



Hope for Europe's largest primeval mountain forest

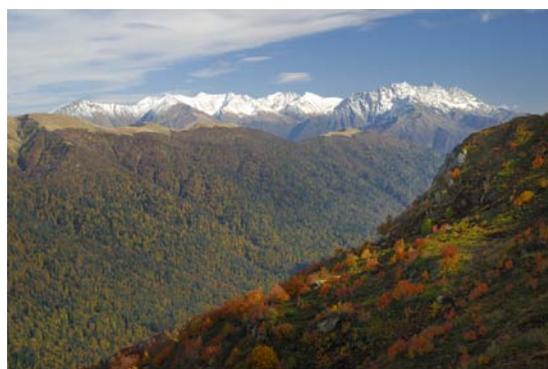
A new NABU project protects the West Caucasus World Natural Heritage Site

With the International Climate Initiative (ICI), the Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU) has supported climate protection projects in developing countries, newly industrialised countries and transition countries since 2008. This newsletter is published twice a year to report on news from NABU's ICI projects.

In December 2010, the BMU approved the first phase of NABU's third ICI project. With the project „West Caucasus World Natural Heritage Site – Climate protection through sustainable forest management and decentralised use of renewable energy resources in the planned buffer zone“, NABU can take another important step in the fight against the threat to climate-relevant ecosystems.

The West Caucasus World Heritage Site in the south Russian regions of Krasnodar and Adygea comprises an area of approximately 300,000 hectares. NABU has been involved in the region and has supported the nature conservation work there in cooperation with local authorities for over 15 years. NABU also substantially contributed to the establishment of the UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999. With this ICI project, NABU can build upon its longstanding work and experience in the West Caucasus.

The goal of this project, which is planned to last four years, is the conservation of Europe's largest primeval mountain forest in the West Caucasus World Heritage Site to ensure it is protected as a sink for greenhouse gases and protect the forest's unique biodiversity. This will be primarily accomplished through sustainable forest management and reforestation in a buffer zone (approx. 80,000 hectares) planned around the World Heritage Site.



UNESCO West Caucasus World Heritage Site

A Unique Natural Paradise

The West Caucasus World Heritage Site is the only example in Europe of an extensive, high mountain landscape which has remained almost untouched by humans. NABU's ICI project for the long-term protection of this ecosystem greatly contributes to the conservation of its biodiversity, especially of the remaining centuries-old Nordmann fir forests. In addition, the region represents an important habitat for many endangered species, such as the lynx, the wolf, the brown bear and even endemic species such as the Caucasian bison. The World Heritage Site is thus counted among the most important biodiversity hotspots in the world.



Caucasian bison

Threat posed by the Winter Olympics

The UNESCO World Heritage Site in the West Caucasus is composed of a network of various reserves, yet it does not have a buffer zone along the intensively used neighbouring areas. Still in their original condition, these untouched natural environments are endangered by human influences.

A serious danger is posed by illegal deforestation, intensive forest management and pressure to develop from the neighbouring regions. The building plans in preparation of the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi and Krasnaja Poljana pose a particularly acute threat, as these directly border the protected area.

The First Steps

After thorough planning, the new project received its starting signal from BMU in December of last year. In the initial project phase, which will continue until the end of 2011, the project team will be formed and the first work meeting will take place with project partners on site and in Germany. In addition, development of the climate protection project will be started, as well as the monitoring and preparation of a forest condition analysis. Last but not least, receiving authorisation for the creation of the planned buffer zone from the relevant regional and federal authorities will be critical to the first phase.

In a further phase, which is still being coordinated with the Federal Ministry for the Environment, four investment projects are planned for the utilisation of renewable energy sources in the intended buffer zone.

“Harapan Rainforest“ – Rainforest Conservation on Sumatra

In the “Harapan Rainforest“ project (Rainforest of Hope), NABU supports the protection and restoration of 98,000 hectares of dry lowland rainforest on the Indonesian island of Sumatra. It is the first project which implements the new Indonesian law on ecosystem restoration. The new license binds concession holders to manage the forest for ecosystem restoration and protect it from deforestation for up to 100 years.



Rainforest of Hope

“Harapan Rainforest” is a joint initiative of a consortium of the Indonesian conservation organization Burung Indonesia, the British Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and BirdLife International, the world’s largest network of conservation organizations. Since December 2009, the German International Climate Initiative has been supporting the Harapan project with 7.5 Million Euro through the KfW Entwicklungsbank. NABU’s work was crucial to the success of the application. NABU supports the project through public relations measures, fundraising and policy advice in Germany.

New Community Nurseries

In the six months since the previous report on “Harapan Rainforest” in the International Climate Initiative newsletter some remarkable progress has been made. Especially in developing the nurseries where the seedlings grow to restore the forest, significant successes have been recorded.

Four community nurseries have been added to the three nurseries managed directly by the project team.

They were planned and developed together with local communities, who have taken responsibility for their management and will sell the seedlings to the project. Thus, an alternative income can be secured and illegal logging can be reduced.

Two of the community nurseries (Kelompok Mandala and Sako Suban) will each produce 150,000 seedlings per year. The other two nurseries (Simpang Macan Dalam and Simpang Macan Luar) will generate 75,000 seedlings annually. All seedlings will be bought by the project. This will result in an annual gross income of approximately 37,000 Euro for the communities.

When added to the projected production of the central nurseries, there will be just under three million seedlings produced at “Harapan Rainforest” this year. If planted on open ground, they will reforest more than 2,700 hectares of degraded rainforest.

Education for the Local Population



Mobile school for the indigenous community

Of course, there is much more work going on with the local communities besides reforestation activities. To deal with the range of activities, the Community Partnerships department at “Harapan Rainforest” has recently been expanded from three to ten staff members, including three school teachers and four community facilitators who will live in the community.

The teachers give daily lessons at two mobile schools. There are 53 pupils enrolled, and the school is formally acknowledged by the local government, meaning that school leavers will receive a certificate recognised by employers and higher education institutes. The schools

are “mobile” because they are operated for the indigenous Bathin Sembilan community who are semi-nomadic. To ensure continuity of education, the schools are able to move as required when the community moves.

The “Harapan Rainforest” project also supports a fortnightly visit to the area for a doctor and a nurse from the district community health centre.

The important co-benefits for local communities in forest protection projects such as “Harapan Rainforest” are highlighted in a new DVD, “Harapan Rainforest, Sumatra: Protecting nature, sustaining livelihoods”. The 14-minute English language film contains interviews with staff and villagers highlighting how they are building a vision of a sustainably managed forest, creating jobs and developing skills to make it a reality. The film is available on the NABU-website online at NABU.de.

A New Species at „Harapan Rainforest“

Biodiversity research is also vital at “Harapan Rainforest”, to ensure that carbon protection provides maximum benefits for biodiversity. Until recently the number of mammals listed for the project area was 55 – one third of them globally-threatened with extinction. However, during a recent camera-trap survey of some of the best remaining habitat in the southwest of “Harapan Rainforest”, a new species for the site was identified – the Malay Weasel (*Mustela nudipes*).



Malay Weasel

The cameras have been invaluable in confirming the presence of certain species, and starting to calculate the population sizes and distribution of others. Therefore, the camera trapping activity is soon to be strengthened with 30 more cameras.

Protecting the Last Afromontane Cloud Forests of Ethiopia

In cooperation with the Ethiopian government and partners, NABU has been working towards the preservation and the sustainable management of the remaining afromontane cloud forests in Ethiopia. The four year NABU-Project (2009-2013) “Climate Protection and Preservation of Primary Forest – A Management Model using the Wild Coffee Forests in Ethiopia as an Example” is intended to serve internationally as a model where climate and natural resources protection go hand in hand with sustainable regional development.



Cloud forest in southwest Ethiopia

A few decades ago about 40 percent of Ethiopia was covered by forest; today less than 3 percent of these areas remain. Most of the forest has been destroyed due to people cutting down trees for firewood or to clear land for farming and pastures. This is not only affecting the flora and fauna but the entire ecosystem and the climate: The destruction of forests releases considerable amounts of CO₂ and the remaining forest can no longer store the same amount of CO₂ as previously. According to UN studies, this situation could worsen. If it continues, Ethiopia will have lost its remaining forests by 2020.

One of last remaining afromontane cloud forests of the country is located in the southwest, in the Kafa region. These forests are considered to be the origin of wild coffee (*Coffea arabica*), an invaluable genetic resource.

What has been accomplished so far

After having officially registered as a non-government organisation (NGO) in Ethiopia, NABU set up two NABU Project Offices, one in Addis Ababa and one in Bonga. An Ethiopian project team of seven people has been employed. The project is managed from the NABU Headquarters in Berlin. In close cooperation with the regional and local government and the local community in Kafa, NABU started with the implementation of the different project components during autumn last year.

The implementation is carried out with the support of Ethiopian and international experts. Most tasks have already been assigned, and experts took the first trips into the field in December 2010. Currently a concept for eco-tourism, one of the most important sources of income for the local communities in the future, is being developed. Based on this concept, the Kafa Biosphere Reserve (project area), provided with touristic infrastructure will become a travel destination for national and international tourists. In addition, experts started with the climate and forest monitoring in the project area. This work will be continued throughout the duration of the project and will help to quantify the project's impact on forest and climate protection. At the same time it creates the basis for a future carbon certification within the frame of REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation + Sustainable Forest Management).

Another component within the project is to survey and analyse the state of the forest and its utilization by the local communities with regards to firewood collection. The results of this study will be available in May 2011 and will help to select suitable sites for reforestation of natural forest as well as community plantations on already degraded areas. To reforest the area with native tree and crop species, seeds were collected in the project area and taken to tree nurseries where seedlings will be grown to start planting during the next rainy season.

A training programme for 30 rangers employed by the project goes hand-in-hand with the supportive work at the Kafa Biosphere Reserve. The rangers will offer guided tours, provide visitors and local people with information on nature conservation as well as forest and climate protection. They will also contribute to forest monitoring schemes, surveys on flora and fauna, oversee core areas and conduct awareness-raising programmes in schools and communities. Ranger training will soon commence.

Official Inauguration of Kafa Biosphere Reserve in Ethiopia

NABU also advises the Ethiopian Government with regards to the establishment of



of UNESCO Biosphere Reserves. Four years of hard work have paid off: The remaining afro-montane cloud forests and the origin of Arabica-coffee in the southwest have been recognized on the 3rd of June 2010 as Kafa Biosphere Reserve, one of the first two UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in Ethiopia. Together with the Ethiopian Federal President, national, regional and local government, the community of Kafa Biosphere Reserve and international guests, NABU celebrated the official inauguration of this 760,000 hectares Biosphere Reserve on the 22nd of March this year. NABU invited business partners who support the international work of NABU to join NABU in Ethiopia for this special event and get to know the country and its people as well as the NABU projects in Ethiopia.

Overview of the International Climate Initiative

The International Climate Initiative of the Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU) serves as a supplement to the German development cooperation with a clear focus on climate protection. In its fourth year, the ICI encompasses 184 projects in over 60 partner countries with financial commitments amounting to 360 million Euros. The projects are implemented in equal parts by KfW Entwicklungsbank, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) as well as by NGOs. With 60 percent most ICI projects support the field of renewable energies. Approximately 30 percent of ICI funding is spent on projects which aim at the protection and sustainable use of natural carbon reservoirs such as forests and mires. Ten percent of the total ICI projects are currently dealing with measures for climate adaptation. By 2012, the contingent of those projects is planned to increase to 35 percent.

NABU is represented in the International Advisory Board of the ICI by Thomas Tennhardt, Vice President and Head of the International Department. Next to national and international climate experts, the German Federal Minister for the Environment is also part of this advisory board. With its three projects funded by the ICI, NABU supports the conservation of forests with particularly high levels of biodiversity and is thereby contributing to climate protection and sustainable development.

Responsible

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