



ENPI FLEG

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



Regional Bulletin

March-June 2010



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.

The ENPI-FLEG Program - "Improving Forest Law Enforcement and Governance in the European Neighbourhood Policy East Countries and Russia" has been implemented in response to growing problems of illegal forest activities in participating countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine). The Program is aimed at battling illegal logging, timber theft and smuggling, trade of illegal wood, unauthorized forest conversion, ambiguous forestry legislation, unclear tender arrangements and lack of enforcement of forest regulations resulting from corruption.

This Bulletin will highlight major events and activities in each of the ENPI-FLEG Program participating countries detailing progress and successes in achieving specific results over the period of **March-June 2010**.

Although all participating countries share problems associated with forest management and efficient use of forest resources such as: illegal logging, ineffective forest legislation, and inadequate capacity of forestry officials, each country has developed specific approaches toward resolving its forest sector issues. Program activities are tailored to specifically address the most pressing problems in each country as well as develop efficient solutions to problems through joint efforts and cooperation of all the country stakeholders in this process.

Under the activities aimed at raising public awareness about the FLEG process and the ENPI-FLEG Program in participating countries efforts have been made to publicize relevant information in local mass media. In this issue of the Bulletin we present an article published in the Ukrainian newspaper "Personal Plus" in April 2010 by Mrs. Svetlana Galata.

UKRAINIAN FORESTS GOING "BALD"

Persecuted Forests

All springs and water flows in the Tyachevsky district in Zakarpatskaya oblast are used for transporting illegally logged timber. Similar examples may be found in other oblasts of the region. Once a year a government commission visits one or another district, becomes shocked, shuts down all (or at least all identified) illegally operated sawmills, stacks up its reports and departs for Kiev. A year before for example, such a commission found nearly one hundred illegal sawmills in the Tyachevsky district (half of which were immediately closed) and drew up a thousand reports on felling violations. However, according to the chair of this commission, Victor Parfenuik, Head of the Audits & Control Department at the State Forestry Committee, all of the closed sawmills are now open again and only 415 legal cases were opened based on the reports left by the commission (the remaining ones were simply dismissed), of which less than one hundred judgments on compensation for damages were passed!

Why worry about the Carpathian Mountains (which are quite far from Kiev), when "legal" violations are being committed only several kilometers away from the capital. For example, in Lessniki Village, which is located at a distance of five kilometers from the capital, the Head of this settlement has handed out 10 hectares of forestland for development without any remorse. Though publicly she claims that



she had nothing to do with this transaction, according to Sergei Vasilkov, chairman of Lesnik NGO from Kiev, the local bureaucracy is doing everything to cover this illegal deal and get away with it.

According to sociological surveys conducted by the World Bank expert Alexander Stegnyy, the public is well aware that illegal logging and related trade are threatening Ukrainian forests, harming the country's economy and debasing its image. Nevertheless, to date the country lacks any systemic efforts aimed at estimating the scope of violations and losses, finding out their reasons and developing a coordinated action plan to improve the situation.

International Help?

Of course, illegal logging, associated trade and corruption in the forest sector are not a purely Ukrainian “monopoly” – they are taking place in many other countries, each of which is counteracting them on its own and also seeking partners to do so. The FLEG (Forest Law Enforcement and Governance) movement was initiated at the beginning of the third millennium. It sounds quite complicated in our language. However, the title is not that important, but rather the goal of combating illegal actions in the forest sector and coordinating stakeholder efforts to ensure “transparency” in forest management and trade. By early 2004, FLEG included several “branches” that united, among others, countries of the European Union, Southeast Asia and Africa. Later it reached us as well. Upon the initiative of Russian officials, a Ministerial Forest Conference was held in 2005 in St.Petersburg, which was attended by a delegation from Ukraine.

As it often happens, the adopted decisions are good, but their fulfillment is not. Because, on the one hand, the certification of forests, which are in constant use by government forest production facilities, have become more active; and required changes were drafted and partially included in the Forest Code, Administrative Code, the Criminal Code, etc. On the other hand, there is still no National Action Plan that clearly defines who does what, when and with what funds with the aim of introducing order into our forests. Even such notions as “illegal logging”, “illegally harvested wood”, etc., have not yet been legally defined.

Nonetheless, we are not alone among post-soviet countries. That is why the European Union, in cooperation with such major international organizations such as the World Bank (WB), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) initiated a special program intended for seven countries of the former Soviet Union, including Ukraine. The program is based on the FLEG process, with just an abbreviation of the region being added – the ENPI-FLEG Program.

Ensuring Observance of the Law

The ENPI FLEG Program in Ukraine is gaining momentum and is looking for support to “overturn” the attitudes of the authorities and society to the existing (screaming!) problems of the forest sector. How can this be accomplished in the best way? The answers to this question were discussed at length by the participants at the round table recently organized at the WB mission in Kiev.

This round table was joined by FLEG experts and public conservation activists. At times, the participants stepped over the bounds of international “decencies”: some regional activists, who every day witness illegal logging and corruption in the forest sector, were quite categorical. They insisted that every Ukrainian legislation that came into force after a revision of the old one was worse than the previous one and, thus, efforts should be focused not on improving laws, but on punishing offenders. The Program experts replied to this that everything would be done in due time: violations would be controlled, laws would be improved,



problems would be communicated to government authorities, and pressure would be “exerted” jointly with public organizations so these issues are not “forgotten”.

A lot was said about the 2006 amendments to the Forest Code, which, in particular, allow allocating forests to the use of legal entities and private persons for a term of up to 50 years. The law does not forbid individuals to walk in the forest for leisure or pick mushrooms, while leaseholders may have a different opinion: it is enough to recall the actions of the former people’s deputy Lozinsky in “his” forest. For example, in Borshchevaya Village in Kharkov oblast, the leaseholders had built a fence around their forest and if it was not for the courage of the village council that terminated the lease agreement, the neighboring village could have been accessed only via a many-kilometer detour. Thus, lawyers hold that the Forest Code has to be rewritten, primarily, articles to easily change the designated purpose of most valuable forested areas. Incidentally, just recently environmental activists have signed an appeal in which they demand a revocation of all local governance decisions on handing over forested plots to long-term users.

Alexei Slenzak, Senior Operations Officer, Environment Sector, WB, said that if a new Forest Code was to be developed, this would, unfortunately, hardly be possible within the framework of the ENPI FLEG Program, because there would not be enough resources for this. However, if the European Commission decided to launch the development of a new Forest Code as a separate project...

Frankly speaking, this is not a task for foreign donors, but one for the state of Ukraine. Although, considering the current economic situation, it seems that waiting for money from abroad would be more realistic.

In the end, I would like to share a sad observation: even with assistance from international programs and projects, the process of establishing a dialogue between the public and foresters, i.e., between those who should be working together side by side to preserve our forests and put them in order, is unfolding with many constraints. “Forestry official” for some people and “NGO” for others sound almost like a curse. Nevertheless, the only way out is through collaboration. Because in a while there will be no matter at all to discuss.

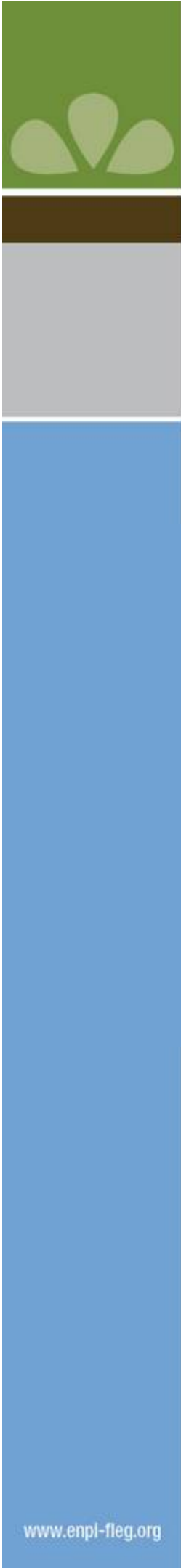
Svetlana GALATA

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Program implementation progress in participating countries

Armenia

In Armenia the ENPI-FLEG Program work has focused on assessing the local population’s access to forest resources and developing pilot projects on sustainable forest use and improved livelihood. One of these pilot projects – the Information and Visitor Center in Dsegh – was recently initiated by the Armenian Society for Protection of Birds (ASPB) as the first step towards the development of ecotourism in the Lori region. Co-funded by the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme in Armenia, Rhône-Alpes Regional Council, WWF and ASPB, this project will provide a unique communication platform for the local community, NGOs, scientists, tourists and students as well as generate alternative income from nature and community based tourism, and will create new jobs for local residents.



In addition to the establishment of the Visitor Center, this project also has a training component which will address the capacity of community members to promote ecotourism and manage the visitor center as an educational and informational hub. Local coordinators will be trained here in the development aspects of building sustainable ecotourism and will promote local conservation and biodiversity issues.

In March-April 2010 IUCN conducted a survey to evaluate the level of knowledge in local communities about forest protection issues. This survey covered 8 towns in the Tavush, Lori and Syunik regions and was carried out through focus group discussions and individual interviews. The study revealed existing level of 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, people's understanding of biodiversity issues and structures dealing with forest protection. The survey also provided environmental information sources for the people and possible ways of dissemination of that information.

All these results are being used by the ENPI-FLEG Armenia Program experts to develop effective communications products and establish best channels for the further dissemination of information. *(The full study report is available at www.enpi-fleg.org website).*

Azerbaijan

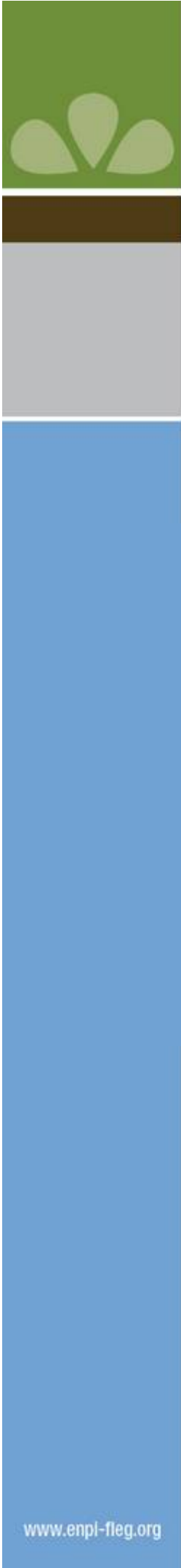
The year 2010 was announced by the President of Azerbaijan as "A Year of Ecology". In this context, a number of initiatives are being implemented to support the development of the forests by the Azerbaijan government. Also, respective activities are included in the national ENPI FLEG strategy to develop adequate mechanisms to prevent the smuggling of illegal forest products, and provide necessary technical assistance to the preparation of an international standard forest certification in the country (FSC).

During consultations with stakeholders, nomadic cattle-breeding was identified as a pressing problem that has a very negative impact on forests in the country. This practice exhausts forests and leads to overgrazing by local residents and farmers. As a result of these consultations a number of concrete steps have been developed which were recommended by stakeholders to the government for inclusion in the National Strategy of forest sector development in Azerbaijan.

The main goal is to mount an efficient response to the practice of illegal grazing in forests through the development and implementation of effective grazing systems and pasture management and involve local communities in this work.

In June of this year announcements were published to submit proposals from a variety of local organizations to implement specific components of the country's ENPI-FLEG Program strategy. The Evaluation Committee is reviewing the proposals, and will select consultants and organizations to implement this work. It is noteworthy to mention the active role played by the NPAC during all stages of the ENPI FLEG country plan preparation. The NPAC consists of representatives from the Forest Department of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan, the Ministry of Economic Development, the National Parliament and three representatives from the respective leading local NGOs. This composition provides a more effective working of the NPAC within the framework of implementation of the country Working Plan.

Some notable proposals made by the Azerbaijani Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources were to use the good practices and experiences of the EU in developing educational programs, tools and manuals to raise awareness among the younger generation on preserving the country's biodiversity.



In late June 2010 **two stakeholder meetings were held** in the north-western city of Gyandja and in the capital Baku. Representatives of regional and national State Forestry Department divisions, other official structures, NGOs, academia and mass media were presented with the history, main goals, objectives, and, expected outcomes from the implementation of the ENPI-FLEG Program in the country. Although the main purpose of these meetings was to raise awareness about the Program in Azerbaijan one concrete achievement resulted from the constructive discussions

- *the identification of alternative sources of income for local communities to replace revenues received from illegal forest usage.*

These proposals will be included in the Program's activities for next year.

Belarus

On May 19, 2010, **the ENPI-FLEG Program implementation progress in Belarus was presented to the management of the Ministry of Forestry of the Republic of Belarus**. IUCN consultants explained the goals and objectives of the Program at the international conference "Investments and innovations in the forestry sector of Belarus" held in the capital city of Minsk within the framework of the international exhibition "Lesdrevtech 2010". This conference was attended by the Minister of Forestry of Belarus Mr. Ameljanovytch, Deputy Minister and ENPI-FLEG Focal point Mr. Yushkevych, and managers of all forestry enterprises of the country. In their presentations IUCN experts specifically stressed the importance of ensuring informational transparency of the official forest management bodies as well as emphasized the need to perform independent forest certification based on one of the internationally recognized systems.

The ENPI-FLEG Program World Bank coordinator Andrew Mitchell visited Minsk on May 24-25, 2010. He held a number of meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Forestry of the Republic of Belarus and visited Logoisky forestry enterprise to familiarize himself with local forest management practices, including development of forest recreational facilities. In the course of discussions plans for further cooperation between the World Bank and Belarus to improve operation of the country's forest sector, with a possibility of providing a grant for this purpose, were tackled. *Belarus officials reconfirmed their interest in receiving support from the World Bank to develop a draft of the new National Forestry Strategic Action Plan for the forest sector for the period of 2015-2030.*

In April-May 2010 IUCN consultants performed an analysis of the quality of the Internet websites belonging to the Ministry of Forestry of the Republic of Belarus. As a result of this exercise shortcomings were identified which included the quality of available information, associated graphic materials, and ease of navigation. Outcomes of this analysis were presented on May 27, 2010, at the republican seminar organized for deputy heads of all organizations subordinated to the Ministry of Forestry, including representatives of all forestry enterprises (total number of participants exceeded 100 people).

- **Participants in this seminar adopted a decision to create websites for all forestry organizations** and conduct regional seminars in the 4th quarter of 2010 devoted to the ways of ensuring efficient operation of these websites.

Also, on June 24, 2010, under the ENPI-FLEG Program in the country, and jointly with the Ministry of Forestry of Belarus, a round table "Facilitating legal use of forests by local residents and small business – development of agricultural and forestry tourism" was held. Outcomes of this event included recommendations detailing proposals on developing efficient cooperation between all stakeholders with

the aim to establish comprehensive recreational forest routes and zones. *It is also planned to publish a guide-book on forest recreational routes with their description and helpful advice on their use as well as organize seminars to publicize this experience.*

In late June 2010, the ENPI-FLEG Program World Bank consultants presented their **analysis of the legislative base and existing forest resource management and usage systems** in the country. Authors developed a package of proposals aimed at improving forest management in Belarus which shall be implemented upon development of the draft National Forestry Strategic Action Plan for 2015-2030. In addition, consultants determined that the existing National Forestry Program (2007-2011) needed additional efforts in order to achieve goals and objectives set under the ENPI-FLEG process in the country.

These goals are:

- a clearer formulation of forestry policy, involvement of the Ministry of Forestry and private business,
- better inter-institutional cooperation, increased openness of forestry related information, and
- greater public involvement and development of effective anti-corruption measures.

Georgia

In Georgia great attention has been given to the **promotion of civil journalism** as a foundation for building an effective civil society, and law enforcement and good governance in the country. Problems with forests in Georgia proved to be a battleground of sorts where all these civil society issues come together. Training in Environmental Civil Journalism was planned and conducted within the framework of the ENPI-FLEG Program in Georgia by IUCN. It was carried out in the resort of Abastumani on May 14-17, 2010.



"If you want a journalist to write about forest – take him to the forest"

David Liklikadze, journalist from Kutaisi, active participant of the ENPI FLEG training in Environmental Civil Journalism

19 journalists representing national and regional media participated in a session on forest issues, several sessions on new media and civil journalism, and a session on photo/video materials editing. This training also included a field trip where participants had an opportunity to meet with the Head of the Regional Forest Department, several forest rangers, and Director of the NGO "Abastumani Tourism Association". It was also a chance for the journalists to openly talk to local residents and visit the unique forest of the Abastumani resort in the Borjomi-Kharagauli national park.

Resulting from this training were a number of video clips, blogs and articles prepared by the participating journalists and later published in the press, and uploaded onto online news portals. Outcomes of the training were reviewed in the following sources: news portal www.imeriati.com, news agency www.fact.ge; personal blogs of participants (Anuna Bukia, David Liklikadze, Levan Geliashvili, Oliko Tsiskarishvili, Shalva Jokhadze, David Kvavadze, Manana Kveliashvili, Giorgi Girkelidze, Nino Chibchiuri) and other online resources.

Voluntary forest certification is another important aspect for the effective development of Georgian forests. A meeting on the prospects of such voluntary forest certification and National Sustainable Forest Management standards in Georgia was held in the capital city of Tbilisi on May 5, 2010. It was organized by WWF within the framework of the ENPI-FLEG Program. Representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations participating in this meeting came to an almost unanimous conclusion that it was essential to first create favorable conditions in the country before such certification could be implemented. Further necessary steps and actions to be taken have been identified, namely the improvement of legislation and existing institutions in the country.

Also discussed at the meeting was a draft of the Sustainable Forest Management Standard for Georgia. It was emphasized that this standard should be a good instrument for awareness-raising among specialists in the forestry sector, NGOs, private logging and wood-processing companies as well as the public in general.



The need for cooperation between the state forestry body and experts from the NGO and other sectors on preparation of new laws and regulations and improving existing ones was especially emphasized at this meeting by representatives of the Georgian Forestry Department.

Moldova

In Moldova IUCN, in cooperation with the World Bank and the Forestry Research and Management Institute (ICAS), organized a round table in early April 2010 in the capital city of Chisinau. The purpose of this event was to encourage broader stakeholder discussions on the development of legislative recommendations for the forestry sector in the country, and to broaden the dialogue between governmental authorities, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders (academia, judiciary, mass-media).



In the course of this round table IUCN legislation consultants presented a **new version of the country Forest Code** and new approaches which ensured better consideration of national forestry sector needs, regional and international trends in sustainable development and use of forest resources. This analysis was done in close cooperation with the Department of Forest Fund and Protection of the Agency "Moldsilva". (The analysis is available on the www.enpi-fleg.org website (in Romanian language) at:

http://www.enpi-fleg.org/fileadmin/ufs/04.%20Program%20Information/4.02%20Program%20Components/4.02.02%20Legislation/New_Forest_Code_Moldova_Draft_presentation_Rotaru_Petru.ppt)

Under the country's Program implementation, IUCN in Moldova signed a consultancy contract with ICAS Chisinau to conduct an analytical study on illegal logging. The general goals and tasks of this study include: assessment of the real impact of illegal harvesting (including its causes, economic and social impact of inefficient forest practices); development of strategies and mitigation

recommendations to help accurately assess changes and areas that may produce positive trends in forest management; and effective involvement of governmental, NGO, private sector and judiciary bodies into assessment of the economic and social impact of unsustainable forest practices.



Also, this study envisages the collection and processing of forestry data, verification of received information, in-depth analysis and extensive research of local taxes and fees for legal logging, actual collective impact of other forest crimes, identifying causes of illegal logging, etc.

ICAS (which is a subdivision of the Government Agency "Moldsilva" and a leading institution in developing strategies, policies, research and management programs, in producing legislative and regulatory documentation and training materials for the forestry sector) in close cooperation with the ENPI-FLEG Program office in Moldova helped "Moldsilva" develop a revised plan for illegal logging.

- As a result of this cooperation a special "Moldsilva" order was issued "On improving forests protection and organizing revisions during spring 2010".

Following this order during the period of April – June 2010, "Moldsilva", in cooperation with the State Ecological Inspectorate (Ministry of Environment), organized control activities and planned revisions over the forest land managed by both the state forestry authority ("Moldsilva") and local authorities (village authorities, municipalities). Results of these control activities revealed a large number of violations in the forest sector including; illegally logged timber in forests managed by Moldsilva, and large volumes of illegally harvested wood in forest lands managed by local authorities. Also, about 49.6 ha of the so called 'missing' or non-existing forests and 15.6 ha of 'missing' or non-existing forest belts were detected. These forests and lands covered with forest vegetation seemed to have been entirely destroyed as a result of illegal logging and authorized grazing.

Russian Federation

Ensuring broader stakeholder involvement in the FLEG process has been one of the key priorities of the ENPI-FLEG Program activities in the Russian Federation. So, the workgroup consisting of local administration representatives, local businesses, forestry entities and experts from the "Polistovskiy" Strict Nature Reserve started its work in the Bezhanitsky region of the Russian Pskov Oblast in February 2010 with methodological support from IUCN. The main purpose of this work was to combine stakeholders' efforts to test practical approaches towards removing administrative hurdles on the way to forest use by local communities and small businesses, as well as to establish constructive relations between forest managing entities and local communities.



As a result of such cooperation **a roadmap on forest law-enforcement for the Bezhanitsky region was elaborated**, which includes, among other things, development of tourism and ecotourism as an alternative way of legal forest resource use and revenue generation for local residents.

- Recently, the roadmap has attracted additional funding from the Economic Development Support Program in the Pskov Region financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

World Bank and WWF experts in Russia were invited to attend the visiting session of the Russian Senate (Sovet Federacii) Committee on natural resources and environmental protection dedicated to the issues of law enforcement as relates to preventing corruption in the course of forest legislation implementation. This session was held in the city of Kostroma in mid May 2010. World Bank and WWF experts presented information on the priority areas of the ENPI-FLEG Program in the Russian Federation. They explained the methodological support that can be provided in the important sphere of increasing efficiency of measures on preventing corruption in the forestry sector. Hence, the final recommendations of this forum stated, in particular, that *the Russian Ministry for Agriculture could take into consideration the ENPI-FLEG Program experience in counteracting corruption in the forestry sector*. This is yet more proof of the significant importance of the Program results at both Federal and Regional levels in Russia.

On March 26, in Moscow at the Russian Chamber of Commerce WWF, with support from the World Bank and IUCN, organized a **workshop dedicated to Russian and European Union Initiatives to Combat Trade in Illegally Harvested Timber and Its Processing Products**.



Over 85 participants, including representatives from the EC, Russian State Duma, Russian Federal and Regional Forestry Agencies, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry for Agriculture and Ministry for Economic Development, Nature Protection Prosecutors Service, regional administrations, businesses, academia and NGOs discussed latest developments in forest legislation and enforcement in the Russian Federation as well as new legislative

initiatives launched by the European Union to combat trade in illegally harvested timber and its processing products. Also, reviewed were private sector initiatives aimed at ensuring timber legality.

In the run up to the Russian State Council Panel meeting held in late May this year Russian environmental NGOs, including WWF-Russia, submitted a number of proposals aimed at improving national environmental legislation and quality of the Russian environment. In these proposals forest law enforcement issues were among the high priorities. As a result of this meeting *the President of the Russian Federation issued specific instructions* covering a wide range of issues whose resolution has been stalled for years by bureaucracy. (Full list of the instructions as well as other materials related to the Russian State Council Panel meeting may be found at: <http://www.wwf.ru/resources/news/article/6717>).

As a continuation of this important process on June 28, WWF participated in a roundtable meeting of the Russian Parliament (Duma) Committee on Natural Resources, Nature Utilization and Environment Protection devoted to the mechanisms of fulfilling these instructions. All this work creates optimism that the ENPI-FLEG Program in the country will help the Russian authorities improve the difficult situation in the forestry sector.

Ukraine

In Ukraine a number of **analytical studies** were conducted in order to better understand the situation in the forestry sector, and to analyze various legal aspects of the regulatory system. These studies included an expert survey of forestry sector professionals, an analysis of corruption risks in Ukrainian forestry legislation and regulations, a study on the existing wood-tracking system in Ukraine and its improvement, and a comparative analysis of forest legislation and related legal provisions in Ukraine to assess the compliance with the legal framework of the European Union. The latter presents a very detailed analysis of *acquis communautaire* (laws and regulatory documents) of the European Union which relate to forests and forest management practices as well as identifies ways, possibilities and extent of potential adaptation of the Ukrainian legislation to the EU requirements.

The study helps determine new directions for Ukrainian forestry legislation and policy instruments and for its implementation based on best practices existing in the EU. Also, the study provides a comparative analysis of forest industry efficiency in Ukraine and Poland, using key indicators on sustainable forest management developed at the Ministerial Conferences on Forests Protection in Europe.

The Center for Social and Marketing Research “SOCIS” has undertaken an opinion poll of the local population in three administrative districts of the Ukrainian Carpathian region - Skolivsky district in Lviv oblast, Tyachivsky district in Zakarpattya oblast and Bogorodchansky district in Ivano-Frankivsk oblast in June 2010. The opinion poll examined perceptions of the general population to issues such as forest management practices in the region, volume of felling and role of forestry for the local economy, use of wood for local households, illegal logging and sale of stolen wood, and attitudes towards existing forest management system. *More than 50% of the respondents proposed increasing the penalty for illegal felling which would help introduce efficient changes into the forest management system, logging and wood sales practices.* Most participants also expressed serious reservations regarding forest privatization as well as removing forest protection responsibilities from local forest specialists.

In order to raise awareness about the FLEG process in the country a **round table for environmental NGOs, experts, and journalists** was organized in late February 2010 at the World Bank office in Kiev. More than 50 participants in this event were presented with the results of the studies conducted within the ENPI-FLEG Program (an analysis of forestry legislation and logging practices in Ukraine, a sociological survey of forestry experts (Ivano-Frankivsk oblast), and an analysis of mass media publications on forestry related issues). During the discussion participants of this round-table voiced a proposal to analyze whether the forestry sector regulatory environment adequately addresses issues of ecosystem protection and biodiversity conservation, and included in the country workplan. Mr. Andriy Artov, Head of the NGO “Centre for Ecological Health”, submitted specific proposals on the above issue and currently these are being reviewed by the Program management. Round table discussions emphasized the importance of the efficient provision of forestry related information to NGOs. The ENPI-FLEG Program provides non-governmental organizations and the general public with such information through its website (<http://www.fleg.org.ua/>) as well as through popular



ecological portals: “Ukrajinskyi Lisovod” (<http://lesovod.org.ua>) and “Pryroda v Ukraini” (<http://pryroda.in.ua>).



The “Green Cross” society (Ukrainian NGO) organized two seminars in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv in late April and June 2010 for representatives of the oblast forestry departments, departments of environmental protection, forest management enterprises of various ownership, associations of entrepreneurs, scientific and educational institutions, local governance bodies, national parks and nature reserves, environmental and educational NGOs, and mass media. *Discussions at these seminars*

focused on the problems of ensuring access to forest resources as a public good as well as possible ways to harmonize the interests of local residents with the methods of forest management.

Participants in the seminars were presented with analysis of the ease of access to information on major aspects of forest sector management and illegal forest harvesting, and analysis of the existing permit issuance practices as relates to forest resource use. Initial results of pilot socio-economic studies in the sphere of illegal forest harvesting in the Carpathian region were also tackled by participants.

The second seminar mainly concentrated on specific ways and steps to efficiently resolve these issues. It was attended by a far larger number of participants than the first seminar, and a very active discussion focused on the shortcomings in the auction system of unprocessed wood trade (virtual character, advance payments, extremely big lots) and the ways to eliminate them. Also discussed were ways of expanding the right of communities to participate in the forest usage, intensive economic activities on the territory of nature reserves and possible alternatives, as well as issues related to establishing a positive image of forestry officials among the public.

Following active discussions participants came to the conclusion that **an inefficient system of forest information provision for the public, especially local communities, proved to be a critical problem**. Local residents felt there was a significant lack of information on forest management practices, forest related events planned by the authorities as well as respective regulatory documents. A need to ensure more effective involvement of law enforcement and local governance bodies in the ENPI-FLEG Program activities was stressed as well.

The ENPI-FLEG Program in Ukraine in cooperation with the State Forestry Committee of Ukraine is preparing a **manual for forest practitioners entitled “Administrative liability for forest violations: practical application by the State Forest Protection Service of Ukraine”**. The manual is expected to be published this fall.

CONTACTS

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

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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.
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 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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Forest Law Enforcement & Governance



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