

LOOKING FORWARD:  
ARMENIAN ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK  
ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN  
2012 – 2017



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## I. VISION, MISSION, & LEADERSHIP

### **VISION**

*Armenia will revitalize development procedures through environmentally sustainable practices, increasing Armenia's profile in the wider conservation community, and bridging the environmental knowledge gap among Armenians, in Armenia and in the Diaspora, within a generation.*

### **MISSION**

*To increase information sharing and engagement among Armenians, in Armenia and in the Diaspora, and the wider conservation community about environmental issues in Armenia while facilitating environmentally sustainable development in Armenia through responsible partnerships of Diasporan and international resources.*

#### **Founder**

Ursula Kazarian – President and Founder

#### **Advisory Board**

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#### **Executive Management Team**

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## II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Along with the Armenian Environmental Network (AEN)'s Vision and Mission, its Guiding Principles provide the foundation upon which the work of the organization stands and the reservoir of intent and imagination out of which its strategy grows. They also serve as touchstones by which AEN evaluates the success and integrity of its work both inside and outside of the organization.

### **Create Open Dialogue**

AEN will create an open dialogue within the pan-Armenian community and expand these conversations to include international, local, and governmental partners.

### **Provide Long-Term Solutions**

AEN will develop all services and projects with an eye toward achieving long-term, positive impact.

### **Promote Healthy Environment**

AEN will promote healthy and sustainable environmental practices through project implementation and by ensuring readily available access to environmental information.

### **Foster Social Equity & Environmental Justice**

AEN will develop projects and strategies that: take into account the best available scientific knowledge; respect all communities and cultures; and aspire to equal opportunity for all.

### **Maintain Integrity**

AEN will be guided by the precautionary principle in utilizing technical and scientific data to protect, preserve and restore the health of the Armenian environment, ecosystems, and species.

### **Establish Leadership & Capacity Building**

AEN will take responsibility for leadership and capacity building for Armenians, in Armenia and in the Diaspora, by championing societal and youth development models that promote sustainability.

### **Exhibit Transparency**

AEN will strive for honesty, openness, and transparency.

### III. AGENDA FOR TRANSFORMATION

#### Strategic Goals and Objectives

The strategic goals presented here define the priorities that AEN will pursue to further its mission over the next five to ten years. The objectives outline how AEN will work toward the achievement of these goals over the next five years. Some objectives will be achieved through existing programs, while others will require the development of new initiatives.

#### **Integrated Waste Management**

**Goal:** Reduce the amount of trash going to Armenian landfills, and create cost effective and sustainable landfill management options to appropriately combat the current lack of an effective waste management plan in Armenia, which has a direct and cumulative impact on public health.

##### **Objectives:**

- Create a model to replicate waste management systems throughout other Armenian regions.
- Design and implement waste management systems in Armenian regions.
- Reduce the amount of waste going to landfills.
- Educate communities about proper waste management and recycling processes.

#### **Advocacy & Active Participation**

**Goal:** Combat the lack of understanding of environmental laws by Armenian citizens through increasing knowledge capital among communities.

##### **Objectives:**

- Encourage and mentor Armenian leaders and activists on best business practices for environmental campaigns.
- Create and utilize partnerships to be a united front on proper implementation of environmental laws.
- Create the standard for future advocacy projects in Armenia.
- Potentially model future advocacy programs based on the impact of the “Teghut Campaign” as measured by direct impact and public participation.

#### **Education**

**Goal:** Educate stakeholders on environmental problems facing Armenia, provide solutions to pressing problems, and be a leading source for information currently lacking in Armenia.

##### **Objectives:**

- Create standard curricula to present to current and potential stakeholders and communities.
- Become a leader in environmental education bat the lack of understanding of in both Armenia and the United States.

### **Eco-business Ventures**

**Goal:** Promote and implement small business projects, which will eliminate or reduce negative environmental impacts in Armenia.

**Objective:**

Work with Armenian businesses and organizations to create and promote the use of canvas bags instead of the common practice of using plastic bags for purchased goods.

### **Policy Evaluation & Assessment**

**Goal:** Conduct a review and evaluation of existing policies and laws in Armenia, which impact AEN's work, and strive to effect change when possible.

**Objectives:**

- Identify Armenian policies and laws, which may impact AEN's work.
- Work with partner organizations and Armenian and international governments/bodies to update and modernize Armenian laws and policies when needed/feasible.
- Work with partner organizations to raise awareness about harmful laws and policies, including past and current case law and systemic failures of the Armenian court system.

### **Organizational Excellence**

**Goal:** Leverage AEN's organizational structure and capacity to support and catalyze the transformation required to achieve its mission.

**Objectives:**

- Ensure the longevity of the organization by diversifying core funding sources and incorporating sustainability into operations planning.
- Establish and maintain partnerships with organizations, businesses, and government.
- Establish and maintain relationships with current and future donor organizations.
- Establish AEN as a leader in environmental information sharing in Armenia.
- Maintain and grow operational capacity for both the United States and Armenia offices.
- Create and ensure proper information dissemination through conventional and innovative methods to increase awareness of AEN.
- Begin and sustain a membership program for supporters.
- Launch and sustain regional chapters to increase involvement and information dissemination.



## IV. PROGRAMS

### How AEN Achieves Its Goals

AEN core programs and competencies guide its choices about how best to pursue its mission and goals. Some of these are more fully developed than others, as reflected in AEN's current programs, described below. The execution of this plan will strengthen AEN's ability to effect societal change through each of these approaches.

#### Education & Information

The core of AEN's mission is to provide increased access to education and information regarding the state of Armenia's environment. AEN utilizes the organization's website and marketing materials to disseminate information, research, and projects on the state of environmental concerns in Armenia.

- **Armenian Youth Forums.** The Armenian office designs topics for a monthly youth forum to engage the future leaders of Armenia.
- **Diasporan Forums.** The United States office regularly holds forums/panel discussions on environmental issues and concerns facing Armenia to U.S. Diasporans.
- **Conference Presentations & Stakeholder Meetings.** The United States and Armenian offices are regularly invited to conferences and meetings about Armenian sustainability and environmental issues, at which the staff presents current information and data on AEN projects.

### Projects

AEN continually evaluates current project needs to address environmental issues facing Armenia. Based on needs assessments and research, the staff initiates different projects to fulfill the organization's mission and goals.

- **Integrated Waste Management Project (IWMP).** The Armenian office is in the process of securing funding for a pilot IWMP. After implementation of the pilot, this could be replicated to other areas of Armenia.
- **Canvas Bag Project.** The United States and Armenian offices are in the process of securing funding to implement introducing canvas bags into test demographic supermarkets to combat the overuse of plastic bags in Armenia.

### Advocacy

AEN assists activists and partners on how to get communities involved and provide structure for government and businesses to adhere to the current Armenian legal framework.

- **Teghut Campaign.** The United States and Armenian offices are currently working with local Armenian activists and partners on an advocacy campaign to cease environmentally destructive mining practices used at the Teghut operations site, ensuring that both the government and businesses adhere to their legal obligations.

### Collaboration

To ensure the largest possible positive impact for Armenia's environment, AEN continually cultivates and sustains partnerships with international and local organizations and businesses, as well as with representatives of the Armenian government. Only through such collaboration will the vision, mission, and goals of AEN be achieved.

## V. THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In 2011, AEN opened the Armenian office to broaden the range of impact the organization had on environmental issues facing Armenia. As the organization grew, a transatlantic conversation developed between the United States and Armenian offices. The president and founder, Ursula Kazarian, enlisted the Advisory Board and Executive Management Team to create a strategic plan for the organization. All of management was onboard. Bryan Hall, at the time a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer with eight years of previous experience in nonprofit organizational management, volunteered to facilitate the process for AEN leadership from December 2011 to April 2012.

### Assessment

The initial assessment for the strategic planning process was developed from December 2011 to March 2012. Due to the transatlantic distance between the participating offices, and the dynamic geographic locations of stakeholders worldwide, simple questionnaires were developed and distributed to the Advisory Board and Executive Management Team to complete. The data was sent to Bryan Hall, an independent consultant, who synthesized the data. Also, Bryan Hall used formal and informal discussions with Executive Management Team to supplement information captured from the questionnaires.

### Strategic Plan Review & Recommendation

Bryan Hall generated a draft strategic plan with recommendations based on all gathered data. The draft document was distributed to the Executive Management Team to review; then, a series of two meetings were undertaken to review all the findings and fine-tune all of the information. This final document was adopted by the Executive Management Team in March 2013.

*\*The strategic planning process not only included goals and objectives for the next five years, but it also included the creation of a vision statement and guiding principles, edits to the mission statement, and the determination of operational roles and responsibilities. The operational strategies were distributed separately to the Executive Management Team to help structure the organization.*