FLEG Program in the Forest Sector of Ukraine: Achievements and Challenges for the Future (World Bank Activities)

February 2017

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**Foreword**

This booklet briefly describes the FLEG Program activities aimed at solving law enforcement problems in the forest sector of Ukraine. The Program achievements and evaluations in the context of transformations in the country’s life are presented. This publication covers only activities of the World Bank Program implementation team in Ukraine, without touching upon the performance of the two other implementing agencies – WWF and IUCN, as well as the Program operations across countries. The purpose of the publication is to make the Program achievements, as well as problems that could not be solved, widely known among a wide range of stakeholders. The publication presents the views of the World Bank Program implementation team that may not coincide with the position of the authorities and other parties involved in forest relations.

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1 The regional 'European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) East Countries Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) II Program' (2013-2016). The Program was funded by the European Commission and implemented by the World Bank in partnership with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in seven East Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) and Russia. The FLEG II Program builds on the first ENPI FLEG I Program 'The Forest Law Enforcement and Governance in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine' (2008-2012).
1. FLEG time: overview of changes in the government and forest policies

Preparation and implementation of the FLEG Program in Ukraine covers a ten-year period, during which the country went through two revolutions, had three Presidents, nine Prime Ministers and nine heads of the forest authority.

Preparation of the St. Petersburg Declaration coincided with the Orange Revolution (2004) and subsequent revision of the political course and the economic strategy of the country. Ukraine participated in drawing up the Declaration and became it signatory.

The FLEG I Program began its operation in 2008 with the aim to assist the participating countries in implementation of the indicative action plan to the St. Petersburg Declaration that provides for the development and performance of complex measures in six areas: policy frameworks; legislative system; institution- and capacity building; sustainable forest governance; rural development, livelihoods and poverty alleviation; trade and customs.

In almost three years from the time of signing the Declaration to the beginning of the actual implementation of the FLEG Program, a lot has changed in Ukraine. The country adopted the Forestry Development Concept (2006), the provisions of which are in many respects consonant with the wording of the St. Petersburg Declaration and the indicative action plan for its implementation. The Concept oriented the country’s forestry to active implementation of methods and technologies used by state forest agencies of the European countries, especially Poland. Within the framework of the existing forest law and the organizational structure of the forest governance system it was supposed to gradually abandon wood processing operations at forest enterprises, switch to contract logging methods, introduce the newest timber accounting and control technologies, change the rules of trade, ensure transparency in the sector operations and open discussion of decisions.

By the beginning of the Program implementation, the State Forestry Committee implemented a number of measures to amend the legislation as appropriate, to form a transparent timber market and to prevent the shadow timber products circulation. However, these measures were insufficient and were implemented at the level of a single agency.

In addition, against the background of the global crisis that caused a sharp decline in the economy, the political situation deteriorated, which resulted in the frequent change of the leadership of state agencies, carried out on the basis of quotas allocated by the leading political forces. Reformist mood of 2005-2006 gave way to a ‘survival’ tactics, the constituent elements of which were the ‘fear of change’ and the desire ‘not to rock the boat’.

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2 The St. Petersburg Declaration was signed in 2005 at the Europe and North Asia Ministerial Conference on Forest Law Enforcement and Governance. It is an expression of commitment by 44 governments from the ENA Region and other participating countries to take action to address illegal logging and associated forest crimes. The participating governments also identified an Indicative List of Actions for the implementation of the Declaration, which are included as an Annex to the Declaration.
Given these factors, in preparing the initial work plan, the Program implementation team proceeded from the premise that:

- Forest is an important public resource, therefore, its related issues should be discussed with involvement of all the parties concerned;
- It is important to place emphasis on the inter-agency cooperation;
- The Program requires that an integrated approach is used, in which the development of measures is preceded by an analysis of the problems and their causes;
- Transparency and publicity are essential parts of the Program.

The Program managed to successfully overcome the difficulties of Phase I related to the lack of tradition of open discussions of forest sector problems, radical or opposing views of many interested parties, rejection by the State Forestry Committee of opinions that were at variance with its position.

In a short period, the Program became a well-known platform for discussing forest sector issues by active participants from various government authorities, scientists, businessmen and representatives of NGOs. (Figure 1).

Fig. 1. Evaluation of the FLEG relative support by its stakeholders in different political settings
*Timeframes: upper – heads of the central executive authority on forest management according to the...
quotas of political parties; middle – general political conditions of the country's development; lower – FLEG Program 'time'

By the end of the first year of implementation, a number of practical proposals were prepared on amendments to the legislation regulating the status of the Forest Service and logging. Unfortunately, their implementation was postponed by reason typical of Ukraine: changes in the leadership violated earlier agreements and led to the need for repeated discussions of the same problems and recommendations.

In early 2011, Ukraine carried out an administrative reform that significantly changed the situation in the state forest governance:

- The State Forestry Committee was transformed into the State Forest Resources Agency of Ukraine (SFRAU), the main function of which was the implementation of the national forest policy;
- The forest policymaking and law improvement functions were transferred to the Ministry of Agrarian Policy that had never dealt with these issues before;
- The entire leadership of the forestry authority was replaced.

After the reform, the SFRAU's main priorities were focused on the two main areas:

- Taking into departmental management forest enterprises subordinated to the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and the Ministry of Defense;
- Increasing forest enterprises' earnings through growth in harvesting volumes, improvements in timber accounting and trade rules, improved access to forest resources (forest roads).

Without having the necessary human capacity, the Ministry of Agrarian Policy was unable to ensure systematic work on forming a forest policy (strategy), improving forest legislation and monitoring the situation in the forest sector. As a result, these issues dropped out of the state's view for several years. At the same time, attention to the tasks of public administration that do not bring short-term benefits (inventory and monitoring of forests, afforestation, forest science and education, forest statistics, etc.) was dropped.

Under the new conditions, the Program experts focused on promoting the fight against offenses and crimes in the forest sector; justifying complex measures ensuring progressive development of the forest sector as a whole, including issues related to the regulation of the timber market; improving forest management practices; monitoring the situation in the sector, identifying problems inhibiting its development and justifying possible ways of their solutions.

In the course of the Program activities, the experts revealed numerous negative trends, primarily related to degradation of forests, stagnation of the wood processing segment, emergence of corruption schemes related to timber trade. Many of these phenomena were the result of mistakes made in the development of forest law and forest governance system in Ukraine. The facts and arguments presented in the studies demonstrated that under the current legislation and the institutional framework it is impossible to form a sustainable and competitive forest sector. This point of view was hardly perceived by the SFRAU heads officially reporting that 'the forest sector of
Ukraine was systemically developing and improving with the support of the President and the Government of Ukraine\(^3\).

After the Revolution of Dignity (January-February 2014), the situation changed fundamentally. The government changed its political course, the main vector of which was the implementation of reforms aimed at European integration.

In response to the changes, the Program paid special attention to promoting the fight against corruption and justifying the reform strategy in the forest sector. This work resulted in the development of the ‘FLEG Program Recommendations for the Forest Sector Reform’, which were submitted to the Government in December 2014.

It should be acknowledged that the Government's plans and society's expectations related to rapid overcoming corruption and reforming the country did not materialize. This fully applies to the forestry, where, despite the new leadership, no significant changes occurred in 2014. Among the main reasons for this are:

- Lack of vision of the ultimate goal of reforms and thorough preparation of the necessary transformations;
- Tolerance to corruption and lack of political will to overcome it;
- The ‘established’ practice of quota-based (from political parties) appointments of managers without adequate knowledge of the object of management, management experience and team of like-minded people.

In the economic sphere, devaluation of the national currency boosted revenues of state forest enterprises exporting a significant part of harvested wood. This resulted in an increase in logging volumes, growth of exports and return to the practice of using non-transparent timber sales schemes. Together, this caused a sharp surge of discontent with the state of affairs in the forestry sector by wood processing industry, environmental NGOs, representatives of local communities and society as a whole. In January 2015, the SFRAU Head resigned and four months later a representative of another political force striving for rapid implementation of reforms was appointed.

In response to the situation, the FLEG Program reinforced attention to the implementation of activities related to the Government’s plans\(^4\) that were aimed at regulating the timber market and preparing the institutional reform. Contrary to the Program recommendations insisting on comprehensive preparation and discussion of the reform model, the SFRAU leadership decided to implement the reform within the shortest period of time by merging more than 300 independent enterprises into one legal entity. This version of the reform promulgated by SFRAU in October 2015 caused a flurry of questions and criticism from the expert community and forest professionals. As a result, the leadership of the forest agency had to abandon it.

The false start of the reforms and failure to implement most of the identified plans led to a change of the Government. In May 2016, the forest agency again remained without a leader. At the time of preparing this publication (February 2017), duties of the SFRAU Head were still performed by the Acting Deputy Head.

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\(^3\) /Sivets, 2012/

In fact, 2014 through 2016 period in the forest sector became the time of failure to act, missed opportunities and unfulfilled promises. To the problems accumulated earlier, new ones were added:

- In forest-poor, arid part of the country, where the ecological and social role of forests is particularly high, more than 70 enterprises appeared on the verge of bankruptcy as a result of discontinued on-budget support of the forestry.
- Due to a sharp rise in energy prices, a significant increase in illegal logging is observed.
- Significant deterioration of forests in all regions of the country resulted from several dry years.
- The shadow wood processing sector, mainly represented by small sawmills, rose.
- The number of various conflicts, violations and crimes in the forest sector sharply increased.

During 2016, the FLEG Program did its utmost to improve the situation. The Program experts were preparing analytical notes on the most acute problems of the forest sector for government officials, were elaborating recommendations for improving laws, were continuing work on justifying and preparing reforms, and were actively participating in the discussion of forest sector issues on various discussion platforms. This was an important factor contributing to the increased focus on the forest sector and understanding of the problems it faces. However, significant changes in the sector have not occurred to date: the reform preparation process is in its initial stage.

2. Program activities

Description of the Program activities is structured by areas, without close linking to chronology. Each area is divided into blocks, including one or several pieces focused on solving a specific problem. There are five areas:

- Analysis of the situation analysis and selection of priorities;
- Improvement of forest law;
- Improvement of forest management practices;
- Policy, strategy and reform;
- Dissemination of knowledge and enhancing transparency of the forest sector.

There are no rigid boundaries between the areas. They are closely connected not only in terms of sense and focus, but also through a common platform of discussion open to expression of any opinions and encouraging debates.

2.1 Analysis of the situation and selection of priorities

Throughout its operation, the FLEG Program planned its activities on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the situation and identification of the most urgent problems to be solved. Apart from the analysis of government and industry statistics, legal and regulatory frameworks, international experience, materials of professional publications and media, the sociological and expert surveys.

5 'Assessment of forest law enforcement and governance in Ukraine’. A survey of 27 experts in Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, November 2009.
identified a wide range of opinions on particular issues. The materials and findings obtained are of interest not only as arguments when selecting subjects for further research, but also as a starting point for tracking changes and a comprehensive analysis of problems. Violations in forest matters always caused a wide public reaction. Most often they are related to illegal use of forest lands and illegal logging. It is noteworthy that there is a discrepancy between the relatively small amount of violations recorded by official statistics and data of sociological surveys and media analysis evidencing that the society values forest offenses as massive and growing in frequency and volume. The discrepancy is explained by the fact that in most cases, certain actions producing justifiable indignation of non-professionals are de jure legal. Their commitment became possible due to poor quality of the legal framework containing gaps and conflicting provisions allowing within the limits of law to carry out activities contrary to the long-term interests of the country and society.

Among similar conflicts related to forest lands and forest felling, the confrontation of stakeholders with different interests and views on the situation in the sector are the most prominent issues. The most significant of these is the long-standing conflict between suppliers of wood and representatives of the wood processing business. The work started with the analysis of sector statistics, surveys and expert survey of market participants showed that the main causes of conflicts are lack of an adequate legal regulation of timber trade and use of shadow schemes for its implementation.

There were many complaints about the activities of government authorities responsible for forest protection and control over compliance with forest legislation. They are accused of concealing information about the real situation, selectivity in supervising the forests, inadequate training, and corruption.

All the problems identified have two components: explicit and hidden. The first is recorded in the figures of law enforcement and forest statistics, manifested in the form of various conflicts and is widely discussed in the media. The second is related to the low quality of legislation and is only revealed in the course of its analysis. In most cases, explicit enforcement problems are the result of gaps and collisions in the legislation.

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Two-stage handout survey for representatives of environmental NGOs, February 2010.

‘Forestry problems in perception of people living in forest regions of Ukraine’. A mass-scale survey of 1,200 residents of rural areas in Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Zakarpattia regions, June 2010.


Survey of 10 major foresters to assess forest law enforcement practices in the state forest enterprises operation, June 2010.

‘Conditions for small and medium business in the forest sector of Ukraine’, based on results of the national survey, May 2012.

‘Level of publicity and transparency in the forest sector’, February-April 2012.

Comparing results of the sociological surveys under the FLEG Program, and other forest sector surveys.
A detailed analysis of the Forest Code and by-laws regulating forestry operations and protection of forests enabled identification and classification of numerous corruption risks. The main among them are:

- Conflict of interest inherent in the status of SFRAU and State Forest Service employees, combining licensing, control and economic functions;
- Insufficient transparency of SFRAU activities and its subordinate entities;
- Poor quality of forest legislation, manifested in the regulation of one procedure by several legal acts, the presence of gaps and collisions, a large number of provisional rules and obsolete provisions;
- Redundancy and complexity of procedures for provision of administrative services and conducting forest management activities;
- Unconstitutional procedures for prosecuting violators of forest legislation and other procedures.

Analysis of the results of this work demonstrated that the best strategy for correcting the situation in the forest sector is carrying out a reform that includes a comprehensive review of forest law and changes in the institutional model of state forest governance. However, the project could not embark on the execution of such a large-scale task due to the position of the forestry authority, which for a long time did not recognize the advisability of a comprehensive review of legislation and changes to the institutional model of forest governance, and due to lack of necessary resources. It was recognized as more appropriate to focus on solving problems, the relevance of which is certain. The Program turned to the strategy development and preparations for the reform only after changes of the political situation in Ukraine.

### 2.2 Improvement of forest law

Development of recommendations for the improvement of forest laws and regulations was a central element of the Program activities. The main efforts were aimed at achieving the following goals:

- Ensuring effective protection of forests;
- Guaranteeing people’s right to free access to forests;
- Ensuring formation of ownership of forest land;
- Harmonization of Ukraine’s forest law with EU legislation;
- Improvement of the legal regulation of logging practices.

#### 2.2.1 Ensuring effective protection of forests

Activities aimed at achieving the first goal were focused on optimizing the legal status of the Forest Service, ensuring state control over compliance with forest legislation and increasing liability for offenses and crimes in forest relations.

**Legal status of the Forest Service**

Employees of the State Forest Service of Ukraine have the status of law enforcement officers. However, the overwhelming majority of them are not civil servants, they are employees of forest enterprises financed by revenues from the sale of timber. Combining business and control
functions creates a conflict between the long-term interests of the state and current interests of enterprises, which generates numerous violations and impedes effective forest management operations. The Program experts analyzed and brought to the public discussion the corruption risks inherent in the current management model, and also offered several options for improving the situation. According to the Program experts, the most effective option is the institutional reform. Under the pressure of arguments, participants in the discussions, including the SFRAU representatives, acknowledged the controversy associated with the performance of mutually exclusive functions by state forest enterprises, but for a long time did not agree with the need to change the institutional model of forest governance. To date, the issue of changing the status of the State Forest Service was again brought up for discussion. For all participants in the ongoing process of preparing reforms in the forest sector, it is becoming increasingly clear that without legislative review of the status of the State Forest Service there could be no qualitative change in the forest governance system.

**Legal support of state control**

The quality of state control over compliance with forest legislation causes many claims. At the same time, criticism is voiced both by NGOs and civil society dissatisfied with forest condition and felling, and by state forest enterprises that are subject to continuous monitoring by various inspection authorities. A study conducted in the framework of the Program, revealed the list of deficiencies in the legal support of state control. The main among them are poor structuring of the legislative block that regulates control, and inadequate status of regulations governing the control procedure. In order to solve the accumulated problems, it is recommended to introduce agreed amendments to a number of laws and regulations. In addition, it was proposed to make changes in the control procedure: to replace numerous multi-faceted inspections with an annual comprehensive audit, to review the frequency and grounds for inspections; to create an interdepartmental system for their registration.

**Responsibility for violations and crimes in the forest sector**

The experts conducted an article-by-article analysis of the provisions of the Criminal and Administrative Codes and other documents regulating responsibility for offences in forest matters, and analyzed the effectiveness of their use in judicial practice. A number of deficiencies were identified that violate the principle of fairness and reduce the overall effectiveness of forest protection. A complex vision of a system of mutually agreed rules of legal liability was developed aimed at counteracting violations related to the deterioration of forest ecosystems, illegal logging, as well as the shadow timber circulation. Major innovations are associated with increased responsibility for arson; distinguishing between penalties for felling with the purpose of stealing timber and for violation of legislation in the course of planned cuttings; distinguishing between administrative and criminal offenses, based on the amount of damage caused; more precise differentiation of payment scales to calculate compensations. The Program's recommendations are the basis for the draft law, which is under consideration by the Verkhovna Rada and has already been adopted in the first reading (http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=60660).
2.2.2 Guaranteeing people’s right to have access to forest

Over the 10 years since the adoption of the revised version of the Forest Code (2006), problems related to violation of the people’s right to free access to forest have become a socially significant phenomenon. The goal of the Program was to identify the reasons for this and to find ways to improve the situation.

**Regulation of long-term temporary use of forest**

The possibility of long-term temporary use of forests without entering into a land lease contract was first envisaged by the Forest Code (2006). It is used in the organization of forest management for purposes not related to silvicultural operations and timber harvesting, in particular recreation, tourism, scientific research. In a short time hundreds of subjects of different ownership forms received a long-term (up to 49 years) use of thousands of hectares of forest located in places attractive for recreation. Experience has shown that many of them do not adhere to the contract terms and commit a variety of violations, most often related to fencing and unauthorized construction. This practice causes indignation of people and leads to long-term conflicts, which do not always receive due recognition in the courts.

Based on the analysis of legislation and its practical implementation, the Program experts identified numerous shortcomings in the legal regulation of temporary use and developed recommendations for their elimination. The Program operation received unanimous support. On its basis, significant changes in the rules governing long-term use of forests were prepared and adopted.

**Ensuring the rights of people to have access to forest**

Analysis of judicial practices demonstrated that the Forest Code does not provide for a reliable protection of the rights of people to have access to forest and to use its beneficial properties. The Program experts developed recommendations on eliminating gaps in the legislation. They stipulate the inadmissibility of unauthorized restriction of the people’s rights to stay in forests, clearly determine in which cases and by whom these rights may be restricted, provide for responsibility for illegal construction of buildings and structures, as well as other illegal actions that impede access to forest. Based on the Program recommendations, a draft law was prepared, which is under consideration of the Verkhovna Rada (http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=59273). Its adoption will significantly reduce the number of violations and conflicts in forest relations.

2.2.3 Ensuring the process of forming the ownership of land for forestry purposes

The Ukrainian legislation considers ‘land’ and ‘forest’ as independent objects of law. Regulation of their record-keeping and use is not sufficiently coordinated. This makes it difficult to form land ownership, prevents the creation of a fully-fledged land cadastre, creates opportunities for abuse. In order to improve the situation, a number of activities were carried out under the Program.

**Development of the institution of ownership of land for forestry purposes**

The process of forming the ownership of land for forestry purposes in Ukraine is extremely slow. This is evidenced by the presence of about 800 thousand hectares of forests not transferred for use, as well as the lack of documents in a significant part of forest enterprises that received de facto land and forests for permanent use. The associated retrospective analysis of forest transfer...
for ownership (permanent use) and its legal regulation revealed problems requiring additional regulation and formulated recommendations aimed at:

- Improving the regulatory framework for the development of non-state forms of ownership of forest land;
- Improving legal support for state forest governance of various ownership forms;
- Eliminating gaps and conflicts in the norms regulating long-term use of forests and lands;
- Strengthening legal significance of forest planning materials;
- Regulating legislative requirements, as well as procedures for transfer for ownership or use of forest shelterbelts.

**Complementation and harmonization of the regulatory framework for forest and land records**

The Ukrainian legislation provides for information exchange between the state land and forest cadastres, other cadastres and information systems. However, in practice, data exchange is not carried out. As a consequence, there are significant discrepancies in the data of different record-keeping systems and lack of cartographic information on forests in the public domain.

The study demonstrated that the main reasons for this situation are the discrepancies in the regulations governing collection of information on land and forests and gaps in the legislation that determines the procedure for information exchange between state cadastres. To improve the situation, the data exchange technology was proposed as formalized in the draft 'Regulations for Information Exchange between the State Land and Forest Cadastres'. In addition, a new draft version of the rules regulating the ‘Procedure for Maintaining the State Forestry Cadastre’ was drafted, in which there are no contradictions with the land law, the norms of the EU legislation are taken into account, procedures for coordination and exchange of information between the cadastres, as well as correction of errors are provided.

Currently, the Program's proposals are widely discussed and used in the course of work on the creation in Ukraine of a national geospatial data infrastructure and the implementation of the INSPIRE Directive 2007/2/EC in the Ukrainian legislation.

**Improvement of the legal framework governing division of forests according to their designation**

Analysis of silvicultural practices shows that the system of forest division used in Ukraine is functionally obsolete and becomes an obstacle to the development of integrated farming based on the principles of sustainable forest governance. Its main shortcomings are:

- Assigning to each forest site only one target function;
- Lack of links between the functional purpose of forests and the mode of their cultivation and use;
- Inconsistency of the designated purpose of forests and lands on which they grow;
- Cumbersome three-level classification.

It is shown that a revision to the Forest Code is needed for qualitative improvement of the situation. However, within the framework of the current forest law, it is possible to optimize the functional division of forests by combining forest subcategories with similar forest management regimes. This implies a transition from a three-level system of functional division ‘categories – subcategories –
special protective areas’ to a two-level system ‘categories – subcategories’ and allows to get rid of the main shortcomings of the current system. The developed recommendations remain relevant and can be used both in the course of a comprehensive revision of forest law and in the harmonization of approaches to the functional division of forests and lands.

2.2.4 Harmonization of Ukraine’s forest law with EU legislation

At the early stage of the Program, it was demonstrated that many provisions of European law related to forests and included in documents on preserving biodiversity, developing rural areas, reducing dependence on fossil fuels, better informing society, developing trade and increasing the competitiveness of industry, i.e. ‘forest’ _acquis communautaire_ of the European Union, have not yet been adequately reflected in the Ukrainian legislation. According to the Program experts, their implementation into national law requires critically important and explicitly formulated national forest policy and strategy, comprehensively revised forest legislation, and effective participation of forest sector professionals in the development of a strategy for the related sectors development. This position was not supported by SFRAU, which believed that it was possible to solve adaptation problems by introducing cosmetic changes to the existing legal system. The facts testify to the ineffectiveness of such approach: in the last three years, approximation of the Ukrainian forest legislation to the EU law has not occurred, and the national strategic priorities for the development of the forest sector have remained unformed.

In the context of active development of the EU regulatory framework and strengthening of the course towards European integration, a second review of the current EU forest legislation was carried out before the Program completion. Provisions of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, together with government plans for their implementation in the forest sector, oblige state authorities to prepare a regulatory basis for further harmonization of forest legislation on forest products market (updating standards), forest statistics (forest records), forest conservation and protection (Natura 2000).

A number of urgent tasks of harmonization remains to be addressed, the main responsibility for the solution of which lies with the national authorities responsible for forest governance. The main among them are:

- Transition to European approaches to the measurement and classification of timber;
- Development of rules for handling reproductive material in full accordance with the requirements of the EU Directives;
- Ensuring silvicultural development, as well as growing and use of wood for bioenergy;
- Improvement of the system to verify the legality of wood;
- Development of the forest climate change adaptation program;
- Ensuring collection and presentation of forest statistics based on the list of indicators that are in line with relevant UN and EU requirements.

Implementation of these provisions in the Ukrainian forest law will allow in the future pursuing further integration and acquisition of EU membership. The decisive factor in the success of adaptation, as before, is the political will to bear the corresponding costs, which, according to experiences of Eastern European countries can be quite high.
2.2.5 Felling regulation

In the past 15 years, against the background of objectively low intensive forest management, there has been an increase in negative public attitudes towards the activities of foresters, accompanied by accusations of excessive logging and destruction of forests. Indignation is caused de jure by legal logging, primarily forest sanitation. The volume of harvesting in the course of logging has really increased many times and approached the volume of timber harvesting at final felling. This dynamics is due to the fact that in the course of revision of forest legislation, the norms of growing stock density were unreasonably increased, under which scheduled thinning is assigned, and the assignment of unscheduled sanitary cuttings was simplified as much as possible. The consequence of this was, on the one hand, reduction in forest tending accompanied by the accumulation of deadwood, decrease in quality and sustainability of plantations, and on the other hand, a sharp increase in sanitary felling that began to be commercialized, mainly in old-growth forests of high conservation and recreational value.

Under the Program, proposals were developed on a comprehensive review, reduction and specification of legislation on logging, but they did not receive timely support from SFRAU. This resulted in further deterioration of the situation.

In 2016, under the pressure of circumstances, the Sanitary Rules in Forests of Ukraine were changed, the new edition of which partially takes into account the Program proposals. However, this document preserves many mistakes and, in isolation from a dozen other legislative acts on logging, cannot significantly change the situation for the better. In this regard, the relevance of the Program’s proposals remains high.

During the implementation of the Program, other issues related to the improvement of legislation were also raised. Basically, they concern the legislative support of timber trade and are presented in the next section.

2.3 Improvement of forest management practices

Forest management practices in Ukraine are based on the principles and methods developed more than 30-40 years ago. Due to fundamental changes in external conditions (state structure, politics, economy, climate) and the emergence of new knowledge and technologies, many of them have become obsolete and began to impede the development. Introduction of new approaches in the forest sector is too slow because of its traditional conservatism, lack of necessary knowledge among decision-makers, too detailed regulatory framework that prevents from taking the initiative to go beyond the legislated limits. To change the situation for the better, a number of activities were carried out within the Program aimed at disseminating knowledge about best practices, changing outdated standards and demonstrating new opportunities in practice. Efforts were concentrated on two directions: introduction of new practices for growing the main forest-forming species and improving practical timber trade.

2.3.1 Implementing best pine and oak growing practices

A serious problem of Ukrainian forestry is a template approach to growing forests that focuses on maintaining high stocks of timber at all stages of growth, assigning thinning cuttings only at very
high density (closeness) of stands and carrying out cuttings with low intensity. The Program experts proved that this practice has a number of negative consequences, including:

- Stagnation of forest yield;
- Reduction of the total volume of logging over the logging cycle;
- Increase in the share of dead wood harvested in forced sanitary cuttings;
- Deterioration in size, quality and cost characteristics of wood being grown;
- Lower resistance of plantings to windfalls, snowstorms, pests and diseases.

Recommendations and methods for large-scale production testing of modern forest cultivation techniques were developed, which efficiency was confirmed by experiences of many European countries, in particular: the ‘Scandinavian method’ of intensive cultivation of pine forests and the ‘German method’ for isolation of the ‘trees of the future’ and the individual care of them in oak stands. Unfortunately, the project proposals were not supported by SFRAU. Meanwhile, the relevance of making adjustments to the forest growing practices is constantly increasing. This is clearly confirmed by the mass drying and weakening of middle-aged pine stands, which began in the last 2-3 years, and a progressive decline in quality of harvested oak wood.

2.3.2 Improvement of timber measurement and classification practices

Using obsolete standards of measurement and classification of wood is the main cause of decreasing timber records efficiency, reducing timber price, frequent violations, complaints and conflicts when concluding trade agreements. Based on the study of the relevant rules and standards of the EU countries, the Draft Rules of round timber assortment and quality assessment were developed along with a handbook to facilitate their study and implementation. The new rules were tested at state forest enterprises and approved. Their large-scale implementation is currently under discussion.

2.3.3 Improving rules on timber trade

In the absence of an adequate legal regulation of trade in timber harvested in the publicly-owned forests, there is an ongoing long-standing conflict between SFRAU representing the interests of timber owners (state forest enterprises) and its customers accusing forestry officials of concealing resources, lobbying exporters and corruption. The FLEG experts prepared a number of papers analyzing causes of the current situation, providing recommendations for its normalization, a review of experiences of timber trade with state forest companies of the EU and Turkey, as well as the draft rules on trade in round timber aimed at creating a civilized timber market. The Program proposals were not adopted in time and remain relevant.

2.3.4 Compliance with the Regulation (EU) No.995/2010 and analysis of the timber legality policy

The FLEG Program carried out a number of activities to inform participants in the forest products market of the new rules of timber and timber products placement in the EU markets, as well as an early assessment whether the Ukrainian timber flow control system is in compliance with the due diligence requirements of the European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR) No.995/2010. Since the Ukrainian legislation does not contain the concept of ‘legal origin’ of timber, it was recommended to define a number of criteria that allow to distinguish between legal and illegal
timber at all stages of the supply chain. To ensure legal circulation of timber, it was proposed to adopt a special regulation and develop on its basis our own timber legality assurance system. The survey assessed components of the timber legality policy: the unified state system of electronic timber records, the prospects for forest certification, as well as the certificate issuance system to confirm the legal origin of timber in its exports.

Later, comprehensive proposals were prepared to draft and formulate a law regulating the requirements and obligations to confirm legality of timber and timber products. In particular, it was proposed to establish a national system of registration of timber sales-purchase contracts and to introduce a mechanism for voluntary provision of guarantees by timber sellers with subsequent state control over compliance with such guarantees.

All FLEG recommendations on legal regulation of timber trade remain relevant. At the time of preparing this review, the Program proposals were in demand by the working group established on the initiative of the Prime Minister with a view to prepare a comprehensive forestry reform. The group includes a separate subgroup engaged in legal regulation of the market and using FLEG materials in its work.

2.4 Policy, strategy and reform
Changing the Government course in 2014 was the basis for revision of the Program work plan, which strengthened its focus on areas related to the formation of a new forest sector development strategy and preparation of the institutional reform. Significant efforts during this period were directed at participation in a multi-vector and multifaceted process of preparing reforms and responding to the new challenges of the forest sector.

2.4.1 Forest policy and strategy
Since independence Ukraine has lost its traditional strategic planning of the forest sector development and monitoring the implementation of the identified plans. The country has not formulated a national forest policy and strategy. They are replaced by regulations of the forestry authority where state strategic and intersectoral objectives are replaced by departmental tasks, and public discussion is replaced by formal departmental coordination.

Analysis of the plans and the concept for the forest sector development showed that they are largely declarative, unrealistic, not properly controlled and, hence, not implemented. Objective indicators show the accumulation of negative changes in the forest sector. Among these:

- Deterioration of the structure, quality and sustainability of forests;
- Decline and stagnation of production in the wood processing segment;
- The growing gap between SFRAU enterprises and state forest agencies of the European countries in terms of economic indicators, technical and technological equipment;
- Sharp differentiation of state forest enterprises in terms of income and financial capacity;
- Growing corruption and shadow segment in the forest business.

The Program identified the strategic objectives of the forest sector and analyzed possible options for their solution. Among these:

- Combating corruption in the forest sector;
- Improving relations related to the realization of ownership rights to forests and forest lands;
Improving the institutional structure of the forest sector. Development of the state forest governance system;
Comprehensive revision of forest legislation;
Improving the financial and economic mechanism for ensuring sustainable forest management;
Ensuring the development of a competitive wood processing segment, improving the system of access to forest resources;
Providing multi-purpose, sustainable and intensive forest management on a regional basis;
Development of protective afforestation, agrosilviculture and agroforestry; creation of plantations with a shorter turnover on agricultural lands;
Improving the quality and accessibility of information on forests, forestry and the forest sector as a whole;
Solving a set of tasks related to the European integration and responding to global changes in the economy and the environment.

2.4.2 Supporting reforms

As part of the work on supporting reforms, the Program experts developed recommendations on the forest sector reform, which were submitted to the Government in December 2014. In part, they were used in the preparation of the Coalition Agreement (2014) between the Parliament and the Government for implementing the Action Plan of the Government (2015, 2016) in paragraphs providing for the preparation and implementation of the forest governance institutional reform and adoption of comprehensive measures to regulate the situation on the timber market.

Also under this line of action, two analytical studies were carried out: ‘Assessment of the State of Forest Governance’ and ‘Regulatory and Legal Support for the Establishment of the State Forest Association’. These studies enabled a more informed discussion on forestry sector reform.

Assessment of the state of forest governance

Changes in the system of executive power weakened vertical relationships of the state forest governance. Throughout the period of independence, the status of the central forestry authority was gradually decreasing, while goals and objectives of its activity remained practically unchanged. Taking into account political intentions of further sector reform, the Program experts recommended a functional survey of SFRAU, as well as a survey of forest governance functions of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine.

An overall assessment of the forest governance system carried out according to a set of criteria proposed by the World Bank (2009), revealed a significant number of operational challenges and problems. Addressing these problems requires regulatory response and operational management, rather than mainly political decisions.

The net-map analysis of management tasks showed that along with the improvement of economic management, optimization of the agencies implementing functions of the state is no less important. Cosmetic administrative reforms have not improved and are unlikely to improve carrying out of the state functions related to the preparation of the regulatory framework, planning, forest management, inventory and record-keeping of forests, organization of forest protection and conservation, coordination of owners and users of communal and private forests.
**Regulatory and legal support for establishing the state forest association**

The Program of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine for 2015-2016 envisaged the establishment of a single forestry authority with a view of separating economic management functions and state control functions in the forest sector. Investigation of legislative solutions to this problem showed the regulatory possibilities of forming a state business association in the form of state forest corporation.

As one of the economic governance reform options, the model of state business association was submitted for consideration to parliamentarians, the SFRAU leadership, the Ministry of Agrarian Policy, and the public. The sector reform group established in SFRAU recommended a piloted establishment of state associations in one or several regions of Ukraine, however, no real steps in this direction have been made.

Available applied results of the research facilitated a broad discussion on the establishment of a single forest company, which ultimately allowed avoiding the unprepared reorganization of SFRAU enterprises. Today, the risks associated with the reform are again relevant and are the subject of discussion.

Being a well-known platform for dialogue on forest sector issues, the Program paid much attention to substantiating and discussing the need for reforms, comparative analysis of forestry performance, summarizing experiences of European countries’ reforms, analyzing the possibilities and shortcomings of various institutional models. These topics were discussed at many round tables, including with the involvement of experts from the EU countries (Sweden and Latvia).

In addition, experts and representatives of the project implementation team actively participated in events organized by other stakeholders – Verkhovna Rada, Cabinet of Ministers, Ministry of Agrarian Policy, Ministry of Economy and Trade, SFRAU, Accounting Chamber, Agrarian University, profile associations and NGOs.

At that, the focus was on the issues related to:

- Assessment of the feasibility of a moratorium on the round timber export;
- Improvement of legislation regulating liability for offenses in forest matters;
- Search for financing options for forest enterprises located in forest-poor regions when their budget support is discontinued;
- Analysis of the dynamics of silvicultural and economic indicators characterizing activities of state forest enterprises;
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of electronic record-keeping system for timber products flow control;
- The choice of a new institutional model of state forest governance.

At the final stage of the Program this activity steadily increased.
2.5 Dissemination of knowledge and enhancing transparency of the forest sector

All Program components indirectly served the tasks of disseminating knowledge and demonstrating transparent methods of work. However, some activities were focused specifically on these goals.

2.5.1 Improving legal knowledge of forest service employees

Within the framework of the Program, a number of teaching and learning materials aimed at improving legal knowledge of forest service employees was prepared and published:

- Booklet ‘A Handbook for State Forest Service Employees on Documenting the Actions of Offenders: Legal, Tactical, Psychological Aspects and Advice’;
- Book ‘Administrative Responsibility for Forest Offences: Practical Application by the State Forest Service of Ukraine’;
- Booklet ‘Criminal Liability for Unauthorized Felling Operations’;
- Book ‘Preventing and Countering Corruption in the Ukrainian Forest Sector: Practical Guide’.

These materials are available in all forest enterprises of Ukraine. They were in demand and gained positive feedback.

For a number of years, the Program expert was delivering lectures on legal liability for forest offenses to forest service professionals at the Ukrainian Center for Training, Retraining and Advanced Training of Forestry Personnel (Ukrtsentrkadrylis). These lectures were included in the compulsory curriculum.

Other knowledge dissemination methods used under the Program include placement of training materials, video recordings of round tables and project reports on thematic websites, publication of brochures with summaries of executed work, and study tours (Latvia, Moscow, Arkhangelsk, Irkutsk).

2.5.2 Working with the public and the media

When starting operation in Ukraine, the FLEG Program faced underestimation of the forest sector problems by the society, lack of minimum information in public access, biased coverage of forest events and problems by official authorities and politicized nature of many publications, a small number of independent journalists specializing in forestry, almost complete absence of analytical articles and civilized polemics.

To change the situation for the better, a strategy was developed aimed at increasing the journalists’ interest in forest issues and raising their awareness. In its implementation, various tools were used. A journalist-oriented manual was prepared, containing answers on key questions related to forest governance. Journalists and NGO representatives were mandatory participants in all Program activities, where they could obtain exhaustive information about a particular problem, as well as hear the opinion of all interested parties. A series of press clubs was held in the regions, during which the outcomes of analytical studies were presented and discussions were organized on the problems most relevant to the particular region.
A popular event of the Program was a contest for regular and freelance writers of all types of media ‘Every Year is Forest Year’ for the best article on FLEG related themes. During the FLEG Program, five such contests were held, and each year the jury noted an increase in the number of participants and the quality of publications. The best materials became subjects of active public discussions and often had a significant impact on the solutions of problems raised in them. The Program efforts yielded results. In a relatively short period of time, the forest sector has become much more transparent, which is confirmed by both objective (availability of data in the public domain, number of publications, number and attendance of forest sites, etc.) and subjective assessments.

3. Situation in the forest sector and challenges for the future

State forest governance, forestry and the forest sector as a whole are in a situation of deep systemic crisis. The forest sector problems accumulated over the years have dramatically worsened in recent years and escalated into conflicts requiring urgent solutions. First of all, it concerns counteraction to corruption, normalization of the situation in the timber market and ensuring operation of state forest enterprises in forest-poor regions of the country. Most of the problems that have been raised under the Program since 2009 remain relevant today. It is becoming increasingly clear that many tasks cannot be solved within the existing organizational and legal model of forest governance, which includes elements of planned and market economy, the combination of which generates corruption risks and impedes sustainable management.

The need to reform the forest governance system was realized by authorities in 2014 (largely due to the FLEG Program), but the vision of reforms has not been formulated to date and is not presented for professional and public discussion. The created ‘vacuum’ enhanced activities of other participants in the forest sector – representatives of political parties, local self-government, business, NGOs, and science, who developed and promote their own, often conflicting views on solving various problems related to forests and the forest sector.

The Program significantly contributed to greater transparency of the forest sector, becoming the first known platform for discussing important problems with the participation of parliamentarians, officials of ministries and agencies, independent experts, representatives of business, science and public organizations. In the current circumstances, it is critically important to continue an open dialogue on forest policy and strategy. The most important part of this dialogue should be the discussion of ways to improve the legal and organizational structure of forest governance and management in state forests. Structuring, organizing and planning the process of preparing reforms is an independent goal, but even now we can name three groups of tasks, whose solution should be found in the process of dialogue.

The first group includes tasks related to preserving the manageability and sustainability of the forest sector, delay in solving which can significantly worsen the situation. The main among these are:

- Strengthening efforts aimed at combating corruption and shadow timber circulation;
- Adoption of a set of measures to ensure equitable access to timber for all market participants;
Search for effective rescue measures from the bankruptcy of state forest enterprises located in arid, forest-poor regions of the country and having no opportunities for self-financing.

The second group includes tasks related to formation of a vision of basic principles and objectives of state forest governance, revision of forest legislation and implementation of the institutional reform. Among these:

- Revision of relations concerning implementation of ownership rights to forests and forest lands in the context of land reform;
- Improvement of the institutional model of state forest governance, including forest administration and agencies ensuring forest management activities in state forests;
- Preparation of a comprehensive review of forest and related legislation;
- Justification of the financial and economic mechanism for implementing sustainable forest management and performing socially significant forest functions in all regions of the country, regardless of their resource potential.

The third group includes numerous tasks related to improving the quality of forest management and increasing the contribution of the forest sector to stability, security, economic and social well-being of the country. Many of these are cross-sectoral and closely linked to programs aimed at developing rural areas, ensuring food and energy security, preserving and restoring biodiversity, informing society and creating ‘e-government’, responding to global climate change, ensuring the development of a competitive industry, and so on. Experience shows that solution of these problems directly depends on the stable forest governance system in place, in the absence of which the results are local and temporary. That is why in the next two to three years, the Government's main focus should be on addressing tasks in the first and second groups.

Evaluating the situation as a whole, it should be noted that at the end of the FLEG II Program in Ukraine, a favorable situation for the implementation of reforms was formed. Among the factors contributing to the reform, are:

- Aggravation of problems that cannot be effectively solved under the framework of the existing forest governance model;
- Conducting a comprehensive public administration reform, inevitably affecting many issues related to forest matters;
- Supporting the idea of forest governance reform at the level of Verkhovna Rada, Cabinet of Ministers, Ministry of Agrarian Policy, SFRAU, as well as other agencies that have some interests related to forests and forest resources.

The main obstacle to reform is lack of political will for reforms, as well as the institutional and professional weakness of state agencies responsible for the formulation and implementation of the forest policy, scientific and legal support and coordination of the forest sector development. Problems arising in this context have been partially addressed by the FLEG Program, but this is clearly not enough, and therefore the need for international support for reforms remains high.
List of reports and publications

2009 - 2012

Report ‘Corruption Risks and Weaknesses in Ukraine’s Forestry Legislative Regulation’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/index5685.html?id=14&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=4&cHash=9b19db53d13e1d7afe9cff12b63ba9de

Report ‘Forest Law Enforcement Analysis through the Prism of Internet Publications’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/index9050.html?id=14&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=38&cHash=ac0d0ddfc38917460ee0755ac73ab87

Report ‘Ukraine’s Forest Law Enforcement and Governance by Expert Survey Results’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/indexb45b.html?id=14&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=5&cHash=cc59632409909a9cc45d299e72ca4cb1

Report ‘Comparative Analysis of Ukraine’s Forest Law and Related Regulations for Compliance with EU Legal Framework for Sustainable Forest Governance’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/indexa8bf.html?id=14&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=34&cHash=529761387b4ea48d73b3b7b2d39c3303

Report ‘Analysis of Ukraine’s Forest Law in Terms of Legality and Ensuring Efficient Use of Forests and Forest Resources’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/index4710.html?id=14&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=48&cHash=9d05fe6e03405d93955c7de8818a324f

Report ‘Forestry Problems and Their Perception by the Population in the Forested Areas of Ukraine’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/index4dae.html?id=14&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=43&cHash=a0557ac3077b5bcada5322adf599ca54

Report ‘Shortcomings and Problems of Legal Regulation of the State Forest Service of Ukraine’

Report ‘Summary of Conditions for Ensuring the Legality of Timber Origin in Ukraine: to the Development of the Practical Guidelines for Ensuring Timber Legality’

http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/index1a19.html?id=14&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=66&cHash=6d6870f8546c96c0c8ec54b0e0e4eac7

Booklet ‘A Handbook for the State Forest Service Employees on Documenting the Actions of Offenders, Legal, Tactical, Psychological Aspects and Advice’

Report ‘Analysis of Legal Regulation of Long-term Temporary Use of Forests: Ensuring People’s Rights to Use Forest Resources, Corruption Risks and Prevention of Forest Law Violations’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/index678b.html?id=6&no_cache=1&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=80&cHash=90c5e0bf6d107dbd365e00f20f9b30a2%20


Report ‘Survey of Business Representatives in the Forest Sector of Ukraine’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/index5c7c.html?id=14&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=124&cHash=3d765a5cb1411fd349496cb4f582e369

Book ‘Administrative Responsibility for Forest Offences: Practical Application by the State Forest Service of Ukraine’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/indexd2c8.html?id=14&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=96&cHash=7ad743fcd981bf9c0bdf448c98433708

http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/index914e.html?id=14&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=122&cHash=bcbcf8f6f05dbac84c6ebec30debdc4

Report ‘Level of Publicity and Transparency in the Forest Sector of Ukraine: Based on Survey of Journalists and Representatives of the State Forest Resources Agency of Ukraine’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/index6401.html?id=14&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=137&cHash=e4fafab0a8d195dac792fe304d3f6595

Report ‘Problems of the Ukrainian Timber Market Related to Measurement, Grading and Quality Assessment of Round Timber’

Report ‘Civil Liability for Illegal Logging: Problems of Enforcement and Ways of Improvement’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/indexe720.html?id=14&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=143&cHash=43e0b8f63363ace1ccc2b04efc54591e

Report ‘Conditions for Small and Medium Business in the Forest Sector. Results of the SMEs Survey in Timber Trade and Processing Sectors’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/index8023.html?id=14&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=144&cHash=8fe51a318dd8bc7652d620b9bee6dc8a

Book ‘Criminal Liability for Unauthorized Logging’
http://fleg1.fleg.org.ua/indexabcc.html?id=14&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=142&cHash=475afa9e0bb989bf8244ba516a6196e2
2013 - 2016

Report ‘Development of the Institute of Ownership of Land for Forestry Purposes’
http://www.fleg.org.ua/docs/238


Book ‘Preventing and Countering Corruption in the Ukrainian Forest Sector: Practical Guide’
http://www.fleg.org.ua/docs/200


Report ‘Forest Policy and Strategy of Ukraine: Assessment, Problems and Their Solutions’
http://www.fleg.org.ua/docs/736

Report ‘Improving the Organizational and Legal Framework of State Control in the Forestry Sector’
http://www.fleg.org.ua/docs/498

Recommendations to the Draft Regulations ‘Round Timber Grading and Quality Assessment’
http://www.fleg.org.ua/docs/731

Report ‘Regulatory Framework for the Establishment of State Forestry Corporation’
http://www.fleg.org.ua/docs/1646


Report ‘Contemporary Forest Cultivation Practices. Comparing them with the Ukrainian ones’
http://www.fleg.org.ua/zvity-konsultantiv-svitovogo-banku/1390

Report ‘Ban on Ukraine’s Timber Export: Causes, Consequences, Alternatives’
http://www.fleg.org.ua/docs/1648

Report ‘Overall Assessment of the State Forest Governance in Ukraine’
http://www.fleg.org.ua/news/1623

Report ‘Improving the Legal Responsibility for Violations of Forest Law, and Countering Circulation of Illegally Extracted Forest Resources. Recommendations on Amendments to the Law’
http://www.fleg.org.ua/docs/1495

Report ‘Review of Ukraine’s Forest Legislation Approximation to EU ‘
http://www.fleg.org.ua/news/1690

http://www.fleg.org.ua
The ‘European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) East Countries Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) II Program is designed to support strengthening of forest governance systems in participating countries. At the regional level, the Program is aimed at promoting the implementation of the 2005 Saint Petersburg Ministerial Declaration. At the country level, the Program analyzes and reviews the forest policy, enhances knowledge and strengthens support for sustainable forest governance and improvement of the governance systems in the forest sector. At the sub-national (local) level, the Program focuses on the development, testing and evaluation of sustainable forest management pilot-projects to disseminate successful experiences. The participating countries are: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. The Program is funded by the European Union. http://www.enpi-fleg.org

Project partners

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www.iucn.org

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www.panda.org