

Strengthening the system of protected areas in Uzbekistan



Transition from pistachio to juniper zone in the Surkhan Zapovednik protected area (Photo: S. Schmidt)

Background

Currently 5.7% of the Uzbekistan territory are under protection but just 1.8% are under strict protection. Uzbekistan is member of the convention on biological diversity since 1995. The „National Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation“, published in 1998 and developed for 10 years, is far beyond the ambitious targets of the CBD.

The current protected area system does not properly represent the ecosystems of Uzbekistan and has large gaps in terms of efficient conservation of wildlife and plants.

With the emergency of independent nations in Central Asia in the beginning of the 1990s, formerly connected habitats got divided by administrative borders. Strengthening the Uzbek system of protected areas is generally considered in the medium term as the first step of a long-term cross-border nature conservation strategy.

The financial situation and management capacities of the protected area administrations are in need for improvement. Additionally, protected

area categories as Biosphere Reserves or National Parks do not receive the attention as necessary. Their introduction finds reservations by the local population.

Project

Fundamental aim of the project was to advise relevant decision makers in the establishment of protected areas in Uzbekistan: The “Man and Biosphere” concept integrates protected areas into regional development approaches. In the frame of the project the following activities were implemented:

- Elaboration of a stakeholder analysis and investigation of opportunities to extent the Hissar Zapovednik in the Pamir-Alay mountains;
- Development of a communication strategy for the most relevant target-groups identified in the proximity of Surkhan Zapovednik;
- Establishment of the Ecocenter Jeyran as a nature tourism destination;
- Capacity development for relevant decision makers in administration and target groups in civil society;
- Elaboration of environmental education offers that consider regional development and regional target groups.

- Target country/region: Uzbekistan
- Duration: 10/2010 – 10/2012
- Beneficiary: State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Nature Protection, Main Department of Forestry of the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan
- Implementing organisation: Michael Succow Foundation
- Project identification: FKZ 380 01 249