

POLICY ON SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT AND USE OF LAND FOR TOURISM

Approved: 2024

Developed by: Sustainable Development Center and Faculty of Business and Management

Next Review Date: 2026

1. Purpose

This policy establishes the framework for sustainable land management in tourism activities at the Azerbaijan State Oil and Industry University (ASOIU). The main goal is to ensure the protection of natural and cultural landscapes, promote responsible land use, and develop an environmentally conscious tourism culture aligned with SDG 15 – Life on Land.

2. Key Concepts

- **Sustainable Land Use:** The use of land resources in tourism without degrading their ecological or biological productivity, maintaining balance between development and conservation.
- **Ecotourism:** A form of tourism focused on environmental preservation, cultural respect, and community well-being, ensuring minimal ecological impact.
- **Landscape Management:** Planning and managing tourism infrastructure and activities in harmony with soil, water, vegetation, and cultural heritage.
- **Land Degradation:** The decline in land quality, soil fertility, and biodiversity caused by excessive or irresponsible tourism activity.

3. Objectives

1. To integrate sustainable land management and eco-tourism principles into ASOIU's academic curricula and research.
2. To conduct educational and outreach programmes through initiatives such as SDG Learncast, Green Transformation Program, and Healthy Life Initiative for communities and stakeholders.
3. To promote environmentally responsible tourism practices, including waste reduction, water conservation, and landscape preservation.
4. To engage local communities, municipalities, and tourism operators through training sessions, workshops, and seminars on responsible tourism and land use.
5. To involve students in field projects in regions such as Gobustan, Absheron, and Shahdag, focused on studying erosion prevention, land restoration, and ecotourism mapping.

4. Partnerships and Implementation

- Collaborating Partners: Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, State Tourism Agency, local municipalities, NGOs, and private sector tourism enterprises.
- Joint initiatives include projects on soil protection, landscape restoration, and ecological impact reduction in tourism areas.
- ASOIU applies modern technologies such as GIS mapping, drone-based land monitoring, and geo-information systems to evaluate land changes caused by tourism.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Sustainable Development Center prepares an annual report on ASOIU’s educational, research, and outreach activities related to sustainable land use in tourism.
- Progress is evaluated based on THE Impact Rankings Indicator 15.2.6 and aligned with national environmental strategies.
- The impact of educational and outreach actions is measured through community feedback, participant surveys, and impact assessment reports.

6. Action Plan

№	Activity Area	Description	Responsible Unit	Timeline
1	Curriculum Enhancement	Incorporation of sustainable land use and eco-tourism topics into tourism and management courses	Faculties, SD Center	2025
2	Awareness Activities	Seminars, campaigns, and field visits for students and community members	Sustainable Development Center	Annual
3	Environmental Research	Monitoring land and water impacts of tourism and proposing solutions	Department of Ecology and Geology	Continuous
4	Partnerships	Joint projects with state bodies and NGOs on eco-tourism and land protection	SD Center, State Tourism Agency	2025–2026