

8TH TRANCHE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT PROJECT

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

PROJECT: “SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT FOR GREENER ECONOMIES IN THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA”

I. Project title	UNECE FAO UNDA 8 th tranche project “Sustainable Forest Management for Greener Economies in the Caucasus and Central
II. Project DA code	2013-ROA-3634-2944-6875-0036
III. Executing	UNECE FAO Forestry and Timber Section
IV. Reporting period covered	January 2014 – December 2014
V. Financial Implementation rate	79 % of the total budget of 500,000 USD

VI. SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

During the reporting period six national capacity building workshops have been implemented in Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in 2014 ¹. Based on the evaluations 89 % of the participants have acknowledged increased knowledge on policy formulation, bioenergy generation and data collection related to sustainable forest management and green economy.

The concept of green economy is rather new for some of the project countries, and several non-pilot countries (Armenia and Uzbekistan) have expressed their interest in similar support in development of the forest sector.

As for pilot countries, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan have made substantial progress towards green economy. Georgia is currently developing an action plan based on the input received from four local workshops (conducted in 2014). Government of Kazakhstan officially agreed to review the draft national forest program in order to include green economy principles. As a result, private sector development has gained remarkable role in widening the original scope of the program focused on conservation. The draft national forest programme was scheduled to be approved by national authorities in Kazakhstan by the end of 2014. The draft is currently being reviewed by the ministries and once they have reached agreement for the programme funding, it will proceed to approval by the prime minister and the president. In Tajikistan the project supports development of a new forest strategy implemented jointly by FAO and GIZ. The project has already provided support in the area of private sector development, in particular, by undertaking analysis of the current situation in Tajikistan of private sector.

¹ Project countries are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Turkmenistan does not participate in the project.

It will further focus on participatory review of the draft forest strategy (input will be provided in January 2015).

Overall implementation of the project goes smoothly. Turkmenistan, as initially planned, does not participate in the project due to lack of interest. No official commitment to participate in the project was received from Turkmenistan. Proper attention shall be given by the project team to ensuring sustainability and monitoring of the project results after the project terminates. For example Kyrgyzstan has expressed interest to use the project methods in forest policy development, which is planned to start 2015. UNECE-FAO shall offer support in follow-up activities by distributing the project outcome and recommendations with relevant ministries and agencies through official channels. Evaluation of the project is planned to take place during spring 2015, and will include national action plan, forest strategy or programme developed by the pilot countries Georgia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, as well as feedback received from participants of the workshops.

More information about the project is available (in English and Russian) at the project website:

<http://www.unece.org/forests-welcome/areas-of-work/forestpolicies/forestscapacitybuilding.html>

and in English, French and Russian “Implementation of the UNDA and Fire projects - ECE/TIM/2014/11” at:

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35336#/>

VII. REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND ACTIVITIES

Table 1 – Review of Performance Indicators

Expected Accomplishment	Indicator of achievement (T1)	Comments	
EA1			
Enhanced knowledge of countries to develop policies for enhancing the forest sector’s contribution to greener economies	89% of national/local participants of training activities that have acknowledged increased knowledge on policy formulation,	Based on evaluation of regional workshop for all seven pilot countries and six national workshops conducted in Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, 89% of the workshop participants (109 out of 122 participants) acknowledged the increased knowledge on the topics.	

	bioenergy generation and data collection		
EA2			
Improved capacity of countries to develop policies for enhancing the forest sector's contribution to greener economies	Three national action plans for the implementation of sustainable forest management contributing to a greener economy are approved by the respective national authorities and five other countries have taken steps to prepare action plans.	<p>Pilot countries Georgia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan have been integrating sustainable forest management and contributing to greener economy.</p> <p>Georgia is currently developing an action plan based on the input received from four local workshops, which were conducted in 2014.</p> <p>Kazakhstan has officially agreed to review the draft national forest programme in order to include green economy principles; the draft was scheduled to be approved by national authorities by the end of 2014, but it is still in review of ministries (January 2015).</p> <p>In Tajikistan the project is supporting new forest strategy development jointly with FAO and GIZ, initiated in November 2014.</p>	

Table 2 – Review of Completed Activities

Activities	Comment
<p>A1.1. Development of training modules and training material (“train the trainers”) on sustainable forest management in a green economy, wood energy and data collection.</p>	<p>Training package, including Trainers Manual and training material (presentations and exercises) has been developed in 2014. Presentations and exercises are available in English and in Russian. For local workshops and were translated to local languages. http://www.unece.org/forests-welcome/areas-of-work/forestpolicies/forestscapacitybuilding.html</p>
<p>A1.2. Capacity building through regional, national and local workshops, each of them will cover the three following themes: (i) policy formulation, (ii) bioenergy generation from wood, (iii) data collection on forests and forest products.</p>	<p>Regional workshops (1 workshop 3 days)</p> <p>1 inception workshop was organized in Astana, Kazakhstan, in April 2014 with the presence of all project countries and national consultants for Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.</p> <p>National workshops (6 workshops 3 days each)</p> <p>Six national workshops (Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) completed in 2014.</p> <p>Local workshops (4 per country, 1 day each)</p> <p>Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have completed all local workshops in 2014. Tajikistan has organized two local workshops in 2014.</p>
<p>A1.3. One concluding regional forest policy workshop (3days + 1 day study tour) to share lessons learned from all participating countries, in particular from the three pilot countries that have developed action plans, and to formulate recommendations for follow-up at national and international level.</p>	<p>Will take place in 21-24 April 2015 in Tbilisi, Georgia. The workshop will be hosted by the ministry of environment and natural resources protection of Georgia. One day will be organized jointly with EU funded RERAM project (Resource Efficiency of Wood Working Industries in Eastern Europe), which will bring small company owners from at least Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to share their views about the action plans and recommendations developed in this UNDA project.</p>
<p>A1.4. Establishment of a web-based hub (portal hosted by</p>	<p>Project website established (English&Russian) to share the project training material including the training</p>

<p>UNECE/FAO) for knowledge management on forest-related issues in the Caucasus and Central Asia.</p>	<p>package and pictures from implemented workshops (visualizing the exercises).</p> <p>http://www.unece.org/forests-welcome/areas-of-work/forestpolicies/forestscapacitybuilding.html</p> <p>https://www.flickr.com/photos/121632478@N08/sets/</p>
<p>A2 Coaching program in three countries for the development of national action plans.</p>	<p>Most coaching program activities in following pilot countries Georgia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan finished in 2014.</p> <p>Georgia started development of an action plan. Kazakhstan submitted new forest program (with input from the project) for approval in 2014. Tajikistan developing new forest strategy (with input from the project), starting from December 2014.</p>

VIII. CHALLENGES/PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED SO FAR

Table 3 – Challenges and actions

Description of challenge	Action(s) taken to solve the issue, if any
<p>NGO, who was contracted to lead the practical workshop preparations in Azerbaijan did not manage to get the grant registered (new requirement by the Ministry of Justice in Azerbaijan). Without registration of the grant, the NGO is not allowed to use the funds.</p>	<p>Letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Azerbaijan to require registration of the grant has been sent, and permanent mission of Azerbaijan in Geneva contacted for support. NGO has asked to terminate the grant (memorandum of understanding). Our intention is to contract UNDP Azerbaijan instead, based on previous successful experience with UNDP in Uzbekistan supporting the project workshop arrangements in October 2014.</p>

IX. SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING

Representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were supported by the Russian Federation to participate in the meeting of the UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry in Kazan, Russian Federation in November 2014.

Activities in Tajikistan were coordinated jointly with GIZ and FAO Tajikistan in order to prepare a joint roadmap of activities to support the new forest policy development and

avoid possible overlaps with different actors. It was agreed that the UNDA project's role would look into forest private sector development (December 2014) and stakeholder review of the draft forest strategy in early 2015.

For the final regional workshop, which will bring together all seven project countries in April 2015, we have initiated discussions with EU funded RERAM project (Resource Efficiency and Raw Material Use of Woodworking Industries in Eastern Europe), how to combine our projects activities to benefit participants in both projects by organizing joint activities.

X. REVISIONS

Funds (US\$ 24,800) initially allocated for consultants have been re-allotted to be able to bring more meeting participants to the final regional workshop in April 2015, and to support other capacity-building activities, e.g. the national workshop in Azerbaijan.

The original allotment to support meeting participants was not sufficient. To solve this issue it has been decided to develop the web-based hub using existing human resources available at the UNECE-FAO Forestry and Timber Section.

The final regional workshop (Tbilisi, Georgia, 21-24 April 2015) is of utmost importance for success of the project and plays a key role in lessons sharing and knowledge exchange. The request for re-allotment of US\$ has been made in December 2014 (please see details in Table XIII), and it was agreed by the Programme Management in UNECE.

XI. WORK PLAN FOR REMAINING ACTIVITIES

Table 4 – Remaining activities

Remaining Activities	Start date	Date of completion
A1.2.3 28 local workshops (4 per country, 1 day each). (Turkmenistan not participating in the project, total number revised.)	January 2015 Tajikistan January 2015 Uzbekistan March/April 2015 Azerbaijan	January 2015 Tajikistan January 2015 Uzbekistan March/April 2015 Azerbaijan
A1.3 One concluding regional forest policy workshop (3days + 1 day study tour)	20 April 2015, Tbilisi, Georgia	24 April 2015
A2 Coaching program in three countries for the development of national action plans	Public Awareness Campaigns January 2015 Tajikistan January 2015 Kazakhstan	February-March 2015 Tajikistan February-March 2015

	Last coaching seminar, January 2015, Tajikistan Last coaching seminar, January/February 2015, Georgia	Kazakhstan January 2015, Tajikistan February 2015, Georgia
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XII.ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

UNECE Press release 24 April 2014:

UNECE/FAO Support Contribution of Forests to Kazakhstan's Green Economy

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35430>

Published also in <http://forests-l.iisd.org/news/unecefao-support-contribution-of-forests-to-kazakhstans-green-economy/>

Full training package developed during the project, including Trainer's manual (in English), presentation and exercise material to conduct a three day workshop (in English and in Russian), as well as other project related documents are available at the project website: <http://www.unece.org/forests-welcome/areas-of-work/forestpolicies/forestscapacitybuilding.html>

UNECE-FAO Forestry and Timber Section was invited to present the project in EU-Central Asia STI Policy Stakeholders' Conference on Climate Change in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 23-24 September 2014: <http://www.inco-ca.net/en/261.php>

Information about our project was broadcasted in a national radio channel in Uzbekistan following the interview of UNECE Deputy Executive Secretary Andrey Vasilyev by the permanent mission of Uzbekistan in Geneva, September 2014. In addition, several local reporters participated in the national workshop organized in Uzbekistan, October 2014.

Photographs from the project national workshops are available at the UNECE-FAO Flickr account: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/121632478@N08/sets/>

XIII.FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Object Class	Description	A. Budget/Allotment	B. Actual disbursements	C. Commitments outstanding	D. Total Expenditure	E. Balance Remaining	F. Revisions to allotments (if any)	G. Explanations to revisions
602	General Temporary Assistance (GTA)	24,800				24,800	-24,800	GTA was paid as a consultant. Re- allotted to meeting participants.
604	Consultants and Expert Groups	0111-Int. consult.:	49,000	38,400	11,000	49,400	-400	
		0140-Nat./reg. consult.:	52,400	50,400	16,100	66,500	-14,100	GTA was paid as a consultant
		2601-Consult. travel:	72,000	13,851	16,652	30,503	41,497	
		Total (under object class 604)	173,400	102,651	43,752	146,403	26,997	
608	Travel of staff	35,000	14,331	6,113	20,444	14,556		
612	Contractual services	195,600	110,500	74,100	184,600	11,000		

616	Operating expenses		3,000	565	800	1,365	1,635		
618	Supplies, Materials etc.		3,400				3,400	-3,400	Re-allotted to meeting participants.
621	Fellowships, grants and contributions	7202 - Workshops:	64,800	41,637	1,054	42,691	22,109	+28,200	More funds needed to bring participants to the remaining workshops
	Total		500,000	269,684	125,819	395,503	104,497		

Implementation rate (%)	79 %
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