

Sustainable forest management for green economy in Kazakhstan

PROCESS DESCRIPTION

Introduction

Globally governments have increased the pace of change towards more sustainable development through policies for greener economies. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), a green economy is where economic and social development is low carbon, resource efficient, and socially inclusive. It aims to promote more renewable, sustainable and efficient natural resource management strategies that are not destructive but at the same time do create economic and social development.

It would be thought that sustainable forest management promotion would ideally fit with green economy objectives with its multiple compatible carbon, economic, social and ecological benefits. However in most countries this is not the case, forestry is often on the periphery of green economy strategies and sometimes completely absent. This is particularly the case in the targeted countries of the project, in the Caucasus and Central Asia region where particularly the sustainable production of materials and energy, economic, livelihood and job creating potential of forest sectors have not been fully realised.

In October 2013, United Nations Economic Commission of Europe (UNECE) and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) launched a project which aims through capacity development and policy process facilitation to assist countries in the Caucasus and central Asian region to release the potential of forestry and mainstream forestry into green economy strategies. Kazakhstan has been selected as a pilot country.

Forest cover of Kazakhstan is 4,6 %. According to this indicator, Kazakhstan is a sparsely forested state, although its total forest area is in third place among the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia after Russia and Turkey. According to the European standards, which take into account only the high forests, forest cover of Kazakhstan does not exceed 1.1%.

Despite the small area, the forests of the republic have important climate-water protection, field- and soil protection, sanitation, health and other useful functions and they play an important role in maintaining the ecological and socio-economic stability of the regions and individual groups of the population.

Intensive exploitation of conifer forests in the past, as well as large forest fires have led to a decrease of the softwood area, reduction of timber resources and significant loss of water protection, recreational and other useful properties of forests, a sharp deterioration in its sanitary state and desertification processes.

Due to the sharp deterioration of the forest state and its structure the Government of Kazakhstan adopted a number of decisions to support and improve the forest industry. The number of industrial programs, including "Zhasyl Damu" program for 2010-2014 were adopted, which identified individual medium term goals. However, the main cause of the forestry sector problems is still inadequate forest policy and forest management system.

Forest ecosystems conservation and effective management are identified as one of the main areas of the Concept of Transition of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the "Green Economy", approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated May 30, 2013. In order to implement this Concept Forestry Committee of Kazakhstan developed a draft program for the forest sector of the economy of Kazakhstan till 2020.

To support the development process of the Program draft and better incorporate to it the green economy principles series of trainings and workshops were held in a participatory way with engagement of broad range of interested stakeholders, including one regional and national workshop, 3 coaching and 4 local workshops, as well as awareness raising campaign. The table below contains this process description.

National workshop			
<i>Key workshop outcomes</i>	<i>Methods used</i>	<i>Stakeholders involved</i>	<i>Date and place</i>
<p>Planning process for the development of the forest strategy was considered, a number of challenges and opportunities for the implementation of sustainable forest management capacity for a green economy in Kazakhstan were identified, current draft strategy for the forest sector of Kazakhstan was reviewed and analyzed. The structure of the forestry strategy for the green economy was developed, which includes following components.</p> <p><u>Vision:</u> increase welfare and forest covering, sustainable models of management and consumption; Implementation of the SFM principles by improving forest productivity and welfare; maintaining and increasing forest cover, environmental benefits of local population, saving agro.bio diversity.</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> Sustainable development of timber production and welfare of population is ensured</p> <p><u>Components:</u> Develop forest policy on green economy; Increase the score of the forest sector in the GDP; Substitute traditional sources to the renewable recourses; Strengthen forest sector at the international level; Improve the efficiency of forest management; Adapt measures for climate change mitigation; Develop private forest; Improve forest training and retraining of forestry specialists; Provide preferential loans to forest users; Provide transfer of resources to the long-term use.</p>	<p>Context analysis, fssessment against GE criteria, stakeholder analysis; problem analysis; rights, revenues and responsibilities analysis and SWOT analysis; Gap analysis on information gathering and management according to key GE criteria; Policy negotiation exercise – with focus on fuel wood policy; Fishbowl debate</p>	<p>The representatives of local akimats from all the regions of Kazakhstan, members of the special working group on drafting Forest Development Program, as well as national experts on forest sector, NGO representatives, UNECE international consultant, total number participants – 30 persons.</p>	<p>14-16 April 2014, Astana</p>
Coaching workshops on forestry action planning for green economies in Kazakhstan			
<i>Key workshop outcomes</i>	<i>Methods used</i>	<i>Stakeholders involved</i>	<i>Date and place</i>
<p>Process plan including following phases:</p> <p><i>Phase 1. Preparing for the development of Forest Strategy of Kazakhstan</i></p> <p>Involvement of local population through the implementation of the road map;</p> <p>Consideration of interests of the forest users (business) through the meetings;</p> <p>Integration of science, production and processing industry through conduction of the round tables, workshops, public hearings, on-line conferences.</p> <p><i>Phase 2. Context analysis – filling data gaps</i></p> <p>Identification of strengths and weaknesses of current sector through the data collection from the local</p>	<p>Seminar followed on from the national workshop. Methods used: context analysis – facilitating stakeholder analysis and data gathering and analysis - filling gaps, toolbox guide was given for the process planning</p>	<p>Members of Working group on development of the forestry program, which is consisted of the representatives of Forestry Committee, interested ministries, scientific institutions, private companies and non-</p>	<p>17 April 2014, Astana</p>

<p>communities; Establishing relationships between interested stakeholders through collection of proposals of forest users and business, including associations, professional unions, entrepreneurs in the forest sector, NGOs, farmers, other environmental sectors. <i>Phase 3. Negotiations on the Strategy priorities</i> Identification of the stakeholders' priorities through conduction of the round tables, workshops and meetings and involvement of local population, NGO, governmental agencies and business structures. Development of approaches for drafting Strategy through the public hearings, monitoring, analysis of stakeholders' proposals. <i>Phase 4. Development of Strategy and its review and validation</i> Discussion the draft Strategy with the relevant stakeholders, including NGO, business, local akimats and ministries through the round tables and working meetings; agreeing the draft Strategy with the interested ministries and agencies of Kazakhstan; Approval of the draft Strategy.</p>		governmental organizations	
<p>Key questions, facilitation skills and methods to be used for the regional workshop in Aktobe were identified, as well as following recommendations to the Program draft were developed: - provide mechanisms for enlarging the long-term use of forests; - provide economic incentives; - increase funding for the reproduction of the forests; - involve youth in the preservation and restoration of the forests; - introduce new technologies in the FFS; - improve state support (reduce creditworthiness and collateral requirements); - allocate funds for marketing researches to attract private business.</p>	<p>Method for participatory review of policies and strategies; Method for quick assessment of policy against basic green economy criteria; Problem analysis procedure; Rights, revenues and responsibilities analysis procedure; SWOT Analysis procedure; Fishbowl debate method; Collectively ranking policy priorities</p>	<p>Members of Working group on development of the forestry program, which is consisted of the representatives of Forestry Committee, interested ministries, scientific institutions, private companies and non-governmental organizations</p>	<p>19 August 2014, Astana</p>
<p>Forest Development Program draft was reviewed and following proposals on its improvement were developed: - use the PPP schemes for the development of the forestry sector; - provide comprehensive use of forest resources; - program should not be limited with the woodworking industry, it has to interconnect all the chains of industry, including woodworking, hunting, tourism, etc; - deadline for the development of program must be extended, it is necessary to involve relevant experts to its development, develop necessary calculations for the activities of the program, to ensure cross-sectoral coordination in its development. The workshop participants agreed to submit concrete proposals to the draft program in written form to the official request of the Forestry and Fauna Committee. The workshop provided an opportunity for</p>	<p>Review, discussion and debate methods</p>	<p>Experts of concerned government agencies of Kazakhstan, including the ministries of national economy, finance, investment and development, agriculture, education and science, energy, as well as the representatives of the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of Kazakhstan, "Atameken" Union,</p>	<p>28 November 2014, Astana</p>

participants to review and discuss the draft program and to exchange views.		Association of Forestry and Forest Products Organizations of Kazakhstan "Zhasyl Orman," Natural Resources Union, Kazhydromet, Water Initiatives Center took part in workshop, total number of participants – 21 pers.	
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Local Workshops on review of the draft Program for Development of Forest Sector of Kazakhstan till 2020 with a focus on green economy principles

<i>Key workshop outcomes</i>	<i>Methods used</i>	<i>Stakeholders involved</i>	<i>Date and place</i>
<p>Improvements to the Forest Development program draft as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide funding for the forestry sector; - improve the legal framework in the field of forestry; - expand business opportunities in the forest sector. - provide tax incentives for private traders in the forestry sector; - responsible persons must be provided at the rayon level in the Plans for creation of green zones; - equip leskhozoes with the necessary equipment (communication equipment, quads, etc.); - establish meteo-station on the legislative level; - improve qualification requirements to the leskhozoes; - introduce forest pathologist and engineers in leskhozoes; - provide a means for cleaning burning for further afforestation; -ensure tourism development. - develop legal framework in the field of forestry; - provide a pay increase, and social support for forest workers; - expand the provision of services of forestry and protected areas; - provide mechanisms to increase public awareness through the media; - establish school forest service with funding from local budgets; - improve access to information for forest research activities. <p>The workshop participants elaborated concrete recommendations to the draft program, which are based on local realities. They increased their knowledge on the development of forest policy thorough analysis of the interests of a wide range of stakeholders and the relevant principles of the green economy.</p>	<p>Method for participatory review of policies and strategies;</p> <p>Method for quick assessment of policy against basic green economy criteria;</p> <p>Problem analysis procedure;</p> <p>Rights, revenues and responsibilities analysis procedure;</p> <p>SWOT Analysis procedure;</p> <p>Fishbowl debate method;</p> <p>Collectively ranking policy priorities</p>	<p>Representatives of local inspections of forestry and wildlife, forestry experts from the western oblasts of Kazakhstan, including Aktobe, Atyrau, West-Kazakhstan and Mangistau, as well as an UNECE international consultant and national experts</p>	<p>22 August 2014, Aktobe</p>
<p>Improvements to the Forest Development program draft as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop a regulatory framework for the settlements planting; - develop settlements greening program; 	<p>Method for participatory review of policies and strategies;</p> <p>Method for quick</p>	<p>Leaders and specialists of leskhozoes, business sector and non-governmental</p>	<p>5 December 2014, Petropavlovsk</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop recommendations on creation of a green zone; - increase in the nurseries area for urban greening; - introduce a ban on the use of planting material imported for the landscaping; - organize training courses for professionals involved in landscaping; - develop recommendations on conservation, protection and restoration of the forest on a perfect level (KazNIILKh); - develop protective afforestation; - oblige farmers to create shelterbelts planting; - develop recommendations on a list of tree species for artisanal regions; - review the rules for Avialesookhrana; - ensure satisfactory forest health; - strengthen services of engineers – forest pathologists; - conduct forest auctions on final forest felling; - deep processing of forest residues; - wood processing, production of briquettes and pellets; - promote and develop state forest owners; - develop public-private partnerships to increase forest cover; - transfer forest resources to the long-term use and provide government support; - simplify documents issuance procedures for participation in the tenders; - provide state support to sales; - create training centers for the specialists involved in forest and forest processing industry; - provide market with the consumer goods from local hardwood and create new jobs, new technologies. <p>In addition, as a result of priority ranking procedure participants proposed following recommendations to the draft:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop financial instruments for the development of forestry and wood industry; - improve forest legislation; - enlarge forest cover through removing and redemption of useful for forests lands, including lands with the renewed self-seedings; - Forestry exclusively by state forest owners considering increasing the forest; - transit gradually from public to private property in the forest sector, since forest users today are not ready for full ownership of the SFF. <p>Workshop provided an opportunity for participants to raise awareness of the "green economy" principles, review thoroughly the forest development program draft, as well as ensure reflection of the realities and needs of the north region, local stakeholders in the draft, to bring it into compliance with the "green economy" principles.</p>	<p>assessment of policy against basic green economy criteria; Problem analysis procedure; Rights, revenues and responsibilities analysis procedure; SWOT Analysis procedure; Fishbowl debate method; Collectively ranking policy priorities</p>	<p>organizations, as well as representatives of local akimats of North Kazakhstan, Pavlodar and Kostanai oblasts attended the workshop, total number of participants is 24 pers.</p>	
<p>Improvements to the Forest Development program draft as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strengthen the material and technical base according the modern requirements; - increase funding for the forest sector; - cancel fees for the forest tending cuttings, sanitary 	<p>Method for participatory review of policies and strategies; Method for quick assessment of policy</p>	<p>Leaders and specialists of leskhozoes, business sector and non-governmental organizations, as</p>	<p>8 December 2014, Almaty</p>

<p>cuttings, since these cuttings are forestry and forest protection activities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introduce the use of fire-extinguishing agents for fighting forest fires and create mineralized zones; - create an e-card with the forest quarterly network to implement an effective forest fires monitoring system; - develop nurseries growing species those are in demand; - develop forest tourism; - increase the powers of inspectors; - provide subsidies for forestry works (sowing, planting); - increase wages in forestry; - improve the forestry regulatory framework; - apply more biological agents for the forest protection; - pay more attention to the private nurseries; - change the standards established by the Government Decree No 53; - provide allocation of funds from the republican budget for forest protection activities; - divide forestry into categories; - ensure timely conduction of forest management activities; - improve forest protection image; - develop space-based forest fires monitoring, that locks area of 0.1 ha; - plan reforestation in reasonable volumes (based on the presence of the surveyed volume of forest funds, its availability, level of material and technical equipment of institutions). <p>In addition, as a result of priorities ranking procedure participants proposed following recommendations to the draft:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to develop the regulatory framework in the field of forestry; - to increase wages in the forestry sector; - to develop tourism; - to develop private forest due to unoccupied lands; - to increase the stumpage fees for timber which is selling in stand. <p>The workshop provided an opportunity for participants to raise awareness of the "green economy" principles, review thoroughly the draft program for the development of the forest sector, as well as ensure reflection of the realities and needs of the southern region, local stakeholders in the draft, to bring it into compliance with the "green economy" principles. Participants received certificates upon completion of workshop.</p>	<p>against basic green economy criteria;</p> <p>Problem analysis procedure;</p> <p>Rights, revenues and responsibilities analysis procedure;</p> <p>SWOT Analysis procedure;</p> <p>Fishbowl debate method;</p> <p>Collectively ranking policy priorities</p>	<p>well as representatives of local akimats of Almaty, Zhambyl, South Kazakhstan and Kyzylorda oblasts attended the workshop, total number of participants - 30 pers.</p>	
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<p>Improvements to the Forest Development program draft as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - create conditions for reproduction of forests, including wage increases in the forestry sector, material and technical equipment, funding; - develop forestry science; - provide grants for the training of young specialists and Ph.D.; - conduct researches on the development of fast-growing plantations; - introduction of modern technologies to ensure the effectiveness of creating cultures; - review the existing regulations established by the Government Decree No 53; - revise the regulations related to provision of leskhozoes with the equipment; - make an inventory of forest lands under the forest management; - consider opportunity of purchase of lands with the self-sowing plants; - simplify procedure of land grant; - eliminate legal barriers to cultivation of forest plantation; - develop cooperation with neighbouring areas for reproduction of forests; - mobilize donor resources for development of the concept of forest industry development, cross-border cooperation on pests combat, etc; - build a cordon for young professionals and develop forest villages. <p>The workshop provided an opportunity for participants to raise awareness of the "green economy" principles, review thoroughly the forest development program draft, as well as ensure reflection of the realities and needs of the north region, local stakeholders in the draft, to bring it into compliance with the "green economy" principles</p>	<p>Method for participatory review of policies and strategies; Method for quick assessment of policy against basic green economy criteria; Problem analysis procedure; Rights, revenues and responsibilities analysis procedure; SWOT Analysis procedure; Fishbowl debate method; Collectively ranking policy priorities</p>	<p>Leaders and specialists of leskhozoes, business sector and non-governmental organizations, as well as representatives of Akmola oblast akimat attended the workshop, total number of participants - 30 pers.</p>	<p>22 December 2014, Kokshetau</p>
Activities under the awareness raising campaign			
<i>Key outcomes</i>	<i>Methods used</i>	<i>Stakeholders involved</i>	<i>Date and place</i>
<p>Increased children's interest in forest conservation and environmental friendliness.</p>	<p>Child drawing competition</p>	<p>Children of Family type Children's Village of Mangistau Oblast. Total 30 children of 6 years and upward</p>	<p>12 August 2014, Aktau</p>
<p>Increased awareness of participants of the Round table "Sustainable forest management for green economy" of following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - principles of sustainable forest management for Green Economy; - Potential of natural capital for greening the economy; - Ecosystem services - Value of ecosystem services - Main components of the draft Forest Program 	<p>round table presentation and discussion</p>	<p>Teachers of Forest Resources and Forestry Department, postgraduates and students of the Agronomic faculty, S.Seifullin Kazakh Agro Technical University, in total 35 participants</p>	<p>18 December 2014, Astana</p>

Increased public awareness of sustainable forest management for greener economy, main priorities and perspectives of forest sector of Kazakhstan	Booklets, calendars and press-releases	stakeholders of forest sector, public	
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Process lessons:

The Government of Kazakhstan is currently revising forest policy for a long term. The Forestry and Wildlife Committee developed a forest program draft in order to provide conditions for the sustainable development of forest sector of Kazakhstan. In this connection the UNECE/FAO support in developing the forest policy and strategy was actual and timely. The Project assisted the Government of Kazakhstan in organizing the process which was necessary for identifying priorities and improving forest program draft.

The state economic policy of Kazakhstan is focused on the "green" path of development, and the Concept of the transition to a green economy was accepted by the President Decree. However, the forest sector is not considered properly in the "greening" process. Although the forest sector of Kazakhstan has a great potential and can contribute to the green economy. In this context, the project was relevant for the forest sector of Kazakhstan. The project helped to influence the drafting process of forest sector development program through the involvement of all interested stakeholders of the forestry sector in defining priorities based on the principles of green economy.

On completion of the process, which was organized under the project and consisted of the series of workshops and trainings, forest program draft was improved and updated. The revised program is focused now on creating the conditions for sustainable forest management, as well as optimizing use of forest resources and creation of "green" infrastructure.

However, it should be noted that attempt to harmonize program draft to the full extent with the principles of green economy has failed. The program is concentrated more on the traditional way of forest management - conservation and reforestation oriented to the government organizations. Due to the small forest area and timber reserves, the forests do not play a determining role in the economy of Kazakhstan. Accordingly, a gradual change in the mindset and approach to forest management is required for developing the use of wood as a source of "green" low-carbon or no-carbon - renewable materials and energy.

Method of interactive participation in the planning and developing forest policy was very interesting for the stakeholders, who were involved in the project. They believe that project approach is very useful for the exchange of views, particularly "Aquarium" and "sticking posters" methods. However, some analysis methods were not clear for the participants and, therefore, they have to be revised.

In general, the project was timely and relevant for the development of forest sector of Kazakhstan in accordance with the principles of green economy.