



**ON
FOR EARTH**

Activity Report
2012-2022

MESSAGE FROM
THE FOUNDER

ABOUT
THE FOUNDER

1 EDUCATION AND TRAINING



3 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND
VOLUNTEER ACTION



5 INNOVATIVE DIALOGUE: FORUMS,
CONFERENCES, SPECIAL EVENTS



2 ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC
AWARENESS



4 WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
AND ANIMAL PROTECTION



6 PARTNERSHIPS AND
COOPERATION



Message from the Founder

Dear friends of Earth,

Today, we are witnessing increasingly alarming environmental trends and threats. The changing climate and countless other environmental problems caused by human activity are already affecting millions of livelihoods and hurting biodiversity around the world.

Yet, as a counter-force to these issues, the global environmental movement has grown much bigger, stronger and more capable of pushing for a sustainable future for all. IDEA is proud to have been a part of this global family for the past 10 years.

Indeed, when we look back to reflect on the past decade, we see very busy and intense years of countless challenges on our common mission to save the planet we share. Our organization has now become a powerful force behind environmental protection efforts that are making a difference both in Azerbaijan and in the region.

But we could not have done so without the support of so many people and organizations both in Azerbaijan and abroad! So, as IDEA turns 10 years old, I would like to express our gratitude to all our friends, partners and counterparts:

- To the thousands of volunteers joining our campaigns to plant millions of trees, to collect tons of plastic from our coasts and riverbanks, and gillnets from our waters, to help homeless animals and to do much more for the environment. Thank you for your helping hands!

- To the engaged citizens and eco-activists, who helped us keep an eye on environmental threats by reporting any illegal or destructive activities. Thank you for helping us help the planet!

- To our partners in Azerbaijan and abroad – local and foreign institutions, state agencies, and international organizations. We appreciate all your efforts, and hope our common goals will make our bonds even stronger in the years to come.

- To our friends - environmentalists, experts, scientists, filmmakers, photographers and many others, who helped us in our advocacy for nature conservation and sustainable development. Your creativity and focus on the most important is helping to inspire millions to join the common cause.

If we have ever missed the opportunity to express our gratitude to all of you, please know that we are endlessly grateful for all of the support we received over the years.

IDEA is pleased to present to you a summary of its activities on preserving and restoring the natural treasures of Azerbaijan and the wider Caucasus region. This report covers both past and ongoing activities for the years 2011-2021 as well as information on new initiatives launched in partnership with our local and international partners.

We hope to be further energized and inspired by the kindness and generosity of all those that also seek a better world, and strongly believe that we will ultimately achieve our goals and save the planet.

Humans have always managed to survive by joining forces and learning from each other. But, instead of judging others, we must all do our part to help save the planet and be a motivation to others. We just need to connect with people's hearts, rather just argue and connect through what we share, not through what divides us. Environmental problems affect people in different ways, so we need to show people how exactly these problems impact their own lives, while also showing how a healthy environment directly benefits them. We need to focus on other people's reasons to care for the environment and not just our own.

The happier people are, the more they will take care of nature. But it is nature that makes all this happiness possible in the first place. Nature is the very foundation of human happiness. Therefore, we all must protect and cherish it!

We count on all of you to keep helping our efforts to protect our one and only home.

Thank you!



ABOUT THE FOUNDER

The founder and head of IDEA Leyla Aliyeva is an Azerbaijani artist, poet and cultural figure as well as a social and environmental activist.

Leyla Aliyeva was born on 3 July 1985 in Moscow. She studied both in London and Moscow and gained a Master's Degree from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) in 2008. She remained the President of the MGIMO Azerbaijan Club until 2010.

In May 2007, she was appointed as the representative of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in the Russian Federation and, in 2011, became the Vice-President of the Foundation.

In December 2007, Leyla Aliyeva founded "BAKU" magazine in Moscow; the English-language version of the magazine was launched in London in October 2011.

On 08 May 2008, on the 16th anniversary of the occupation of Shusha, Leyla Aliyeva launched an international campaign called "Justice for Khojaly" aimed at raising the global community's awareness of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict and the Khojaly Genocide.

Also, in May 2008, she became the General Coordinator of the OIC Youth Forum for Intercultural Dialogue.

On 12 July 2011, Leyla Aliyeva founded the International Dialogue for Environmental Action (IDEA), with the vision to protect the rich nature of Azerbaijan and the greater Caucasus region, and to preserve it for future generations by promoting public awareness and action on environmental challenges.



On 25 May 2015, she was designated as Goodwill Ambassador of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

In April 2009, she founded and became the Chairperson of the Azerbaijani Youth Organization of Russia – AYOR, which supports Azerbaijani students and young people living in the Russian Federation, and became its Honorary Chairperson in March 2022.

Leyla Aliyeva is a recipient of numerous awards and honors, including the Azerbaijani state medal "Taraggi" (Progress), a special Certificate and Commendation from the United Nations, and "Key To Life" award from the New York-based Children's Cancer & Blood Foundation in 2011; the medal "For Merits Before

the Astrakhan Oblast" in 2012; the Saint Princess Olga Medal of the 3rd degree, the medal "For Services to Volgograd Region", and the special international honor for 'Environmental Protection' from the steering committee of INEPO-Eurasia in 2013; the Pushkin Medal of the Russian Federation in 2015, a diploma of professor emeritus of the Moscow State University of Humanities and Economics as well as "Medal of Merit" from Moscow State International Relations Institute's Scientific Council in 2016.

She is a mother of four children.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

“
At IDEA, we believe that education in environmental protection and sustainable development is the most effective way to motivate and equip a generation to create fundamental and lasting change.”

This is why we have devoted massive efforts aimed at implementation of a range of educational programs and activities, including training sessions, scientific courses, seminars, lectures, camps and field studies. Every year, IDEA expands its agenda with new study activities that are conducted in our well-equipped resource centers for children, students and young professionals.



The International Camp of Young Environmentalists

In 2011, in partnership with Heydar Aliyev Foundation and UNDP, IDEA organized the International Camp of Young Environmentalists with a view to promote active participation of the young environmentalists in public life, reinforce their role in communities and encourage them to become ambassadors for local

environmental awareness. Three-day youth camp in the Gabala district of Azerbaijan gathered more than 80 environmentalists from 35 countries and featured multiple workshops and discussions, and resulted in the adoption of the Gabala Declaration.



International Summer School Green Corps

Having due regard for environmental education among Azerbaijani youth, IDEA partnered with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, OSCE Office in Baku, "Debate in Civil Society" Public Union, Tamiz Shahaar JSC to co-organize the International Summer School Green Corps in 2012.

Training sessions on the subjects of ecological management and youth engagement with environmental issues were held with the participation of international trainers in the city of Lankaran. The young participants of the training drafted projects aimed at the solution of ecological problems in Azerbaijan's southern region, and a contest was held to select 3 best projects for implementation.



Green Conversation Club

Launched in 2012 with the vision to improve English language skills of young environmentalists, the Club consists of monthly interactive discussions on a range of environmental issues with participation of various local and foreign experts with an environmental background, who moderate discussions.

By increasing the ability of people to access and analyze most up-to-date and reliable information about the environment in English, the sessions aimed to encourage further interest and self-education in various environmental issues.

Discussions held at the Club focus on such topics as sustainable development, green economy, waste management, air and land pollution, global warming, other pressing environmental challenges and the role of youth in solving them.





Green Economy Youth Camp

In 2013, IDEA organized the Green Economy Youth Camp aimed at informing the youth on the ecological benefits of non-waste and low-waste technologies, and effects of economic development on the environment.

Around 30 young people attended the camp organized at Gala State Historical Ethnography Reserve, which consisted of trainings on waste management, efficient technology and green economy, as well as of tours to SOCAR Ecological Park and Gala State Historical Ethnography Reserve, and several workshops.

Recycle for the Environment Youth Summer Camp

The purpose of IDEA's 2013 Recycle for the Environment Youth Summer Camp was to enhance youth knowledge of environmental issues and to encourage them to commit to nature protection.

Training sessions on domestic and industrial waste management and recycling process, advantages of recycling and eco-volunteerism were held for young locals in Ismayilli and Goychay.





International Youth Environmental Camp

In 2013, IDEA, with the support of the Ministry of Youth and Sport and "Friends of Nature" Public Association, gathered nearly 80 young people from different CIS countries for International Youth Environmental Camp.

Main objectives of the camp were to promote 'green' thinking among youth in the country and the region,

increase their sense of responsibility towards environment and enable networking among young environmentalists. Participants of the camp attended various seminars on ecological projects in Azerbaijan, sustainable waste management, eco-volunteerism, ecotourism, wildlife preservation and specially protected natural areas.



"For Green Azerbaijan" Project

Another ecological training conducted in 2013 was the week-long "For Green Azerbaijan" program aimed at improving knowledge of environmental issues and shaping responsible attitudes towards nature among Azerbaijani youth.

More than 7500 schoolchildren from 40 schools in 20 cities and districts of Azerbaijan attended seminars dedicated to various topics related to environmental protection and ecology, which enhanced their understanding and knowledge of environmental threats and solutions.

IDEA's Annual Summer Camps

IDEA'S ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPS HAVE BEEN ANNUALLY HELD SINCE 2014 IN VARIOUS REGIONS OF AZERBAIJAN AND ATTENDED BY HUNDREDS OF SCHOOLCHILDREN. SEPARATE CAMPS ARE HELD ON THREE DIFFERENT THEMES: "PROTECT THE LEOPARD"; "PROTECT THE GAZELLE" AND "RETURN THE BISON".

The summer camps aim to bring awareness among school-aged children on the endangered species in the region, increase understanding of conservation programs and encourage behavioral changes that would reduce threats to wildlife. The camps are organized in

partnership with Azerbaijan Youth Foundation, Ministry of Education and WWF Azerbaijan, and with the support of local district authorities of Azerbaijan. During the camps, young people attend lectures on the three species and get to learn about their

lifestyles, habitats and the role in nature. Moreover, they engage in ecological research practices, thematic games and competitions. The program features field trips to national parks and other protected nature areas.



Textbook and Seminars on Environmental Management

Release and presentation of IDEA's textbook "Environmental Management" - a useful study tool on various environmental topics, including eco-systems, biodiversity, legal regulation, contemporary global ecological problems and their solutions, international practices and other topics - took place in 2015. The two-volume textbook was authored by prominent biodiversity experts and presented to all institutions of higher education in Azerbaijan. The book is a valuable source of knowledge not only for students, but also for professionals that deal with environmental issues.

Over 5 thousand copies have been distributed to various universities and libraries across the country. The study tool was also made available for free download on IDEA's website. Additionally, seminars on environmental management featuring renowned experts and scientists were held with the participation of hundreds of students from more than 20 universities. Each participant also received a copy of "Environmental Management" textbook.



"0 Waste" Student Summer School

To spread youth awareness on ways to reduce waste and environmental damage caused by waste, IDEA, Tamiz Shahar JSC and ADA University organized "0 Waste" Student Summer School in 2015.

Lectures and information tours were arranged for 40 bachelor and master's degree students from different universities. Students learned about Azerbaijan's experience and potential in the field of waste management, observed the process of waste sorting and incineration, and shared offered their ideas on waste reduction issues and management.

“Green Pack” Multimedia Tutorial

In 2016, IDEA, Ministry of Education, Regional Environment Center for Central and Eastern Europe, Public Union for Sustainable Development presented the “Green Pack” tool to educational institutions of Azerbaijan, as an interactive tutorial on sustainable development and environment. Thus, students gained an advanced education tool that can help them conduct research and widen their understanding of the natural world and how to preserve it.



Ecological Laboratory for Kids



Launched in 2015, the Eco Laboratory for Kids - a program jointly carried out by IDEA and Sevimli Bala Club - continues to educate children about the natural world, with a view to nurture a sense of responsibility towards the environment in kids from the early ages. The Eco Lab is a monthly training session that takes place in IDEA's resource



centers in Baku and Ganja. Sessions consist of theoretical and practical learning on various environmental themes and feature various lab experiments, quizzes and exciting games. Over 1000 kids aged 5 to 11, including children from low-income families and orphanages,

have so far attended the sessions. Since 2017, IDEA added numerous new topics and fun eco activities to its Eco Lab program. A special emphasis was made on informing kids about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how they can get involved in the global plan of action for people, planet, and prosperity.



“Let’s Protect the Environment Together” Ecological Training Program

“Let’s Protect the Environment Together” was training program jointly conducted in 2016 by IDEA and Ministry of Education aimed at involving schoolchildren in the solution of environmental problems and nurturing responsible behavior towards nature among young generation.

Training sessions, which consisted of theoretical and practical parts, covered eco-club members of 25 secondary

schools of Baku. Hundreds of children from various schools benefited from regular training sessions on bioethics, bionics and biotechnology, basics of ecology, the ecology of plants and animals, human ecology, urban ecology and future cities, climate change, alternative energy, waste management, biodiversity and its conservation, forest ecology, green tourism and more.



Snake Identification Posters

Considering regular camps and field trips to nature organized by IDEA and, in general, the higher likelihood of encountering a snake by people during the summer months, in 2017, IDEA prepared educational posters to raise awareness on poisonous and non-poisonous snakes in Azerbaijan and on how to act when encountering a snake.

The posters are distributed to schools and universities, national parks and reserves as well as ASAN service centers across the country. They are also distributed electronically and are available at the IDEA website.



SNAKES ARE WIDESPREAD IN AZERBAIJAN, AND WITH THE COMING OF SUMMER THE REPTILES BECOME PARTICULARLY ACTIVE

The World's Largest Lesson

Reaching over 130 countries and millions of children since its launch in September 2015, the World's Largest Lesson is an initiative that introduces the Sustainable Development Goals to children and young people everywhere and unites them in action.

With a view to ensure that children grow up knowing and caring about the Sustainable Development Goals and are inspired to help achieve them, IDEA, UNICEF Azerbaijan and Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan, launched the World's Largest Lesson program in Azerbaijan in 2018.

In this regard, materials on SDGs were produced in Azerbaijani and training sessions were conducted for teachers in Baku and the Khachmaz district, who, in turn, held lessons on the Global Goals for hundreds of children in their respective schools, and marked their schools on the project's global map.



IDEA Eco Scout Club

In 2017, consistent with its mission to engage more Azerbaijani young people in environmental protection and education, IDEA launched its Eco Scout program. The Eco-Scout Club is a great platform for young people to take part in nature protection and become leaders of the environmental movement within their respective communities.

Each member of the club receives a membership card used to collect points as well as an Eco Scout badge, hat and backpack. Upon joining the club, members get the title of "Young Environmentalist" and are gradually promoted to higher titles with more points they earn. Eco Scout points are earned by completing a range of

environmental activities. Those who collect enough points to pass each level are also awarded with gifts from IDEA.

Since the launch of the club, IDEA has enrolled around two hundred young nature-lovers and is actively seeking new memberships, mostly through reaching out to local schools.





Eco Scout Camp

In 2018, IDEA and the Association of Scouts of Azerbaijan (ASA) launched the Eco Scout Camps. Organized as part of IDEA Eco Scout program, the camps aim to cultivate awareness of local and global environmental challenges among the country's youth, and install lifelong interest in environmental stewardship and ethics.

In the past two years, four separate camps were held in national parks of Azerbaijan, including in Shirvan, Aggol, Shahdag and Goygol national parks. Around 500 young people aged 18-30, who are pursuing environmental field studies or have experience in related fields, attended the camps. During the camps, participants toured the national parks and learned about species these specially protected areas serve to preserve.

With a view to expand young people's knowledge on Azerbaijan's rich biodiversity, IDEA plans to organize Eco Scout Camps in other national parks of the country as well.





Inspiring Green Minds

Organizing visits to educational institutions around the country, meeting with the young minds, sharing our stories and inspiring them to think 'green' is something IDEA has been doing since day one.

Presentations, typically held for mass audiences, cover IDEA activities in nature protection and sustainable development, and are followed by interactive discussions with children and youth on numerous environmental topics.

Within the past six years, IDEA held presentations at dozens of schools and universities of Azerbaijan, informing young people about the many ways that they can get involved in protecting the environment. By holding such meetings, IDEA aims to deepen young people's understanding and sense of responsibility towards the environment, as well as to encourage them to live sustainably, join IDEA's efforts and become ambassadors for environmental awareness.

The Kura Box

In early 2019, IDEA collaborated with UNDP GEF Kura II Project and other partners to develop "The Kura Box" Learning toolkit. The book aims to provide a better understanding of the current state of water resources in the Kura river basin, examines links between human activities and environmental degradation in the basin, as well as potential impacts of such global threats as climate change and disasters on its water resources. The publication also includes interesting facts about water resources, related ecosystems and provides additional information about some environmental concepts.

The toolkit can be used as an additional source of information for the schoolteachers, students and everyone else who uses water. The publication's electronic version is publicly available online and can be downloaded at www.ideacampaign.org.



Promoting Eco-entrepreneurship

As pollinators, bees play an essential role in the protection of biodiversity, and beekeeping is considered the most environmentally safe and beneficial type of agriculture.

In 2021, IDEA launched a joint project with the Azerbaijan Youth Foundation, supported by State Employment Agency and ABAD, titled "Promotion of eco-entrepreneurship among the youth of Azerbaijan", which provides for the establishment of apiaries for young families in rural areas, by organizing a 2-month training on beekeeping for 20 families and providing them with the necessary inventory.

The aim of the project is to promote the spread of beekeeping as a type of eco-entrepreneurship in Azerbaijan, and thus to support preservation of biodiversity as well as to contribute to the improvement of livelihood among low-income families and to youth employment.



Aquaponics Training Center

THE NEWLY-ESTABLISHED AQUAPONICS TRAINING CENTER WAS UNVEILED IN BAKU ON 23 OCTOBER 2021.

The project that aims to promote eco-friendly and climate-smart agriculture practices in Azerbaijan was jointly carried out by IDEA, UN-DP-GEF Kura II Project and Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources. Aquaponic systems are based on advanced technologies that allow simultaneous cultivation of fish and plants to obtain environmentally friendly, organic and high-quality products, while using minimal amounts of water and energy.



Engaging Youth in Post-conflict Environmental Assessment

THREE DECADES OF OCCUPATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL WARFARE ON AZERBAIJAN WERE ACCOMPANIED BY RELENTLESS DESTRUCTION OF FORESTS, CONTAMINATION OF WATERS, EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND OTHER ACTIVITIES, RESULTING IN SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE TO THE ENTIRE CAUCASUS REGION.

“Engaging youth in the environmental assessment of the de-occupied territories of Azerbaijan” was a joint one-year project launched in 2021 by IDEA, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and Azerbaijan Youth Foundation and supported by Azerbaijan Mine Action Agency (ANAMA). The goal of the project was to help young environmentalists gain knowledge and

skills in conducting environmental assessments, and, by doing so, contribute to environmental restoration and conservation activities in Karabakh. Another major objective of the project was to raise awareness on issues related to protection of the environment in armed conflicts.



Training Sessions on Birdwatching

Annual training sessions on the occasion of World Migratory Bird Day were organized during 2012-2015, in partnership with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, WWF Azerbaijan, Zoology Institute of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences.



Training sessions were aimed at developing skills of IDEA volunteers for observing the dynamics of change in the quantities of birds and mammals, assessing effects of various factors on bird populations, and compiling reports on their numbers. More than a hundred volunteers took in trainings dedicated to various bird and mammal species and methodology for their counts. Later volunteers joined the annual birdwatching and bird counting activity and a field study.

The project participants gained skills and knowledge to observe and report on bird numbers, their migration and types, while the information obtained by students in the training process was used by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources for the assessment of bird populations and their numbers.



Eco-Summer School

In 2012, IDEA and Tamiz Shahr JSC held the Eco-Summer School aimed at providing young people with knowledge on the impact of economic growth on the environment and sustainability.

A five-day summer school for university students was held in the city of Sheki, where participants attended lectures on solid waste management, different types of solid waste and methods of its utilization, and took part in a special session on “The Impact of Economic Growth on the Environment”.



ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

Advocacy and awareness-raising are essential in IDEA's efforts to inform the wider public about pressing ecological challenges of the day and to motivate individuals, households, groups and whole communities to be part of the solution. Along with our regular 'green' events and activities, IDEA, in cooperation with its partners, has undertaken several initiatives on promoting the Sustainable Development Goals in Azerbaijan.



Green Competitions

One of the ways, in which IDEA is working to motivate and mobilize young people to protect nature, is through organizing and supporting competitions and contests on a range of environmental issues. The topics covered in such competitions addressed, among others, the challenges of making cities and settlements safe and sustainable, ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns, protecting ecosystems and halting biodiversity loss.

To mobilize the Azerbaijani youth for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and encourage them to think about current global environmental problems, in 2012, IDEA organized an essay competition themed **"Send Your Message to Rio+20"**. Hundreds of Azerbaijani and international students studying in Azerbaijan participated in the competition by submitting essays, in which they shared their views and ideas on how to tackle the challenges of sustainable development. Essays covered such topics as international environmental agreements, problems impeding the sustainable development, and the significance of transition to green economy.

"The Future You Want" competition was held in 2012 in partnership with the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Participants made presentations on various environmental problems and suggested tangible ideas on their solution. In 2012, **IDEA Birdhouse Design** tender was announced for local and foreign young activists, where a special jury assessed over 100 works and announced the winner.

In 2013, IDEA birdhouses based on the best design were installed by IDEA volunteers in parks and residential areas in Baku, Moscow, Bishkek, Minsk and Vilnius. The installation of the birdhouses was dedicated to the International Migratory Bird Day and aimed at raising awareness on the importance of preserving the urban wildlife.

"Children's Eyes on Earth" International Photo Contest was held in 2012 in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sport, WPO (World Photography Organization), National Geographic Kids, SDN (Social Documentary Network), FotoEvidence, Aina World, SFR Jeunes Talents and Webistan Photo Agency. The Contest's themes "I Love Nature" and "I Fear Pollution" inspired more than 1,200 young people in over 90 countries to pick up their cameras and use their photographs to highlight the beauty of the natural world and the environmental dangers threatening our planet's cities, ecosystems and wildlife.



“Ideas for IDEA” contest was held in 2013 in partnership with PwC Azerbaijan to promote social responsibility among young people. The contest created an opportunity to find sustainable, interactive, dynamic and cost-effective methods of promoting ideas for a clean and safe life. Three participating teams made presentations of their projects. The winning project was “Think Green, Speak Green and Act Green”, which focused on environmental journalism and was selected for implementation.

The authors of the best photos gained an opportunity to participate at the subsequent “Children’s Eyes on Earth” Festival & Exhibition held in Baku in 2013. The festival

gave the talented winners of the contest a unique opportunity to develop their photography skills through a series of events and workshops, while the exhibitions held in Baku and Valetta (Malta) displayed the winning works of the contest.

In 2013 and 2014, the National Stage of the International Eco Picture Diary Contest was held in partnership with Heydar Aliyev Center, Ministry of Education, UNESCO and Panasonic Marketing (PMCIS). Thousands of eco diaries were submitted by schoolchildren aged 6-11 and 12-15 from Baku and Ganja, where they drew pictures and described ideas behind them. Finalists of the contest gained a chance to participate in the international stage of the contest.

In 2014, IDEA organized the photo contest “Happy Leopards” to raise youth awareness of the importance of protection of Azerbaijan’s biodiversity and its endangered species, in particular the Caucasian leopard. The photo contest involved up to 50 kids presenting their photos in leopard costumes.

“My Eco Story” contest was held in 2014 in partnership with Heydar Aliyev Center to increase understanding of man-made damage to the environment, promote social responsibility among young people and engage them in environmental protection. Hundreds of video clips on environmental topics were submitted, three of which were selected and awarded as the works with the best calls to protect the environment and preserve it for future generations.

Eco House Design contest was organized in partnership with Heydar Aliyev Foundation in 2014 with a view to promote sustainable and energy efficient buildings in the country. The contest was held among young professionals with design and architecture background. The best three designers were awarded and offered an internship at one of Azerbaijan’s leading construction companies.

In 2016, IDEA and the Ministry of Education carried out a project titled “Spring Yards” aimed at improving the landscape of school surroundings and raising environmental awareness among young people. Volunteer activities were held in 26 schools and 15 universities in three cities of Azerbaijan within 9 days featuring activities such as planting of greeneries, installation of birdhouses, cleanups and other activities. At the conclusion of the project, the best yards were selected and awarded as winners of the project.

“Reduce Your Waste” photo contest was held in 2016 in partnership with Tamiz Shaha JSC to promote environmental protection and waste reduction, raise awareness on waste and its negative effects on the environment. Professional and amateur photographers submitted their photos that reflect the negative impacts of waste on the environment.

Environmental Poster Contest was held in 2018 to encourage creative, resonant, challenging and original entries - posters that can inspire people to start taking care of the environment. The contest sought works that best communicated environmental issues and sent a strong message on the urgency to protect nature and wildlife. Three submissions were selected as contest winners and awarded with gifts and cash. First place winners became the creators of “Do you see it now?” concept by Sinan Agayev, Parviz Babayev and Amal Alili, who portrayed environmental problems by putting them at the heart of Baku city.

In early 2019, a new global internet challenge swept through social media inspiring people to pick up trash. The challenge consisted of finding a littered public area, cleaning it up and sharing ‘before’ and ‘after’ images of the area on Facebook and Instagram. Seizing this opportunity to spread environmental awareness, IDEA and Azerbaijani Youth Foundation launched the #Trashtag challenge competition in Azerbaijan. Dozens of individual and group submissions from all over the country followed the announcement, five of which were selected as winners and awarded for the most outstanding results.



GREEN ART

Art is undoubtedly one of the most influential cultural expressions as well as one of the most effective ways to communicate the seriousness of the challenges faced by the global community in providing a healthy environment and advancing sustainable development. Among such challenges is having the capacity to promote education on sustainable development and environmental issues, including climate change, pollution, overfishing, deforestation and species loss. IDEA's innovative approach in communicating the 'green' agenda has enabled it to successfully organize and engage in numerous art events in Azerbaijan and beyond.



The Big Five Exhibition was held for several years since 2012 in partnership with Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Baku Museum of Modern Arts, Qiz Qalasi Art Gallery, Baku Magazine, "Icherisheher" State Historical-Architectural Reserve. The exhibition was organized within the annual Maiden Tower festival. The exhibition consisted of works by local and international artists representing the "big five" animals of the Caucasus that are under the threat of extinction – the brown bear, imperial eagle, grey wolf, gazelle and Caucasian leopard.

"From Waste to Art" Exhibition has been held since 2012 to promote innovative approaches to the solution of environmental problems and increase public awareness on post-consumer recycling. Organized in partnership with Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Tamiz Shahar JSC and Gala State History and Ethnography Reserve, the exhibits display various artworks by artists around the world made from domestic waste.

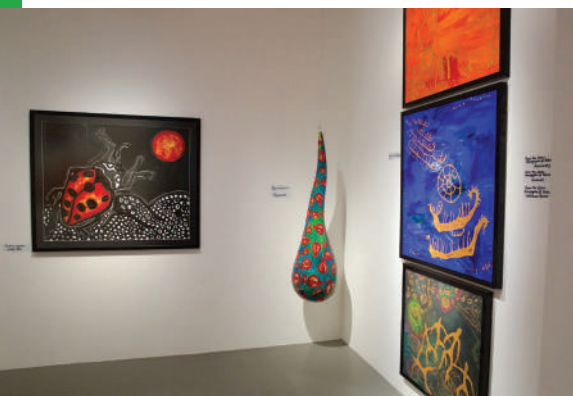


The Recycled Christmas tree exposition was launched jointly with YARAT Contemporary Art Space in 2013. Around 3000 plastic bottles were collected by volunteers and used for the construction of a decorative seven-meter-tall Christmas tree by two British artists Nicholas Blake Sayers and Gleidon Mike Casey. The artificial tree was installed in the center of Baku.

The International Green Graffiti Festival was held in 2013 with an aim to increase public awareness of global environmental issues by means of graffiti art. Young people from Azerbaijan, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, and the United Kingdom participated in the festival. The participants delivered their messages on environmental issues by drawing different paintings on special stands installed in a central area of Baku. Hundreds of daily park visitors saw these amazing paintings, which focused on the importance of protecting nature.

3D Eco Graffiti project was launched in 2014 in partnership with YARAT Contemporary Art Space. 3D artworks were created by British artists at one of the central parks of Baku. The graffiti works illustrated the rich nature of Azerbaijan, including the five iconic animals of the Caucasus that are under the threat of extinction.





In 2014, IDEA, in partnership with Heydar Aliyev Center and Cracking Art Group, held the **Samani International Art Exhibition** aimed at promoting waste reduction. A traditional exhibition of samani – the symbol of the spring holiday of Novruz – featuring unique designs of samani sculptures made of recycled paper, metal, plastics and wheels, in an event that took place along with the famous Cracking Art Group exhibition of giant artworks made in pop-art genre.

“**Here Today...**” Exhibition was organized in 2014 jointly with Heydar Aliyev Foundation, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Baku Magazine. The exhibition on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species was held in London, and brought together works of more than 50 modern art masters depicting the flora and fauna species under threat of extinction.

In 2015, “**Vita Vitale**” Exhibition was held in partnership with Heydar Aliyev Foundation and Venice Biennale, with a view to raise awareness about the environment and the transformation of the planet through human activity. Held within the framework of the 56th Venice Biennale, “Vita Vitale” Exhibition consisted of works by talented artists portraying their views on environmental challenges and human impact on nature.

Live Life Exhibition, focusing on the theme of harmony with nature and sources of life, was held in recent years in Baku, Berlin, Paris, Moscow, London and Tbilisi, displaying artworks by IDEA Founder Leyla Aliyeva as well as various other artists from Azerbaijan and around the world. All proceeds from the Live Life exhibition have been directed to environmental causes. The exhibitions are part of IDEA's efforts to engage the public in nature protection through art. At the same time, the charity events aim to support various biodiversity conservation efforts, such as IDEA's project to clean and restore the Kura river delta.



Eco cinema

Visual images are a powerful tool for learning and motivation, especially when it comes to environmental issues. Documentaries that demonstrate the whole beauty and magnificence of nature and biodiversity are an effective supplement to theoretical knowledge.





Films are especially appealing to young people, enabling them to better appreciate our natural treasures and assess environmental threats, and inspiring them to be part of the solution. As in previous years, IDEA has continued its Eco Cinema series, where we regularly screen environmental documentaries for hundreds of young people. IDEA has organized screening sessions of films from IDEA's documentary series dedicated to the country's national parks, as well as of "The World's Most Wanted Leopard" documentary on the endangered Caucasian leopard, shot by a famous photographer and filmmaker Adrian Steirn.

In 2016, screenings of the Blue Marine Foundation's (BLUE) documentary "The End of the Line" on the issue of overfishing, which had been translated into Azerbaijani, was organized at cinema centers in Baku and Ganja with a subsequent photo exhibition of marine life.



OFF  ON



Earth Hour Azerbaijan

WWF's Earth Hour movement was launched in Australia in 2007, with a view to draw public attention to problems faced by our planet, including the impacts of climate change. During Earth Hour, the lights of landmark buildings in large cities are turned off at 20:30 local time for one hour on the last Saturday of March every year.

Azerbaijan joined the list of countries supporting this global campaign in 2011, and since then the campaign has annually been held in the country with the support of IDEA. Since 2014, IDEA has been granted the status of an official national coordinator by WWF. Annual mass celebrations are organized jointly with WWF Azerbaijan in central Baku on Earth Hour, with lights being switched off in many landmark buildings of the city.

World Car-free Day Celebration

Marked on September 22nd, World Carfree Day was started in 2000 as a grassroots movement by the World Carfree Network. It has grown to involve participants from around 1,500 cities in 40 countries. The campaign is intended to promote more sustainable and clean ways of transportation and to reduce the human impact on the natural environment.

On 22 September 2017, Baku residents were called to leave their cars at home and join IDEA, Heydar Aliyev Center, Azerbaijan Cycling Federation and Baku Transport Agency for a bike ride in support of World Carfree Day. Hundreds of people took part in the bicycle rally held under the motto "Let's bike to work", followed by an entertaining awareness program, featuring performances by cyclists and skateboarders, an exhibition of locally made ISMA bikes and handmade bicycles, and other fun activities.



Documentary Series on National Parks

IDEA's documentary film series about each of the country's ten national parks - aims to promote the fascinating natural beauties of Azerbaijan, both within the country and abroad, and to highlight the importance of protecting our natural treasures.

Documentaries on Shirvan, Agh-gol, Goy-gol, Absheron and Shahdag national parks by film director Igor Bishnyov have already been produced, presented and shown on national TV channels. The films are freely available on IDEA's YouTube channel. Five more documentaries are to be produced, namely on Hirkan, Altiaghaj, Zangazur, Samur-Yalama and Gizilaghaj national parks.



Outdoor Gym in the Baku Boulevard

Mental and physical health is one of the prerequisites for sustainable human development. Consistent with IDEA's efforts to promote healthy and active lifestyles, sport facilities have been created in nine public parks within the past two years, in cooperation with "Cavan" Youth Movement Public Union.

Furthermore, a new outdoor gym was unveiled in 2018 in one of the most visited public areas of the city – the Baku Boulevard. The facility was especially built to accommodate the increasingly popular sport type called street workout, which involves bodyweight exercises that improve your muscle strength, flexibility and endurance. The outdoor gym is also accessible for people with special needs.



RECYCLING BINS



“

For years IDEA has been promoting recycling and awareness on proper waste management through public education campaigns and mass waste collection events. In early 2017, IDEA kicked off a recycling program, whereby specially designed green (paper) and blue (plastic) waste bins were placed in up to a hundred of schools, universities and office buildings in Baku. Around 2500 tons of paper 300 tons of plastic waste has so far been recycled as a result of joint efforts by IDEA and Azersun Holding.

IDEA is steadfastly expanding the program and involving more students, teachers and school staff in the recycling process, aiming to both increase the volumes of the collected waste and attract wider attention to the importance of recycling and waste management.



SDG Stands in the Baku Boulevard

As part of efforts to promote the Sustainable Development Goals in Azerbaijan, massive SDG stands devoted to each of the 17 Global Goals have been installed in the Baku Boulevard, in collaboration with United Nations Azerbaijan.

The opening ceremony of the SDG stands was held in July 2018, with the participation government officials, representatives of the United Nations agencies, civil society, youth organizations and the media. Two-sided colorful stands display information on each goal and provide suggestions on how every person can contribute to its achievement.





SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Promoting SDGs WITH FAO

In 2017, IDEA signed an agreement with FAO Partnership and Liaison Office in Azerbaijan for collaboration in implementing advocacy activities on Sustainable Development Goals in Azerbaijan. The objective is to strengthen the awareness of relevant state agencies, national stakeholders and public on the role and contribution of sustainable food and agriculture to SDGs.

Numerous SDG advocacy materials on food security and agriculture, including video ads, billboards, publications and other materials in the Azerbaijani language have been produced, disseminated and used in numerous awareness-raising activities. Special emphasis was given to the issues of food waste and the link between climate change and agricultural development.





Football Master Class in Support of SDGs

On 12 June 2018, a football master-class session for children was organized in the Baku Boulevard, jointly with Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) and United Nations Azerbaijan. The event aimed to promote awareness on Sustainable Development Goals and encourage the young generation's interest for sports, healthy lifestyle and sustainable development.

During the event, leading players of the Azerbaijani national football team Kamran Aghayev, Javid Imamverdiyev and Ruslan Gurbanov, conducted an exciting training session to about 60 junior football enthusiasts. Following the training session, the kids played a football match together with the players of the national team.



“

Clothing Donation Bins

As with all other products, the dumping and decomposition of clothes negatively impacts the environment. The damage is caused by toxic substances and gases released into the environment as a result of decaying waste as well as production of new products.

With that in mind, in January of 2019, IDEA started a program to collect used clothing and distribute it among people for reuse through various charity organizations.

So far, clothing donation bins have been installed at four locations in Baku. Each week, hundreds of people eagerly drop off their unneeded clothes, instead of sending them to landfill, thus helping save the environment. More donation units are expected to appear across the capital in the near future.





Battery Recycling Bins

Single-use batteries disposed of in a landfill can leach toxic constituents, such as lead, cadmium and lithium, into the environment, contaminating groundwaters and resulting in possible exposure to humans.

In May 2019, IDEA and the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) started a program on the collection and utilization of used batteries, with the support of the Ministry of Education. In the framework of the pilot program, 20 battery recycling bins were placed in Baku's schools. The collected batteries are regularly delivered to the utilization site of SOCAR. The program will be gradually expanded to cover more local schools and other institutions.





Healthy and Responsible Food Consumption

In November of 2018, IDEA launched its series of presentations on healthy and responsible food consumption among schoolchildren. The project is conducted with the support of Azerbaijan Youth Foundation, Ministry of Education and FAO.

Each week, IDEA holds interactive lectures at schools of Baku aimed at encouraging healthy eating habits in children. In the course of presentations, children learn how to be responsible food consumers, how irresponsible consumption affects our planet, what constitutes a healthy diet, how a bad diet impacts growth, and much more.





HYDRO HEROES



Hydro Heroes Mobile App

The Hydro Heroes Water Saving App enables citizens to report water leakages directly from their mobile phones and also learn about conserving water in the process. Launched in partnership with UNDP-GEF Kura II Project, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and Azersu OJSC, the app can be used by anyone to upload information and images on water leaks, report them to the relevant entity, and subsequently monitor progress on the reported case. The application also includes water-related games, quizzes, interesting facts, 360 ° videos of Azerbaijan's inland waters, water usage calculator, AR function and more.



Awareness Campaign on Forests

Comprising 11.8% of the country's land area, forests are among the most valuable natural resources of Azerbaijan and play an extremely important role in people's lives and livelihoods. For decades, forests have been under serious pressure as a source of fuel for heating, timber products and as forest pastures. Forest degradation, deforestation, and unsustainable use of forests are the main challenges facing forestry in Azerbaijan.

In 2018, IDEA signed an agreement with FAO for support in implementing an awareness-raising campaign on socio-economic and environmental benefits of the forests. Numerous advocacy materials on forests, including video ads, publications and other materials were developed and disseminated within the campaign. Several public events were held in the country's regions, including seminars and tree-planting events at schools in Gakh and Agdash

districts. The project held in the rural regions of the country has been a great contribution in terms of ensuring that participants are fully aware about their forests the importance of forests, forest restoration, and sustainable forest use and management, and the impact of human activities on forests and their effects. Schoolchildren learned about the concept of responsibility and ways of lessening our impact through resource conservation and habitat restoration.





Plastic-free July Campaign

In 2021, in support of a global plastic free July initiative, IDEA, British Embassy in Azerbaijan and Bravo Supermarket Azerbaijan held a joint campaign to encourage and reward consumers to use reusable bags instead of single use plastic bags. During the campaign, IDEA volunteers handed out reusable bags in front of supermarkets and raised awareness of harm plastics cause to our environment.



Water for Life

Clean, safe drinking water is scarce, with nearly 1 billion people globally having no access to this life-giving resource. Attaching great importance to advancing Sustainable Development Goal 6 (Water and Sanitation), IDEA joined the Water for Life project, which is aimed at providing remote villages and vulnerable communities with access to clean safe drinking water.

So far, IDEA has already installed water wells in Uganda's Boliso village, Tanzania's Kabowa village and Kenya's Sikulu village. These water wells will benefit over 2000 people in these villages.



Bir damcı öyrənək!



#AXIRNECƏ?

One Drop Campaign

In early 2022, IDEA joined the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, "Azersu" OJSC and Azerbaijan Amelioration and Water Management OJSC, to run a nationwide awareness campaign titled One Drop (Bir damcı).

The project aims to inform the public on the long and complicated journey that a drop of water takes to reach us, as well as on why water conservation is absolutely critical for our survival, and what we all can do to save this life-giving resource. The campaign has already produced and circulated multiple social ads on the subject, garnered the support of numerous public figures eager to spread the message, and created a website full of water-related resources and tips. As the project slogans suggest - a drop of learning, a drop of appreciation and a drop of support would be really nice!



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEER ACTION

Engaging public, especially young people, in efforts to protect the planet is key for achieving lasting environmental sustainability. Besides its immediate benefits for the environment, volunteerism also helps ensure long-term resilience of communities, improves their capacity for local action and advances durable change in attitudes and lifestyles. IDEA is proud to have mobilized tens of thousands of volunteers for action to protect and expand green spaces, as well as to clean and restore the polluted areas in Azerbaijan. Over the years, more than 6 million trees have been planted across the country, hundreds of cases of illegal tree felling have been resolved, and dozens of tons of marine and coastal plastic and other waste has been cleaned with the help of young volunteers, public employees and ordinary citizens.

It is very heartwarming to see our youth gradually become more active and passionate for the environment as a result of years of public engagement. We can now witness an increasing number of young people converting into permanent advocates for sustainability, and mobilizing their communities to plant trees, clean coasts and spread the message.





A Young Tree for a Young Spirit

Trees help us combat climate change, sustain species biodiversity, clean the air we breathe and support our livelihoods. It is estimated that people cut down around 15 billion trees each year for agriculture and other purposes, and that the number of trees worldwide has fallen by 46% since human civilization began. Therefore, we must ensure that more native trees are planted to replace those that have been felled or destroyed.

During 2011-2012, IDEA held a series of mass tree-planting events under the motto "A Young Tree for a Young Spirit" with the help of thousands of young volunteers, which resulted in the planting of 300,000 trees in various areas of Baku.

Supported by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and Baku City Executive Power, the events aimed at expanding green public spaces in the capital city, promote environmental ethics and youth engagement in environmental action, and raise awareness on the UN Conference Rio+20 on Sustainable Development in Brazil.



The Green Marathon

Held since 2014, the Green Marathon is a nation-wide tree planting campaign run by IDEA and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources in the spring and autumn seasons, with the support of district and city executive authorities of Azerbaijan.

The rush to plant across the country aims at expanding green areas to help combat climate change and prevent deforestation and desertification.



Millions of local tree species such as oleaster, pine, beech, cypress, acacia, maple, ash, walnut, oak, chestnut and olive were planted, in accordance with the soil and climatic conditions of different regions.

Turning Papers into Leaves

In 2014, with a view to increase public awareness on post-consumer recycling and engagement in environmental action and promote effective waste management, IDEA launched an initiative to organize mass paper waste collection at one of the most visited public institutions of Azerbaijan – ASAN Service Centers.

Waste paper containers were installed in front of all such centers in the country, with tons of paper regularly collected and sent for reprocessing. People and institutions have thus gained an opportunity to support greening efforts by planting one tree per 50 kg of submitted waste paper, with tens of thousands of trees planted in Baku and other major cities of Azerbaijan.





“No tree cutting!” program

IDEA Public Union launched its “No tree cutting!” program in 2014 to combat and prevent unlawful cutting and removal of trees and shrubs. The 1113 hotline called “First Aid to the Nature” and a mobile response team has been created, and numerous public awareness-raising and tree-planting campaigns and other activities have been held within the program.

When citizens report cases to IDEA through the 1113 hotline, our response team conducts on-site investigations of the submitted complaints, collects additional information, photo and video materials related to each case, and takes necessary action in cooperation with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources.

“Our Yard” Project

In a developed and densely populated city such as Baku, people often forget that they actually dwell in nature. Trees are mainly perceived as merely an aesthetic accessory to an urban setting, while in fact they constitute the bedrock of urban ecology.

Being aware of all the environmental, social and health benefits of green public spaces, in December 2017, IDEA launched a project to improve unmaintained outdoor facilities, parks and playgrounds in Baku’s neighborhoods.

Based on requests from city residents, IDEA and its partners conduct a needs assessment of the reported locations and begin renovation works, which generally include creating a new children’s playground, leisure facilities, sports playgrounds and street workout equipment, as well as refurbishing other surrounding public buildings and areas. Most importantly, many trees and shrubs are planted during opening ceremonies of renovated yards with the help of local residents and IDEA volunteers.

The project is carried out with the support of district executive authorities of Baku. More than 50 yards were renovated in various districts of Baku by the end of 2019. The project is expected to cover all unmaintained yards reported to IDEA by city residents.



before



after

“Fruit Gardens” Project

In April 2017, IDEA, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have launched a joint project on establishing fruit gardens for low-income residents of Azerbaijan. The initiative aims to improve the welfare of families in need and help them generate revenue in a sustainable way.

Sizeable land plots in districts of Azerbaijan are allocated as gardens and divided equally among several local low-income families, which will grow and harvest the trees for their own financial benefit. Thousands of fruit-bearing trees, such as hazelnut, pomegranate, apricot, feijoa, persimmon, walnut and apple trees are planted on these land plots with the help of hundreds of young IDEA volunteers.

Fruit gardens have already been established and presented to over 80 families in 25 districts of Azerbaijan: Ismayilli, Shamkir, Aghstafa, Tovuz, Aghdash, Gakh, Lankaran, Beylagan, Sabirabad, Agjabadi, Barda, Imishli, Gazakh, Gabala, Goygol, Lerik, Guba, Balakan, Aghsu, Goychay, Oghuz, Yevlakh, Astara, Shabran and Khachmaz. The project is set to continue and cover all districts of the country in subsequent years.

“School Gardens” Project

Aside from other environmental benefits of trees, they also provide food for humans, birds and wildlife. With a view to expand green spaces in schools as well as promote healthy eating choices and raise environmental awareness among children, IDEA, in partnership with Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Ministry of Education, started the “School Gardens” project in April 2017.

In line with the initiative, fruit tree planting events with the participation of schoolchildren were organized in five schools in each district of Azerbaijan. The project covered over 300 schools across the country and resulted in the planting of almost 20,000 fruit bearing trees, including apple, pear, sweet cherry, plum, walnut, hazelnut, almond, persimmon and quince, in accordance with each region’s climate and soil type.



“Restore the Greeneries” Program

While continuously expanding green spaces through numerous planting events, we also attach great importance to the issue of promptly replacing the illegally felled as well as dead, infected and hazardous trees with many more new ones. “Restore the greeneries” program was started 6 years ago by IDEA, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and Baku City Executive Power.



With the help of countless young IDEA volunteers, thousands of native trees were planted in Baku at locations, where illegal felling cases were reported and resolved. On the other hand, based on citizen's reports, infected, dying or dead trees were removed, treated or trimmed in order to improve tree health and prevent any accidents.

The majority of complaints on hazardous trees were related to poplar trees, which are considered risky because they are often unable to withstand Baku's strong winds and collapse, causing harm to people and property. Therefore, these trees are removed and replaced with pine, cypress, olive, ash, medlar, hackberry and other trees, in accordance with soil and climate types of Baku and the Absheron peninsula.



Annual Beach Cleanups



Pollution and contamination are having a severely detrimental effect on the health of the marine environment. That is why IDEA holds regular activities aimed at cleaning and restoring the polluted coastal and riverside areas, as well as encouraging the public to support such efforts.

Each year multiple cleanups are held on the coast of the Caspian Sea - before and after the beach season and during the International Coastal Cleanup Week. These cleanup events are attended by hundreds of our young volunteers, in cooperation with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Azerbaijan Youth Foundation, Tamiz Shahr JSC and United Nations Office in Azerbaijan. The mass events have resulted in the collection of tons of trash, subsequently taken to the Balakhani Solid Waste Sorting Plant for recycling.

More active youth join our events each year to help make our coastal areas cleaner, but more importantly send a strong message to the wider public on the harmful effects of pollution.

Establishment of Public Beaches



Along with regular coastal clean-up activities, IDEA has taken other steps to keep Baku's public beaches neat and tidy. In 2019, IDEA has established six exemplary public beach zones in Baku, namely in Shikh, Goradil, Novkhani, Buzovna, Pirshagi and Sahil settlements. After having been cleaned by an army of volunteers, vast coastal areas were equipped with lifeguard units of the Ministry of Emergency Situations, anti-littering and safety signs, waste and recycling bins, benches, tents, sunbeds, changing rooms, outdoor showers, public toilets, volleyball and football fields, parking lot and other amenities. Entrance to public beaches and using their facilities is completely free of charge.

The effort aims to help keep our shorelines clean, promote environmental and social responsibility, improve public health and sanitation, while providing comfort to beachgoers and maintaining the natural beauty of the region's beaches.



River Cleanup Events

As a habitat and spawning ground for many precious fish species as well as a vital source of freshwater, the Kura basin has been under increasing pressure for many decades, with pollution and gillnets being among major threats to its biodiversity. IDEA continues its efforts to reduce the environmental damage of human activities on Azerbaijan's internal waters.

Since 2015, annual cleanup events are held at the delta of Kura River and by the Ganja River with the help of young IDEA volunteers. As a result of past cleanups, hundreds of gillnets were removed from the estuary of the Kura River to allow free passage of fish during their spawning period, and tons of waste, predominantly plastic, was collected from riverside areas, in partnership with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources. Alarmed by the issue of extreme pollution at the Old Ganja archeological complex located by the Ganja River, IDEA had partnered with "Cavan" Youth Movement Public Union to mobilize hundreds of volunteers, who cleaned the riverside areas and conducted an information campaign on effects of pollution on rivers and local communities.





WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND ANIMAL PROTECTION

The Caucasus is one of the planet's most biologically diverse, yet most threatened regions. The forests, mountains and arid landscapes contain an abundance of wildlife, which is disappearing at an alarming rate. It may sound astonishing now, but the region was once home to top carnivores, such as Asiatic lion, Caspian tiger and Asiatic cheetah. The loss of some species is probably irreversible, as human activities have transformed half of these lands. However, we must strive to conserve and restore all others to prevent further permanent damage to our precious natural ecosystems.

Since its inception, IDEA focused many of its activities on the preservation of the rich fauna of the region through projects aimed at the conservation of both terrestrial and marine species facing the threat of extinction, such as the Caucasian leopard and Beluga sturgeon. Furthermore, the organization takes measures to protect the urban wildlife and to address the issue of homeless animals in Baku and other cities of Azerbaijan.



Bison Reintroduction Project

The Caucasian wisent, a subspecies of wisent, which resided for centuries in Azerbaijan, has been wiped out during the historical times. The European bison (wisent) - the only extant wild ox species and the largest land mammal inhabiting ecosystems of Europe - is currently one of the most threatened species in the world.



A project by IDEA, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and WWF Azerbaijan is underway to bring this keystone species back to our nature. As part of the project, a bison adaptation center has been constructed in 2017. Initially, 12 bison have been brought from various European parks in 2019. These animals have been successfully breeding ever since and, after a two-year acclimatization period, twenty European bison were released into the wild in Shahdag National Park. Collared with GPS devices, these animals will be tracked and monitored for their movement and survival, collecting valuable information that may benefit the wild population in the future. More bison are expected to arrive in Azerbaijan for reintroduction in late 2022. By supporting the establishment of a founder population of at least 100 animals at the chosen site, this population will have the potential to expand into a larger free-ranging population. Shahdag National Park will become the first place in the South Caucasus, where the bison will roam freely again after becoming extinct in the region.



Caucasian Leopard

IDEA has actively engaged in efforts to save the endangered Caucasian leopard, through joint measures taken in cooperation with its partners, including the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan, WWF Azerbaijan, ANO Caucasus Nature Center and others.

Following the Caucasus Cat Summit organized by IDEA in 2014, IDEA and the Zoological Society of London, with the participation of WWF, published a joint report entitled "Recovery of the Leopard in Azerbaijan", which contained practical recommendations on the restoration of Leopards in the region. Thus, the Summit became a starting point for future efforts to save the Caucasian leopard.

IDEA has participated in the preparation of the revised Strategy for the Conservation of the Leopard in the Caucasus Ecoregion, based on which the new national plan of action was prepared.

Based on data obtained through camera traps provided by IDEA to WWF Azerbaijan in order to identify places of habitat and number of leopards in the country, it is estimated that there are currently 15 Caucasian leopards in Azerbaijan. Several individuals, including cubs, are regularly being spotted on camera traps in Zangezur National Park and Kalbajar, signaling hope for species.

The Caucasus Big Five

In 2012, IDEA announced the Big Five endangered animals of in the region requiring protection - the brown bear, imperial eagle, grey wolf, goitered gazelle and Caucasian leopard.

In partnership with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Heydar Aliyev Foundation and WWF Azerbaijan, around 200 gazelles were resettled into different areas of Azerbaijan and Georgia within the program "Reintroduction of gazelles into their historical habitat in the Caucasus", with subsequent measures to monitor movements, record illegal hunting and protect these animals. A number of measures have been taken to protect Caucasian leopards, while a series of events were organized to raise public awareness about the significance of these endangered animals. Notably, in 2014, Caucasus Big Five post stamps have been released featuring illustrations of these iconic animal species.



Maiden Tower Birdhouses

From the very beginning of its operation, IDEA attached special importance to preservation of the urban wildlife in Baku and other cities of Azerbaijan.

In 2012, with a view to save bird nests during maintenance works on the ancient Maiden Tower, where swifts had always resided and thrived, around 200 artificial swift nests were installed in Baku's "Icherisheher" State Historical-Architectural Reserve (Old City) that allowed safe transfer of birds from their old nests on the historic building.



Wildlife Crime Hotline 1113

Everyone has a role in cracking down on the illegal wildlife trafficking. IDEA is calling on citizens to report cases of suspicious trade in wild animals to its **1113 hotline**. The information received from the public via the hotline is channeled to the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, and appropriate joint measures are taken to address each case. Over the years, numerous reports from the public have resulted in confiscation of wildlife kept without permits. Among the most notable cases were the rescue of a bear cub from a canteen in Aghstafa district and confiscation of 8 gazelles from a man in Baku's Mardakan settlement to subsequently release them in Shirvan National Park.



Urban Ecology

At the end of the last century, populations of species that inhabited the city of Baku began to decline sharply due to environmental problems, such as loss of green spaces. However, the gradual restoration and expansion of the urban flora within the last decade have created favorable conditions for the return of some animal species that used to dwell in the city.

In 2019, aiming to preserve and restore the species characteristic for Baku's environment as well as to promote harmony and a healthier connection between people and the environment, IDEA launched a project called "Urban Ecology". Measures are taken out to enrich public spaces in the city with animals and birds, such as squirrels and parrots, which can live and thrive in urban environments. Also, houses for homeless cats and dogs have been installed in many locations around the city.



Animal Welfare

IDEA has been involved in efforts to improve animal welfare in the country long before the establishment of IDEA Animal Care Center (IACC) in 2017. One of the organization's major contributions to improvement of housing conditions of homeless dogs in Baku was the renovation and building of 40 new dog enclosures in a dog shelter in the Balakhani settlement of the Sabunchu district in 2014.

With a view to study and analyze the public attitudes toward dogs, especially stray dogs, prior to the opening of IACC, an attitude survey of city residents on dogs was conducted

in 2015. Up to 1500 people were surveyed in various districts of Baku. Survey responses were analyzed to learn the public's views on stray and owned dogs, including on responsible dog ownership, humane treatment of dogs, animal cruelty, etc.

To properly plan the operation of IACC, a dog population survey was also conducted in Baku in 2016. Counting was performed according to the methodology described in the survey guidelines of WSPA (World Society for the Protection of Animals).



IDEA Animal Care Center (IACC)

Increasing populations of homeless domestic animals may cause a wide array of health and welfare problems, both for humans and animals. It is estimated that a single female dog and its offspring may give origin to up to 67000 puppies in just 7 years. Unfortunately, many of them die early from diseases, accidents and other causes. Those that survive have only a very small chance of being rehomed and end up spending their lives on the street. Sterilization and timely veterinary care can prevent all this unnecessary suffering.

Applied in many countries around the world, CVNR (Catch-Vaccinate-Neuter-Release) is the most effective and humane way to control the number of homeless animals and ensure their welfare.

IDEA Animal Care Center officially opened its doors on 1 March 2017. IACC is equipped with a modern veterinary clinic and other facilities to provide a range of animal care services. While temporarily accommodating some animals that are in desperate need for shelter and care, the Center's prime focus in addressing the street animal problem is on sterilization, disease prevention, adoptions, responsible pet ownership and humane attitudes towards animals.

IACC's veterinary clinic has facilities for both homeless and owned animals. All medical care for street animals is completely free of charge. The majority of adult street animals brought to the Center get sterilized, vaccinated, ear-tagged and subsequently released back into their original location. The Center's adoptions section houses homeless dogs and cats, mostly younger animals and those considered to have a higher chance of being adopted.

Over the past 5 years, IACC provided veterinary care for thousands of homeless cats and dogs, found homes for hundreds of pets, and organized numerous public awareness events and mass sterilization campaigns. Besides conducting a free CVNR program at IACC, IDEA supports the establishment of small mobile veterinary clinics in local shelters and provides training young local vets to sterilize and treat homeless animals in these clinics. First such mobile veterinary unit was opened in September 2019 in Baku's Mardakan settlement.



Baku Zoological Park

Over the past seven years, IDEA has supported the process of improving the Baku Zoological Park, placing education, research, species conservation and animal welfare in the top priority. In October of 2021, the new Baku Zoological Park opened to the public after 4 years of reconstruction. In the course of renovation, special attention was paid to the preservation of trees and shrubs on the territory. The green area was also increased in the park and a more natural environment has been created. The park's total area was almost doubled and brought to 4.25 hectares.

The all new Baku Zoological Park has necessary conditions for visitors of all age groups, as well as people with physical disabilities. Along with various entertainment facilities, there is a playground, a lecture hall, and an electronic guide

system on the park territory. More comfortable enclosures, an aqua terrarium, a petting zoo, an artificial lake and pools, and a veterinary clinic have been created as a result of the major reconstruction. The enclosures, where animals are kept, are equipped in view of the specific needs of each species. The Baku Zoological Park will serve as an educational, research, and conservation center, where people can receive information about the animal world, in particular, the unique fauna of Azerbaijan. The park has favorable conditions for increasing the population and reintroduction of animal species included in the Red Book of Azerbaijan. Notably, 22 out of 125 animal species in the Baku Zoological Park are included in the Red Book.



before



after



OVER THE PAST SEVEN YEARS, IDEA HAS SUPPORTED THE PROCESS OF IMPROVING THE BAKU ZOOLOGICAL PARK, PLACING EDUCATION, RESEARCH, SPECIES CONSERVATION AND ANIMAL WELFARE IN THE TOP PRIORITY.

Marine Conservation

In recent decades, wild populations of such unique fish species as Beluga sturgeon and Caspian salmon have come to the brink of extinction, largely due to effects of human activities, including pollution, poaching and overfishing. Over the past six years, IDEA has continued its partnership with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and Blue Marine Foundation (BLUE) on various projects to rehabilitate the populations of sturgeon and other valuable fish species in the Caspian Sea.



One of the measures supported by IDEA and its partners to address the problem at national level was the establishment of the Gizilaghaj National Park in September 2018, comprising the Gizilaghaj State Reserve and the entire Gizilaghaj Bay. This is the first marine protected area (MPA) in the Caspian Sea and its designation will be crucial for the survival of some of the world's most endangered fish species. Declared a wetland of international importance in 2001 for its significance for migratory birds, Gizilaghaj State Reserve lies by the mouth of Kura River, which provides spawning grounds for different anadromous fish species.

IDEA, BLUE and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources have studied the area to determine potential spawning locations and collaborated in an effort to sustainably breed sturgeon, which would subsequently be released in those locations. Millions of sturgeon fingerlings have been harvested and subsequently released by Khilli state fish-breeding farm in Neftchala since May 2018. IDEA is determined to further expand its efforts to increase the populations of wild fish in the Caspian Sea.

First Marine Hope Spot in the Caspian

On 8 November 2019, upon nomination by IDEA and BLUE, the newly established Gizilaghaj National Park was announced to be a Mission Blue Hope Spot. Hope Spots are ecologically unique marine areas designated for protection under a global conservation campaign overseen by a non-profit organization Mission Blue. They are special places that are critical to the health of the World Ocean. The launch of the first Hope Spot in the Caspian Sea has been followed by continuous global media coverage of the marine protected area (MPA) in Gizilaghaj, drawing attention to the importance of protecting the area.





“Abundant Basins” project

On 7 May 2020, a major new project to protect and improve the internal water resources of Azerbaijan was launched jointly by IDEA and Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan. The project titled “Abundant Basins” oversees fish stocking events in the rivers and lakes to replenish the country’s fish populations with the help of public and private fish farms, cleanup activities to reduce the water pollution levels, as well as promotion of sustainable fishing through awareness activities.



INNOVATIVE DIALOGUE: FORUMS, CONFERENCES, SPECIAL EVENTS

Since day one, IDEA has persistently been committing efforts to build dialogue and partnerships by organizing and supporting local, regional and international events on themes related to environmental protection and sustainability.

Such events provide a platform for people and institutions to share experiences, engage in creative exchange of ideas, review their cooperation and seek other potential synergies that can yield positive results for both nature and people.

Green Week Series of Conferences

The Green Week Series of Conferences was organized in 2012 in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme with an objective to provide a platform, where leaders from around the globe could voice concerns about the future of our planet, find innovative solutions for the economy and environment, advance youth participation and contribution to the implementation of the commitments made by UN's Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development.

The Green Week events were attended by environmentalists from more than 20 countries as well as high level officials from UNEP and Azerbaijani government. Some of the objectives and themes that were discussed included the youth response to Rio+20 and the role of major stakeholders, green economy, environmental diplomacy, and international affairs. Among the main events held within the Green Week were the International Youth Forum titled "What Did Youth Get Out of Rio+20?", UNEP Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) Regional Consultation meeting (RCM) for Europe, an open lecture by UNEP experts on environmental diplomacy and international affairs at the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy, and the Green Economy Round Table focusing on the Green Economy Scoping Study jointly prepared by UNEP and Azerbaijani national experts.





Baku Debate Forum

In 2012, IDEA partnered with Tamiz Shahar JSC and “Debate in Civil Society” Public Union to hold the Baku Debate Forum aimed at generating innovative ideas on waste reduction.

Over 2000 students from 15 universities in Azerbaijan participated in a two-month series of events that consisted of training sessions, expert meetings and a debate contest, where the teams competed for the Green Thinking Cup. The training and meetings parts of the forum, focused on the “3R” (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) approach and other progressive concepts in the field of environment.



“Responsibility for Clean Future” Eco-Panel Discussion

In 2012, IDEA partnered with Azerbaijan Youth Organization of Russia (AMOR) and PwC Russia to organize an eco-panel discussion in Moscow titled “Responsibility for Clean Future”.

The panel discussion held in Moscow featured prominent public figures, government officials and members of academia that spoke on ecological problems facing the global community. The event was attended by about

100 Azerbaijani students studying in Moscow and other cities of the Russian Federation, who engaged in interactive discussions with the panelists on nature protection and the role of local and international environmental organizations.



International Environmental Forum: “Learning from Each Other”

International Environmental Forum: “Learning from Each Other” was jointly held by IDEA, Ministry of Youth and Sport and “Friends of Nature” Public Association in 2013.

The forum gathered over 40 young environmentalists from the CIS countries. The participants engaged in interesting discussions and exchange of views on such topics as sustainable waste management, eco-volunteerism, ecotourism, wildlife preservation and specially protected natural areas.

The First Environmental Forum of Azerbaijan

In 2014, in partnership with Heydar Aliyev Foundation, IDEA organized the First Environmental Forum of Azerbaijan.

Held under the slogan "Let's build a green future of Azerbaijan together", the forum brought together representatives of government agencies and NGOs operating in the field of environmental protection. The Forum featured two panel discussions:

"National view at environmental problems, their solutions and the role of the NGOs in this context" and "Present and future cooperation between NGOs and governmental institutions on environmental protection in Azerbaijan". "Declaration of the First Environmental Forum of Azerbaijan" was adopted as the outcome document of the event, reflecting the participants' common position on addressing the existing environmental challenges in Azerbaijan.

Caucasus Cat Summit

The Caucasus Cat Summit was held in partnership with Heydar Aliyev Center and IUCN in 2014, to gather cat experts, researchers and people working in the field of biodiversity conservation to discuss the preservation of the endangered Caucasian leopard and other big cats.

Prominent international cat experts from around the world held discussions on the protection of the Caucasian leopard with the representatives of IDEA and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources. As a result of discussions held at the Summit, IDEA and the Zoological Society of London, with the participation of WWF, published a joint report entitled "Recovery of the Leopard in Azerbaijan", which contained practical recommendations on the restoration of Leopards in the region. The Summit became a starting point for future efforts to save the Caucasian leopard.



“Wildlife Trafficking” Round-Table



In 2016, on the occasion of World Environment Day, the “Wildlife Trafficking” Roundtable was co-organized by IDEA, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and UNEP.

In accordance with the theme for the 2016 World Environment Day - “Zero tolerance for the illegal trade in wildlife”, a round-table titled “Wildlife Trafficking” was held with the participation of representatives of relevant state structures, scientists, researchers and members of civil society and international organizations. The participants engaged in interactive discussions of approaches to tackling the illegal wildlife trade and shared their experiences from related projects, and put forward proposals regarding the application of leading international practices in Azerbaijan.



International Environmental Exhibition: Caspian Ecology

Over the past years, IDEA has supported and participated at the annual Azerbaijan International Environmental Exhibition organized by Caspian Event Organisers LLC and also supported by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan. This is the only environmental exhibition in the Caspian and Caucasus regions, which presents innovations in environmental protection and natural resource management.

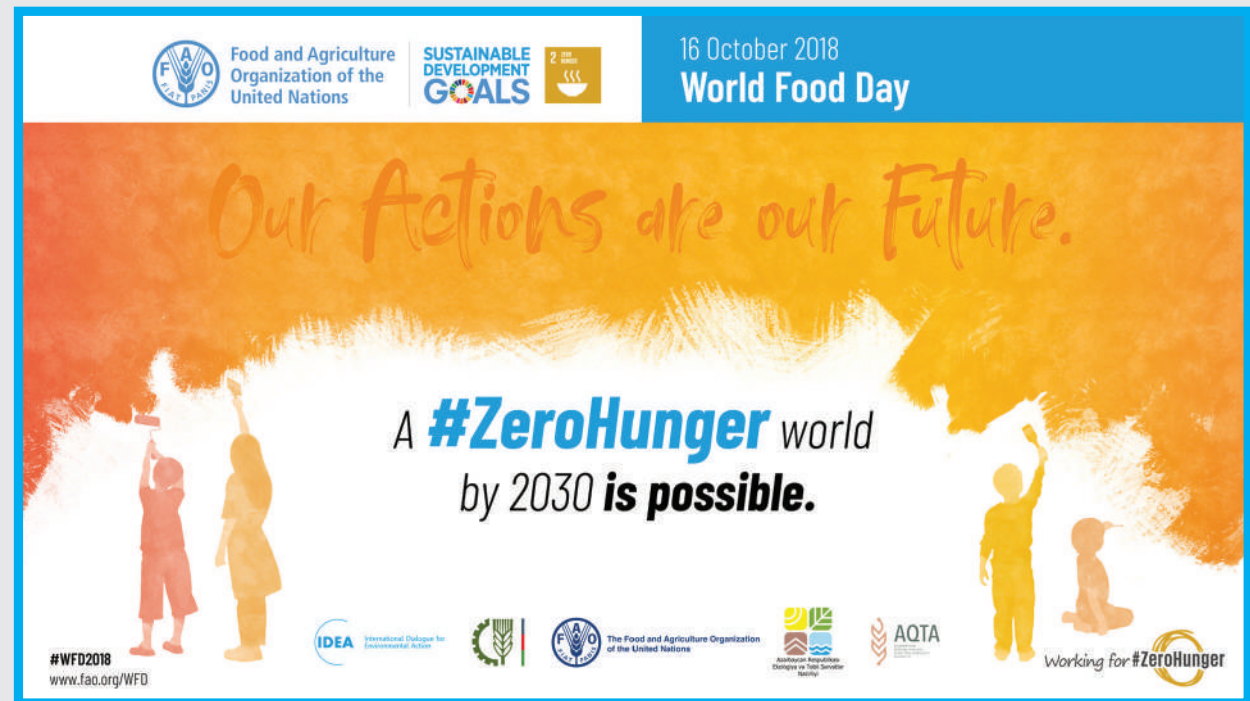
Every year, the event brings together exhibitors from dozens of countries, including companies specializing in waste management, eco-friendly products, green energy, landscape design and many other areas. The exhibition aims to attract global attention to environmental projects in Azerbaijan and to establish cooperation between local and international organizations working in the field.



Annual World Food Day celebration in Azerbaijan

Each year, IDEA and its partners mark World Food Day in Azerbaijan by holding special events to draw global attention to the pressing challenge of hunger and food security, discuss ways to solve it, and reaffirm the common commitment to achieve Zero Hunger. WFD celebrations were organized in partnership FAO

Partnership and Liaison Office in Azerbaijan, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and Ministry of Agriculture. WFD 2017 was held under the theme “Change the future of migration. Invest in food security and rural development”. The event focused on the intricate link between migration, food security, sustainable agriculture and rural development. The 2018 celebration was held under the theme “Our Actions are our Future. A Zero Hunger world by 2030 is possible” and stressed the need to strengthen efforts to fulfill food-related SDGs.





National Youth Forum “Agenda 2030: Focus on the Environment”

On 5 June 2018, hundreds of young people attended the National Youth Forum “Agenda 2030: Focus on the Environment” held by IDEA, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, UN Office in Azerbaijan and Azerbaijan Youth Foundation on the occasion of World Environment Day. The event aimed to raise youth awareness on Sustainable Development Goals, especially their environmental dimension, and motivate young people to be drivers of change for a green and sustainable future.

Featuring international and local experts, the forum included three panel discussions on the role of youth in tackling climate change, preserving biodiversity and ensuring energy sustainability. Among the keynote speakers of the forum were IDEA founder Leyla Aliyeva, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources Mukhtar Babayev and the UN Resident Coordinator a.i. Edward Carwardine, who called on the young people to be active in advancing the Global Goals.



Partnership for Wildlife Restoration in the Caucasus

On 16 November 2018, a scientific conference on partnership for Wildlife Restoration in the Caucasus was held in the framework of the Caspian Ecology 2018 exhibition. The event brought together ministers of ecology and natural resources of Azerbaijan and Georgia, representatives and experts from academia and conservation organizations, including World Wildlife Fund and IUCN, as well as delegates from Azerbaijan, Russia, Turkey, Germany, the Netherlands, Belarus, and Iran.

Addressing the conference, IDEA founder Leyla Aliyeva stressed the urgent need to expand local, regional and global conservation efforts and, more importantly, to change the unsustainable consumption and production patterns that destroy the planet and threaten our future.

The conference featured panel discussions on regional prospects and current initiatives for wildlife restoration in the Caucasus, wildlife management in Azerbaijan and global conservation experience. IDEA made an extensive presentation of its joint project with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and WWF Azerbaijan on the restoration of the European bison in Azerbaijan.



Azerbaijan Youth Climate Conference

Azerbaijan Youth Climate Conference devoted to Earth Day 2022 was held at ADA University by IDEA and the British Embassy in Baku.

During the event, representatives of the diplomatic corps, experts and young leaders reviewed the results of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) that took place in 2021 in Glasgow, UK, and discussed ways to combat the climate crisis. The conference also featured presentations and exchanged views on the efforts to combat climate change in Azerbaijan, the role of youth in solving the problem of global warming and leadership prospects.



PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATION

When dealing with such universal issues as environmental protection and sustainable development, no country or organization can do it alone. Therefore, IDEA has devoted major efforts to develop cooperation with both international and local partners, and to benefit from technical and expert support of leading international institutions in addressing the existing and emerging environmental challenges.

Since 2011, IDEA established cooperation ties with almost all major international and regional organizations as well as leading NGOs and academic institutions working in the field of environmental protection and nature conservation, and has successfully implemented a number of ambitious projects in partnership with these organizations.



UNCCD

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is a convention to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought. Adopted in 1994, UNCCD is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management.

IDEA was accredited with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in December 2015. Also, in 2015, IDEA Founder Leyla Aliyeva and UNCCD Executive Secretary Monique Barbut signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation. In the past two years, IDEA has been representing the Eastern European region for the UNCCD Civil Society Organizations Panel.



UNFCCC

The 21st Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which negotiated the Paris Agreement, a global agreement on the reduction of climate change, was indeed a historical turning point for global environmental efforts. COP21, known as the 2015 Paris Climate Conference, resulted in the adoption of a legally binding and universal agreement on climate.

IDEA founder Leyla Aliyeva attended the December 2015 conference, during which she addressed an event entitled "Innovative decision making tools for low-carbon development and climate resilience in Europe and Central Asia" organized by the Regional Environment Center. The event was dedicated to the subject of ensuring sustainable development in the countries of the Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

UNFCCC has admitted IDEA as an observer member during its 26th session taking place in Glasgow, UK on 1 - 12 November 2021. The admission allows IDEA to participate in and contribute to the UNFCCC process, which aims to prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.



Special consultative status with ECOSOC

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is one of the six main organs of the United Nations and is its central platform for reflection, debate, and innovative thinking on sustainable development.

Having considered IDEA's national, regional and international initiatives, ECOSOC has unanimously granted IDEA campaign a special consultative status with the Council on 13 April 2016. The special consultative status enables IDEA to closely and actively engage with various UN bodies. As part of the ECOSOC network, IDEA will benefit from the experience of the UN's specialized agencies and the support of global funds for projects implemented at national, regional and international level. IDEA has also gained the right to participate in the negotiation and adoption of documents during meetings held at UN Headquarters, consult and prepare joint projects with UN bodies, put forward initiatives, and keep the international community informed about ecological and health threats faced by the country and region.

IDEA Founder Leyla Aliyeva as FAO Goodwill Ambassador

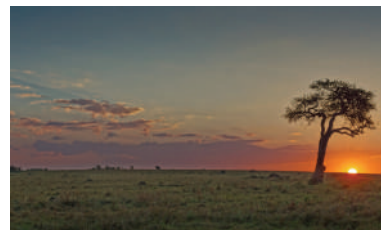


The Goodwill Ambassador Programme of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is dedicated to promoting FAO's vision of a world without hunger. The FAO Goodwill Ambassadors - distinguished men and women of talent and passion - have expressed their desire to help focus global attention on the noble aims of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

IDEA Founder and head Leyla Aliyeva was designated as FAO Goodwill Ambassador in May 2015 for her contribution to achieving such goals as combatting hunger, ensuring food safety, increasing efficiency of agriculture, forestry and fishery, and creation of healthy food systems.



International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)



Founded in 1948, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is the world's largest and oldest professional conservation network. The organization has more than 1,200 members, including 200 government and 900 non-government organizations and brings together about 11,000 scientists and experts from 160 different countries. IDEA and IUCN have started cooperation since the beginning of 2014, and implemented a number of successful projects. Later that year, IDEA was accredited to IUCN. IDEA's membership at the IUCN created an opportunity to expand its cooperation with the world's leading international organizations functioning in the field of environment, participate in world-class ecological projects more closely, and influence the process of global environmental decision-making.

In November of 2014, IDEA participated in the World Parks Congress organized by the IUCN in Sydney, Australia. IDEA founder Leyla Aliyeva, who was designated as Champion of the Congress, presented Azerbaijan's experience in preserving nature and biodiversity, and held a number of bilateral meetings with the heads of principal international organizations. A separate pavilion featuring information on IDEA's activities and future projects was set up at the Congress site.

United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)

Established in 1972, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.

In May 2014, IDEA was accredited to UNEP and obtained an observer status within the organization, thus gaining an opportunity to engage closely with UNEP's work. Accreditation brings many advantages for the organization with respect to participation in the work of UNEP's Governing Bodies, such as the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) of UNEP and its subsidiary bodies.

IDEA has maintained great high-level and working contacts with UNEP and held several joint events in Azerbaijan dedicated to topical environmental challenges.



World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

Founded in 1961, WWF is recognized to be one of the world's largest conservation organizations. It has representations in more than 80 countries around the world, including Azerbaijan, with 6000 full-time staff and more than 5 million members. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

In 2014, IDEA and WWF Azerbaijan launched several ambitious joint projects, including on the restoration of leopards and reintroduction of bisons in Azerbaijan, and most notably, increasing the number of gazelles in the Caucasus region. As a result of joint activities up to 200 gazelles were resettled into different areas of Azerbaijan and Georgia within the program "Reintroduction of gazelles into their historical habitat in the Caucasus". With regard to protecting the Caucasian leopard, IDEA presented 20 surveillance cameras to the Azerbaijan office of WWF with the view to help identify places of habitat and number of leopards in the country.



Panthera



Panthera is a charitable organization founded in 2006, which is devoted to preserving big cats and their ecosystems around the globe.

In May of 2014, IDEA established cooperation with Panthera by signing a memorandum of understanding, according to which both organizations pledged to draft a work plan on the protection of leopards in Azerbaijan. The MOU creates opportunities for IDEA to benefit from Panthera's experience in the field of big cat preservation.



Blue Marine Foundation (BLUE)

Founded in 2010, the Blue Marine Foundation (BLUE) is a charity dedicated to creating marine reserves and establishing sustainable models of fishing. Its mission is to achieve the protection of 10% of the world's oceans by 2020 through a network of marine reserves and private sector led solutions in the sea.

IDEA established cooperation with BLUE in 2015 and, upon IDEA's invitation, a delegation headed by the foundation's chairperson visited Azerbaijan, which was followed by several subsequent visits its marine biodiversity expert. During their visits, the experts observed and analyzed the situation with fish stocks in the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan's internal waters, and got acquainted with country's fishing industry. IDEA and BLUE reached an agreement on the involvement of leading experts from the Foundation in the protection of marine environment in the Caucasus region, particularly of the endangered sturgeon populations of the Caspian.



WildCRU

Founded in 1986 by Professor David Macdonald within the Department of Zoology of the University of Oxford, the Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU) is recognized as the leading university-based institute for wildlife conservation research. WildCRU's approach is to combine field research with conservation actions rooted in sound science. Currently, around 50 scientists from WildCRU are heading projects on wildlife conservation carried out in various countries around the world.

In October 2015, upon the invitation of the IDEA, the WildCRU Director and a world-renowned expert on conservation of biodiversity Professor David Macdonald was on a visit to Azerbaijan. In the course of the visit, Professor Macdonald held discussions with representatives of IDEA and WWF Azerbaijan. Furthermore, Professor Macdonald gave a comprehensive lecture on biodiversity conservation at ADA University.

During the meeting between the IDEA founder Leyla Aliyeva and Professor Macdonald, prospects for cooperation between IDEA and the University of Oxford were discussed and an agreement was reached on the admission of one student from Azerbaijan to study biodiversity at the University of Oxford. While both organizations are keen on further developing ties, ways to engage WildCRU in the process of conservation and restoration of Azerbaijan's endemic fauna species are currently being explored.



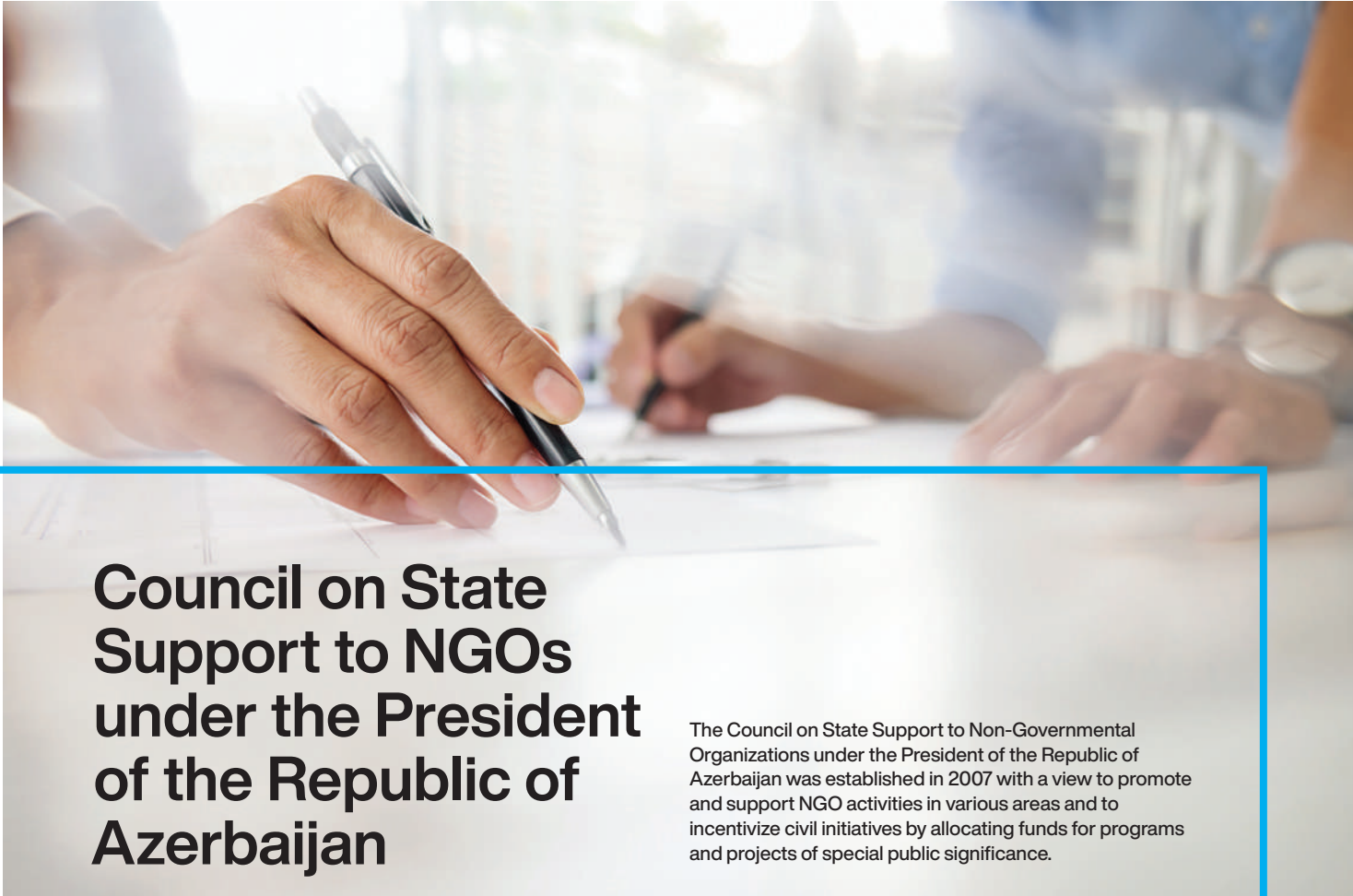
All-Russian Society for the Protection of Nature

On October 16, IDEA Founder Leyla Aliyeva met with the chairman of All-Russian Society for Nature Conservation and UN goodwill ambassador Vyacheslav Fetisov. During the meeting, a partnership agreement was signed between IDEA and All-Russian Society for the Protection of Nature to implement joint promotional, educational and awareness activities on environmental protection and sustainable development.

UNWTO

Abundant natural resources and diverse geographical landscapes, along with rich cultural heritage and modern infrastructure in Azerbaijan present ample opportunities for the further development of the country as an attractive tourism destination. Such development, however, must be sustainable, so as not to compromise the welfare of future generations.

On 17 June 2019, eager to combine efforts in promoting sustainable tourism and tackling global warming, IDEA founder Leyla Aliyeva and Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Zurab Pololikashvili signed a Memorandum of Understanding between UNWTO and IDEA. The partnership envisages implementation of joint activities focusing on biodiversity, climate change, ecotourism, and education and capacity building in Azerbaijan.



Council on State Support to NGOs under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

The Council on State Support to Non-Governmental Organizations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan was established in 2007 with a view to promote and support NGO activities in various areas and to incentivize civil initiatives by allocating funds for programs and projects of special public significance.

In May 2016, IDEA established cooperation with the Council on State Support to NGOs in the field of environmental protection and promotion of sustainable development by signing an agreement on cooperation. Based on the agreement, IDEA and the Council will cooperate and implement joint projects in enhancing ecological education and awareness, promoting environmental responsibility, preservation and expansion of green spaces, encouraging recycling and efficient waste management, protection and restoration of biodiversity, and other relevant areas.



Azerbaijan Youth Foundation



AZƏRBAYCAN
GƏNCLƏR FONDU

Established in 2011, the Youth Foundation under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan is a non-profit organization aiming at stimulating activities in the sphere of science, education, culture and other fields related to the youth policy. The Foundation lists environmental education of youth as one of its main areas of focus.

Cooperation in the area of ecology between IDEA and the Youth Foundation was launched with the signing of a cooperation agreement in June 2015. Based on the agreement, IDEA and the Youth Foundation jointly implement projects in such areas as enhancing environmental education, countering climate change, waste management, combating the emerging environmental challenges, protection of biodiversity, encouraging sustainable development, promoting environmental responsibility and conducting ecological assessments.



ON
FOR **EARTH**

