



المركز الدولي للزراعة الملحية

INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR
BIOSALINE AGRICULTURE

Supported by Abu Dhabi Fund for Development: Karakalpakstan Project Wins the 2024 Energy Globe National Award in Uzbekistan

- Led by ICBA, in partnership with IICAS and the KARI, under the patronage of Uzbekistan’s Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change, and Ministry of Agriculture.
- Triangular south-south cooperation Advancing Sustainable Agriculture in the Aral Sea Region.

Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan, 24 December 2024: The project titled “Development of Sustainable Agricultural Production Systems in Degraded Areas of Karakalpakstan,” funded by Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD), has been recognized as Uzbekistan’s national winner of the Energy Globe Award 2024. This achievement underscores the project’s critical role in addressing environmental and agricultural challenges caused by the shrinking of the Aral Sea and its alignment with global sustainability goals. The project now qualifies to compete in the International Energy Globe Award – Earth Category in March 2025.

The Energy Globe Award, one of the world’s most respected environmental accolades presented by the non-profit ENERGY GLOBE Foundation in Austria, recognizes innovative projects advancing ecological sustainability and responsible resource management. . With participation from over 180 countries, the award fosters global awareness of innovative solutions to critical environmental challenges.

The ADFD-financed project is being implemented by the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) in partnership with the International Innovation Center for Aral Sea Basin (IICAS) and the Karakalpakstan Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) under the patronage of the Ministry of Ecology, Environment Protection and Climate Change and the Ministry of Agriculture in Uzbekistan. This partnership exemplifies the principles of triangular cooperation, pooling expertise and resources from the Global South to develop and implement sustainable agricultural systems.



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His Excellency Mohamed Saif Al Suwaidi, Director General of Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, said: “The recognition of the Karakalpakstan project by the Energy Globe Award is a testament to the power of strategic partnerships and our shared commitment to advancing sustainable development globally. ADFD is proud to support initiatives that restore degraded ecosystems and empower local communities with the tools and resources to achieve long-term resilience. This project demonstrates how global cooperation can lead to impactful outcomes, boosting innovation and sustainability in some of the world’s most vulnerable regions.”

Dr. Tarifa Al Zaabi, Director General of ICBA, remarked: “The recognition of the Karakalpakstan project highlights the transformative power of partnership, innovation, and knowledge-sharing across the Global South in addressing pressing environmental and agricultural challenges. Through this initiative, we are restoring degraded landscapes and equipping local communities, especially women and youth, with the tools and knowledge to secure their livelihoods and shape a sustainable future. ICBA is proud to collaborate with its esteemed partners to bring meaningful change to the Aral Sea region. This project underscores how collective action and triangular cooperation can address the most complex global challenges. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development for their generous support and to our partners—the Ministry of Ecology, Environment Protection and Climate Change, the Ministry of Agriculture, IICAS, and KARI—for their dedication and collaboration in making this project a success.”

The project is a vital step in mitigating the long-term effects of the Aral Sea disaster, which has caused widespread salinization, soil degradation, and desertification in the region. Through the introduction of climate-resilient crops, improved irrigation infrastructure, and the development of agri-business value chains, the project aims to strengthen the adaptive capacity of smallholder farmers. It focuses on empowering communities through capacity development programs, such as farmer field schools and training initiatives, with a special emphasis on engaging women as key contributors to agricultural and economic transformation.

The project also emphasizes the transfer of knowledge and technology, ensuring that farmers and agropastoralists have access to high-quality seeds and sustainable farming practices tailored to local conditions. The ICBA-run seed production unit is a cornerstone of the initiative, designed to meet farmers’ specific needs and enhance agricultural productivity.

The project directly benefited 100 farmers who received training in seed production techniques across three demonstration sites in Karakalpakstan, while 58 national scientists were trained in



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soil, water, and crop management practices to enhance dissemination and sustainability. Through the evaluation of 30 crop varieties, the project identified 8 high-performing varieties—a mix of ICBA-developed and local varieties—for seed multiplication, producing a total of 4 tons of seeds for distribution. These outputs have significantly contributed to building local capacity, enhancing agricultural resilience in salt-affected areas, and promoting self-reliance within farming communities.

As the Karakalpakstan project progresses to the international stage, it exemplifies the importance of collaboration, knowledge transfer, and inclusive development in addressing environmental adversity. It serves as a model for how integrated solutions can create sustainable and resilient futures for communities most impacted by climate and environmental challenges.

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