



The European Union
for Georgia
ENPARD



Environmental Protection, Management of Natural Resources and Disaster Risk Reduction



Tetritskaro Local Action Group



Environmental protection, management of natural resources and disaster risk reduction in the Tetrtskaro Municipality

Main goal of the Tetrtskaro Local Development Strategy is:

to contribute to the improvement of quality of life of the Tetrtskaro Municipality through introduction of innovative social-economic models

To reach above mentioned goal, Tetrtskaro Local Action Group identified four strategic priorities and cross-cutting issues, such as: youth inclusion in local development processes, migration, access to the employment opportunities, vocational education and innovation. For this purpose, detailed analysis of the Environmental aspects has been conducted within the Visegrad Fund supported project: “Rural Development Experience for Sustainable Growth”.

Environmental protection, management of natural resources and disaster risk reduction

Environmental protection, management of natural resources and disaster risk reduction is one of the core elements for sustainable development of Tetrtskaro municipality, which is connected to and influences effectiveness of other strategic directions of Tetrtskaro development. This strategic priority aims to:

Contribute to reduction of negative impact of environment and to effective management of the resources

To achieve this goal, the LAG identified following objectives:

- 1.1. Environmental protection and disaster risk reduction*
- 1.2. Supporting introduction of effective mechanisms/methods*
- 1.3. Support to registration of natural resources and implementation of interventions that raise awareness and teach about environmental protection and disaster risk reduction*

Tetrtskaro municipality is quite rich with natural resources, as revealed though its diverse landscape and eco system; however, these resources are not properly managed or cared for. Illegal mining of natural resources, challenges with management of municipal waste, absence of disaster risk reduction interventions and generally very low level of environmental awareness are among the most urgent environmental problems in Tetrtskaro.

Environmental problems are mainly related to low awareness among local population. Lack of information or no access to information provokes and encourages environmental issues. Raising awareness among local communities is one of the first steps for achieving real changes, which can be done through information campaigns (including, sharing information about existing risks).

For awareness raising it is important to work with the youth, specifically through support of elaboration of relevant school-based programs and establishment of eco-clubs. Organization of non-formal education activities will positively affect introduction of education programs about environmental protection and disaster risk reduction. Supporting public environmental activities and educational programmes will play important role in raising public awareness in this direction.

The LAG believes that eradication of problems related to management of natural resources is possible through introduction of methodology for registration of resources at the municipal level and mechanisms for responding to the cases of environmental pollution/impact. Assessments in this sector and development of strategy, will create a basis for establishing strong management system for natural resources. Control over and registration of forestlands, also lack of forest management plan is another issue related to management of natural resources. Support to local registration processes and development of sustainable plans for resource management are considered as steps required for improving situation in this sector. Despite existing control mechanisms, issue of approaches still stands in the municipality that requires introduction/improvement of mechanisms for identification of illegal activities. LAG believes that introduction of volunteer rangers' program could contribute to resolution of this issue. This will enable continuous inspections and quicker identification of infringements. Also, it is necessary to raise public awareness regarding negative impact caused by poaching.

Poor management of municipal waste management system is another problematic issue. Spontaneous waste fields, massive pollution of river basins and gorges, cause significant damage to the environment of Tetrtskaro municipality and endanger health of local population. To improve existing situation, Tetrtskaro LAG considers necessary lobbying for allocation of territories for sanitary waste fields and arranging them according to standards. Along with organizing waste collection and removal, establishment of recycling factory is also important. Existence of spontaneous waste fields further pollutes environment in Tetrtskaro. It is important to support promotion idea of sanitary waste field, separated collection and recycling.

Management of animal waste is among other problems related to management of municipal waste. For resolving mentioned issue, besides the interventions named above, it is important to support introduction of food safety standards, (HACCP, GLOBALG.A.P.) and informing local communities about the. Supporting implementation of demonstration projects that are aligned with these standards will further promote the problem resolution processes.

Nonexistence of disaster risk assessment methodology and emergency management plans is one of the critical problems of Tetrtskaro municipality. Awareness raising about the natural and technological risks are the first and necessary step of risk reduction. The LAG believes that the mentioned problem can be reduced through strengthening skills and capacities of relevant municipal structures and community groups. Also, it is important to support with development of emergency management plans.

Support to introducing standards for energy effectiveness and renewable energy sources and advocating for mentioned process, will significantly reduce negative impact on the environment. Often society lacks information about renewable energy sources and their importance. First of all, it is necessary to organize public information campaigns, in order to ensure public awareness raising around these issues. The LAG also supports building demonstration sites and introduction of renewable energy systems in the frame of implemented projects (within the local development strategy).

Stray animals carry huge threat for the local population; there is no shelter for animals in Tetrtskaro; there is no vaccination or sterilization activities that increase threats of physical damage and disease outbreaks. The LAG recommends arrangement of shelter for stray animals, introduction of vaccination and sterilization activities that will reduce potential threats to minimum.

SWOT analysis of environmental protection of the Tetrtskaro municipality

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse landscape and eco system • Favourable geographic conditions for environmental activities (e.g. proximity to main communication means) • Implemented and ongoing environmental protection projects • Algeti protected territories • Existence of DRR working group in the municipality structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of environmental researches and strategies • Weak environmental legislation • Low environmental awareness • Limited financial resources for implementing environmental actions • Irrational utilization of resources, including poaching • Lack of energy effective technologies and approaches • Unregistered buildings/land plots • Sanitary-hygiene conditions and lack of public toilets • No sterilization and vaccination programs for stray animals at local level • Lack of emergency management plan at local level • Lack of qualified staff • Lack of special equipment and technical means for carrying out emergency interventions
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further development of protected areas • Sustainable utilization of natural resources • Ongoing international projects • Planned project at local and central levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Railway routes • Hydroelectric stations • Degree of impact of mining companies on environment • Pipelines • Natural and technological threats • Irrational utilization of natural resources • Irrational utilization of pesticides

Goal	Objectives	Activity/expected projects
Contribute to reduction of negative impact of environment and effective management of resources	3.1 Environmental protection and disaster risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support improvement of municipal waste management system • Support arrangement of innovative demonstration units for waste recycling • Support actions for identification of illegal utilization of natural resources (such as, video/online supervision) • Support development of disaster risk assessment methodology and development of emergency management plan • Support/lobby introduction of standards for energy effectiveness and renewable energy sources
	3.2. Supporting introduction of effective mechanisms/method for registration of natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support introduction of natural resource registry at municipal level • Support introduction of methodology for registration of resources at the municipal level and mechanisms for responding to the cases of environmental pollution/impact
	3.3. Supporting registration of natural resources and implementation of interventions that raise awareness and teach about environmental protection and disaster risk reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support activities for raising awareness about existing risks • Support programs for raising awareness regarding environmental and DRR issues • Support introduction of food safety standards (trainings) • Support awareness raising activities regarding renewable energy sources • Support awareness raising activities regarding plant protection means and their correct application

Analysis of Strategic Documents in Environment Sector

Given documents considers and analyses challenges that exist in the environmental sector. It is in line and complements the country's central, regional and local level strategies and reflect all main needs faced at the local level. In order to, ensure effective implementation of the strategy and identify specific connections with other strategic documents, following state strategies were analysed in terms of their goals, objectives and activities:

- Rural development strategy of Georgia 2017-2020
- 3rd National Environmental Action Program of Georgia 2017-2021
- Kvemo Kartli regional development strategy 2014-2021
- Strategy for Agricultural Development in Georgia 2015-2020

Mentioned analysis has served as guidance for elaboration of the goals, objectives and expected activities of the given document, which aims to improve quality of life of the Tetrtskaro municipality population.

❖ Contribute to reduction of negative impact on environment and effective management of resources

Proper waste management and pollution prevention are important priorities of the country. Tetrtskaro local development strategy goals and objectives are aligned with the 3rd National Environmental Action Program of Georgia 2017-2021, Strategy for Agricultural Development in Georgia 2015-2020, and Rural development strategy of Georgia 2017-2020.

Their common approach aims to regulate waste management system and ensure sustainable utilization of natural resources, as well as to increase effectiveness of information management system. Support to introduction and advocating for energy effective and renewable energy source systems is the key strategic goal in local and national strategies. Special attention is given to registration and monitoring of climate change related issues. It must be noted that registration, assessment, and management of organic polluters is critical for achieving common goal.

Priorities identified in the given document and other Government strategies, in most of the cases complement each other; hence the support program of Tetrtskaro strategy, which contributes to resolution of identified problems at the local level, will positively affect the rural development processes in the country at a larger scale.