

DAR and Global Witness presented the results of the “Report on Transparency in the Peruvian Forest Sector”

On Wednesday, 21 April, DAR and Global Witness presented "Results of the Report on Transparency in the Peruvian Forest Sector" at the Pérgola Room of the “El Olivar” Hotel. The Report was elaborated as part of the Project “Promoting Transparency in the Forest Sector”, funded by the British Development Cooperation Agency DFID and that is currently been implemented with technical support and coordination of Global Witness in 4 countries over a period of 4 years: Liberia, Ghana, Cameroon and Peru,.

The “Transparency in the Forest Sector” Report points out that compliance with the Law governing Transparency and Access to Information by the organisations in charge of forest management is worrying because of the scarcity of data that can be found on the websites in regard to transparency, the lack of answers to requests for information as well as the few information available.

Hugo Che Piu, Executive Director of DAR, presented the Report’s results. During the presentation emphasis was laid on the subject of governance, for which implementation of mechanisms and better channels of participation are needed.

During the event, he stressed that the publication reveals a need to assure the citizens’ right of participation in the forest sector, since transparency and access to public information in this area are lower than national averages of other sectors.

It was also pointed out that public forestry institutions should aim to raise levels of transparency and access to public information; not only seeking more transparency but also reducing the burden of generating information and responding to requests.

In this regard, Dr. Ivan Lanegra Quispe, Deputy Director of the Ombudsman for the Environment, Public Services and Indigenous Peoples, commented that the issue of Forest Transparency "is basically to ensure that every citizen has the opportunity to access information that the Authorities have on forests and thus to exercise the right to information, involving the possibility to monitor and ensure the government is complying with its obligations."

For Jessica Morales of the Congress Commission of Andean, Amazonian, Afro-Peruvian Peoples, Environment and Ecology, human and financial resources are needed; but most importantly a website:

"I think we should have user-friendly websites, where you could access information with just two clicks, with a straight-forward path to such information and where you know who is directly responsible for providing that information," she said during the interview.

Similarly, Lucia Ruiz Ostoic of the Centro de Conservación, Investigación y Manejo de Áreas Naturales Cordillera Azul – Cima (Center for Conservation, Research and Management of Nature Areas of the Cordillera Azul – Cima) noted how unfortunate it is for ordinary users of the public sector not to have access to the requested information because of the disinterest of the authorities.

"I do not think something as basic as establishing a website or a forestry website or asking the ministry to provide a particular link to everything that is forest information is too cumbersome ... I think it's a lack of interest by the authorities, and all you need is pushing, publishing this kind of results and then see if there is any reaction", he said as he checked the disclosed figures.

For his part, the forestry consultant Helmut Scheuch stated the need to implement tools for dissemination and awareness rising amongst all stakeholders in the sector "so that they change their attitude (and) that public officials are aware that they are obliged to provide a good service to the community. It is not that they are owners of information, but that they see what the demands for information are and that that way everyone is kept informed and maintain an attitude of constructive criticism."

Data

- The average compliance with legal requirements for websites dedicated to transparency in the forest sector by the institutions in charge of management and conservation of forests is of 49.5%, while in other non-forest-related institutions it is of 82.6%.
- MINAG shows an average of 80.95% compliance on its transparency website, while the Agency for the Supervision of Forest Resources and Wildlife (OSINFOR) only reaches 2.38%.
- In the public forest sector, only one of every four requests is responded.
- When requesting information on consultation and participation, responses cover barely 16.7%.
- More than half of the information concerning the forest sector is not available, neither through its legal framework nor via its websites (institutional and dedicated to transparency.) Hardly 26.5% could be fully accessible.

We appreciate your efforts to disseminate this information.

“DAR, contributing to the country’s sustainable development”