**INFORMATION**

**of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change in the Republic of Azerbaijan**

1. ***What kind of information should be collected and shared to identify and prevent negative impacts on human rights arising from climate change and climate change response measures? What kind of information can be particularly challenging to access and why?***

In order to determine the negative effects of climate change and response measures to climate change on human rights, it is necessary to get acquainted with the physical-geographical conditions of the areas, to clarify the areas in which climate change is more noticeable, the activities of people in those areas, and the damage caused by the response measures against the climate change problems. The information collected should cover these areas and should be shared so that the related fields can benefit from this information in the implementation of problem’s solution.

It is particularly difficult to obtain accurate information on ecological crimes of Armenia in liberated territories of Azerbaijan because of lack of access during Armenian occupation throughout 30 years’ time and now due to heavy mine pollution by Armenia.

1. **Are existing approaches to collect, share, and monitor information on climate change and human rights sufficient for the public to assess the magnitude of actual and potential negative impacts on their human rights, and the adequacy of States' responses to these risks? How can these approaches be improved?**

In Azerbaijan, as highlighted in Fourth National Communication to UNFCCC (2021), the water supply, agriculture and human health are considered more sensitive areas that may be affected by climate change. A number of projects are carried out in our country to prevent these consequences and inform the population.

In our country, some activities have been implemented to improve Early Warning Systems: In March 2021, two Doppler radar systems were installed in Shamakhi and Goygol regions. There are 40 automatic hydrological stations installed on the rivers of the Republic, with the help of which both the amount of water in the rivers and the quality of water in transboundary rivers are controlled. In addition, the Agency of Geodesy and Cartography of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources has prepared an electronic water map, which will contribute to raising awareness of climate change.

To support the country's most vulnerable communities to keep up and cope with the impacts of climate change and to build climate-resilient farms a project named “Support for planning and implementation of adaptation measures to climate change in Azerbaijan” has been developed.

“IDEA” - The public association “International Dialogue on Environmental Protection” began its activities with the goal of educating the population on environmental issues and activities, collaborating with youth, educating about environmental issues and finding the right methods of implementation.

Early warning system has a pivotal role in collecting and sharing info for prevention of negative impacts on human rights of climate change. Public awareness projects on climate change negative effects have been implementing in different line ministries with involvement of all stakeholders; workshops in universities, schools, farms, plants and etc. are held.

By decree of the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, 2024 was declared in the country as the “Year of Green World Solidarity”, and the lands liberated from occupation were declared a “green energy” zone.

This year, Azerbaijan will host the world’s largest international conference on climate change - COP29. Climate adaptation and loss and damage will be critical to global response to climate change and addressing these issues will require greater levels of financial commitment to pursue our guiding compass to 1.5 degrees and to make sure that we leave no one behind while moving forward in solidarity for a green world.

1. **Are there undue barriers to obtain access to information on human rights and climate change that is up to date?**

There are not undue barriers to obtain access to up-to-date information on human rights and climate change in Azerbaijan.

1. **Are there examples in which international cooperation effectively supported public access to information on climate change and human rights? What are the challenges in implementing UNFCCC Articles 4 (public access to information) and 6 (public awareness), and Paris Agreement Article, 12 (public access to information), and other international instruments and processes that can support/contribute to international cooperation on access to information on climate change and human rights?**

As part of its international commitments under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Azerbaijan ensures regular reporting of climate change related trends and developments in the form of national communications and biennial update reports. In this regard, the Government developed and submitted its Fourth National Communication in 2021. In addition to the National Communications, Azerbaijan has also submitted its Second Biennial Updated Report (SBUR) and communicated its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) to the UNFCCC Secretariat in 2015. The updated NDC submitted to the Secretariat in 2023. In addition, Azerbaijan signed the Paris Agreement in 2015.

UNEP GEF Project “Capacity Building for Azerbaijan to meet the requirements of enhanced transparency framework of the Paris agreement” (CBIT) is ongoing in Azerbaijan. The main objective of the project is to strengthen institutional and human capacities in Azerbaijan to meet the reporting requirements of the enhanced transparency framework of the Paris Agreement by establishing a tracking system to support reliable domestic MRV arrangements. Project outputs:

* Institutional arrangements for inter-ministerial cooperation on systemizing data collection and processing for preparing GHG inventory are established;
* National GHG database management system for GHG data is developed;
* National system for tracking progress of the implementation of Azerbaijan’s Nationally Determined Contributions for mitigation actions established and operationalized;
* Training programme on enhanced transparency processes provided.

In 2020, a Presidential Decree approved the new composition of the State Commission on Climate Change and established a working group that subsequently prepared an Action Plan on issues to be addressed at the level of the State Commission. Adoption of a law on climate change is expected in 2024.

**5. Are there concrete examples of, or specific challenges for business to communicate information on risks, including in different countries, in relation to climate change and human rights. What are the barriers for the rights holders to access to this information and to evaluate the adequacy of an enterprises response to these risks? Are there specific examples of State regulation that have significantly improved access to information held by private actors on climate change and human rights?**

Much of the carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions causing climate change come from business-driven economic activity. However, business activities can also contribute to innovation and solutions to prevent, mitigate and adapt to climate change and its adverse impacts on the planet and its people. To avert future climate harms and ensure climate justice, business enterprises must be part of the solution. In the context of climate change, business enterprises should continuously assess how their environmental and climate impacts may lead to human rights harms. Impact assessments should priorities the most severe human rights risks and focus on the impacts on individuals and groups at heightened risk of vulnerability and marginalization. This process should include meaningful consultation with potentially affected stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities. If it is not possible to sufficiently engage with all relevant stakeholders, businesses should consider reasonable alternatives such as consulting credible, independent expert resources, including environmental human rights defenders and civil society.

Generally, the key challenges faced by most stakeholders are the lack of an adequate communication / media strategy that requires and guides the dissemination of technical knowledge.

The pivotal role for communication of the mentioned information relates to the business support organizations such as Confederation of Entrepreneurs, Chamber of Commerce and etc.

1. **What are the impacts on human rights of inadequate access to information from public authorities and/or business? Are there concrete examples of, or specific challenges in, collecting and sharing information on disproportionate levels of actual and potential harm from climate change and climate change response measures (disaggregated data on indigenous peoples, women, children, local communities, persons with disabilities, older persons, persons living extreme poverty, others)**

The impact of climate change exacerbates inequalities disproportionately affecting persons, groups and peoples already in vulnerable situations including children, indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities.

Structural inequalities can affect the acceleration of NDC implementation. Apart from physical infrastructure, increasing investments in social infrastructure are needed for acceleration.

In 2021 the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and UNDP announced a new three-year project to improve the country’s resilience to climate change. The project will support the Government to advance climate change adaptation actions in three priority sectors: water, agriculture and coastal areas. Within this project activities on access to the climate change information is supported and awareness raising activities are performed.