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The analysis of the state programme “Development of forest industry” for the period 2013-2020 and recommendations for its improvement. (E. Shvartz, N. Shmatkov, K. Kobayakov, Russian office of WWF)

WWF analysis of the state programme “Development of forest industry” revealed the tendency in which forest policy in Russia is developed as well it showed some problems and contradictions that need to be solved in order to make the programme more efficient.

One of the biggest problems is the fact that this programme declares the intensification of forestry in Russia, yet the majority of the measures mentioned in it continue the trend of extensive forest exploitation. Another weak point is that prescribed cut is used as a major indicator, whereas it needs to be replaced with another one that will show the increase in the average volume of wood harvested per unit of area of forests designed for such activities. Moreover, some other indicators also don't contribute to the intensive model of forestry and need general revision, some of the indicators that proved to be effective in the WWF rating of state forest management also can be added to the programme. After a thoughtful study of the state programme “Development of forest industry” WWF not only highlighted existing problems but also suggested a wide range of recommendations.

Using the information about forest condition for the evaluation of exercised authorities in forest industry in Russia. (A. Bobrinsky, EMPI-FLEG, E. Kuzmichev, RSA)

Through the analysis of forest legislation and forest management in Russia the author of the article revealed some of the problems that exist in the field of organization and planning of forest protection measures. Currently there are eleven indicators used by the authorities in order to evaluate quantitative changes in forests and to measure economic results of forest management exercised by regional authorities. The issue is that six indicators out of eleven require information about the area suffering from forest mortality and the sources that provide this information are not reliable enough and tend to distort the real situation.

All necessary information can be provided by the results of forest pathology monitoring. In the course of this monitoring stand condition and causes of forest mortality are determined. The application of forest pathology results should be stated in forest legislation and overall in order to improve the system of evaluation of regional forest management the importance of forest pathology monitoring needs to be recognized by all policy makers.

The 7th FSC General Assembly (E. Bubko, A. Ptichnikov, T. Yanitzkaya, Russian office of FSC)

FSC is an organization with more than 850 members including private individuals, organizations and more than 50 countries. Every three years FSC members get together for the General Assembly where they can hold negotiations, exchange opinions present their motions and make decisions. The main principles of the General Assembly are transparency, democracy, equality and participation.

In 2014 FSC General Assembly was hosted by Spain and it was held in Seville from the 7th to the 14th of September. More than 500 participants attended and among them such VIP guests as CEOs of IKEA, Tetra Pak, Greenpeace and WWF, the minister of forestry from Democratic Republic of Congo and the head of the Association of aboriginal peoples in Canada. There were 34 different meetings and conferences that participants could attend; they could go on field trip to Spanish FSC-certificated forests, take part in FSC+20 Forum or in official General Assembly session.

One of the most important results of the GA work is a global FSC strategy that reflects the most important problems. The main goals according to the strategy are: to double the demand for FSC production and to double the area of certified forests, to improve the quality of the certification, to pay more attention to social problems and to increase the importance of FSC in the field of forest legislation and national forest policies. The realization of the strategy is expected to start in 2015.

Taking FSC to the next level (A. Van Kreveld)

Since 2002 WWF and IKEA have been developing a partnership aimed at the promotion of the responsible forestry. The partnership contributes to the expansion of FSC certification in the world which can be proved by a lot of positive examples of increasing area of certificated forests in Laos, Russia, China and other countries. Particularly it helps to overcome the problems with national legislation which is especially important for Russia.

Overall the importance of FSC work is increasing and it is essential now to turn certified production into a reasonable substitute for the production that wasn't certified. Both FSC and the partnership of WWF and IKEA are pursuing this goal.

Canadian experience in the field of sustainable forestry and forest certification (A. Kostenko, GFTN Russia)

In May, 2014 GFTN Russia organized a workshop for Russian timber industrialists and specialists in forestry, the theme of the workshop was Canadian experience in sustainable forestry and FSC certification so it was held in Canadian provinces Ontario and Quebec. The participants studied best practices of responsible forestry in boreal and mixed forests of Canada, the way of FSC standards are applied in Canada as well as Canadian measures for biodiversity conservation.

Forest management in Canada lies within the responsibility of regional government and depends on regional legislation, thus there are both very successful sustainable forestry examples in some provinces (Ontario, Quebec) and on the contrary examples of excessive forest exploitation (British Columbia). The participants of the workshop had a chance to find out more about Canadian methods of forestry that imitate natural processes, about the way the government takes care of forest renters and cooperates with Canadian indigenous peoples. Moreover, Russian participants shared their experience with their Canadian colleagues.

WWF project “New generation plantations”: their importance for Russia (N. Shmatkov, WWF Russia)

Growing demand for wood products nowadays turns into a problem that urgently needs a solution. One of the ways to protect forests from excessive exploitation is to organize forest plantations, which on the one hand bring obvious economic profit but on the other hand can cause other environmental and social problems.

WWF project “New generation plantations” was created in 2007 in order to reveal the positive potential of forest plantation and to promote the best practices. The project is aimed at finding a way of ecologically and socially responsible and beneficial plantation management that will guarantee ecosystem integrity, protection of high forest conservation values, participation of all parties concerned and sustainable economic growth. Mainly in this project landscape approach is being used, which means it tries to combine efficiently natural and anthropogenic ecosystems. A sustainable multifunctional landscape is highly resistant to sudden environmental effects and provides the opportunity for a long-term forest exploitation that won't lead to forest exhaustion. The project promotes the development of common values for all the parties concerned, it highlights the importance of the dialogue and beneficial exchange of opinions. Overall forest plantations are less efficient than natural forest ecosystems but they can become one of the ways of conservation of especially valuable and virgin forests.

Intensive forestry: a duty or a recognized necessity? (the interview with participants of intensive forestry workshop from Ltd “International Paper”

October, 9 -10 in 2014 on the territory of Tikhvinsky forest district in the Leningrad region Ltd Interntional Paper organized a practical seminar that touched upon the problems and perspectives of intensive forestry in Russia. The seminar was supported by federal and regional authorities as well as by Saint Petersburg State University, WWF and forest industrialists.

The point of the discussion was development of new legal standards, up-to-date specialist training in the fiend of forestry, increasing role of forest renters and the necessity of beneficial dialogue between all the parties concerned.

In the course of the seminar the participants stated certain recommendations for federal and regional authorities. Particularly they suggested to develop new standards for intensive forestry that will comply with international standards and will take into account biodiversity conservation requirements. In addition they suggested to reckon the Leningrad region among the areas of intensive forestry and to estimate possible risks and perspectives of such decision.

Public forest management: how to overcome the crisis in personnel policy? (A. Petrov, All-Russian Institute of the Continuous Education in Forestry)

Educational crisis means not only imperfections in the educational system but also an incredibly low level of knowledge and professional competences among forestry students. There are few reasons that explain this situation: the fact that federal authorities in the field of forestry don't participate in the development of personnel policy; legislation imperfections and the lack of long-term state policy for the training of specialists in forest management.

FLEG programme and World Bank contribute to the solution of this problem by developing study programmes and preparing manuals for different aspects of forest management. Network education is one of the best forms of organization of successful professional training for bachelors and masters in forest management. Overall in order to overcome the crisis in personnel policy it is crucial to solve existing problems in educational system through thoughtful reforms.