

Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences .:. Geology Institute
STATE PROGRAMMES

The Cabinet of Ministers of the Azerbaijan Republic

RESOLUTION

No. 299s

Baku, August 22, 2008

Government of the Azerbaijan Republic has studied the proposal of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences agreed with the Ministry of Economic Development of the Azerbaijan Republic, Ministry of Finance of the Azerbaijan Republic, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Azerbaijan Republic, Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Azerbaijan Republic, Ministry of Education of the Azerbaijan Republic, Ministry of Communication and Information Technologies of the Azerbaijan Republic and decrees:

1. To approve Plan of activities on preservation and long utilization of rare geological sites in the Azerbaijan Republic for the period of 2009-2012 (enclosed);

2. The present resolution comes into effect on the day of its signing.

Prime Minister of the Azerbaijan Republic

A. Rasizada

Full document



PLAN OF ACTIVITIES ON

Preservation and long utilization of rare geological sites in the Azerbaijan Republic (2009-2012)

1. Introduction

Today the measures aimed at preservation of natural heritage sites are in process. State natural reserves and sanctuaries, national parks, natural (zoological, dendrologic) parks, botanic gardens are being founded. There are 8 national parks, 15 state natural reserves and 20 state natural sanctuaries.

Rare geological sites (RGS) are an indispensable part of the natural heritage. Rare geological sites are all geological sites of scientific, cultural, aesthetic and historical importance which are protected and need to be protected. The territory of the Azerbaijan Republic is included into the belt of the Alpine folding and characterized by the complex tectonic structure. Geological-geomorphological processes occurring for the recent 13-15 thousand years, original climatic conditions, sharp fluctuations of the Caspian Sea level and direction of frequent winds created unique relief forms. Our country is rich in the world of stones represented by "Stone chronicle of the past," - information of global disasters, deformations of the Earth Crust, geological process of water and wind, climate changes, representatives of ancient flora and fauna, etc. All these and other factors show a great importance of rare geological sites and their necessity to be preserved.

According to the article 25 of the acting Law of the AR "About interior parts" dated 13.02.98 N"Q439-r, rare geological sites, i.e. "rare geological outcrops, mineralogical formations, paleontological objects and other interior parts of scientific and cultural importance can be declared in registered order as geological natural reserves, sanctuaries, monuments of nature and culture. According to the decree of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party and Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR "About protection of monuments of nature in the Azerbaijan SSR" dated 16.03.82 N"Q167 (attachment 3). a list of state monuments of nature-geological (paleontological) sites protected by government was made up. There are 37 geological monuments of nature: mountains (4), cliffs (2), ravines (2), caves (4), fauna and flora location (3), mud volcanoes (4), typical and key sections of stratigraphic subdivisions (2), waterfalls (1), mineral springs (1), etc. It is clearly seen that the above-mentioned document adopted 25 years ago and not reviewed since then is out of date at the moment and does not meet the



present demands for the preservation of geological sites. Some of these sites have already been lost or damaged as a result of natural processes (landslides, erosion, etc.) and anthropogenic activity, other sites are still on the territory occupied by Armenia (caves "Azykh" and "Taglar" in Fizuli region, "Khan magarasy" and "Gakhal magarasy" in Shusha region, "Palace of Giants" in labrail region, basalt column (parts in Kelbajar region), while the other group of sites is not duly protected (there are no barriers, no security zones, no monitoring system, etc.)

Moreover, there are some shortcomings from the methodical point of view. First, this first is "resaturated" by geomorphological RGS (here 60% of them), but stratigraphical RGS are represented by only 10%, paleontological RGS-8%, mineralogical, hydro-geological, ore-petrographical, historical-mining-geological and so on. RGS are represented by only few sites. Secondly, it does not cover all the rich geological heritage of Azerbaijan. Over the recent years the government has taken measures for the preservation of protected RGS: State historical-cultural and natural reserve "Yanar dag", State natural reserve of mud volcanoes group on the territory of Baku and Absheron Peninsula and others have been founded. However, it does not change the present situation, as according to the statistics there are more than 100 rare geological sites in the Azerbaijan Republic which are protected and need to be protected (including those which are within especially protected natural territories).

However, it is evident that including RGS into the list of protected sites does not provide all by itself their preservation. Many objects having official status of monuments of nature or proposed for the protection are under the threat of complete or partial destruction, mainly as a result of anthropogenic activity.

The Plan of activities (further-Plan) provides carrying out the complex of measures for the period of 2009-2012 to solve these problems.

The main directions of this Plan correspond to the regulations of the following legal acts: "National Strategy and Plan of Activities on preservation and long utilization of biological diversity in the Azerbaijan Republic" adopted by President's Decree of AR dated 24 March, 2006, N21368 and "Additional measures to address the problems ensuing from the international conventions and agreements in the field of environmental protection, which the Azerbaijan Republic has also joined. (adopted by President's Decree of AR dated 30 March, 2006, N21396).

2. The object of the Plan

The main object of the Plan is a safe guarantee for preservation and rational utilization of rare geological sites and their handover to next generations in natural state.

3. The main directions of the Plan

The main directions of the work within the Plan:

- Development of methodical base for geoconservation
- Information, organizational, man power and financial support of work on preservation and long utilization of rare geological sites;



- . Draw up an inventory of protected and determination of new (proposed for the protection) rare geological sites;
- . Preservation of ex-situ geological (paleontological) heritage of Azerbaijan which is under the threat of destruction;
- . Enhance the quality of ecological education and increase people's awareness of cultural values and traditions connected with geodiversity;
- . Analysis of the threat of destruction of rare geological sites;
- . Expanding the international cooperation in the field of geoconservation;
- . International recognition of some unique geological sites of Azerbaijan;
- . The search for rational and safe ways of using rare geological sites (for scientific, educational, touristic and other purposes) without causing damage to their preservation;
- . Strengthening the protection measures in locations of rare geological sites;
- . Creating conditions for active public participation in the work on preservation of the natural heritage of Azerbaijan.

4. Expected results

By fulfilling the Plan the main results should be expected:

- definition of state Cadastre of especially protected natural territories and sites with new-found rare geological sites taken into account;
- scientific monograph, reference-book (catalogue), map (compiled and printed using GIS technologies) thematic web-site in Internet (full data-base of rare geological sites of Azerbaijan in English, Azerbaijan and Russian) and other printed, mapping and electronic materials reflecting the present level of geoconservation in Azerbaijan;
- coordination of activities of all interested ministries, departments, scientific and public organizations within the whole Programme with concrete functions distribution, problems solution and improvement of personnel skills and qualification ;
- creation of reliable monitoring system for rare geological sites;
- establishing of stable and long-term contacts with foremost experts and world organizations in the field of geoconservation;
- preservation of cultural values and people's traditions connected with geodiversity ;
- development of measures aimed at prevention of the threat of destruction of rare geological sites;
- preparation of proposals on improvement of normative-legal base related to especially protected natural territories and sites;
- preparation of proposals on the inclusion of protected RGS into the sphere of ecological tourism;
- preparation of validated proposals on the inclusion of some unique geological sites of Azerbaijan into "The World Heritage List" of UNESCO.

5. Investment of the Plan

Investment of the Plan is fulfilled by the following funds: state budget, for executive



organizations, appropriate organizations' own funds, foreign and local investors and sponsors, grants and other means within the legislation of the Azerbaijan Republic

. Measures to be taken to fulfill the Plan

	<i>Measures</i>	<i>Executives</i>	Terms of the fulfillment
1	2	3	4
	1. To analyze the foreign countries expertise of the protection of rare geological sites (geoconservation) and to study possibilities of its application in Azerbaijan		
1.1.	To analyze the expertise of leading foreign countries in the field of geoconservation	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2009
1.2.	To study possibilities of the application of the expertise offoreign countries in the Azerbaijan Republic		
	2. To develop methodical bases of geoconservation		
2.1.	To develop the classification of rare geological sites (RGS)	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2009-2010
2.2.	To determine categories of RGS according to their significance and preservation		
2.3.	Legal regime of the protection of RGS depending on their value, significance and preservation		
2.4.	Risk assessment of destruction of GRS as a result of the impact of climatic, anthropogenic and other factors		
	3. Information required for works on the preservation and utilization of rare geological sites		
3.1.	To prepare and to publish scientific monograph "Natural Heritage of Azerbaijan" and a catalogue "Rare Geological Sites of Azerbaijan"	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2011-2012
3.2.	To create a thematic web-site, containing a complete database on RGS of Azerbaijan (in English, Azeri and Russian).		
3.3.	Making map "Rare Protected Geological Sites of Azerbaiian and Those Proposed for Protection"		
3.4.	Periodical cast a light on a problem of geoconservation in mass media, in scientific and scientific-popular journals.		



1	2	3	4
	4. Organizational and man power support of works on the preservation and utilization of rare geoeological sites		

4.1.	To develop a long-term state strategy of studies, preservation and utilization of RGS of Azerbaijan	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, National Academy of Sciences	2009-2010
4.2.	To introduce a new <i>subject</i> "Protection of Rare Geological Sites" into a <i>cuniculum</i> program of higher schools on a speciality "Geology". To prepare an educational-methodical book for this course.	Ministry of Education, National Academy of Sciences	2010-2011
4.3.	To organize training courses to improve the qualification of scientists and experts in the field of geoconservation and management of geodiversity	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, National Academy of Sciences	2010-2011
4.4.	To organize practical studies of a <i>group</i> of young experts in leading scientific centers of Russia, Turkey and in the countries of the European Council to study foreign expertise of geoconservation and its application in Azerbaijan. To hold conferences and workshops.	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2011-2012
4.5.	To widen a scope of works on geoconservation in thematic plans of relevant scientific organizations. To train personnel of a higher qualification in this field.	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2011-2012
5. To draw up an inventory of protected state rare geological sites			
5.1.	To organize field works to study the RGS protected by the state	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2009-2011
5.2.	Interpretation of data gathered during field works: assessment of the preservation and correspondence to the original parameters of RGS (significance, rank, category) as well as extent of impact of new threats of destruction of RGS etc.	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2010-2011
5.3.	To identify RGS requiring the intensification of a protection regime, maintenance and other geoconservational measures	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2010-2011

1	2	3	4
5.4.	Making changes in the state Cadastre of specially protected natural territories and RGS	Ministry of Ecology and	2011



		Natural Resources, National Academy of Sciences	
6. To draw up an inventory of RGS proposed for the protection			
6.1.	To organize field works to identify new RGS proposed for the protection	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2009-2012
6.2.	To identify sites among the new RGS (mainly of international and republican importance) requiring the urgent protection	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, National Academy of Sciences	2010-2011
6.3.	Mapping protected RGS and RGS proposed for the protection on a new methodical base; creation of a computer database, passportization etc.	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, National Academy of Sciences	2010-2012
6.4.	To develop and to validate proposals to attach a status of "a monument of nature" to RGS proposed for the protection, including those located in specially protected natural territories (state natural reserves, national parks)	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, National Academy of Sciences	2011
7. Strengthening the protection measures in the field of preservation and rational utilization of rare geosites			
7.1.	Preparation and taking all required measures on geoconservation of the protected RGS and sites proposed for the protection (after having acquired a special status by them)	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2009-2011
7.2.	Intensifying the control for the protection in the areas Of the location of RGS	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2009-2012
1	2	3	4
7.3	Creation of a monitoring system, covering all RGS in the territory of Azerbaijan	Ministry of Ecology and	2010-2011



		Natural Resources, National Academy of Sciences	
8. Preservation of ex-situ geological (paleontological) heritage			
8.1.	To attach more importance to Natural-Historical museum named after G. Zardabi and Geological Museum of Azerbaijan to preserve ex-situ unique geosites (paleontological) which are under the threat of destruction and loss.	Ministry of Culture and Tourism, National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Ministry of Education	2010-2012
9. Expanding the international cooperation in the field of geoconservation			
9.1.	Expanding the cooperation with leading scientific institutions of CIS and other states, including the exchange of information, implementation of joint projects etc.	National Academy of Sciences	2009-2012
9.2.	To establish relations with the Global Geosites Working Group, coordinating the preparation of "The Global Indicative List of Geological Sites"	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2010
9.3.	Ensuring participation of Azerbaijan scientists and experts engaged in the problems of geoconservation and in measures taken by the European Association on ProGeo	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2010-2012
10. To enhance Quality of ecological education and enlightenment			
10.1.	To provide facilities for the training, practicals and for the acquisition of expertise in especially protected natural territories, including RGS.	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Ministry of Education	2009-2012
1	2	3	4
10.2.	Systematization of educational material on the problem of geoconservation and its review	National Academy of	2011-2012



		Sciences, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	
10.3	Making teaching documentaries, trailers, booklets, posters, post-cards etc., dedicated to the preservation and utilization of RGS	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Ministry of Education, National Academy of Sciences, TSS "TV and Radio Broadcast", Ministry of Communication and Information Technologies.	2011-2012
11. Preservation of cultural values and traditions, linked with geodiversity (RGS as a part of cultural-natural heritage)			
11.1.	To identify sites of cultural-natural inheritance among the RGS to be protected. To make up proposals on their preservation and long utilization.	Ministry of Culture and Tourism, National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2010-2011
11.2.	To hold competition of papers and photo exhibition dedicated to "Natural heritage and culture"	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	2010-2012



1	2	3	4
11.3.	To identify RGS of the cultural importance exposed to the threat of destruction and degradation; to assess	National Academy of	2010-2012

	possibilities of the restoration. To make up proposals on their development	Sciences, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	
12. Analysis of threats of destruction of RGS and measures to be taken to neutralize them			
12.1.	Analysis of threats of destruction of RGS as a result of impact of climatic, geological, technogenic and other factors	National Academy of Sciences	2009-2012
12.2.	To make up and to realize proposals providing preservation and long utilization of RGS through the alternative activity of local population, making no hazardous impact on these sites and promoting new work-positions.	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Ministry of Economy	2010-2012
13. Involving RGS into tourism			
13.1.	To study possibilities of the utilization of RGS in a tourism industry	National Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Culture and Tourism	2009-2010
13.2.	To determine requirements to RGS as to recreation Objects	Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, National Academy of Sciences	2010
13.3.	To select RGS, meeting the requirements for the recreation objects; to make up proposals on the foundation of new tourist routes with account of the attendance of the selected RGS	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, National Academy of Sciences	2010-2011

1	2		
14. Measures aimed at the international recognition of some unique geological sites			
14.1.	To analyze requirements of the World Heritage	National	2009



	Committee for unique geological sites	Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	
14.2.	To analyze geological sites in Azerbaijan from the point of view of the possibility to identify possible RGS of the international importance	National Academy of Sciences	2009-2012
14.3.	To prepare necessary documentation to include the selected RGS into "The list of sites of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage" of UNESCO and also into "The Global Indicative List of Geological Sites"	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, National Academy of Sciences	2010-2011

