

GEORGIA



Progress Towards Environmental Sustainability

Recent democratic changes in Georgia have seen the emergence and rapid strengthening of environmental NGOs. The introduction of a legislative framework has promoted a certain degree of civil participation in decision-making. A Law on Environmental Impact Assessment was enacted in 1996. In 2000 Georgia acceded to the Aarhus Convention on Access to Environmental Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.



Access to safe drinking water is still a problem and is further compounded by the uneven natural distribution of water resources across the country, with severe water shortages experienced by the population of eastern regions. Ground water represents the major source of drinking water. 65% of drinking water supply is provided by centralized systems, which meets the demand for drinking water of 95% of urban, and 35% of the rural population. The sanitary and technical condition of existing water pipelines is unsatisfactory. No major rehabilitation or repair works have been carried out since 1987, inflicting the loss of 25-30% of total drinking water supply.

The earthquake of 2002 damaged about 21,500 residential houses in Tbilisi alone. Socially subsidized community/municipal accommodation has virtually vanished due to mass privatization of housing. Local governments are unable to undertake proper public reconstruction. Mortgage schemes are starting to appear, but are currently not widely used.

Particularly alarming is the “slumerisation” of multi-story houses. There has been no consistent preventive maintenance, routine or capital repair. Roofing and engineering communications are out of order and the load-bearing capacity has decreased. Georgia’s high-ly seismic zones further complicate this situation.

Forests, many of which are virgin, cover almost 40% of the country. There are about 26,000 small rivers and 16 different landscapes in the country. A network of state reserves is expected to promote biodiversity in Georgia. As of 2003, the total area of reserves comprises 4.1% of the country. Financial constraints and institutional weakness prevent the management of protected territories under prescribed regimes.¹

QUICK FACTS

Total UNDP-GEF and Co-Finance:	\$19,369,208
Total UNDP and Co-Finance:	\$649,629
Total MPU and Bilateral:	\$117,350
Total:	\$20,136,187
Cumulative Total ODS Phased-Out:	5.2 ODP tonnes

SPOTLIGHT

Incentives Programme Helps Phase-out ODS²

In 1996, Georgia acceded to the 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. In order to meet its Montreal Protocol commitments, Georgia was required to gradually reduce the production and import of ozone-depleting substances (ODS), of which a significant portion were used in the commercial and industrial refrigeration sector.

In 2002, with support from UNDP, the Government of Georgia launched a project to meet the country’s ODS phase-out schedule under the Montreal Protocol by providing incentives to end-users in commercial and industrial refrigeration sub-sectors. Selected enterprises were given an incentive payment to replace or permanently retrofit the existing refrigeration equipment with new equipment using a non-ODS refrigerant or a refrigerant with less potential to deplete the ozone layer.

A national workshop was held to introduce the programme and present the concept and procedures of the incentive programme to end-users. The workshop raised general awareness about the importance of phasing-out CFCs and helped stakeholders identify appropriate alternatives for CFCs in the commercial and industrial refrigeration end-user sector. Participants in the national workshop included commercial and industrial refrigeration sector end-users, as well as representatives from NGOs, the State Technical University, and the National Ozone Unit of the Ministry of Environment of Georgia.

Upon completion of the programme, 15 enterprises in total received assistance to change refrigeration systems from ODS to alternative refrigerants. As a result of this initiative, approximately 85% of Georgia’s consumption of ODS has been phased-out and the country has been able to meet its Montreal Protocol commitments to date.



Sustainable environment and natural resource practices in Georgia will be promoted and adopted through the implementation of pilot projects, multiplying their successes nationwide, and intervention at the policy level.³ UNDP works towards building capacity for protecting and managing the environment, while ensuring sustainable development in the country. The agenda is to give a human face to environmental issues; empower people to become active agents of sustainable and equitable development; promote an understanding that communities are essential to changing attitudes towards environmental issues; and advocate partnerships, which will ensure that all nations and peoples enjoy a safer and more prosperous future.



Lance Clark, Resident Representative

PORTFOLIO

FSSD*

Georgia is undertaking its NCSA process to develop and adapt the National Capacity Building Strategy/Action Plan for the implementation of UNFCCC, UNCBD and UNCCD through a participatory process.

WATER

GEF and SIDA are supporting a current planning phase of a project addressing water challenges within the Kura-Aras River Basin. The project establishes planning, institutional, informational, and partnership frameworks for the Basin. The UNDP/SIDA component assists South Caucasus countries with developing National Action Plans and building Integrated River Basin Management capacities.

ENERGY

The goal of the energy programme, supported by UNDP/GEF, KfW, GoG and local investors, is to remove financial, legal-institutional, and other barriers to increased utilization of local Renewable Energy (RE) Resources through: obtaining additional finances for RE Revolving Fund and addressing legal-regulatory and public awareness and capacity barriers.

A GEF self-assessment exercise is considered as a pre-feasibility study for the Second National Communication (SNC). It aimed at increasing stakeholders' participation in decision making processes.

BIODIVERSITY

The biodiversity Programme, supported by GEF and ELKANA, aims to preserve Georgia's agro-biodiversity through promoting practices of in-situ conservation and sustainable utilization of local agro-biological resources. The focus of this project is on selected traditional crop and fruit species in the pilot region of Samtskhe-Javakheti.

CHEMICALS

UNDP supports Georgia's efforts towards sound management of chemicals through provision of assistance to support the country's Montreal Protocol and Stockholm Convention programmes. With MLF funding, UNDP is implementing an incentive programme for the end-users in the commercial/industrial refrigeration and refrigerated transport sub-sectors. A monitoring component that ensures good management practices is an integral part of this project. In support of the Stockholm Convention, assistance is provided through the implementation of an enabling activity that will result in NIP development for Georgia.

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³Georgia MDGR 2004 <http://www.undp.org/ge/news/Georgiamdg.pdf>; ⁴<http://www.unopspmu.org/environment.htm>; ⁵Tushishvili, M., "The Final Report of UNDP Incentive Programme for End-Users in the Commercial/Industrial Refrigeration and Refrigeration Transport Sub-Sector", UNDP Georgia; ⁶http://www.undg.org/documents/5977-Georgia_UNDAF__2006-2010_.doc Page 10; ⁷Frameworks and Strategies for Sustainable Development