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## Committee on Environmental Policy

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### Environmental performance reviews

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## Third Environmental Performance Review of Azerbaijan: recommendations<sup>1</sup>

### Note by the secretariat

#### *Summary*

The document presents the recommendations of the third Environmental Performance Review of Azerbaijan agreed upon by the Expert Group on Environmental Performance Reviews at its meeting conducted in a hybrid format in Tbilisi and by virtual means from 12 to 16 September 2022.

The Committee is invited to adopt the recommendations.

### Chapter 1: Legal, policy and institutional framework

#### Recommendation 1.1:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Initiate or complete the preparation of new or revised laws on climate change, atmospheric pollution, fauna and flora, chemicals and subsoil, and propose their adoption;*
- (b) *Review the Water, Land and Forest Codes to determine whether they can be modernized and harmonized, with a view to their being revised and reissued;*
- (c) *Integrate the management of e-waste into the waste-related legislation and the management of construction and demolition waste, together with standards for the energy efficiency of buildings, into the Urban Planning and Construction Code;*
- (d) *Complete adoption of procedures on conducting environmental impact assessment, including in a transboundary context, and strategic environmental assessment through, inter alia, the adoption of secondary implementing legislation;*
- (e) *Review environment-related norms and standards and accelerate their modernization.*

#### Recommendation 1.2:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Develop low-carbon and mining strategies with strong consideration of environmental protection and the Sustainable Development Goals more generally, and adopt and implement them;*
- (b) *Ensure that regular implementation and evaluation reports on environment-related policy documents are publicly available on the websites of relevant government departments;*
- (c) *Ensure the timely analysis of environment-related policy documents and the early preparation of successor documents that are well aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.*

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<sup>1</sup> This document was not formally edited; it will undergo editing before being published.

Recommendation 1.3:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Complete and employ the planned Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) financing mechanism;*
- (b) *Ensure that SDG relevant policy documents and implementation reports, reports of meetings of the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development and related materials are made available to the public on either the website of the Ministry of Economy or a dedicated site;*
- (c) *Continue developing the National Information Portal on the SDGs;*
- (d) *Continue broadening the scope of SDG indicators, including on waste, and accelerate the collection of disaggregated data;*
- (e) *Convene a stakeholder group to score Sustainable Development Goal indicator 17.14.1 on policy coherence for sustainable development, identify measures to raise the country's score and implement those measures.*

Recommendation 1.4:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Address the competing functions within the Forestry Development Service, for example, by shifting the control function to the State Environmental Safety Service or the production function either to an agency subordinate to the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources or to the Ministry of Agriculture;*
- (b) *Consider publishing State commissions' policy documents, meeting and implementation reports and other materials on public Government websites.*

Recommendation 1.5:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should continue developing the website of the Ministry, inter alia, providing links to the latest legislation, policy documents, plans and programmes, including information about their implementation status and reports.*

## **Chapter 2: Regulatory and compliance assurance mechanisms**

Recommendation 2.1:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should draft amendments to the environmental legislation and implementing regulations on the integrated permitting of pollution by providing:*

- (a) *Determination of its scope consistent with the list of activities with thresholds mandatory for the environmental impact assessment;*
- (b) *Issuance of integrated permits based on the application by large industries best available techniques;*
- (c) *Enhanced opportunities for public participation in the integrated permitting procedure.*

Recommendation 2.2:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, should update:*

- (a) *The methodological documents on air emission and wastewater discharge limits;*
- (b) *The documents on ambient environmental quality standards.*

Recommendation 2.3:

*The Government should revise the relevant legal acts to cover all stages of the environmental impact assessment procedure, make the national law fully consistent with the Aarhus and Espoo Conventions and ensure effective public participation in the EIA procedure.*

Recommendation 2.4:

*The Ministry of Economy should encourage companies to:*

- (a) *Undertake sustainability reporting;*
- (b) *Ensure access to sustainability reports for the public.*

### **Chapter 3: Greening the economy and financing environmental protection**

#### Recommendation 3.1:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Pass the relevant secondary legislation for the implementation of subsidies for renewable energy and energy efficiency;*
- (b) *Regularly implement impact assessment analyses of the existing economic incentive mechanisms and adjust them accordingly.*

#### Recommendation 3.2:

*The Government should continue the phasing-out of fossil fuel and energy subsidies and gradually eliminate the differences in excise duties of gasoline versus diesel.*

#### Recommendation 3.3:

*The Government should continue attracting investments in non-oil sectors, promote green activities and gradually impose environmental performance targets on firms benefiting from favourable taxation.*

#### Recommendation 3.4:

*The Government should develop legislation on green public procurement and ensure that national guidelines for such procedures are developed and disseminated across all public authorities, and their implementation monitored.*

#### Recommendation 3.5

*The Government should revise the current legislative framework regarding Public-Private Partnerships to clarify ownership rules and therefore increase the attractiveness of such investments from the private sector perspective.*

#### Recommendation 3.6:

*The Government should consider:*

- (a) *Introducing policies that enhance material efficiency and promote circular economy and material resource efficiency to support achievement of SDG Target 12.1;*
- (b) *Defining standards and incentives on the efficient use of materials;*
- (c) *Setting up a monitoring system for collecting data and information on resource efficiency and material flows.*

### **Chapter 4: Environmental monitoring and information**

#### Recommendation 4.1:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should develop and implement an integrated environment monitoring and information system to ensure the provision of high-quality information that supports strategic environmental policy planning and compliance control.*

#### Recommendation 4.2:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should establish a mechanism to enhance the coordination of environmental monitoring activities, with the participation of representatives of its own monitoring services and other bodies engaged in environmental monitoring.*

#### Recommendation 4.3:

*The Government should ensure that:*

- (a) *The monitoring of ECE environmental indicators, OECD Green Growth Indicators and SDGs indicators is further developed;*
- (b) *State-of-the-environment reports are regularly prepared, published and made easily available, in accordance with the provisions of the Aarhus Convention.*

Recommendation 4.4:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should:*

- (a) *Streamline the digitalization of environmental monitoring records and integrate them in electronic databases;*
- (b) *Provide access to the different environmental monitoring databases through a single portal, and promote easy accessibility to interested stakeholders;*
- (c) *Expand the portal to other thematic areas of environmental data and information.*

Recommendation 4.5:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should establish an electronic pollutant release and transfer register based on the data reported by enterprises and use the related information for planning and decision making.*

Recommendation 4.6:

*The Government should strengthen regional cooperation for environmental monitoring and information, in particular regarding:*

- (a) *The identification of priority transboundary conservation areas to be regularly monitored;*
- (b) *The establishment and/or expansion of transboundary surface and groundwater monitoring networks.*

## **Chapter 5: Public participation**

Recommendation 5.1:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should:*

- (a) *Define detailed internal procedures for handling information requests and appeals of refusals;*
- (b) *Publish statistics on received and processed information requests;*
- (c) *Build capacity for handling information requests and appeals.*

Recommendation 5.2:

*The Government should revise the 2012 Resolution No. 158, which limits the maximum volume of information in electronic form that can be provided to members of the public free of charge.*

Recommendation 5.3:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Consider measures to facilitate public access to justice in environmental matters;*
- (b) *Continue its efforts to raise awareness, the capacity and specialization of the judiciary and prosecutors to consider environmental cases;*
- (c) *Examine the situation of environmental defenders, including relevant statistical information, to identify trends, and take measures to ensure the protection of environmental defenders;*
- (d) *Organize trainings for different target groups aimed at ensuring the protection of environmental defenders.*

## **Chapter 6: Education for sustainable development**

Recommendation 6.1:

*The Government in cooperation with relevant institutions, academia, business and NGOs, should:*

- (a) *Develop a policy document for ESD with a view to attain SDG targets 4.7, 12.8 and 13.3 until 2030;*
- (b) *Establish an operational mechanism to oversee the implementation of the policy document and to monitor and report on progress made;*
- (c) *Ensuring adequate financial and expert support to operationalise the policy document;*
- (d) *Integrate ESD in all state policy documents relevant for country's sustainable development.*

Recommendation 6.2:

*The Ministry of Education in cooperation with relevant ministries and institutions, should:*

- (a) *Ensure the development and integration of ESD into formal education at all levels of education;*
- (b) *Consider introducing mandatory subjects on ecology and/or sustainable development in upper secondary education and/or in the first or second grades of bachelor studies of higher education;*
- (c) *Consider expanding the sustainable development themes addressed at the primary and secondary levels of education.*

Recommendation 6.3:

*The Ministry of Education in cooperation with relevant ministries and institutions, should:*

- (a) *Promote the integration of ESD in the education of future educators, teachers and other education professionals;*
- (b) *Promote the integration of ESD in the in-service training of educators, teachers, school administrators and inspectors, making mandatory such training for all personnel engaged in the education sector;*
- (c) *Support research and development on ESD in the country to facilitate attainment of SDG Targets 4.7, 12.8 and 13.3.*

Recommendation 6.4:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Support the expansion of the Green Network of Schools;*
- (b) *Establish effective mechanisms for small grants to schools to enable them to carry out activities for promoting a whole-of-institution approach to ESD.*

Recommendation 6.5:

*The State Statistical Committee, in cooperation with the ministries in charge of education, of the environment and of the economy, and other relevant ministries and institutions, should undertake assessments to ensure a regular reporting until 2030 and beyond on the achievement of SDG targets 4.7, 12.8 and 13.3.*

## **Chapter 7: Implementation of international environmental agreements and commitments**

Recommendation 7.1:

*The Government should undergo the necessary preparatory work and proceed with accession to:*

- (a) *The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity;*
- (b) *Protocols under the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution: EMEP Protocol and the amended Heavy Metals Protocol, Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone, and Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants;*
- (c) *The Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer;*
- (d) *The Minamata Convention on Mercury;*
- (e) *The Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade to support the achievement of SDG Target 12.4;*
- (f) *The Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers and the Amendment to the Aarhus Convention on genetically modified organisms;*
- (g) *The Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks to support the achievement of SDG Target 14.c.*

Recommendation 7.2:

*The Ministry for Ecology and Natural Resources, in close collaboration with other relevant line Ministries, should:*

- (a) Carry out an assessment of the effectiveness of CITES-related enforcement measures;*
- (b) Develop a legal framework regulating decision-making processes regarding domestic use, transboundary movements of genetically modified organisms, the handling and use of GMOs that are pharmaceuticals, or establishing informed agreement procedure;*
- (c) Update the National Implementation Plan for the management of Persistent Organic Pollutants taking into account inter alia the new chemicals listed in the Convention's annexes;*
- (d) Ensure fulfilment of commitments it has assumed in the framework of Multilateral Environmental Agreements to which it is a Party.*

## **Chapter 8: Climate change**

Recommendation 8.1:

*The Government should:*

- (a) Finalise the elaboration of the national climate change mitigation and adaptation plan and start the preparation of regional and local adaptation plans;*
- (b) Elaborate a national DRR strategy;*
- (c) Upgrade the early warning systems for extreme climate events and natural disasters, and enhance preparedness for emergencies;*
- (d) Use drought-resistant tree species for activities of reforestation or afforestation, with particular reference to the use of domestic species;*
- (e) Continue implementing public awareness campaigns about climate change to increase the country's resilience to climate change;*
- (f) Build capacities of local governments on adaptation to climate change and security risks;*
- (g) Elaborate an integrated coastal zone management plan for the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea, including ecosystem restoration of coastal areas and priority adaptation measures to face the fluctuations of the sea level.*

Recommendation 8.2:

*The Government should:*

- (a) Facilitate the dissemination of technologies and techniques for stormwater reuse;*
- (b) Facilitate the implementation of water catchment areas from pervious and impervious surfaces for its eventual reuse;*
- (c) Promote the practice of rainwater harvesting in urban and rural areas;*
- (d) Foresee that every single building (new construction or existing) reduces water consumption and implements measures to store rainwater for its reuse;*
- (e) Continue promoting awareness-raising campaigns on water savings, especially in summer times.*

Recommendation 8.3:

*The Government should:*

- (a) Promote the development of renewable energy sources instead of fossil fuels wherever possible;*
- (b) Ensure improved monitoring of the status of the energy infrastructure and provide data on the number of accidents, incidents and power cuts;*
- (c) Promote the upgrading of old energy infrastructure to improve their productivity, reduce emissions and pollution, and increase energy security;*
- (d) Consider nature-based solutions as a preferred adaptation option whenever possible to improve the security of energy production and transmission.*

Recommendation 8.4:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Promote the integration of climate change considerations into relevant policies, programmes and plans (e.g., by using the strategic environmental assessment), including those for agriculture, water management, territorial and urban development;*
- (b) *Promote mitigation actions at the territorial scale, scaling up the results of the NAMA project;*
- (c) *Integrate climate change adaptation and mitigation into urban and territorial planning, masterplans and any planning and instruments involving local communities and municipalities into the planning preparation process;*
- (d) *Promote the implementation of nature-based solutions and green infrastructures within urban areas;*
- (e) *Introduce specific land-use requirements to regulate the pervious/impervious surface ration in urban areas;*
- (f) *Adopt a legislative regulation to prescribe an increase of green areas in cities and neighbourhoods.*

Recommendation 8.5:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Set up a certification scheme for new and existing buildings based on their overall sustainability performances (both in winter and summer) to increase the value of better-performing buildings;*
- (b) *Prescribe the compulsory recourse to renewable energy sources, including shallow geothermal, whenever applicable, in new buildings and major refurbishments;*
- (c) *Continue to develop extensive interventions for the refurbishment of existing buildings to improve their energy efficiency;*
- (d) *Promote the integration of nature-based solutions at the neighbourhood and building scale (e.g., green roofs and green walls) to mitigate the effects from and adapt to climate change;*
- (e) *Promote the use of control and measuring devices to monitor energy consumption in the building and construction sector;*
- (f) *Promote energy-saving technologies in lighting and heating systems and the modernisation of existing equipment;*
- (g) *Update construction guidelines and other relevant technical documents to specifically consider climate change.*

## **Chapter 9: Air protection**

Recommendation 9.1:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should:*

- (a) *Introduce a new system of air quality standards for major pollutants that is aligned with the standards that are in use in the EU and recommended by the WHO;*
- (b) *Adopt reasonable compliance deadlines for these new air quality standards considering technical and economic feasibility; differentiated approach to particular pollutants should be applied;*
- (c) *Make proposals to the Government to ensure that financial resources needed for training and equipment to facilitate the transfer to these new standards will be applied.*

Recommendation 9.2:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should:*

- (a) *Continue modernizing the air monitoring stations and setting up a national network where major acidifying pollutants, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>, heavy metals and POPs are measured and which generates necessary data for the evaluation of SDG indicators 3.9.1 and 11.6.2 in cities;*
- (b) *Consider in cooperation with EMEP to ensure full operation of the automatic EMEP monitoring station.*

Recommendation 9.3:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should:*

- (a) *Continue implementing additional improvements in the inventory reports on the emissions of air polluting substances, including information on the past and present levels of emissions based on the higher-level methodologies of the protocols to achieve full compliance with the requirements of the EMEP/EEA Guidebook (version 2019);*
- (b) *Continue building capacity and assure adequate availability of expertise for reporting.*

## **Chapter 10: Water management**

Recommendation 10.1:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should:*

- (a) *Assess all available water resources in the country (surface water and ground water), which will allow to assess the level of water stress (SDG indicator 6.4.2);*
- (b) *Assess the status of small rivers and, based on the results, develop an action plan on the conservation, protection and rehabilitation of small rivers.*
- (c) *Conduct rehabilitation of small rivers taking into account measures aimed at establishing a well-balanced water system, restoring the natural balance and self-regulating environment and conducting awareness-raising campaigns with community residents.*

Recommendation 10.2:

*The Ministry of Health should update drinking water quality standards with due account of special national features as well as establish scientifically well-grounded standards following the WHO Guidelines for drinking water quality.*

Recommendation 10.3:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Ensure sustainable management of wastewater sludge;*
- (b) *Develop a regulation on permissible indicators both for wastewater sludge and for lands where sludge is going to be applied, and a programme of controlling compliance with the requirements set for sludge use as fertilizers.*

Recommendation 10.4:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Approve the National Water Strategy as the basis for introducing basin (watershed) water resource management principle;*
- (b) *Elaborate the regulatory legal framework for making a transition from the administrative territorial to the basin water resource management principle, which will support the achievement of the SDG indicator 6.5.1;*
- (c) *Activate reforms of the organizational structure by establishing administrative bodies and basin councils for each river basin, and involving national, regional and local authorities in integrated water resource management;*
- (d) *Conclude an agreement on the Kura River with Georgia and develop similar agreements for other transboundary basins.*

Recommendation 10.5:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should:*

- (a) *Include hydro-biological observations in the regular programme of surface water quality monitoring;*



- (b) *Reconsider the current water quality classification system for water bodies by integrating assessment of the hydro-biological status into it.*

## **Chapter 11: Waste and chemical management**

### Recommendation 11.1:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Continue efforts to remediate identified pollution sites, both on the Absheron Peninsula and beyond;*  
(b) *Stepwise eliminate the dumpsites and close or remediate operating landfills by shifting to regional sanitary landfills;*  
(c) *Draw up the inventory of the abandoned industrial sites;*  
(d) *Initiate the development of a comprehensive industrial waste database.*

### Recommendation 11.2:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Develop a successor document to or revitalize the National Solid Waste Management Strategy, with updated timeframes, which includes a goal setting component, evaluation and adjustment mechanisms;*  
(b) *Develop and approve regional solid waste management plans, specifying and prioritizing the activities to be done.*

### Recommendation 11.3:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Develop and implement an integrated set of measures on introduction of source-separated collection of household waste across the country, including laying the necessary material and technical foundations, conducting awareness-raising and outreach campaigns and educational activities;*  
(b) *Encourage private sector participation in waste management activities aimed at reusing and recycling separated waste fractions, in particular through public-private partnership;*  
(c) *Develop a mechanism for setting and reviewing tariffs, for the collection and processing of solid household waste, that are socially acceptable and ensure the gradual transition of MSW management to self-sufficiency;*  
(d) *Develop and implement a training and advanced training programme for the personnel of companies involved in waste management;*  
(e) *Develop and implement an educational programme to raise public awareness about waste collection and recycling;*  
(f) *Introduce the Extended Producer Responsibility by developing relevant standards and integrating principles into the legislation.*

### Recommendation 11.4:

*The State Statistical Committee, in cooperation with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, should clarify the collection and presentation of waste statistics to account for:*

- (a) *Industrial waste by industry sectors and not only by types of activities, which would allow for the analysis of industry practice, including comparing indicators with international practice, for example, with the best available techniques;*  
(b) *Wastes produced by companies, similar in morphological composition to MSW and transferred by enterprises to the executive authorities for disposal separately from household waste produced by the local community.*

## **Chapter 12: Biodiversity and protected areas**

### Recommendation 12.1:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources should:*

- (a) *Increase conservation efforts of important bird populations, in particular on migratory or wintering species;*
- (b) *Carry out a comprehensive and in-depth assessment on biodiversity status in the country and develop management plans for all special protected areas;*
- (c) *Promote private conservation agreements and transboundary conservation cooperation and enable participatory management;*
- (d) *Implement sustainable grazing management and prevent degradation of pasture;*
- (e) *Increase efforts for integrated conservation of mountains riverine habitats.*

### Recommendation 12.2:

*The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources to contribute to SDG Target 15.1. and Aichi Target should:*

- (a) *Complete the nationwide inventory of forests and a forest condition description;*
- (b) *Develop a sustainable forest management concept on forest fund land, including with the aim to prevent forest fires;*
- (c) *Finalize the Nomination File of Hirkanian Forest to UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site.*

### Recommendation 12.3:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Set up relevant sciences projects to improve the evidence-base in the impacts of invasive alien species;*
- (b) *Update and review species and species list on endemic and threatened species;*
- (c) *Set up scientific education campaign and programmes at universities, and strengthen relevant institutes at the National Academy of Science;*
- (d) *Increase capacity for ecological science.*

## **Chapter 13: Land management**

### Recommendation 13.1:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Review and rationalize the responsibilities of the authorities involved with all the aspects of land management and land use;*
- (b) *Define clear assignments of targeted responsibilities for the monitoring, management, and protection of the land and strengthening land monitoring activities, including of improper land uses, and informal settlements;*
- (c) *Finalize land inventory;*
- (d) *Coordinate with the authorities involved with protected areas (both natural and cultural) to integrate all information concerning the areas in a single database;*
- (e) *Ensure the development of an integrated and open-source GIS accessible to all authorities and other stakeholders in land management and conservation;*
- (f) *Define Land Degradation Neutrality targets and prepare a national action plan to combat desertification.*

### Recommendation 13.2:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Update and consolidate the Building Code for all types of construction and land ownership, including provisions for environmental impact assessment and green building;*
- (b) *Upgrade sanitary norms for buildings and construction;*

- (c) *Promote the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation considerations into the design of neighbourhood developments.*

Recommendation 13.3:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Issue a set of regulations for the integration of traditional building features and materials, morphological elements, and cultural forms;*  
(b) *Define standards for landscape use;*  
(c) *Prescribe the integration of a multi-stepped Heritage Impact Assessment for all types of interventions in sensitive areas;*  
(d) *Promote the relocation or refurbishment of the industrial facilities located in urban areas;*  
(e) *Integrate local traditional crafts and activities of intangible heritage within eco-tourism activities, to support the economic improvement of rural areas.*

Recommendation 13.4:

*The Ministry of Agriculture should:*

- (a) *Issue regulations on the application of good agricultural practices and carry out capacity-building activities;*  
(b) *Develop a strategy and medium-term action plan for land decontamination;*  
(c) *Promote the involvement of local communities and agri-businesses in eco-tourism and agro-tourism.*

Recommendation 13.5:

*The Government should require detailed risk assessments on projects aiming at the rehabilitation of areas currently occupied by informal settlements.*

## **Chapter 14: Agriculture and the environment**

Recommendation 14.1:

*The Ministry of Agriculture should facilitate involvement of graduate agronomists who are interested in advanced training courses as consultant-agronomists at Ganja State Agrarian University.*

Recommendation 14.2:

*The Ministry of Agriculture through AKIA should consider providing incentives for farmers and their associations participating in actions for environmental protection in agricultural practices.*

Recommendation 14.3:

*The Government should establish a council of experts from the relevant agencies responsible for reviewing and approving projects of land consolidation and reclamation.*

## **Chapter 15: Energy and the environment**

Recommendation 15.1:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Restructure state-owned energy utilities through public-private partnerships and establish wholesale and retail markets, while keeping a major role in power generation and transmission;*  
(b) *Introduce the transformation from administrative measures towards measures based on economic incentives and market mechanisms at a gradual level, considering the concerns of poor and vulnerable parts of the population.*

Recommendation 15.2.

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Undertake a comprehensive study on the development of appropriate national energy mix that will consider options of various power sources: their status, trends, economic analysis, environmental footprint, institutional and legislative barriers;*
- (b) *Fulfil RES plants construction projects to increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the energy mix.*
- (c) *Continue to explore ways to use natural gas for power generation more efficiently and in a more environmentally friendly manner, including CCS technology, and develop economic incentives to address environmental and health impacts.*

Recommendation 15.3.

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Provide measurable incentives for maximising the energy efficiency gains;*
- (b) *Encourage local authorities to undertake energy audits of public buildings and develop appropriate plans for improving their energy performance and implementing the requirements of audits;*
- (c) *Establish conditions allowing growth of the market for energy services by allowing banks to finance long term energy related projects; reconsidering public sector procurement and tendering rules to allow ESCO operation and adopting a model ESCO contract.*

Recommendation 15.4:

*The Government should consider options for harmonized reporting and sustainable management of energy resources endowment at the national level.*

## **Chapter 16: Industry, mining and the environment**

Recommendation 16.1:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Promote the introduction of clean technologies, including in industrial parks, districts and zones;*
- (b) *Develop effective economic tools to incentivize investments in cleaner technologies;*
- (c) *Prepare methodological guidelines aimed at identifying climate risks and integrating them in the management of industrial parks, districts and zones;*
- (d) *Introduce the requirement to estimate GHG emissions of industrial projects, where applicable, in the context of the EIA;*
- (e) *Consider the integration of landscape and ecological considerations and nature-based solutions (NBS) in the development and maintenance of industrial parks.*

Recommendation 16.2:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Secure sufficient expenditures for science, technology and innovation;*
- (b) *Create policy support to boost the development of green entrepreneurship and innovation;*
- (c) *Develop a Green Tech Acceleration Programme to promote and support progress in this area.*

Recommendation 16.3:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Develop a roadmap for the scaling-up of SCP methods in industry aimed at to set up support instruments for the expansion of SCP in the country;*
- (b) *Introduce an efficient sustainable production funding mechanism to stimulate related investments.*

Recommendation 16.4:

*The Government should develop and implement a comprehensive programme with an action plan to gradually rehabilitate polluted soils and lakes of the Absheron Peninsula, in collaboration with the private sector and international donors.*

Recommendation 16.5:

*The Government should consider joining the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.*

## **Chapter 17: Transport and the environment**

Recommendation 17.1:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Continue developing policies supporting the import and production of environmentally friendly vehicles;*
- (b) *Review policies in relation to the importation of used vehicle imports to ensure they are the most energy efficient;*
- (c) *Given that the first source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the transport sector is road transport, balance the use of road transport with the other transport modes, by promoting a modal shift towards sustainable and combined transport modes.*

Recommendation 17.2:

*The Government should continue:*

- (a) *The expansion of reliable, safe, secure and affordable public transport networks in major cities;*
- (b) *The development of cycling network and also encourage safe and pleasant use of bicycle for daily trips.*

Recommendation 17.3:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Pursue the development of intercity train network, with higher speeds, increased frequencies and affordable prices;*
- (b) *Continue the efforts toward adopting a draft law on railway transport that will organize railway development and will encourage the use of railways for freight and passenger transport.*

Recommendation 17.4:

*The Government should consider the accession to road safety-related agreements, such as the Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of Such Inspections, of 1997, and the Agreement on Minimum Requirements for the Issue and Validity of Driving Permits (APC) of 1975.*

Recommendation 17.5:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Accelerate the integration and coordination of the activities of main transport operators (ADY, Caspian Shipping Company and Baku Port) on East–West route;*
- (b) *Encourage the development of multimodal freight transport.*

## **Chapter 18: Risk management of natural and technological or anthropogenic hazards**

Recommendation 18.1:

*The Government should increase the effectiveness of national disaster risk management efforts related to natural hazards caused by climate change by:*

- (a) *Developing a hydrometeorology development strategy to ensure the sustainable development of hydrometeorology, taking into account the recommendations as included in the fourth national communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;*
- (b) *Accelerating the modernization of the National Hydrometeorological Service in accordance with the requirements of the World Meteorological Organization;*
- (c) *Developing a state-of-the-art, effective and sustainable multi-disciplinary and multi-hazard early warning system, as well as related software packages as modelling tools to provide forecasts on different types of hazards and their (potential) impact;*
- (d) *Ensuring the participation of all relevant government authorities in the process of improving sustainable development of hydrometeorology and early warning.*

Recommendation 18.2:

*The Government should:*

- (a) *Continue, expand and complete the inventory and data of toxic and contaminated sites throughout the country;*
- (b) *Complete the inventory of pesticides according to the requirements of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and pay in addition special attention to the small-scale pesticides sites*
- (c) *Conduct an assessment and evaluation of risks and types of natural hazards that can impact the toxic sites and consequently affect human health and the environment;*
- (d) *Initiate and implement research on linkages between health effects from toxic pollutants and place-specific locations and pathways of transmission of and exposure to these toxins.*

Recommendation 18.3:

*The Government should strengthen an effective policy on the management of national disaster risk reduction step by step, namely by:*

- (a) *Integrating and aligning Disaster Risk Reduction priorities along with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development targets into all State strategic documents and governmental institutions;*
- (b) *Integrating mainstreaming of DRR into the strategies of the involved sectors;*
- (c) *Developing annual work programmes and plans with tangible actions and timelines on the implementation of Disaster Risk Reduction.*

Recommendation 18.4:

*The Government should strengthen its approach on data management regarding disaster risk reduction by:*

- (a) *Evaluating the current situation on data exchange and management regarding disaster risk reduction aiming at identifying opportunities for improvement;*
- (b) *Defining a policy for sharing data and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in disaster risk management;*
- (c) *Conducting research into integrating data from existing databases from different institutes into a single state-of-the-art web-based tool in addition to or in connection with the Electronic Regional Risk Atlas (ERRA);*
- (d) *Involving the State Statistical Committee in the analysis and processing of meta data related to emergencies and disasters, in particular on losses of human, environment and economic capital.*

Recommendation 18.5:

*The Ministry of Emergency Situations should strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of disaster risk management by:*

- (a) *Reviewing the current national response organization, evaluating the need and availability of special expertise and identifying gaps;*
- (b) *Making arrangements with expert institutes about their deployment during disasters based on 24/7 availability and formalize this by agreements between the Ministry of Emergency Situations and the organizations;*

- (c) *Developing standard operating procedures in which roles and responsibilities of the expert institutes in the national response organization are defined;*
  - (d) *Institutionalizing the expert institutes by including them in the national response and action plan which are currently under revision.*
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