

In Focus

FCFPP targets global forest issues in Tavush region

Deforestation as a global issue has reached a critical level in today's Armenia. It started in early 1990s, when Armenia faced energy crisis after independence, several hectares of forest area were illegally-cut and damaged by rural population, since the fuel-wood was the only available energy source during that time. These trends had social nature.

Poor public knowledge on importance of forests ecosystems' role in global carbon cycle, forest policy, forest preservation and low level of understanding "why deforestation is such a pressing and urgent issue", "what forests bring to global ecosystems and to the quality of life" have enforced massive deforestation starting in the early 1990s, which has led to disturbance of functions of forest ecosystems, loss of biodiversity consequently creating negative environment which accelerates land degradation and climate change.

Forest rehabilitation and improvement of forest management is a priority for the Government of Armenia, and considerable legislative and institutional efforts have been made in this direction in collaboration with international organizations.

Based on the urgency of addressing the global forest problem Regional Environmental Center for Caucasus (REC Caucasus) in close cooperation with European Union has started



"Fostering Community Forest Policy and Practice in Mountain Regions of the Caucasus" regional project in two communities of Tavush region; Koghb and Jujevan in 2009.

The EU funded project is focused on the development of new institutional, legal and technical set-up for community forest management and in particular supports securing land tenure and forest rights of local communities, implementation of institutional arrangements and land use policies for forest conservation and sustainable use, development of pilot community forest management plans and forest landscape restoration.

The project also supports awareness raising among local communities and local authorities and in process of building capacities on sustainable forest management its relation and impact on other fields such as climate change, poverty reduction, sustainable development etc. During the project implementation wide consensus has

been reached on immediate reforestation measures under the project, which helps to solve such problems as land-slides, mudflows, avalanches and consequently protect populated areas from natural disasters.

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Landscape restoration activities in Koghb and Jujevan communities

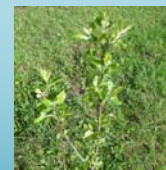
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Landscape restoration activities in Koghb and Jujevan communities

Landscape restoration measures has taken place by REC Caucasus Armenia in close cooperation with the “Forest Research and Experimental Centre” SNCO, which elaborated reforestation plans of former kolkhoz-sovkhoz forests in communities of Koghb and Jujevan. Reforestation Plans include afforestation and reforestation sites, time schedule for the reforestation activates, selection of tree species and their quantities, the map sheets of 1:25000 scales of planning areas, cost breakdown package for planned reforestation activities.



RECC Armenia signed contracts with two local organizations “Mshkavanq” LLC and “Jujevan Forestry” LLC, with special purpose for implementation of reforestation and afforestation activities in the pilot areas.



22,1ha area in Koghb community and 8,4ha area in Jujevan community has been reforested so far. At least 20 % of community population is involved in landscape restoration activities

Now, reforestation activities are in process of implementation according to the Reforestation plans for pilot communities. Reforestation activities will be continued during 2012.

Public Awareness Initiatives within the FCFPP project

RECC Armenia in partnership with UNDP Armenia, organized event dedicated to “**International Years of Forests**”, declared by the United Nations General Assembly to raise awareness on sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of forests.

Presentations on implementation of EU funded regional FCFPP project and the UNDP/GEF project on «Adaptation to Climate Change Impacts in Mountain Forest Ecosystems of Armenia» funded by Global Environmental Facility as a global pilot have been demonstrated.



An event contributed to the greater awareness on expansive activities conducted within the projects, in particular elaborated community forest management plans for capacious landscape restoration works focused on conservation of forest ecosystems and prevention of processes of forest loss and degradation, which are considered as global issues having worldwide negative impact.

The Europe Day

The European Delegation to Armenia organizes the event to celebrate EU-Armenia co-operation and European

cultural diversity every year. The fair is both cultural and educational event dedicated to the Europe Day, which is being celebrated all over the world.

REC Caucasus Armenia together with numerous organizations, foundations and centers takes part in the information fair and presents its mission, goals, as well as achievements, on-going and future projects. The Europe Day event creates an opportunity for RECC Armenia to emphasize EU-projects’ best applicable practices, share experience and find new opportunities for further cooperation.



Besides this, RECC Armenia, prepares and distributes large scale of information on FCFPP regional project, especially publications, brochures, booklets, leaflets highlighting achievements and outputs of the project and CD information packs including outlines of CFMPs, SWOT analysis and Legal analysis, reforestation plans.

An event makes a great contribution to the goal of the Europe Day and raises wide awareness about the importance of EU-Armenia valuable cooperation.



Series of Trainings conducted within the FCFPP project

REC Caucasus Armenia BO in partnership with the “Forest Research and Experimental Centre” SNCO organized series of trainings in “Zikatar” Training Centre for the community population of Koghb and Jujevan communities. Trainings aimed at raising awareness of rural population of pilot areas about techniques related to forest rules, policies and schemes, as well as build capacities of rural people have served in their purpose.

Nearly 3966 rural people; or 56% of local population living in pilot areas have been trained and provided with materials (presentations, textbooks, tables, maps). 100% of representatives of local authorities (staff of administrations of Jujevan and Koghb) have also been trained and provided with training materials



These trainings helped to increase awareness and transfer knowledge on main issues of Armenian north-eastern forests; reforestation and afforestation measures; biodiversity and natural ecosystems; the methods of forest protection; artificial forest planting; forest Code of RA; implementation of care cuttings in the mountainous forests; organization of recreation, ecotourism; the demands of community forest management activities; establishment of forest nursery; forest mechanisms and equipments; the chain-saw safety

usage; sustainable management, improvement and restoration of postures and meadows, the role and importance of side forest usage on community forest management and general information on GIS system.



Joint Stakeholder Workshop on Forest /Land Information Management (UNDP co-funding)

In partnership with UNDP/GEF, REC Caucasus Armenia organized joint stakeholder workshop on Lands/Forests Information Management within the EU funded FCFPP and GEF funded “Developing Institutional and Legal Capacity to Optimize Information and Monitoring System for Global Environmental Management in Armenia” projects has been held on June 14, 2011.



During the workshop the co-operation and synergy mapping between two projects of UNDP Armenia and REC Caucasus Armenia were discussed, including improvement of legal and institutional frameworks on forests and lands in Armenia. UNDP is already co-operating on these areas,

and presentations of both organizations and experts helped to identify priorities for co-operation, reveal gaps in the field, as well as to find the best ways to manage information and tools/mechanisms which will make the process easier and accessible. The workshop was productive and had served its purpose.

National Guideline on CFM and CFMPs

“National Guidelines for Community Forest Management”, is prepared and published within the FCFPP project by joint efforts of RECC Armenia and FCFPP project team. The document sets out guiding principles and provides recommendations for implementing forms of community forestry, which are not normative. Each country will need to adapt the guidance for incorporation into its own legal framework.

The document is mainly focused on *Community Forestry in Practice, Initiating Community Forestry, Management Plans for Community Forestry, and Mechanisms for Implementing Community Forestry.*





FCFPP project's Success stories

FCFPP Project implementation has left its positive impact in pilot communities, Koghb and Juevan. An attempt to understand and address deforestation that reforestation is not the solution to deforestation, has been widely recognized among rural population, when villagers began to benefit from reforestation activities.

Success story 1:

Landscape restoration activities had played significant role in community's life through opening employment opportunities. Rural residents were actively involved in the restoration activities and were paid for the works implemented. Such approach helped to mitigate social tension and increase employment rate in pilot communities, as it created income source for rural people, to get for a living, thus improving welfare and means to care for their social needs.



Success story 2:

Rehabilitation of deforested and degraded areas through plantation of 21500 seedlings, 8270 trees has

awarded communities other benefits from the agricultural point of view. Soils in these areas are distinguished with high fertility and 30,5ha restored area in both communities, will create favorable environment for significant tree species being under threat extinction and fruit-tree species for rural population engaged in agriculture. It is expected, that plantation of fruit tree species (apple, pear, walnut and plum) will create extra income sources in the near future. Rural population will benefit from fruit production, high fruit yields, which will be used either for domestic, or sale purposes to get for a living, thus contributing to improvement of social conditions and reduction of poverty level in rural remote areas.



Success story 3:

FCFPP project has also created another beneficial opportunities for rural farmers to improve and enrich cattle feed. In the rehabilitation process, reforested areas have been fenced to protect tree plants from impacts of external factors, such as grazing, floods and etc. In newly plowed and planted soils, large amounts of grass began to grow, especially in the territories near fences. Farmers of pilot communities with the help of the project expert team obtained permission from community mayor to mow grass and use for cattle feeding purposes. Nowadays, hay is being mowed and stored by natives for cattle feeding purposes. This helped to diversity, improve and enrich cattle fodder source in rural areas.



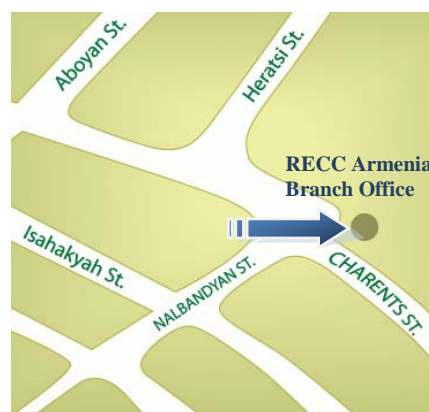
FCFPP Project's Visibility

Within the framework of the EU funded "Fostering forest policy and practice in Mountain Regions of the Caucasus" regional project, large scale of information materials on the project including booklets, CD info packages, brochures, info sheets have been published and disseminated by REC Caucasus Armenia BO.



Our Contacts

REC Caucasus Armenia
Branch Office
1 Charents Ave; 0025 Yerevan
Tel/Fax: +374 10 574743; 575148
Web site: www.rec-caucasus.am
E-mail address: info@rec-caucasus.am



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