

AZERBAIJAN STATE OIL AND INDUSTRY UNIVERSITY

POLICY ON PREVENTING AND REDUCING MARINE POLLUTION FROM LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES

Approved by the ASOIU Rector on 27/03/2024

1. Purpose

Azerbaijan State Oil and Industry University (ASOIU), as a national higher education and research institution, recognizes its responsibility to prevent and reduce marine pollution originating from land-based activities. This policy establishes the university's commitment to sustainable environmental management, marine ecosystem protection, and alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14 (Life Below Water), particularly Target 14.1 and Indicator 14.4.3, which require institutions to adopt measures to prevent marine pollution of all kinds.

2. Policy Statement

ASOIU is committed to preventing all forms of marine pollution by reducing waste, controlling runoff, promoting sustainable consumption, and raising awareness among staff, students, and community partners. The university will minimize land-based sources of pollution such as plastics, chemicals, and solid waste that can reach the Caspian Sea and other aquatic environments through drainage systems and surface runoff.

3. Scope and Application

This policy applies to:

- All ASOIU campuses, facilities, and departments;
- All staff, students, contractors, and vendors;
- University-led projects, laboratories, field activities, and community programs.

It covers all activities that may lead directly or indirectly to marine or aquatic pollution, including waste disposal, laboratory practices, stormwater management, maintenance, food services, and procurement.

4. Definitions

- Marine Pollution – Introduction of harmful substances or energy into marine environments that cause adverse effects on living resources, ecosystems, and human health.
- Land-Based Sources – Pollution originating on land that reaches marine waters through rivers, drainage, or wind dispersion.
- Single-Use Plastics – Items made for one-time use such as plastic bags, bottles, cutlery, and packaging.

- Caspian Basin Ecosystem – The interconnected freshwater and marine ecosystem receiving runoff from Baku and surrounding regions.

5. Policy Objectives

1. Prevent marine pollution by minimizing solid and liquid waste discharge from university operations.
2. Reduce single-use plastics across all ASOIU facilities by replacing them with biodegradable or reusable alternatives.
3. Implement effective waste segregation and recycling systems on all campuses.
4. Promote awareness of marine and aquatic pollution among students, staff, and local communities.
5. Support research focused on pollution reduction, water quality, and sustainable waste management.
6. Collaborate with governmental, municipal, and industry partners to improve waste collection and coastal protection in the Baku region.

6. Implementation Measures

6.1 Waste Management and Reduction

- Establish “ASOIU Waste Bank” modeled where plastic and recyclable materials are collected and monetized or rewarded through campus sustainability credits.
- Introduce a ban on single-use plastics (plastic bottles, cups, straws, and bags) across all university cafeterias, dormitories, and offices.
- Promote the use of refillable water dispensers and “Bring Your Own Cup/Bottle” campaigns.
- Implement waste separation bins (paper, plastic, organic, metal) across all campuses.

6.2 Stormwater and Drainage Control

- Design and maintain drainage systems to prevent litter and chemical runoff from campus grounds into municipal water channels leading to the Caspian Sea.
- Conduct annual inspections of stormwater outlets and maintenance systems.
- Introduce filtration or sediment traps in vulnerable drainage areas.

6.3 Environmental Education and Outreach

- Integrate marine and coastal sustainability topics into environmental engineering, petroleum engineering, and chemistry curricula.
- Conduct regular workshops and seminars on marine protection, waste management, and pollution pathways.

- Organize “Clean Caspian” community campaigns for shoreline cleanups and awareness with student clubs and local schools.

6.4 Research and Innovation

- Support student and faculty research on microplastics, oil spill prevention, and wastewater management.
- Develop simulation and modeling studies of land-based pollution impacts using ASOİU’s HPC and Environmental Labs.
- Encourage interdisciplinary projects connecting petroleum engineering, environmental science, and data analytics.

6.5 Sustainable Procurement

- Require suppliers to minimize plastic packaging and provide environmentally friendly alternatives.
- Give procurement preference to companies using biodegradable or recyclable materials.

6.6 Partnerships and Cooperation

- Collaborate with Baku City Municipality, SOCAR Ecological Department, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, and NGOs to support Caspian Sea conservation efforts.
- Engage in regional and international networks to exchange best practices.

7. Governance and Responsibilities

- Rectorate and Environmental Sustainability Council: oversee implementation, approve annual action plans, and allocate funding.
- Department of Facilities and Operations: manage waste, drainage, and infrastructure adaptation.
- Sustainability and SDG Office: coordinate awareness campaigns, reporting, and monitoring of performance indicators.
- Academic Departments: integrate policy objectives into teaching and research activities.
- Student Union and Green Campus Leaders: lead outreach and volunteer programs related to marine pollution prevention.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting

- The SDG and Sustainability Office shall prepare an annual Marine Pollution Prevention Report summarizing:
 - Waste reduction statistics;
 - Plastic usage data;

- Number of awareness and cleanup events;
 - Research outputs and publications;
 - Partnerships and community collaborations.
- The policy shall be reviewed and updated every 2 years.

9. Communication

- The policy shall be published on ASOIU's official website and included in all staff/student orientation materials.
- Awareness posters and signage shall be placed around campuses and laboratories.
- Quarterly newsletters will share updates and good practices.

10. Compliance and Enforcement

- All units and contractors must comply with this policy.
- Violations (e.g., improper waste disposal, plastic use, drainage negligence) shall be reported to the Environmental Committee for corrective action.
- Persistent non-compliance may result in administrative penalties or exclusion from ASOIU contracts.