



FOREST SUMMIT

Global Action and Armenia

Co-Presented by

AUA ACOPIAN CENTER
for the ENVIRONMENT

ARMENIA
TREEPROJECT

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Deputy Environment Minister Calls Inaugural Forest Summit ‘A Constructive Step’ for Armenia’s Forests

Yerevan, Armenia - As anticipation builds for October’s [Forest Summit: Global Action and Armenia](#), forestry professionals and political leaders alike are emphasizing the importance of the conference, and the significance of its timing and location.

The event brings education, dialogue, and networking among the leading minds in forestry to Yerevan from Sunday, October 20 through Wednesday, October 23. The keynote address at the inaugural summit will be delivered by Dr. Anthony S. Davis, dean and professor at the College of Forestry at Oregon State University, which is recognized as one of the world’s leading forestry research, teaching, and extension institutions.

Joining Dr. Davis will be Dr. Glenn Bush, an environmental economist at [Woods Hole Research Center](#), Dr. Omri Bonne, Chief Forester at [KKL-JNF](#), Israel’s largest afforestation organization; David Mathenge from the [Green Belt Movement](#) - an organization whose founder won a Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 for the group’s activism and reforestation work in Kenya; Dr. Maya Nehme, Executive Director of the [Lebanon Reforestation Initiative](#); and Ms. Carmen Argüello of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

“We welcome the initiative of American University of Armenia’s Acopian Center for the Environment and Armenia Tree Project to host the inaugural Forest Summit this month. From what we’ve seen so far, the list of speakers is impressive from local and international organizations,” said Vardan Melikyan, Armenia’s Deputy Minister of Environment. “We have an ambitious national goal to double Armenia’s forest cover by 2050, so this event is a constructive step for bringing the various stakeholders together to collaborate on our forestry issues.”

Scientists, political leaders, and citizens of all nations have come to recognize climate change as one of the most pressing issues of the 21st century, and the expansion of forests has been identified as one of the leading ways to help mitigate this disaster. Forests help to sequester carbon dioxide which contributes to climate change, and provides other valuable ecosystem services including water purification and habitat for birds and animals.

Armenia has seen a re-emergence of the Caucasian Leopard in the Khosrov Forest Reserve, which is widely considered to be a conservation success story. At the same time, the country has pledged to double its forest cover by 2050 as part of its commitment to the Bonn Challenge and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. This Forest Summit will address many of these issues.



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In addition to the insights and addresses from these talented speakers and panelists, the conference will provide field visits to tree planting sites in Armenia and to the beautiful Dilijan National Forest. At its core, the conference will foster discussion and collaborative dialogue on the conservation and reforestation efforts much needed in Armenia and countries across the world.

For more information about the conference, AUA Acopian Center for the Environment, or Armenia Tree Project, please visit <http://forestsummit.am>.

About the AUA Acopian Center for the Environment

The AUA Acopian Center for the Environment, a research center of the American University of Armenia (AUA), promotes the protection and restoration of the natural environment through research, education, and community outreach. The AUA Acopian Center's focus areas include sustainable natural resource management, biodiversity and conservation, greening the built environment, clean energy, and energy efficiency, as well as information technology and the environment. Founded in 1991, the American University of Armenia (AUA) is a private, independent university located in Yerevan, Armenia, and affiliated with the University of California. AUA provides a global education in Armenia and the region, offering high-quality graduate and undergraduate studies, encouraging civic engagement, and promoting public service and democratic values. For more see <http://ace.aua.am>.

About Armenia Tree Project

Armenia Tree Project (ATP), a non-profit program based in Massachusetts and Yerevan, conducts vitally important environmental projects in Armenia's cities and villages. Since 1994, ATP has made enormous strides in combating desertification in the biologically diverse but threatened Caucasus region. More than 5,700,000 trees have been planted and restored, and hundreds of jobs have been created for Armenians in seasonal tree-related programs. ATP works to further Armenia's economic and social development by mobilizing resources to fund reforestation. These vital new trees provide food, wood, environmental benefits, and opportunities for economic growth. ATP has a full time staff of over 80 in Armenia. The Yerevan office manages four state-of-the-art tree nurseries and two environmental education centers, partners with villagers to create tree-based micro-enterprise opportunities, creates urban green belts for public use, restores degraded forest lands, and employs hundreds of part-time workers to plant new forests. For more see www.armeniatree.org.