



REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
MINISTRY OF
ENVIRONMENT



Implemented by:
giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Management of Natural Resources and Safeguarding of Ecosystem Services for Sustainable Rural Development in the South Caucasus (ECOserve)

Commissioned by:

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Partner organizations:

RA Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure
RA Ministry of Environment
RA Ministry of Economy

Duration: December 2018 to December 2024

Budget: € 25.610.206

EU co-financing:

€ 4.000.000 EU4Sevan
€ 2.700.000 EU4Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in Armenian Communities



ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE, OPPORTUNITIES

for people and nature

Brief Description

ECOserve Environment Programme supports the Government of Armenia. It is commissioned by the German Federal Government and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The overall objective of ECOserve is to improve the preconditions for sustainable pasture management (SPM), with particular attention on energy security of the rural population. Environmental awareness-raising and education are among the key measures of the programme.

From December 2018 till March 2023 ECOserve was a regional programme covering Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Since April 2023 it has been operating only in Armenia.

Challenges

Among the key factors that have resulted in pasture and forest degradation are the overuse and underuse of pastures in the country, excessive fuelwood use, lack of alternatives and low level of environmental awareness. The rural population suffers from energy poverty, and people depend on natural resources to meet their basic heating needs. There is a lack of robust data, rules, sustainable practices, and expertise at all levels among the population and related institutions. Holistic approaches to sustainable and biodiversity-friendly use of natural resources are insufficient.

Fields of Intervention

- Information on pasture and grassland/ rural energy is used for decision-making.
- Institutional framework for SPM is improved.
- Pilot activities for SPM, Energy Efficiency (EE) and Alternative Energy (AE).
- Environmental education and awareness-raising.

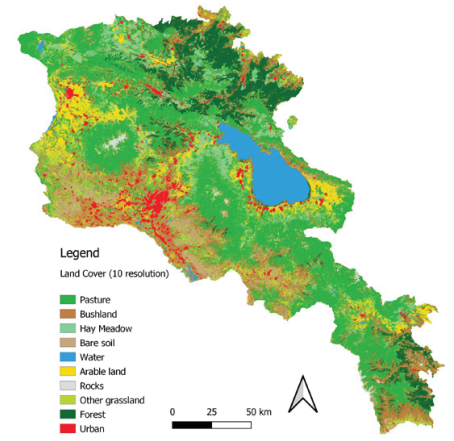
EU co-financed projects

- 2020-2024 EU4Sevan: the objective is to enhance the environmental protection of Lake Sevan.
- 2023-2024 EU4Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in Armenian Communities: the objective is to ensure that communities and households have better access to energy efficiency and sustainable energy solutions, thereby contributing to the improved energy security of the rural population and the conservation of natural resources.

Results and Achievements

Sustainable Pasture Management

- Nationwide mapping of Armenian pastures and grasslands and hand-over to the Armenian Government.
- Capacity development at the Armenian Ministry of Economy for the future use of GIS mapping models.
- Support of the Program Coordination Platform for Sustainable Management of Natural Fodder Areas: Pastures and Grasslands of RA.
- Support fodder production and pasture improvement measures to reduce the pressure on pastures and ensure income for the rural population. Improvement of 123 ha of pastures and arable lands (20 ha pastures, 20 ha hay meadows, 83 ha arable lands) in Balaq settlement in Sisian community of Syunik marz.



Improved Energy Situation in Rural Households

ECOserve has been working on marketable approaches to increase energy efficiency and/or provide alternatives to reduce the use of fuelwood (and dung) for heating in rural areas.

- Energy efficiency of selected solid biomass stoves was assessed, and energy efficient models were identified.
- More than 70 beneficiary households in the pilot communities of Lori, Shirak, and Kotayk marzes received locally produced energy efficient stoves on a cost-sharing basis.
- ECOserve approaches were replicated by the local partner organizations, including energy efficiency assessment of other stoves and dissemination of over 110 efficient stoves in other areas.

BMZ supports Food Security in 2023

In the context of the war in Ukraine, Armenia has been facing new challenges in terms of food security, particularly in relation to importing such products as wheat, barley, grain, seed varieties, feed combination, mineral fertilizers, etc.

In 2023, BMZ supports the Government of Armenia to improve food security in line with ECOserve objectives of reducing the pressure on pastures and other natural resources.

The measures include:

- Food and fodder production and pasture improvement to reduce the pressure on pastures.
- Promotion of the local use and production of fertilizers of organic origin.
- Establishment of a Circular AgroFood Model at ANAU.
- Feasibility study on development of public-private partnership (PPP) mechanisms for improvement and efficient use of pastures.

Environmental Education and Awareness-Raising

Strategic collaboration with the Armenian National Agrarian University for strengthened environmental education and research.

- New BSc programme in Precision Agriculture.
- New MSc programmes in Sustainable Agriculture and Precision Agriculture.
- Improved MSc programmes in Forestry Science and Organic Agriculture.
- Establishment of a new training programme in Green Agriculture.



- ToTs and development of training materials.
- In cooperation with WWF, the Biodiversity Informational and Educational Center of Armenia (the EcoEpiCenter) was established at the Institute of Botany after A.L. Takhtajyan.

- "From Trash to Treasure" initiative was implemented with the aim to raise awareness about pollution of water ecosystems by waste, waste reduction, and recycling in Gegharkunik region. 22 women from the region were trained to make unique jewelry (home decor, lamps, etc.) from paper and plastic waste.
- In the framework of "Financial and environmental literacy aimed at promoting energy efficiency in rural areas of Armenia" measure, trainings on family budget management, energy efficiency and alternative energy, and other environmental topics were conducted with participation of 3656 people in 167 rural settlements in 10 regions of Armenia.



"Restoration of Riparian Zones in Armenia" COVID-19 Response Project

The "Restoration of Riparian Zones in Armenia" COVID-19 Response Project supported the Government measure #15 to mitigate the socio-economic consequences of COVID-19 in Gegharkunik region.

- Short-term employment was provided to 1012 people who had lost (part of) their income due to the Corona pandemic.
- More than 1 million willow and poplar cuttings were planted in the riparian zones of 6 rivers.
- A total of 376 150 kg of solid waste, out of which 1107 kg recyclable plastic and glass, was removed during clean-up measures along 10 rivers flowing into Lake Sevan.



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