



Russian Forest Sector: Update on FLEG(T) activities

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Overall Context: On-going Reforms in Russian Forest Sector

- New Forest Code (frame character, about 60 sub-ordinate by-laws needed to be developed)
- Maximum decentralization - delivery of responsibilities on forest management to the regional level
- Changing in export tax policy for round wood





Peculiarities of Forest Reforms Implementation

- All they are implemented simultaneously
- Short-term period of realization
- Lack of information and communications, a lot of uncertainties
- Lack of public involvement into decision-making process





Status of FLEG Issues

- Programme of measures on elimination of illegal turnover of wood, adopted by the Government (February, 2007). Inter-agency character - measures are presented as normative documents, reports, meetings
- Set of activities:
 - monitoring of authorities delivered to the regional level
 - on-ground inspections with the purpose to prevent illegal turnover of wood: North-West (Karelia, Perm), Far East (Khabarovsk, Primorye, Amurskaya oblast)
 - continuing program of remote-sensing monitoring
- Regional initiatives
- Relevant agencies' activities (Ministry of Interior, Custom, Transportation, etc.)





Rate of FSC Certification Growth in Russia

- 2000 – first certificate in Altaysky Kray - 32,7 thousand ha
- Currently – 20.6 ml ha (North-West, Siberia, Far East)
- It comprises almost 1/5 of commercial forests
- 2-nd place in the world
- Leads to improved forest management
- Drivers: environmentally sensitive markets





Status of FLEG Issues

BUT...

- Due to reforms, uncertainties in legislation, poor practice of law enforcement, etc. **scale of illegal logging is raising**
- There are no regional bodies designated for forest violation control or they are very limited in capacities
- Forest guard is abolished and its functions are distributed among 5-9 services
- Reliable statistic is not available





What is new on FLEG Issues?

- Intention to improve legislation: proposals to the Government with suggestions for current system improvement: illegal logging defining, forest guard reestablishment, reinforcement of penalty system, etc.
- Focused efforts – initiative to ensure legality of wood from the cutting site – system of activities, equipment and documentation (?)
- Suggestion on new format of documents ensuring proving of legality





Status of FLEGT Issues

- Not relevant for Russia but...
- Changing in export tax policy for round wood
- Russian authorities are not well-aware on EU FLEGT process and mechanisms
- EU states national policies of public procurements are not well-known
- EU requirements to use certified or legal wood from 2009?
- NGOs comments on FLEGT questionnaire





Stakeholder Process

- Civil society and business are not involved into joint activities. All parts are acting separately
- Major driving forces
 - State organizations
 - Civil society
 - Forest business
- Role of the World Bank
- Regions





Voluntary initiatives from business side

- Shortages in forest legislation and inability to prove legality of timber origin
- Develop and improve corporate wood tracing systems
- Certification
- Cooperation with NGOs – detecting “weak” areas and bringing their systems in accordance with new legislation, joint lobbying of new forest acts under elaboration





Mechanisms of Public Opinion Delivery (1)





Mechanisms of Public Opinion Delivery (2)

- Federal level - Forest Sector Development Council under Vice-Prime-Minister (Forest Strategy)
- Federal level - Public Ecological Council (MNR)
- Regional level – Public Councils to be established
- National Forest Policy (Programme or Strategy) has to be elaborated based on stakeholder approach





Country Priorities

- Analysis of new forest legislation (ENA FLEG issues)
- New Forest Code and relevant legislation should be adjusted
- Business should have legal basis to ensure/guarantee legality of trade
- Social issues should be brought to the agenda
- Local population should have equal access to the forest NTFP resources without any restrictions
- SFM principles should penetrate all spheres of Russian forest sector through education and training





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