

PROJECT CONCEPT NOTE

Project Title	Strengthening sustainable forest management monitoring and assessment in the Caucasus and Central Asia
Project Manager	Roman Michalak
Subprogramme	Forestry and Timber
Implementing Entity	UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section
Start Date	November 2017
End Date	October 2018
Budget	100,000 USD
Beneficiary Countries	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan
Cooperating Entities within the UN System	FAO
Other Implementing Partners	ECE/FAO Team of Specialist on Forest Monitoring

Background

Most of the countries in the region are ‘low forest cover countries’, where forests fulfil recognized and valuable protective functions like freshwater renewal and prevention of wind and mudslide erosion, and desertification, but their economic and social functions are often not fully recognized. The countries do not regularly monitor the status of forests, and lack a holistic approach to a multi-aspect forest inventory. Due to limited monitoring and assessment of forests, including socio-economic aspects, the importance of the forests and the role they play is often unknown to a policy makers and the broad public.

The problems and challenges faced by the forest sector in the region are diverse and often country specific. High fuel wood demand of the local population also put high pressure on the scarce wood resources leading to illegal logging, overexploitation or deforestation. Many areas suffer from degradation and are under pressure from over-grazing. Desertification and pollution are serious threats to settlements and ecosystems. Timber industry plays a minor role for national economies and the potential offered by the abundance of other forest products and services in developing national economies and generating employment is underutilized, which leads to the underfunding of the forest sector in the region. Because of the specificity of the region’s forests and scarce source data, forests and the forest sector in the Caucasus and Central Asia have not found appropriate attention in the global and/or regional studies published so far.

This project will strengthen the capacity of ECE countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia capacity of the UNECE countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia to monitor and assess Sustainable Forest Management as well as the knowledge of the UNECE countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia of the

state of their forests. This will allow more informed decision making and the development of more targeted forest policies. The project will be implemented between November 2017 and October 2018.

The key recipients and beneficiaries of the project are forest related ministries, national forest agencies, research institutes, and NGOs. The project will be carried out with key partners including members of the ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Monitoring. Beneficiaries to the project are ECE countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan).

The Joint UNECE and FAO Forestry and Timber Section supports the implementation of Integrated Programme of Work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) European Forestry Commission (EFC) and UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Committee on Forestry and Forest Industries (COFFI) which covers 56 member States and work areas on forest and timber data, monitoring and assessment, policy dialogue and advice, communication and outreach and capacity-building.

The project is part of the implementation of the ECE/FAO Integrated Programme of Work, Work Area 1: Monitoring and Assessment and Work Area 4: Capacity Building. Work Area 4 of indicates that special attention is provided to countries in Eastern Europe, South East Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The project will build on, supplement and extend work done under the UNDA 10th Tranche Project “Accountability systems for sustainable forest management in the Caucasus and Central Asian countries”. The published Manual, which will be refined with the use of experience gathered through the UNDA project, will increase their visibility and usability not only in the Caucasus and Central Asia but also in other parts of ECE and beyond the region. The study on forests of the sub-region will be prepared with the use of indicators developed in the frame of the UNDA project by countries of the sub-region; the study will provide the opportunity for practical testing of relevance and applicability of new indicators.

The project will endeavor to reach provision of equal opportunities for participation of women and men in the project activities in conformity with the UNECE 2016-2017 Gender Action Plan.

Relationship to the Strategic Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals

The project is linked to the SDG 15. “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss” and related targets, in particular:

- 15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and dry lands, in line with obligations under international agreements;
- 15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally;
- 15.3 By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world;
- 15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development;

- 15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.

The project also is a direct contribution to the implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan on Forests (UNSPF) adopted by the General Assembly in April 2017. The UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 mentioned both Regional Commissions as well as FAO as organizations providing a crucial bridge between international policies and national actions and as important partners in efforts to achieve the global forest goals and targets of the strategic plan.

The project is part of the implementation of the ECE/FAO Integrated Programme of Work, Work Area 1: Monitoring and Assessment and Work Area 4: Capacity Building. Work Area 4 of indicates that special attention is provided to countries in Eastern Europe, South East Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The project provides capacity building support in line with the 2016-2017 programme of work of COFFI and the 2016-17 ECE Strategic Framework (A/71/6) and the UNECE proposed Strategic Framework under Subprogramme 7 “Forestry”, EA (b) “Increased national capacity of countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-East Europe in sustainable forest management”.

Objective

The objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of ECE countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia to monitor and assess sustainable forest management in this region.

Expected accomplishments

EA1. Increased capacity of the UNECE countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia to monitor and assess Sustainable Forest Management.

EA2. Increased knowledge of the UNECE countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia of the state of their forests.

Indicators of achievement

IA1.1. The manual is issued and used by at least 5 out of the 7 beneficiary countries.

IA2.1. At least 5 of the 7 beneficiary countries directly contribute to the preparation of the publication.

Main activities

A1.1. Preparation of a Manual for the development of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management in the Caucasus and Central Asia (English and Russian).

A2.1. Preparation of a publication on the State of Forests in the Caucasus and Central Asia (English and Russian).

A2.2. Preparation of promotional material and presentation of the publication at relevant events.

Assumptions and Risks

The key assumption is that the governments and relevant experts will be willing to share any available data. The key risk is in fact related to either non-availability of relevant data or reluctance to share it. This will can be overcome by utilizing existing data collected by the section through different projects and monitoring work in the region.

Annex 1: Results-based work plan

EA	Activity #	Timeframe by activity		Budget class and Code		Amount (USD)
		Year	Quarter	<i>(Please use the budget classes listed in the table above.)</i>		
EA1	A1.1.	Y1	Q1 – Q2	Contractual Services (collection of relevant data, drafting of manual, translation and editing of the manual)	120	\$32,000
EA2	A2.1.	Y1	Q1 – Q2	Consultants (drafting of publication)	010	\$15,000
				Contractual Services (collection of data, translation and editing)	120	\$30,000
	A.2.2.	Y1	Q3	Travel of Staff	160	\$ 5,000
				Contractual Services (preparation of promotional material)	120	\$ 5,000
13% of Programme Support Costs						\$13,000
Total						\$ 100,000

Annex 2: Budget

Consultants (010): \$ 15,000 (Total)

International consultants

International consultants for the task(s) of drafting the publication. A2.1: 3 months x \$5,000= \$15,000.

Travel of Staff (160): \$ 5,000 (Total)

Travel of 2 UNECE staff to relevant meetings/events (2 person x \$2,500 = \$5,000), in support of activity A2.2.

Contractual services (120): \$ 67,000 (Total)

A provision of \$20,000 is required for the collection of relevant data and information (individual contractor x 4 months x \$5,000=\$20,000) in support of activity A1.1.

A provision of \$12,000 for editing and translation of the manual (individual contractor x 4 months x \$3,000 = \$12,000) in support of activity A.1.1.

A provision of \$18,000 is required for the collection of data and information for the publication, (individual contractor 3 months x \$6,000 = \$18,000) in support of activity A.2.1.

A provision of \$12,000 for editing and translation of publication (individual contractor x 4 months x \$3,000 = \$12,000) in support of activity A.2.1.

A provision of \$5,000 for the preparation of promotional materials (individual contractor x 1 month x \$5,000 = \$5,000) in support of activity A.2.2.

Total direct cost	\$87,000
13% UN Programme Support Cost of	\$13,000
Total budget	\$100,000