FACTS AND FIGURES

- 1,436 member institutions from 130 countries
  - including 1,072 universities and research institutions
  - organized into 47 National and Regional Networks
- 5 universities and 2 research and educational institutes from Kazakhstan are already members of SDSN

The UN SDSN was set up in 2012 under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General to promote SDGs through education, research, policy analysis, and global cooperation. The UN SDSN works closely with United Nations agencies, multilateral financing institutions, the private sector, and civil society.

Nazarbayev University (NU) has become a member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN) since 2020 to improve research and educational activities on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Kazakhstan and Central Asia.

As an UN SDSN Member, NU aims to accelerate joint learning and promote integrated approaches that address the interconnected economic, social, and environmental challenges confronting sustainability and SDGs in Kazakhstan and Central Asia.

HELP us ADVANCE the SDGs in KAZAKHSTAN!

For more information visit UN SDSN website www.unsdsn.org

Follow UN SDSN social media
HELP us ADVANCE RESEARCH and EDUCATION on SDGs in KAZAKHSTAN by joining SDSN!

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MEMBERSHIP IN THE NETWORK IS FREE AND WILL GIVE THE INSTITUTION ACCESS TO:

- Gain global recognition for membership in the UN SDSN
- Get involved in UN SDSN Solutions Initiatives under the SDSN and its thematic
- Pursue joint fundraising
- Leverage UN SDSN expertise for teaching, research and local/national sustainable development projects
- Directly link into the United Nations processes and annual events
- Benefit from privileged access to online educational materials and courses through the SDG Academy
- Share research and analyses with other members of the global network
- Contribute to UN SDSN publications
- Work with SDSN Youth

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ON SDGS IN KAZAKHSTAN

The focus of Nazarbayev University through UN SDSN is to:

- promote practical solutions for the development of long-term sustainable pathways in Kazakhstan
- support high-quality education and research collaboration on SDGs in Kazakhstan
- suggest applied research and policy initiatives for better addressing the challenges of sustainable development in Kazakhstan

HELP us ADVANCE RESEARCH and EDUCATION on SDGs in KAZAKHSTAN by joining SDSN!
The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and natural resources management has gained attention during the last few years in Kazakhstan. Significant efforts are taken to develop CSR in alignment with the SDGs. The extractive and mining industries have incorporated environmental, social, and governance indicators in their sustainability reports, by also getting evaluated by international accredited rating agencies on its climate action and sustainability performance. Many companies also focus on industrial safety, occupational safety and environmental protection by abiding to the improvement of labor conditions. There are still however major challenges to be met on the improvement of corporate sustainability in the field of natural resources in Kazakhstan.

We aim to conduct research on CSR mainly of extractive and mining industries in Kazakhstan which is the most crucial economic sector with a major environmental impact. The research will focus on the direct dialogue of universities, oil and gas, mining, and power companies, and state agencies to assess the current and future CSR strategies in Kazakhstan and its significance for the attainment of SDG goals nationwide. Also, we intent to utilize the Youth SDSN for attracting student associations and raise their interest in the field of CSR and sustainability approaches in Kazakhstan.
SUSTAINABLE LAND USE RESOURCES AND FOOD SYSTEMS (SDG 1, 9, 13, 15)

Kazakhstan has a large endowment of agricultural land and an advantageous geographical location in the Eurasian corridor. In recent years, domestic and foreign investments in the agricultural sector and food provision systems have been growing. However, there are also major challenges due to unequal water distribution, aged agricultural machinery, shortage of skilled labor, and limited financial credit. Although Kazakhstan does not suffer from overpopulation, the growing domestic demand in the last decade, together with poor land use management approaches, has driven Kazakhstan to become a net importer of agricultural products. These pressures request technically effective solutions, institutional reforms, and better governance schemes. In this regard, we will explore the drivers and pressures of land use and foods systems in the country in cooperation with existing collaborations among national institutes and international organizations.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND BIODIVERSITY (SDG 13, 14, 15)

Emblematic environmental disasters in Kazakhstan like the desiccation of the Aral Sea and the land contamination in the Semipalatinsk nuclear site have caused major socio-economic and health-related impacts which are still noticed today. In terms of biodiversity aspects, the area of biodiversity protection in Kazakhstan is still limited to only 2.8% of the total area of the country, which is a very low level in the international context. Environmental conservation and biodiversity protection are important aspects to the attainment of SDGs on a country level. There are already major efforts from different state and non-state actors to improve natural environment and conservation in Kazakhstan through applied policy reforms. We plan to launch different initiatives like the organization of events and research activities in collaboration with key research institutes and NGOs to improve the policy agenda on environmental conservation in the country, improve conservation management plans, and encourage environmental conservation courses in tertiary education. There is also intention to engage SDSN Youth in this priority, as there are a number of students’ associations which focus on topics of environmental conservation and biodiversity protection.
WATER SECURITY WITH FOCUS ON CASPIAN SEA (SDG 6, 14, 17)

Different approaches have dealt with the transboundary context of freshwater systems in Kazakhstan to identify water security priorities at the national level. Focus has been given to the Caspian Sea and the Ural river which is the third largest river in Europe and the major contributor of surface water to the Caspian Sea. The large-scale development of oil and gas fields along with the intensification of agriculture and fisheries have degraded the Ural river basin and the Caspian Sea which hosts the largest reserves of sturgeon species. Since 1992, Kazakhstan has cooperated with Russia on transboundary water management of the Ural-Caspian basin and implementation of sustainable use practices. However, not much progress has been identified in terms of policy implementation while the research on water security and environmental aspects is relatively poor. We aim to introduce research initiatives in the region in partnership with the Sustainable Blue Growth Initiative taken by SDSN Europe and SDSN Black Sea and reinforce research on water security in Caspian region.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION IN THE TERTIARY SECTOR (SDG 4, 10)

Universities and other higher education institutions have a critical role in achieving the SDGs through their research, learning and teaching, campus operations, and leadership. Individual elements on sustainability and SDGs are already covered in different schools and institutes in Kazakhstan, nevertheless, there are no integrated programs and frameworks to address the major challenges of our era. Policy-related and structural changes are required for tertiary education in Kazakhstan to adopt novel approaches towards the better inclusion of SDGs in research and educational activities. We focus on the incorporation of sustainable development science into the curricula of the universities in the country and on the progress made towards the embedding of SDGs in tertiary education.

An evaluation framework has been prepared by Nazarbayev University to track the progress of Kazakh universities and institutions based on the SDSN guidelines. The goal is to ensure mainstreaming the SDGs in tertiary education over time in Kazakhstan. There is also an intention to incorporate SDSN Youth initiative in this priority and to encourage gender equality in education. There is already cooperation with the Consortium of Gender Scholars (GenCon) based at Nazarbayev University which aims to bring together and support gender scholars in Kazakhstan.