



ENPI FLEG

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



Arboreum Georgia

Quarterly Newsletter for the “Improving Forest Law Enforcement and Governance in the European Neighbourhood Policy East Countries and Russia” Program
December 2009 - February 2010

ENPI FLEG Program

"Improving Forest Law Enforcement and Governance in the European Neighbourhood Policy East Countries and Russia" (The ENPI FLEG) program has been implemented in response to the growing problem of illegal forest activities in the participating countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine). Illegal forest activities include illegal logging, timber theft and smuggling, trade of illegal wood, unauthorised forest conversion, unclear legislation, unclear tenure arrangements and lack of enforcement of forest regulations due to corruption. The effects of unsustainable forest management and illegal forest activities include: loss of revenue to governments, the private sector and local livelihoods (especially forest-dependent communities); degradation of forest ecosystems and loss of biodiversity; loss of carbon stocks and climate change (deforestation accounts for 20% of global CO₂ emissions); and creating a negative image for the sector and the producing countries. More information....

IUCN

IUCN is working in partnership with WWF and the World Bank to implement the ENPI-FLEG Program in Georgia. The organization is supporting in-country Program implementation through active involvement in different key directions and activities of Program implementation. Activities include raising FLEG awareness and increasing public participation in the decision making process, planning and monitoring of FLEG related issues by national institutions as well as regional collaboration and knowledge sharing. More information....

WWF Caucasus Programme Office

WWF Caucasus Programme Office is actively involved in this Program, mainly through working with the private sector. Specifically, private wood-processing companies will be provided with up-to-date information on responsible wood purchasing policies. Specialists from private forest inventory companies will be trained in more advanced and efficient wood assessment methods. WWF's activities will also involve the evaluation of wood-tracking systems, which have been newly developed in Georgia, specifically in assessment of the system implementation by the private companies and identification of possible ways to improve it. More information....

The World Bank

The World Bank is one of Program implementing partners. The organization is implementing activities such as increasing national ownership and improving FLEG planning and monitoring by national institutions, capacity building of stakeholder authorities and regional collaboration and knowledge sharing. All these issues include activities that the World Bank is carrying out in the framework of the Program implementation in Georgia. More information....

ENPI FLEG Program News

HOW THE ILLEGAL LOGGING IMPACTS THE RURAL POPULATION OF GEORGIA: A STUDY TO BE CONDUCTED



Photo by WWF Caucasus Programme Office

Recently an agreement to conduct study on socio-economic impact of unsustainable forest practices was signed between IUCN Regional office for Pan-Europe and Vasil Gulisashvili Forest Institute.

The following tasks will be performed during the execution of the project – studying and assessing the economic and social impact of inefficient and unsustainable forest practices and illegal logging on rural population of Georgia; preparation of practical recommendations; identifying of suitable pilot areas for implementing small scale projects that aim to strengthen local capacity for improving possibilities for livelihood development; and for creating strategies to expand the scope for those projects.

The study will also include field work and interviews with local governments, local units of forestry administration, community organizations and forest-dependent communities, population and the stakeholders groups. Stakeholders' consultations will take place in the course of the project.

ENPI FLEG Program News

COMMUNICATION MEETING FOR ENPI FLEG PROGRAM IN GEORGIA

Photo by M. Kavtarashvili



On frosty of January 2010, IUCN Southern Caucasus office in Tbilisi hosted first Communication Meeting of the ENPI FLEG Program. Program coordinator, consultants, and country communication coordinators from Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia, as well as Joint Communications Team Leader from IUCN European office and experts from WB and WWF, visited Georgia in order to discuss communication strategies, activities,

monitoring and evaluation issues.

Two days of constructive discussions, brainstorming and practical exercises ended in a number of decisions, related to the future national and regional communication activities of the Program. The necessity for more regional activities and joint communication efforts in the ENPI FLEG program was emphasized by all the participants of the Communication Meeting.

STUDY ON CURRENT FOREST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN GEORGIA

Photo by K. Nakashidze



One of the ENPI FLEG components in Georgia includes a Study on Current Practices in the Forest Management and their comparison with the internationally acknowledged sustainable forest management standards.

The study started in Georgia in November 2009 and aimed to research current forest management standards and practices in Georgia by focusing on four pilot areas; to compare those standards and practices with internationally acknowledged sustainable forest management standards, and to prepare recommendations for improvements of existing forest management practices in Georgia. An Inception report was prepared by the research consultant Mr. Merab Machavariani. The results of the inception report was the identification of 4 pilot areas, where the field work shall take place.

The Inception report also included general information about existing forest practices and relevant documents at the national and international levels, together with the methodology to be used for their comparison.

ENPI FLEG GEORGIAN STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

On November 24, IUCN office for Southern Caucasus hosted an event under the ENPI FLEG program, a stakeholder meeting on the inception report on the practices being conducted by forestry expert Merab Machavariani.

Photo by K. Nakashidze



This first stakeholder meeting was used to find out what type of output is needed by relevant state bodies and non-governmental organizations.

A very interesting and practical idea was suggested by one of the participants. It was later summarized as a proposal for the new activity to be undertaken by IUCN in Georgia, as follows: "Legal and institutional analyses of forest use regulations and procedures in order to identify weaknesses which create enabling environment for corruption. Preparation

of recommendations for improvement. Publication: Guidelines for calculation of damage inflicted on forest resources".

This publication will be very useful and practical both for related rangers/ forestry employees, as well as NGOs involved in forest illegal logging monitoring.

Environmental News in Georgia



Photo @ GHN

EXPERTS FORECAST DISASTER DUE TO EXCESSIVE LOGGING IN AKHMETA DISTRICT

Experts surmise that a natural disaster can occur in Akhmeta district. As former Chairman of Forest Department Bidzina Giorgobiani declared, the long-term rent of tens of thousand hectares of Akhmeta forest have been granted on lease over the recent 3 years and the current situation on the territory is out of control. (GHN) [More information....](#)

KVARELI AND TELAVI GET DEFORESTED

Chestnut-tree forests are being destroyed at Kvareli and Telavi districts, according to the information given by local people to Kakheti Information Center. Cases of illegal commercial logging are particularly frequent in the villages of Lafankuri and Akhalsofeli. According with the local authorities, criminals usually proceed with illegal logging by night. (GHN) [More information....](#)

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT PRESENTS PROGRESS REPORT 2009

The Minister for Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, Goga Khachidze, presented the report on the work implemented in 2009 to representatives of society and the media. (GHN) [More information....](#)

POLLING OF RESIDENTS OF BAGDATI AND VANI

Representatives of "Georgian Wood and Industrial Development Ltd." have arranged the polling of the local population in Bagdati and Vani districts. The purpose was to inquire the status of the exploitation of the local forest resources. Total of 190 respondents have participated in the polling (84 in Bagdati district and 106 in Vani district). (GHN) [More information....](#)

SEVERAL eDbases OF FOREST DEPARTMENT SET UP

Several e-Databases of Forest Department were set up in 2009 to reflect the status of special felling land plots, wood chips, developing of poor timber areas (land plots with cut and broken trees/bushes) allocated for firewood supply, also, of the allocation special felling forests. (GHN) [More information....](#)

OPPOSITION PROTESTS AGAINST THE ROAD PAVED FOR THROW IN KHELVACHAURI

In Khelvachauri, Zeda Jocho, namely, on the territory attached to "Ghele-Ghurdani" restaurant, the road is paved to facilitate throw. This fact triggered a protest among representatives of the opposition. (GHN) [More information....](#)

TESTED PLANTING STOCK TO BE RAISED IN GEORGIA FOR THE FIRST TIME

February 4, Minister of Environment Protection Goga Khachidze paid a visit to Sartichala Nursery Forest, in order to become acquainted with the modern nurture technology. With the assistance of GTZ, WWF, and also, with the help of several foreign experts, the process of raising of the artificial (container-raisen) saplings has launched in Georgia for the first time. (GHN) [More information....](#)



Photo @ GHN



Legislation

December 30, 2009 President approved Agreement "On Cooperation between Government of Georgia and Government of Republic of Turkey in the sphere of Nature Protection and Forest Management". This Agreement had been signed on 4th of December, in Tbilisi. February 15, 2010, Minister of Nature Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia signed Decree # 5 concerning the rule to award state forest fund lands as Land of Special Category. This rule is deemed to settle the procedure and conditions of special forest management, also the awarding of state forest fund lands and forests of special category. See the full text version of the Order # 5 on our website www.enpi-fleg.ge.

Additionally, changes and amendments have entered a number of laws, orders and decrees. For instance, the Rule # 96 of the Georgian Government (as of May 10, 2007) "Concerning the Approving of Rule "On Inclusion and Exclusion of Land-plots in and from State Forest Fund"" have been amended. In accordance with this rule, new regulating norms have been approved, according to which land-plots should be either included or excluded in/out of state forest fund land. The relevant paperwork has been submitted to the Ministry. The relevant laws, rules, decrees and statements may be found at the ENPI FLEG site.

International News

CLIMATE CHANGE AND COPENHAGEN CLIMATE SUMMIT

Copenhagen, Denmark, 19 December 2009, IUCN - World leaders in Copenhagen have taken a first and useful step to slow the course of climate change – a threat that is already affecting people, ecosystems and biodiversity in many parts of the world. A global, legally-binding climate change treaty must be the next step. For more information on IUCN position please visit IUCN web site.

Announcements

IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) is seeking for a Trainer to execute the TRAINING IN ENVIRONMENTAL CIVIL JOURNALISM in the framework of ENPI FLEG program, to be held in May 2010 in Abastumani.

The information flow in the world has been significantly changed lately, due to different social and economic changes in the society. First of all, mainstream mass-media sources that were initially intended to be a tool, interconnecting various social groups, have in many countries become a control arm of powerful economic/ oligarchic structures, influencing the mass consciousness with their hidden agenda. More information....

Publications/ Online resources

The ENPI FLEG program implementation plan includes awareness rising and public involvement activities, together with strengthening of communication capacities of key institutions. One of the direct activities in this respect envisages issuance of regular electronic newsletter and publication of leaflets about ENPI FLEG in Georgian and English languages. Leaflets are prepared and printed in Georgian and English languages. For hard copies of leaflets, please contact IUCN Southern Caucasus Office. Electronic versions can be downloaded from our web site.

Also, Georgian website of ENPI FLEG program was launched, where information about Georgian forest will be consolidated.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON TRANSBOUNDARY TIMBER FLOW

Regional workshop on transboundary timber flow in the region – problem identification capacity building needs assessment will take place in Spring 2010. The main objectives are to assess current situation with respect to transboundary timber trade in the countries of the FLEG Program and identify existing problems/weaknesses in terms of legislation, relevant documentation, customs procedures and capacities, which create favourable grounds for wood smuggling and other related illegal activities. This workshop will be an opportunity and a platform where participants/stakeholders can share information/knowledge on the transboundary timber flow issues and identify gaps in each country.

For more information please contact Iliia Osepashvili iosepashvili@wwfcaucasus.ge

About ENPI FLEG Program

The ENPI FLEG project supports governments of participating countries, civil society and the private sector in the development of sound and sustainable forest management practices, including the prevention of illegal forestry activities. Participating countries include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. This project is funded by the European Union.

www.enpi-fleg.org

Project Partners



World Bank

The World Bank is one of the world's largest sources of funding for the developing world. Its primary focus is on helping the poorest people and the poorest countries. It uses its financial resources, its staff, and extensive experience to help developing countries reduce poverty, increase economic growth, and improve their quality of life. www.worldbank.org



IUCN

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges. IUCN works on biodiversity, climate change, energy, human livelihoods and greening the world economy by supporting scientific research, managing field projects all over the world, and bringing governments, NGOs, the UN and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice. IUCN is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organization, with more than 1,000 government and NGO members and almost 11,000 volunteer experts in some 160 countries. IUCN's work is supported by over 1,000 staff in 60 offices and hundreds of partners in public, NGO and private sectors around the world. www.iucn.org



WWF

WWF is one of the world's largest and most respected independent conservation organizations, with almost 5 million supporters and a global network active in over 100 countries. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the earth's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption. www.panda.org

CONTACTS

This newsletter was prepared by the IUCN Southern Caucasus team in Georgia. For your comments and feedback please contact: ekaterine.otarashvili@iucn.org

In order to submit your paper/news please contact ekaterine.nakashidze@enpi-fleg.org

HOW TO UNSUBSCRIBE: In order to unsubscribe please visit <http://www.enpi-fleg.ge>

NEWSLETTERS ARCHIVE: Archive of newsletters is accessible online at <http://www.enpi-fleg.ge>

