



EUROPEAN NEIGHBORHOOD
AND PARTNERSHIP INSTRUMENT
(ENPI) EAST COUNTRIES FOREST
LAW ENFORCEMENT AND
GOVERNANCE (FLEG) II PROGRAM
COMPLEMENTARY MEASURES FOR
ARMENIA AND GEORGIA



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Threats to the Forests in Armenia

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Armenia

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Armenia's Forests

- According to official statistics (2010) forest occupies 11.2% (345,820 ha) of the total land area
- All forest located in Tavush and Lori regions (62% NE), Syunik region (36% S), and only 2% in the central region of Armenia
- $\frac{1}{3}$ of forest located on steep terrain (app. 80% of the country's terrain is mountainous)
- 70% is “high forest” (mainly oak, beech, hornbeam and pine), 22% is coppice forests and 7% is shrub forest
- Armenian forests are state-owned and managed by Ministry of Agriculture (Hayantar SNCO) and Ministry of Nature Protection
- Forests provide important services for local population and national economy: Dependence not only for timber & fuelwood for rural communities but also for NTFP - berries, nuts, wild fruits, etc., prevent from erosion, flooding, landslide.
- Forests of Armenia are of high conservation value



Direct Threats to Armenia's Forests

- Unsustainable Forestry Practices (Illegal Logging);
- Mining - Open-pit mines, especially metal (Teghut)
- Infrastructural developments - Road construction, SHP on rivers
- Overgrazing in the forest (due to lack of fodder and inaccessability of pastures/hayfields)
- Forest Fires - most forest fires (84%) happen in Syunik Marz. In 2006, forest fires destroyed over 300 ha of forest (US\$2 million damage)
- Climate change: the potential territory at risk is between 21% and 34% of Armenia's forestland, likely to reduce fuelwood resource to 10% of Armenian households
- Pests and Diseases – from 1990s to present day, beetle infestation affected between 19,000 and 30,000 ha of forestland



Direct Threats to Armenia's Forests

- **Unsustainable Forest Use and Illegal Logging**
 - Unsustainable Commercial Logging for Timber Sale and Processing domestically and regionally
 - Unsustainable logging for subsistence to provide fuelwood and source of income by local people



Direct Threats to Armenia's Forests

Social, Economic and Political Causes	Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Logging driven by commercial gain▪ Logging driven by poverty and high unemployment (forces local people to engage in short-term income opportunities)▪ Imperfect legislative framework - unclear legislation & lack of enforcement of forest regulations due to corruption▪ Low level of education and awareness▪ Low financial, economic and political incentives to control illegal forest use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Loss of forest quality (reduced number and high value species of trees) and biodiversity▪ Fragmentation, transformation and degradation of forests lowers their resilience (pests, fires)▪ Amounts logged underestimated (discrepancy between official and actual data)



FLEG Findings

- Consumption of fuelwood exceeds supply and illegal logging estimated at least 240,000 m³ annually (bare minimum)
- Logging of “good forest” reduces availability of forest products to local communities
- Strong dependence on forest, especially firewood for heating and cooking, because firewood is cheaper and accessible and gas & electricity are expensive
- Access to forest (incl. fallen wood) for local people is often restricted and controlled – majority buy fuelwood from intermediaries
- Gas introduction did not help switch away from fuelwood fully
- High level of migration, aging of villages
- Forests in Armenia used mostly by the ‘*Poor*’ and the ‘*Rich*’. For ‘*Poor*’ a source of survival, for ‘*Rich*’ a source to increase own capital.
- State forestry budget is underfunded and Hayantar’s status is too low to control