PROSPECTIVE DIRECTIONS OF AGRICULTURAL USE OF LAND RESOURCES OF UZBEKISTAN

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Annotation. *In the article, the measures aimed at the effective use of land resources in agriculture in the Republic of Uzbekistan, the ways of effective use of irrigated land to ensure food security, and the problems that have arisen in the territorial organization of agriculture, the main ways to eliminate them the directions are stated.*

Keywords. *Agriculture, land, water, food security, irrigated land, land reclamation, drip irrigation.*

In the conditions of intensive development and modernization of the country's agriculture, rational use of available land and water resources ensures the stability of economic and social development. Identifying the problems that arise in the process of using land and water resources in agriculture and finding their solutions, determining opportunities and prospects in this direction is an urgent task today.

In Uzbekistan, it is desirable to develop and implement a set of measures designed for certain periods at the level of regions and regions to increase the efficiency of the use of land and water resources in agriculture and to develop this economic sector on an innovative and industrial basis.

According to the data of the "Yergeodezkadastr" state committee, as of January 1, 2020, the total land area within the administrative borders of the Republic of Uzbekistan is 44,896.9 thousand hectares, of which irrigated land is 4,311.5 thousand hectares or 9.6% of the total land area. According to Article 8 of the Land Code, the land fund of our country is divided into 8 categories. In particular, in relation to the total land area, agricultural land is 45.13%, settlement land is 0.49%, industrial, transport, communication, defense and other purposes land is 1.91%, nature protection, health and recreation land is 1.57 percent, lands of historical and cultural importance are 0.03 percent, forest fund lands are 24.84 percent, water fund lands are 1.86 percent, and reserve lands are 24.16 percent. It is necessary to admit that the quality of agricultural land, which is considered extremely important for the economy, does not meet the requirements in most regions of the republic. More than 50 percent of them are saline, and their reclamation condition has deteriorated; 8.0 percent are eroded and about 4.0 percent are rocky areas [9, 10].

Since the territory of the country is located in an arid region, agriculture is mainly carried out with the help of artificial irrigation. However, in the following years, the transition to the condition of limited irrigation water distribution also has a negative effect on the efficiency of the use of irrigated agricultural land. Therefore, increasing the economic

efficiency of the use of land (especially irrigated land), protecting it and the ecological condition of the environment in general remains one of the main problems in today's market conditions [4, 5].

More than 91 percent of food products in the republic are grown on irrigated lands. But if we take into account that our republic is located in the lower part of transboundary watercourses, as well as the fact that only 20.0% of the water resources used in our country are formed in our country, and the remaining 80.0% are formed in neighboring countries, the issue of water supply for irrigation of agricultural crops may become complicated in the future. According to information, by 2040, if the water flows in the Amudarya and Syrdarya rivers remain unchanged, the water deficit in our republic may be 15%, and if the water flow decreases, it may be 33%.

The absence of a long-term strategy for the development of agriculture in the republic has been hindering the wide involvement of investments in the sector, the high income of producers, and the effective use of land and water resources to increase the competitiveness of products. Adoption of the "Strategy for the development of agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020-2030" by Decree No. PF-5853 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated October 23, 2019 was an important step taken in this regard. As defined in this Strategy, food security depends on a wide range of socio-economic, demographic and environmental factors. Population growth, increasing demand for land, water and energy resources, and drastic climate change are the main factors affecting food security.

In recent years, as a result of the implementation of a number of measures to strengthen food security in the country, Uzbekistan has managed to strengthen its position in the world and has gradually improved its position in global rankings. In 2018, the Republic of Uzbekistan took the 52nd place among 119 countries on the Global Hunger Index and reached the "moderate" level with an index of 12.1. The issue of ensuring food security of the country's population depends primarily on the effective use of agricultural land and arable land. Only 20.7 percent of the 20.2 million hectares of agricultural land is irrigated land. Over the past 15 years, the irrigated land per capita has decreased by 24% (from 0.23 to 0.16 hectares). This situation occurred as a result of population growth, reduction of water supply and transfer of agricultural lands to other land fund categories. According to forecasts, the irrigated land area may decrease by 20-25 percent in the next 30 years".

Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 6, 2020 No. PQ-4633 "On measures for the wide introduction of market principles in the cotton industry" and No. PQ-4634 "On measures for the wide introduction of market principles in the cultivation, purchase and sale of grain" In accordance with the decisions of the Ministry of Agriculture, the state order and the practice of setting purchase prices by the state in the fields of cotton raw material and grain cultivation were gradually abolished, and a favorable agribusiness environment aimed at the widespread introduction of market principles was laid in the field. This is a great event in the history of agriculture of our country, and it

allows farmers and farmers to place crops at their discretion and sell products freely based on market prices under direct contracts [].

In order to effectively use water resources and improve the melioration of irrigated lands in the republic, it is desirable to introduce drip irrigation in a comprehensive manner. It is important to implement targeted state programs aimed at introducing modern and water-saving irrigation technologies. According to the information of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan, during the drip irrigation of vegetables and crops in the republic, water consumption is reduced by 50-55%, labor consumption by 50-60%, consumption of mineral fertilizers is reduced by 50%, and productivity increases by 55-65%. In addition: soil erosion stops, groundwater level decreases and land salinity decreases; the soil does not harden, the work of cultivation and weeding between the rows is reduced; Fertilizer is given with water and its absorption rate increases; less water evaporates from the soil, it is achieved that water does not flow in vain; the root layer of crops is constantly supplied with moisture, and an opportunity is created to receive water and nutrients. In this case, the plant directs its energy to increasing the yield [6, 8].

According to the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 103 of February 6, 2019 "On the approval of the regulation on the procedure for reimbursement of the expenses of cotton growers related to the introduction of drip irrigation technology": - regardless of the total amount of expenses related to the introduction of drip irrigation technology, cotton 8 mln. from the State budget of the Republic of Uzbekistan for each hectare of the area where the drip irrigation system of raw material growers is introduced. a subsidy of soum is allocated. - 20 million per hectare to cotton growers who introduced drip irrigation technology. Reimbursement of fixed interest expenses on loans not exceeding soums is carried out at the expense of the state fund for the support of the development of entrepreneurship under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, in the amount of 10 percentage points of the interest expenses on the loan obligations of the cotton raw material grower.

To date, there are a number of problems related to the rational use of land resources and environmental protection. Including:

- the practice of planting crops on land by the state does not allow more land use;
- land ownership is not adequately protected. As a result of this, there are cases where the structure of the land is destroyed and out of use;
- there is no system of allocation of land on the basis of transparency.
- land plots are not handed over to owners who are real scientists, agronomists and agriculturalists, and their expertise is not studied in the allocation of land plots. Currently, only 16 percent of agricultural producers are highly educated specialists;
- there are a number of problems such as lack of access to land for a large part of the local rural population.

It is necessary to set the following priority directions for effective use of land resources and creation of fair mechanisms for privatization of agricultural land:

- introduction of a transparent system of allocation of agricultural land based on market mechanisms and sale and purchase of land lease rights in an electronic system, on an online platform;

- giving benefits to landowners for efficient use of land (property rights, strengthening the rights to full use of land and improving the taxation system).

- Digitization of the agricultural land use system, creation of electronic maps of all agricultural lands;

- complete abandonment of state orders, introduction of free market mechanisms for cotton and grain, creation of opportunities for local villagers to earn a large income, employment of the population;

- taking steps to transition to a state support system based on modern and market mechanisms.

In Uzbekistan, half of the population lives in rural areas. According to the target indicators of the population social protection strategy, about 17 percent of the population (about 6.1 million people) live at the level of the poverty line (defined by the minimum consumption expenditure (MIX) of 498 thousand soums from 2022). At the same time, 75 percent of the population living in poverty live in rural areas, whose only source of income is the products grown on their own farms. Therefore, their food security is highly dependent on the agricultural sector. For these reasons, the development and diversification of agriculture in Uzbekistan is one of the priority tasks.

It should be noted that Uzbekistan imports a certain part of the most necessary food products from foreign countries, and the volume of imports is increasing year by year. According to the Ministry of Investments and Foreign Trade, food imports in 2021 amounted to 2.2 billion dollars, an increase of 25% or 441 million dollars compared to 2020 ($1.7 billion). Food products were imported mainly from Kazakhstan (881 million dollars), Russia (747 million dollars), Belarus (105 million dollars), Ukraine (59 million dollars) and Turkey (45 million dollars). Wheat (616 million dollars), vegetable and animal fats (499 million dollars), and meat products (188 million dollars) were imported from foreign countries [11].

In the "2020-2030 strategy for the development of agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan" adopted in 2019, a number of tasks to provide the population of the country with safe and high-quality food products at stable prices are defined. According to the strategy, by 2030, grain yield will be 75 t/ha, milk yield will be 3500 kg/head, and acreage for livestock feed will be doubled. Water is the most important resource for expanding the production of agricultural products in Uzbekistan. It is planned to save 2 billion cubic meters of water on 500,000 hectares of land in 2023, and 2.2 billion cubic meters of water on 530,000 hectares in 2024 due to the introduction of modern irrigation methods.

In order to reduce the import of food products and expand their export, 2,163 projects with a total value of 17 trillion soums were formed in the food industry. For their financing, 471 million dollars attracted from international financial institutions were placed in banks.

Through this, more than 37 thousand people will be provided with work. If the planned measures are effectively implemented, it is possible to increase the gross added value in the agro-food complex by 3-4 times due to the corresponding increase in the production of food products. It is also important to strengthen the digitalization of agricultural production in order to increase the supply of food products in the domestic market [12].

Based on the above, ensuring food security of smallholder farms - adapting to food security threats in the context of global changes, including water distribution, land use, dissemination of necessary knowledge, formation of prices and sales of food products, food security requires the development of measures that include management issues.

As world experience shows, non-agricultural activities are becoming an important part of the rural economy in many ways. Non-agricultural activities include rural tourism, handicrafts, small-scale production, mining, quarrying, repair, transport, and public works in rural areas. In order to diversify the incomes of rural households, local authorities should improve local infrastructure, improve the quality of human capital, especially among young people and women, including retraining for professions that are in high demand in the market; special attention should be paid to subsidies for the purchase of industrial mini-technologies and long-term preferential loans for the establishment of industrial enterprises in rural areas. These measures will help small farmers to diversify their activities and reduce their dependence on agriculture.

It should be noted that not all of the proposed recommendations require additional budget and resources for implementation. For example, individual support to farmers and promotion of interactions between them can be achieved within the available financial resources. But additional investment in new sectors such as tourism, development of private entrepreneurship through variable microfinance is required to diversify rural population incomes, which will lead to increased food security and income of homestead farm owners in the long term.

In the conditions of Uzbekistan, which is located in an arid climate, that is, in a situation where natural evaporation is high, the intensive evaporation of underground saline water leads to the accumulation of salts in the soil and the salinization of the land. In this regard, maintaining the melioration of irrigated lands in a stable state is an important problem. Because it is impossible to get a high yield from crops without improving land reclamation and taking measures against salinity. Although the reclamation condition of the irrigated lands of Uzbekistan is assessed at a satisfactory level, there are some unresolved issues in this regard, especially in the irrigated areas. It is necessary to develop practical programs to eliminate specific geoecological problems caused by the use of land and water resources in such areas.

From this point of view, it is desirable to improve the reclamation condition of low-quality lands, to introduce regular cleaning of the existing collector-drainage networks, to organize the composition of agricultural crops on a scientific basis, and to fully introduce the rotation system. Also, it is necessary to direct the funds spent on irrigated lands to

improve the melioration of the existing irrigated lands, to increase the effectiveness of the utilization of the targeted funds allocated to agriculture, and to put an end to allocating productive irrigated lands for non-agricultural activities. This will serve to improve the overall quality of the country's rural lands in the future and increase the effectiveness of the agro-economic policy in this regard.

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