

## Development Account Final Report

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### 1. KEY PROJECT FEATURES

<b>I. Project title</b>	UNECE FAO UNDA 8th tranche project “Sustainable Forest Management for Greener Economies in the Caucasus and Central Asia”	
<b>II. Project DA code</b>	2013-ROA-3634-2944-6875-0036	
<b>III. Implementing Entity</b>	UNECE FAO Forestry and Timber Section	
<b>IV. Start date</b>	08/2013	
<b>VI. End date</b>	a. Original: 06/2015 b. Actual date: 12/2015	
<b>VII. Beneficiary countries</b>	1. Armenia 2. Azerbaijan 3. Georgia (pilot) 4. Kazakhstan (pilot)	5. Kyrgyzstan 6. Tajikistan (pilot) 7. Uzbekistan
<b>VIII. Implementing partners</b>	UN system  1. FAO 2. UNFF 3. UNDP	Other partners  1. GIZ

## 2. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

All seven project countries, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan completed their activities according to the project workplan. Altogether 2 regional, 7 national, 9 coaching and 28 local capacity-building workshops were organized. The training package including modules on green economy and sustainable forest management, wood energy, forest policy formulation, and forest data collection and reporting, have been produced for the benefits of the participants. In addition, the training package included variety of participatory exercises to better introduce methodology for stakeholder engagement.

Based on the workshop evaluations 91% of the participants acknowledged increased knowledge on policy formulation, bioenergy generation and data collection related to sustainable forest management and green economy.

Three pilot countries, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan made a progress towards inclusion of green economy principles into the national forestry sector's strategies and programmes. With support of the project, Georgia developed a national action plan for the forest sector in a green economy based on the input received from four local workshops. The head of forest policy service in the Ministry of natural resources protection of Georgia was involved in the process since the beginning, and recommended integration of the action plan to various on-going forestry processes in Georgia (national forest programme development including national criteria and indicators development). The action plan was acknowledged by the head of forest policy service in Georgia in the final coaching workshop in February 2015, but according to our knowledge it has not gained a status of an official document. Georgia has taken first steps in stakeholder participation for policy processes only in 2013, and this project had a significant impact on enhancing participatory approach.

The Government of Kazakhstan officially agreed to review the draft national forest programme in order to include green economy principles developed during this project. As a result, private sector participation widened the scope of the programme, originally focused on conservation only. The draft national forest programme was scheduled to be reviewed by the relevant ministries and approved by the Prime Minister and the President by the end of 2014, according to the final report received from the national consultant.. The forestry officials trained within the framework of the project acknowledged the need for further work in particular, to address the perspective of forestry in the long-term planning (20-50 years).

In Tajikistan the project supported development of a new forest strategy implemented jointly by FAO and GIZ. The local workshops were coordinated with the national forest agency, and included the private sector development in Tajikistan. The workshops produced recommendations for the forest strategy. The strategy has been finalized and ready for the approval by the Government (scheduled for the end of 2015 but delayed due to political changes in the country). Overall, the project increased knowledge and skills and stakeholders' involvement in policy processes, although further strengthening is needed. Both project partners, FAO and GIZ will continue supporting project results by keeping the project results visible in future work and continuing the coordination of project work with UNECE.

Non-pilot beneficiary countries Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan produced gap analysis on the needs of forest sector development towards a green economy. Azerbaijan, another non-pilot country, did not deliver a project report, leaving its participation in the project without concrete outcome. In addition to delays with official approval for workshops there was little interest from

the national forest agency to organize any project activities in Azerbaijan. This is most probably due to a small role of forests and renewable resources in national economy, and low level of political support. National workshop in Azerbaijan was organized finally with the help of UNDP and FAO country offices. Armenia and Uzbekistan have formally expressed their interest in similar project pilot support for development of the forest sector in the future, and willingness to continue capacity-building work with UNECE. No official commitment to participate in the project was received from Turkmenistan. An evaluation of the project identified some useful recommendations that will be employed at the implementation of 10 Tranche UNDA Project. In addition, UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section will continue to work with all project countries and will continue building their capacities in the area of sustainable forest management. As an example, a new UNECE/FAO UNDA project on “Accountability systems for Sustainable Forest Management for Caucasus and Central Asia countries” will continue capacity-building activities by focusing on forest reporting and national criteria and indicators for Sustainable Forest Management (2016-2019).

### 3. DETAILED REVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Table 1 - Review of Performance Indicators

Expected Accomplishment	Indicator of achievement (T0)	Indicator of achievement (T1)	Comments
EA1			
Enhanced knowledge of countries to develop policies for enhancing the forest sector's contribution to greener economies	For most project workshop participants this was a first introduction to green economy.	89% of national/local participants of training activities that have acknowledged increased knowledge on policy formulation, bioenergy generation and data collection	Based on evaluation of two regional workshops for all seven countries and seven national workshops conducted in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, 91% of the workshop participants (139 out of 153 participants) acknowledged the increased knowledge on the topics.
EA2			
Improved capacity of countries to develop policies for enhancing the forest sector's contribution to greener economies	No national action plans for the forest sector in a green economy exist. Forestry not included in green economy strategies that include other sectors. Green economy as a concept not	One national action plan for the implementation of sustainable forest management contributing to a greener economy developed by Georgia. Kazakhstan has reviewed national forest programme in respect to green economy principles. Tajikistan produced forest strategy and through the project workshops produced recommendations for	Georgia produced national action plan with four local workshops showcasing stakeholder involvement in policy processes, and providing excellent example for other countries. Ministry representatives were present throughout the project and acknowledged the project results.  Kazakhstan reviewed the new forest programme during the project towards green economy, and increased the role of private sector in the programme, which was originally focused on protection only. However, the

	<p>taken into consideration in most forest strategies or programmes.</p>	<p>the strategy.</p> <p>Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan produced gap analysis and recommendations for the forest sector.</p> <p>Azerbaijan did not provide a project report due to low interest of national forest agency and lack of political support for forest sector development.</p>	<p>programme lacks a long term vision for the forest sector in the country.</p> <p>Tajikistan produced a forest strategy, and accepted the project to support on private sector development in coordination with other international partners. The forest strategy approval has been delayed, and due to the changes in the forestry administration it is unclear whether all recommendations produced by the project were accepted. The recommendations were provided to the forest agency and other international partners (FAO and GIZ), and the role, timetable and the framework of the project was agreed with the forest agency beforehand. However, the fact that there was still reluctance from the forest agency to accept the recommendations from local workshops demonstrates that Tajikistan has a long way to go with participatory policy processes. As an example, the project recommendations included a stakeholder review of the draft strategy in Tajik language (not only in Russian).</p>
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**Table 2 - Review of Activities**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<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 some local languages.</p> <p><a href="http://www.unece.org/forests/capacitybuilding.html">http://www.unece.org/forests/capacitybuilding.html</a></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 + study tour). 1 inception workshop was organized in Astana, Kazakhstan, in 8-11 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). Six national workshops were completed in 2014: 10-12 September 2014 in Armenia, 9-11 June 2014 in Georgia, 14-16 April 2014 in Kazakhstan, 30 September – 2 October 2014 in Kyrgyzstan, 25-27 June 2014 in Tajikistan and 21-23 October 2014 in Uzbekistan). National workshop in Azerbaijan was organized in 23-25 September 2015 only due to delays in approval.</p> <p>Local workshops (4 per country, 1 day each): Armenia (30 Oct 2014, 7 Nov 2014, 14 Nov 2014, 21 Nov 2014), Georgia (19 Sep 2014, 22 Sep 2014, 23 Sep 2014, 24 Sep 2014), Kazakhstan (28 Nov 2014, 1 Dec 2014, 8 Dec 2014, 22 Dec 2014) and Kyrgyzstan (23 Oct 2014, 29 Oct 2014, 31 Oct 2014, 21 Nov 2014) have completed all local workshops in 2014. Tajikistan has organized two local workshops in 2014 (2 Dec 2014, 4 Dec 2014) and two in 2015 (14 Feb 2015, 18 Feb 2015). Azerbaijan organized four local workshops in 2015, but no reports were received from them (no details available). Uzbekistan organized four local workshops in early 2015 (19 Jan 2015, 23 Jan 2015, 3 Feb 2015, 13 Feb 2015).</p>
<p>A1.3. One concluding regional forest policy workshop (3 days + 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>The final workshop took place on 21-24 April 2015 in Tbilisi, Georgia. The workshop was hosted by the ministry of environment and natural resources protection of Georgia. One day was organized jointly with EU funded RERAM project (Resource Efficiency of Wood Working Industries in Eastern Europe), which brought small company owners from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to share their views about the action plans and recommendations developed in this UNDA project, as well as research partners from Poland and Ukraine.</p> <p>The presentations and report if the workshop are available at:  <a href="http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=37795#/">http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=37795#/</a></p>

<p>A1.4. Establishment of a web-based hub (portal hosted by UNECE/FAO) for knowledge management on forest-related issues in the Caucasus and Central Asia.</p>	<p>Project website established (English&amp;Russian) to share the project training material including the training package and pictures from implemented workshops (visualizing the exercises).  <a href="http://www.unece.org/forests/capacitybuilding.html">http://www.unece.org/forests/capacitybuilding.html</a>   <a href="https://www.flickr.com/photos/121632478@N08/sets/">https://www.flickr.com/photos/121632478@N08/sets/</a></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 were finished in 2014.          Georgia developed national action plan. Kazakhstan submitted new forest programme (with input from the project) for approval in 2014. Tajikistan developed new forest strategy (with recommendations from the project to the strategy and the process for review of the strategy), which approval was delayed until the end of 2015.</p>

#### 4. CHALLENGES/PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

**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 was sent, and permanent mission of Azerbaijan in Geneva was contacted for support. When unsuccessful, NGO asked to terminate the grant (memorandum of understanding).           UNDP Azerbaijan was contracted to make the practical preparations instead, based on previous successful experience with UNDP in Uzbekistan supporting the project workshop arrangements in October 2014.</p>
<p>No reports received from the national consultant in Azerbaijan regardless of numerous reminders. The outcome of Azerbaijan national workshops remains unclear.</p>	<p>The national consultant has received only half of his payment and will not receive his final payment if the reports are not delivered.</p>
<p>Changes in forestry administration in Tajikistan (January-February 2015) caused delays in approval to organize the local workshops, although the plan for workshops was approved by the forest agency. Furthermore, once the workshops were finally approved to be organized, the forest agency informed that it is too late to include the outcome to the strategy (February 2015). However, the strategy is still not approved by the government (March 2016).</p>	<p>The outcome of the local workshops with recommendations to the strategy has been brought to the attention of the forest agency, and working group members to prepare the forest strategy were present in the project workshops. Only part of the recommendations were included in the strategy text.</p>

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## 5. GOOD PRACTICES AND KEY LESSONS LEARNED

Most countries involved in the project complained about the tight target schedule for multiple workshops, which caused challenges for both organizers and participants. Distribution of information takes time and in order to engage all relevant levels and partners in the country and to get official approval more time is needed. It is advisable to reserve more time for multiple project activities in the future. In practice that means several months for multiple workshops, while in this project some countries had to organize as much as four local workshops in one month.

In addition, the project focused on seven countries, many of which required substantial support for workshop preparation from UNECE. However, since only the project manager was supporting the project, it was sometimes impossible to be present in several overlapping events. As a result, it would be better to focus on smaller number of countries at a time and dedicate several staff members to support the project already in the planning phase, which would then facilitate sufficient support for countries when needed.

Each project country had national consultant, national focal point, and NGO or UNDP to prepare the workshops. This arrangement proved to be rather challenging due to numerous stakeholders involved, and caused some issues in communication at national level. Sometimes the information sent to ministry level did not reach national forest agency in time. As a conclusion, for future projects, it is recommended to communicate both at ministry level and forest agency level at the same time. In addition, it can be beneficial to engage national consultants that already work in the forest agency (rather than in NGO), in order to ensure proper involvement of the relevant institutions. However desirable, it can be restricted with limited English language skills of the forest agency staff.

Some countries in the Caucasus region observed some problems in participation in the project due to lack of language skills (Azerbaijan and Georgia), which posed challenges also for the workshops' organization. Workshop materials were prepared in English and in Russian, but interpretation had to be made often to a national language. Some workshop participants had excellent Russian skills while younger generation had difficulties in communication in Russian. Selected material was translated to national languages by local consultants, and local workshops organized fully in national languages. Furthermore, recommendations from the local workshops in Tajikistan claimed that the new forest strategy should be translated into Tajik to facilitate wider stakeholder engagement (the project contributed to the preparation of the strategy). Thus, the importance of working in national languages should be highlighted, and working language should be chosen in a way that as many stakeholders as possible are comfortable to express themselves.

The project evaluation also recommended translating all training material in national languages, which is ideal, but would require additional funds.

In Azerbaijan the attempt to act through an NGO caused substantial delays in the project schedule. In the future it is better to involve UNDP directly to transfer the funds, as was done for Azerbaijan (after the difficulties) and Uzbekistan. In addition, using UNDP country offices saves

substantial amount of time and effort, because preparing a grant for an NGO requires proceeding through the UNECE grant committee, which takes several months.

## 6. SUSTAINABILITY

UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section will continue to work with the project countries, and depending on available funds, will continue capacity-building activities. A new UNECE/FAO UNDA project for 2016-2019 has been accepted and it will focus on forest monitoring in five countries in the region (Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan). A good network or contacts has now been established in the region, which will facilitate the work in the future.

The Section will invite the countries to participate into workshops and other meetings organized as a part of the regular programme of work. The project countries have requested to produce the training material in printed form. Thus, the project results will be developed into a publication, which will include the training package, and will be translated into Russian.

The project outcome in Tajikistan has been shared with FAO Tajikistan and GIZ, who continue to work in the country. As requested in the project evaluation, full project documentation with national consultant reports and other materials will be added to the project website, which has been in active use.

In addition, a side event for the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, which will take place in Batumi, Georgia, in June 2016, has been proposed. The event will focus on Rovaniemi Action plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy and this project outcome (approval for the event pending). Furthermore, the results produced by pilot countries Georgia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan have been shared with UNFF, which is working with other countries to produce forest sector action plans. Especially the national action plan of Georgia serves as a successful example for other countries.

## 7. MULTIPLIER EFFECTS

Kyrgyzstan has expressed interest to use the project methods in future forest policy development. In addition, the NGO in Kyrgyzstan, which was involved in the project, has organized additional workshops on green economy based on the project materials, outside the project activities. Furthermore, the national consultant in Georgia has used the participatory methods of the project in trainings outside the project and outside the forest sector.

## 8. SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING

**Table 4 – Financial Leveraging**

Contributing Entity/Donor	Purpose	Amount raised	
		Cash (USD)	In-Kind
Russian Federation	Representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were supported to participate in the meeting of the UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest		Direct support to cover the travel and accommodation of the participants.



	Industry in Kazan, Russian Federation in November 2014.		
FAO	Representatives from Armenia, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan were supported to participate in a workshop on Forest Products Markets and Forest Sector Workforce in Montenegro in December 2015.		Direct support to cover the travel and accommodation of three participants. All three participants had problems in receiving their visas regardless of the support of the secretariat, and could not participate in the end (i.e. part of in-kind support was lost).

## 9. 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/capacitybuilding.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 and final regional workshop is available at the UNECE-FAO Flickr account: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/121632478@N08/sets/>

The project final regional workshop was organized in Tbilisi, Georgia, jointly with RERAM-project. The presentations and report from the workshop that summarizes the project achievements are available at the meeting website:  
<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=37795#/>

The project outcome was presented in a UNECE/FAO side event during the FAO World Forestry Congress in September 2015 in Durban, South Africa. "Forest Governance: From Global Initiatives to National Experiences":

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=40409#/>

The project countries were invited to participate in the meeting of the UNECE Committee on Forests and Forest Industry (COFFI) and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC) "Silva 2015" in Engelberg, Switzerland, in November 2015. One representative from each project country was supported to travel to the meeting. Azerbaijan was invited but did not participate.

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=39138#/>

Workshop on Forest Products Markets and Forest Sector Workforce was organized in December 2015 in order to bring representatives from different regions together to discuss the challenges and exchange experiences related to forest sector development. More information is available at the meeting website: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41338#/>

Finally, the project outcome will be presented for member States at the joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management, in Geneva, Switzerland, in March 2016. More information is available at the meeting website: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41852#/> or in the background document: [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/timber/meetings/20160321/ECE\\_TIM\\_EFC\\_WP\\_2\\_2016\\_5d.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/timber/meetings/20160321/ECE_TIM_EFC_WP_2_2016_5d.pdf)

In addition, a side event for the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, which will take place in Batumi, Georgia, in June 2016, has been proposed. The event will focus on Rovaniemi Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy and this project. outcome.

10. FINANCIAL INFORMATION- **FINANCIAL DETAILS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN JUNE 2016 DUE TO UMOJA START UP IN UNECE**

Table 5

Object Class	Description	A. Budget/Allotment (as per project document) (USD)	B. Revisions to allotments (if any) (USD)	C. Total Expenditure (USD)	D. Explanations to redeployments (USD)
602	General Temporary Assistance				
604	Consultants and Expert Groups	0111-Int. consult.:			
		0140-Nat./reg. consult.:			
		2601-Consult. travel:			
		2602-Expert Group (travel):			
608	Travel of staff				
612	Contractual services				
616	Operating expenses				
618	Supplies, Materials etc.				
621	Fellowships, grants and contributions	7202 Workshops:			
		7203 - Study Tours:			
	Total				