



ENPI FLEG

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



Photo by H. Hovhannisyan

ENPI FLEG ARMENIA NEWSLETTER

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ENPI FLEG ARMENIA PROGRAM NEWS

Public Awareness Activities

Journalists' Training and Media Tour on Illegal Logging



Photo by L. Yolchyan

15 journalists, representing Yerevan and region based TV, radio, print and online media, participated in the training organized on June 21-22, within the framework of ENPI FLEG Program. The training aimed at providing journalists with comprehensive information on illegal logging by experts, environmentalists and state officials. During the training invited speakers, representing various structures, introduced various viewpoints on the topic providing a platform for discussions. Thus, discussions evolved on such urgent and controversial issues, as changes necessary in the forest management system and legislation, classification of

industrial forests, level of corruption in the forest sector, mechanisms applied for illegal logging and measures taken for prevention, forestries most endangered from the perspective of illegal logging or specially protected areas, formal and informal figures, etc.



Photo by L. Yolchyan

The training was followed by a media tour to Tavush region, where the journalists learned about the situation on the spot and had an opportunity to speak with local authorities and ordinary people. Materials prepared as a result cover various social, economic and political aspects of illegal logging. Another media tour to Lori region will take place in July. It is also planned to hold a competition with nominations in the best television, radio, print and online material with relevant prizes.

ENPI FLEG Project Highlighted by a National Radio

On 20 April 2010, Siranush Galstyan, WWF Armenia Coordinator for the ENPI FLEG Project was the guest of the European Perspective program of Radio Hay. This weekly talk-show highlights dynamics of cooperation between Armenia and EU countries in various ENP fields. Devoted to the Earth Day, the April 20 program covered issues related to the forest sector, in addition to other environmental issues. During the program Siranush Galstyan spoke on the FLEG process in Armenia, ENPI FLEG program and ENPI FLEG Armenia program activities. The radio program is available at www.hello-europe.info website.

Leaflet on ENPI FLEG Program

In order to raise the public awareness on the ENPI FLEG Program, a leaflet with a slogan "Save Trees from Illegal Logging" was published. The leaflet presents the Program in general and ENPI FLEG Armenia Program in particular: its goal, objectives and implemented activities. The leaflet will be disseminated among interested state and private structures and NGOs.



Assessing Forest Sanctuary Management and Law Enforcement Effectiveness

During March-May 2010, within the framework of ENPI FLEG Program, WWF Armenia conducted assessment of management and law enforcement effectiveness of forest sanctuaries. For this purpose, Ijevan, Arjatkleni and Gulagarak forest sanctuaries were selected under the management of Hayantar SNCO of the RoA Ministry of Agriculture and Zikatar one managed by the RoA Ministry of Nature Protection. Effectiveness of their management was assessed through surveys conducted on a local level.

Through the assessment peculiarities of these sanctuaries were identified and legal, institutional, management and law enforcement problems were revealed. A number of proposals on improving management and law enforcement effectiveness were developed, namely conducting research and monitoring biodiversity, staff training on biodiversity monitoring, conservation, ecotourism and other issues, developing conservation, recreation and ecotourism infrastructures, reviewing the RoA Forest Code and the RoA Law on Specially Protected Areas, regulating forest use (types of allowed activities, limitations and use), developing sanctuary statutes and management plans.

The next phase of this assignment envisages implementation of specific proposals in close collaboration with the "Hayantar" SNCO.

Survey Revealed Knowledge, Attitude and Perception

During March-April 2010, within the framework of the ENPI FLEG Program, IUCN conducted a survey aimed at revealing forest protection related knowledge, attitude and perception of people living in communities adjacent to forests. The survey covered 8 towns/villages of Tavush, Lori and Syunik regions and was carried out through focus group discussions and individual interviews. The study revealed people's knowledge on forest management and functions, problems of legal and illegal logging, the level of people's concern and care about forests and actual attitude towards forest protection, the level of people's perception on biodiversity issues and structures dealing with forest protection. The survey also revealed environmental information sources of people and possible ways of dissemination of that information. Based on the survey results, ENPI FLEG Armenia Program's communications products will be developed and relevant channels identified. The study report is available at www.enpi-fleg.org website.

Cooperation with State Structures

Ongoing Dialogue with the Republic of Armenia State Sector



Photo by WWF Armenia

On April 8, 2010, the ENPI-FLEG Program team in Armenia met with representatives of RoA Ministry of Territorial Administration and Ministry of Agriculture, namely the administration of Hayantar State Non-Commercial Organization (SNCO) - the body responsible for the state forest management in the country. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the ENPI-FLEG Program objectives, current and upcoming activities as well as overall FLEG issues in Armenia.

Discussions in the course of the meeting proved very constructive and helped further promote an active dialogue between the ENPI-FLEG Program implementing parties and the state sector through an open exchange of ideas. Mr. Martun Matevosyan, Director General of Hayantar SNCO, gave an overview of the general situation in the Armenian forest sector and pointed to the current institutional and law enforcement challenges faced by the agency.

Also, the problem of illegal logging was high on the agenda of this meeting, and the ENPI-FLEG Program experts reconfirmed that the uncontrolled logging was largely a result of inefficiently regulated economic activities, and that major institutional reforms were needed to minimize the pressure on the country's forest resources.

The meeting participants stressed the importance of involving the private sector in combating the illegal logging in Armenia. It was highlighted that the work with the private sector should result in finding the effective common

solution which would prove workable given the current difficult state of the forestry sector in Armenia. The Hayantar Director General also noted the significant progress made within the forest sector development in tree planting on a community level in northern regions of Armenia. He also indicated the importance of the ENPI-FLEG Program in targeting forest-based communities while effectively raising the Program's awareness.

In its outcome this meeting has strengthened the platform for continuous dialogue and cooperation with the state sector under the ENPI-FLEG Program implementation, as well as helped to determine prospects for effective cooperation and identify existing issues. All the participants have reconfirmed that continuous efforts and commitment of the state sector were instrumental for improving transparency in the forest governance in Armenia.

FOREST SECTOR NEWS

Development of Community Forest Management in the Focus



Training in Zikatar Community

Photo by REC Caucasus

Regional Environmental Center (REC) Caucasus' Supporting Development of Community Forest Management Policy and Practice in Mountainous Regions of Caucasus project is currently underway. Implemented in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Northern Osetia, the project activities include building community forest management capacity, raising community members' and local authorities' awareness on sustainable forest management, and reforestation. Through these activities the project addresses the issues of sustainable development of communities, poverty reduction in rural areas, climate change, etc.

Within the framework of the project, REC Caucasus Armenia Branch's activities are targeted at Koghb and Jujevan communities of Tavush region. Training courses were conducted among community members transferring theoretical and practical knowledge on biodiversity protection, usage of non-wood forest products, and legal, protection, management and reforestation issues related to forests. Analyses of forest legislation and relevant legislative acts was conducted and existing gaps were revealed. Reforestation plans were developed, including respective areas, their types, relevant activities and schedule. These plans will be launched in autumn 2010, involving community members in the reforestation activities. Gap analysis will be conducted to reveal people's attitude towards protection, conservation and management of community forests and to identify activities directed at effective use of forests. Best practices of the project will later be applied in other forest areas of Armenia.

Young Activists Against Logging



No Comment

Photo by Group Members

In March, in the park adjacent to the National Library and known as "Students' Park" construction activities of two entertainment centers (cafes, discotheques) started in Yerevan. For this purpose, in an area of 1.17 hectares 20 trees were logged, of which photos and video materials are evidence.

The construction had a wide response among young people, students. We Are the Owners of this City Facebook group started to actively struggle against destruction of the park, uniting volunteers and NGOs and organizing various actions: collecting signatures, addressing letters to authorities, meeting state officials, photo exhibition and protest actions by providing evidence that the construction was carried out with violation of engineering, construction and environmental legislation. Notwithstanding these protests, Yerevan Municipality authorities didn't take any measures towards the problem solution. We Are the Owners of this City group, which currently has almost 3.500 members involved in open and active discussions on the problem, initiated a collective claim demanding from the Yerevan Municipality to annul the construction authorization and to bring the park to its previous condition. Tens of citizens, including renowned intelligencia, have signed under the claim. As stated in the group appeal, "Our group will consistently apply every legal action and means of civic appeal in order to satisfy the lawful claim of returning the public park to Yerevan people."

630 Hectares of Reforestation



The first phase of the Mitigating Impact of the Climate Change in the South Caucasus through Conserving, Managing and Reforestation Forests project is finished, resulting in 630 hectares of reforestation in Lori region. For this purpose, areas deprived of forests were selected in the region and their afforestation projects were developed. Later, through community workforce, seedlings were grown and planting, fencing and maintenance activities were carried out. Training courses on mitigating the impact of climate change were conducted among community members. As a result of the project, almost 2 million trees were planted in Jrashen, Tsaghkaber,

Arjut, Ghursali, Katnajur communities of Lori region and in the area of Spitak enterprise of Gugark forestry. Thus, a composition of breeds close to the natural and highly adaptable forests were created. Among the mid-term benefits of the project are 800 temporary workplaces for the local population, improving protective features of forests and preventing soil erosion. In the long-term perspective possibilities of using timber and forest by-products will be improved.

The second phase of the project envisions maintenance activities in already planted areas, as well as reforestation activities in previous forest areas, which were suffered from fire.

The project is implemented by WWF Germany, WWF Caucasus and WWF Armenia in cooperation with Hayantar SNCO of RoA Ministry of Agriculture and Armenian Tree Project. The project is funded by German Federal Republic Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety through KfW International Development Bank.

For Improving Adaptation of Armenia's Forests



Goris Pilot Project Area, Planting Activities

RoA Ministry of Nature Protection's Adaptation to Climate Change Impacts in Mountain Forest Ecosystems of Armenia project is currently underway. Implemented jointly with UNDP and with support of Global Environmental Facility, the project is focused on Syunik region. The latter is characterized by vulnerable forest ecosystem towards the climate change. There are also degraded forest areas and unfavorable climate conditions there. The area is rather rich in biodiversity.

The main objectives of the project are to create favorable conditions for involving risks of climate change impacts in mountain forest ecosystem management programs, to develop mechanisms as early responses to those risks, to carry out reforestation activities in areas logged, fired and damaged by forest pests, to contribute to struggling against pests, and to introduce a data collection and analysis system for developing adaptation activities.

A number of studies were conducted: revealing adaptation problems and assessing vulnerability towards climate change risks in forests, examining forest pests and pestilences conditioned with climate change, revealing problems related to forest fires.

Pilot projects on reforestation of Syunik region are also conducted, including logged areas in the Shurnukh forest enterprise, reforestation of a fired juniper area in the David Bek forest enterprise of Kapan forestry, and reforestation of Arevik National Park, fired and damaged by forest pests.

Project results and experience will be applied in other regions of Armenia.

ABOUT ENPI FLEG PROGRAM

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

www.enpi-fleg.org

PROJECT PARTNERS



World Bank

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

www.worldbank.org



IUCN

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

www.iucn.org



WWF

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

www.panda.org



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