



**UNECE**



Workshop

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Market Information”**

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**Country statement**

**Azerbaijan**

**- Policies affecting forest land use and forest  
products markets -**

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# Forest policy in Azerbaijan

## **a) Property right in Forest management**

On 16 July 1996 Azerbaijan adopted a law on land reform which is considered as an official beginning of reforms. Soon after that "Law on land tax", "Law on rent", "Law on land market", "law on land cadastre" and "law on control of the land" followed and this set of laws established a legal base for reforms in land sector.

Land reforms were carried out on the basis of this foundation, and out of 8.6 million hectares of state land 44.2% i.e. 3.8 million hectares remained under state control, 31.4 million hectares were transferred to local municipalities while 24.4 % i.e. 2.1 million hectares were privatized.

According to article 14 of the "Constitution of Azerbaijan", natural resources – forests, water, air, flora and fauna is state property and permanently allocated to forest enterprises for further development.

Rent of forest is regulated by Forest code adopted in 1998 and is conducted on the basis of contract ranging from 1 to 10 years. Forest rent demonstrated very positive outcome as Azerbaijani forests have a lot of potential in the area of tourism and most contracts are concluded on the basis of recreation activities which are beneficial to the forest enterprise and to the landholder.

## **b) Basic needs of the society in the use of forests.**

Since 1991 all forests in the country have been considered as belonging to the first group *i.e.* of important ecological, industrial and social importance. More than 80% of these forests are situated in the mountains where they protect the soil from erosion, regulate water balance and at the same time serve as an important source of timber, wood and food (nuts etc.) which are very popular with local population.

There is no industrial forestry in Azerbaijan; logging is conducted only due to sanitary reasons where it is necessary to clear the area. Therefore there are no large industrial logging enterprises in Azerbaijan.

During the last years due to the depletion of forest resources, there was a reduction in timber production while forest enterprises produce 31000 cubic meters of wood a year, mostly from sanitary clearing, which is used as fuel (totals to 2% of the necessary fuel on national basis).

Industrial timber is imported mostly from Russia by private businesses. The volume is about 500.000 cubic meters and it is used to furniture production. For comparison during Soviet period, the import of wood from Russia was 1.2-1.5 million hectares, natural gas 8 million cubic meters, coal 250 thousand tons. The reduction of imported gas and coal resulted in illegal slash of forest further resulting in the degradation of forests and soil, erosion, and deforestation which causes wide public concern.

Traditionally Azerbaijani forests served as food supplement for local population. Their structure is very specific; nuts and apricots, mulberry, apple trees, hawthorn, pomegranates and persimmon grow in Azerbaijani forests. Forests have provided local population with food, wood, building material; pastures, hay sites, and apiaries were set nearby. In 1970s

and 80s collective farms produced a 200-300 tons of nuts per year, developed honey production, gardening but the collapse of trade connections among former Soviet republics reduced the production. Market economy does not seem to be working in agriculture and in general there is no stimulus for the development of forest enterprises.

### **c) Usage of forest lands, condition for stable development and potential dangers for forest development.**

Azerbaijan has large resources of arable lands (52% of the territory) but the economy mainly depends on the oil sector. Apart from oil industry, agriculture also demonstrated good growth in development especially after conducting land reform. Therefore the degradation of the lands is especially relevant as it results in the reduction of food production and the quality of living standards. The most appalling conditions concerning land degradation are on Apsheron peninsula. Oil polluted 10 thousand hectares in that area and ecological standards were ignored for the last 100 years.

Transition to market economy, continuation of land reforms, establishment of new methods of farming in agriculture and increase in the development of oil and gas are considered one of the main governmental objectives. Governmental policies are designed on the conservation of forests and stable development of forest management which includes rational and efficient use of land and forest resources.

### **d) Further challenges of forest management**

The main driving forces capable of influencing the development of forest management are:

#### 1) Demographic factor

Azerbaijan is a country with a high birth rate and in such circumstances the problem of unemployment together with poverty will remain very relevant. In order to address the situation population will need to develop new arable lands in the mountains. Apart from that basic necessity in timber fuel and construction wood will continue to grow.

#### 2) Necessity to build modular power electric stations.

#### 3) Necessity of developing bio gas.

#### 4) It is necessary to import coal and prices should be affordable for population.

#### 5) It is necessary to develop and enforce legislation in the area of environment protection in general and forest management in particular.

### **e) The problems of illegal activities in forest management**

Due to shortage of electricity, gas and coal after the collapse of the Soviet Union illegal logging rose sharply especially in the mountains. As a result, deforestation of the mountains is increasing; forest areas are shrinking leading to erosions, landslides and other elemental events. Soil erosion is also of special concern.

Out of total 8640 thousand hectares of land 3441 (43.2%) experience problems degradation and deserting. The main causes of deserting are water erosion 34.3%, irrigation erosion 3.2% and wind erosion 4.3%. Mining as well as the development of urban infrastructure etc.

is also responsible for the pollution of more than 30 thousand of hectares of land (14 thousand are polluted with oil).

About 300 square km experience regular washing out of soil which is about 1 million cubic meters. The problem of land degradation is especially acute as it results in reduction of arable and forest land. Intense erosion of soil is especially problematic in the hilly and mountainous areas where the angles of the slope exceed 15 degrees.

**f) Aid provided by international organizations.**

There are a number of international organizations in Azerbaijan offering specifically addressed aid programmes. To name just a few, they are Regional ecological centre, United Nations development programme, World Bank of Reconstruction and Development.

**k) Expected changes concerning the usage of forest land.**

Currently no substantial changes concerning the usage of land are expected.

**l) Attitude to international network on forest policies**

In order to monitor the latest development in world forest management, national forest management understands the importance of participation in this infrastructure.

**g) government institutions responsible for government forest management**

Area of application	Ministry	Main objective	Main means (please, put "X")			Year	Source/link
			Laws	Economic motivations	Informational		
<b>Forest management</b>	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Forest protection and restoration	Forest Code Law on Environment	state budget allocations	at a developmental stage	2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
<b>Plantation forestry</b>	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Plantations of fast growing species (acacia, poplar)	National Programme on Restoration and Extension of Forests	state budget allocations	at a developmental stage	2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
<b>Forest health control</b>	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Keeping forests in proper sanitary conditions	National Programme on Restoration and Extension of Forests	state budget allocations	at a developmental stage	2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
<b>Collateral production</b>	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	development of self-supporting basis and economic incentive	Forest Code, National Programmes AP	depends on forest industry resources	at a developmental stage	2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
<b>Hunting</b>	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources Ministry of Youth, Sport and Tourism	development of self-supporting basis and economic incentive	Forest Code, National Programmes AP	depends on forest industry resources	at a developmental stage	2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resourcesb
<b>Forest water balance/ Forest air balance</b>							
<b>Carbon control</b>	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Accumulation of carbon dioxide in wood-pulp	The government has signed Framework Convention	missing		2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
<b>Control over biological varieties</b>	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Preserving biological variety of flora and fauna in forest territories	national strategy and tactics on preserving varieties	on some programmes	Department of Variety Protection and Development of Highly protected Nature Territories	2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

<b>Erosion protection</b>	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	soil erosion protection measures	National Programme on Anti-desertification	on results of works	regulations and instructions are available	2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
<b>Tourism</b>	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Ministry of Youth, Sport and Tourism	Tourist route planning and laying out. Tourism management.	Tourism Law	on results of tourism activities	through promotion brochures and Internet	2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Ministry of Youth, Sport and Tourism
<b>Public relations</b>	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Promotion of knowledge on forest protection and on nature in general	НПО Law	to be introduced in the future	through mass media and promotion brochures	2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
<b>Education and research</b>	Ministry of Education through State Universities.	Training of University Degree Forest Management specialists	programmes on higher education	to be introduced in the future	through press	2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
<b>Cultural heritage of forests</b>	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, НПО	Promotion of knowledge about forest	НПО Law	not worked out	through mass media and promotion brochures	2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

**h.) List main institutions of the country (state, regional, local) that are responsible for introduction of forest laws and also institutions responsible for forest management in state forests.**

Ministry	Forests and forest lands (in hectares)	Management exercised (%)			Year	Source of information
		State resources	Business enterprises	Amount		
<b>Ministry responsible for forest management</b>	1214000	100	-	100	2005	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
<b>Ministry responsible for nature protection</b>						
<b>Ministry responsible for Defence</b>						
<b>Ministry responsible for agriculture</b>						
<b>Total: state forests</b>	<b>1214000</b>					

i.) List country's top level organisations (state, regional, local) responsible for enforcement of forest laws and also institutions responsible for forest management in state forests.

	Institutions responsible for law enforcement			Institutions responsible for forest management			Year
	Name of the institution	Number of the institutions	Average forest density per hectare	Name	Number of the institutions	Average forest density	
<b>Government level (1st level - Ministry)</b>	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	1			1		2005
<b>Regional - 2nd level of importance</b>	Department of Forest Development	1					
<b>Regional - 3d level of importance</b>	Department of Variety Protection and Development of Highly protected Nature Territories	1					
<b>Regional - 4th level of importance</b>	Forestry enterprises	38	32630				2005
...	National Parks	6	21600				2005
...	Nature Reserves	14	13657				2005
	Forest Reserves	20	14284				2005

**j) Name and list main engaged entities related to forest management including non-governmental, research, educational and environmental institutions apart from state organisations (see items g) and h)).**

Type of organisation	Name of organisation	Main objective	Internet address (URL/ link)
State forest enterprises	Department of forest development	Forest protection and restoration	г.Баку ул.Б.Агаева 100
	Forest nursery enterprises	Growing saplings	г.Баку ул.Б.Агаева 100
Private forest owners and unions of entrepreneurs			
Non-governmental organisations			
	Research Institutes of Botany	Research on flora species and current flora condition in forest reserves and forest lands	г.Баку ул.Б.Агаева 100
	Research Institutes of Forestry	Complex research on forest protection, selection of certain tree species	г.Баку ул.Б.Агаева 100
	Research Institutes of Zoology	Research on fauna species and current fauna condition in forest reserves and forest lands	г.Баку ул.Б.Агаева 100
	Baku State University (Biology Faculty)	Carrying out research on flora and fauna biology, including practical work for the students	г.Баку ул.Б.Агаева 100