

**Dashoguz, Turkmenistan, 11 November 2024** - Narine Sahakyan, UNDP Resident Representative in Turkmenistan, completed a two-day working visit to Dashoguz velayat from November 10 to 11, 2024.

During her visit, Ms. Sahakyan met with Mr. Dovletgeldi Babayev, the Khyakim of Dashoguz Velayat, along with other representatives from the local administration, to discuss the outcomes and future initiatives in their collaborative efforts toward environmental sustainability and development goals in Turkmen part of the Aral Sea basin.

***“We greatly appreciate the strong support from local authorities in achieving our program targets, particularly in enhancing environmental resilience, improving water management strategies, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices,”*** Ms. Sahakyan stated following the meeting. ***“This visit reinforces UNDP’s ongoing partnership with Dashoguz velayat and underscores our shared commitment to building resilient communities amid the Aral Sea ecological crisis, intensified by climate change.”***

The visit also included participation in events organized under the project “Conservation and Sustainable Management of Land Resources and High Nature Value Ecosystems in the Aral Sea Basin for Multiple Benefits,” funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented in partnership between UNDP and Turkmenistan’s Ministry of Environmental Protection.

The UNDP delegation also attended the “Ecology of Culture” Environmental Festival at the Dashoguz Regional Library, celebrating environmental awareness and promoting youth-led sustainability initiatives. The festival featured an exhibition of environmentally conscious products, innovative ideas and traditional crafts, including national attire and student research projects. The event was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Dashoguz City Administration, and UNDP in Turkmenistan, in partnership with the American Corner in Dashoguz, UNESCO, CAREC and local NGOs “Ekodurmush” and “Yashil Shokhle”.

***“It was incredibly inspiring to witness the creativity and dedication of youth and local artisans at the festival,”*** remarked Narine Sahakyan. ***“The vibrant display of crafts, eco-friendly products, and traditional attire, coupled with the participants’ enthusiasm for sustainability, showcases a profound commitment to safeguarding Turkmenistan’s environmental and cultural heritage. This event aligns with UNDP’s ongoing efforts to promote the creative economy in Turkmenistan, fostering innovation and sustainable practices while supporting local communities***

***and youth-led initiatives.”***

On the second day of her visit, Ms. Sahakyan participated in a workshop, organized as part of the above-mentioned project, which was focused on water resource management in Turkmenistan’s Aral Sea region. The workshop aimed to address the critical issue of water scarcity and its impact on sustainable agriculture. Participants gained valuable insights into best practices for efficient water use and conservation.

On the same day, the UNDP delegation visited the Gaplanyr State Nature Reserve, where the Head of the UNDP Office in Turkmenistan participated in a tree-planting campaign to demonstrate commitment to greening efforts and highlight the importance of preserving the region’s rich biodiversity.

The visit concluded in Gorogly etrap, where the delegation explored UNDP-supported pilot projects promoting sustainable land management, agriculture, and environmental conservation.



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