



UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

21st Century

Producer: Paterson
Script version: Final
Duration: 9'56"

KYRGYZSTAN: STANDING TALL

INTRO :

In Kyrgyzstan, the fruits of ancient trees are protecting the future of the country's last remaining forests. By also providing a living for locals, walnuts are helping both people and trees stand tall. (13")

VIDEO

OPEN FOREST RAIN
MONTAGE

AUDIO

(music / nats / call to prayer)

NARRATION

Just as rain is no reason to miss prayer services on the Muslim holy day of Eid Al Adha. (5")

(nats prayer)

Sharshenbek Nazaraliev and the other men of Bel-Terek, a small mountain village in Southern Kyrgyzstan, know the wet conditions cannot excuse them or their families from the work that awaits this time of year. (13")

SHARSHENBEK NAZARRALIEV : (In Kyrgyz)
We say that autumn is a struggle. It is a time of abundance, a time when you gather the harvest; when you gather everything that you planted in the spring. (10”)

FAMILY EATING

NARRATION
And so after the family meal Sharshenbek and his five-year old son join his teenage boys in the tract of National Forest they lease from the government. (12”)

IN FOREST

In this economically impoverished area one product is a critical source of income.(4”)

SHARSHENBEK ON CAMERA

SHARSHENBEK NAZARRALIEV : (In Kyrgyz)
Our main harvest is walnuts. That is what we do! The walnut season is really short, one month only. And on days like today when it rains and there is a strong wind, lots of walnuts fall from the trees. (19”)

PICKING UP WALNUTS

NARRATION
The harvest provides almost a third of Sharshenbek’s annual income... and can be even more important for those less well off. (7”)

SHARSHENBEK NAZARRALIEV : (In Kyrgyz)
If you gather a good amount of walnuts over the autumn season, the profit it brings can feed your family for the whole year. (11”)

FOREST SCENICS

NARRATION

But it's not just people who profit...(2")

By contributing to local livelihoods, forest products are boosting the prospects of forest preservation in this part of central Asia. (8")

AERIAL MOUNTAINS
FROM PLANE /
HORSES FEEDING ON
GRASS

NARRATION

Known for its steep peaks ...(2")

and open grasslands... (2")

MAP

Kyrgyzstan's tree canopy extends over just seven percent of its land making it a low forest cover country -
- according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. (10")

FOREST SCENES
WATERFALLS

But the forests of the Fergana Valley are treasured for their rich and unique biodiversity, including the largest, and perhaps one of the oldest, walnut forests on the planet. Half of the trees here are at least 100 years old. (13")

DAVLET MAMAJANOV: (In Kyrgyz)

From the perspective of the forest's size, its beauty, its biodiversity, we can say that this is the number one forest in the world. (14")

OFFICE BROLL,
WALKING AROUND
TEST SITE

NARRATION

Davlet Mamajanov runs the Laboratory of forest resources for the Southern branch of Kyrgyzstan's

Academy of Sciences.knows big challenges lie ahead – from both climate change and population growth. (11”)

DAVLET MAMAJANOV: (In Kyrgyz)

The number of people exploiting forest resources is increasing. People are taking from the forest more than it can give. (9”)

PHOTO

NARRATION

So Davlet studies the growth of different walnut trees and their nut production, to ensure the forest’s future. He explains to locals what nuts are best to gather and which to avoid. (9”).

WITH OLD LADY

DAVLET MAMAJANOV: (In Kyrgyz)

During the harvest, people gather walnuts in three or four phases. We tell them to leave at least a few nuts behind during the last gathering so that some trees can grow naturally. (10”)

NARRATION

SET UP IN OFFICE OF ERMEKOV

Ermekov Baktybek Zulumbekovich (ERRMECKOV BACKTEBECK ZULUMBECKOVITCH) the Jalal-abad regional head of the Kyrgyz (KERGEEZE) State Agency of Environmental Protection and Forestry, oversees the implementation of new “Collective Forestry Management” programs. (12”)

ON CAMERA

ERMEKOV BAKYT ZULUMBEKOVICH: (in Kyrgyz)

People come from each village and they then work out the charter and conditions. (4”)

IN THE FOREST
TAKING NOTES

NARRATION

These programs aim to integrate everyone in the decision making process. (4”)

ERMEKOV BAKYT ZULUMBEKOVICH: (in Kyrgyz)

The people decide where to direct their money, how to address their social needs.(5”)

NARRATION

Other important changes include laws like Decree 482 which allows for National Forest long-term leases to individuals who want to care for and work the woods. (10”)

MAMAJANOV ON
CAMERA(4”)

MAMAJANOV DAVLET : (In Kyrgyz)

If each person preserves the forest on their rented parcel of land, this would also greatly benefit the country. It makes everyone personally responsible for their part of forest. (13”)

NARRATION

Sharshenbek Nazaraliev pays almost twenty dollars per hectare per year for the right to work his part of the forest. This is the third year of a 49-year lease. And it's not just walnuts he profits from ...(13”)

SHARSHENBEK NAZARRALIEV : (In Kyrgyz)

In the spring time we gather mushrooms from the forest. We also gather wild apples, different berries and rosehips. (15”)

GENERAL STORE

NARRATION

Sharshenbek serves on his regional citizens forestry council ... and also owns the village general store which he operates with his wife, Guljan. (GOOLJAN) (8")

Here, customers are also sellers, as neighbors trade-in their bags of nuts... for cash or goods. (6")

Sharshenbek knows that by generating an income for his family and friends, the forest is also financing its own survival – an example of self-sustaining forest financing heralded by the United Nations Forum on Forests. This body promotes the conservation and sustainable development of forests globally. (18").

SHARSHENBEK NAZARRALIEV: (In Kyrgyz)

Today, thanks to change in people's attitude towards forests, the situation is better. (4")

MONTAGE LOADING

(rooster)

MARKET SCENES

NARRATION

Early morning.. and Sharshenbek is heading to market. It's a two hour drive to Bazaar Korgon, the country's largest walnut market on the outskirts of Jalal-abad city (14")

NATS MARKET

NARRATION

This is where Sharshenbek and his wife reap the rewards of their labor. (3”)

SHELLING NUTS

Negotiations can be fierce and a 30 kilo sack can sell for almost fifty dollars to men and women who then oversee the shelling of the nuts. The walnut meat, which is known as the meaning, is then resold. (16”)

Eventually the meaning lands in processing plants -- like this one, run by Vega-Plus a Kyrgyz company,. (6”)

During walnut season the company’s ranks swell from 15 employees to 300...all financed by the fruits of the forest. (7”)

This facility alone can move one-thousand metric tons of their prized product....every year. (5”)

KANYBEK AITAKHANOV : (In Kyrgyz)

God willing, this year’s harvest looks promising. We just started a week ago. (10”)

NARRATION

Vega-Plus director , Kanybek Aitakhanov
(KANNYBECK AITAHANOV) (2”)

FLAG / CITY

KANYBEK AITAKHANOV : (In Kyrgyz)

The higher the price for walnuts, the better off will be the people whose livelihoods directly depend on the forest and its walnuts. And this will positively impact the

condition of the forests. (16”)

NARRATION

But Aitakhanov knows more must be done for Kyrgyzstan’s walnut industry to reach its full potential (5”)

Vega Plus already works with local “fair-trade” groups, and is looking to expand into European markets. But to be successful, they have to reach stringent certifications and improve their marketing plans. (10”)

Of course, any opportunity for market expansion would make walnut gatherers like Sharshenbek very happy. (5”)

SHARSHENBEK NAZARRALIEV : (In Kyrgyz)

Whether it is Europe or America, the more the product goes to other countries, the better it will be for lives of people who work with walnuts. (7”)

NARRATION

Today he is meeting with his friend, the scientist Davlet Mamajanov, to examine his stash of nuts. (6”)

Davlet believes this collaboration is a sign that Kyrgyzstan’s new forestry management programs and land leasing laws are working and such forest financing will protect Kyrgyzstan’s natural wealth long into in the future. (12”)

DAVLET MAMAJANOV: (In Kyrgyz)

People feel more responsibility now. They understand the forest and its life better. And so they contribute to forest management, preservation and enlargement efforts. (10”)

NARRATION

People like Sharshenbek, and his family, will continue to play their part in this sustainable economy ... based on natural resources and designed to keep both trees and people standing tall. (11”)

SHARSHENBEK NAZARRALIEV: (In Kyrgyz)

Everything the forest offers is so important personally for my family and for the population in general. We can't imagine our lives without the forest. (17”