COUNTRY WORKPLAN FOR THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Area 1
   Improving the FLEG planning and monitoring at the national, local, and interagency levels

Activity 1.2.
   Improving forest law enforcement and governance mechanisms

Task 1.2.3.
   To improve forest policy implementation tools: a methodology of designing forest development programs as a basis for forest management

Report Summary

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Executive summary

The EU funded regional program titled: EUROPEAN NEIGHBORHOOD AND PARTNERSHIP INSTRUMENT (ENPI) EAST COUNTRIES FOREST LAW ENFORCEMENT AND GOVERNANCE (FLEG) II PROGRAM (ENPI EAST COUNTRIES FLEG II PROGRAM) is aimed at putting in place improved forest governance arrangements through the effective implementation of the main priorities set out in the St. Petersburg Ministerial Declaration and Indicative Plan of Actions on the Europe and North Asia Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (ENA FLEG). The Program is to support the participating countries strengthen forest governance through improving implementation of relevant international processes, enhancing their forest policy, legislation and institutional arrangements, and developing, testing and evaluating sustainable forest management models at the local level on a pilot basis for future replication.

According to the Russian Framework Policy of Forest Use, Protection and Renewal (‘Russian Forest Policy Framework’) for the Period up to 2030, approved by Directive of the Government of the Russian Federation # 1724-p of September 26, 2013, critical prerequisites for achieving its goals and priority objectives include good forest governance. In the Russian Federation and its regions, forest management is based on forest sector development programs (‘forest programs’).

The main goal of the work was to identify specific and systemic gaps and inconsistencies and to find ways for improving strategic planning in the forest sector through evaluating the existing regulatory and legal frameworks and current practices of drafting federal programs and regional targeted programs in the pilot regions.

The report contains the following outputs: (1) a review of the existing regulatory and legal frameworks for the development and implementation of national forest programs, (2) a review of the approved forest programs, and (3) general conclusions from the reviews as well as references and annexes. 1

1 The analytical data and conclusions of the Report may be complemented, changed, specified and further developed in the course of fulfilling the assignment.
The undertaken analysis of the current regulatory and legal frameworks reveals the following gaps:

- lack of mechanisms to define targets for the indicators in the process of programming on the basis of specifics of the regional context, current situation and development projections for the forest sector;
- lack of a mechanism for interagency coordination and collaboration with ‘adjacent’ sectors (e.g., road infrastructure development, logistics hubs, ports, linear facilities);
- no established procedures for undertaking professional external (among other things, independent) reviews of draft targeted programs;
- Matters of involving local self-governance bodies and local communities in forest management are left beyond the scope of regulatory requirements;
- There are no regulations, setting standard rates for costs of forest management operations under targeted programs.

As follows from the completed comparative analysis of the ongoing targeted forest programs and a survey of specialists, responsible for their development at the federal level and in the pilot regions, the current practice of strategic planning has a number of systemic deficiencies.

It is found out that there is no single methodological approach to arrange and manage processes of program development. It results into the ‘TOP DOWN’ planning in most Russian regions. This practice prevents from accommodating opinions of rayon and municipal level specialists, personally responsible for the implementation of ‘handed down’ programs.

Goals and objectives of regional programs sometimes fail to be based on forest development priorities, taking into account economic, environmental and social specifics of a given Russian region.

In many cases, targets for regional program performance indicators disagree with those for the national program. There are mistakes in some targets for indications.

Though the Russian Forest Policy is aimed, among other things, at promoting multiple forest use, this aspect still remains beyond the scope of strategic planning, and hence, is not integrated into forest governance as no forestry development programs
include activities or targets for multiple use of forest resources and forest lands. In addition, practically in all pilot regions, except for the Arkhangelsk Oblast, forestry development plans fail to agree with plans of timber industry development.

Based on the identified systemic gaps, the following general recommendations are made:

1. Under the budget deficit, it is necessary to set right economic, environmental and social priorities of forest development in each Russian region in its forest policy or another document.

2. Forest programs should pay attention to multiple use of forest resources and forest lands.

3. Timber industry development should not be left beyond the scope of targeted programs. It is necessary to include measures to increase forest revenue through increasing the intensity and efficiency of forest use.

4. Russian regions have gained vast experience of developing programs, therefore, it would very useful to share it from time to time with others, including FLEG program countries.

5. Authors of targeted programs must have special knowledge for projecting and planning, so, an appropriate program of training and/or professional development should be designed for them.
Content

1. Review of the existing regulatory and legal frameworks for designing and implementing government programs of forest sector development.
2. Review of the approved forest development programs.
3. Survey of specialists responsible for the development of targeted programs in pilot regions.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

References

Annexes