

“Local Environment Action Plans Development in CA”

Project Background

Local environmental management strengthening and environmental local government institutions development are an important condition for environmental democracy and joint local environmental problem-solving promotion with the active inhabitants’ participation and ecological partnership development. One of the effective practical instruments for enhancement of public participation in environmentally important decision-making is implementation of Local Environment Action Plans (LEAPs). LEAP is a system approach to local environmental problem-solving that uses to the maximum the local communities’ potential (government bodies and institutions of local government, NGOs and private sector), aims at local environmental local initiatives and community actions support and promotion. This methodology can serve as a reliable basis for development of the Local Agenda for the 21 Century.

In 2003 the CAREC together with REC Moldova, REC Caucasus began to develop this direction within the frame of regional project “The Strengthening of Local Environmental Management in EECCA Countries”. In the course of its implementation they made the assessment of current practices of local environmental management in CA countries, legislative base of public participation in environmental problem-solving at the local level and inventory of CA countries experience in carrying out local environmental and community projects. The frame for development of the institutional base for the LEAP promotion in countries was set up:

- The regional network of expert-trainers on environmental management was formed and is supported and its members took part in the work of International Conference on exchange of LEAP development experience in EECCA countries;
- National workshops on LEAP development prospects assessment were held;
- The Informative and Methodological Base on LEAP is formed;
- The Manual on LEAP Development for trainers was worked out;
- The Database on Pilot Territories interested in LEAP projects implementation was formed;
- Project proposals from all CA countries.

The suggested project is sequential of work launched by CAREC and is based on results of researches carried out in the field of environmental institutions of local government in CA countries, on national LEAP workshops recommendations and practical activity of Central Asian network of experts on environmental management.

Project Description

The main task of this project is to set up institutional conditions for promotion of the best practices of local environmental planning and management and to receive the practical experience of LEAP projects implementation in CA countries. The project will allow to work out practical mechanisms for public engagement in participation in methodology of LEAP development and promotion at the pilot territories levels, to develop recommendations on reforming practices of local environmental planning and management and to prepare basis to include LEAP development requirements into national legislations of CA countries.

The network base made by the CAREC in the frame of previous projects will give the possibility to figure on this successful implementation and will be able to contribute well to public participation promotion and to practical priority environmental problem-solving at the local level.

Four complementary components underlies in project methodology:

- **Information campaign.** Includes dissemination of the best examples of local environmental management, publication of booklets and bulletins on LEAPs and environmental management issues; conducting information campaigns in mass-media; environmental management web-site development and up-dating.

- **Capacity building at national and local levels.** Conducting number of workshops on LEAP/LA21 development at regional, national and local levels; development and publication of the Manual on LEAP for CA countries sub-region (including ones in native languages), support of Central Asian Network of Experts on Environmental Management activity, trainings and strengthening of partnership with local stakeholders.
- **Demo LEAP/LA21 projects implementation.** Implementation of 10-15 demo/pilot LEAP projects in CA countries (energy efficiency, drinking water, waste management, etc). LEAP projects will be implemented in each country at the rural community level and at the urban level. Conditions for exchange of experience in LEAP implementation between CA countries will be made.
- **Lobbying.** Promotion of the LEAP methodology at regional and national levels (national programmes, legislations, etc). Including LEAPs into the local environmental and development programmes and budgets and using LEAP development procedure in territorial development state programmes at the parliament, environmental ministries and government bodies levels.

Project Purposes

Creation of the institutional possibilities for environmental democracy and environmental local governing institutions development by means of using the best environmental management practices at the local level.

Objectives:

1. To assist with local environmental initiatives and public participation in decision-making promotion at the local level
2. To strengthen the local communities potential in Local Environment Action Plans Development
3. To receive practical experience in LEAP projects implementation in CA countries sub-region for further public participation promotion

Target Groups:

1. Local authorities
2. Institutions of local governing
3. Public community and NGOs
4. National and local environmental organizations

Project executors:

The Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia

Central-Asia Network of Experts on Environmental Management:

Kazakhstan: “Karaganda EcoCenter”;

Kyrgyzstan: the Environmental Movement “BIOM”;

Tajikistan: “Foundation to support civil initiatives in Tajikistan”.

Turkmenistan: “Environmental Fund of Turkmenistan”;

Uzbekistan: Environmental Advocateship Centre “Armon”.

Project Duration: 24 months.

Project Budget: 200,000 EUR.