UZBEKISTAN STATE WORLD LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY

AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS PROTECTION POLICY

Protecting Rivers, Lakes and Aquatic Ecosystems

Approved: January 2025 | Next full revision: January 2028

1. Purpose

Uzbekistan State World Languages University (UzSWLU) is committed to protecting rivers, lakes, canals and the wider aquatic environment from the effects of its operations. Uzbekistan lies in the Aral Sea basin, where the health of aquatic ecosystems depends on how water is used, how wastewater is managed and how pollution from land is prevented. This policy sets out how the University ensures that food from aquatic ecosystems served on campus is sustainably produced, prevents pollution of water from land-based activities, and minimizes physical, chemical and biological alterations of the aquatic ecosystems connected to its sites.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all land and buildings 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 and the Orta Chirchiq Recreation and Ecological Complex in the Tashkent region, and student residences. It applies to all staff, students, contractors, suppliers and food-service operators working on university premises, whether operated directly by the University or under contract or lease, and to field lessons, expeditions and volunteer actions carried out by the University near rivers, lakes and other water bodies.

3. Legal and regulatory framework

The University complies with the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan on water and water use, nature protection and the protection of flora and fauna, with the sanitary requirements for food safety, and with the requirements of Tashkent City Water Supply JSC for wastewater discharged to the city sewer network. This policy sets additional commitments beyond these legal requirements.

4. Principles

- **Prevention first:** pollution is stopped at its source on campus, before it can reach drains, the sewer network or water bodies.
- **No direct harm:** the University does not discharge untreated water, waste or harmful substances to rivers, canals, irrigation channels, lakes or groundwater.
- **Sustainable sourcing:** fish and other food from aquatic ecosystems is sourced from producers that do not deplete wild stocks.
- **Connected systems:** reducing water use and keeping water clean also reduces pressure on the rivers that supply Tashkent and the Aral Sea basin.

5. Commitments

5.1 Sustainably sourced food from aquatic ecosystems

- Fish served at campus canteens that offer fish dishes is purchased from local producers in Uzbekistan that raise fish in ponds (pond aquaculture), mainly common carp (sazan), silver carp (do‘ngpeshona) and grass carp (oq amur). These species feed low in the food chain and are farmed without drawing on wild fish stocks.
- Wild-caught fish from rivers, lakes or reservoirs is not purchased for campus catering. Species listed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species or in the Red Book of the Republic of Uzbekistan are never purchased or served.
- Suppliers provide documents confirming the origin of the fish (producer and region) and the veterinary and sanitary certificates required by law. Preference is given to producers that manage pond water responsibly and do not release untreated pond water into rivers or canals.

- If marine fish or seafood is purchased, it must carry a recognized sustainability certification, such as the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) or Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) label.
- Every catering contract or lease concluded or renewed after the adoption of this policy includes the requirements of this section, in line with the UzSWLU Sustainable Food Policy and the Sustainable Purchase and Procurement Policy.

5.2 Preventing pollution from land-based activities

- All wastewater from university buildings is pre-treated on site before it is discharged to the city sewer network, in line with the standards of the UzSWLU Water Quality and Discharge Management Policy.
- Every catering outlet is fitted with grease traps, which are cleaned and serviced on a regular schedule so that fats, oils and food residues do not enter the sewer network.
- Oils, paints, solvents, cleaning chemicals, medicines and other hazardous substances are never poured into sinks, drains or the ground. They are collected and handed over for disposal under the UzSWLU Hazardous Waste Disposal and Management Policy.
- Plastic and other litter is prevented from entering drains, irrigation channels and water bodies through separate collection, regular cleaning of grounds and the measures of the UzSWLU Plastic Waste Reduction Policy.
- Surface drains and gutters are kept clear of litter, sediment and leaves. The use of fertilizers and pesticides on university grounds is kept to the minimum necessary and avoided next to drains and irrigation channels.
- Any spill or incident that could pollute drains, the sewer network or a water body is contained immediately and reported under the emergency response procedure of the Water Quality and Discharge Management Policy, and the competent authorities are notified where required.

5.3 Minimizing alterations of aquatic ecosystems

The University plans its activities so as to avoid physical, chemical and biological alterations of the rivers, canals, irrigation channels and other water bodies connected to its sites:

- **Physical alterations:** construction, renovation, landscaping and utility works on or near water bodies are screened under the UzSWLU Environmental Impact Assessment Policy before works begin. No earthworks, waste storage or construction take place within the water protection zones established by legislation, and banks, slopes and open ground on the Angren Campus and the Orta Chirchiq complex are kept under vegetation cover to prevent erosion and the washing of soil into water.
- **Chemical alterations:** no untreated wastewater or harmful substance is released to any water body, and discharge quality is monitored as set out in Section 7.
- **Biological alterations:** no fish, plants or other aquatic organisms are released into natural water bodies by the University, its staff or students, including ornamental or aquarium species, and plant material from invasive species is disposed of so that it cannot reach water, in line with the UzSWLU Environmental Sustainability Policy.
- **Water demand:** the University reduces its demand on the city water supply, and therefore on the rivers and groundwater from which Tashkent draws its water, through water-efficient fixtures and the reuse of greywater and rainwater under the UzSWLU Water Reuse Policy.

5.4 Education and awareness

- The Department of Ecology and Green Resources supports teaching, research and awareness activities on rivers, lakes, the Aral Sea and the protection of aquatic ecosystems.
- The University organizes and takes part in events, campaigns and community outreach that promote the conservation and sustainable use of water resources and aquatic ecosystems.

6. Responsibilities

- **Department of Administrative Affairs:** holds overall responsibility for implementing this policy. Its Environment and Energy unit manages wastewater pre-treatment, discharge monitoring and grease-trap servicing, supervises contractors and prepares the annual report.

- **Department of Ecology and Green Resources:** provides scientific advice on the protection of aquatic ecosystems, advises on species and sourcing questions and leads education and awareness activities.
- **Procurement unit:** applies the sourcing and contract requirements of Section 5.1.
- **Food-service operators and suppliers:** comply with Sections 5.1 and 5.2 in their outlets and keep the origin documents for fish purchased.
- **Contractors:** comply with Sections 5.2 and 5.3 in all construction, renovation and maintenance work.

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
Discharge quality	Results of sampling at campus discharge monitoring points (pH, turbidity, biochemical and chemical oxygen demand, suspended solids); share of wastewater pre-treated before discharge	Monthly sampling, annual summary
Kitchen discharges	Grease traps serviced on schedule at every catering outlet	Quarterly
Pollution incidents	Number of spills or pollution incidents affecting drains, the sewer network or water bodies, and corrective actions taken	Annual
Aquatic food	Share of fish purchased by campus canteens that comes from documented pond aquaculture producers in Uzbekistan	Annual
Water bodies and planning	Share of construction, landscaping and works projects near water bodies screened before works	Annual
Awareness	Number of events on rivers, lakes and the Aral Sea, and participants	Annual

8. Review

This policy was approved in January 2025. It is reviewed every year, and a full revision will be undertaken by January 2028, or earlier if required by changes in legislation or university operations.

9. Related policies

UzSWLU Water Quality and Discharge Management Policy, Water Reuse Policy, Hazardous Waste Disposal and Management Policy, Plastic Waste Reduction Policy, Sustainable Food Policy, Environmental Sustainability Policy, Biodiversity Conservation Policy and Environmental Impact Assessment Policy, available at uzswlu.uz/en/sdg-policies.