

PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

As is at project end April 2009

Developing sustainable tourism in Altyaghach, Azerbaijan



Park rangers and ATI staff jointly developing environmental education materials. Picture: S.Görnert

Background

Azerbaijan's total area is roughly the size of the three northern German states Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania combined. Despite its small size, Azerbaijan is a country with a large variety of natural areas and therefore, high biodiversity. This makes it an interesting destination for both domestic and foreign tourists. This diversity is threatened, however, by uncontrolled forest clearing, overuse of pastures, soil erosion and salination, and pollution of the Caspian Sea by pesticides, oil and untreated waste water.

Sustainable tourism would generate income for the local population and at the same time ease pressures on the natural environment. It would thus make a contribution to environmentally sustainable development.

Project

The project aimed to promote sustainable tourism development in the Altyaghach National

Park region in northeastern Azerbaijan with involvement of the local population, representatives of the National Park administration and the developing tourism industry.

The project partner – the Azerbaijan Tourism Institute (ATI) – carried out training in environmental education and (tourism) infrastructure in the municipalities in and around the Altyaghach National Park. National Park staff was trained in the principles of sustainable tourism so that they might apply them in their work. As support the ATI developed environmental education materials for park visitors.

In a dialogue process, relevant actors in the municipalities and the National Park administration and from the tourism industry and nature protection NGOs were jointly developing a mission statement for the National Park. The results of the dialogue process were made available to the public. After the end of the project, they are used as guidance for municipalities and protected areas in developing sustainable tourism.

In this project, ATI was supporting active public relations work aimed at furthering the concerns of the National Park.

- Funding: Advisory Assistance Programme of the German Federal Environment Ministry
- Project identification: 380 01 191
- Region: Azerbaijan
- Duration: 11/ 2008 - 04/ 2009
- Project management: Umweltbundesamt
- Project partner: Azerbaijan Tourism Institute (www.tourism.edu.az)