decisive; if implemented well, Uzbekistan's green transition could become a model for sustainable growth across Central Asia and beyond.

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