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Priority Directions of The Strategy for Developing A "Green" Economy in Uzbekistan

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Abstract: This article provides a comprehensive examination of the key priorities, sectoral areas, and core objectives associated with the transition toward a "green" economy. Particular attention is devoted to improving energy efficiency, expanding the use of renewable energy sources, strengthening adaptive capacity to the impacts of climate change, enhancing the efficiency of water resource management, and establishing financial and non-financial mechanisms to support the development of a "green" economy. The study also outlines the principal target indicators for implementing the strategy and identifies the anticipated outcomes associated with each priority area through 2030.

Keywords: "Green" Economy, "Green" Growth, Development Strategy, Climate Change, Sustainable Development, Energy Efficiency

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Introduction

Uzbekistan is currently undergoing profound structural transformations across various sectors as part of the reform of its national economy. In this context, the transition toward a "green" economy is increasingly recognized as a strategic priority for economic development, an important factor in strengthening national competitiveness, and a prerequisite for achieving long-term sustainability.[1][2]

The transition to a "green" economy primarily seeks to enhance energy efficiency, promote the rational and sustainable use of natural resources, and strengthen the country's capacity to respond and adapt to global climate-related challenges. Achieving these objectives requires the modernization of existing technologies, the introduction of resource-efficient solutions, and the establishment of effective financial mechanisms capable of supporting environmentally sustainable economic activities. In this regard, the Presidential Resolution of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Approval of the Strategy for the Transition of the Republic of Uzbekistan to a 'Green' Economy for the Period 2019–2030" was adopted to ensure an efficient, resource-saving, and environmentally safe economy under changing climatic conditions.[3][4]

The need for Uzbekistan to accelerate its transition toward a "green" economy is associated with several interrelated environmental and economic challenges. A significant proportion of the energy consumed within the national economy is generated through the use of non-renewable natural resources, while the reserves of such resources are inherently limited. At the same time, rapid industrial development has intensified environmental pollution and increased pressure on natural ecosystems. Growing water scarcity

and the progressive drying of the Aral Sea have further aggravated the country's environmental situation.[5][6]

Against this background, ensuring the sustainable development of the Uzbek economy and formulating a long-term strategy for structural transformation require a comprehensive assessment of both domestic conditions and global trends. Such an approach is essential for identifying emerging economic and environmental challenges, improving the efficiency of resource utilization, and establishing a development model that is economically viable, environmentally responsible, and resilient to future climate-related risks.[7]

Materials and Methods

In The system of long-term and comprehensive measures aimed at developing a "green" economy in Uzbekistan has been formulated in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted under the initiative of the United Nations and designed to be achieved by 2030. Since 2015, the Republic of Uzbekistan has expressed its commitment to supporting the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which encompasses 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, and to implementing comprehensive measures across key areas of sustainable development.[8][9]

Within this framework, particular emphasis has been placed on the following priorities:

- Ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy: by 2030, substantially increasing the share of energy generated from renewable sources in the global energy mix;
- Improving energy efficiency: doubling the rate of improvement in energy efficiency while expanding infrastructure and modernizing technologies to ensure access to modern and sustainable energy. These objectives correspond to Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG 7);
- Addressing climate change: integrating measures to combat climate change into national policies, strategies, and planning frameworks, while strengthening institutional capacity and public awareness related to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as improving preparedness and early-warning mechanisms for climate-related hazards. These priorities are reflected in Sustainable Development Goal 13 (SDG 13). [10]

Within the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda, particular importance is also attached to promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, achieving full and productive employment, and ensuring decent work for all, as stipulated under Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8). In addition, Sustainable Development Goal 9 (SDG 9) emphasizes the development of resilient infrastructure, the promotion of inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and the advancement of innovation. Collectively, these objectives provide an important methodological and strategic foundation for shaping Uzbekistan's long-term approach to the development of a "green" economy and ensuring sustainable socio-economic development.[11]

Results

The overarching objective of the Strategy is to integrate the principles of the "green" economy into the structural reforms being implemented in the country. This approach is intended to promote social development, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, strengthen climate and environmental resilience, and establish a solid foundation for sustainable economic growth.[12]

To achieve the strategic objectives, several key tasks need to be addressed:

- Enhancing the energy efficiency of the economy and ensuring the rational use of natural resources through technological modernization, the adoption of resource-efficient technologies, and the development of appropriate financial mechanisms;

- Integrating "green" criteria into priority areas of public investment and government expenditure in accordance with advanced international standards and principles of sustainable development;
- Supporting pilot projects aimed at facilitating the transition to a "green" economy by strengthening government incentive mechanisms, expanding public-private partnerships, and intensifying cooperation with international financial institutions. Such measures can contribute to the practical testing and subsequent scaling-up of innovative approaches and environmentally sustainable solutions;
- Promoting investment in education and human capital by improving systems for the training and retraining of specialists in cooperation with leading foreign educational institutions and research centers. Strengthening professional competencies in areas related to green technologies, environmental management, and sustainable development is essential for the successful implementation of the Strategy;
- Mitigating the adverse environmental and socio-economic consequences of the ecological crisis in the Aral Sea region through the implementation of targeted environmental protection measures, restoration initiatives, and programs aimed at improving the living conditions of the population in the affected areas.[13]

In Uzbekistan's transition toward a "green" economy, diversifying energy consumption and expanding the utilization of renewable energy sources have been identified as the second priority area. Achieving this objective requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses the development and deployment of renewable energy technologies, the improvement of energy efficiency throughout the construction and operation of buildings, the diversification of energy use in the transport sector, and the adoption of energy-efficient technologies in the production of construction materials. These measures are of particular importance for reducing dependence on conventional energy resources, improving overall energy efficiency, and accelerating the transition toward a more sustainable energy system.[14]

The third priority area focuses on adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change, improving the efficiency of natural resource utilization, and preserving natural ecosystems. Its key areas include water management, agriculture, forestry, solid municipal waste management, and measures aimed at mitigating the adverse consequences of the environmental crisis in the Aral Sea region.[15]

The principal target indicators established under this priority area include:

- Significantly improving water-use efficiency across all sectors of the economy, introducing drip irrigation technologies on up to 1 million hectares of agricultural land, and increasing the productivity of crops cultivated on these areas by 20–40%;
- Achieving land degradation neutrality, thereby ensuring a balance between land degradation and the restoration and sustainable management of land resources;
- Increasing the average productivity of major agricultural and food products by 20–25%, thereby strengthening agricultural efficiency and contributing to food security and the sustainable use of land resources.

The **fourth priority area** is focused on establishing and strengthening financial and non-financial mechanisms to support the development of a "green" economy. This area encompasses a broad range of measures, including the development of institutional frameworks for the adoption of "green" technologies, improvement of the regulatory and legal framework governing the "green" economy, and enhancement of mechanisms for regulating and monitoring energy efficiency.

It also involves integrating the principles of the "green" economy into the education and research systems, strengthening national capacity and creating a favorable institutional environment for the transition toward a "green" economy, as well as promoting and facilitating "green" investment. These measures are intended to establish the institutional, financial, technological, and human-capital foundations necessary

for the effective implementation of sustainable development principles.

Discussion

The key objectives and priority areas defined by the Strategy are implemented through measures incorporated into national development plans, sectoral and industry-specific programs, as well as relevant development strategies. Such an integrated approach facilitates the coordinated implementation of "green" economy principles across different areas of the national economy and contributes to achieving the Strategy's long-term objectives.

Conclusion

In conclusion, accelerating Uzbekistan's transition toward a "green" economy and addressing pressing environmental challenges require the efficient and sustainable use of energy resources, water, and land; the expansion of environmentally friendly alternative electricity generation; increased investment in waste recycling and resource recovery; and the further strengthening of public-private partnership mechanisms. These measures should be regarded as among the most pressing priorities for ensuring sustainable economic and environmental development.

From a long-term perspective, particular attention should be given to developing human capital during the transition to a "green" economy. This includes improving employees' professional qualifications, implementing comprehensive retraining programs, strengthening their competencies in green growth, and expanding their capacity to work with environmentally sustainable technologies and practices. Such measures are essential for creating stable and sustainable employment opportunities in the future.

Overall, the transition to a "green" economy represents a comprehensive and multidimensional process encompassing numerous interconnected areas of economic, environmental, technological, and social development. Its successful implementation requires coordinated policy measures, adequate investment, technological modernization, institutional cooperation, and the continuous development of human capital.

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