

## Topical issues of sustainable development of the Caucasus

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The Caucasus plays one of the **most important** geopolitical roles in the modern world, particularly in the Near East and Western Asia. Its role is also essential in the economic relations; however, this role is diminished by the different developmental trends of the countries of the region. The scales of the natural resource use are still large, and the environmental pollution and landscape transformation, as well as the negative outcomes of the anthropogenic impact on land resources and forests are still alarming. The problems of the sustainable development of the Caucasus can be solved only at the expense of the cooperation between the countries of the region. Of the transboundary issues, certain trends of monitoring of protected areas, transport and other communications, forest and water economies, agriculture, natural disasters and risks develop in a particularly intense and privileged mode.

Some of these trends are **particularly topical** for the Caucasus. It is considered that at this stage, the cooperation for the environmental protection and development of water resources, recreational economy and transport will be efficient. In the Caucasus, for the prevention of the processes of disintegration of a single cultural and natural area, the cooperation to develop the measures to mitigate the Climate Change and biodiversity degradation and to establish transboundary protected areas and ecological and transport corridors, is very important.

The **management and regulation** of the natural environment and natural resources of the Caucasus, as that of a mountainous region, is associated with the international and local (national) market and traditional legal mechanisms. The experience evidences that only their harmonization and optimization yield the sustainable and desirable outcome. Following the historical-geographical peculiarities of the Caucasus, the experience of the Alpine and Carpathian countries will not do good if copied directly. In the Caucasus, the major difficulties in view of the sustainable development are associated with the conservation of the biological and landscape diversity, optimal water resource management, use of forest resources and appropriate development of agriculture. The hampering factor on the way of inventory, scientific study and protection of biological and landscape diversity is permanent political oppositions.