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## **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR GREEN ECONOMY TRANSITION IN UZBEKISTAN: STRATEGIES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND GLOBAL LESSONS**

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**Abstract.** Uzbekistan's transition to a green economy represents a strategic realignment toward sustainable growth, climate resilience, and environmental restoration. Amid pressing challenges such as water scarcity, fossil fuel dependence, and land degradation, the government has recognized the necessity of collaborative international approaches. This article analyzes Uzbekistan's green economy transition, highlighting international financial mechanisms, technology transfer, and policy integration. Drawing comparisons with nations like Germany, South Korea, and Singapore, it underscores effective models Uzbekistan can adapt. The study concludes with targeted recommendations for deepening global partnerships, institutional reforms, and local implementation strategies to secure long-term sustainability.

**Keywords.** Green economy, Uzbekistan, international cooperation, renewable energy, sustainable development, global partnerships

### **Introduction**

The Republic of Uzbekistan, located in Central Asia, is navigating a pivotal transformation toward a green economy<sup>81</sup>. Confronted by the environmental legacy of the Aral Sea crisis, inefficient water usage, and outdated industrial processes, Uzbekistan's government has committed to comprehensive ecological reforms. Green economy strategies offer a pathway not only to mitigate environmental degradation but also to diversify the economy and enhance socio-economic equity. This paper explores the country's green transition, with a special focus on the role of international cooperation in facilitating financial, technical, and policy support.

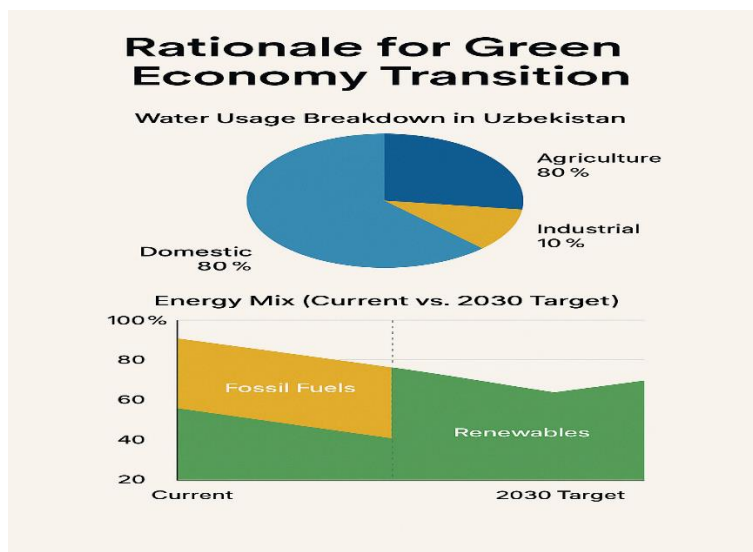
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<sup>81</sup> Uzbekistan's National Green Economy Strategy (2019–2030) and public declarations at UN climate forums (e.g., COP28/COP29).

## 1. Rationale for Green Economy Transition

Uzbekistan faces critical environmental challenges. The rapid retreat of the Aral Sea, desertification, and the over-exploitation of water resources threaten livelihoods and ecological balance. Agriculture accounts for nearly 90% of water usage, yet much of it is lost due to inefficient irrigation systems. Modernizing these systems with international support is vital. Moreover, heavy dependence on fossil fuels (which still provide over 85% of energy needs) necessitates urgent diversification.



**Figure 1. Water usage and energy mix transition in Uzbekistan. Source: Green Economy Transition Strategy 2019–2030; World Bank Uzbekistan, 2024.**

To address these, Uzbekistan has adopted the Green Economy Transition Strategy 2019–2030, focusing on renewable energy, eco-friendly agriculture, waste reduction, and sustainable urban development.<sup>82</sup> The country aims to increase the share of renewable energy in its electricity mix to 25% by 2030, supported by solar and wind installations.

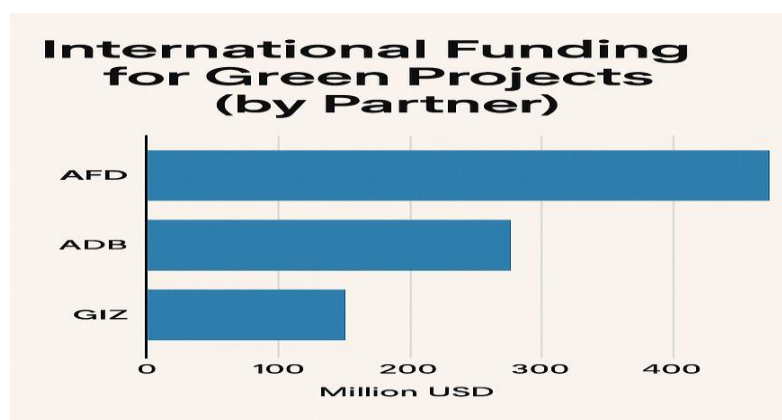
## 2. International Cooperation Mechanisms

International cooperation plays a transformative role in Uzbekistan's green agenda. The country is engaging with multilateral institutions like the World Bank, the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Projects such as the 100 MW Nur Navoi Solar Power Plant, co-financed by Masdar (UAE), and the Asian Development Bank, are landmark examples.

Bilateral efforts have also been instrumental. France's Agence Française de Développement (AFD) has committed €150 million to green infrastructure.

<sup>82</sup> Government of Uzbekistan. (2023). Strategy for the transition to a green economy for the period 2019–2030. Tashkent: Ministry of Economy and Finance.

Similarly, Germany's GIZ supports energy efficiency and capacity building.<sup>83</sup> Japan is aiding in smart city development and waste management systems. These initiatives bring both capital and expertise to Uzbekistan.



**Figure 2. International funding commitments to green projects in Uzbekistan by partner.** Source: AFD (2022), ADB (2024), GIZ (2024), World Bank Uzbekistan.

### 3. Lessons from International Models

Global experiences provide Uzbekistan with practical models:

- Germany has achieved significant emissions reductions through its Energiewende policy, which Uzbekistan can emulate by strengthening regulatory frameworks and feed-in tariffs.
- South Korea's Green New Deal integrates digital innovation with green infrastructure, offering a model for inclusive, tech-driven sustainability.
- Singapore's water recycling and urban planning strategies provide insights into sustainable urban development in arid zones.

Adopting elements from these models can help Uzbekistan develop localized solutions while aligning with global best practices.

### 4. Strategic Recommendations

To accelerate the green transition:

- **Scale Up Renewable Investments:** Continue attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) in solar and wind energy, backed by stable policy frameworks.
- **Reform Agricultural Practices:** Collaborate with FAO and CGIAR to implement climate-smart agriculture.
- **Develop Green Finance Mechanisms:** Issue green bonds and create carbon credit systems with international support.

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<sup>83</sup> GIZ. (2023). Sustainable development in Central Asia: GIZ in Uzbekistan. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit. <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/374.html>

- Strengthen Institutional Capacity: Establish a Green Economy Coordination Council with cross-sector representation.

- Enhance Regional Diplomacy: Promote transboundary water management through regional cooperation platforms like the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS).<sup>84</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Uzbekistan's green transition is a multifaceted endeavor that hinges on international collaboration. By learning from successful global models, securing diverse financing channels, and reforming institutional practices, the country can lead Central Asia's sustainability movement. International cooperation not only accelerates this transition but also anchors Uzbekistan in a global network of environmentally conscious nations.

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