ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Terrestrial Ecosystems

Approved: January 2021 | Last revised: January 2025 | Next full revision: January 2028

1. Purpose

Uzbekistan State World Languages University (UzSWLU) is committed to the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of the terrestrial ecosystems associated with the University. This policy sets out how the University protects the forests and wooded areas on its land, the mountain and foothill environments in which it holds sites and carries out field activities, and the dryland soils and green areas that characterize Tashkent and the Tashkent region. It also sets out how the University reduces the impact of alien and invasive species on its campuses. The policy reflects the national "Green Space" (Yashil Makon) project and the University's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG 15, Life on Land.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all land owned, leased or managed by the University, including:

- the Main Campus and the Zakovat Street Campus in Tashkent;
- the buildings and grounds of the Faculty of Russian Philology and the Faculty of International Journalism;
- the Angren Campus in the Tashkent region;
- the Orta Chirchiq Recreation and Ecological Complex in the Tashkent region;
- student residences and other premises used by the University.

It also applies to field lessons, expeditions, volunteer actions and research carried out by the University, its staff and students in natural areas outside its own land, and to contractors working on university sites.

3. Legal and regulatory framework

The University complies with the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan on nature protection, forests, protected natural areas and the protection and use of flora and fauna, and with the requirements of the authorities responsible for ecology and environmental protection. This policy sets additional commitments beyond these legal requirements.

4. Principles

- No net loss: the University maintains and, where possible, increases the area of green cover and forest vegetation on its land.
- Restoration first: land disturbed by construction, repair or other works is restored as part of the same project.
- Right species in the right place: new planting favors native and climate-adapted species with low water demand and avoids invasive species.
- Low-impact use: university sites and natural areas are used for teaching, research and recreation in ways that do not degrade them.
- Shared responsibility: staff, students, contractors and neighboring communities are involved in caring for land.

5. Commitments

5.1 Forests and wooded areas

- Forest vegetation, mature trees and wooded green zones on university sites are kept as permanent green cover and are recorded in the University's green area inventory.
- Mature trees are not removed unless they are dead, diseased or unsafe. Where removal is unavoidable, at least two trees are planted for each tree removed, on the same site where possible.
- Trees and shrubs receive regular care, including irrigation, sanitary pruning, whitewashing and inspection for pests and disease.

- The University carries out seasonal tree planting each spring and autumn under the "Green Space" project and takes part in national afforestation initiatives for higher education institutions.

5.2 Mountain and foothill ecosystems

- On the Angren Campus and the Orta Chirchiq complex, slopes and open ground are kept under vegetation cover to prevent erosion, and paths and recreation areas are maintained so that visitors stay on established routes.
- Field lessons, expeditions and student trips to mountain areas follow low-impact rules: staying on marked trails, collecting no plants or animals, taking all waste back, and lighting no fires outside designated places.
- Group leaders brief participants on these rules before every trip to a natural area.

5.3 Drylands and soil

- New planting on university land gives priority to drought-tolerant species, and green areas are progressively moved to water-efficient irrigation, in line with the UzSWLU Water Reuse Policy.
- Bare soil is avoided: open ground is planted, mulched or otherwise protected to reduce erosion, dust and loss of soil moisture.
- Topsoil removed during construction is stored and reused on site wherever practicable.
- The use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides on university grounds is kept to the minimum necessary, and only products approved for use in Uzbekistan are applied.

5.4 Restoration of degraded land

- Land disturbed by construction, renovation or utility works on university sites is restored with soil and vegetation cover within one planting season of the end of works, and this obligation is written into contracts.
- Degraded or neglected areas of university land are identified in the annual inventory and planned for restoration.
- The University supports the restoration of degraded land beyond its own sites through participation in national afforestation and greening campaigns.

5.5 Alien and invasive species

- Alien species are plants or animals introduced outside their natural range. Invasive alien species are those that spread on their own and displace native vegetation or damage ecosystems.
- The Department of Ecology and Green Resources maintains an inventory of alien plant species on university land, identifies those that are invasive or potentially invasive, such as black locust (Robinia pseudoacacia), and updates the inventory each year.
- No species recognized as invasive in Uzbekistan is used in new planting. New planting gives priority to native species and to non-invasive species adapted to local conditions.
- The spread of invasive plants on university land is controlled by removing self-sown seedlings and root suckers, and plant material from such species is disposed of so that it cannot spread.
- Plants, seeds and soil brought onto university land are sourced from licensed nurseries and checked for pests and unwanted species. No plants or animals are released into the wild by the University, its staff or students.

5.6 Education, research and community engagement

- University sites and green areas are used for outdoor teaching, biodiversity observation and environmental education.
- The Department of Ecology and Green Resources supports research and teaching on soil ecology, plant resources and the conservation of terrestrial ecosystems.
- The University works with neighboring mahalla communities, local authorities and environmental organizations to care for shared green areas and to raise awareness of land conservation.

6. Responsibilities

- Department of Administrative Affairs: holds overall responsibility for implementing this policy on university land. Its Environment and Energy unit maintains the green area inventory, organizes planting and care, supervises contractors and prepares the annual report.
- Department of Ecology and Green Resources: provides scientific advice on species selection, maintains the alien species inventory and advises on restoration.
- Deans, heads of departments and group leaders: apply the low-impact rules to field lessons, expeditions and student trips.
- Student organizations: involve students in planting, care of green areas and awareness activities.
- Contractors: comply with the tree protection, topsoil and restoration requirements of this policy.

7. Monitoring and reporting

The Department of Administrative Affairs reports progress against this policy annually, and the report is published on the University's website. The following indicators are tracked:

Area	Indicator	Frequency
Forests and wooded areas	Area of forest vegetation on university sites (m²); number of trees planted, removed and replaced	Annual
Restoration	Area of degraded or disturbed university land restored (m²)	Annual
Drylands and soil	Share of new planting using drought-tolerant species; share of green areas on water-efficient irrigation	Annual
Alien and invasive species	Alien species inventory updated; share of new planting that is native or non-invasive; control actions taken	Annual
Engagement	Number of greening, restoration and awareness events, and participants	Annual

8. Review

This policy was first approved in January 2021. It was reviewed in March 2023 and revised in January 2025 to set out specific commitments for forests, mountain and foothill ecosystems and drylands, and to add provisions on alien and invasive species. The policy is reviewed every year, and a full revision will be undertaken by January 2028.

9. Related policies

UzSWLU Biodiversity Conservation Policy, Environmental Impact Assessment Policy, Water Reuse Policy, Sustainable Food Policy and Waste Management Policy, available at uzswlu.uz/en/sdg-policies.