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**SITUATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN UZBEKISTAN  
IN 1950–1980-IES**

**СИТУАЦИЯ ПО ОХРАНЕ ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЫ В УЗБЕКИСТАНЕ  
В 1950–1980-Х ГОДАХ**

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*Abstract.* In the given article are considered the problems of environmental protection situation in Uzbekistan in 50–80s of the XX century. In the article are Enlightened the processes of environmental protection in Uzbekistan in 1950–1990-ies, worsening of ecological environment, its influence to social and economical life.

In the article is noted that in the Soviet period the infrastructure of the republic oriented to the raw material couldn't require to national economy. The raw character of production strength and their development led to not rational use of natural material, in the condition of deficiency of the final products led to the wide production of agricultural raw material. There were arisen social and ecological problems of water and land resources use. Under the influence of such factors was damaged the balance of “nature–population–national economy” system. There was made irreparable harm to many important vital interests.

There was analyzed the influence of negative ecological situation to social and economical life at the example of Aral Sea and Aral Sea region problem.

In the process of the work was obtained the information which in the sphere of environmental protection in 60s of the XX century Nature conservation society started its activity, in the last years by regulatory bodies of the republic was adopted number of important decisions on its activity improvement. On this basis, it was taken into public control the implementation of laws for nature protection, carried out complex measures on environmental protection and its improvement. However, these shortcomings in the work, as a formality, the pursuit of numbers reduced its effectiveness. Founded in 1988, State committee for nature protection began a new stage in environmental protection.

*Аннотация.* В данной статье рассмотрены вопросы охраны окружающей среды в Узбекистане в 50–80-х годах XX века. В работе освещены процессы охраны окружающей среды Узбекистана в 1950–1990 г.г., обострение экологической среды, ее влияние на социально–экономическую жизнь.

В статье отмечается, что в советский период инфраструктура республики, сориентированная на сырье, не могла отвечать требованиям народного хозяйства. Сырьевой характер производительных сил и их развитие привели к нерациональному использованию природных ресурсов, в условиях дефицита готовой продукции к широкому производству сельскохозяйственной сырьевой продукции. Возникли социально–экологические проблемы использования водных и земельных ресурсов. Под воздействием таких факторов нарушился баланс системы «природа–население–народное хозяйство». Был нанесен непоправимый ущерб многим важным жизненным интересам.

Проанализировано влияние неблагоприятной экологической ситуации на социально-экономическую жизнь на примере проблем Арала и Приаральского региона.

В процессе работы были получены сведения, что в деле охраны окружающей среды в 60-х годах XX века начало свою деятельность Общество охраны природы, в последующие годы органами управления республики был принят ряд важных решений по совершенствованию его деятельности. На основании этого было взято под общественный контроль исполнение законов по охране природы, осуществлен комплекс мер по охране и оздоровлению окружающей среды. Однако, такие недостатки, существующие в работе, как формальность, погоня за цифрами снижали ее эффективность. Основанный в 1988 году Госкомприрода начал новый этап в деле охраны окружающей среды.

*Keywords:* nature, history, ecology, water, environmental protection, Aral Sea problem.

*Ключевые слова:* природа, история, экология, вода, охрана окружающей среды, проблема Арала.

In the Soviet period the development strategy of the country and the command type of 'Central' policy, as well as inefficient allocation and development of production forces and resources have led to the critical ecological situation in Uzbekistan in the second half of the XX century. Economic policy based on the ideology of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has resulted in the cotton monoculture, damage to nature and livelihood of the people, drying of the Aral Sea, contamination of water resources of the Amudarya and Syrdarya rivers and degradation of irrigated land. Lack of attention to ecological problems deteriorated the level of social life, ignited the spread of various diseases and led to other negative consequences.

The First President of Uzbekistan I. A. Karimov wrote: "...problems which our country faces since 1990s, have roots in the period of the former USSR, with its totalitarian cotton monopoly, when production of cotton was the main objective of the country, prevailing over health and lives of the people" (1, p.116).

As is well known, centralized command-administrative system of management in USSR promoted the formation of one-sided strained system of national economy, oriented towards the development of the republics as raw resources suppliers (2, p. 41). For example, in Uzbekistan, which produced annually 5–6 mln. tons of raw cotton, only 150 thousand tons of cotton wool was internally processed.

In the result of the cotton monopoly occupying central place of the economic policy of the Soviet government, many other vitally important agricultural sectors were suffering. Likewise, raw cotton production plan in 1986 was fulfilled up to 87.5%, whereas production plans for wheat, melons, grapes, milk and eggs were not met at all (3).

Similar situation was valid also for industrial sector of the republic. Increase of such industries as chemical, requiring large amounts of water resources and minimum labor force, in light of water shortage years has created many problems and hardships. At the same time, textile industry, having strong raw resource base, was developing at low pace. Measures, undertaken by the central administration including elaboration of programs for developing agrarian, food and energy sectors, also did not bring anticipated results, and on the contrary caused deepening of contradictions in national economy. Such economic policy was carried out in Uzbekistan without taking into consideration of its impact on environment and had drastic consequences for ecology, lives and health of the population.

Influence of the unfavorable ecological situation on socio-economic life was most evident in the Aral Sea and Aral Sea region. From 1961 a period of active anthropogenic intervention in Aral Sea structure has begun. Loss of sea water refilling and other reasons have led to the destruction of water and salt balance as well as water deficit in 1960–80s.

The impact of chemical industry on contamination processes of the environment in the study period was quite high. In the years after World War II in order to revive the development of agriculture of the republic, were put into operation such plants as Kokand superphos plant (1947), later Fergana plant for production of mineral fertilizers (1962), Navoiy chemical industrial complex (1964), Almalyk chemical factory for production of ammophos (1967). In total, in the period of 1940–1985 over 20 factories of chemical industry were functioning in the republic. By the end of 1970s over 16 thousand tons of mineral fertilizers have been produced in the republic every day [1, p. 23]. Thus, local requirements of the republic in mineral fertilizers for agriculture have been met, and part of mineral fertilizers has been even exported to the neighboring states. Intensive development of this sector, however, has led to sharpening of ecological problems. In particular, by the end of 1980s the amount of poisonous emissions into atmosphere has reached 130 thousand tons (4), which amounted to 20% of the total emissions to atmosphere.

We cannot say that during the Soviet period there were no attempts to decrease the level of emissions to atmosphere. Many enterprises, factories have installed equipment for reducing emissions of dust and gases; the worn-out equipment was gradually being replaced by new equipment. Likewise, in the period from 1986 to 1989 about 52.034 mln. Rubles have been spent in the republic for protection of atmosphere (4). However, such part measures did not bring the anticipated results and did not have systematic character. In addition, there were some cases of misuse of the distributed funds.

Process of environmental protection in Uzbekistan received impetus for development in the second half of the XX century. In particular, in November 1959, Supreme Council of UzSSR has adopted law “On protection of nature” with the aim of intensifying protection of nature of Uzbekistan, provision of rational use of natural resources and meeting the material and cultural demand of local population. This law has become a legislative base of measures, undertaken in the Republic for further protection of the environment. Based on this law, state authorities have adopted further decrees and resolutions. Based on Chapter 4 of this law and based on “Regulations on Main department of forestry and protection of nature attached to the Council of Ministers of UzSSR”, approved by the Decree of the Council of Ministers of UzSSR #664 from September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1959, the mentioned Main forestry department became responsible for protection of nature (5). Services of protection of atmosphere, soil, water resources and basins, fauna have been integrated to the Forestry Inspectorate.

In 1960s attention of authorities to the problems of nature protection have been intensified. In particular, based on the Decree of the Council of Ministers of UzSSR and Presidium of the Supreme Council of UzSSR and Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan #835 from November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1961, an “Association for nature protection and planting of greenery of Uzbekistan” was created. In 1962 Presidium of Labor Unions Council of Uzbekistan has also adopted a decree on participation of labor unions in protection of nature. On the first session of the sixth assembly of the Supreme Council of UzSSR in February 1963 a constant deputy commission of the Supreme Council of UzSSR “Protection of nature and natural resources”. Similar commissions were established in all provincial, city and district deputy councils (5).

Archival documents prove the results of the vivid activities of the constant deputy commission on nature protection attached to the Supreme Council of UzSSR and its role in monitoring the fulfillment of legislative acts in this sphere by Republican ministries and departments. For example, in 1970s it is stated in the documents of the Commission about considerable achievements of the Republic in the sphere of nature protection and rational use of natural resources. In particular, documents tell about installation of the waste treatment facilities for sewage water, emissions to atmosphere, as well as about creation of natural reserves and sanctuaries for multiplication of endangered species. However, Commission has revealed many problems with regards to abolishing certain issues having negative impact on the environment of the Republic. In particular, there were many mistakes and limitations in use, storage and transportation of harmful chemicals by cotton refining and chemical plants. There was a big lack of activities related to

prevention of air contamination, contamination of some lakes and water river basins with sewage water, start-up of industrial sites, not equipped with purification installations.

Association for nature protection and planting of greenery of Uzbekistan has foreseen realization of a complex of measures with regards to protecting and rehabilitation of environment and establishment of public control over fulfillment of legislation for nature protection. However, excessive formalism, chase for statistics and bureaucracy have considerably decreased the efficiency of this association.

In 1988 State Committee for nature protection was established in Uzbekistan. This committee inherited protection functions for various resources like water resources, agriculture, aquaculture, geology and ministry of health protection. As a result, despite of some certain drawbacks of the newly established system, including non-efficient use of labor force and other resources, absence of unique concept of ecological activities, the processes of environmental protection have faced certain development. Activities and measure undertaken by this committee have become the new phase of radical changes in the processes of protection and preservation of nature in Uzbekistan.

Scientific analysis of the collected research data and material allowed formulating the following scientific conclusions:

Economic policy of Soviet government, based on extensive approach for natural resource use and production in conditions of administrative system, was directed toward complete conquering of nature. Priorities of economic objectives have shaped the declarative and formal character of nature protection measures.

In 1960s an “Association for nature protection” has started its activities in the framework of nature protection. In the following years, several important decisions have been taken for improving activities of this association. Based on this, fulfillment of nature protection legislation has been under public control, some measures for nature protection and rehabilitation have been carried out. In particular, industrial factories and organizations, contaminating the atmosphere, air and water with their wastes, have been registered, purifying facilities have been installed, nature reserves and protected areas have been established, forestry management improved, awareness campaigns on careful attitude to nature have been conducted, monitoring of environmental protection activities has been conducted. Nevertheless, there were some drawbacks such as formalism, much paper work, pursuit of high indicators, long sessions and meetings, which have decreased the efficiency of nature protection association.

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