Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) is an international, participatory process of formulation and implementation of policies and practices aiming to ensure sustainable forest management and fight against illegal logging and associated timber trade. This process has, since its start, evolved into a number of national, regional and global initiatives.
ENPI FLEG Armenia introduces guide on national forest legislation

The acting Forest Code of Armenia was adopted in 2005 and introduced new and progressive forms of forest ownership, forest classification and principles of forest use. However, ENPI FLEG Armenia identified the need for additional explanation regarding certain provisions which led to the publication of a dedicated Guide.

WWF Armenia carried out an analysis of the national forest legislation (Forest Code and related acts) and a series of capacity building trainings which started in November 2009 and will come to an end in April 2012.

The Guide on Forest Legislation, resulting from the analysis and part of the trainings, constitutes the first attempt for thorough commentary of the Forest Code of Armenia and relevant provisions of other legal acts forming the national system of forest legislation. It also includes clear proposals on amendments and additions to the commented provisions.

Trainings will be organized in six regions of Armenia during March and April 2012 to present the Guide and disseminate it among state employees, communities, the private sector, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders.

The Guide will be used by the forest authorized bodies for the revision of the Forest Code. Even though it is still early to say it with certainty, it is expected that the Guide will become a desk book for specialists dealing with forest legislation as well as be of use for the communities and private sector, thus contributing to the implementation of forest legislation in Armenia.

Tourism program for sustainable forests in the Dsegh community, Armenia

In the framework of ENPI FLEG activities, WWF-Armenia is going to support the Dsegh community in the establishment of a tourism program as one of the pilot projects on alternative forest use in communities. The project is aimed at protection and sustainable use of Dsegh and neighboring forests while developing tourism which creates opportunities for alternative incomes for the communities and decreases the pressure on natural resources.

The project includes establishing of tourist infrastructure in the Dsegh community and neighboring areas. Among the activities is the provision of tourist shelters (Tsover Resort Area), necessary equipment (tents, sleeping bags, garbage bins, etc.), establishment of three bed&breakfast facilities in the Dsegh community to accommodate tourists and visitors, installation of directional and information signs (for tourist attraction areas, B&Bs and ecotourism trails). Last but not least, an awareness raising campaign and a cleaning initiative will be organized for Dsegh school-children and others.

A Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation for the development of ecotourism in the community was signed between WWF-Armenia and the Dsegh community.
Journalists award in Baku

A ceremony to award journalists for their coverage of forest-related issues in the media of Azerbaijan was held in the ENPI FLEG Program Office in Baku on January 11, 2012. The event was organized by the ENPI FLEG Program Azerbaijan Communication Team and managed by the Media Consultant.

The celebrations of the 2011 UN International Year of Forests and of the Azerbaijani Year of Tourism have extensively contributed to increasing interest in environmental issues and forests preservation nationwide. Thanks to the ENPI FLEG Program’s active efforts in promoting public awareness on sustainable forest management and developing forest education, large coverage of these topics has appeared on various media both in the country and outside.

Among the numerous exciting stories received for the contest, the ENPI FLEG in-Program Committee selected Fiona Maclachlan and her piece “Fighting for Forests” published by the “Visions of Azerbaijan” magazine and a series of articles on Program activities produced by Gulgiz Suleymanova and published by the leading national newspaper “Zerkalo”.

During the award ceremony the Program Team presented the activities and initiatives launched and implemented in Azerbaijan. A lively questions and answers session enriched the meeting.

“Protect the forests”: Young Foresters Ecological Contest launched in Azerbaijan

The Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan announced the launch of a national ecological contest for young foresters under the title “Protect the forests”. The event is dedicated to celebrating the International Year of Forests and the Year of Tourism in Azerbaijan. The contest will take place from December 2011 through January 2012. It is carried out at three levels (school, district and national) and covering four topics: school-based forest unions; forest biodiversity; ecotourism and eco education of teachers. Currently, essays and drafts of ecology-related projects are being prepared focusing on forest protection activities of school-based forest unions, as well as on sustainable forest management.

It is significant to mention that this contest was developed following the Ministry’s approval of the “Young Forester School” tutorial — a teacher support pack developed within the framework of the ENPI FLEG Program in Azerbaijan. The ENPI FLEG Forest Education Consultant is the main tutor in this initiative.

ENPI FLEG to report results at a national conference in Minsk

ENPI FLEG results and reports will be presented at a conference on “Important issues of the Belarus forest sector strategy” on April 10, 2012 in Minsk. More than 150 participants will attend the event at the State educational institution “Republican center for training and skill upgrading on forest management” (PTC-Forest).

The main goal of the conference is to analyze the implementation of the “State Program of Forest Sector Development in Belarus for 2011-2015”. Furthermore, possible directions for further increasing the positive economic, ecological and social role of the
Belarus forestry sector will be discussed. The outcomes of the discussion will be used for the preparation of the “Belarus Forestry Strategic Plan until 2030”, which is an activity of the World Bank as part of the ENPI FLEG Program in Belarus.

This is the second time such a document is being produced with the assistance of the World Bank. The “Strategic Plan until 2015” was developed in 1997 as part of the World Bank Forest loan program, and was later used for creating amendments to the Belarus forestry legislation. Some proposals from this document were included in the “State Program of Forest Sector Development in Belarus for 2011-2015”.

ENPI FLEG representatives from the World Bank and IUCN will present reports on the “International experience in forest management systems reforms” and “Forest management communication strategy as part of the FLEG process”. Within this seminar ENPI FLEG Belarus publications will be presented and distributed to participants.

The conference is organized by the Belarus Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Education, National Academy of Science and other organizations. Among the 150 expected participants are state forest managers, representatives from science, universities, civil society organizations, and the media.

Georgian State Forest department trained on geoinformation systems

From February 6 through March 2, 2012 the Global Information System (GIS) and Remote Sensing Consulting Center GeoGraphic conducted training in geoinformation systems for the staff of the Forest Department of the Natural Resources Agency at the Georgian Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources. The training was part of the ENPI FLEG activities of the World Bank.

The main purpose of the training was to teach participants the application of geoinformation systems, specifically the ArcGIS Desktop system. Seventeen employees of central and regional offices of the Natural Resources Agency attended the training. It consisted of an introduction to ArcGIS Desktop and training on the instruments for the creation, management and analysis of GIS data. The training consisted of presentations, practical exercises and independent work with the application. The course also included testing of the level of acquired knowledge by trainees and the results varied between 80 and 93 out of 100 points.

Since 1998, GeoGraphic has been contributing extensively to the development and utilization of modern technologies for spatial information management in Georgia. GeoGraphic performs its activities in areas, including environmental protection and natural resources management. Within the training in geoinformation systems for the Forest Department staff, GeoGraphic may also provide additional support for trainees over the following 6 months if such need arises.

For more information on the training please contact Mr. Rati Japaridze, ENPI FLEG coordinator from the World Bank: rati.japaridze@enpi-fleg.org

NPAC members discussed ENPI FLEG implementation in Georgia

On January 26, 2012 the Georgian Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources hosted the ENPI FLEG Program National Advisory Committee (NPAC) meeting.

The meeting was attended by Ms. Mariam Valishvili, the First Deputy Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of Georgia and NPAC Chairman, the committee members from the state and non-governmental sector, as well as Ms. Camilla Aberg from the European Commission delegation to Georgia.
Ms. Mariam Valishvili gave a speech about the implementation of the Program in Georgia and its importance for the country. “The existence of such Program is significant for Georgia. It shows the consideration of the European Union for the country. Moreover, it paves the way for other projects carried out by the European Union in the country”.

The representatives of the three implementing organizations of the Program, the World Bank, IUCN and WWF, presented the activities carried out and the publications produced in the framework of the Program. They also discussed the ongoing and planned activities at national, as well as at regional level. The State and non-governmental sector representatives showed appreciation of the Program and made valuable suggestions for its planned activities.

For more information on the ENPI FLEG Program in Georgia please, contact Ms. Ekaterine Otarashvili: ekaterine.otarashvili@iucn.org

Forests and people in Moldova

As many as 76.5% of the respondents to a survey recently conducted in Moldova by the ENPI FLEG Program state to use wood as their primary source of energy. An alarming figure, considering the pressure on Moldovan forests of such practice.

The survey is part of a study which analyzed the public perception of and some trends related to forests, such as demand in wood products, wood use, the official volume of timber harvest and the scale of illegal logging.

The results show that there is lack of forest coverage in the country and that forest resources are not sufficient to meet subsistence needs of the local population. Real wood consumption and demand in wood products are rather high: the utilization rate of wood as energy source varies from 5 to 10 cubic meters per heating season within a household. Acquisition of wood/timber by the local population is done legally with the corresponding documentation as well as illegally – directly at the forest units, from a forester officer or even from an intermediate.

Almost 45% of respondents state to have heard about illegal logging activities and about 23% to have often heard about these activities in their own districts. Only 12% of respondents consider that the forest guard works well and elicits all or almost all facts of illegal logging. At the same time slightly more than half of the respondents (52%) believe that many such facts are not revealed at all. A more detailed report can be found here.

The survey was conducted in 2010-2011 among the local population of four geographical areas of Moldova: Central forest zone (“Codri”), Northern forest-steppe zone, Southern steppe zone and South Eastern lowland zone (Transdniestria). 604 people were interviewed.

High wood consumption in Moldova revealed

In 2010 the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), in cooperation with Public association “Silva-Mileniu III” and FLEG Office Moldova (WB, IUCN), carried out an analytical study on the estimative consumption of wood and wood products in Moldova (including import-export trends).

Data and other information were provided by the forestry entities of a range of different actors including Agency “Moldsilva”, Ministry of Environment, State Ecological Inspectorate, Ministry of Transport and Road Infrastructure, National Bureau of Statistics, Agency of Land Relations and Cadastre, Customs Service and Local Public Authorities.
According to the results, the estimated annual consumption of wood (including other energetic biomass) by local population in Moldova is estimated at around 1.3 million m³, of which 2.5% is timber and 97.5% constitutes fuel wood. Most of this consumption is from domestic forest resources, mainly to meet household subsistence needs, and less from imported wood products. A dangerous situation is the fuel wood consumption – the local population consumes large volumes of domestic energetic wood estimated at 1,207,140 m³ annually, which is virtually equal to the annual growth in forests in Moldova, which is 1,236,000 m³, thus limiting the use of almost all domestic wood to local household consumption (www.moldsilva.gov.md). Though local population faces difficulties with fuel wood provision, lack of forest resources associated with high wood consumption makes forest ecosystems being under continuous depletion and creates extremely unfavorable conditions for biodiversity.

**NPAC reviews NAP FLEG and projects new activities in Moldova**

A Meeting of the National Advisory Program Committee (NPAC) was held at the Agency “Moldsilva” in Chisinau on 9 January, 2012, with the participation of officials from Moldsilva, the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Finance, Forest Enterprises, Forest Guard Service, ONG Silva-Mileniu III and PCT Moldova (WB, IUCN).

Summarizing the International Year of Forests 2011, declared by the UN, and the implementation of “National Action Plan on combating illegal logging and other forest contraventions for the period of 2009-2011” (PNA FLEG approved by Moldsilva’s Order Nr. 11-P from 30.01.2009), the results and achievements of these activities were discussed. It was proposed that a new National Action Plan FLEG (NAP FLEG) for the period 2013-2016 in Moldova needs to be developed.

Moldsilva introduced the concept of the “Forestry Institutional Reform Strategy in Moldova” (FIRSM), and welcomed the intention of International Organizations (World Bank and IUCN) and ADA (Austrian Development Agency) to help the country develop it. There are many factors that need to be addressed, such as the continuous pressure on forests associated with increased level of forest ecosystem degradation as well as socio-economic demands from the population and necessity for maintaining the forests as an indispensable habitat. Therefore, the Forestry Sector of Moldova needs to be reorganized and a reform strategy to be developed in this respect.

NGO “Silva Mileniu III” presented a “Map of forests managed by Agency “Moldsilva” and a “Database use concept”, developed in cooperation with the Division of Cartography and Cadastre of ICAS Chisinau.

The PCT members and the FLEG Focal Point provided an overview of the third Operational Committee Meeting in Brussels between 31 January and 1 February in which they took part. Among the topics presented to the attention of the National Advisory Program Committee were the EU’s intentions, ADA involvement, the results of regional cooperation among the 7 countries, and perspectives of FLEG extension.

The NPAC discussed some activities to be developed together with stakeholders and to be proposed for the FLEG Program extension within the period of 2013-2016. Among them were community and private forestry sector development, extension of forest vegetation on degraded lands and other types of land, conducting forest management planning work, delimitation of forest lands to prevent illegal logging and other forest contraventions. Furthermore, tackling existing conflicts of interests and other interrelationships in order to combat corruption on local level and reduce the involvement of local population in various schemes of forest contraventions were also presented as issues. Last but not least, raising awareness of the large public and educational and communication campaign employing young generation were suggested as possible activities for that period as well.
Forest law enforcement on the agenda in Russian regions

On January 23-27, 2012 the seminar “The experience of state forest control and supervision authorities on regional forest law enforcement” took place in Arkhangelsk. The event was conducted by the Arkhangelsk oblast Ministry for Nature Resources and Forest Industry Sector and the World Bank with organizational support from the Regional NGO “Lesnye Znateli”.

The seminar included plenary meetings and field courses. It was attended by specialists of the state forest control and supervision authorities from two ENPI FLEG pilot regions (Arkhangelskaya Oblast and Krasnoyarskiy Krai). The major aim of the meeting was to promote exchange among state inspectors to improve regional legislation in counteracting illegal forest use and increasing efficiency in management, protection and conservation of forests, in particular those experiencing illegal resource use.

Representatives from the Arkhangelskaya Oblast regional division of the Ministry of the Interior, State Forest sector department of Arkhangelskaya Oblast, WWF and the Regional NGO “Lesnye Znateli” participated in the seminar.

A series of seminars to promote a new manual will be held in Russia

On February 21, 2012, the new manual “Improving Forest Law Enforcement and Governance in the Russian Federation” will be presented at the World Bank Russian Representative Office in Moscow. The goal of the meeting is to discuss how the materials of the handbook can be used for training, retraining and advanced training of forest officials and staff. The seminar is the first in the series of similar events during which the manual will be presented to practitioners and higher education teachers, as well as bodies for advanced training in the forest sector. This first meeting is organized for participants from the Moscow Region. Later, in February-April, a series of roundtables and workshops on the same topic will be organized in pilot regions of the ENPI FLEG Program: Khabarovsk, Krasnoyarsk and Arkhangelsk and also in Voronezh.

On April 4-6, 2012, a three-day seminar will be held for mentors from other regions of the country, as well as for interested representatives of higher forestry education institutions from countries participating in the ENPI FLEG Program. The seminar will take place at the Russian Institute of Continuous Education in Forestry.

The manual was written and printed as part of the educational component of the ENPI FLEG Program country workplan which is led by the World Bank. During the preparation of this publication, the concept of training modules was developed following the advice of representatives of the target audiences: federal and regional forestry officials and university teachers from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. Leading experts in each field wrote the texts of the manual on themes selected during extensive consultations. The materials were tested in Russia during two one-day training courses for forestry staff and subsequently upgraded based on the experience obtained.

The Educational and Methodological Association on Forestry Education, to which the manual was presented for consideration, has recommended it for students of higher educational institutions specializing in the following subjects: Forest Resources Reproduction and Processing (including Forestry; Forest Management; Technology and Equipment in the Timber Harvesting and Wood Processing Industry; and Forest Engineering).
ENPI FLEG Program consultant receives a prestigious UN award

The official closing ceremony of the International Year of Forests held on February 9, 2012, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York also included a special ceremony of awarding Forest Heroes, individuals who nurture and protect forests and contribute to their sustainable management. Anatoly Lebedev, a prominent environmentalist from Russia and an IUCN consultant under the ENPI FLEG Program in 2011 became one of the 15 winners who were awarded the title Forest Hero, and this became a pleasant surprise for his ENPI FLEG colleagues. Anatoly is an energetic and competent professional who helped preserve many hectares of virgin forests in the Russian Far East and who was also instrumental in the adoption by the regional legislature of several regulations on sustainable forest management and the prevention of the destruction of local national parks.

We are glad to congratulate our colleague on this prestigious international award and wish him many new professional and creative successes.

Based on the materials of the UN News Center.

Every year – Year of Forests

This is the motto of a new competition for the best journalistic material on law enforcement and management in the forest sector in Ukraine. The competition started on 1 February and will end on 6 June 2012 (Day of Journalists in Ukraine). The period for submissions is from 1 February to 15 May.

The competition topics cover a broad range of issues, such as:

• The situation in the Ukrainian forest sector with a focus on the level of illegal felling and the fight against it
• Quality of forest management in the country
• The ENPI FLEG approach
• Forest and related legislation of Ukraine
• The State Forest Protection Service in Ukraine
• Rights of local population and small businesses to access forest resources
• Sustainable use of forest resources, etc.
• More details can be found on the Ukrainian ENPI FLEG web-site www.fleg.org.ua (in Ukrainian).

Criminal liability for unauthorized logging in Ukraine: a manual

A manual on “Criminal liability for unauthorized logging in Ukraine” was published by the World Bank under the ENPI FLEG Program in the country.

The book contains methodological recommendations on the practical application of criminal legislation as well as related legal
issues in the forest sector. It provides advice on documenting criminal violations along with explanations on how to collect and document evidence of violations, instructions on how to deal with specific issues, and so on.

The manual also contains practical suggestions on several chapters of the Ukrainian Code on Criminal Violations and an analysis of typical shortcomings and mistakes made by forest guarding service staff when dealing with criminal cases. It is expected that the manual will help increase the level of legal knowledge among the forest guarding service staff, as well as make the fight against violations in the forest sector more effective.

The publication was developed by ENPI FLEG Program expert Mr. Oleg Storchous. It will be disseminated among forest practitioners employed in the forestry sector enterprises ("lishosp") under the State Agency of Forest Resources in Ukraine.

CONTACTS

Materials for this Bulletin were contributed by the FLEG project teams in participating countries. More information at: http://www.enpi-fleg.org

For your comments and feedback please contact: info@enpi-fleg.org
About ENPI FLEG Program

The ENPI FLEG Program 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 Program is funded by the European Union with a contribution from the Austrian Development Cooperation. www.enpi-fleg.org

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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 is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organization, 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.
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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