



COMBATING CORRUPTION AND ENSURING TRANSPARENCY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Rakhmonaliyev Zikrullo Iqboljon o'g'li

Fergana State University

Faculty of History, Jurisprudence

3rd-year student

zikrullohrahmonaliyev6gmail.com

+998974177273

Annotation: This article explores the issues of transparency and accountability in the management of natural resources. It examines the root causes of corruption, its various forms, and the consequences for economic, social, environmental, and institutional development. The study highlights critical areas such as abuse of authority during the issuance of permits, illicit practices in procurement, and environmental violations. Emphasis is placed on recent reforms in Uzbekistan aimed at improving governance, as well as on international cooperation and the integration of digital technologies to increase transparency.

Keywords: transparency, natural resources, corruption, law enforcement, digitalization, environmental sustainability, governance.

Introduction:

Natural resource management plays a fundamental role in the economic and social development of every nation. Resources such as water, land, minerals, and forests are not only vital for industry and agriculture, but also for environmental sustainability. Yet, in many countries, weak governance and lack of transparency in resource management open the door to corrupt practices. The misuse of authority, opaque procurement procedures, and disregard for environmental regulations are among the major challenges that lead to ineffective resource utilization. This article



aims to analyze transparency-related problems in the management of natural resources in Uzbekistan and propose measures for improvement.

Research Methods: The research was conducted using the following methods:

- **Comparative Analysis:** Comparing natural resource management practices in different countries;
- **Statistical Analysis:** Using quantitative data to measure economic and environmental losses caused by corruption;
- **Legal Analysis:** Reviewing Uzbekistan's legal framework regulating resource use;
- **System Approach:** Understanding interconnections between institutional weaknesses and corrupt behavior;
- **Expert Evaluation:** Examining assessments by international organizations and local experts.

Key Issues Identified: 1. Lack of Transparency in Permit and Licensing Procedures Despite existing regulations, the process of obtaining permits and licenses in Uzbekistan is often non-transparent. According to 2023 investigations, 127 violations related to land and water resource permits were detected, most involving bribery or favoritism.

2. Irregularities in Public Procurement: The procurement of equipment and services for natural resource projects lacks transparency. Artificial inflation of prices and uncompetitive tenders have cost the state around \$150 million in losses in the mining sector alone (2023).

3. Weak Oversight by Regulatory Bodies: Oversight institutions sometimes fail to enforce laws due to internal corruption. In 2022, 85 officials were found guilty of ignoring environmental violations in return for bribes.



4. Illegal Resource Exploitation: Unauthorized land use, illegal logging, poaching, and water pollution persist in many regions. The damage caused by such activities in 2023 exceeded 56 billion soums.

5. Tax Evasion and Hidden Revenues: Companies underreport resource extraction volumes and shift profits offshore to avoid taxes. The 2023 figures from the Tax Committee showed more than 430 billion soums in evaded taxes in this sector.

6. Ignoring Environmental Standards: Falsified environmental assessments and negligence in following ecological norms were widespread. In 2023, 215 violations by mining firms were recorded.

Root Causes of Non-Transparency and Corruption

- **Institutional Weakness:** Underpaid staff, poor oversight, and inefficiency plague public resource management institutions.
- **Gaps in Legislation:** Vague laws create loopholes. Uzbekistan's 2023 Natural Resources Law addressed some, but gaps remain.
- **Conflicts of Interest:** Officials' personal interests often conflict with public duty.
- **Limited Access to Information:** Public cannot easily monitor resource use or procurement processes.
- **Political Interference:** Powerful elites may manipulate decisions for personal gain.

Consequences of Poor Transparency

1. **Economic Impact:** Reduced state revenue and discouraged investment. According to the World Bank, Uzbekistan loses 3–4% of its GDP annually due to corruption.



2. **Social Impact:** Inequities in resource distribution and declining living standards in affected areas. Quality of life was 12% lower in resource-rich regions (2023).
3. **Environmental Impact:** Depletion of resources, soil degradation, and water pollution—12 major water bodies were polluted in 2023.
4. **Institutional Damage:** Public trust declines as state institutions lose credibility. 218 criminal cases on natural resource corruption were filed in 2023.
5. **International Reputation:** Uzbekistan ranked 126th out of 180 countries in Transparency International's 2023 CPI.

Discussion: Addressing the Challenges

- **“Resource Governance Dilemma”:** The paradox of resource-rich countries facing underdevelopment due to poor governance is evident. Transparency is key to breaking this cycle.
- **Leveraging Technology:** E-governance tools and blockchain can enhance accountability. The “Digital Uzbekistan 2023–2026” strategy supports this goal.
- **Public Participation:** Strengthening civil society and public monitoring mechanisms is essential. The 2023 Law “On Public Control” empowers citizens to demand accountability.
- **International Standards:** Ratifying the UN Convention against Corruption in 2022 positioned Uzbekistan for broader global cooperation.
- **Legal Reforms:** Enhanced anti-corruption clauses in the updated Criminal Code of 2023 are steps toward deterrence.

Conclusion: Effective and transparent management of natural resources is critical for sustainable development. The analysis shows that:



- Corruption and lack of transparency exist in multiple layers of natural resource governance.
- Institutional reforms and strong legal frameworks are necessary but not sufficient without effective implementation.
- Technology, civil oversight, and international cooperation can drastically improve transparency.
- Uzbekistan has made notable legal advancements, but continued efforts are needed for long-term results.

Sustainable management of resources demands joint action from all stakeholders — government bodies, civil society, business, and international partners — to ensure accountability and environmental justice.

References

1. Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On the Use of Natural Resources,” 2023.
2. National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2021–2024.
3. Law “On Conflict of Interest,” 2021.
4. State Statistics Committee data, 2023.
5. State Committee for Ecology Report, 2023.
6. Transparency International CPI Report, 2023.
7. World Bank Report “Economic Development and Corruption in Uzbekistan,” 2023.
8. Anti-Corruption Agency Statistics, 2023.
9. UN Convention against Corruption, ratified 2022.
10. “Digital Uzbekistan” Strategy 2023–2026