Sub-national cooperation in Georgia

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• Georgia is situated in the south-east of Europe, between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea
• Total area: 69,700 km²
  Population: 4.7 million
• Coastline: 310 km
• lowest point: Black Sea - 0 m
• Highest point: Mount Shkhara - 5,201 m above sea level
Challenges in mountain regions of Georgia

• Socio-economic problems
  • High level of migration remains main a problem and is linked with: Lack of working places, insufficient social infrastructure, low level of income, etc.

• Environmental/climate change problems
  • Are closely linked socio-economic development and could not be considered as a separate issue.

• Problems of institutional organisation
  • Need for appropriate institutional set-up which will support solving of abovementioned problems.
National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia

- The National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG) is a non-governmental, non-profit and non-political organization which unites all 69 Georgian entities of local self-governance was established in 2004. Its work aims at:
  - *Further developing the local self-governance system;*
  - *Developing democracy at the local level;*
  - *Decentralizing the government power throughout the country;* and
  - *Promotion of the local self-governance institutions.*
- Serves as a Secretariat for the Georgian Delegation to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.
Self-government System in Georgia
Centre for Regional Policy and Sustainable Development

- In 2010 NALAG by decision of its Board established the Centre for Regional Policy and Sustainable Development.
- The Centre aims at integration of environmental considerations into agenda of LAs of Georgia.
- Main focus at this moment is establishment of special units of sustainable development and climate change at the municipal level to ensure, *inter alia*, implementation of broad range of statutory functions of LAs on natural resources management, spatial planning and sustainable development stipulated in the Organic Law of Georgia on Local Self-Governance and sectoral legislation.
Climate Project

• The Commissions on sustainable development and climate change will be established in all municipalities of Georgia by the decision of the municipal councils and will deal with environmental protection and climate change issues at the local level, including local policy development and monitoring of its implementation. The initiative is implemented with support from USAID.

• Baseline study of key climate change/environmental problems was conducted recently under initiative. The study demonstrate that among number of risk factors of climate change mountain regions are most vulnerable to natural hazards.
Mountain “Issues” under Georgian Legislation

• The Constitution of Georgia, states: "The state shall take care for the equal socio-economic development of the whole territory of the country. With the view of ensuring the socio-economic progress of the high mountain regions special privileges shall be determined by law".

• The Organic Law of Georgia on Self-Government (adopted in 2005) states: “to ensure legislative provision for the peculiarities of exercising self-governance in high mountainous regions and other territories of Georgia specified by the Georgian legislation.”

• The Law of Georgia on Socio-economic and Cultural Development of High Mountain Regions was adopted in 1999.
“Mountain Laws” in the Caucasus

• The North Ossetia/Alania “Mountain Law” was adopted in 1998.

• In 2008 Government of the North Ossetia adopted the Law on Strategy for Socio-economic Development of the Republic of North Ossetia/Alania, before 2030. The considerate part of the Law is dedicated to analysis and planning of development in Mountain regions of the republic.

• The Mountain Law was also adopted in Dagestan. The Law on Mountain Territories of the Republic of Dagestan, 2010. Focused on sustainable development of the territory.
New generation of the “Mountain Laws” in the Caucasus

- Recently NALAG had raise an issue of the need for elaboration of a set of legal acts and update existing Mountain Law in the Parliamentary Committee on Regional Policy, Self-Government and Mountainous regions

- Currently the Association is mapping the resources to start revision of the law which should reflect socio-economic development and environmental protection and support mainstreaming of sustainable development of mountain regions in legislation and overarching policy of the country
New generation of the “Mountain Laws” in the Caucasus

• In case of drafting of the Law in line with intentions of the NALAG – Georgian law could be considered as a second generation of “mountain laws” in the Caucasus region; as

• New Mountain Law should be based on the careful research and analysis of international experience and local/regional knowledge to avoid adoption of another “paper” legal act or policy document.
Scientific Knowledge for Mountain Regions of the Caucasus

- The NALAG and its Centre for Regional Policy and Sustainable Development, together with international and regional partners, and in particular with UNEP Vienna Office and Geneva University is making efforts to consolidate regional knowledge under a Scientific Network of the Caucasus Mountain Regions.

- In April-May 2013 two regional meetings of scientific institutions were commenced to discuss opportunities of establishment of a network.
Scientific Knowledge for Mountain Regions of the Caucasus

- Last meeting agreed on establishment of Ad-Hoc Working Group which will discuss in details institutional set-up of the network and until the end of the year come up with concrete proposal on how it will organised

- To support Sustainable Development of the Caucasus mountain regions there is need to assess knowledge gaps and on the basis of it planning of next steps for action not only for scientists but also for other stakeholders such as NGOs, IGOs, and governmental agencies
Key initiatives which took place in the Caucasus

- Number of transboundary and national initiatives focused on sustainable development of mountain regions of different scale, geographic coverage and different purpose were taking place during the recent decades.

- Among them most important were elaboration of Caucasus Ecoregional conservation plan and establishment of Biodiversity Council; elaboration of Local Agenda 21s, first Euro-region in the Caucasus, etc.
on the way to Shatili village, Khevsureti
Holy Trinity church with mountain Kazbek on the background
Gudauri ski resort, Kazbegi municipality
“Agro and bio-diversity” in Thruso gorge
“Coexistence”
Village of Ushguli, Mestia Municipality
Thruso gorge, Kazbegi municipality
The village of Shatili in Historical Province of Khevsureti, Greater Caucasus
Thank you!

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