UNDA Eighth Tranche

12/13AW Sustainable forest management for greener economies in the Caucasus and Central Asia

Project document
for additional funding from the 8th tranche of the Development Account

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Trade and Sustainable Land Management Division

June 2013

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: Sustainable forest management for greener economies in the Caucasus and Central Asia[1]

Duration: 24 months, June 2013 – May 2015

Budget: US$ 500,000

Executing agency: UNECE

Implementing entity: UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section

When managed on a sustainable basis, a strong, healthy forest sector has a key role to play in the "greening" the economies as outlined in the Rio+20 outcome document. Using wood products to substitute for more carbon-intensive non-renewable materials and fossil fuels enhances that contribution. Additionally, forests perform an essential role in preventing environmental degradation (air and water pollution, soil erosion) and reducing the impact of natural disasters such as landslides, avalanches and flooding.

In the UNECE region, the role of forests is particularly acute for countries in transition, and especially in the Caucasus and Central Asia, to address environmental problems like soil erosion, pollution and climate change, which otherwise may impact heavily on communities and their livelihoods. Strengthening of the forest sector will enable countries to gain both environmental and economic benefits. To this end, forest sector policies and institutions need to be strengthened; provision of sustainable forest products need to be expanded including for renewable energy production.

There are numerous obstacles to achieving the full potential of the forest sector. Among these are illegal logging, poor governance, overcutting and overgrazing leading to forest degradation, deforestation and severe erosion. These are often compounded by weak information systems as well as obsolete policies and institutions. When the countries of this region gained independence in the early 1990's, they did not have institutional frameworks in place for managing their forest resources. Unfortunately and for a variety of reasons, the relevant institutions remain fragile and suffer from a lack of staff qualified in policy for sustainable forest management. However, countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia are ready to develop and implement policies which will allow them to properly and sustainably capture the opportunities in the forest sector, in full respect of existing environmental legislation and international commitments. All of them are signatories to the Rio Conventions as well as participating in relevant UN processes which identify forests as a key biome for the mitigation of climate change and the conservation of biodiversity.

To address the above mentioned obstacles, the project objective is to strengthen the national capacity of countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia to enhance the contribution of their forest sector to greener economies through sustainable forest management.

The project will help countries to respond to key capacity gaps and overcome these development challenges, by providing knowledge, capacity building, training materials and advisory services on:

[1] Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia; Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan

- Strengthening forest sector policies and institutions, to facilitate sustainable forest management's contribution to a green economy and mitigating climate change;
- Developing action plans and implementing sustainable forest management in three pilot countries;
- Promoting sustainable forest products, including for bioenergy production.

Target groups will be government officials from ministries responsible for forestry and other related institutions.

The project will mainly develop capacities at national level but it will also reach out to the local level to ensure that staff from local forest and forest related administrations are trained and advised on how to request further support. This will be achieved through tailored training workshops based on the content used at national level.

The UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section will be responsible for leading the project. The project will be implemented through partnerships in the region, drawing on the UNECE and FAO existing regional networks[2] and involving the Resident Coordinator system.

[2] These include: responsible ministries for forests; relevant forest policy, markets and resources specialists such as the Heads of the Delegation to the UNECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission, and the UNECE Teams of Specialists on Forest Policy and on Sustainable Forests Products; partnership with FAO Headquarters; the Sub-regional Offices for Eastern Europe and Central Asia; the Forest and Farm Facility (FFF); as well as with the UNEP regional office for Europe, in particular on environment issues.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Introduction

"The Future We Want", the outcome document of Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development (June 20 to 22, 2012), stressed that the forest sector has a role to play in a variety of areas, including: the provision of sustainable products and services; reforestation, restoration and afforestation to reverse deforestation; sustainable forest management; the reduction of risks from climate change; and strengthening of cooperation, capacity building and governance. It also called for enhanced sustainable forest management and increased efforts to strengthen forest governance frameworks and means of implementation. To this end, member states have committed to improving the livelihoods of people and communities by creating the conditions to sustainably manage forests, including through strengthening cooperation arrangements in the areas of finance, trade, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, capacity-building and governance, as well as by promoting secure land tenure, particularly decision-making and benefit-sharing, in accordance with national legislation and priorities.

When managed on a sustainable basis, a strong, healthy forest sector has a key role to play in the "greening" the economies as outlined in the Rio+20 outcome document. Using wood products to substitute for more carbon-intensive non-renewable materials and fossil fuels enhances that contribution. Additionally, forests perform an essential role in preventing environmental degradation (air and water pollution, soil erosion) and reducing the impact of natural disasters such as landslides, avalanches and flooding.

In the UNECE region, the role of forests is particularly acute for countries in transition, and especially in the Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA), to address environmental problems like soil erosion, pollution and climate change, which otherwise may impact heavily on communities and their livelihoods. Strengthening of the forest sector will enable countries to gain both environmental and economic benefits. To this end, forest sector policies and institutions need to be strengthened; provision of sustainable forest products need to be expanded including for renewable energy production.

This project, to be executed by the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, has been formulated to address these challenges. The comparative advantage of the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section lies in its extensive knowledge as well as its technical and human resources, the possibility to tap into existing networks within relevant Ministries in the region, and the specific expertise developed within the Section on the topics covered by the capacity building activities included in this proposal (i.e. sustainable forest management and markets and wood energy).

The project will fit well to the Joint Programme of Work of the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, in particular to Work Area 1: Data, monitoring and assessment; Work Area 2: Policy dialogue and advice; and Work Area 3: Capacity building.

2.2. Link to the Programme Budget

The project will be implemented in relation to:

- The UNECE Strategic Framework 2012-2013 (A/65/6), Subprogramme 7, Forestry and Timber.

- The FAO Strategic Framework 2010 – 2019 (C 2009/3).

2.3. Link to the internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), including the Millennium Development Goals

- The United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/Res/55/2)
- The Millennium Development Goal 1 – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- The Millennium Development Goal 7 – Ensure environmental sustainability – and more specifically Target 7A: "Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources".

3. ANALYSIS

3.1. Problem analysis

3.1.1. Green Economy

The Green Economy, according to UNEP, is a system which results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. The Green Economy can be thought of as one which is low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive.

The forest sector, which includes the management of all forest functions, as well as the supply, consumption and trade of forest products, can play a significant role in this transition towards a green economy.

Because the Green Economy concept is still fairly recent, most CCA countries do not have the capacity to seize green economic opportunities, to design and implement supporting policies. If not adequately addressed, this lack of capacity will result in continuing unsustainable practices, increased carbon emission and socially harmful measures in the forest sector.

3.1.2. Forest and tree resources

Forest and tree resources are scarce in the CCA region compared to the other parts of the world and are closely connected to rangeland and livestock management.

Forest and wood lands have provided both tangible and intangible benefits i.e. wood and non-wood products (e.g. nuts, fruits and fodders) as well as environmental services, such as preventing land degradation and protecting watershed, serving as windbreaks and thus protecting agricultural fields, roads and railways, and providing amenity. Limited forest cover under the particular topography and climate conditions has made the roles of forests even more significant, especially for the environmental services provided by the forests.

The region is unique in sharing the similar history as being a part of the former Soviet Union, and thus countries used to manage their forests under the same system, while becoming independent states in the early 1990s, they started developing their own forest policy and management scheme.

The economic transition brought a significant challenge to maintaining and enhancing forest goods and services in the CCA region. Sudden economic decline and disruption of the economic system resulted in an increased demand for domestic forest products. Many countries have observed disappearance and degradation of forests as a result of unanticipated overharvesting, overgrazing in forested areas, and/or threats posed by fires, pests and diseases. With declining economy and resources, the state forest administrations have not been able to cope with the exacerbating situation.

The followings describe this situation in more detail.

Natural condition and land use

Reflecting dry, continental climate, about 50-70% of the lands are used as permanent pastures in Central Asia, while arable lands and permanent crops represent only 5-12%. Contrary, about 30 % of the land is used as permanent pasture and 15-24% as arable lands and permanent crops in the Caucasus. Division of permanent pasture lands and forest and wood lands are often unclear.

Forest and tree resources

According to FAO Forest Resources Assessment 2010 (FRA2010), forest covers up to 4% of the county's land area in the CCA region except for Georgia with about 40%. Based on FRA2010, the change in extent of forest and other wooded land in the CCA region during 1990-2010 is marginal with minimal negative trends in Armenia, Georgia and Kazakhstan and positive ones in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. However, absence of reliable data makes it difficult to assess the actual situation. Forest and land degradation have been locally observed and reported, which is not also quantified due to weak data base.

Management of forest and other wooded lands

The CCA countries are managing the majority of their forests for protection or conservation purposes. Commercial loggings are prohibited in most of the forests. Protected areas have been established prior to the independence and have continued to increase during the economic transition. However, an increase in protected area does not necessarily mean that the designated areas are well managed.

The CCA countries are the signatories of the major environmental conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the World Heritage Convention. Ratification of the major conventions resulted in attracting external assistance to develop national action plan or national strategy for the implementation of the convention. However, to date, little has been done to actually implement the developed plans and strategies.

Afforestation and reforestation were common practices in the past. Trees were planted to rehabilitate degraded lands, protect agricultural fields, railways and roads, prevent desertification as well as enhance urban environments. The extent of afforestation and reforestation has decreased after the independence due to lack of financial and technical means. Recently, some countries have started planting more trees, especially around urban areas.

Fires, pests and diseases continuously pose threats to forests. However, since the independence, because of economic decline and disruption of affordable energy distribution to the population, unauthorized loggings for fuelwood and commercial purposes as well as overgrazing in the forest and wood lands became one of the most significant threats to forests.

Forest products

The CCA countries are net forest products importers except for Georgia. Consumption of wood and wood products have been recovering since the mid-1990s, especially sawnwood and wood-based panels. Consumption of paper and paperboards has been on increase since the mid-1990s to date.

Non wood forest products (NWFPs) serve as an important source for livelihoods in the region. Major NWFPs include nuts, fruits, berries, mushrooms, medicinal plants, trophy hunting, beekeeping, and fodder. Previously, leskhozes systematically collected NWFPs. After the independence, such systematic collection decreased, while uncontrolled individual collection has been increased for subsistence purpose thus leading to the degradation of this resource.

Policy, legal and fiscal framework

After the independence, all CCA countries have developed their own legal frameworks on forests in the early 1990s. The basic laws are either the Forest Code or the Law on Forests and most countries have revised them. However, sound enforcement of the existing legal framework is still a major challenge to most of the CCA countries as countries face severe budget constraints in forest as well as a low priority assigned to the forest sector.

With external assistance, a few countries, e.g. the Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan and Armenia, took a step forward in developing national forest programmes as a basic framework in pursuing sustainable forest management. However, a lack of financial, technical and human resources in the forestry sector and weak institution and governance pose a serious difficulty to the implementation of these programmes.

Immediate threats to forest and tree resources

There are numerous obstacles to achieving the full potential of the forest sector. Major immediate threats to forests and tree resources are unsustainable harvesting, overgrazing in forest and wood lands, fires, pests and diseases, lack of human and financial resources and weak information systems.

Unsustainable harvesting

After the independence, the CCA countries have faced economic decline that resulted in decreased distribution of affordable and accessible energy to the population, and decreased forest products supply from abroad due to reduced imports from Russia. These social and economic changes have encouraged harvesting of domestic forests and tree resources to satisfy the population's immediate needs for fuelwood, wood products and income generation. Harvesting is often taking place without official authorization and beyond the sustainable level.

Overgrazing in forest and wood lands

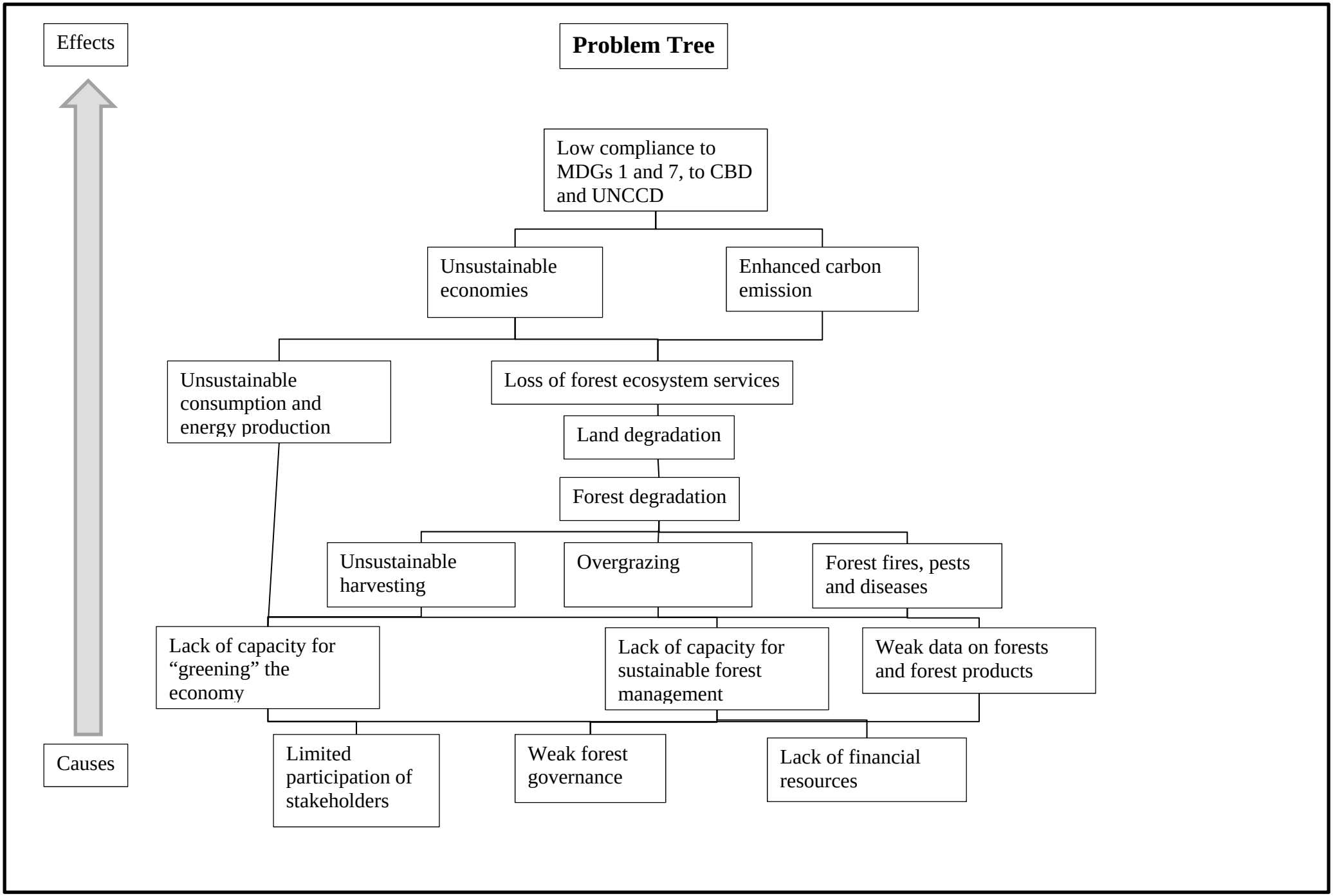
The economic decline has forced people to seek as many economic opportunities as possible. In many CCA countries, the previous livestock management system, including the utilization of pasture lands and associated infrastructure, has deteriorated. People started using forest lands nearby their settlements for grazing. Consequently, overgrazing has become a serious threat to forest land management.

Fires, pests and diseases

Fires, pests and diseases have been regular threats to forests and woodlands. However, they become even more threatening in the CCA sub-region since the 1990s because sufficient preventive and counter measures could not be implemented due to severe constraints related to human and financial resources.

Lack of capacity and weak information systems

The CCA countries have been unable to overcome many of these problems, because of reduced technical, human and financial resources, preventing the development and implementation of sustainable forest management, halting reforestation/afforestation and other remedial activities. These are often compounded by weak information systems as well as obsolete policies and institutions.


Effects
Problem Tree
Low compliance to MDGs 1 and 7, to CBD and UNCCD
Unsustainable economies
Enhanced carbon emission
Unsustainable consumption and energy production
Loss of forest ecosystem services
Land degradation
Forest degradation
Unsustainable harvesting
Overgrazing
Forest fires, pests and diseases
Lack of capacity for "greening" the economy
Lack of capacity for sustainable forest management
Weak data on forests and forest products
Limited participation of stakeholders
Weak forest governance
Lack of financial resources
Causes

3.2. Stakeholder analysis and capacity assessment

In the CCA region, major stakeholders in forest management can be grouped into (i) state institutions and (ii) non-state actors, including NGOs, the private sector and local population.

State forest institutions

As most forests in the sub-region have been continuously owned and managed by the state, the state government remains the key player in forest management and forest policy formulation in all the countries. They have their substructures at the local level, i.e. leskhozes (state forestry enterprises) or similar substructures. Leskhozes or their successor organizations remain under the state government control and carry out forestry works according to the forest management plan approved at the central level except for Kazakhstan, which has been promoting devolution of forest management responsibilities to the local level. However, they have been facing severe financial and technical constraints.

After the independence, forestry institutions in the region, including the state authorities and their sub-organizations, have been unable to obtain sufficient financial resources to meet required activities. In addition, they have not been able to hire and train younger generations, due to a lack of financial resources and consequent unattractive low salaries, as well as declining forestry education.

After the independence, prevailing technical reliance to other institutions and therefore lack of own institutional experience in both forest inventory and planning became a major institutional problem. Since a consistent and reliable inventory serves a basis for forest management, its absence is one of major impediments to the region's forest management.

A few research institutes specialized in or related to forestry exist in each country, where the National Academy of Science keeps playing an important role on forestry research. Among them, the Uzbek Scientific Research Institute of Forestry, The Institute of Mountain Forestry in Georgia, the Forest and Walnut Research Institute in the Kyrgyz Republic, and the National Institute of Deserts, Flora and Fauna in Turkmenistan are leading research institutes in the sub-region.

Non-state actors

NGOs: The number of registered environmental NGOs has been increasing in the CCA region, especially in the Caucasus. NGOs have been playing an increasingly significant role in forest management, especially in the fields of awareness raising and education.

Yet, the degree of their involvement has been still limited, as the state continues to play a major role in forest management and forest policy formulation/implementation. Many NGOs have not yet been very active and are dependent on external support. Moreover, despite an NGOs' increasing involvement in the forestry sector, limited communication among stakeholders, in particular between the state and others, remains as a key obstacle in promoting sustainable forest management in a more transparent and participatory manner.

Private sector: Similarly, involvement of the private sector in forest policy formulation/implementation and forest management is limited in the CCA region since most forestry activities are carried out by state agencies. After the independence, many wood processing/furniture factories were privatized. However, they could not make profit due to a

lack of sufficient raw materials and investment to update infrastructure. Consequently they became less competitive with imports and were obliged to close down.

Local population: Historically, local people and communities have appreciated and utilized the limited forest and tree resources in the CCA region. Increasingly, some governments have acknowledged the role of local people and communities in forest management. Yet, establishing a trustful relationship between governments and local communities has been rather challenging because of the limited rights that are granted to these communities. Efforts continue in some countries to explore optimum forest management regimes with the participation of the local population.

3.3. Analysis of the objectives

Following the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, countries have been encouraged to consider the implementation of green economy policies in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. This encouragement resulted in increased willingness of CCA countries to develop in a sustainable manner, combining economic growth with social justice and improved environment.

Within this context, there is need for a transition to a new, efficient and climate-neutral 'Green Economy'. Overall economic recovery in the CCA countries coupled with increased distribution of affordable energy as well as higher forest product imports will help reduce demands for domestic timber, and therefore the pressure on forest and tree resources.

The CCA countries need to take advantage of this challenging situation to re-examine their priorities and their people's expectations from forest and tree resources in the context of a Green Economy. The forest sector and economic development come together in the concept of the green economy and the forest sector's role in it. Because of its specific characteristics as a sector dependent on a multifunctional renewable resource which provides many goods and services which are not marketed in the conventional economy, the forest sector will be profoundly influenced by the emerging green economy and should play a leading role in promoting its establishment. To that effect CCA countries will need to strengthen human and technical capacities, to improve their information systems on forest related issues and to develop national action plans.

Capacity building:

Increasing and sustaining technical and human capacity in the forest sector is a priority to design and implement supporting policies. A shift towards a green economy require the strengthening of government capacity to analyse challenges, identify opportunities, prioritise interventions, mobilise resources, formulate and implement policies and evaluate progress.

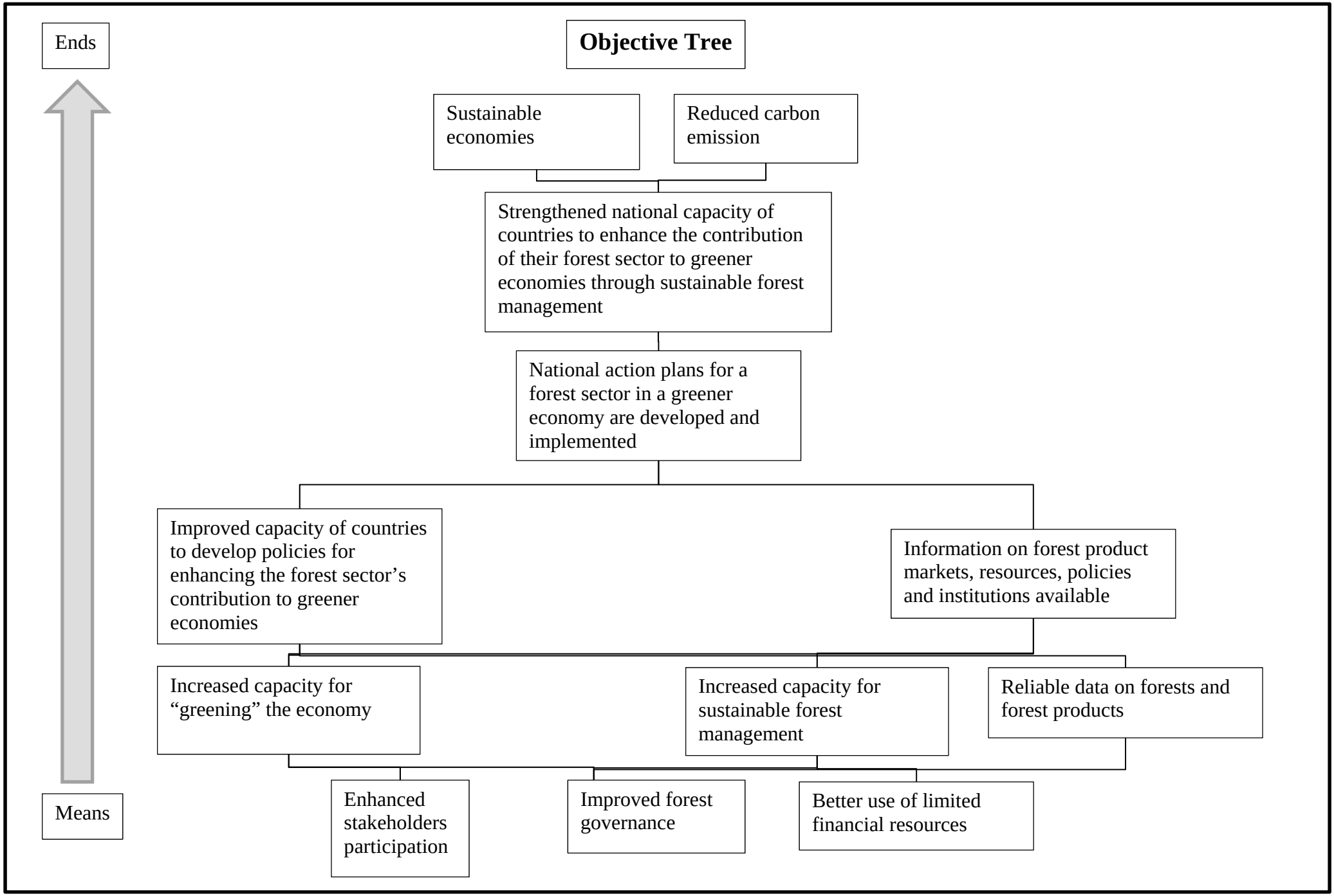
Further, sound forest policy making is based on a good understanding of the resources base, markets and institutions as well as on a solid monitoring system. Quality information necessitates data collection on forests and forest products that meet current international requirements and standards as well as the establishment or improvement of national data bases.

Tailored training and skill enhancement programmes for the main stakeholders are needed to create the necessary level of expertise and to prepare the workforce for a green economy transition.

National action plans:

Implementation of policies that support an enhanced role of the forest sector in a green economy requires the preparation of national action plans to guide the governments and other stakeholders actions. The role of national action plans is to provide to national authorities and other stakeholders a set of targets and activities to ensure that the forest sector will match the characteristics of a green economy such as improved human well-being and social equity while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. To meet these goals the action plans will normally address 5 main themes with their respective areas of activity:

1. Sustainable production and consumption of forest products
2. The low carbon forest sector
3. Decent green jobs in the forest sector
4. Valuation of and payment for forest ecosystem services
5. Monitoring and governance of the forest sector in the green economy


Ends
Objective Tree
Sustainable economies
Reduced carbon emission
Strengthened national capacity of countries to enhance the contribution of their forest sector to greener economies through sustainable forest management
National action plans for a forest sector in a greener economy are developed and implemented
Improved capacity of countries to develop policies for enhancing the forest sector's contribution to greener economies
Information on forest product markets, resources, policies and institutions available
Increased capacity for "greening" the economy
Increased capacity for sustainable forest management
Reliable data on forests and forest products
Enhanced stakeholders participation
Improved forest governance
Better use of limited financial resources
Means

4. PROJECT STRATEGY: OBJECTIVE, EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS, INDICATORS, MAIN ACTIVITIES

(a) OBJECTIVE

To strengthen the national capacity of countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia to enhance the contribution of their forest sector to greener economies through sustainable forest management.

(b) EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

EA 1: Enhanced knowledge of countries to develop policies for enhancing the forest sector's contribution to greener economies.

EA 2: Improved capacity of countries to develop policies for enhancing the forest sector's contribution to greener economies.

(c) INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT

IA 1: Number of national/local participants of training activities that have acknowledged increased knowledge on policy formulation, bioenergy generation and data collection.

IA 2: 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.

(d) MAIN ACTVITIES

The following activities targeting the government agencies, industry and civil society will be implemented:

A1 Capacity building

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.

A1.2 Capacity building through regional, national and local workshops, each of them will cover the three following themes:

- Policy formulation for sustainable forest management in a green economy and in the context of climate change (topics: guidelines on forest policy formulation, definition and concept of green economy, examples from case studies, discussions);
- Bioenergy generation from wood: opportunities and challenges (topics: potential of wood energy in a green economy, current trends, technologies, identification and mitigation of risks);
- Data collection on forests and forest products (topics: current international requirements and standards for data collection, understanding criteria for data sets, setting/improving national data bases, data transmission/exchange with UNECE/FAO web based hub).

A1.2.1 One regional inception workshop (3 days). The regional inception workshop will be organized by the international consultant and the 8 national consultants. About 25 participants from the 8 countries will be attending. The workshop will introduce the project concept and approach and provide a basic training for the countries participants that are expected to support project activities in their respective country. Participants will be recruited from relevant ministries at senior level.

A1.2.2 8 national workshops (3 days each). The national workshops will be organized by the international consultant and the respective national consultant. About 25 participants from relevant ministries and organizations will be trained on forest policy formulation, bioenergy and data collection. It is expected that they will contribute to the dissemination of the acquired knowledge at all levels.

A1.2.3 32 local workshops (4 per country, 1 day each). To reach the local level four one-day workshops will be conducted in four provinces of each country. About 25 staff of relevant local administrations and organizations will be trained on forest policy formulation, bioenergy and data collection. Purpose of the local training is focused on awareness raising and to provide them with tools to gain further knowledge on related topics.

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.

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.

A2 Coaching program in three countries for the development of national action plans for implementing sustainable forest management to enhance the forest sector's contribution to a green economy consisting of:

- Three coaching sessions per country for a participatory formulation of the action plan;
- Two local and one national seminars (2 days each) per country organized during the coaching missions;
- Public awareness campaigns about the action plan;
- Stakeholder participation for the formulation of the action plan;
- Formulation of the Action Plan and submission for endorsement.

(e) ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS MANAGEMENT

The main risk for this project is the lack of financial and human resources of governmental and other relevant organizations which might hinder the participation of relevant staff to the capacity building activities. In order to minimize this risk, sufficient financial provisions have been made in the project design to support the participation of government and other relevant organizations staff to the capacity building workshops.

Another risk is the possible fluctuation of participants during the capacity building process within a given institution or organization, i.e. designated staff doesn't attend the whole process that might negatively impact the project results. This risk will be minimized by clearly stating at the project onset that designated staff have to commit to attend the whole capacity building programme. In addition, the capacity building program is relatively short for most participants.

(f) MULTIPLIER EFFECT AND SUSTAINABILITY

The project has been designed to ensure maximum multiplier effect by training trainers who will then replicate the training sessions at local level in their respective countries, thus reaching out a large number of stakeholders. The repetition of the training sessions will also contribute to strengthen the skills and knowledge of the trainers. They will retain this capacity after the project and will therefore be contributing to the sustainability of this capacity building program. In addition, the regional collaboration, that this project will foster, should result in some collaborative activities between countries to continue their work on sustainable forest management and its contribution to a green economy.

(g) LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

Capacity building programs are most effective when using the cascading principle, i.e. training trainers who will then train colleagues in their respective countries and in their own language. There is a high demand from CCA countries for capacity building programs on emerging issues as the region has only marginally benefited from such support in the transition period, in particular in the forest sector.

The coaching approach for capacity building and for the development of National Action Plans has proven its efficiency as it provides support at regular intervals over a longer period of time to build the necessary capacities, to provide the required advice and to ensure full national ownership of the process. The coaching approach adopts participatory working practices, gives time to develop new capacities, to practice them and to reflect on them. It empowers colleagues at the country level. This is instrumental in contributing to a strong sense of national ownership of the process with positive consequences for mainstreaming and institutionalising the acquired skills and knowledge. In general this result cannot be achieved with one-off events to build capacity.

The regional approach has also proven to be successful as the CCA countries share a common history and often have common technical background.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The project implementation will be monitored by the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section in close collaboration with the national coordinators and will be based on the detailed result based work plan. Reports will be prepared by the national coordinators every 3 months and will be sent to the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section for evaluation.

The final evaluation of the project will be done by an external consultant together with national consultants who will evaluate the project results and impact. The international consultant will travel to at least 4 countries to assess project results in-situ. To reach the largest possible number of beneficiaries, national consultants will conduct surveys in their respective countries using questionnaire in addition to meetings with stakeholders.

6. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The project will be implemented by UNECE. The UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section will be responsible for leading, coordinating and monitoring the project. The project will be implemented through partnerships in the region, drawing on the UNECE and FAO existing regional networks. The UNECE will solicit cooperation from all UN Resident Coordinators and other interested UN agencies on selected parts of the project.

The UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section will provide expertise on the topics covered by the capacity building activities included in this proposal (i.e. sustainable forest management and markets and wood energy). In addition, the services of national and international consultants will be used to support the development of training materials, capacity building workshops and the development of the three national action plans.

Target groups will be government officials from ministries responsible for forestry and other related institutions. The project will mainly develop capacities at national level but it will also reach out to the local level.

The identification of pilot countries will be demand driven, all participating countries will be invited to express their interest in being a pilot country for the development of a National Action Plan as foreseen in activity A2. Amongst those interested, the selection of the three pilot countries will be based on the following criteria: 1) sustainable development of the national forest sector is identified as one of the priority areas in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF); 2) strong commitment of the national government to sustainable development of the forest sector and greening the economy demonstrated by recent supportive initiatives; and 3) geographical balance and type of ecosystem of beneficiary countries.

The outcomes of the project will be shared among the countries and parties involved to maximise synergies amongst the target groups.

7. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: SIMPLIFIED LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Intervention logic	Indicators	Means of verification	Risk/Assumptions
Objective: To strengthen the national capacity of countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia to enhance the contribution of their forest sector to greener economies through sustainable forest management.			
Expected accomplishment EA1: Enhanced knowledge of countries to develop policies for enhancing the forest sector's contribution to greener economies.	Number of national/local participants of training activities that have acknowledged increased knowledge on policy formulation, bioenergy generation and data collection.	Survey conducted three months after completion of training activities. Training documents Workshop reports and attendance lists. Website monitoring and statistics (audience overview).	Risk: lack of support of national authorities could result in poor attendance and implementation. Lack of resources to establish/improve national data bases. Assumption: the topic is very relevant and actual for CCA countries, UNECE/FAO has good linkages to counterparts organizations, this will result in committed participation. There is high interest and demand to improve data collection and data base management.
Main activity 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.		
Main activity A1.2:	Capacity building through regional, national and local workshops, each of them will cover the three following themes: policy formulation, bioenergy generation from wood, data collection on forests and forest products.		
Main activity 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.		
Main activity 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.		
Expected accomplishment 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.	National action plans documents Letter of endorsement by national authorities	Risk: lack of support of national authorities. Assumption: the 3 pilot countries will be carefully selected and their interest in preparing an action plan will ensure a successful process.
Main activity A2	Coaching program in three countries for the development of national action plans for implementing sustainable forest management to enhance the forest sector's contribution to a green economy		
Monitoring and evaluation of the project implementation			

ANNEX 2: RESULT BASED WORK PLAN

Expected accomplishment	Main activity	Time frame by output / activity		
		2013	2014	2015
EA1: Enhanced knowledge of countries to develop policies for enhancing the forest sector's contribution to greener economies.	A.1.1. Development of training modules and training material ("train the trainers") on sustainable forest management in a green economy, wood energy and data collection.	June to November		
	A.1.2. Capacity building through regional, national and local workshops, each of them will cover the three following themes: policy formulation, bioenergy generation from wood, data collection on forests and forest products.	December	January to December	
	A.1.3. 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.			March
	A.1.4. Establishment of a web-based hub (portal hosted by UNECE/FAO) for knowledge management on forest-related issues in the Caucasus and Central Asia.		March to October	
EA2: Improved capacity of countries to develop policies for enhancing the forest sector's contribution to greener economies.	A.2. Coaching program in three countries for the development of national action plans for implementing sustainable forest management to enhance the forest sector's contribution to a green economy		January to December	January to February