

ENPI FLEG

Improving Forest Law Enforcement and Governance
in the European Neighbourhood Policy East Countries and Russia

The Problem

A significant proportion of the world's timber is harvested, transported, processed and traded in violation of national and international laws. Poor governance of forest resources combines with weak rule of law to undermine sustainable economic growth, societal equity, and environmental conservation.

Numerous rural forested communities in Russia and former Soviet Union countries are facing severe poverty and often are forced to use natural resources to survive. Corruption and organised crime combined with complicated and ineffective forest legislation and management constrain the community's capability to work within formal and informal market structures.

The effects of unsustainable forest management and illegal forest activities include:

- Significant loss of revenue to governments, the private sector and rural communities (especially forest-dependent communities);
- Degradation of the environment and forest ecosystems;
- Loss of biodiversity;
- Loss of carbon stocks, further exacerbating climate change.

The ENPI FLEG Program

The ENPI FLEG Program "Improving Forest Law Enforcement and Governance in the European Neighborhood Policy East Countries and Russia" was created to combat the threats posed to forests by illegal logging, trade, and corruption. The initiative is comprised of processes which address the complex and politically-sensitive issues related to illegal logging at national and regional levels, and is implemented in cooperation with major stakeholders from governments, civil society and the private sector.

The FLEG Program in ENPI countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine) and Russia has the potential to make an important contribution to the struggle against illegal logging and the illegal timber trade, by targeting both the producer countries and consumer countries, and ensuring that governments strengthen regulations and rules of law to prosecute individuals and companies involved in the illegal timber trade. It promotes increased regional and international cooperation, as well as greater law enforcement, governance and transparency.

The Program is implemented by the World Bank (WB), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and WWF through a grant of the European Commission.

What is ENPI?

The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) is the main financial mechanism of the European Commission for assistance to the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Partner Countries, as well as Russia. www.enpi-info.eu

What is FLEG?

The Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) process was initiated by the World Bank to combat the threats posed to forests by illegal logging, trade, poaching and corruption. A series of Ministerial Conferences paved the way: East Asia and the Pacific (2001), Africa (2003), Europe and North Asia (2005).

The objectives

The ENPI FLEG Program aims to contribute to the achievement of legal and sustainable forest management and utilization practices; a strengthened rule of law and improved local livelihoods in each of the seven participating countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine.

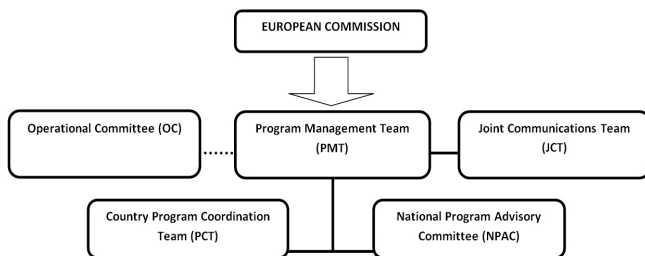
The Program endeavors to support improved forest governance arrangements through the effective implementation of the main priorities set out in the FLEG Ministerial Declaration produced in Saint-Petersburg in 2005 through selected pilot activities and with the active involvement of governments, civil society and the private sector. Priorities relate to the strengthening and reform of the institutions responsible for forest management, reviewing and updating the policy, legal and institutional frameworks, as well as increasing the countries' capacities to enforce existing laws and policies.

Key actions are targeted to:

- Promote effective national and regional FLEG action processes;
- Increase national ownership and capacity;
- Improve regional and national collaboration and knowledge sharing;
- Promote effective engagement of key trading partners;
- Strengthen continuation of the formal official FLEG process in the countries;
- Foster sustainable forest management practices; and
- Increase awareness and commitment of key stakeholders on FLEG.

How is the Program organized?

The European Commission ensures funds and oversight to the Program. An overall Program Management Team (PMT) consisting of one member from each of the three Implementing Organizations (IOs) is responsible for the overall planning, guidance, and implementation of the Program. The Operational Committee (OC) includes a representative from each Participating Country, the World Bank (WB), IUCN, WWF, and the European Commission. A Joint Communications Team (JCT) consists of one member from each of the three IOs and provides guidance on communications for the Program as a whole. Country communications coordinators (CCC) are appointed to ensure that all the country's communications products meet the program visibility and branding requirements. Each country has a Country Program Coordination Team (PCT) where the IOs are represented. Also each country has a National Program Advisory Committee (NPAC) providing guidance to the PCT.



More information is available on the ENPI FLEG website at www.enpi-fleg.org.



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Armenia

Background

The latest National Forest Inventory and Forest Resource Accounting undertaken in 1993 estimated forest cover to be 11.2% (334,100 hectares) of the whole territory. According to various estimates, from the early 1990s Armenia lost up to 30% of its forest cover due to uncontrolled logging, although there is no clear figure on current forest cover. Most of the wood has been used for household heating and economic activities largely driven in recent years by the dramatic increase in construction.

Under intense public pressure the Government of Armenia started the forest sector reforms in the late 1990s to stop the degradation of scarce forest resources. Considerable progress has been made, and key legislation and framework strategies have been adopted. Yet, the institutional setting is not working effectively to stop illegal logging and corruption continues to thrive. The new institutional structure requires further development.

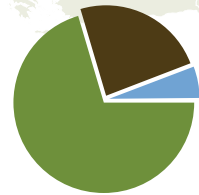
There is a great deal of uncertainty on which agency should deal with monitoring illegal logging – the Ministry of Agriculture or the Ministry of Nature Protection through its Environmental Inspectorate. Duplication of efforts is contributing to the problems faced by Armenia in trying to control illegal logging. There is a general consensus that illegal logging should be the responsibility of the agency charged with managing and protecting resources (in this case the Ministry of Agriculture), while the Environmental Inspectorate should monitor logging activities to ensure all operations are in compliance with environmental provisions of the forest management plan.

The Program

The ENPI FLEG Program in Armenia was established to support the government and other stakeholders' efforts in promoting the sustainable management of forests. It aims to contribute to legal and sustainable forest management and utilization practices and improve local livelihoods in the country by:

- Helping advance institutional and legal reforms;
- Building public awareness and support for forest law enforcement and governance;
- Promoting private sector inclusion in the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) processes.

As such the Program has initiated a set of studies that will help people better understand the causes of illegal logging and will provide sound policy advice to the government. Moreover, the Program will involve the private sector in the FLEG process to help analyze and introduce markets for alternative forest products; include a major advocacy component to update the current knowledge on forest governance, corruption and illegal logging; and communicate the FLEG process to a broader public.

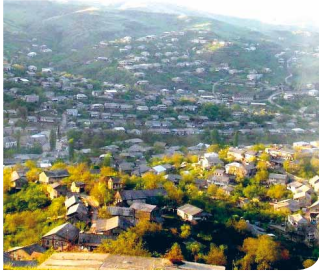


Forest cover

- 70% high forest (mainly indigenous beech, oak and hornbeam)
- 22% coppice forest
- 7% shrub forest

Source: "The Economics of Armenia's Forest Industry", by Economy and Values Research Center, Yerevan 2007.

Featured activities



View of the Koghb Community

Two **pilot projects were designed to improve livelihood and sustainable forest use** in the areas where the Koghb and Dsegh communities live. The projects foresaw the creation of a fruit and berry collection point and the development of ecotourism infrastructure (a visitor center, nature trails, road signs and itineraries, pavilions and a camp site in the forest). The aim of these projects is to actively involve the local population in collecting and processing forest fruits and berries, and in providing services to tourists: working as guides, providing horses, selling local products and handicrafts.



Roadshow in Syunik region

A **series of road shows** under the slogan “Turn to the Law, Protect Yourself and Your Forest” were initiated with a group of national and local experts travelling to 20 forest adjacent communities in Lori, Tavush and Syunik regions carrying the FLEG logo and meeting with local residents for discussions. Experts emphasized the importance of forests as ecosystems not just sources of energy, as in local communities forest resources are largely used for heating. The discussions resulted in a package of proposals highlighting: the need to develop ecotourism; the need for subsidies for natural gas and electricity bills for poor local residents; new projects on alternative sources of energy; and more active involvement of locals in timber processing.



Media tour in the Lori region

15 journalists, representing Yerevan and region-based TV, radio, print and online media participated in **training sessions** where experts, environmentalists and state officials provided comprehensive information on illegal logging. Different viewpoints were the ground for discussions. The training was followed by field trips to biodiversity hotspots in the Tavush and Lori regions, where the journalists had the opportunity to learn about nature and speak with local authorities and people. The activities resulted in extensive and comprehensive coverage (almost 70 items) of issues such as forest management, protection, conservation, use, illegal logging and its impacts. In addition, the “Forests of Armenia” media competition was held to encourage forest coverage and the blog <http://antarnet.net/> was created as a source of information with around 200 visitors per day.



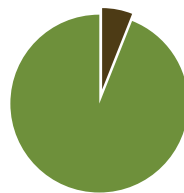
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Azerbaijan

Background

Azerbaijan is a country with modest forest cover (11.8% of the total territory). All forests are owned by the state and forest land usage is limited and industrial cutting forbidden. Forests have essential water safeguarding and soil protection functions in Azerbaijan and they are a valuable source of biodiversity, providing habitats for some rare species of flora and fauna. More than 450 tree and shrub species grow in Azerbaijani forests where the majority of trees are hardwood. The value of forests for the development of local and international tourism is another important factor for their protection.



Forest location

- 94% mountainous regions
- 6% plains

The economic transition following the end of the Soviet era and the military conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan have slowed the development of effective measures to counter illegal logging, and the felling of trees for commercial purposes and heating in rural areas. Nomadic cattle breeding which causes serious damage and diminishes the impact of government efforts on forest management is another major element, as are the gaps in training for specialists of the state forest sector.

The “National Program on restoration and expansion of forests in the Azerbaijani Republic” adopted for the period 2003-2008 contributed partially to the improvement of the situation: over the last 6 years forest restoration actions were carried out on more than 71,634 hectares of forest land, and a large number of trees were planted.

The Program

The ENPI FLEG Program in Azerbaijan plays a crucial role in improving forest governance in the country. The national workplan was developed after active consultation with forest stakeholders and local actors. The main aims of the ENPI FLEG Program are to:

- Improve knowledge of forest management;
- Increase awareness of forest practices and issues;
- Develop sustainable forest management methods.

The realization of these objectives is supported by governmental institutions as well as by local authorities and the general public in the regions. Sadiq Salmanov, a leading specialist in the Department on Forests Development of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources has praised the ENPI FLEG Program for extensively assisting the Ministry in its daily efforts of forest preservation and in the development of sustainable forest use.

Featured activities



Occurrence of illegal logging in Lahij village

An **opinion poll** among the local population, government employees, municipalities and forestry stakeholders revealed the key factors affecting forests in the country. Based on the detailed analysis of the data collected, the following problems were outlined:

- Lack of pastures and consequent damage to forest areas due to cattle grazing which leads to destruction of forest land close to villages;
- Illegal logging for heating purposes in winter due to insufficient or absent gas infrastructure in the regions;
- Poor education and information among local populations on the sustainable use of forest resources.

Other research studies revealed a lack of awareness and hence implementation of existing legislation. It is reported that often employees of forestry bodies are unaware of relevant laws, and normative and legal acts, while old Soviet standards are still in use in some regions.



Beech forest in Gabala district

A research study on the social and economic aspects of the unsustainable use of forest resources and illegal logging on rural populations was conducted in the Ismaili, Lenkaran and Gusari regions. The outcomes of the preliminary study revealed that poverty and unemployment, particularly among the rural population located near forests, are the main factors causing unsustainable practices. Excessive and unfair access restrictions to vital resources, impracticable legislation requirements and corruption hindering the development of legal businesses, along with low forest protection levels are other major factors.



Seminar organized by ZIYA

A number of **training sessions and seminars** have been organized for forest employees, representatives of local authorities and communities. In particular, the Program Center of Legal and Sociological Studies “ZIYA”, a partner of the ENPI FLEG Program, has conducted a series of trainings on the legal aspects of sustainable forest management. These gatherings led to some important findings on the situation: the absence of standardized employment norms and wages in regional forestry bodies; poor knowledge of forest legislation and specific legal acts; weak law enforcement; and a lack of understanding of the basic notion of sustainable forest management among the population.



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Belarus



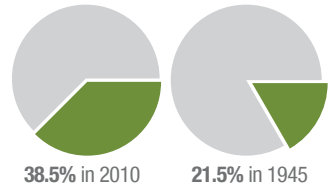
Background

In Belarus forests cover 8 million hectares, approximately 38.5% of the entire country. In 2010, timber stock was 1.6 billion cubic meters and it is projected that in 2030 it will reach 2.2 billion which will be an important carbon sink in coming decades.

All forests belong to the state and 85% are managed by the Ministry of Forestry. This situation creates obstacles for the development of the private timber industry and causes conflicts of interests within state structures which manage, control, and actively use forest resources. Yet the strong state control on forests ensures low levels of illegal logging and protects forests from disastrous fires. All forests in Belarus were certified by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) in 2010 and half of Belarus' state forest enterprises hold certificates under the Forest Stewardship Council system (FSC).

Belarus' forests are important sources of employment and export income (roundwood, sawnwood, plywood mainly exported to EU countries) and for biodiversity protection. The Belovezhskaya Pushcha forest, a World Heritage site, hosts a viable population of European bison, the largest wild herbivore in Europe.

Forest cover
(% of the whole country)



The Program

Following the approval of the ENPI FLEG country workplan in December 2009, a range of core activities have been identified and consolidated in 4 main areas:

- Improving the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) regulatory framework and efficiency of its enforcement;
- Improving the system of forest management, protection and utilization of forest products recording;
- Integrating FLEG processes into local forest management and utilization practices, including support to local initiatives;
- Improving information transparency of FLEG processes.

The ENPI FLEG team works in close cooperation with the Ministry of Forestry. The Program also collaborates with the Republic Forest Industries Association (RFIA), a leading timber industry; NGOs; the APB, which is the largest environmental organization in Belarus; and the association "Country Escape", a business NGO in the area of agroecotourism.

Featured activities



Participants to the all-republic seminar from state forest enterprises

The ENPI FLEG team performed an **analysis of the quality of internet websites** belonging to the Ministry of Forestry. The results were presented at an all-republic seminar in May 2010, where the decision to create websites for all forestry organizations in the country was adopted. A second inventory of internet sites, made in December 2010, showed a very substantial improvement in terms of quantity (85 out of 95 existing State forest enterprises have a website), but often a lack of quality of these tools. In close collaboration with the Ministry of Forestry's press service the Program will work to improve the situation.



Yelnya wetland, Ramsar Site and Globally Important Bird Area

One of the most recent efforts under the ENPI FLEG Program included **sharing experience on efficient ways to fight forest and bog fires**. This became especially meaningful after the disastrous forest and peat bog fires in the Russian Federation in the summer of 2010 that affected millions of people. In Belarus in 2002, following severe drought and resulting bog fires, extensive bog areas had been re-wetted with the support of international donors. This process included nearly 30,000 hectares of peatlands. Despite limited financial resources these efforts were quite successful thanks to the active participation of local residents, environmental organizations and volunteers. The Program analyzed this knowledge and is ready to share it with all the countries where a potential danger of forest and peat bog fires exist.



Private agrotourism manor in northern part of Belarus

A **package of proposals aimed at improving forest management** in Belarus was developed as a result of an analysis of the legislative base and existing forest resource management and usage systems in the country led by the ENPI FLEG Program. Part of these proposals has been reflected in the recently approved Government Program of Forest Sector Development for 2011-2015. Also at legislative level, it is significant that from 1 January 2010 the need for state licenses for logging operations or running tourism businesses was cancelled. This cancellation was a necessity for improving resource management and has created new opportunities to develop private business operations in Belarus' forest sector. These opportunities include logging, reforestation, recreation and multiple use management of resources in general.

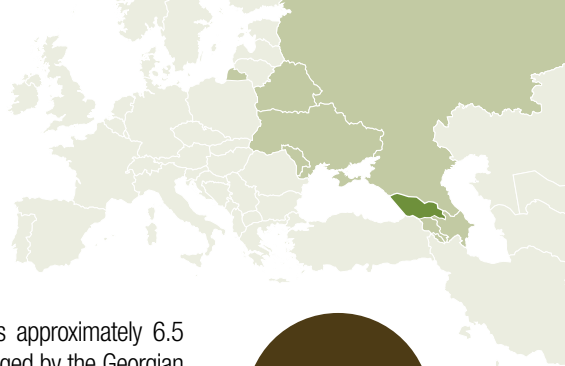


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Georgia



Background

The total territory of Georgia measures approximately 6.5 million hectares. Forest fund land, managed by the Georgian Forestry Agency, occupies around 3 million hectares and includes bogs, wetlands, and other non-forested areas. Pure forest land occupies approximately 2,700 hectares. The information has not been updated through a forest inventory for more than 10 years. Georgian forest resources are estimated to be 450 million cubic meters.



Georgia's land
40% forest
60% other land

Georgia's forests are threatened by unsustainable forest practices and climate change. Some examples of these unsustainable practices are illegal logging and grazing. The factors which cause the degradation and loss of Georgia's forests are intertwined in a complex system. International and domestic markets in Georgia focus mainly on profit, and stakeholders pay little or no attention to the environmental and social impacts of their activities. Due to the lack of alternative energy supplies, people in forest dependent communities are forced to cut trees illegally. National forestry policy is poorly developed while legal frameworks are weakened by gaps and conflicts in the legislation.

The Program

The main objectives of the Program in Georgia are to contribute to establishing legal and sustainable forest management and practices, strengthening the rule of law, and enhancing local livelihoods. To achieve these goals, the country work plan includes four sets of activities:

- Raising awareness of the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) process, public involvement in decision making and strengthening communication capacities of key institutions;
- Increasing national ownership and improving FLEG planning and monitoring by national institutions;
- Training and capacity building of decision makers and specialists from stakeholder authorities for improved forest governance and law enforcement;
- Regional/cross country collaboration and knowledge sharing.

The ENPI FLEG Program has recently started working with the Forestry Agency on the preparation of a communication strategy for the Agency, including a communication action plan, brand book, and website.

Featured activities



Survey among the local population in Sagarejo district © M.Kavtarishvili

Experts from the Vasil Gulisashvili Forest Institute, a partner of the Program, conducted a **study on the economic and social impact of unsustainable forest practices** in Georgia. An initial phase of the study looked at analyzing key legislation such as the Georgian Forest Code; the Georgian Law on Licenses and Permissions; and the Law on Self-government and Adopted Forest Management Plans. The outcomes of the study concluded that forest legislation requires improvement in order to achieve an effective mechanism to ensure the sustainable use of forest resources. In addition it was concluded that the decentralization of the forest system is needed; responsibilities and duties of local forestry units in the decision-making process need to be identified; and procedures for forest usage permission must be simplified.



Journalist shooting during field trip © S.Pirgauri

Civil journalism – which by definition is independent from political or economic pressures – has become a very popular concept because it is seen as a main prerequisite for building civil society and improving law enforcement and good governance. On the basis of this trend, the ENPI FLEG team in Georgia has organized **training for journalists**. A first training session in Environmental Civil Journalism took place in Abastumani. Nineteen journalists (selected from 80 applicants) representing national and regional media, including newspapers, radio, TV stations, internet portals, news agencies and media related organizations were selected and took part in the training. Another training was held in Telavi and involved journalists from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia. Numerous video clips, blogs and articles which can be found at www.enpi-fleg.org resulted from the meetings.



Regional workshop on transboundary timber flow © WWF CauPO

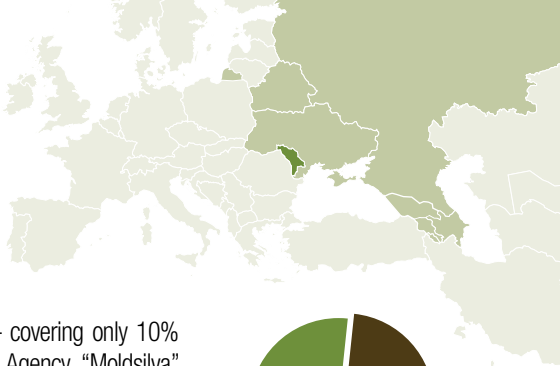
A **regional workshop on Trans-Boundary Timber Trade** was held in Tbilisi, Georgia. The main objective of the workshop was to assess the current situation of transboundary timber trade in the countries of the ENA Region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine) plus Turkey. Existing problems and capacity gaps that could induce wood smuggling and other illegal activities were identified and mitigation strategies were discussed. The workshop contributed to the creation of one of the seven major outputs of the Program: improved regional and sub-regional collaboration and knowledge sharing.



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Moldova



Background

Moldova's forest resources are modest – covering only 10% of the whole territory. The State Forest Agency “Moldsilva” manages the majority of forested land, while the rest is administered by local governments and only a small part is privately-owned. Not only are forests home to great biodiversity (80% of the country's protected area network is on forest land), they are also essential to local communities for fuel and domestic use. According to data, 40% of forest growth is used annually and the consumption of wood is primarily linked to heating. The effects of unsustainable forest management and illegal activities include: significant loss of revenue for the forestry sector and, more importantly, for rural communities; degradation of the environment and forest ecosystems; loss of biodiversity; and loss of carbon stocks, which further exacerbates the effects of climate change on rural communities.



Illegally logged wood during 1997-2004

■ 24.6% in Moldsilva's forests
■ 75.4% in local authorities' forests

Illegal logging is considered a major problem in the forestry sector. Since the mid-1990s, the Government of Moldova has approved a series of special policies and regulatory documents on forestry. The Parliament of Moldova has adopted several decisions and amendments to existing laws on the prevention and combating of illegal logging. One of the main factors in illegal logging is the lack of legal provisions for the forests administered by local governments in the country's Forest Code.

The Program

As a parallel process to the development of a Moldovan National Action Plan relating to forest resources, the ENPI FLEG Program was established to improve governance structures and to strengthen sustainable forest management practices. The Program focuses on:

- Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) training (geographic information systems, digital forest mapping, database usage) for forestry staff (governmental, community level, private), local authorities, judiciary bodies, customs officers;
- Capacity building for forest management planning at community level;
- Legislative analysis with the intent of improving forest legislation;
- Analytical studies (real consumption of wood, illegal logging) and socio-economic impact of inefficient forest management practices on local communities;
- Information and communication campaigns with key audiences (government, local communities, private sector, NGOs).

Featured activities



The ENPI FLEG team evaluating standing timber in "Moldsilva" forest

An **analytical study on wood consumption** revealed that the needs of local authorities for wood products in the country are currently not met and demand is on the increase. Although according to official statistics the share of the forestry sector used for energy purposes is rather low, Moldova's population consumes large volumes of wood for heating which are several times higher than the authorized harvesting quotas. Preliminary data appears to indicate that most fuel-wood comes from illegal logging. Another study is currently assessing illegal logging and its impact on local communities. Preliminary results reveal a rate of illegal logging ranging from 5.5 cubic meters per 1000 hectares in forest land managed by "Moldsilva" compared to 114.3 cubic meters per 1000 hectares in community forests managed by local authorities. However, actual timber volumes and forests illegally logged could be significantly higher, with the most vulnerable being community forests.



Typical occurrence: Illegally logged tree in an existing forest enterprise

The ENPI FLEG team closely **cooperates with the Moldovan NGO community**. The public forest association "Silva-Mileniu III" is developing training materials for creating and using databases and geographic information systems (GIS) which will be useful for FLEG. They are also developing digital forest maps to support sustainability assessments of logging practices. The environmental NGO "Eco-Spectru" will conduct a community forest management planning study in several districts of Moldova. They are also organizing several workshops with local communities dependent on forests, and will provide local authorities with educational / training materials on forest management planning (47 studies and 94 maps). The NGO Ecological Society "Biotica" was engaged to strengthen institutional and human capacities of entities subordinate to the Forest Agency Moldsilva (ICAS, nature reserves, forestry units)".



Event "Moldovan forests: reality, problems, solutions"

On 7th December 2010 the ENPI FLEG team in cooperation with the EU Delegation to Moldova, the ENPI Info centre, and PARC Communication Agency organized the **event "Moldovan forests: reality, problems, solutions"** at the Moldovan State University. The event was part of a road show which aimed to draw attention to forests, the application of legal provisions and forest sector management, citizens' access to information on the legal use of forest resources and European Union actions oriented to forest protection and management.



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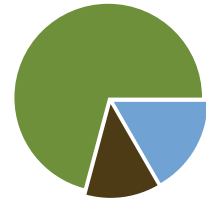


Russia

Background

Russia hosts a significant share of the planet's forest resources (ca 80.5 billion cubic meters equaling to 21% of the world timber stock). Russian forests are one of the four remaining mega-areas of intact forests in the world.

The current level of illegal logging is estimated at the level of 15%, however in some areas this percentage can reach up to 80% being one of the world's highest ratios. There is a strong preference especially among illegal loggers to cut trees of high value or endangered species (Korean Pine, Far Eastern Linden, other deciduous trees). At the same time Russia hosts the greatest area of certified forest stands (Forest Stewardship Council -FSC) in the world.



Legal harvesting volumes



The recent reform of the forest legislation and the introduction of the new Forest Code in 2007 led to a significant restructuring of forest management and governance systems. This has resulted in a drastic decrease of illegal logging controls, forest law enforcement, safeguard of honest competition of small and large businesses, and forest resource use by local citizens. Forest management responsibilities have been transferred from the Federal authorities to regional administrations which caused unbalances in forest protection and sustainability across the different regions of Russia. The long distances among regions and recent economic difficulties have complicated timber trade control. Recent catastrophic forest fires revealed an overall disintegration of the forest management system and an urgent need for the optimization of forest governance in the country.

The Program

The major priority areas for the ENPI FLEG Program in Russia are the following:

- Increasing efficiency of the forest legislation system;
- Increasing transparency in forest logging, processing and trade chains;
- Improving coordination among forest governance governmental agencies;
- Supporting rural livelihoods in forests and securing their rights for access to forest timber and non-timber products;
- Safeguarding access of citizens and stakeholders to information on forest management and timber trade.

Priority is given to those activities which can provide immediate results to bring relief to current tensions in the forestry sphere and provide practical tools for forest law enforcement and governance. Recent consultations with stakeholders revealed an extreme interest in rapid response and resolution of the existing legal and organizational contradictions in the Russian forest sector. The ENPI FLEG team has already achieved significant results by cooperating with all stakeholders and at all administrative levels.

Featured activities



Abandoned timber in Buriatia near Lake Baikal

A series of amendments to Russian Federal forest legislation have been submitted to the Federal authorities. The ENPI FLEG Program team initiated and coordinated the submission to the State Duma (the Russian Parliament) of a series of amendments which are aimed at improving forest law enforcement and governance and solving issues of illegal logging, enhancing effective timber origin tracking, increasing transparency in the forest sector, more effectively controlling sustainable forest use, improving fire prevention and access of local citizens to forest resources. These amendments are under consideration.



Siberian Taiga in the vicinity of Krasnoyarsk

One such amendment is refining **training modules (including distance learning modules) on forest law enforcement** as part of continuous education programs for managers and specialists from forest management authorities. The ENPI FLEG team has drafted the training modules whose aim is to increase capacities of the forestry sector specialists and decision-makers to more effectively manage forest resources. The training modules were tested during two back-to-back 10-day courses with participation of forest businesses and high school representatives (40 specialists from 18 Russian regions). This testing demonstrated the high value of the product for representatives of administrations of all levels (federal, regional and local), forestry management enterprises, forest sector businesses and NGO representatives. The modules are designed to provide knowledge in such areas as forest legislation, law enforcement and governance, forest certification, and transparency in the forest sector.



Polistovsky Nature Reserve ecotrail

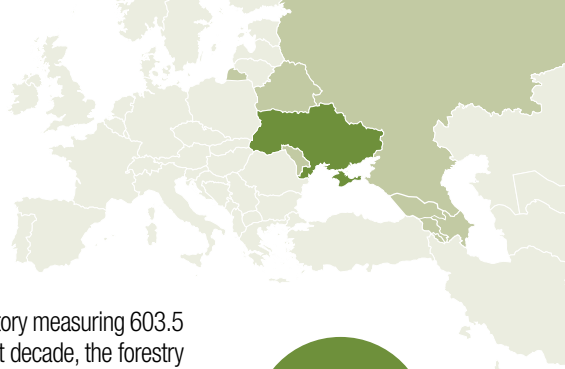
In fall 2010 an **environmental trail** was started in Polistovsky Nature Reserve (Pskovskaya oblast) to demonstrate the potential of utilizing non-timber forest resources as an important component of local economic development. The work was done in close cooperation with the local administration, local forestry department, and Reserve staff with support from the ENPI FLEG experts. The local administration plans to use this as an example of development of ecotourism. Information about this positive experience was broadly disseminated across Russia through a press tour organized by ENPI FLEG which resulted in over 15 publications.



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Ukraine



Background

Forests cover 17.5% of the Ukrainian territory measuring 603.5 thousand square kilometers. Over the past decade, the forestry sector has expanded and public awareness has also increased yet there are scarcer wood resources in the country. Negative factors such as illegal logging and illegal timber trade pose a serious danger to forests impacting not only the economy but also the international image of the country. Despite optimistic official statistics, practically no coordinated efforts have been taken to measure legal violations and resulting damages, or to identify the root causes of these problems, nor to develop joint action plans aimed at rectifying the situation.



Forest Management

- 70% by State Forestry Committee
- 30% Other

The recently adopted Forest Code (2006) and the concept of reforming and developing forestry in the Ukraine (2006) did not succeed in bringing quick positive results. Frequent forestry violations and crimes persist. An administrative reform which encompasses forest management is underway. Given a host of pressing problems in the Ukrainian forest sector, the successful implementation of the administrative forestry reform along with other relevant structural changes would largely depend on the positive results of international projects implemented in Ukraine, with the ENPI FLEG Program being a key support for the country's forest sector.

The Program

The overall national objectives of the ENPI FLEG Program in Ukraine are:

- Develop, test and introduce an effective mechanism for public participation in the forest management decision-making process;
- Develop an efficient communication strategy and information facilities for the Ukrainian forestry sector;
- Promote the Program's results and outreach, especially among the population directly influenced by forest problems;
- Increase awareness and enhance the commitment of stakeholders to the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) process.

From the very beginning of the ENPI FLEG Program in the Ukraine, a strong cooperation framework has been developed with environmental NGOs in the country. Active cooperation with leading Ukrainian sociologists resulted in a number of important, and quite often unique, studies primarily on Ukrainian forest laws and relevant national regulations, and sociological surveys of local populations and small businesses on legal access to timber and other forest resources. Continuous interest in the ENPI FLEG Program in Ukraine by the media culminated in a number of articles being published in national newspapers and a TV clip aired on the National TV Channel.

Featured activities



Carpathian region

The issue of **public participation and access to information on forest management** was the subject of an analysis carried out in the country. Results showed that the main sources of forestry information are experts, self research and the internet. The press, television, and especially radios do not have proper capacity in this sector. The analysis prompted a number of recommendations submitted to the State Forestry Committee: more attention should be given to the development, functioning and contents of the official websites of the State Forestry Committee and its departments; a regulation should be developed for efficient provision of written information on forestry issues; and systems ensuring effective involvement of the public and local communities in the decision-making process on forest management are needed.



Participants to the scientific workshop

On 12 November 2010, the Ukrainian Green Cross Society, an ENPI FLEG partner, organized a scientific workshop on the **social and economic consequences of ineffective forest management on local communities**. Special attention was paid to the problems of illegal felling, and in particular to social and economic factors of illegal activities in the field of forest resource use. Other issues such as the potential legalization of illegal sawmills through certification; incentives for the sustainable use of forest resources by local populations; and the legal aspects of natural afforestation of abandoned lands were tackled. About 50 specialists representing local self-governing bodies, the forest sector, science, education, environmental NGOs, and mass media participated in the workshop.



Carpathian region

A **poll on forest management** was conducted by the Center for Social and Marketing Research "SOCIS" among the local population. Around 1,200 respondents representing the rural adult population were interviewed in a number of districts in June 2010. The results were: 60% of respondents believe it is necessary to increase liability for illegal tree felling in order to make improvements in forest management, timber harvesting and sales; 41% think that only a small number of cases of illegal tree felling are disclosed in their area while the rest of such cases are concealed; 5% think that it is necessary to privatize forests and transfer them to private owners to ensure better management efficiency. These outcomes will be further used in the planning and preparation of future ENPI FLEG activities.



The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the ENPI FLEG Program team and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union, the World Bank, IUCN or WWF.



ENPI FLEG

Improving Forest Law Enforcement and Governance
in the European Neighbourhood Policy East Countries and Russia

Future prospects

In just a couple of years, the ENPI FLEG Program has established a strong network in the ENPI East countries and the Russian Federation thanks to the close cooperation of its three implementing organizations (World Bank, WWF and IUCN) and the European Commission. Actively supported by national and local governments, the Program has generated unprecedented government cooperation and a significant number of actions aimed at increasing the sustainable use of forest resources in the seven participating countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine). The Program has been instrumental to advancing the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) process in the region and has supported communities with local economic development and sustainable livelihoods.

The current phase of the Program has served to highlight the need for increased action on sustainable forest management in each of the partner countries, and also in neighbouring countries not part of the ENPI FLEG Program. Newly formed, and previously established, forest networks have accumulated valuable new information throughout the region by implementing studies and surveys. The results of these activities represent a valuable source of information to use for future action.

The formation of Advisory Committees (NPACs) provides an important link to government ministries and is one of the major reasons for the impressive degree of successful activities carried out in the participating countries. The implementers of ENPI FLEG have successfully blended government cooperation and expert implementation of activities designed to move towards improving long-term sustainable forest management.

With the backing and shared commitment of cooperating countries, ENPI FLEG is now poised to further its positive impact on forest resources and on the people who depend on these resources. The goal is to strengthen and deepen ENPI FLEG impacts in order to ensure the best use of the Program's resources.

The new goals will ensure a continuation of the actions started with the current phase of the Program and will lead to their enhancement. Current results could be replicated in other communities across the whole ENPI region and Central Asia.

Partnerships and Opportunities

The second phase of the ENPI FLEG Program would offer great opportunities for strengthening sustainable forest management in the existing network of countries and beyond. Collaboration with ENPI FLEG for improving forest law enforcement ensures better consideration of national forestry sector needs and the sustainable use of forest resources. Here we provide some concrete suggestions for the follow-up to the current phase in participating countries.

For more information, contact info@enpi-fleg.org.

Regional focus areas

- Development of sustainable economic alternatives, considering the pressures on the resilience of rural communities;
- Increased utilisation of wood biomass residues for renewable energy production for rural communities and exploration of the potential for export to Europe to respond to the EU renewable energy target;
- Effective timber tracking system to establish a chain of custody, strengthen the legal framework and enforcement;
- Expand local processing capacity to export finished products instead of illegally harvested raw timber;
- Continue sharing and promoting best practices for sustainable forest management.

Country priorities

Armenia

Increase private sector participation in the FLEG process, strengthen sustainable forest utilization practices, increase law enforcement for preventing illegal harvesting, introduce advanced technologies for monitoring and information management (State Forest Monitoring Centre), and expand alternative livelihood related to sustainable use of forest resources (e.g. eco-tourism).

Azerbaijan

Strengthen the sharing of best practices for sustainable forest use, establish alternative sources of income for local communities not based on illegal forest use, and strengthen forest law enforcement.

Belarus

Improve local livelihoods and sustainable forest management, strengthen and increase law enforcement, further develop and implement forest certification systems, and assist NGOs' involvement in decision-making to sustain the FLEG process.

Georgia

Strengthen local capacity for improving sustainable livelihood development, improve standards for sustainable forest management practices according to international levels, improve FLEG planning and monitoring, increase regional sharing of knowledge on forest practices, and improve the national wood tracking system.

Moldova

Develop forest certification regulations, strengthen the development of forest management plans and implementation, continue with forest governance reforms, develop mitigation strategies to reduce illegal harvesting, strengthen the sharing of sustainable forest management practices, and finalise the development of a new version of the FLEG National Action Plan.

Russia

Increase measures for forest law enforcement, strengthen the development of legal alternative sources of forest income, and support the rural forest-based economic development activities and incentives.

Ukraine

Increase national ownership and capacity to develop a FLEG National Action Plan and compliance of forest legislation with the EU legal framework, improve the wood-tracking system, strengthen sustainable forest management, increase forestry and wood-processing activities for improving employment and income, increase inter-sectoral cooperation and investment in the forest sector.

