Regional Newsletter

WINTER 2016

Timber Traceability System in Moldova may be Extended at National Level  p. 10

New United Forestry Enterprise of Ukraine: What Should it Be?  p. 9

More Initiatives to Support Ecotourism in Russia  p. 12

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INTRODUCTION

Having reached the final year of ENPI FLEG II implementation, all of us are taking a breath and reflecting on the work that has been implemented and results achieved. It is indeed a pleasure for me to provide a lead-in to the winter edition of the FLEG Newsletter. Not only do I want to extend my sincere thanks to the European Commission and Austrian Development Agency for their support, but to also reflect on the St. Petersburg Declaration, from which we focus on the elements promised and turn them into realities.

In the ENPI East Region and Russia millions of people are dependent to some degree on forests for their livelihoods, well-being, and income. Environmental products — i.e. products from non-cultivated ecosystems such as natural forests, woodlands, wetlands, lakes, rivers, and grasslands — can be a significant income source for rural households providing energy, food, construction and medicines both for subsistence and cash uses. This has come to be known as the "hidden harvest".

I am pleased that FLEG has become a recognized brand. This recognition has been earned through the hard work and dedication of the varied "components" of the Program. As we all face the realities of the future, where we find ourselves facing uncertainties brought about by a changing climate, food security issues, global financial influences and failure to fully understand the complex and diverse role played by forests, I find myself encouraged by the progress made by the FLEG Program. FLEG has not only produced remarkable results it has united a region by viewing it through the "lens" of forest resources. This "lens" is special because it blocks out many biases, preconceived notions, and inertial thought processes and helps direct conversations and processes toward transparency and openness.

As we move toward the formal end of the ENPI FLEG II Program I take great pleasure and solace in the fact that the people who are part of the FLEG II Program are skilled practitioners, experts in many disciplines, see hope where others don’t and have collectively made FLEG II a resounding success. FLEG has made life better for many people as well as for the natural heritage bequeathed to us for safeguarding while we are here.
since June 2015, FLEG II and the Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN) have been supporting the Georgian government in the development of a state program which aims to provide rural populations with sufficient heating resources.

Under the slogan “Forest is Not Firewood”, FLEG points out how forests cannot represent the only available resource to satisfy the energy needs of Georgian households.

Through FLEG’s financial and technical support, the National Working Group created by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection (MoENRP) is discussing the process of development of the state program.

In cooperation with the National Forestry Agency and the MoENRP, FLEG and CENN carried out an assessment of firewood provision and consumption in Georgia. This ground-breaking research includes the analysis of alternative energy sources and their availability in different areas of the country.

The analysis of the energy situation was brought to the attention of the Georgian parliament. On February 9th 2016, Gia Zhorzholiani, Chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Protection Committee, convened a joint sitting with the Regional Policy and Self Governance Committee to discuss the ongoing forest sector reform.

On this occasion, the data provided by FLEG and CENN made a valuable contribution to the debate, and their positions were taken into careful consideration.

VOICES

Marika Kavtarishvili
FLEG Program Coordinator for IUCN Georgia

“The discussion around heating resources provision is still open, but the fruitful collaboration between the FLEG Program and Georgian institutions already represents a very positive achievement”.

Karlo Amirgulashvili
Head of the Forest Policy Service of the MoENRP

“The activities realised within the FLEG Program are a precious support for our Ministry in the development of sectoral policies”.

LEARN MORE:
http://www.enpi-fleg.org/news/forest-is-not-firewood

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LEG II presented this and other reform-related proposals in a letter to the National Reform Council under the President of Ukraine. Similar letters were sent to committees of Verkhovna Rada and a number of relevant ministries and agencies.

This letter is the result of a round table that FLEG II organized in Kyiv on December 17, 2015. It gathered representatives of Verkhovna Rada and key government agencies responsible for the forest sector reform and European integration, national and foreign experts, business, donors and the public.

“The forest sector reform is about the management of our key nature resource, the heritage of Ukrainian people. The responsibility for the forest management is divided between several ministries and regional and local authorities. Taking that into account, it is critical to create a high-level working group that will lead the work on the reform safeguarding the state and public interests”, the letter says.

To implement this reform, FLEG II suggests creating a high-level working group including competent national and international experts in the working group. FLEG experts are also ready to make a contribution to the reform preparation and implementation, if this process is transparent and is carried out in the interests of the state and the public.

The authors of the letter suggest including competent national and international experts in the working group. FLEG experts are also ready to make a contribution to the reform preparation and implementation, if this process is transparent and is carried out in the interests of the state and the public.

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**Learn More:**
IN FOCUS

Moldova: Forest Dependency in a Nutshell

A survey conducted in 3 Moldovan communities shows their heavy dependency on forests.

Along Moldovan country roads, endless lines of walnut trees hide in their foliage a real treasure, green round “coins” of great value for locals.

The recently finalized report “Forest Dependence Based on Surveys Conducted in Three Villages of Moldova” revealed that nuts, in particular walnuts, are an incredibly valuable resource for forest-dependent communities in the country. People collect them for personal consumption or sell them to specialized companies. Moldova has had a long tradition of walnut trade since the Soviet times, and is still one of the world’s biggest exporters. This report is part of a wider regional study undertaken within FLEG II, which compares the value of forests and forest resources for local households in the Program’s countries.

Another remarkable result of the Moldovan study is related to illegal logging, as the analysis revealed that local communities use larger volumes of fuelwood than forest administrators can officially supply. This data therefore indicates that a portion of fuelwood is not entirely legally sourced. Consequently, actions undertaken by public authorities to combat illegal logging, like those supported by FLEG to implement the Saint Petersburg Declaration, are fundamental steps to guarantee the necessary amount of fuel to local communities and, at the same time, promote sustainable forest management.

Nuts are collected and either consumed by the family or marketed to supplement the household’s income.

These vernal plants (Pulsatilla grandis and Adonis vernalis) are species included in the National Red Book, but locals collect and sell them on the street to gain money for living.

VOICES

Aurel Lozan
FLEG Country Program Coordinator for IUCN Moldova

“The report highlights how Moldovan rural dwellers make extensive use of forest resources to address their primary needs and to supplement their income. The most valuable forest resources turned out to be fuelwood for heating and nuts for personal consumption and as goods for sale.”

LEARN MORE:

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In September 2015, FLEG experts supported the organization of a 3-day hobby-tour in Tsevlo, a village of Bezhanitsky Municipal District, situated in the Polistovsky Nature Reserve (PNR). On this occasion, over 15 participants learned how to produce paper and dyes from mushrooms.

To realize this initiative, Yulia Orlova, one of the organizers, engaged the Estonian instructors Airi Gailit and Anna Baklan, expert mycologists specialized in the art of mushroom dyeing.

Already on the first day of the Master Class, Ms. Baklan proved to be incredibly skillful in the identification of fungi and mushrooms. During the excursion in the forest, the Estonian mycologist discovered dozens of species that had never been found before in this area.

Impressed by Ms. Baklan’s level of expertise, the Head of the Research Department of the PNR, Ms Svetlana Igonina, invited her to conduct in-depth research on indigenous fungi over the year 2016. In particular, the aim of the study will be to compile a large-scale inventory of fungi species in the reserve and its environs.

In order to pursue this scientific purpose, the reserve will allocate additional funds to the next Master Class and extend the collaboration with the Estonian expert. As a result of this joint international research activity, a publication will be released.

LEARN MORE:
http://www.enpi-fleg.org/news/transboundary-research-cooperation-for-better-understanding-russian-mushroom-diversity/

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Beyond Borders to Discover Russian Mushroom Diversity

Master Classes triggered the first inventory of fungal diversity in Polistovsky Nature Reserve
IN FOCUS

Origami Helps Children in Armenia Learn about Forest Fires

FLEG II prepared to prevent the wildfires with entertaining materials for children and adults

We all know that usually, information materials end up in a recycle bin, because once you read them, they become a useless piece of paper. Our target was to make information materials that would last as long as possible”, says Sirarpi Haykazyan, World Bank’s FLEG II activity coordinator in Armenia.

The new publications were produced by ADA-funded FLEG II Complementary measures for Armenia and Georgia Program. Working in close collaboration with “Hayan-tar” State Forest Agency, FLEG II developed:

- A colourful leaflet on forest fire prevention and control;
- A calendar describing issues, problems and concerns related to sustainable forest management, protection and fire prevention;
- A leaflet-origami, specially designed for children.

The content in all of the publications is easy to understand for anyone without forestry background. “However, our pride among the products is the leaflet-origami, which was specially designed for children”, says Sirarpi Haykazyan. “On one side, we give brief information on the importance of the forest and ways to protect it. On the other side, there is a pattern of an owl, which children need to colour, and then, using the directions provided, they can make an Origami and keep the Owl with them”. The Origami leaflets will be disseminated at a school forestry event organized by the Program.

In addition to the above mentioned products, FLEG II also developed banners on fire prevention. The banners will be placed near forests, close to recreation and picnic zones.

All of the materials have been uploaded to the enpi-fleg.org website, and can be printed out.

QUICK FACT

- Over 80% of wildfires are caused by humans. Most fires in forests are registered on the weekends, when people are more likely to spend time outside.

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The logotype for the publications is an owl. It symbolizes wisdom and is known as the protector of the forest.

One of the publications features an origami that can be colored and folded into a cute owl.

FLEG II publications teach adults and children to prevent forest fires and manage forests sustainably.

LEARN MORE:
New Fun Ways for Children to Learn about Forest within the Context of Sustainable Development

Educational Toolkit for teachers and students is now available in English and Russian

Earlier last year FLEG II developed an educational toolkit “Forest in the context of sustainable development”, for teachers and students in Moldova. Due to its success and high demand, materials are now also available in English and Russian. Focused on forestry, it provides collection of topics about forest functions and benefits, climate change and forests, sustainable development and forest certification as well as insight into non-formal educational methods like outdoor activities and experimental education approaches.

Quick Facts

- Even though the main source of income for the Moldovan population from the rural environment is agriculture, from which comes 64% of the total income (for comparison, 74% of Moldova’s lands are used for agricultural purposes), the forests insure up to 18% of the income for the local population (even though the forests and forestry plantations cover only about 13% of the country’s territory).

- The forests represent the biggest reserve of carbon from the terrestrial biosphere, namely 70% of the entire carbon that is in the living organisms. The carbon of the forests is stored in trees, in the soil and in the forest floor.

- Up to a third of the forest species from Europe are dependant, for their survival, on the very old trees and on deadwood.

Learn More:

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New United Forestry Entity of Ukraine: What Should it Be?

FLEG II discussed the reform of the forest sector with top government officials...

At the meeting in Kiev, Ukraine, the topic of the new united forestry enterprise (or enterprises), which is supposed to make state forest management more efficient, spurred the most discussion.

In particular, the participants discussed whether forestries of southern and eastern Ukraine should be included in the new entity. These regions have almost no production forests: their forests have mainly protective, ecological functions. According to the State Forestry Agency, the new entity should be funded by forestries of forest regions, and will redistribute the income to fund the forestries of non-forest regions and forest research institutions, which will replace the state budget support. FLEG II experts believe that the forestries of non-forest regions and research institutions face serious challenges, which require integrated and large-scale solutions and funding from the government, and cannot be solved by the new forestry enterprise only.

FLEG II also emphasized that the future forest entity should be as independent from the influence of government officials as possible. It must be controlled by a Supervisory Board, and the head of this entity must be appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers. This person should hold full responsibility for managing the state property, as well as for recruitment and placement of personnel.

However, the Ministry and the State Forest Agency believe that the new united enterprise should report to the Agency. Also, the Agency wants to retain the authority for property management and personnel recruitment for the new forest enterprise.

First Deputy Minister of Agrarian Policy and Food Yaroslav Krasnopol’sky instructed head of the State forestry agency of Ukraine Alexander Kovalchuk to take into account all FLEG II suggestions, and to ensure transparency of the work on the creation of the forestry entity, in particular, disclose all documents and action plans on the Agency website.

FLEG II experts believe that the forestries problems in Ukraine since 2009, and the forest sector reform has constituted an important part of FLEG II work since the inclusion of FLEG II recommendations in the Coalition agreement in December 2014. During the whole of 2015 the Program organized several events where it presented the recommendations of FLEG experts regarding the forest sector reform, including two round tables with the participation of leading experts from Sweden and Latvia. The round table discussions with a wide participation of key stakeholders are an important heritage of FLEG program, which became the first platform for open discussion of forest sector problems in Ukraine.

LEARN MORE:

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Timber Traceability System Developed under FLEG II has Chances to be Extended at National Level

Second round of trainings was organized for Moldova’s foresters

LEG II program has developed and piloted a wood tracking system in Moldova. Forest enterprises are committed to follow sustainable forest management principles to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of their operations in Moldova. The need to demonstrate effective enforcement in combating illegal logging has given rise to efforts to provide real-time, verifiable information on harvested timber by tracking it through the entire production process. A reliable, transparent wood traceability system is an essential tool in combating illegal harvesting and trade. The system aims at improving wood traceability from the standing timber to the end user and supporting law enforcement agencies to eliminate most of illegal activities.

After successful introduction in the Vatici Forest Management Unit, which had been selected as a pilot unit and model area for the initial implementation, testing, and training of the foresters, the system developed by FLEG was recognized by the authorities as a modern application useful for improved tracking of the harvested timber and its use.

The final achievement will be the adoption of timber traceability system at the national level. On 12 October 2015 Ion Cebanu, Director General of the National Forestry Agency Moldsilva, issued an order that sets the formal framework of the system implementation from the Vatici Forest Management Unit to the whole Orhei Forest Enterprise. On 12-13 November 2015, more than 20 foresters from the pilot forest enterprise were trained to use the wood evidence software application, its utility and benefits. The earlier initiation training was held in May.

For future, there are many chances that the monitoring system will be implemented at the national level. The system will bring Moldova’s forestry closer to the EU and international requirements for the sector, contributing at reducing illegal logging.

QUICK FACTS

- Forest ecosystem services in Moldova are estimated at 28 million USD/year.
- 80% of local communities use wood as the primary source of energy. Most of the wood is being sold to the small households as a source of energy and keeping accurate/real time records of the operations is still a challenge.
- In 2010 the annual use of fuelwood was 1.039 million m³ or almost three times the reported sale of firewood. The total estimated consumption of fuelwood and timber used for energy is 1.079 million m³ and this represents 80% of the estimated annual increment of forests and other forest vegetation.
- Forests are locally important as sources of employment with up to 10,000 seasonal workers employed annually.

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The training on the use of the wood evidence software application, its utility and benefits.
The practice of agroforestry has ancient roots and consists in integrating trees or shrubs with agricultural plantings in order to make the agro-systems more diverse, productive, and sustainable.

Moldova has a long tradition of growing forest protection belts in agricultural systems, but in the ‘90s, when the country became independent, a significant part of these shelterbelts was cut down by the population to obtain fuelwood.

In the National Plan for Forest Vegetation Expansion 2014-18, the Moldovan government took measures to favour the afforestation of degraded land. The data provided by the Agency of Land Relations and Cadastre indicates that about 30,000 hectares of land are currently occupied by shelterbelts.

These serve as a true green corridor that protects crops from high winds, supports thermal regulation, maintains water balance, sustains biodiversity, and enhances crop productivity as well as acting as wildlife corridors.

In a country like Moldova that heavily relies on its agricultural sector, agroforestry represents an important tool to enhance land productivity as a whole.

This perspective is supported by the FLEG report “Evaluation of Forest Ecosystem Services in the Republic of Moldova”, which presents the economic, social, and environmental advantages of the Forest Ecosystem Services beneficial to citizens.

According to the forecasts of the study, the monetary value of forest vegetation for the agricultural sector could amount to $212.5 million in the next 25 years. This scenario would only become a reality if ecosystems are managed to meet both ecological and human needs in the future, and adequate measures are taken to stop ecosystem degradation.

LEARN MORE:

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More Initiatives to Support Ecotourism in Russia

Enthusiasm, fresh ideas and good partners to kick off the new year with the right mindset

During the first week of 2016, Natalia Milovidova and residents of Tsevlo – a village of Bezhanitsky District near the Polistovsky Nature Reserve – organized a roundtable to plan the next initiatives to promote ecotourism in the Reserve.

Together with Yulia Orlova, organizer of FLEG-supported Master Classes in traditional crafts, and Valentina Ipatova, Head of the Educational Tourism Development Department of the Kostomukshsky National Nature Reserve, they analyzed the fruitful work done over the past months and came up with new ideas for the next tourist season.

Beautiful gloves dyed with fungal pigments, delicious cinnamon-honey cakes, and natural homemade soaps are only few of the many artisanal crafts that visitors can pursue or... learn how to make themselves. The Master Classes turned out to be a real lucrative opportunity for the villages around the Reserve, as many tourists are willing to pay cash to join a hobby-tour in the nature.

The significant economic value of commercial Master Classes should not overshadow their social and cultural role. FLEG activities stimulated a long-term cooperation between the Reserve’s staff and the residents towards a green and sustainable development of the region. The ultimate goal is to form a group of local activists that would take the initiative and continue these activities based on the needs of their communities.

The good news is that this is not far from being achieved. On December 21-22, the inhabitants of Tsevlo organized the first Master Class on soap making with the Reserve’s support, but without any assistance of the FLEG team. The workshop was conducted by Marina Svetlova, expert in soap making from Pskov, and attended by 9 participants.

© All photos — Yulia Orlova

Temperatures down to -30°C do not prevent local citizens from getting together to discuss the plans for the 2016 tourist season in Tsevlo

VOICES

Andrey Zaytsev
FLEG II Program Coordinator for IUCN Russia

“Within the ENPI-FLEG Program, we have been working towards the promotion of regional, inter-regional, and transboundary collaborations between citizens, local authorities, artisans, and experts in tourism to build a dense network of public and private partnerships. We hope that our work will raise the interest of other forest-dependent communities and institutions, so to foster the environmentally-responsible rural development of the entire region and, therefore, accomplish one of the primary goals of the Saint Petersburg Declaration”. 
If a good start is half the work, this attitude is certainly encouraging. The involvement of indigenous communities in the decision-making process is a key element to make them feel responsible for the management of forest resources.

“In 2014-15, several activities were carried out to demonstrate to forest-dependent communities that ecotourism represents a precious resource to revamp their economy”, says Natalia Milovidova, FLEG consultant for IUCN in Russia. “For instance, we taught villagers new (or traditional and long-forgotten) ways of using non-timber forest products to produce souvenirs for tourists”.

QUICK FACTS

- 15 new jobs were created in Tsevlo and Bezhanitsky thanks to ecotourism.
- The number of tourists visiting the Polistovsky Nature Reserve skyrocketed: the number of overseas tourists grew from 8 in 2010 to over 50 in 2014-15, while total number of tourists experienced a 10-fold increase over the same time frame.
- 5 fresh business ideas on the use of non-timber forest resources to diversify the range of tourist products and services were successfully developed in Tsevlo between 2013 and 2015.

“In January, we were pleased to see that everybody was eager for new trainings on a whole variety of traditional knowledge and techniques like spinning, baking typical gingerbread, or learning the properties of medicinal herbs. There were also several proposals to improve the quality of services for tourists and organize seminars for sharing best practices on ecotourism. It was refreshing to feel all this positive energy, and we will be happy to help the residents implement these initiatives”, says Ms. Milovidova.
At the final session of the meeting, participants discussed the sustainability of FLEG II results. Ms. Arusyak Alaverdyan, FLEG Program coordinator from the World Bank, suggested that NPAC (or similar entity) should continue to function after FLEG II is over: “Since this type of collaboration, information sharing and advisory capacity proved to be very useful, I suggest we continue the format of the committee after the completion of FLEG II, for the benefit of the forestry sector.”

FLEG experts presented 5 new reports to the NPAC members - representatives of key stakeholders, including Ministries of Environment and Finance, Agency Moldsilva (central administrative authority in forestry and hunting), NGOs, forestry enterprises and the media.

NPAC and Moldsilva decided to disseminate the results to a wider audience, from local communities to government institutions. NPAC also decided to be involved in all activities proposed by FLEG II at the regional level, with special attention being drawn to payments for ecosystem services, which are of high interest to Moldova.

NPAC members unanimously agreed that to ensure FLEG sustainability, after the end of the Program the National Advisory Committee will continue to promote sustainable forest management within Agency Moldsilva.

FLEG II Delivers Preliminary Results to National Program Advisory Committee in Moldova

Committee members also discussed sustainability of FLEG beyond its timeframe.

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“Thanks to FLEG, the regional cooperation in strengthening of forest education. The results of the recent regional forest dependency study have invoked debates among the professionals about the necessity to conduct a similar study in other forest regions”, said Program’s National Focal Point, head of the sector in the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan Rahim Ibrahimov at National Program Advisory Committee (NPAC) meeting. He pointed out that these initiatives have improved cooperation in the forestry sector and intensified sustainable forest use and management.

“Thanks to FLEG, a new generation of environmentally aware Azerbaijani youth is growing to take a lead in promotion of sustainable practices in the country”, said head of the Republican Center of Ecological Education and Experience Firuza Sultan-zadeh, referring, in particular, to the recently published tutorial “Safe Forest”, which was highly welcomed by experts and children.

The increased number of education experts in NPAC became visible during the last meeting. Three representatives of the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan are currently the members.

LEARN MORE:

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The Republican Center of Ecological Education and Practice (RCEEP) under the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan brought together forestry and educational experts in Baku, Azerbaijan to discuss the prospects of promoting sustainable recreation. Representatives from 48 district departments of RCEEP and 10 Republican Centers of Young Tourists and Ethnography listened to the experts from the Baku State University, UNDP, FLEG II, GIZ, and EkoSfera SEC.

FLEG II presented a new study on the potential of sustainable recreation in Azerbaijan’s state forests. “During the survey our consultants were absolutely pleased with the readiness of the locals to participate”, said FLEG II Country Coordinator Azer Garayev. “The big concern is inadequate knowledge on the concept of sustainable recreation and insufficent resources and facilities on the ground”.

The experts agreed that more efforts have to be put to re-organize the work and strengthen cooperation of educational and tourist centers.

VOICES
Firuza Sultan-zadeh
Director of the Republican Center of Ecological Education and Practice

“Sustainable recreation and tourism in forest areas are crucial for the protection of the forestland”.

LEARN MORE:

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On November 24 2015, the State Forest Agency Moldisilva held a workshop titled “Sustainable development of forest and pastoral resources in Moldova” to present the preliminary results achieved throughout FLEG II in Moldova.

During the workshop, FLEG experts presented both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis of the use of forest and pastoral resources in the country. In particular, it was highlighted how these resources represent an important source of revenue and economic development.

According to the recent analysis of the FES in Moldova, in monetary terms, numerous sectors of Moldovan economy benefit from ecosystem services (a major part being from forests), whose value was estimated to be of $68.84 million in 2014.

This initiative was also a good opportunity to reinforce the fruitful collaboration between FLEG and its partners.

In the Soviet times, there was a special category of forests called local forests (LF), administrated by state and collective farms. LF represented an important resource for rural populations both in terms of consumption and income creation.

After the Soviet fall, the governance of LF developed autonomously in each country.

A new FLEG study, to be released this spring, describes and analyses the existing schemes of governance of LF in FLEG countries to contribute to policy review and reform of their forest sectors.

The study combines a detailed overview of LF governance with 5 illustrative cases, which show the concrete governance systems’ impacts on the environment.

“This study is an invaluable tool to assess the quality of governance of local forests in FLEG countries, and governance is a fundamental factor that determines whether forest resources are used efficiently, sustainably, and equitably.”

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About ENPI FLEG Program

The Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) II European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) East Countries Programme supports participating countries’ forest governance. At the regional level, the Programme aims to implement the 2005 St. Petersburg FLEG Ministerial Declaration and support countries to commit to a time-bound action plan; at the national level the Programme will review or revise forest sector policies and legal and administrative structures; and improve knowledge of and support for sustainable forest management and good forest governance in the participating countries, and at the sub-national (local) level the Programme will test and demonstrate best practices for sustainable forest management and the feasibility of improved forest governance practices at the field-level on a pilot basis. Participating countries include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine. The Programme is funded by the European Union. http://www.enpi-fleg.org

Project Partners

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**IUCN**
IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges. IUCN’s work focuses on valuing and conserving nature, ensuring effective and equitable governance of its use, and deploying nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate, food and development. IUCN supports scientific research, manages field projects all over the world, and brings governments, NGOs, the UN and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice. IUCN is the world’s oldest and largest global environmental organisation, with more than 1,200 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 45 offices and hundreds of partners in public, NGO and private sectors around the world. [www.iucn.org](http://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 planet’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](http://www.panda.org)