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### Committee on Environmental Policy

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#### Environmental performance reviews

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## Third Environmental Performance Review of Uzbekistan: recommendations

### Note by the secretariat

#### Summary

The present document provides recommendations of the third Environmental Performance Review of Uzbekistan agreed upon by the Expert Group on Environmental Performance at its meeting held in Geneva on 30 October – 1 November 2019.

The Committee is invited to adopt these recommendations.

### Chapter 1: Legal, policy and institutional framework

#### Recommendation 1.1:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Ensure regular and transparent activities throughout the entire institutional framework for national Sustainable Development Goals implementation and monitoring;
- (b) Ensure the effective participation of civil society in the institutional framework for national Sustainable Development Goals implementation and monitoring;
- (c) Actively involve the local authorities in implementation and monitoring of the national Sustainable Development Goals, in particular to reduce the regional differences in the achievement of the national targets;
- (d) Ensure that the national Sustainable Development Goals are explicitly integrated into all future strategic planning documents;
- (e) Define baseline, midterm and final values to be achieved for national Sustainable Development Goals indicators;
- (f) Ensure the regular preparation of reports on national Sustainable Development Goals implementation;
- (g) Ensure that a voluntary national review is organized in 2020 with the involvement of all stakeholders in its preparation;
- (h) Consider reviewing the national targets with a view to encompassing additional targets in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

#### Recommendation 1.2:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ensure:

- (a) Comprehensive coverage of the entire spectrum of environmental issues in the national policy framework;

(b) Provision of free online access to the reports on implementation of strategic documents on environmental protection and on sectoral development with a possible impact on the environment;

(c) Support to local authorities in the development and adoption of strategic documents on environmental protection.

Recommendation 1.3:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should progressively introduce strategic environmental assessment (SEA) by:

(a) Developing the legal framework to introduce a fully fledged SEA system in line with the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context;

(b) Ensuring that SEA and EIA are part of a coherent environmental assessment framework;

(c) Raising awareness and providing capacity-building on SEA to governmental authorities and other stakeholders;

(d) Organizing one or more pilot SEAs.

Recommendation 1.4:

The Cabinet of Ministers should strengthen horizontal coordination on environmental protection issues by:

(a) Reviewing the need for interagency coordination in the areas of climate change, environmental health, chemicals and air pollution or other areas requiring such coordination;

(b) Ensuring meaningful stakeholder participation in interagency councils and commissions;

(c) Making meeting reports of the interagency councils and commissions publicly available.

See Recommendations 7.2, 17.6.

## **Chapter 2: Regulatory and compliance assurance mechanisms**

Recommendation 2.1:

The Cabinet of Ministers should revise the legal and regulatory framework on state ecological expertise in line with international standards laid down by the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters and the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, in particular such aspects of the environmental impact assessment as screening, scoping, effective public participation and transboundary impact assessment, and by extending the relevant time limits.

Recommendation 2.2:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should:

(a) Develop effective mechanisms for citizen environmental enforcement by ensuring public access to the environmental information on planned and ongoing development projects and by providing incentives to citizens for triggering environmental compliance review through submission of complaints to enforcement authorities, including on environmental aspects of industrial activities;

(b) Develop and implement measures to strengthen the capacity of environmental inspectors for planning inspections on the basis of risk assessment of industrial and mining facilities;

(c) Regularly disclose data and information about the performance of the environmental compliance assurance system;

(d) Ensure that data on activities of public environmental inspectors are available to enable effective use of this tool.

Recommendation 2.3:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should:

- (a) Develop and provide incentives for the application of environmental audit;
- (b) Raise awareness of global initiatives on voluntary environmental and sustainability reporting by companies;
- (c) In cooperation with the Uzbek Agency for Standardization, Metrology and Certification, promote scheme-based eco-labelling, including the application of internationally recognized eco-labelling schemes, and raise public awareness of eco-labelling.

Recommendation 2.4:

The Cabinet of Ministers should initiate:

- (a) A review of the proportionality of administrative fines for environmental offences on the basis of consideration of their deterrent effect and possible environmental impact;
- (b) The development of legislation providing the right of individuals and NGOs to claim compensation for damage to their health and property due to violation of environmental legislation;
- (c) Development of the legal framework enabling the application of compulsory and voluntary environmental insurance.

### **Chapter 3: Greening the economy**

Recommendation 3.1:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should:

- (a) Reform the system of pollution charges by focusing on (a few) major air and water pollutants;
- (b) Abandon the pollution charges on enterprise vehicles to avoid double taxation;
- (c) Replace the pollution charges on industrial waste with cost-reflective tariffs for waste collection, transport and disposal;
- (d) Ensure effective pollution control and abatement by a judicious combination of pollution charges and command-and-control regulation.

Recommendation 3.2:

The Cabinet of Ministers should continue with the liberalization of prices of motor fuels and raise tax rates on motor fuels, taking into account the development of incomes of the population.

Recommendation 3.3:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Continue the process of gradually bringing utility tariffs to cost-recovery levels;
- (b) Support measures designed to ensure comprehensive and accurate water metering from the stage of water abstraction to the stage of final water consumption;
- (c) Design an effective mechanism for providing targeted social assistance to ensure vulnerable consumers have adequate access to utility services.

Recommendation 3.4:

The Cabinet of Ministers should continue the planned phasing out of fossil fuel subsidies and the ongoing transition to cost-reflective energy tariffs, while coordinating and synchronizing them with the introduction of effective renewable energy sources support schemes, incentives, such as feed-in tariffs, and competitive bidding auctions for promoting the increased use of renewable energy.

Recommendation 3.5:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Apply the water use tax to all water abstracted by water companies;
- (b) Review the costs and benefits of introducing water abstraction charges for irrigation water to recover the costs of water delivery to the operational areas of water user associations;
- (c) Earmark revenues from the water use tax for the financing of water sector infrastructure management.

Recommendation 3.6:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ensure the publication of detailed annual reports on revenues and expenditures of the Fund for Ecology, Environmental Protection and Waste Management, Forestry Development Fund and Fund for Development of Water Supply and Sanitation Systems.

Recommendation 3.7:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Strengthen efforts to establish an effective and transparent public-private partnership (PPP) framework that meets advanced international standards;
- (b) Ensure that the administrative capacities and competencies for the evaluation of the benefits and costs of PPPs are developed.

Recommendation 3.8:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Ensure that subsidiary legislation on public procurement is developed to enable the use of a multi-criteria approach that considers, inter alia, environmental impacts;
- (b) Allocate sufficient human resources and raise the capacity of staff working on green public procurement.

#### **Chapter 4: Environmental monitoring, information and science**

Recommendation 4.1:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ensure that:

- (a) The Programme of Environmental Monitoring includes measures to promote further automation and digitalization of the state environmental monitoring;
- (b) The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection, in coordination with Uzhydromet and other relevant government bodies, automates data collection, quality control and transfer in general towards the establishment of a continuous monitoring and real-time pollution data collection system, particularly with regard to the atmospheric air pollution monitoring network;
- (c) Noise monitoring activities are initiated and integrated in the Programme of Environmental Monitoring.

See Recommendation 8.2.

Recommendation 4.2:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Ensure accreditation of all analytical laboratories under concerned ministries and agencies with responsibilities in the implementation of the Programme of Environmental Monitoring;
- (b) Provide resources for Uzhydromet to install surface water quality and soil pollution laboratories in relevant regional offices;
- (c) Provide resources to equip the Centre for Specialized Analytical Control on Environmental Protection under the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection with portable (mobile) laboratories.

Recommendation 4.3:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

(a) Allocate sufficient resources to the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection for the establishment of an integrated environmental information system interlinked with the environmental databases of the other public authorities operating under the Programme of Environmental Monitoring and supported by geographic information system (GIS) technologies in accordance with common formats, metadata and interoperability requirements;

(b) Take necessary legislative, policy and practical measures to improve management and facilitate continuous modernization and digitalization of environmental information, including state environmental monitoring information and environmental databases/cadastral, ensuring their interoperability with geospatial, statistical, health and other information systems by leveraging the use of modern technologies to promote effective information collection, exchange and dissemination to the public;

(c) Allocate sufficient resources to the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection for the finalization of the portal of the Centre for Specialized Analytical Control on Environmental Protection aimed at collecting emissions data from enterprises in support of reporting, data visualizations and the display of monitoring data to the public, and support its further development towards a future pollutant release and transfer register in Uzbekistan in line with modern international standards;

(d) Promote the regular participation of Uzbekistan in activities under the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers with a view to sharing experience and learning from international good practices;

(e) ~~Consider accession to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers,~~

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Recommendation 4.4:

The State Committee on Statistics should:

(a) Make publicly available on its website the environmental statistics it collects;

(b) Initiate the production of accounts according to the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA);

(c) Promote the development of environmental Sustainable Development Goals indicator methodologies and exchange of international experience in reporting on the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(d) Align some of the national indicators with the global Sustainable Development Goals indicator framework;

(e) Increase the number of environment-related Sustainable Development Goals indicators made publicly available online;

(f) Initiate the collection of gender and environment statistics.

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(f) . Decide to develop capacities in that regard

Recommendation 4.5:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should:

(a) Continue with the regular production of its set of 91 environmental indicators and produce all remaining indicators in the ECE list of environmental indicators that are relevant to the country;

(b) Make these publicly available on its website in line with Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) principles of open access to environmental data.

Recommendation 4.6:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should:

(a) Reinitiate the regular production of the national report on the state of the environment and use of natural resources, ensuring its alignment with the international standards provided through the 2007 ECE Guidelines for the Preparation of Indicator-based Environment Assessment Reports in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia and the

Aarhus Convention, and taking into account the potential of the national report to contribute to monitoring the implementation of the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(b) Provide online public access to the national report on the state of the environment and use of natural resources and to other reports and bulletins produced by different government agencies under the scope of the implementation of the Programme of Environmental Monitoring and as part of reporting on implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, so as to provide timely, relevant and reliable information on the state of the environment to decision makers and the public.

Recommendation 4.7:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

(a) Ensure that a sectoral assessment of priority areas for research and innovation in line with the roadmap of the Strategy for Innovative Development for the period 2019–2021 is carried out and identify resources needed for promoting applied research and technology development in the field of pollution prevention and control technologies;

(b) Provide the Scientific and Research Institute on Ecology and Environmental Protection with sufficient resources for it to further develop applied research on pollution prevention and control technologies appropriate for the territory of Uzbekistan.

## **Chapter 5: Access to information, public participation and education on the environment**

Recommendation 5.1:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection and other governmental authorities should:

(a) Make available online all information on environmental matters in their possession, including the electronic versions of the available printed publications;

(b) Enhance the legal framework, procedures and practical measures to enable effective public access to information on environmental matters in line with international standards;

(c) Establish a system to monitor the effectiveness of procedures related to requests for information on environmental matters;

(d) Organize activities to raise the awareness of the public on information on environmental matters and the rights and procedures to access it;

(e) Organize activities to develop the capacity of civil servants at the national and subnational levels regarding the scope of information on environmental matters and procedures to make information on environmental matters effectively accessible to the public;

(f) Provide adequate human and financial resources to support effective access to information on environmental matters.

See Recommendations 3.6, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6.

Recommendation 5.2:

The Cabinet of Ministers should simplify the procedures for the operation of environmental NGOs in line with international standards.

Recommendation 5.3:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

(a) Ensure that detailed procedures are developed and practical measures are taken to enable effective public participation in decision-making on environmental matters (on projects, activities, strategic planning and legislation) in line with international standards, and monitor their implementation;

(b) Ensure meaningful organization of public hearings;

(c) Increase the time frame for commenting on laws and by-laws, at least to 30 days and, for large and complex documents, to 60 days or more, to enable the public to organize for the submission of comments;

(d) Develop the capacity of civil servants at the national and subnational levels and provide adequate human and financial resources to support public participation.

See Recommendations 2.1, 16.4.

Recommendation 5.4:

The Cabinet of Ministers, through the Ministry of Justice, the General Prosecutor's Office and the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection, should:

(a) Promote access to justice in environmental matters and raise the awareness of members of the public and environmental NGOs about their rights and opportunities as provided by the legislation in this respect;

(b) Develop the capacity of the judicial system (civil servants, judges, staff of the Human Rights Ombudsperson and relevant training institutions) to provide access to justice in environmental matters to members of the public and environmental NGOs.

See Recommendation 2.4(b).

Recommendation 5.5:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

(a) Ensure the regular participation of Uzbekistan in activities under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) with a view to sharing experience and good practice;

(b) Encourage the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan and other relevant bodies (Human Rights Ombudsperson, General Prosecutor's Office) to participate in activities related to access to justice under the Aarhus Convention;

(c) Initiate an in-depth assessment of the state of affairs in the area of access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, with detailed recommendations on action needed in each area, with a view to bringing the national system in these areas in line with the Aarhus Convention;

(d) ~~Consider accession to the Aarhus Convention.~~

Recommendation 5.6:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

(a) Give a mandate on education for sustainable development (ESD) to the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection, including promoting ESD in non-formal and informal education and in-service training;

(b) Give a mandate on ESD to each of the three ministries in the education sector, including for mandatory integration of ESD into the formal curricula at all levels and into teachers' education and in-service training;

(c) Revitalize the work of the Coordination Council on Education for Sustainable Development by revisiting its composition to include all relevant stakeholders and by ensuring its regular activities;

(d) Ensure the integration of ESD into the national legislation and policies and monitoring and reporting on their implementation;

(e) Support the work on ESD by academia and NGOs;

(f) Ensure regular participation by the country in activities in the framework of the ECE Strategy for ESD.

Recommendation 5.7:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should:

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(e) Decide to develop capacities in that regard

- (a) Mandate its Centre for Retraining and Advanced Training of Environmental Professionals to integrate ESD into its training activities;
- (b) Promote the integration of environmental education and ESD into the training activities of in-service training centres under other governmental authorities.

## Chapter 6: Implementation of international agreements and commitments

### Recommendation 6.1:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ensure that:

- (a) Regular and efficient mechanisms for coordination on environment-related issues that are subject of international, regional or bilateral cooperation are in place;
- (b) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has an updated and publicly available database of all focal points of international agreements, in particular, environment-related ones, and relevant authorities display information on focal points of their websites;
- (c) Focal points comply with their duties of sharing information and preparing and disseminating meeting reports and that they are properly prepared for performing the functions of focal points;
- (d) Information available at the convention secretariats in relation to focal points is always up to date;
- (e) Technical capacities to implement and report on multilateral environmental agreements are strengthened.

### Recommendation 6.2:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ~~consider accession~~ to:

- (a) 1991 Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context;
- (b) 2003 Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context;
- (c) 1979 Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution, the 1984 EMEP Protocol under the Convention and, subsequently, the three amended protocols to the Convention: the 1999 Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone amended in 2012, the 1998 Protocol on Heavy Metals amended in 2012 and the 1998 Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants amended in 2009;
- (d) 1998 Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade;
- (e) 2013 Minamata Convention on Mercury;
- (f) 1999 Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

See Recommendations 4.3, 5.5, 12.5, 13.4, 14.5, 15.5.

### Recommendation 6.3:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ensure regular fulfilment by Uzbekistan of its reporting obligations under all multilateral environmental agreements the country participates in.

### Recommendation 6.4:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ensure the active role of Uzbekistan in facilitating the strengthening of the legal and institutional frameworks of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea.

### Recommendation 6.5:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should facilitate timely approval of the Regional Environmental Programme for Sustainable Development in Central Asia, its implementation and monitoring.

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Recommendation 6.6:

The Cabinet of Ministers should continue to support the Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region, in particular by:

- (a) Ensuring timely and efficient implementation and monitoring of activities and public availability of related reports;
- (b) Increasing advocacy activities to reach out to potential donors;
- (c) Continuing its own contributions to replenish the Trust Fund.

## **Chapter 7: Climate change**

Recommendation 7.1:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Ensure development and adoption of a law on climate action and an overall long-term strategy on climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- (b) Ensure the development of local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030;
- (c) Ensure that local climate change adaptation and mitigation measures are integrated into local development plans and programmes.

Recommendation 7.2:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Strengthen human capacities of the authorities most relevant for climate change mitigation and adaptation by establishing climate change units with a clear mandate for mainstreaming climate change in the relevant sector;
- (b) Establish a mechanism that can ensure the coordination of climate-change-related measures at the national level.

Recommendation 7.3:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Ensure continuous process of preparation of the GHG inventory, including through its additional financing from the state budget;
- (b) Provide that the new inventory to be prepared in 2020–2021 includes also data on sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>) and perfluorocarbons (PCFs) and data on emissions related to waste incineration;
- (c) Consider establishing an emissions trading scheme.

Recommendation 7.4:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ensure:

- (a) Regular and systematic implementation of measures aimed at raising awareness on climate-change-related issues;
- (b) That climate-change-related topics are integrated into the curricula in primary, secondary and higher education and vocational training.

Recommendation 7.5:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Address the issue of the decrease in floodplain and riparian forest habitats due to changes in hydrological phenomena;
- (b) Address the issue of the negative impacts of climate change on tugai forests;
- (c) Promote the diversification of the planted species in the Aral Sea region, to mitigate the effects of climate change and also to stimulate economic co-benefits for the local communities.

Recommendation 7.6:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Promote actions to decrease the energy demand for cooling purposes;
- (b) Promote the full exploitation of the solar energy potential, also in line with the targets set in the country's nationally determined contribution (NDC);
- (c) Address the negative influences of climate change on the productivity of the hydropower sector as a result of changes in water availability.

## **Chapter 8: Air protection**

### Recommendation 8.1:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection, together with the Ministry of Health, should draw up a roadmap to transfer the current air quality assessment to air quality standards based on mean pollutant concentrations according to the internationally accepted practices.

### Recommendation 8.2:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Ensure that the number of parameters measured is increased with PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> for all measuring posts in vulnerable areas, such as cities and near industrial complexes;
- (b) Ensure the introduction of legally-binding national standards and limit values for PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>;
- (c) When sufficient data about the concentrations of fine particulate matter have been collected, initiate the adoption by Uzbekistan of the Sustainable Development Goals global indicator 3.9.1 and ensure that information on the mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution is available to decision-makers and the public.

### Recommendation 8.3:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should promote the application of internationally accepted best available techniques to abate air pollution from industrial sources and seek expertise under the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution for this purpose.

### Recommendation 8.4:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Stimulate the implementation of measures for energy efficiency in residential buildings, e.g. by enhancing the attractiveness of energy-efficiency measures by guaranteeing a reasonable pay-back period of costs and setting conditions for better technical maintenance of district heating systems;
- (b) Promote the use of low-carbon technology (heat pumps, renewables) and cleaner fuels such as natural gas instead of liquid and solid fuels for individual households;
- (c) Promote the use of individual heat-use monitoring devices in apartment buildings.

## **Chapter 9: Water management**

### Recommendation 9.1:

The Cabinet of Ministers should improve policy coherence, cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination with the wider water community by:

- (a) Improving the cross-sectoral collection, sharing and use of data;
- (b) Developing a roadmap of key strategic objectives for the water sector as a whole, to allow focus of action;
- (c) Considering the establishment of a national policy dialogue on integrated water resources management.

### Recommendation 9.2:

The Cabinet of Ministers should continue progress in infrastructure development by:

- (a) Identifying priority communities and settlements to target for expansion of sustainable water supply and sanitation infrastructure;
- (b) Initiating the review of national design and construction standards for water supply and sanitation facilities in rural areas, to reduce capital and operational costs and make infrastructure more affordable;
- (c) Identifying priority investments that could be made to refurbish existing irrigation infrastructure and improve collector-drainage systems, with a focus on investments that would make a step change in efficient water management, reduce land salinity and increase agricultural productivity;
- (d) Designing appropriate financing mechanisms to support these investment programmes and human and technical capacities to support the investments.

See Recommendations 13.2 and 17.4.

Recommendation 9.3:

The Cabinet of Ministers should continue its efforts to drive efficient use of water in all sectors of the economy and by all water users by:

- (a) Developing policies and strategies to support water efficiency, including metering schemes to monitor consumption and financial incentives for purchasing water-efficient technologies and investment in the human capacity and awareness campaigns to support effective roll-out;
- (b) Embedding water-efficient principles in land use planning to ensure that best practice in this area is adopted from the start of new municipal, industrial or agricultural developments;
- (c) Ensuring that agricultural policies and strategies are coordinated with water management objectives so that the necessary crop mix, irrigation technology and practice and required water volume are aligned.

## **Chapter 10: Waste and chemicals management**

Recommendation 10.1:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should develop a new law on waste in accordance with the best international practice and in line with the Strategy on Municipal Waste Management for the period 2019–2028 and ensure that the law includes well-defined site-specific permits regulating waste management activities.

Recommendation 10.2:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should:

- (a) Establish a nationwide system of municipal waste collection and disposal in line with the Strategy on Municipal Waste Management for the period 2019–2028;
- (b) Elaborate a priority list for the modernization of controlled landfills.

Recommendation 10.3:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection, in cooperation with the State Committee on Statistics, should consider introducing a waste classification system based on chemical-physical characteristics and abandon the system of four hazard classes, so that to ensure compatibility of data to produce the global Sustainable Development Goals indicator 12.4.2 and support waste recycling and proper disposal.

Recommendation 10.4:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should start the transition from calculated waste data to waste data from weighbridges in the preparation of national statistics and reports.

Recommendation 10.5:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should continue to prepare the standards for siting, construction, operation, closure and monitoring of waste disposal sites in line with international practice.

Recommendation 10.6:

The Cabinet of Ministers should reconsider its position on obsolete pesticides and task the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection to engage in international cooperation in POPs management.

Recommendation 10.7:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection should investigate the use of PCBs and PCB-containing equipment in the industrial sectors and prepare a plan for the elimination of PCBs and their safe disposal.

Recommendation 10.8:

The State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, should:

- (a) Prepare a national strategy for management of medical waste that would focus on the regional approach to treatment and disposal of medical waste;
- (b) Consider establishing a state-owned enterprise specialized in medical waste management.

Recommendation 10.9:

The State Committee on Industrial Safety should:

- (a) Consider preparing a Chemical Profile of Uzbekistan, using the latest data;
- (b) Include chemical management as a separate category of risk management in industry;
- (c) Provide training focused on safe management of chemicals.

## **Chapter 11: Biodiversity and protected areas**

Recommendation 11.1:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Based on a proposal from the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection, adopt the revised and updated Red List of rare and endangered flora, fungi and fauna species, paying due account to the globally applied IUCN methodology and criteria, and ensure the publication of the next edition of the Red Book;
- (b) Based on a proposal from the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection, adopt the list of priority biodiversity monitoring and research programme topics, with a special focus on both rare and threatened, and locally endemic flora, fungi and fauna species, plant communities and ecosystems, game species and invasive alien species;
- (c) Adopt and ensure the implementation of a long-term state biodiversity monitoring and research programme, as part of the integrated system of state environmental monitoring, in cooperation with the Academy of Sciences, other relevant public academic and scientific research institutions and environmental NGOs;
- (d) Mobilize adequate resources to ensure the continuation of state support for biodiversity monitoring and research in the long run;
- (e) Support the State Committee on Forestry and mobilize adequate resources for carrying out the national forest inventory and long-term systematic research on forest ecosystems and habitats;
- (f) Ensure the establishment and operation of an efficient biodiversity information system, utilizing contemporary techniques for digitalized data acquisition, storage, retrieval, processing and dataset harmonization, with the objective to gather, store and share results of biodiversity monitoring, research programmes and projects carried out with the support of

public funding, and provide access to this system (with differentiated access and data administration levels) for all stakeholders involved in biodiversity conservation initiatives.

**Recommendation 11.2:**

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Ensure implementation of the 2019 National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan;
- (b) Adopt and ensure implementation of the national wetland policy and corresponding programme for wetlands conservation;
- (c) Adopt and ensure implementation of ecosystem and species action plans and programmes;
- (d) Mobilize adequate resources for the implementation of all biodiversity-related policy documents in the long run.

**Recommendation 11.3:**

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Adopt amendments to the 2004 Law on Protected Natural Territories, incorporating the concepts of the ecological network and ecological corridors;
- (b) Designate external buffer zones surrounding or adjacent to the territories of relevant categories of protected areas;
- (c) Extend the territories of existing protected areas and designate new protected areas, paying due account to the need to provide adequate coverage of all main ecosystem types representative of Uzbekistan and the sufficient inclusion of mainstays and habitats of rare and threatened species, and to ensure the ecological connectivity and continuity of the protected area network by linking core areas with ecological corridors, covering migration routes of rare and threatened terrestrial and aquatic wildlife species;
- (d) Mobilize adequate resources in order to ensure the proper functioning of the national ecological network in the long run.

## **Chapter 12: Energy and environment**

**Recommendation 12.1:**

The State Committee on Statistics, in cooperation with the Ministry of Energy, should continue its efforts to:

- (a) Develop an integrated system of multipurpose energy statistics based on the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the International Recommendations for Energy Statistics;
- (b) Publish energy statistics, including national energy balances;
- (c) Ensure data collection for monitoring progress with the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 7 in line with the internationally accepted methodologies.

**Recommendation 12.2:**

The Cabinet of Ministers should introduce regulations that will allow the financial resources saved through energy-efficiency measures in public buildings to be accumulated in the budgets of organizations undertaking such measures.

**Recommendation 12.3:**

The Ministry of Energy should:

- (a) Gradually reduce the share of fossil fuels in the energy production and consumption, while continuing to explore ways to use them, especially coal, in a more efficient and environmentally friendly manner;
- (b) Facilitate the use of less polluting energy sources as a valid alternative to fossil fuels;

(c) Take measures to increase the efficiency of coal utilization with gradual modernization and technology upgrades at existing coal-fired power plants;

(d) While developing its national policy documents to meet Sustainable Development Goal 7, undertake a comprehensive study on the development of advanced fossil fuel technologies that will include their status, trends, economic analysis, environmental and health impacts, and institutional and legislative barriers;

(e) Develop economically and environmentally sound policies that also address health impacts in support of Sustainable Development Goal 7, ensuring that such policies are supported by appropriate legal frameworks and economic incentives;

(f) Collect information about land and soil polluted by oil products and analyse the environmental impacts of gas leakages in Uzbekistan;

(g) Properly address the environmental hazards of open pit mining.

Recommendation 12.4:

The Ministry of Energy should promote the regular maintenance and upgrade of the electricity transmission assets to provide reliable power supply to domestic consumers, especially in southern regions.

Recommendation 12.5:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

(a) While developing its national policy documents to meet Sustainable Development Goal 7, undertake a comprehensive study on the development of renewable energy technologies that will include their status, trends, economic analysis, and institutional and legislative barriers in renewable energy technology issues in the country;

(b) Take appropriate steps to meet the targets of raising the share of renewable energy sources in total power production;

(c) Further develop support schemes for renewable energy.

Recommendation 12.6:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

(a) ~~Consider accession~~ to the 1986 Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, 1994 Convention on Nuclear Safety and the 1986 Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency;

(b) Carry out an EIA for the proposed NPP in line with international standards and ensure transboundary consultations as part of the EIA procedure;

(c) Ensure application of recommendations of the International Atomic Energy Agency<sup>1</sup> to provide necessary safeguards to reduce environmental and health risks associated with construction and operation of an NPP;

(d) Ensure compliance with the country's international obligations under the Ramsar Convention by refraining from the construction of an NPP in the territory of a Ramsar site.

### Chapter 13: Agriculture and environment

Recommendation 13.1:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ensure the development and adoption of a legal framework, allowing for the establishment of a national certification and labelling system that is recognized internationally, for organic agricultural production.

Recommendation 13.2:

The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Water Management should enhance their efforts to further promote water-saving irrigation techniques.

<sup>1</sup> Safety Standards for protecting people and the environment, available at IAEA website ([www.iaea.org/resources/safety-standards](http://www.iaea.org/resources/safety-standards)).

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See Recommendations 3.5, 9.2.

Recommendation 13.3:

The Cabinet of Ministers should finalize and adopt a strategy on agriculture that considers environmental matters, particularly for the rational use of water and for the expansion of environmentally friendly crop cultivation techniques.

Recommendation 13.4:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ~~consider accession~~ to the International Plant Protection Convention.

**Deleted:** decide to accede

## Chapter 14: Transport and environment

Recommendation 14.1:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Consider the best ways to modulate or reduce fossil fuel subsidies to ensure that higher quality fuels are used in vehicles that have a lower impact on the environment;
- (b) Encourage the move away from the use of lower quality fuels and the take-up of alternative, low-carbon-fuelled vehicles;
- (c) Encourage the simultaneous deployment of electromobility along with renewable electricity production to help meet the objective of reducing the total amount of vehicle emissions.

See Recommendation 3.2.

Recommendation 14.2:

The Cabinet of Ministers and other relevant authorities should:

- (a) Improve access to, and use of, public transport in the urban environment to reverse the increase in congestion and emissions;
- (b) Develop and implement coherent policies and actions aimed at incentivizing the use of public transport and of alternative modes such as cycling.

Recommendation 14.3:

The Cabinet of Ministers, in cooperation with Uzbekistan Railways, should facilitate further development of the railway network and the switch away from road transport for both passengers and freight while ensuring that there are good intermodal connections for both passengers and freight for their last mile journeys.

Recommendation 14.4:

The Cabinet of Ministers should develop a safe-system approach to road safety covering all aspects of road safety activities, including:

- (a) Coordinated governmental action and policies on road safety, including the involvement of all relevant stakeholders;
- (b) Investment in making the road infrastructure safe;
- (c) Appropriate enforcement of driving and road safety laws and regulations;
- (d) Ensuring that the vehicles registered domestically meet the highest international technical specification standards.

Recommendation 14.5:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ~~consider accession to~~ transport-related agreements, including:

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- (a) 1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Harmonized Technical United Nations Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be Fitted and/or be Used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of these United Nations Regulations;

- (b) 1997 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of Such Inspections;
- (c) 1997 European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR);
- (d) 1993 Protocol amending article 1 (a), article 14 (1) and article 14 (3) (b) of the European Agreement of 30 September 1957 concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR);
- (e) 1989 Convention on Civil Liability for Damage caused during Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road, Rail and Inland Navigation Vessels (CRTD);
- (f) 1950 Declaration on the Construction of Main International Traffic Arteries;
- (g) 1975 European Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries (AGR);
- (h) 1985 European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC);
- (i) 1991 European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC).

## **Chapter 15: Industry and environment**

### Recommendation 15.1:

In order to support the introduction of green technologies in industry, the Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Create economic and financial incentives for industrial enterprises to move towards green technology;
- (b) Foster the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups focused on green technology.

### Recommendation 15.2:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Develop and adopt legislation and policies on the management of industrial waste, setting out specific targets and indicators for industrial waste reduction and reuse;
- (b) Elaborate appropriate standards for wastewater treatment facilities in industrial enterprises and facilitate installation of such facilities by creating incentives for investments in wastewater treatment and ensuring the financial viability of modern wastewater treatment plants.

### Recommendation 15.3:

The State Committee on Statistics, in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy and Industry and the State Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection, should ensure regular collection of environment-related data from industrial enterprises and the publication of such data.

### Recommendation 15.4:

The Cabinet of Ministers should assess the impact of industrial activities on the environment and ensure that new programmes on industrial development contain information on environmental safeguards to reduce negative environmental impacts of the proposed industrial projects.

### Recommendation 15.5:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Approve and proceed with the implementation of the National Action Plan for the implementation of priority actions identified based on results of Uzbekistan's self-assessment of progress towards accession to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents;

(b) Consider accession to the Convention to fully enjoy its benefits and enhanced level of prevention of and preparedness for industrial accidents with potential transboundary effects;

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(c) Identify hazardous activities that may cause accidents with potential transboundary effects and subsequently notify its neighbours of such activities.

Recommendation 15.6:

The Cabinet of Ministers should develop and enact legislation to ensure implementation of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) standard.

Recommendation 15.7:

The Cabinet of Ministers should develop and adopt legislation on corporate social responsibility.

## **Chapter 16: Human settlements and the environment**

Recommendation 16.1:

The Cabinet of Ministers should consider:

- (a) Introducing climate adaptation planning in urban areas and rural settlements;
- (b) Introducing specific zoning requirements to mitigate GHG emissions and energy efficiency in urban areas and rural settlements;
- (c) Fully exploiting the potential for GHG emissions reduction from the housing sector;
- (d) Implementing the use of local materials for the housing sector, to reduce its energy intensity and their carbon footprint;
- (e) Introducing incentives for investments in low carbon buildings;
- (f) Introducing incentives to reduce the carbon footprint of the housing sector and to introduce modern technologies in the cement industry by using the carbon footprint calculations;
- (g) Prescribing the integration of traditional materials, morphologies and aesthetic shapes with contemporary techniques and technologies for the design and construction of new rural housing;
- (h) Elaborating, maintaining and updating the maps of flood-prone areas;
- (i) Addressing climate resilience of rural settlements by designs tailored to local climatic conditions (in terms of sun orientation, prevailing wind direction, pervious surfaces, establishment of green infrastructure) and not based on standard multiplication of rows of buildings;
- (j) Introducing climate change adaptation and mitigation in the policy documents related to urban development.

See Recommendation 7.1.

Recommendation 16.2:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ensure:

- (a) Removal of existing industrial facilities from urban areas;
- (b) Strengthening environmental requirements for the localization of new factories, or the upgrading of existing ones in urban areas.

Recommendation 16.3:

The Cabinet of Ministers should consider:

- (a) Introducing an extended concept of landscape, which takes into account the promotion of Uzbek cultural identity;

(b) Taking stock of existing studies carried out by Uzbek universities to introduce distinctive elements of Uzbek identity in housing and urban and rural settlement design, to improve the quality of life in cities and rural areas;

(c) Promoting awareness-raising activities on distinctive Uzbek cultural identity and architectural and urban forms.

Recommendation 16.4:

The Cabinet of Ministers should ensure:

(a) Effective public participation in the elaboration of plans and programmes affecting the territory at the earliest stage possible;

(b) Effective public participation in decision-making on projects to be implemented in inhabited areas, and specifically those that would entail their total or partial transformation;

(c) That due account is taken of the outcomes of such public participation procedures.

See Recommendation 5.3.

Recommendation 16.5:

The Cabinet of Ministers should facilitate the updating of remote sensing and GIS systems to:

(a) Geolocalize, manage and monitor protected sites and objects of culture;

(b) Share information about cultural heritage and raise awareness among the population about the importance of cultural heritage;

(c) Monitor the construction activities inside and outside urban areas.

Recommendation 16.6:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

(a) Develop and introduce energy efficiency standards and requirements for existing buildings;

(b) Enforce the 2018 construction standards;

(c) Promote in the housing sector the use of:

(i) Market-based solutions for energy efficiency;

(ii) Geothermal systems;

(iii) Solar thermal collectors for heating water and air and generating electricity.

Recommendation 16.7:

The Cabinet of Ministers should consider developing and implementing urban ecological networks.

Recommendation 16.8:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

(a) Ban asbestos as a construction material and its use in the remediation of existing buildings;

(b) Organize dedicated campaigns to inform the population of the extreme danger of asbestos for human health.

Recommendation 16.9:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

(a) Implement social protection measures aimed at safeguarding the rights of inhabitants of residential buildings that receive demolition orders;

(b) Ensure the provision of social housing for people in vulnerable categories and the low-income population.

Recommendation 16.10:

The Cabinet of Ministers should consider:

- (a) Introducing development impact taxes;
- (b) Requiring that large construction developments fully compensate the communities affected by demolition and reconstruction;
- (c) Introducing strategic environmental assessment as a support tool to develop sustainable urban planning documentation.

See Recommendation 1.3.

## **Chapter 17: Health and the environment**

### Recommendation 17.1:

The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with relevant governmental authorities, should:

- (a) Introduce legally specified data flows to streamline data reporting by public health authorities, avoiding duplication while ensuring the involvement of all relevant institutions, e.g. primary health-care centres, hospitals and health-care institutions;
- (b) Ensure training of all involved in data reporting in uniform diagnosis and case registration;
- (c) Establish a publicly available information system that includes data and indicators and some simple indicator-based analysis and reporting tools at the national, oblast and district levels.

### Recommendation 17.2:

The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with relevant governmental authorities, should:

- (a) Enhance infectious disease surveillance through the introduction of integrated service delivery;
- (b) Strengthen laboratory networks through cost-effective upgrading of selected laboratories with enhanced capabilities to diagnose a range of infectious diseases and to detect bacterial, viral and parasite pathogens in water and food samples;
- (c) Improve capacity and skills to apply analytical epidemiological and public health methods to both infectious and non-communicable diseases, and other relevant data at the national and subnational levels, in order to prepare periodic reports aiming at informing health managers and as a basis for disease control and prevention.

### Recommendation 17.3:

The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with relevant governmental authorities, should:

- (a) Improve access to quality preventive and therapeutic and diagnostic services for pregnant women and newborns throughout the country, in particular in remote rural areas, and introduce changes in health-care financing to ensure equitable access to health services;
- (b) Improve collection of data and information on maternal and child health and its determinants to meet the needs of health-care providers and those engaged in health protection.

### Recommendation 17.4:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

- (a) Ensure that the modernization of water treatment systems and distribution networks and connection to sewerage systems is governed by achieving maximum reduction of population health risks from water contamination;
- (b) Ensure progressive implementation of the WHO water safety plans for small-scale water supplies across the country;
- (c) Ensure that gender analysis is taken into account in the development of measures on access to water and sanitation;
- (d) Support development and implementation of programmes to improve hygiene and sanitary conditions in the countryside and reinforce hygiene education.

See Recommendation 9.2.

Recommendation 17.5:

The Cabinet of Ministers should:

(a) Ensure integration of concrete actions on protecting the population's health from climate change, along with mechanisms for monitoring their effects and effectiveness in future national strategic documents on climate change adaptation and mitigation and on disaster risk reduction;

(b) Ensure development and sustainable operation of early warning systems, in particular for flash floods, mudflows and heatwaves;

(c) Support the broader dissemination and use of climatic and meteorological information and data among various stakeholders at the central and local levels, to advance preparedness for and resilience to extreme weather events;

(d) Reinforce the building of climate-resilient water supply and sanitation services following the 2010 Guidance on Water Supply and Sanitation in Extreme Weather Events developed under the Protocol on Water and Health;

(e) Ensure capacity-building on climate change, the environment and health among the relevant authorities.

See Recommendation 7.1.

Recommendation 17.6:

The Cabinet of Ministers should endorse mechanisms for intersectoral collaboration on the environment and health and the necessary organizational arrangements, and allocate financial resources for these purposes.

See Recommendation 1.4.

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