

## King of the Desert

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**Abstract:** The saxaul plant, which is considered an integral part of nature, is considered, its morphology, and economic importance. Saxaul, which became the “King of the desert”, did not lose its value and holiness, no matter how much time passed. Only the generation of each era, not understanding its value, creates the danger of saxaul disappearing from the face of the earth. This, of course, is a great abuse, first of nature, and then of humanity. Saxaul is used when planting field-protective forests, planting in sand, especially in sand with saline soil. Saxaul is a fortress of the sandy desert. That is, it holds the sand tightly. Saxaul is the living depths of the desert.

**Keywords:** Saxaul, Kazakhstan, Desert, Sand, Soil, Nature.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Saxaul is a Turkic word that means “HorseTail” in Kazakh. In fact, when the leaves are down and the branches are bent, the horsetail will not budge. The Greeks call it “Salt Tree” (Anonymous, 2013). Saxaul also entered science under the name “Haloxylon”, “a perennial plant belonging to the Amaranthaceae family (*Chenopodiaceae*), not very tall, the trunk is tuberous, the leaves are small, scaly, opposite, the flower are also small, bisexual, grows and reproduces by shoots and seeds. It is written in the domestic encyclopedia and educational literature that this tree lives about 30 -60 years. There are 10 species of saxaul growing in Asian deserts and steppes, of which only 3 species are found in Kazakhstan: black saxaul (*Haloxylon aphyllum*), Zaisan saxaul (*Haloxylon ammodendron*) and white saxaul (*Haloxylon persicum*). The roots of the black plane tree go up to 12 meters in length, the height sometimes reaches 10 meters, the trunk diameter is 50-70 cm. It blooms in April-June, bears fruit in October-November. It mainly grows between Ustyurt and Lake Balkhash (Mukanov et al., 2009).

“King of the Desert”, this is what the Kazakh called saxaul, which protects the soil from erosion in the desert, stops landslides of sand dunes and heats up more than coal. Unfortunately, the number of this valuable plant is declining in the country. That is why experts are sounding the alarm, claiming that saxaul needs special protection. And the government is trying to save the precious plant by banning pruning of saxaul.

11.2 % of the lands of Kazakhstan are forested, 48 % of them belong to saxaul groves (Anonymous, 2022). There are about ten species of hardy woody plant native to sandy areas and tolerant of desert conditions in Central Asia and the Arab countries. Three of them grow in Kazakhstan: white saxaul, black saxaul and Zaisan saxaul. Saxaul in Kazakhstan occupies 48 % of the forest fund. Half of the 30.552 hectares of the republic’s forest fund belongs to saxaul. It is well known that the main reason for this is the growing number of people wishing to illegally cut down a valuable plant. In addition, today the regrowth of saxaul is also a problem for foresters. Every year, although saxaul seeds are sown in many places, it is not easy for them to take root. The natural vegetation of the field has become sparse and cannot serve as protection from the wind. That is why the seed sown in the ground is carried away by the wind. In turn, the actions of merciless cutting of Saxaul prevent the plant from re-growing. In the past, people used saxaul as a fire starter. And now the shortage of coal and the increase in its price, in addition to the lack of natural gas, have affected people living in the villages, and they began to use saxaul as clean fuel (Khabdulkhabar, 2019).

Valuable firewood is prepared from saxaul; its trunk is difficult to cut and split with an axe, but if you hit each other with one of them, they will quickly break. Kazakh people warmed up and having absorbed the heat of saxaul, will not yield to an external enemy; he can only be defeated by driving him closer to each other. They listen to other people’s gossip, cut

themselves off, judge good and evil, shake their heads, saying that “the Kazakh has no enemy but the Kazakh”, finish what they ruined, and return to their old life.

Saxaul ash contains potassium carbonate, which was previously used to make soap. Kazakh Saxaul Ash is added to the tobacco leaf, “Nasway”, hitting the heel of his boot with his fist, glancing into the space around him, he admits that his only owner is himself, grateful to the ancestors who inherited this vast steppe from their descendants. When saxaul completely withers, a very large amount of salt is released into the soil. It can be seen that the Saxaul region has brackish soil, and there is little vegetation around (Anonymous, n.d.).

Forestry officials are responding to increased plant supplies. In the early 1990s, planting of saxaul began on an area of 54 thousand hectares. Due to lack of finance, it remained idle and was resumed only in 2002. In the period from 2008 to 2014, a project was launched for the conservation of forests and the reproduction of plant reserves in Kazakhstan. With the support of the World Development Bank, saxaul was sown on an area of 57 thousand hectares. Today, Almaty, Kyzylorda and Turkestan regions occupy leading positions in the use of saxaul in everyday life. In these territories, saxaul has a high risk of complete extinction as a biological species. In this regard, within the framework of the project, research work, activities to involve the local population in small business and environmental education of children, measures to counter illegal saxaul logging, improvement of the material and technical condition of nature reserves and reserves located in these territories, training in them are carried out personnel (Anonymous, 2019). The UN Development Program and the country's government have jointly initiated special projects to preserve biological diversity. For the same projects, special attention is paid to the protection of saxaul in Kazakhstan.

In desert areas, saxaul is used to stop landslides because it has a very strong root system that takes deep roots. In honor of the tenth anniversary of our independence, at the command of the First President, who at one time traveled through the southwestern regions, members of the special train “My Kazakhstan”, which included representatives of art and a service group, were amazed by this country, calling it “Unbending Oaks”. Yesterday's ancestor bowed indiscriminately for centuries, preserving the offspring. Today we have taken sovereignty and formed the ruler of the country and the land.

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