

PROSPECTS OF CENTRAL ASIAN COOPERATION FOR GREEN ECONOMY

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The Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) are experiencing rapid population growth, and their economies are growing at the same time. Economic growth is impossible without energy. Most Central Asian countries rely on fossil fuels (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan) and hydropower (Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan). Uzbekistan has set ambitious goals for 2030 and Kazakhstan for 2050. Even if these figures are achieved, they will not be sustainable without a green economy.

Central Asian countries are facing common environmental problems. These are transboundary problems - no country can solve them alone. If one country misuses them, it will have a negative impact on other countries. It can cause additional damage through environmental degradation and deterioration of public health.

The global economy is increasingly demanding sustainability and environmental protection. To compete in international markets, Central Asian countries need to introduce environmentally friendly technologies and invest in a green economy. Investing in a green economy requires regional countries to pursue policies that are consistent with sustainability and environmental standards. This requires strengthening cooperation at the regional and international levels.

Green energy projects (e.g. wind, solar) often require regional networks and infrastructure. To do this, countries need to work together to attract investors, coordinate projects, and agree on technical standards. A single green strategy in the region would allow for coordinated resource management and joint monitoring and mitigation.

Development of renewable energy and green economy is an alternative way to attract foreign investments in the region. This will make it possible for the countries of the region to join the ranks of stable exporters of electricity in the medium term.

Stabilization of the situation in neighboring Afghanistan can stimulate the activation of entrepreneurship in this country and, as a result, further increase the need for energy. Central Asian countries can produce cheap energy compared to large economies (China, Turkey, Europe) by establishing a unified energy system among themselves.

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Furthermore, each country in the region has its own experience and strengths in the field of green economy. For example, Kazakhstan has green financing initiatives, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have experience in the field of hydropower, and Uzbekistan has solar energy projects.

Cooperation in the field of green economy strengthens trust between countries and increases political stability. This creates an image of a reliable region for international donors and investors.

A regional green energy network would encourage the use of renewable sources such as solar and wind, which are abundant in the region, to reduce dependence on coal and gas, and to promote cross-border energy trade, ensuring resource efficiency. This would attract green investments, and global donors and financial institutions would work on sustainable projects.

In this regard, regional cooperation will create larger and more attractive markets for green technologies and promote the development of joint applications for financing green projects, such as the Green Climate Fund. Working together, countries in the region will be encouraged to reduce excessive dependence on extractive industries, stimulate innovation in agriculture, transport and construction through joint research and development, and support job creation in new green sectors.

In the context of political stability and regional security, green cooperation can help strengthen trust and common interests among states, increase resilience to climate-related risks, exchange common knowledge and best practices, and ensure regional peace and long-term security.

We can conclude that the need for cooperation on the green economy among Central Asian countries stems from common environmental vulnerabilities, the need to modernize the economy, and the opportunity to become a model region for sustainable development. Through regional unity, Central Asia can move towards a green, sustainable, and prosperous future.

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