



“Environmental Performance Reviews and highlights of biodiversity and forestry chapters from selected non OECD countries in the pan European region”

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**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

Outline

- UNECE Environmental Performance Reviews methodology overview

- EPR Georgia

First cycle

1994 – 2004 (2011)

20 countries

- EPR Moldova

- EPR Croatia

Second cycle

2000-2013

18 countries

- EPR Belarus

- Conclusions

Third cycle from 2013

Beyond ECE



UNECE EPR Scope and Status



UNECE Environmental Performance Review Programme

- **Background** – Initially created following the OECD Environmental Performance Review methodology
- **Methodology** – Country requests an environmental performance review and discusses with the secretariat which subjects will be covered in the report and country makes the choice
- **Review mission** – UNECE EPR team with UNECE experts. country experts and experts from international organizations participate in the review mission
- **Expert review** – A panel of experts from the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy member States reviews the report and recommendations and suggests amendments
- **Peer review** - The member States of the Committee on Environmental Policy consider and approve the recommendations in the report

Terms of Reference for contents of the EPRs

General issues covered with biodiversity aspects

- Introduction on environmental conditions and pressures: ecosystems and habitat threats; flora and fauna; protected areas
- Environmental Governance and Financing: economic instruments (Aichi target 3 on incentives); environmental monitoring
- Domestic/International interface: general priorities for international cooperation; global and regional MEAs; bilateral cooperation; international technical assistance; MDG and post Rio (SDGs next?); meeting international commitments (legislation; policies, programmes and initiatives; institutional framework)
- Climate Change mitigation and adaptation (Aichi target 15 on ecosystem resilience and carbon stocks)
- Integration of environmental considerations into sectors (Aichi target 5 on loss of natural habitats, target 7 on sustainable management): transport, agriculture, industry, mining, forestry and others

Terms of Reference for the contents of the EPRs, cont. Forestry

Assess environmental performance of forestry by focusing on decreasing pressures on forests and strengthening environmentally beneficial functions of forests.

State of forests: Protected forests; Other wooded lands; Trends in forestry (logging and illegal logging, afforestation, reforestation, productivity); Type of forest management including ownership

Role and functions of forest for: GHG sinks (Aichi target 15 on carbon stocks); biodiversity conservation; prevention of soil erosion, recreation, education

Pressures from forestry on: forests; biodiversity; soil; landscape; non-wood forest products

Assessment of environmental performance: legal framework; strategies, policies, programmes; regulatory, economic and information instruments; institutional arrangements (forest management authorities; intersectoral cooperation; vertical coordination with regional and local authorities; cooperation with other stakeholders (e.g. forest owner associations, hunting associations, scientific community and NGOs

Terms of Reference for the contents of the EPRs, cont. Biodiversity

Assess progress towards improved biodiversity conservation and the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation in economic sectors

Trends in species and ecosystems: threatened (Aichi target 12), endemic, widespread, invasive alien species (Aichi target 9); ecosystems (Aichi target 11 and 14 on protection, restoration)

Trends in development and management of protected areas and ecological networks (Aichi target 14 on protection)

Pressures on species and ecosystems from (targets 5 and 7 on loss of habitats and sustainable management): land uptake (transport infrastructure; urban development; agriculture; minerals exploration and extraction); habitat fragmentation; logging and deforestation; acidification; eutrophication; desertification; intensive agriculture; hunting and fishing; collection of non-wood forest products; tourism; climate change; use of GMOs

Assessment of performance by focusing on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems and improved management of protected areas: legal framework; strategies, policies, programmes and projects (Aichi target 17, 20); regulatory, economic and fiscal instruments (Aichi target 3); communication, education and public awareness raising (Aichi target 1); institutional arrangements (Aichi target 1: intersectoral and multistakeholder communication and cooperation)

Georgia EPR: Biodiversity, Forestry Chapters

Forestry chapter recommendations:

1. Carry out an inventory for the State Forest Fund; Ensure the development of forest management plans for production and conservation based on the new forest inventory, including mechanisms for involving local communities; Develop a categorization of sensitive forest stands and of forests with exploitable timber resources and implement an effective forests monitoring system; Promote incentive mechanisms for the sustainable use of forest areas by forest licence holders.
2. Develop a national forest management action plan, with criteria, budget, implementing entities, potential financial resources and indicators for SFM, along with forest-level operational guidelines.
3. Conduct an evaluation of the environmental, economic and social potential of the country's forestry sector.
4. Identify education and professional requirements for forest personnel; develop education programmes at the university level and targeted training curricula; strengthen relevant awareness-raising and communication activities targeting the general public and all key stakeholders, in particular local communities; coordinate awareness raising and capacity building projects for the forestry sector funded by non-governmental sources (i.e. donors)

Biodiversity chapter recommendations:

1. Develop and maintain a unified, well-equipped biodiversity monitoring system that is in line with international practice.
2. Develop and maintain a protected areas network.
3. Ratify the CBD Nagoya Protocol and the ITPGR for Food and Agriculture

Croatia EPR: Biodiversity and Forestry Chapter

Recommendations:

1. Enforce nature protection measures and address the major threats to biodiversity caused by the introduction of alien invasive species; put in place mechanisms to raise awareness on the need to protect biodiversity in forests; revise the bear management plan following the new status of “strictly protected species” granted to bears.
2. Ensure implementation of nature protection measures in order to reduce the pressures on biodiversity caused by hydroelectricity generation.
3. Carry out studies related to the valuation of biodiversity and ecosystems; promote public and private investments in nature conservation.
4. Continue ensuring adequate management of the Natura 2000 network; ensure adequate monitoring of biodiversity; complete the development of a functional nature protection information system and ensure its long-term maintenance and updating.

Belarus EPR: Biodiversity and Forestry Chapters

Biodiversity and protected areas chapter recommendations:

1. Design and establish a national ecological network by ensuring cooperation of environmental, sectoral, land management, spatial planning and other stakeholders in the development of the network; allocate protection status to those areas currently not under the system of specially protected areas and do not have a special protection status.
2. Initiate accession to Eurobats and Almaty amendment on GMOs of the Aarhus Convention.
3. Work to progressively reduce the use of the methods of killing, capture and other forms of exploitation listed in appendix IV of the Bern Convention

Forestry chapter recommendations:

1. Ensure a proper, science-based balancing of the ecological, economic and recreation functions of forests to achieve conservation goals, especially those related to clear-cutting patterns, the age limit of harvested species and species composition of reforested and afforested areas.
2. When formulating policy and legal documents for the forestry sector, undertake a wide consultation process based on a stakeholder analysis; take into account cross-sectoral issues, such as biodiversity and climate change; set up an effective and transparent monitoring .
3. Consider developing a roadmap to strengthen the economic potential of forests, enhance the role of the private sector in the management and use of forest resources, and improve framework conditions for investors.
4. Consider setting up a fair, competitive and transparent system for timber sales.
5. Enhance the forest road network, paying due consideration to potential environmental impacts, including soil erosion, habitat loss and natural landscape impacts.

Conclusions

The EPRs, over the course of participating in the three cycles, can help a country improve sustainable forest management (assessing follow up on SFM principles) and biodiversity conservation and sustainable use (assessing follow up on CBD, Aichi biodiversity targets, EU directives, MEA obligations)

Assessing progress in putting in place legislation, policies and strategies is easier than assessing progress in implementation especially where monitoring is not consistent and data is lacking

Highly descriptive in nature—it is difficult to have an indicator based assessment in the EPR for this sub region due to lack of data on impact of policies on forestry and biodiversity sectors

Expert and Peer review based assessments are also helpful for exchange of best practices and lessons learned in different countries

Need to establish a baseline to be able to eventually review and follow up on progress in SDG implementation/achievement of goals and targets

THANK YOU!



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