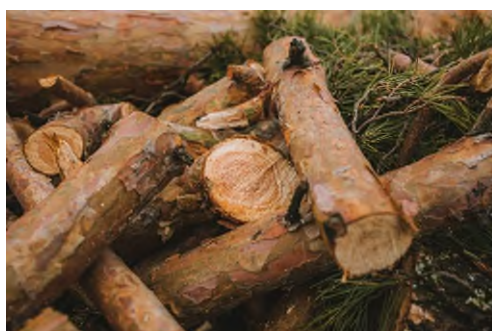




PROJECT INFORMATION

Reduction of utilisation pressure on forest biomass in Ukraine, especially in semi-natural forests



Freshly cut pine logs with
branches

Source: Yurii Ivanenko, WWF-
Ukraine

Background

Ukraine's forest ecosystems are under significant pressure due to increased firewood consumption for heating, particularly as a result of the damage to centralized energy infrastructure caused by Russia's war against Ukraine. Half of the country's forests are semi-natural, with high biodiversity, and their preservation is critical. At the same time, a lack of effective energy efficiency mechanisms and transparent sub-granting is preventing communities from transitioning to sustainable heating. This project aimed to develop practical tools to reduce dependence on forest biomass and lay the foundations for sustainable heating policies.

Project details

The project aimed to reduce pressure on Ukraine's natural and semi-natural forests by decreasing the use of unsustainable forest biomass for heating. This was particularly important in communities affected by damaged energy infrastructure and an increased population due to displacement. The target group included local authorities, forest managers, and residents of the five municipalities selected in the Kyiv and Zakarpattia regions. Together with partners, WWF-Ukraine developed a methodology for identifying suitable pilot communities, conducted a legal analysis to design a sub-granting scheme and created a monitoring framework to track the impact of biomass consumption. Technical solutions for more efficient or alternative heating were assessed, and local forestry personnel were trained to continue monitoring after the project ended. As a result, stakeholders now have the necessary tools and knowledge to transition to more sustainable heating methods, thereby reducing emissions and protecting biodiversity-rich forests. Further steps include scaling up the model and implementing the proposed financing mechanism, for which government and donor support is required.

Updated: July 2025

Project country: Ukraine

Duration: 09/2024 – 05/2025

Beneficiaries: Ukrainian authorities: Ministry of Environment; State Enterprise "Forests of Ukraine"; Forest Agency; State Agency of Energy Efficiency and Energy Saving (SAEE)

Implementing organisation: WWF Central and Eastern Europe (WWF CEE); WWF Ukraine

Project number: 3724 36 0022

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Advisory Assistance Programme (AAP)

for environmental protection in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and other countries neighbouring the European Union – a programme of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

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